

## India AI Impact Summit 2026: A Global Convening of Great Spectacle and Substance

Amit Kumar

Assistant Professor, RIS



India AI Impact Summit 2026 succeeded in transforming the conversation around AI to more focused and concrete discussions on impact, opportunity, and inclusion. Its key takeaways include the need to democratize AI infrastructure, promote responsible and ethical governance, strengthen international collaboration, and ensure that technological progress translates into societal benefit. By convening global stakeholders around these priorities, the Summit firmly established India as a strong leader in shaping the agenda and trajectory of the

AI revolution to serve humanity. Dr. Amit Kumar writes.

The India AI Impact Summit 2026, held in New Delhi during 16-20 February 2026, emerged as a resounding triumph, cementing India's stature as a pivotal force in the global AI landscape. Touted as the world's largest AI gathering and the first hosted by a Global South nation, it drew over 100 country delegations, 20+ heads of state, 60 ministers, and a constellation of tech titans representing leading tech companies of the world including Google, Microsoft, OpenAI, Anthropic and NVIDIA along with an array of extremely promising start-ups and AI innovators/researchers. With 300+ exhibitors from 30+ countries, the event transcended dialogue, evolving into a dynamic exposition of AI's tangible potential for humanity, blending spectacle with substance!

Earlier global AI meetings focused on risks and safety. The India AI Summit highlighted a decisive shift toward AI impact—*'how the technology can deliver tangible economic and social benefits'*. Anchored in the theme “*Sarvajan Hitaya, Sarvajan Sukhaya*” (Welfare for All, Happiness of All), the event emphasized a human-centric and development-oriented approach to AI innovation. The New Delhi AI Impact Summit Declaration endorsed by 92 countries and international organisations, reflect a broad-based global consensus on leveraging AI as an impact agent for economic growth and social good while underscoring that benefits of AI must be equitably shared across humanity. The Declaration calls for international cooperation and multi-stakeholder engagement across countries along the seven *Chakras* (domains) of the AI Impact Summit centred around the principles of development of human capital; broadening access for social empowerment; trustworthiness of AI systems; energy efficiency of AI systems; use of AI in science; democratizing AI resources; and use of AI for economic growth and social

good. To foster shared understanding while respecting national sovereignty, several voluntary and non-binding initiatives were launched across the seven *Chakras* such as Charter for the Democratic Diffusion of AI, Global AI Impact Commons, Trusted AI Commons, International Network of AI for Science Institutions, AI for Social Empowerment Platform, AI Workforce Development Playbook and Reskilling Principles, Guiding Principles on Resilient, Innovative and Efficient AI, and a Playbook on Advancing Resilient AI Infrastructure.

In addition, one of the landmark outcomes of the Summit was the announcement of the New Delhi Frontier AI Impact Commitments that brings together leading frontier AI companies and India's domestic innovators to advance inclusive and responsible artificial intelligence. These voluntary commitments reflect a shared vision to ensure that the development and deployment of AI systems are aligned with equity, cultural diversity, and real-world needs, particularly across the Global South. Participating organizations include India-based innovators such as Sarvam, BharatGen, Gnani.ai, and Soket, and global frontier AI firms such as Google DeepMind, OpenAI, Anthropic, Meta and Microsoft.

Alongside these outcomes, the India AI Impact Summit could also successfully catalyse significant investment commitments (over USD 200 billion!) across AI value chain from leading global and national companies such as Google, Reliance, Adani, Tata etc. The Summit also witnessed the unveiling of MANAV Vision by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi. MANAV stands for 'M'oral and Ethical System; 'A'ccountable Governance; 'N'ational Sovereignty; 'A'ccessible and Inclusive; and 'V'alid and Legitimate. In a sense, it encapsulates India's governance framework for AI.

In conclusion, the India AI Impact Summit 2026 succeeded in transforming the conversation around AI to more focused and concrete discussions on impact, opportunity, and inclusion. Its key takeaways include the need to democratize AI infrastructure, promote responsible and ethical governance, strengthen international collaboration, and ensure that technological progress translates into societal benefit. By convening global stakeholders around these priorities, the Summit firmly established India as a strong leader in shaping the agenda and trajectory of the AI revolution to serve humanity.

