

The imperative of continuous learning in India's AI-driven future

The rapid growth of AI, has intensified the demand for skilled professionals. Yet, a stark talent gap threatens this progress. Technology has become an integral part of our daily lives and work, making continuous learning essential to stay relevant. The rapid adoption of automation and advanced digital technologies, such as artificial intelligence (AI), is not just transforming industries but also reshaping the skills employers expect from their workforce. By 2027, it is projected that 80 per cent of engineering roles will require employees to undergo training and development to meet the changing demands brought about by AI advancements, according to Gartner. In India, the demand for skilled professionals in technology-driven fields, especially AI, is growing significantly. Reports by BCG and NASSCOM indicate that the AI market in the country could grow to \$17 billion by 2027, with an annual growth rate of 25–35 per cent. However, this growth is accompanied by a stark shortage of experts in advanced technologies. NASSCOM estimates that over a million skilled engineers specialising in AI and related technologies will be needed in the coming years. Alarming, the talent gap could rise from 25 per cent to nearly 30 per cent by 2028, emphasising the critical need for skill development among both new graduates and experienced professionals. One significant challenge

is the disconnect between formal education and the practical skills required in the job market. Every year, approximately 1.5 million engineering graduates enter the workforce in India, yet only a fraction secure jobs aligned with their field of study. This mismatch is not due to a lack of opportunities but stems from the gap between the theoretical knowledge imparted in academic institutions and the hands-on skills sought by employers. Beyond technical expertise, companies now prioritise candidates with interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence, essential for thriving in collaborative and dynamic work environments. The India Skills Report 2024 highlights this concern, noting that while some states, such as Telangana, have made strides in job preparedness among the 18 to 21 age group, critical skill gaps persist. For roles reliant on AI and emerging technologies, the gap ranges from 60 per cent to 73 per cent. These statistics underscore the urgent need for educational institutions to revamp their curricula to better align with industry demands. Updating academic programmes is vital to bridging this gap. Universities and colleges must incorporate industry trends and practical learning experiences into their courses. Today's workforce needs to think critically across disciplines and understand the broader implications of technology on economic, social, and cultural con-



texts. Flexible and continuous education plays a pivotal role in closing the divide between academic knowledge and the realities of the job market. Digital learning platforms offer a promising solution in this context. With over 50 per cent of Indians actively using the internet, online education provides accessible opportunities to acquire new skills. Edtech platforms specialising in skill enhancement allow individuals to enroll in tailored courses and programmes, preparing them for rapidly evolving job landscapes. The benefits of continuous learning extend beyond career advancement. Employees who are adaptable and committed to enhancing their knowledge contribute to organisational innovation and help businesses navigate shifting market dynamics. For instance, as AI becomes more integrated across industries, the demand for experts in these technologies will continue to rise. Forward-thinking companies are already investing in employee training programs to

stay competitive and ensure their teams are equipped to handle emerging challenges. Despite these efforts, many traditional educational institutions struggle to meet industry needs. Relying heavily on lecture-based teaching, these institutions often focus on theoretical knowledge at the expense of practical skills. Students have limited access to industry-standard equipment or opportunities for hands-on problem-solving, leaving them ill-prepared for the workforce. Integrating real-world applications into academic learning bridges the gap between theoretical instruction and practical expertise, ensuring graduates are ready to meet employer expectations. Upskilling is not just about addressing current deficiencies—it involves cultivating a mindset of continuous improvement. In a world where industries evolve rapidly and the shelf life of skills is shrinking, professionals must adapt to new technologies and methodologies quickly. Skills once considered indispensable can become obsolete within a few years, making the ability to learn and relearn critical for success in today's professional environment. For individuals and organisations alike, embracing continuous education is a strategic move to navigate the present and excel in the future.

