

Indian firms may be overusing AI tag

Experts say country trails global peers in core AI

JADEN MATHEW PAUL
Mumbai, 6 April

Experts in India's artificial intelligence (AI) startup ecosystem fear an overuse of the AI label by companies, which see it more as an efficiency layer rather than a core innovation driver. According to them, some recently established companies are branding themselves as AI-driven, though in many cases AI functions more as a tool to enhance efficiency rather than redefine workflows.

Abhishek Srivastava, general partner at Kae Capital, said while vertical software as a service (SaaS) companies are integrating AI to optimise repetitive tasks, their core technology stack and workflows remain largely unchanged — making AI more of a “wrapper”. In contrast, truly vertical AI applications fundamentally alter processes, he said.

Such applications, where AI is central to the solution rather than an add-on, are still relatively rare. While a significant portion of AI adoption is genuine, Srivastava estimates that about 15–20 per cent of implementations are forced fits with limited impact.

Santosh Maheshwari, partner at Grant Thornton Bharat, said, "I would say this terminology (AI) is used very loosely from any operational perspective." He added, "Even a small tool that can be automated is now called AI. I think the term or function needs to be better defined to determine what constitutes an AI-operated startup."

Sumangal Vinjamuri, associate vice-president at Blume Ventures, classifies AI



- Several startups fail to use AI as an innovation driver
- 'AI' label applied loosely, even for simple tools
- India raised \$171.4 mn in AI startup funding in 2024 vs \$3.3 bn raised by China and \$34 bn by the US
- Outflow of AI talent limiting local innovation depth
- India trails US by 3 years in AI thinking and product design

startups into three categories. The first includes companies established between 2010 and 2020 that are integrating AI into specific use cases. While many position themselves as AI-native, there is often a gap between marketing claims and actual product capabilities.

The second category comprises deep-tech firms operating closer to the fundamental AI layer — genuinely AI-native by design.

The third includes new applications built entirely around AI, blending traditional SaaS models with AI-driven functionalities.

Over time, Vinjamuri noted, the first and third groups are likely to converge as they compete for the same customers.

One major challenge facing India's AI startup ecosystem is the outflow of top-tier technical talent. Vinjamuri said many engineers and product developers capable of building

AI-native products have already moved to the United States. "We have a lot of tech talent, but it is not at the tip of the spear when it comes to AI," he said. He added that this limits the depth of AI product development in India.

According to him, India lags Silicon Valley by two to three years in both technological thinking and product imagination. "A pattern I see in many US companies is that they are able to imagine replacing not just software spends but also human resources," he said.

According to data from Tracxn, AI startup funding in India stood at \$171.4 million across 30 rounds in 2024 and \$12.5 million across two rounds in the first quarter of 2025. In comparison, China secured \$3.3 billion and the United States raised \$34 billion in 2024. For the first quarter of 2025, China attracted \$220 million, while the US saw \$6.2 billion.

'Real innovation is how you integrate AI with hardware'

B Capital, the investment firm cofounded by Facebook's Eduardo Luiz Saverin, is making a major push to back companies in artificial intelligence (AI) and robotics in India and Asia, according to General Partner **KARAN MOHLA**. In a video interview with Peerzada Abrar, he highlighted the growing market for AI and robotics products, anticipating a surge of innovative companies from India and Asia to meet diverse needs. Edited excerpts:

Which sectors are you excited about right now?
The area that we are very excited about right now and which includes certain tailwinds is AI. We are seeing a lot of interesting work for foundational models. We are starting to see applications both for enterprises and users.

We are expecting to see a lot of interesting companies emerging from Asia because the context is very different from most other AI native applications that are being built in the US, Europe or China. We are also excited about deeptech, robotics, space tech and advanced manufacturing. What was typically done in academic and research organisations has now come up to the surface of commercial and business value propositions, where they are able to raise venture capital money.



“WHAT WAS TYPICALLY DONE IN ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH ORGANISATIONS HAS NOW COME UP TO THE SURFACE OF COMMERCIAL AND BUSINESS VALUE PROPOSITIONS

Will ChatGPT and DeepSeek impact your investment decisions?

