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MAGAZINE NOTES

AI at Population Scale: India's Blueprint for the World

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AI at Population Scale: India's Blueprint for the World

■ Yojana Chapter 1 · 2 min read ·

Published: Yojana, April 2026 (focus article by Abhishek Singh)

The issue’s central argument: India is repositioning artificial intelligence as the next layer of **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)**, after Aadhaar, UPI and DigiLocker. The shift is framed as moving from “technology-centric AI to citizen-centric AI”, where the state builds shared AI rails that startups, researchers and governments ride, rather than leaving capability concentrated in a few private firms.

THE INDIAAI MISSION’S THREE LAYERS

LAYER	WHAT IT PROVIDES
Compute	Shared GPU capacity at subsidised rates of Rs 65-100 per GPU-hour
Data and models (AIKosh)	National repository: 10,000+ datasets, 286 AI models
Applications	Crop monitoring, disaster prediction, beneficiary verification, diagnostics (TB, diabetic retinopathy), voice-enabled UPI

The compute subsidy is the population-scale wager: by collapsing the cost of training and inference, India lowers the entry barrier the way UPI collapsed the cost of payments.

GOVERNANCE SCAFFOLDING

- **DPDP Act 2023:** penalties up to Rs 250 crore; Data Protection Board as the adjudicatory body
- **IT Intermediary Guidelines (amended):** deepfake content must be removed within 24 hours of reporting
- **The threat side:** I4C data shows a 250 percent rise in deepfake-related crimes in 2024
- **Judiciary adoption:** SUVAS (judgment translation across Indian languages) and SUPACE (research assistance for judges)

DIPLOMACY AND SKILLING

The **India AI Impact Summit 2026** in New Delhi produced the **New Delhi Declaration**, endorsed by 90+ countries, positioning India as the voice of the Global South on AI governance: access to compute, datasets in local languages, and AI for development rather than only frontier-model safety.

Skilling rails: **YUVA AI for ALL** courses on DIKSHA (schools) and iGOT Karmayogi (civil servants), plus AI labs planned in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities.

MAINS ANGLE

For: DPI-style AI avoids private concentration, serves welfare delivery directly, and exports a replicable model to developing countries. **Against / risks:** subsidised compute can crowd out private data-centre investment; deepfake enforcement is reactive; DPDP's state exemptions weaken the privacy counterweight that population-scale AI needs. **Way forward:** independent algorithmic audit capacity, compute-allocation transparency, and Indic-language dataset quality standards.

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INDIAAI MISSION:

GPU compute subsidised at Rs 65-100 per GPU-hour

AIKosh: 10,000+ datasets, 286 AI models

LAW AND INSTITUTIONS:

DPDP Act 2023: penalties up to Rs 250 crore; Data Protection Board

IT rules: deepfakes must come down within 24 hours

I4C (Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre): 250 percent rise in deepfake crimes (2024)

OTHER RELEVANT FACTS:

India AI Impact Summit 2026, New Delhi: New Delhi Declaration endorsed by 90+ countries

Judiciary AI tools: SUVAS (translation), SUPACE (court efficiency)

YUVA AI for ALL runs on DIKSHA and iGOT Karmayogi

Sources: Yojana / Publications Division, PIB



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