Superpower retreats and their fallout

Russians abandoning Assads is a stark reminder of the fact that promises of steadfast allegiance can falter when geopolitical will and resources wane. The Vietnam War was fought between the forces of the North (supported by the Soviet Union and China) and those of the South (supported by the United States of America). While it lasted twenty years (1955 to 1975) the direct involvement of the American troops lasted about a decade from 1965 onwards. The scars of 58,281 US fatalities and 303,644 wounded had tired the spirits, emotions and morale of the Americans, and they secretly negotiated a pull-out plan under the garb of the Paris Peace Accords that the Americans knew would not hold up. The Americans made many insincere and knowingly immoral promises to intervene on behalf of its ally, the Southern side, but when the push came to shove, it pushed the Southern side under the bus with non-intervention or support. Later day US President Ronald Reagan was to coin the term 'Vietnam Syndrome' to suggest a reluctance to support an international military intervention, beyond a point. A similar renegeing of support after almost a decade of direct military intervention was to face the Soviet-propped puppet government of Afghanistan, under Mohammad Najibullah. Ultimately the political and popular will of the Soviets had waned as the human and financial cost of continuing the war in Afghanistan had waned. A few years later, exactly as it had happened in Vietnam, the Afghan government was ousted in a bloody offensive and



Najibullah's corpse was dragged behind a truck through the streets of Kabul. Eventually, the Soviets left him to his fate. It was the sort of end of a regime that was far less than ideal as the land of many 'Great Games' earlier i.e., Afghanistan, had seen similar consequences of bloodlust with the British troops leaving Afghanistan in Jan 1842 (only one survivor had managed to reach the British controlled township of Jalalabad). Sadly, even Najibullah's ouster wasn't to be the last of the 'abandoning' of a regime in Kabul. In 2021, an exhausted and dispirited American force 'abandoned' its ally i.e., the Ashraf Ghani government, in Kabul on the pretext of a deal signed between the Taliban and the US in Doha. Everyone knew that the deal would not hold up and lo behold the Taliban stormed into Kabul, soon after. The 'longest war in US history' with a two trillion financial cost, a no-win situation, and mounting pictures of 'US body bags' had yet again forced the Americans to push their ally under the bus.

By blindsiding its purported ally, the Americans had unilaterally let down its ally after making promises to defend the same. Afghan Vice President Amrullah Saleh was left mocking the US on its pusillanimous stand, "when a superpower decided to become a mini power". Recently, and yet again, it was the decisive reluctance of a major power and ally i.e., Russia and Iran, that left the beleaguered Syrian Government of Bashar Al Assad, to its inevitable fate and within days of some token support, the Syrian capital of Damascus fell to rebels, who routed the Russia-Iran supported Bashar Al Assad regime. To be fair, the 'abandonment' of Bashar Al Assad cannot be compared to the Vietnam or Afghanistan situations, as the principal power behind the Syrian regime no longer had the wherewithal to continue supporting, even if they wanted to. Russia is already bleeding and reeling under the humiliating and costly stalemate on the Ukrainian front, whereas the Iranians and their strategic regional proxies (e.g. Hezbollah and the Houthis) were getting systematically decimated and attacked with literal impunity. After the Syrian rebels had taken over Idlib and were dashing the next profile target of Homs, the Russian fighter planes did bomb some rebel strongholds, but it simply wasn't enough. Soon, the Syrian rebels made the kill for Damascus, and the isolat-

ed and unsupported forces of Bashar Al Assad simply couldn't hold on. History repeated itself and in the face of supporting foreign allies failing the regime, it was tantamount to pushing the same under the bus! The lessons are substantial for other regions facing similar belligerence or circumstances i.e., counting on declared allies cannot be assumed, definitely and certainly not, infinitely. When there were grave tensions on Indo-Sino borders in 2020, then President Donald Trump (author of a book aptly titled, 'The Art of Deal') made meaningless offers to 'negotiate' between the two sides, as opposed to denouncing Chinese expansionism and aggression, unequivocally. While certain military orders with Delhi were indeed signed and expedited – the same made great transactional and commercial sense to the American defence sector. This is something that the already cornered Ukrainian President Zelensky must be fearing as President-elect Donald Trump sheepishly talks about yet another 'deal' to supposedly end the Russia-Ukraine war. History is instructive of the consequences that await whenever similar 'deals' (read, abandonment) are made by a Superpower, be it the Americans or most recently, the Russians in Syria. Reveling on the latest situation in Syria, Donald Trump tweeted, "Assad is gone. He has fled his country. His protector, Russia...led by Vladimir Putin, was not interested in protecting him any longer" – while it is true, it has been no different for the US, throughout history. Trump too has the blood of letting down Afghanistan on his hands.