A We've done two robotic investments in the past year – one in the US and one in Asia – and we're working on one more now. Aside from a few highly technical use cases, hardware (innovation) has become somewhat commoditised. The real innovation is in how you integrate AI, computer vision, and software intelligence with the

hardware. India's strength lies in software engineering and development.

Historically, the country didn't have much success in robotics. But that has started to change. Also, countries like Japan have expertise in the area of hardware, but they don't have full capability on the software side. The founders from India have a phenomenal opportunity to be able to build the companies which can cater to these requirements. A fund like us can be helpful in commercialisation and helping firms get access to large customers.

What opportunities do you see for AI to scale up in health care, education and finance?

We are seeing interesting opportunities in edtech, health care and financial services which sort of marries this combination of AI and relevant data. India offers probably one of the most attractive markets for AI-led solutions in different industries where you can build large businesses.

More on business-standard.com

Welspun One gets construction loan worth ₹2.3K crore from Nabfid

Welspun One Logistics Parks (Welspun One) on Sunday announced the financial closure of its logistics park project at Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA) with a construction financing of ₹2,300 crore underwritten by the National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (Nabfid).

The JNPA logistics park, spanning 55 acres, is Welspun One's largest logistics development in India. The logistics park is located within the JNPA Special Economic Zone in Navi Mumbai. The grade A industrial and warehousing facility will cater to e-commerce, 3PL, FMCG, and manufacturing sectors.

The logistics park's total development potential is over 3.6 million square feet. Anshul Singhal, co-founder and managing director, Welspun One, said: "The financial closure of our JNPA project marks a pivotal step in our journey to create world-class logistics and industrial infrastructure."

Rajkiran Rai, managing director of Nabfid said: "We are delighted to partner with Welspun One's Logistics Park in JNPA. The state-of-the-art facilities such as this one are a part of the government's plan to reduce logistics cost to the global average of 8 per cent of GDP, in order to promote competitiveness of Indian industry." **PRACHI PISAL**

APPOINTMENTS

 **Sir Sorabji Pochkhanawal**
Bankers' Training College,
(Central Bank of India & Prakashan)
सर सोरबजी पोचखानावाल बैंकर्स प्रशिक्षण महाविद्यालय
(संस्कृत बैंक ऑफ इंडिया वल बैंक ऑफ इंडिया बंगलौर)
APPOINTMENT OF WARDEN
Sir Sorabji Pochkhanawal
Bankers' Training College, Mumbai
is looking for appointment of
Warden.
Please refer the detailed notification
placed on the Banks' website
www.centralbankofindia.co.in and
www.bankofbaroda.com.
The application can be downloaded
from the websites from 03.04.2025
onwards. Last date for receipt of
application is 21.04.2025.
Date 03 April 2025
Principal, SPBTC

POST EVENT COVERAGE

5TH EDITION 28 MAR 2025
SAHARA STAR HOTEL, MUMBAI

THE ACT IMPERATIVE

AUTHENTICITY, CONSISTENCY,
AND TRANSPARENCY

TRUST TOOK CENTER STAGE AT THE 5TH EDITION OF THE MOST TRUSTED BRANDS OF INDIA 2025.

The event brought together industry leaders, visionaries, and brand custodians to celebrate brands that have consistently earned consumer trust. Through thought-provoking keynotes, engaging panel discussions, and meaningful networking, the forum explored the evolving dynamics of trust, authenticity, and purpose-driven branding in today's business landscape.

The evening culminated in a prestigious recognition ceremony, honouring exceptional brands that continue to set the standard for credibility and loyalty in India.

THOSE THAT GRABBED THE SPOTLIGHT AT THE MOST TRUSTED BRANDS OF INDIA 2025 INCLUDED:

