National Health Authority and IIT Kanpur sign MoU for development of digital public goods for AI in Healthcare

The partnership aims to revolutionize Artificial Intelligence in health research with innovative data platform

This MoU under the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission will provide an open public benchmarking platform for comparing & validating AI models: Union Health Secretary

"Use of data for improving health outcomes is the envisaged goal of this partnership"

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The National Health Authority (NHA) and IIT Kanpur signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in the presence of Union Health Secretary Shri Apurva Chandra, here today. The MoU was signed by Ms. L. S. Changsan, Addl. Secretary, Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare & CEO, NHA, and Prof. Manindra Agrawal, Director, IIT Kanpur.

Under this MoU, a federated learning platform across a variety of machine learning model pipelines, a quality-preserving database, an open benchmarking platform for comparing & validating AI models, and a consent management system for research under Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) would be developed by IIT Kanpur. The platform will subsequently be operated and governed by NHA, thereby unlocking the immense potential of AI for improving health outcomes.

Speaking at the occasion, Shri Apurva Chandra complemented the NHA and IIT Kanpur for signing "this very important MoU under the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission that will provide an open public benchmarking platform for comparing & validating AI models."

Highlighting the importance of this MoU, Shri Chandra stated that "use of data for improving health outcomes is the envisaged goal of this partnership. It will use the data available under the ABDM to create a public benchmark for AI models for quantifying and diagnosing diseases against which other AI models can be benchmarked." He added that "one of the biggest issues related to AI models in the healthcare sector is the availability and efficacy of disease diagnosis data which will be tackled by this collaboration. In a clinical setting, the availability of reliable data will lead to better outcomes and result in better diagnosis."

Addressing the event, Ms. Changsan stated that, "this partnership marks a significant step forward in harnessing the power of AI for our country's healthcare," and "this partnership will help provide researchers with access to high-quality data and a platform for collaboration with other stakeholders of the health ecosystem while taking into account all aspects of data privacy. It will also accelerate the development of AI-powered health solutions that address critical health challenges." She further added that "this MoU will be a benchmark in digital public health goods that will leverage AI and upcoming technologies to strengthen digital public health infrastructure."

Prof. Manindra Agrawal, Director IIT Kanpur, stated that, "this partnership with the NHA will contribute towards democratizing access to quality healthcare in India". Prof. Agrawal further added that, "Partnering with the NHA, IIT Kanpur aims to create a transformative platform that will empower researchers, healthcare providers, and policymakers to unlock the full potential of AI for improving health outcomes in India."

This platform will offer numerous benefits, including:

- **Trustworthy Models:** By enabling providers of AI models for healthcare applications to perform genuine out-of-set validation, and establish publicly verifiable performance benchmarks, this platform will foster trust in the consumer market for these applications.
- **Improved Data Access:** The platform will address the fragmentation of health data in our country, making it easier for researchers to access and analyze health data without data leaving the custody of data fiduciaries.
- **Statistical Quality Preservation:** Healthcare data is uniquely costly to acquire and through this platform will be protected against statistical dredging, without compromising on openness and innovation.

Ms. Punya Salila Srivastava, OSD, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare; Shri Kiran Gopal Vaska, Mission Director (ABDM), NHA and senior officials from the Ministry and representatives of IIT Kanpur were also present at the occasion.

Background:

Digital Health is becoming an important catalyst to drive India's healthcare sector. Launched by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on 27th September 2021, the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) aims to establish a robust digital health ecosystem through active collaboration between public and private sectors. ABDM aims to integrate various healthcare entities—hospitals, clinics, labs, pharmacies, health insurance companies, and more—to improve patient care, accessibility, and

affordability. AI has the potential to revolutionize India's healthcare ecosystem and when coupled with ABDM's offering of a digitized health ecosystem, it can lead to significant advancements in disease diagnosis, treatment planning, and patient outcomes.

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