

Far and Wide

Every week we share selection of six news from six continents that we believe will impact our world in the near or distant future

July 2024 | Issue #54



India's Bharat 6G Alliance Expands Global Footprint with European and US Collaborations

Welcome to the latest edition of Far and Wide, where we embark on a journey to explore intriguing stories and global developments.

India's Bharat 6G Alliance (B6GA) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the 6G Smart Networks and Services Industry Association (6G IA) and 6G Flagship - Oulu University. This agreement explores potential 6G collaborations and follows a similar MoU recently signed with the USA's NextG Alliance, according to an official statement. The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) under the Ministry of Communications is actively looking for strategic international partnerships to enhance global connectivity to position India as a leader in digital innovation. Under the Bharat 6G Vision, the DoT received 470 proposals for "Accelerated research on 6G" where the MoU provides opportunities to the R&D companies, academia, and research institutions in the EU and India, to align research and development of 6G and to promote joint research initiatives which involve conducting pilot studies of 6G technologies and their use cases. The collaboration of 6G technology development will help to contribute to standardization efforts at global forums.

The Bharat 6G Alliance (B6GA) includes Indian industry, academia, national research institutions, and standards organizations. The 6G Smart Networks and Services Industry Association (6G-IA) represents European industry and research for next-generation networks and services. The 6G Flagship program, funded by the University of Oulu and the Research Council of Finland, focuses on developing key 6G technology components, establishing a 6G Test Centre, and driving societal digitization in the 2030s through 6G research and innovation. India's involvement in this joint venture is seen as a strategic move to leverage its technological expertise and vast market potential. By aligning with European counterparts, renowned for their research prowess and technological advancements, India aims to accelerate the pace of 6G development.

INSIDE

Stories in Focus



Global Trade & Economy

Global Environment Facility to finance projects in 23 Latin American and Caribbean countries

Sri Lanka seals debt deal with Official Creditor Committee after financial crisis

India exploring renewed negotiations with New Zealand, and South Africa for new FTA deals



Technology

India Joins Forces with Europe in 6G Technology Push

AskSASI Tool By University Of Adelaide And Food South
Australia Helps Food Producers Navigate Environmental Accreditations



Healthcare

ACR Highlights Healthcare-Related Artificial Intelligence Bills in 2024 State Legislative Sessions



Europe

India Joins Forces with Europe in 6G Technology Push

India has announced a strategic partnership with Europe to jointly develop 6G technology, marking a significant step forward in global telecommunications.

The collaboration aims to leverage India's technological expertise and Europe's research capabilities to advance the next generation of mobile networks.

With 6G promising unprecedented speed and reliability, the initiative is poised to revolutionize sectors like healthcare and manufacturing with real-time applications.

Source: Telecom Talk

https://telecomtalk.info/india-joins-forces-europe-in-6g-technology/978217/#google_vignette

This partnership also emphasizes the importance of global cooperation in shaping future telecommunications standards and ensuring seamless connectivity worldwide. As India and Europe align efforts towards 6G development, the initiative is expected to drive innovation, create new economic opportunities, and strengthen digital infrastructure on a global scale.



North America

American College for Radiology Highlights Healthcare-Related Artificial Intelligence Bills in 2024 State Legislative Sessions

In 2024, numerous states are prioritizing the integration of AI in healthcare through various legislative efforts. Key trends include establishing regulatory frameworks, forming workgroups, and ensuring ethical standards and data privacy. Legislation is also targeting the prevention of algorithmic discrimination to protect patients from biased AI decisions.

States are focusing on transparency and patient consent, with notable bills such as California's Assembly Bill 3030, requiring disclaimers for AI-generated patient communications, and Senate Bill 1120, mandating that healthcare decisions involving AI be made by qualified professionals.

Colorado's SB24-205 requires developers of high-risk AI systems to avoid discrimination and report risks. Georgia's Senate Resolution 476 formed a committee to explore AI's potential and challenges.

Illinois' House Bill 5116 mandates impact assessments for automated decision tools, while Oregon's HB 4153 created a task force to define AI terms. Rhode Island's HB 8073 requires coverage for AI breast tissue imaging, and Utah's SB 149 established an AI policy office. Washington's SB 5838 and West Virginia's HB 5690 created task forces to assess and regulate AI use.

These legislative efforts aim to balance AI innovation with ethical considerations, patient rights, and transparency.



Source: Imaging Technology News

<https://www.itnonline.com/content/acr-highlights-healthcare-related-artificial-intelligence-bills-2024-state-legislative>



South America

Global Environment Facility to finance projects in 23 Latin American and Caribbean countries



Source: FAO UN

<https://www.fao.org/americas/news/news-detail/fmam-financiara-proyectos/en>

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) is funding projects in 23 Latin American and Caribbean countries to address urban sustainability, groundwater management, biodiversity loss, climate change, and land degradation.