Mumbai BEST bus crash: Death toll climbs to 7; experts examine vehicle



The death toll in the BEST bus accident in Mumbai has risen to seven, officials on Tuesday said as experts inspected the wet leased vehicle to ascertain if it had any mechanical fault. As many as 42 other persons were also rushed to various hospitals after being injured in the incident on the SG Barve Marg in Kurla (West) at around 9.30 pm on Monday when the bus dashed into pedestrians and some vehicles after its driver lost control over the wheels, they said. Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Tuesday expressed deep sorrow over the loss of lives in the incident and prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured persons. In a message on X, Fadnavis announced a financial assistance of Rs 5 lakh to the kin of each of the deceased from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund. The medical expenses of the injured will be covered by the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation and the Brihanmumbai Electric Supply and Transport (BEST) undertaking, he said. "We stand with the families of those who lost their lives in this unfortunate incident. I pray for the speedy recovery of the injured," the CM said. Necessary instructions had been issued to ensure the victims and their families receive prompt assistance, he assured. The BEST bus, after ploughing through pedestrians and vehicles, entered into a residential society, Buddha Colony, and came to a halt, the officials said. Three deaths were reported on Monday. A civic official on Tuesday said the death toll in the incident has gone up to seven. The official said a total of 49 persons were rushed to various hospitals after the accident. Of them, 35 were taken to the civic-run Bhabha Hospital in Kurla. Two of them were brought dead, while two others were declared dead after admission at the medical facility, the official said. Later, six injured persons were shifted from the Bhabha Hospital to Sion Hospital where one of them died during treatment. Out of the total 49 injured, three were rushed to the private Kohinoor Hospital nearby where one person was declared dead, while the condition of the other two was reported to be critical. Six other injured persons were taken to the private Habib Hospital where one of them was declared dead while the others were undergoing treatment. Four police personnel were also injured in the accident. They were admitted to the civic-run Seven Hills Hospital and their condition was stable. Besides, a 35-year-old man was admitted to the private City Hospital in Kurla, the official said. Police took the bus driver, Sanjay More, into custody after the incident and he was booked on charges of culpable homicide not amounting to murder, as per officials. His blood samples were also collected to examine whether he was under the influence of alcohol, an official said. In details shared with the media after more than five hours of the accident, BEST said "as per the initial information, the driver lost control of the bus". Further commenting on the accident, in which several vehicles were dragged or damaged along the way, the transport body said the bus "speed accelerated" after the driver lost control over the wheels. A BEST official said the bus suffered extensive damage on its front portion and windscreen and some window glasses were also shattered in the accident. The bus was removed from the spot with the help of a crane and an earth mover machine at around 12.30 am on Tuesday and brought to Kurla depot by 1.15 am. A team of motor vehicle inspectors examined the bus to find out if there was any mechanical problem in it. They will submit a report to police on the basis of their findings, sources at the Regional Transport Office (RTO) said. The bus was a 12-metre long electric vehicle manufactured by Hyderabad-based Olectra Greentech and it had been taken by BEST on wet lease, an official earlier said. No official communication was received so far from the wet leasing company EVEY Trans and Olectra on the accident. Meanwhile, the Mumbai police shut the SG Barve Marg, connecting to Kurla station, for traffic movement. As a result, BEST was operating buses on as many as 10 routes from other nearby locations instead of plying to Kurla station, an official from the transport body said. Barve road is one of the busiest routes connecting to Kurla station. Scores of passengers travel in buses from Kurla bus stand located on Barve road to reach the Bandra-Kurla Complex and other location.

Shocking 38% Plunge: Indian Students Face Visa Crisis in the US!