*During the India AI Impact Summit 2026, RIS (as the Knowledge Partner) and DAKSHIN organised three Panel Discussions at the Bharat Mandapam around the themes of Safe and Trusted AI, Human Capital and Governance.*

## **SCIENCE POLICY & DIPLOMACY**

### **International S&T Cooperation**

[India–France Partnership for Science, Technology and Innovation Cooperation](#)

India and France reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening bilateral cooperation in science, technology and innovation. They agreed to expand collaboration in emerging technologies, research partnerships, higher education, AI, health, and sustainable development under an enhanced strategic framework.

### [AI Impact Summit Declaration](#)

The official declaration adopted at the AI Impact Summit 2026 held in New Delhi, outlines a global commitment to collaborative, trustworthy, resilient and equitable development and governance of artificial intelligence. It sets out a shared international vision structured around seven key pillars including democratizing AI access, secure and trusted AI, AI for science and social empowerment, human capital development, and energy-efficient AI systems aimed at fostering responsible AI cooperation among participating countries and organisations.

### [India–Bhutan Deepen Bilateral Cooperation on Trans-Boundary Rivers and Hydropower Projects](#)

The visit reviewed hydropower projects (Punatsangchhu-I & II) and aimed to strengthen cooperation on flood forecasting, data sharing, and water-resources management for shared rivers. The visit also included site inspections and discussions on modernising hydro-meteorological networks and enhancing capacity building to address climate change-linked risks like glacial lake outburst floods.

### [India – Israel Special Strategic Partnership for Innovation](#)

During the state visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Israel, India and Israel agreed to elevate their bilateral relationship into a strengthened strategic partnership that emphasises cooperation in technology and innovation across AI, cybersecurity, semiconductors, quantum computing, biotech, agriculture, water management, space. Leaders also reaffirmed support for joint initiatives like the India-Israel Industrial R&D and Innovation Fund (I4F) and enhancement of joint research calls and institutional mechanisms to foster deeper collaboration in critical and emerging technology domains.

### [India and Nepal sign MoU to Strengthen Cooperation in Forests, Wildlife, Environment, Biodiversity and Climate Change](#)

The Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and the Government of Nepal signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to enhance bilateral collaboration on forest protection, wildlife conservation, biodiversity strategies, and climate change action, including exchange of technical expertise and best practices. The agreement aims to safeguard shared ecosystems and promote sustainable management of natural resources.

### [India–Brazil TKDL Access Agreement Strengthens Traditional Knowledge Protection](#)

India and Brazil signed a cooperation agreement granting the Brazilian Patent Office access to India's Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL) to enhance patent examination and prevent misappropriation of traditional knowledge. It aims to bolster bilateral collaboration on intellectual property rights and traditional knowledge protection while improving the quality and efficiency of patent scrutiny.

### [India–UK Offshore Wind Taskforce Launched to Accelerate Clean Energy Cooperation](#)

India and the UK launched an offshore wind taskforce to strengthen collaboration in developing India's offshore wind ecosystem under the Vision 2035 partnership. The initiative focuses on market design, infrastructure and supply chains, and financing mechanisms to support large-scale offshore wind projects. The government has also announced ₹7,453 crore viability gap funding for early offshore wind projects, with key zones identified off the coasts of Gujarat and Tamil Nadu.

## **Emerging Tech & Governance**

### [India and Sweden Deepen AI Partnership Through the SITAC Framework](#)

IndiaAI Mission and Business Sweden signed a Statement of Intent to establish a Sweden–India Technology and Artificial Intelligence Corridor (SITAC) to bolster bilateral collaboration on AI and digital technologies and promote trade, investment, and innovation. The structured partnership will connect Indian and Swedish ecosystems through workshops, exchanges, innovation hubs and joint programmes aimed at developing scalable, responsible AI solutions for societal and industrial use.

### [IISc Deploy AI to Analyse Bengaluru's Groundwater](#)

The Indian Institute of Science partnered with the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) and IoT data for analysing groundwater levels across Bengaluru. The predictive insights are guiding precautionary measures, water conservation directives, lake rejuvenation, and expedited water connections.

### [India's Dedicated Quantum & AI University Campus in Amaravati](#)

The National Institute of Electronics & Information Technology (NIELIT) signed an MoU with the Government of Andhra Pradesh at the India AI Impact Summit to set up India's first dedicated Quantum & Artificial Intelligence university campus in Amaravati. The initiative will focus on advanced research and education in quantum computing, AI, quantum communication, cybersecurity and high-performance computing, bolstering the nation's deep-tech ecosystem and innovation capacity.