Supported by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), these initiatives align with FAO's regional strategies.

FAO Assistant Director-General Mario Lubetkin emphasized the organization's role in promoting climate finance, innovative agriculture, and risk management.

In Chile, efforts will focus on ecosystem-based solutions, improving practices over 1.3 million hectares, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and benefiting 732,000 people.

Central American countries will adopt a source-to-sea approach to enhance biodiversity and water security across 12 watersheds, benefiting 350,000 people. In the Caribbean, 14 countries will enhance sustainable land management under the SOILCARE initiative, aiming to restore 28,000 hectares of agricultural land and support 6,900 farmers. These projects collectively aim to improve environmental sustainability, resilience, and livelihoods across the region



Asia

Sri Lanka seals debt deal with Official Creditor Committee after financial crisis



Sri Lanka achieved a significant milestone by finalizing a \$5.8 billion debt restructuring deal with its bilateral lenders through the Official Creditor Committee (OCC) in Paris, granting substantial debt relief. This agreement enables Sri Lanka to allocate resources towards essential public services and secure concessional financing for development. China, despite not joining the OCC, concluded a separate \$4.2 billion debt restructuring agreement with Sri Lanka, facilitated bilaterally.

The OCC, comprising 17 countries including India and members of the Paris Club, was formed to streamline Sri Lanka's debt negotiations following its default amid a severe financial crisis in 2022.

Meanwhile, negotiations with bondholders to address \$12 billion in debt are ongoing, with efforts to finalize terms scheduled this week. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has emphasized the urgency of timely debt restructuring to support Sri Lanka's economic recovery. The agreements come at a crucial juncture as Sri Lanka navigates through a challenging economic landscape following the 2022 financial crisis. These developments mark a significant step forward for Sri Lanka in stabilizing its financial footing and laying the groundwork for sustainable economic growth.

Source: The Hindu

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/sri-lanka-finalises-debt-restructuring-agreement-after-financial-crisis/article68335968.ece>



Australia

AskSASI Tool By University Of Adelaide And Food South Australia Helps Food Producers Navigate Environmental Accreditations

The Adelaide Business School, in collaboration with Hydra Consulting and Web Design Café, launched AskSASI, funded by the End Food Waste Cooperative Research Centre and Food South Australia.

Dr. Rebecca Dolan states that AskSASI helps businesses navigate environmental sustainability accreditations crucial for international supply chains and consumers.

The AI-driven tool simplifies identifying relevant sustainability indicators and accreditations for South Australian food and beverage businesses targeting export markets.

Source: India Education Diary
<https://indiaeducationdiary.in/asksasi-tool-by-university-of-adelaide-and-food-south-australia-helps-food-producers-navigate-environmental-accreditations/>

AskSASI is based on a previous report by the Adelaide Business School and provides customized accreditation information using the Food South Australia Sustainability Matrix.

The tool, still in its minimum-viable-product stage, has already shown value in trials with companies like Golden North Ice Cream, offering user-friendly, quick results to support export strategies. This initiative aids small businesses in understanding and meeting international ESG standards, enhancing their global competitiveness.



Africa

India exploring renewed negotiations with New Zealand, South Africa for new FTA deals

India is on its way to negotiate the free trade agreement (FTA) with New Zealand and South Africa to diversify the trade and strengthen its economic position globally. New Zealand has been actively engaging with India for the FTA talks and thus prioritizing this move will be a shift from the existing geopolitical landscape. Developed economies consider India to be a major economy and they look forward to forming strategic trade alliances with India this FTA would enhance the trade in agricultural products, education services, and technology, with New Zealand exporting dairy products, wool, and fruits, while India exports pharmaceuticals, textiles, and IT services.

India is also exploring the possibility of initiating FTA discussions with South Africa, a key member of the South African Customs Union (SACU). India's trade with South Africa has been steadily growing, with exports increasing by 2.7% to \$8.71 billion and imports by 8% to \$10.54 billion in FY2023-24. Conversely, trade with New Zealand saw a decline, with exports dipping by 1.73% and imports dropping by 29.89%. As India continues to negotiate FTAs with various countries and economic blocs, these new discussions with New Zealand and South Africa are expected to further diversify its trade portfolio and reinforce its standing in the global economic order.



Source: Live Mint
<https://www.livemint.com/economy/trade-deals-india-exploring-renewed-negotiations-with-new-zealand-south-africa-for-new-fta-deals-11719386100973.html>