The scene of worldwide instruction is associated with a tremendous, ever-changing tide, where waves of opportunity can rapidly move to streams of instability. Within the wake of a post-pandemic surge, Indian understudies have found themselves facing a critical downturn in the issuance of F-1 understudy visas to the United States. Concurring to the most recent information from the US State Office, there has been an emotional 38% decline in F-1 visas issued to Indian understudies amid the primary nine months of 2024, dropping from 103,495 in 2023 to a fair 64,008 this year. This stark decrease marks the lowest level of visa issuances since the widespread started, reflecting an upsetting slant for aspiring students. The examination of visa insights uncovers that this decrease isn't confined to Indian understudies alone; in any case, it is particularly articulated in their case. Chinese understudies, who speak to the moment's biggest worldwide cohort within the US, experienced an 8% increase in visa issuances during the same period. Whereas Indian under-

studies surged ahead to end up the biggest gather of worldwide understudies in US colleges for the 2023-24 scholarly year-totalling 331,000 compared to 277,000 from China-the later drop in visa endorsements raises questions around future enrollment patterns and understudy inclinations. A few components contribute to this downturn. Reports propose that authoritative delays and tensions encompassing visa handling may hinder potential candidates. Outstandingly, around 20,000 student visa arrangement spaces distributed for Indian citizens went unused amid top application months this year. As students weigh their alternatives, numerous are turning their look towards elective goals such as Canada and the UK, which offer more favourable movement arrangements and instructive openings. Vibha Kagzi, CEO at ReachIvy.com, emphasizes that while the US remains a favoured goal for numerous, the expanding challenges in securing visas



see Tom lead to a broader move in understudy inclinations. Looking forward, in the event that current patterns hold on, we may witness a critical reconfiguration in the universal instruction flow. The continuous decrease in F-1 visa issuances could flag a future where elective consideration goals pick up noticeable quality over conventional powerhouses just like the US. As students adapt to changing circumstances and look for more open ways to instruction overseas, it is likely that nations advertising streamlined forms and strong situations will develop as unused pioneers in pulling in worldwide ability.

Is Travel to India Risky for U.S. Indians? Visa Dread Deepens



As the winds of alter clear over the Joined together States, numerous Indians living overseas are feeling a developing sense of unease around returning to their country. With the looming introduction of President Trump on January 20th, concerns are mounting over potential complications with visa stamping. The prospect of delays or issues at U.S. offices in India has cast a shad-

ow of trepidation, taking off numerous to ponder in the event that they will be able to return easily to their lives in America. This uneasiness isn't unwarranted; past encounters have cleared out a waiting fear among travellers with respect to long hold-up times and specialized glitches at offices. Migration attorneys and online gatherings are buzzing with cautionary exhortation, encouraging travellers to fastidiously get ready their records and brace themselves for conceivable mishaps. For those holding H-1B and other non-immigrant visas, the stakes are especially high, as re-stamping is pivotal for re-entry into the U.S., making the thought of being strand-

ed in India an overwhelming reality. Whereas there has been no official caution issued, remaining educated and taking proactive measures is basic for anybody arranging to travel. Specialists suggest that people check for upgrades from U.S. departments and look for direction from migration lawyers to explore this dubious scene viably. The fear of being caught in bureaucratic limbo looms expansive, inciting numerous to rethink their travel plans through and through. As this circumstance unfurls, one can foresee that in the event that these concerns continue without determination, we may see a noteworthy decay in travel from the U.S. to India among the Indian diaspora. The swell impacts might reshape family elements and social ties, as instability around visa forms may prevent future visits and have an enduring effect on transnational connections.

Same Caller Targets Pawan Kalyan, Minister Anitha!

In a chilling twist of fate, the office of Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan has become the focal point of a threatening plot. Recently, Kalyan received a threatening phone call that echoed with threats of violence, as an anonymous caller vowed to eliminate him. This unsettling communication has sent shockwaves through the political landscape, painting a portrait of fear and uncertainty that looms over the state's leadership. The gravity of the situation has ignited a firestorm on social media, where users have speculated wildly about the motives behind these threats. As details emerge, it becomes clear that this is not an isolated incident; the same caller had previously issued death threats to Home Minister Anitha using the same phone number. This alarming



connection between threats directed at two high-ranking officials has sparked intense discussions about safety and security within Andhra Pradesh's political sphere. Authorities are taking this matter seriously. Home Minister Anitha has already engaged in discussions with DGP Dwarka Tirumala Rao, demanding swift action to apprehend the individual responsible for these

alarming calls. The Andhra Pradesh Police are now on high alert, launching a comprehensive investigation to track down the perpetrator and ensure the safety of its officials. With tensions rising, the public watches closely as this dramatic saga unfolds. As this unsettling narrative continues to develop, one can only speculate on its implications for the future of political safety in Andhra Pradesh. If these threats remain unchecked, they could set a dangerous precedent, leading to increased fear among public officials and potentially stifling democratic discourse in the region. The coming days will be crucial in determining whether justice will prevail or if this dark chapter will deepen into a more pervasive crisis.