## Events & Meetings

### [World Sustainable Development Summit \(WSDS\) 2026: Transformations: Vision, Voices, and Values for Sustainable Development](#)

The Silver Jubilee edition of WSDS 2026 was held from 25–27 February 2026 in New Delhi, as a flagship global platform on sustainable development and climate action, bringing together policymakers, scientists, business leaders, and civil society to advance solutions for today’s environmental and development challenges. The Union Environment Minister inaugurated the summit, which featured high-level dialogues on renewable energy transformation, climate finance, multilateral cooperation and Himalayan-focused sustainability platforms like *Him-CONNECT*, alongside sessions promoting clean energy, green maritime transformation and climate accountability.

### [IGSTC Organises Strategic Conclave 2026](#)

The Indo-German Science & Technology Centre held the Strategic Conclave 2026 on ‘Integrated Water Resource Management’ at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, bringing together policymakers, scientists, conservationists and international partners to discuss sustainable water governance and technological cooperation. Speakers emphasised the need for people-centric water governance, technological solutions for water stress and enhanced Indo-German research partnerships to support climate resilience and long-term water security.

### [First Policy Dialogue on the Japan-Canada Memorandum of Cooperation on Industrial Science and Technology](#)

During the meeting, officials from both countries exchanged views on enhancing cooperation in fields such as quantum technologies, AI and clean tech, and discussed steps to deepen joint R&D and human-resource exchanges.

### [Water Conclave 2026 Concludes at IIT Roorkee](#)

The three-day conclave, jointly organised by the Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee and the National Institute of Hydrology, focused on water cooperation, sustainable management and emerging global challenges in the water sector. Discussions were held on water quality, transboundary cooperation, sustainable irrigation, conservation, and strengthening institutional collaboration to advance water resource management practices.

**INDIAN SCIENCE NEWS**

### [AI System for Early Detection of Breast and Cervical Cancer](#)

Researchers at IIT Indore developed advanced AI algorithms that can automatically detect breast and cervical cancers from medical images with high accuracy. The system assists doctors by highlighting suspicious regions, helping reduce missed diagnoses and enabling faster screening.

### [New Cathode Material to Improve Zinc-Ion Batteries for Grid Storage](#)

The Centre for Nano and Soft Matter Sciences (Bengaluru) developed a novel cathode material, sulfur-vacancy induced 1T-phase molybdenum disulfide to enhance aqueous zinc-ion battery performance. The prototype battery achieved about 97.9 per cent capacity retention after 500 cycles and 99.7 per cent efficiency, demonstrating strong potential for safe, low-cost grid-scale renewable energy storage.

### [IISER Bhopal Develops Technology to Support Low-Cost Chip Production](#)

Researchers at the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research Bhopal have developed a new technology that could significantly reduce the cost of semiconductor chip manufacturing. The innovation is expected to support India's push for domestic semiconductor production by enabling more affordable fabrication processes and reducing dependence on imported chips.

### [AI Device Developed with IIT Kanpur Startup Enables Early Lung Cancer Detection](#)

A portable AI-powered device developed by a startup incubated at IIT Kanpur in collaboration with Kamala Nehru Memorial Hospital can help detect lung cancer at early stages. The technology aims to improve diagnostics in rural and low-resource healthcare settings.

## **ADVANCES IN S&T**

### [Nanodevice Generates Continuous Electricity from Evaporating Saltwater](#)



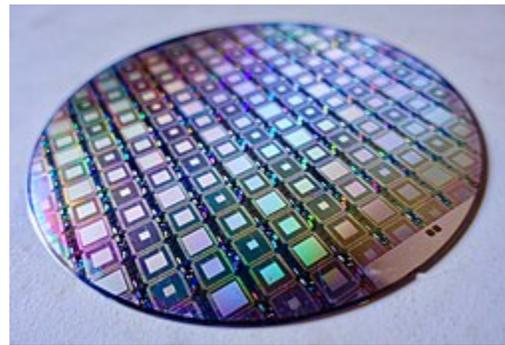
**The Problem:** Generating small but continuous amounts of electricity for sensors, wearable devices, and distributed electronics is challenging, especially in environments where batteries are impractical. Traditional hydrovoltaic devices can harvest energy from water evaporation, but their efficiency and stability are often limited, and heat and light typically accelerate evaporation without directly improving power generation.

