7 Indian organisations selected for Microsoft's AI for Earth

Tech giant Microsoft Tuesday said seven Indian organisations as part of its USD 50 million 'AI for Earth' programme that aims to help build sustainability solutions for the environment based on new-age technologies like artificial intelligence and cloud computing.

With this, India now has the third largest concentration of 'AI for Earth' grantees after the US and Canada.

The seven recipients -- which includes names like India Institute of Science and Symbiosis Institute of Technology -- will receive access to Microsoft Azure Cloud and AI computing resources along with technology training on these tools and additional support.

"In every country around the world, we are facing unprecedented environmental challenges, impacting the ability to access water, grow healthy crops and protect biodiversity," Microsoft Chief Environmental Officer and Lead (AI for Earth) Lucas Joppa said.

He added that through the initiative, the company intends to empower environmental researchers with Microsoft's AI solutions to help them create a more sustainable future.

Launched in July 2017, AI for Earth is a USD 50 million, 5-year commitment from Microsoft. Its focus areas include climate change, agriculture, biodiversity and water. Within a year, AI for Earth has grown from 20 grantees to 147 from across more than 40 countries, with USD 1.1 million worth of Azure credits (Microsoft cloud) awarded to date.

The grantees from India, chosen based on their efforts to conserve, protect and rebuild the environment with AI, include India Institute of Technology (together with the Technical University of Munich) and International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), Hyderabad in the agriculture category.

For Biodiversity, Microsoft has chosen Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and Environment (ATREE), Bengaluru and Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology Delhi.

Symbiosis Institute of Technology, Pune and India Institute of Science, Bangalore are the other recipients.

"Today's announcement represents an expansion of our commitment to and investment in democratising AI and advancing sustainability in the country," Keshav Dhakad, Group Head and Assistant General Counsel - CELA at Microsoft India, said. SR MKJ.

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