

AI framework on anvil, brainstorming begins

Dedicated regulation expected after the Lok Sabha elections

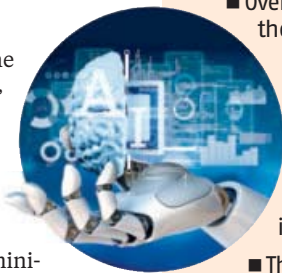
ASHUTOSH MISHRA
New Delhi, 19 April

A high-powered committee, led by the Principal Scientific Advisor (PSA) to the Government of India, is developing a framework for artificial intelligence (AI). This committee, it has been learnt, includes representatives from various ministries, academia, industry associations, including Nasscom, and think tanks, such as the Indian Software Product Industry Round Table (iSPIRT).

The office of the PSA serves as the apex scientific advisory body to the Union government on scientific policy in India. It has released several working papers on AI in the recent past.

A dedicated regulation or comprehensive framework for AI is expected to be introduced after the Lok Sabha elections, a government official stated. "We will be taking a balanced approach when it comes to regulating AI. The focus of the legislation will be to minimise user harm and increase the accountability of platforms, while also promoting innovation," the official said.

He further said: "There have been more than 70 draft versions of



SYNTHESISING RULES

- Over 70 draft versions of the AI policy, so far
- The PSA-led high-powered committee has representation from ministries, academia, and industry associations
- The committee for following 'whole-of-government approach' to regulate AI
- In January, the Economic Advisory Council to the PM proposed 'Complex Adaptive Framework' for regulating AI
- The NITI Aayog released a paper titled 'National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence' in 2018 in connection with regulating AI

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the AI policy so far, and a comprehensive, multi-stakeholder discussion is still ongoing."

Earlier this month, Business Standard reported that a committee

involving members from different central ministries recommended the establishment of an inter-ministerial body to oversee AI regulation. The committee suggested a "whole-of-government approach" to AI regulation, under which every ministry would have a role, in addition to the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).

India currently lacks a dedicated policy framework to govern AI, amid growing concerns about the potential harms and risks associated with the technology. In the past, MeitY had issued advisories asking intermediaries and AI platforms to regulate the risks arising from the use of AI and to ensure that biases in their models do not adversely affect Indian users.

In January this year, the Economic Advisory Council (EAC) to the prime minister proposed a "Complex Adaptive Framework" approach to regulate AI. Through this approach, the EAC advised establishing guardrails, mandating manual "overrides" and "authorisation chokepoints", requiring audits for transparency and accountability, outlining liability protocols, and setting up a specialist regulator to monitor AI.

The discussion around AI regulations is not new. It began as far back as 2018 when the NITI Aayog released a paper titled "National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence". Turn to Page 7 ▶

▶ FROM PAGE 1

AI framework on anvil...

Among other recommendations, NITI Aayog emphasised the appropriate handling of data, ensuring privacy and security through the establishment of data protection frameworks, and the creation of sectoral regulatory frameworks.