**The Method:** Researchers at EPFL developed a nanodevice that converts energy from evaporating saltwater into electricity by controlling the movement of ions and electrons using heat and light. The device contains three layers dedicated to evaporation, ion transport, and charge collection, built around a silicon nanopillar structure. As saltwater evaporates, ions move and create charge separation at the liquid–solid interface, while sunlight excites electrons in the silicon; together these processes generate an electric current in an external circuit.

**Future Prospects:** The device can produce around 1 volt of open-circuit voltage and a power density of about  $0.25 \text{ W/m}^2$ , with improved stability due to protective oxide coatings on the nanopillars. Researchers believe the technology could enable battery-free sensor networks, environmental monitoring systems, wearables, and Internet-of-Things devices wherever water, heat, and sunlight are available.

### *Triplet Superconductivity could be a Breakthrough for Quantum Computing*

**The Problem:** Superconductors that carry electrical current with zero resistance are already crucial in technologies like MRI and quantum computing. However, most known superconductors form *singlet* pairs of electrons, which limits how they interact with magnetic fields and spin — a key challenge for creating stable, efficient quantum computers. Scientists have been searching for *triplet superconductors*, where electrons pair with aligned spins, as these could enable lossless transmission of both charge and spin, dramatically improving quantum device performance.



**The Method:** Researchers have investigated a metallic alloy of *niobium and rhenium (NbRe)* and observed phenomena consistent with *triplet superconductivity*. Experiments showed superconducting behavior linked with simultaneous transport of electrical charge and electron spin with zero resistance which is a signature of triplet pairing. This was achieved in thin-film structures where superconducting behavior could be switched using small magnetic fields, suggesting the presence of spin-aligned Cooper pairs.

**Future Prospects:** If confirmed by further experiments, triplet superconductors like the NbRe system could become foundational materials for future quantum computing and spintronic technologies, enabling devices that operate with far lower energy consumption and improved stability. These materials may also lead to new forms of superconducting circuits that integrate magnetic control and spin information processing, potentially transforming quantum information systems.

## **INSIGHTS & RESOURCES**

### **Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization Highlights Six Global Health Threats**

The Gavi Insight Paper highlights six major global health threats that could shape the world's health landscape in 2026. It emphasizes the urgent need for preparedness, robust immunisation programs, and coordinated global action to mitigate risks from infectious diseases, climate change, and misinformation.

- **Conflict-Associated Outbreaks:** Armed conflict disrupts health systems, increases population displacement, and contributes to the spread of infectious diseases such as cholera, measles, polio, and tuberculosis. Strengthening immunisation and outbreak response in fragile settings is vital.
- **Climate Change and Arboviruses:** Climate change is expanding the range and seasonality of mosquito-borne diseases (like dengue, chikungunya, Zika and yellow fever) by creating more favourable conditions for vectors, raising the risk of outbreaks globally.
- **Global Health Funding Cuts:** Reductions in global health financing threaten routine immunisation, disease surveillance, and outbreak preparedness efforts, putting at risk years of progress on preventable diseases.
- **Health Misinformation:** Misinformation about vaccines and infectious diseases undermines trust in health systems, contributes to declining immunisation coverage, and increases vulnerability to outbreaks.
- **Marburg Virus Disease:** Although not considered a global pandemic threat at current levels, Marburg virus disease remains a serious regional threat in parts of Africa, highlighting the need for strong surveillance and rapid response systems.
- **Disease X:** The concept of “Disease X” represents the unknown pathogen that could cause a future epidemic or pandemic, underscoring the importance of preparedness frameworks and flexible global response capabilities.
- **Role of Immunisation as Defence:** Despite escalating risks, vaccination remains a key defence against outbreaks, maintaining vaccine stockpiles, expanding routine immunisation, and strengthening delivery systems can reduce the impact of many threats.
- **Collaborative Global Efforts:** The report stresses that none of these threats are inevitable, coordinated action among governments, multilateral organisations, scientists and local health workers can mitigate risk and save lives.
- **Underlying Drivers of Risk:** Factors such as population displacement, weak health infrastructure, climate stressors, and information disruption are interconnected drivers that can amplify health threats if not addressed proactively.