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E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE UNDER IBC, 2016			
M/s. GVK INDUSTRIES LIMITED (GVKL) (In Liquidation)			
Reg. Office: Plot-10, Pargah Colony, Phase-1, Sarda Patel Road, Secunderabad, Hyderabad, Telangana-500021.			
Bids are invited through e-auction platform https://ibbi.baaninet.com for sale of following assets of GVKL forming part of the Liquidation Estate by the Liquidator u/s. 35 (f) of IBC, 2016 r/w reg. 32 of IBBI (Liquidation Process) Regulations, 2016.			
SALE OF ASSETS OF GVKL UNDER REGULATIONS 32(a) TO (d) BROAD DETAILS AS UNDER		Reserve Price (Rs.)	EMD (Rs.)
Plant & Machinery and Power Plant Buildings: All the plant & machinery comprising mainly of i) 148.85 MW Abolton (GT13E2 DUAL FUEL) Gas turbine; ii) 80MW Abolton (NE33AA type pressure) steam turbine and iii) other equipment, electrical, fixtures, inventory, stores, furniture & fixtures and Buildings of Phase-II Gas based power plant having capacity of 220 MW situated at Jegurupudi, Rajamahendravaram, East Godavari Dt., Andhra Pradesh		54 Crores	5.4 Crores
			1.00 Crore
Last date for submission of EOI and all bid documents as per the e-Auction Process Information Document.			22.04.2025
Last date for remittance of EMD			25.04.2025
e-Auction Date and Time	23.04.2025 (10.00 A.M to 4.00 P.M) (With unlimited extension of 5 minutes each up to 7 P.M.)		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Interested applicants may refer to e-Auction Process Information Document for detailed terms and conditions of online E-Auction, Bid Form, Eligibility Criteria, Declaration by Bidders, EMD requirement etc., available at https://ibbi.baaninet.com. Prospective bidders shall submit the requisite documents, including an undertaking of eligibility under Section 23A of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code through the BAANINET auction platform https://ibbi.baaninet.com. Prospective bidders shall deposit the Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) through the BAANINET auction platform https://ibbi.baaninet.com. The undertaking referred in clause 2 hereinafter should state that the prospective bidder does not suffer from any ineligibility under section 23A of the Code to the extent applicable. Prospective bidders may note that if found ineligible at any stage, the EMD shall be forfeited. The maximum time allowed to the Successful Bidder for making payment of balance Sale Consideration (i.e., accepted Bid Amount plus other applicable taxes) dues after set-off / adjustment of EMD received) along with interest due is 120 days from the date of LOI. Interested applicants depositing the EMD and requiring assistance in submitting the EMD and Bid Forms may contact Liquidator @ 9649039674 or info@krfms.com / info@krfms@gmail.com or his authorized representative CS. Mayank Padhya @ 79904 55605, Mr. Vijaya Krishna @ 94917 91079 or Mr. Kashyap Patel @ 93274 90966 / e-Mail: support.BAANINET@seelliance.com It is clarified that the invitation purports to invite prospective bidders and does not create any right of binding obligation on the part of the Liquidator or the Company afterwards the sale. Liquidator has right to extend, defer, cancel and/or modify, delete any of the terms and conditions including timelines of E-Auction at his discretion in the interest of Liquidation Process and has right to reject any bid without any prior notice or assigning any reason whatsoever at any stage of the auction. E-Auction shall be conducted on "AS IS WHERE IS", "AS IS WHAT IS" "WHATEVER THERE IS" and "NO RECOURSE" basis only. 			
<p style="text-align: right;">Sd/- CA, Sri Ramesh Kumararathi Liquidator of GVK Industries Limited IBBI Reg No.: IBBI/PRA-01/P-090910(2017-2018)11510 AFA Valid upto: 31-12-2025</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Address for Correspondence: Plot 6-B, Road No.2, Benjara Hills, Hyderabad-500034. Cell: +91 9849930674</p>			
<p>Date: 07-04-2025 Place: Hyderabad</p>			

