Ques. Explain the EM algorithm?

Ans. Given a set of incomplete data, consider a set of starting parameters.

1. **Expectation step (E – step):** Using the observed available data of the dataset, estimate (guess) the values of the missing data.
2. **Maximization step (M – step):** Complete data generated after the expectation (E) step is used in order to update the parameters.
3. Repeat step 2 and step 3 until convergence.

The essence of Expectation-Maximization algorithm is to use the available observed data of the dataset to estimate the missing data and then using that data to update the values of the parameters. Let us understand the EM algorithm in detail.

- Initially, a set of initial values of the parameters are considered. A set of incomplete observed data is given to the system with the assumption that the observed data comes from a specific model.
- The next step is known as "Expectation" – step or *E-step*. In this step, we use the observed data in order to estimate or guess the values of the missing or incomplete data. It is basically used to update the variables.
- The next step is known as "Maximization"-step or *M-step*. In this step, we use the complete data generated in the preceding "Expectation" – step in order to update the values of the parameters. It is basically used to update the hypothesis.
- Now, in the fourth step, it is checked whether the values are converging or not, if yes, then stop otherwise repeat *step-2* and *step-3* i.e. "Expectation" – step and "Maximization" – step until the convergence occurs.

Usage of EM algorithm –

- It can be used to fill the missing data in a sample.
- It can be used as the basis of unsupervised learning of clusters.
- It can be used for the purpose of estimating the parameters of Hidden Markov Model (HMM).
- It can be used for discovering the values of latent variables.