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India, Where the AI World Assembles

Global collaboration on display at Bharat Mandapam

AI IN INDIA
FROM VISION TO IMPACT

February 20, 2026

On a mild February morning in New Delhi, the glass façade of Bharat Mandapam reflects more than sunlight. It reflects possibility. Inside, thirteen country pavilions stand in a sweeping arc, each a statement of intent. **Australia, Japan, Russia, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Serbia, Estonia, Tajikistan** and a collective **African pavilion** have all arrived with ideas, investments and quiet ambition. This is the hook of the India AI Impact Summit 2026. The world has not just come to attend. It has come to collaborate.



From 16 to 21 February 2026, the India AI Impact Expo unfolds alongside the Summit, spreading across ten arenas and more than **70,000 square metres**. Global delegates, technology leaders, researchers and students move through expansive halls designed for dialogue and demonstration. In response to the overwhelming interest, the Government of India extends the exhibition by an extra day, keeping it open

to the public on Saturday, 21 February, to ensure a more comfortable experience. The gesture is simple but telling. This is not a closed room conversation. It is a public moment.

At the centre of it all lies a theme rooted in civilisational confidence. 'Sarvajan Hitaya, Sarvajan Sukhaya' Welfare for all, Happiness of all. In his inaugural address, Prime Minister Narendra Modi says this is India's benchmark for artificial intelligence. He speaks of diversity, demography and democracy as India's enduring strengths. Any AI model that succeeds in India, he notes, can be deployed globally. Then comes the invitation. Design and develop in India. Deliver to the world. Deliver to humanity. The words travel far beyond the hall.

The thirteen country pavilions give those words texture. At the **French Pavilion**, visited by President Emmanuel Macron and Prime Minister Modi, twenty nine companies display France's technological edge. The visit marks an energetic beginning to the India France Year of Innovation. President Macron is candid in his praise. India, he says, has built what no other country has built. A digital identity for **1.4 billion people**. A payment system processing **20 billion transactions** every month. A health infrastructure that has issued **500 million digital health IDs**. This, he reminds the audience, is the India Stack. Open, interoperable and sovereign. We are at the beginning of a huge acceleration, he adds.



A few steps away, **Estonia's pavilion** draws steady crowds. Known for its digital governance model, Estonia finds resonance here. President Alar Karis observes that digital public infrastructure is no longer a technical backbone. It is the foundation of how modern states operate. When AI is embedded into these systems, algorithmic transparency and human oversight become essential conditions for public trust. His words echo across discussions on ethics and accountability. Collaboration here is not abstract. It is structural.

Slovakia's President Peter Pellegrini offers a grounded perspective. India shows the world an important truth, he says. Technology can be built at scale and it can help real people. Slovakia may be smaller, but it

can move fast. It wants practical outcomes. Finland's Prime Minister Petteri Orpo calls the Summit timely. The world, he says, urgently needs shared understanding, common rules and political will for responsible AI. Switzerland's President Guy Parmelin speaks of inclusive dialogue and multilateral cooperation. Responsible AI does not hinder innovation, he insists. It enables it. India and Switzerland, he adds, are building a bridge between ambition and implementation.

These voices converge across seven thematic Chakras that organise the Expo. Human Capital. Inclusion for Social Empowerment. Safe and Trusted AI. Resilience, Innovation and Efficiency. Science. Democratizing AI Resources. AI for Economic Growth and Social Good. The Chakras translate People, Planet and Progress into concrete areas of action. Delegations move between them, finding intersections between research labs, startups and public institutions. Conversations shift from compute capacity to classroom skilling, from data governance to green energy grids.

The Pavilion of the International Solar Alliance introduces another dimension. It showcases practical models where AI, digital platforms and geospatial tools modernise utilities and accelerate renewable integration. The Global Mission on AI for Energy emerges as a point of convergence. Solar deployment meets digital intelligence. Real time optimisation meets smarter grid management. The collaboration is technical, yet its implications are social. Energy resilience across member countries becomes a shared objective.



Across the ten arenas, global technology firms, startups, academia, Union Ministries, State Governments and research institutions create a mosaic of capability. The scale is unmistakable. Yet the tone remains collaborative rather than competitive. The presence of multilateral institutions and political leaders underscores the Summit's stature. This is not a trade fair alone. It is a defining platform shaping how AI will be governed and deployed in an interconnected world.

As the Summit unfolds, the pavilions begin to feel less like national enclosures and more like open laboratories. Delegates exchange notes on data standards. Researchers discuss ethical frameworks. Entrepreneurs speak of co-development. The extended public day brings families, students and young innovators into the fold. Curiosity replaces caution. The international flavour does not dilute India's presence. It amplifies it.

What emerges is a portrait of India as both host and heavyweight. A country confident in its digital public infrastructure. A nation willing to share its stack and learn from others. A platform where sovereign ambition coexists with global accountability. The thirteen pavilions stand as visible proof that collaboration is no longer optional in the AI age. It is foundational.

As evening lights settle over Bharat Mandapam, the glass façade now reflects a different glow. It is the glow of dialogue. Of agreements in progress. Of partnerships yet to be signed. The India AI Impact Summit 2026 closes not with finality but with forward motion. In the quiet hum of conversations that linger, one message is clear. The world has found in India not just a market, but a partner in shaping the future of artificial intelligence.

References:

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