ఆయనెంటో అందరికీ తెలుసు.. నిరూపించుకోవాల్సిన అవసరం లేదు



అడిలైడ్ టెస్ట్ మ్యాచ్లో భారత క్రికెట్ జట్టు ఓటమి తర్వాత టీమిండియా కెప్టెన్ రోహిత్ శర్మ విమర్శకులకు టార్గెట్గా మారాడు.

రోహిత్ శర్మకు మద్దతుగా నిలిచిన కపిల్ దేవ్. భారత మాజీ ప్రపంచ ఛాంపియన్ కెప్టెన్ కపిల్ దేవ్ గోల్డ్ క్లబ్లో ఓ కార్యక్రమంలో పాల్గొనేందుకు ఢిల్లీ చేరుకున్నారు.

ఫ్లేయింగ్ 11లో రాంగ్ రూల్స్.. కట్ చేస్తే.. బీగ్స్ రద్దు చేసిన వనీశ్.. ఫాటో సవన



ప్రపంచ క్రికెట్ అతిపెద్ద సంస్థ ఇంటర్నేషనల్ క్రికెట్ కౌన్సిల్ అంటే వనీశ్ కీలక నిర్ణయం తీసుకుంది. ప్రపంచ వ్యాప్తంగా క్రికెట్ను శాసించు వనీశ్ నిషేధ వారం నాడు అమెరికాలో నేషనల్ క్రికెట్ లీగ్ను నిషేధించింది.

చీర కట్టలో నా సామిరంగ్..!

కన్నడ ముద్దుగుమ్మ ఆషికా రంగనాథ్ క్రేజీ బాయ్ సినిమాతో హీరోయిన్గా పరిచయం అయ్యింది. కన్నడ సినిమాల్లో ఎక్కువగా నటించిన ఈ అమ్మడు తమిళంలో మొదటి సారి పట్టుతు ఆసరన్లో నటించింది.



బుట్టబొమ్మ డబుల్ గేమ్ ఇంట్రెస్టింగ్!

టాలీవుడ్ అవకాశాల్ని కాదని బాలీవుడ్ కి వెళ్లొంది పూజాపార్గే. కానీ అక్కడ కెరీర్ ఆశించి విధంగా సాగకపోవడంతో వెంటనే మళ్ళీ సాత్ ఇండస్ట్రీ కి కంబ్యాక్ అయింది.

మోస్ట్ వాంటెడ్ లేడీ యానిమల్..!



రణజీత్ కపూర్ హీరోగా సందీప్ రెడ్డి వంగ దర్శకత్వంలో వచ్చిన యానిమల్ సినిమాలో హీరోయిన్గా రష్మిక మందన్న నటించింది.

త్రిప్లి యొక్క కెరీర్ గ్రాఫ్ మారిపోయింది. తన యొక్క అందాల ఆరబోత ఫోటోలు నోషెట్ మీడియాలో రెగ్యులర్గా వైరల్ కావడం మొదలవుతుంది ప్రతి విషయంలోనూ ఆమె గురించి జనాలు మాట్లాడుకోవడంతో ఎక్కువ సినిమా ఆఫర్లు దక్కించుకుంటూ ఉంది.



సాయి పల్లవి తర్వాత రష్మిక.. కోలీవుడ్ హీరో ప్లాన్ అదుర్స్..!

కోలీవుడ్ లో వీడియో షాట్ నుంచి సిల్వర్ స్క్రీన్ హీరోగా మారాడు టాలీవుడ్ యాక్టర్ శివ కార్తీకేయన్. అతని సినిమా వస్తుంది అంటే సంభంగి స్టేషన్ గా ఉంటుంది అనించే ఆకట్టుకుంటున్నాడు.