Addendum to Public Notice for 12 th Round of E-Auction – Punj Lloyd Limited (-in Liquidation)					
Sale of the Company on a going concern basis and in alternate various Set of Assets of the Company pursuant to the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016					
With reference to the Public Notice Dated 18 March 2023 issued by the undersigned regarding E-auction notice for the 12 th round of e-auction, the timelines, including date for submission of EMD Amount and date for conducting e-auction for the following Asset Sets is hereby revised as follows pursuant to the Clause 4.9 of the Asset Sale Process Memorandum dated 18 March 2025:					
Set of Asset	Asset Description	Manner of sale	Date and time of E-Auction	Reserve Price (in INR)	EMD Amount (in INR) & Submission deadline
Category A					
Asset Set 1	Sale of Punj Lloyd Limited as a whole (excluding certain assets as provided in the 'ASPM')	On a Going Concern Basis	21 April 2025 from 10:00 hours IST to 12:00 hours IST	341.92 Crore	10.00 Crore On or before 17 April 2025
Category C*					
Asset Set 2	Sale of Arbitration Assets of Punj Lloyd Limited	On Collective Basis	21 April 2025 from 10:00 hours IST to 12:00 hours IST	175.90 Crore	10.00 Crore On or before 18 April 2025
Category D*					
Asset Set 3	Sale of Leasehold Land, Building and Plant & machinery at Malanpur, Madhya Pradesh	On Collective Basis	21 April 2025 from 10:00 hours IST to 12:00 hours IST	70.50 Crore	7.05 Crore On or before 18 April 2025
Asset Set 4	Sale of Land at Sidhuhdr District, Maharashtra	On Standalone Basis	21 April 2025 from 10:00 hours IST to 12:00 hours IST	11.30 Crore	1.13 Crore On or before 18 April 2025
Asset Set 5	Sale of Land at Mehasana, Gujarat	On Standalone Basis	21 April 2025 from 10:00 hours IST to 12:00 hours IST	89 Lakh	8.90 Lakh On or before 18 April 2025
Asset Set 6	Sale of Plant & Machinery and Inventory at DAPL site at Odisha	On Collective Basis	21 April 2025 from 10:00 hours IST to 12:00 hours IST	29 Lakh	2.90 Lakh On or before 18 April 2025
Asset Set 7	Sale of Plant & Machinery at RSRP site at Chhattisgarh	On Collective Basis	21 April 2025 from 10:00 hours IST to 12:00 hours IST	26.50 Crore	2.65 Crore On or before 18 April 2025
<p>All other terms of the E-auction notice, and Asset Sale Process Memorandum dated 18 March 2025 shall remain same.</p> <p>The addendum to the Asset Sale Process Memorandum dated 18 March 2025 is uploaded on website of the Company https://www.punjlyoydgroup.com/liquidation-documents and also on E-Auction website https://ncltauction.auctontiger.net.</p> <p>* It is clarified that if a Highest Bidder is declared for Asset Set 1 under Category A, i.e., Sale of the Company on a going concern basis, the Liquidator reserves the right to cancel e-auction of all Asset Sets under Category C and D. Further, the Liquidator also reserves the right to cancel e-auction of any or all Category(ies) and/or Set of Asset(s) being sold under 12th round of e-auction.</p> <p>Further, as per the provisions of the IBBI (Liquidation Process) Regulations, 2016, as amended, all interested bidders for the respective Category(ies) and/or Set of Asset(s) are required to submit an Affidavit that they do not suffer from any ineligibility under section 29A of the IBC to the extent applicable and if found ineligible at any stage, the earnest money along with any amount deposited by interested bidders shall be forfeited by the Liquidator. The format of the 29A Eligibility Affidavit is provided in the ASPM.</p> <p>Nothing contained herein shall constitute a binding offer or a commitment for sale of assets of the Company including sale of the Company as a whole, on a going concern basis.</p> <p>Please feel free to contact Mr. Ashwini Mehra at LQ.PUNJ@in.gt.com or Mehra.ashwini@gmail.com or Mr. Surendra Raj Gang at Surendra.raj@in.gt.com (representative of GT Restructuring Services LLP, IPE appointed as professional advisors to the Liquidator) in case any further clarification is required.</p>					
<p style="text-align: right;">Sd/- Ashwini Mehra Liquidator (Regn No: IBBI/IPA-001/IP-P00388/2017-18/10706) Punj Lloyd Limited - in Liquidation Authorization for Assignment valid till -30 June 2025</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Correspondence Address: Mr. Ashwini Mehra, Liquidator Punj Lloyd Limited C/O Mr. Surendra Raj Gang GT Restructuring Services LLP L-41, Connaught Circus, New Delhi - 110001 E: LQ.Punj@in.gt.com</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Registered address of Liquidator with IBBI C 1201, Salarpuria Magnifica, Old Madras Rd. Bangalore 560016 E: Mehra.Ashwini@gmail.com</p>					
<p>Date: 07 April 2025 Place: New Delhi</p>					