

AI may not destroy white-collar jobs so quickly: Raghuram Rajan

Adds new technologies usually take longer to spread across industries than many forecasts suggest

NEW DELHI

FEARS that artificial intelligence could wipe out a large number of white-collar jobs in the next few years may be overstated, former Reserve Bank of India governor Raghuram Rajan has said.

In a recent commentary published by Project Syndicate, he added that the pace of technology adoption, market competition and government policies will determine how the disruption unfolds.

"New technologies usually take longer to spread across industries than many forecasts suggest," Rajan added.

"Outside a few sectors such as software, various challenges and resistance to change often slow down the adoption of new technologies," he mentioned.

To illustrate his point, Rajan referred to the example of automated telephone exchanges, which took decades to fully replace human op-



erators. He argued that similar delays could occur in the widespread use of AI across many industries.

Rajan later reiterated his views in a post on LinkedIn, where he said many AI predictions ignore the role of society and politics.

"Public opinion and political responses will also shape how AI affects jobs and the broader economy," he mentioned.

In his analysis, Rajan outlined several possible paths for the AI-driven economy.

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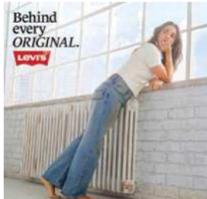
"These companies could then charge high prices to businesses that rely on their AI systems," Rajan explained.

"If that happens, companies across industries might use AI to automate many cognitive tasks and reduce white-collar staff," he stated.

Workers who lose such jobs could move to service sectors like retail or hospitality, which may increase competition and push wages lower in those areas.

Rajan also described another possibility where multiple AI systems compete in the market.

"In such a scenario, productivity gains could spread more widely across the economy rather than being concentrated among a few companies," he mentioned.



Levi's new ad campaign launched

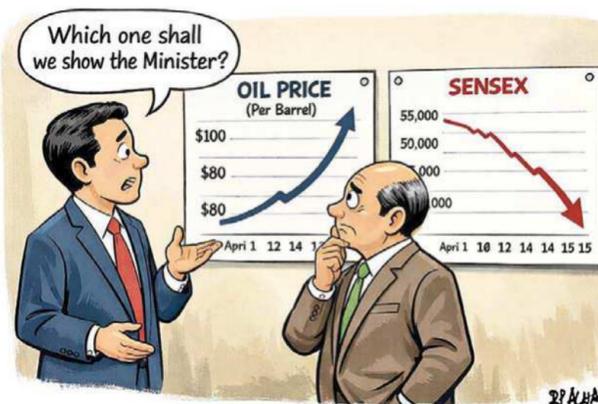
BIZZ BUZZ BUREAU
HYDERABAD

THE Levi's brand has launched its 2026 global advertisement campaign, 'Behind Every Original,' in India, starring Global Brand Ambassador Alia Bhatt.

For over 150 years, the brand has been worn by those who move culture forward. From music and sport to fashion and art, these jeans have become a constant in moments of change, worn by those pursuing progress and shaping what comes next.

Behind Every Original builds on that legacy. The global campaign celebrates the mindset behind originality — curiosity, conviction and the courage to see the world differently. It spotlights the instinct and intention that drive progress.

BIZZTOON



CCI may step in if AI leads to anti-competitive practices

Ravneet Kaur says fair trade regulator is closely monitoring developments across sectors, including sports, civil aviation

NEW DELHI

INDIA's fair trade regulator, the Competition Commission of India (CCI), is prepared to take action against any anti-competitive practices that could emerge in the artificial intelligence (AI) space, its Chairperson Ravneet Kaur said on Monday.

Addressing the 11th National Conference on Economics of Competition Law in New Delhi, Ravneet Kaur said the antitrust regulator has identified potential risks in the AI ecosystem, including concentration across the AI value chain, algorithmic collusion, price discrimination, and lack of transparency in AI applications.

"We have identified potential anti-competitive conduct in the AI space, which could include concentration across the AI value chain, algorithmic collusion, price discrimination or opaque-



ness in AI applications," she said.

The CCI chief also said that the fair trade regulator is closely monitoring developments across sectors, including sports, civil aviation, liquor, and paints.

She noted that enterprises deploying AI systems should conduct regular self-audits to ensure that their applications do not lead to hidden anti-competitive outcomes.

In a market study released in October 2025, the CCI also emphasised the need for companies to review their AI systems to address potential competition concerns, while the regulator continues to

strengthen its technical capabilities and infrastructure to deal with emerging challenges.

"Stakeholders should undertake self-audits to ensure that at the stage of deployment of AI applications, there are no hidden anti-competitive outcomes, which may sometimes occur knowingly or unknowingly," the CCI Chairperson said.

According to Ravneet Kaur, the rapid growth and adoption of AI has intensified competition but has also raised concerns around data monopolies, algorithm-driven collusion and pricing practices.

India entering new phase of tech-led national development: Jitendra

Says the nature of warfare rapidly changing and is becoming increasingly technology-driven

NEW DELHI

INDIA is entering a new phase of technology-led national development, where advanced sectors such as space, nuclear energy and artificial intelligence will play a key role in strengthening the country's security and economic growth, Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh said.

Speaking during a fire-side chat at the "Unstoppable Bharat 2026" conference here, Singh said the nature of warfare is rapidly changing and is becoming increasingly technology-driven.

"Traditional man-to-man combat is gradually declining as modern technologies begin to play a decisive role in strategic preparedness and national security," he stated.

Singh, who holds key portfolios related to science and technology, said sectors such as space, nuclear energy, artificial intelligence and advanced scientific research will shape India's future security architecture and development.



Referring to recent reforms in the space sector, the minister said opening the sector to private companies and startups has helped create a strong ecosystem of innovation.

"India now has a rapidly growing space startup ecosystem and the country's space economy is expected to expand significantly in the coming years as industry, research institutions and young innovators work together," Singh mentioned.

He said India has no shortage of scientific talent and the government is working to create an environment that supports innovation from an early stage.

Singh highlighted initiatives aimed at encouraging

students at school and university levels to pursue careers in science and technology.

The minister said programmes such as Vigyan Jyoti are helping students, particularly girls, explore opportunities in research and innovation.

Singh also stressed the importance of strengthening India's scientific base by encouraging students to identify their interests early and pursue research in emerging fields.

He said the National Education Policy has introduced greater flexibility for students, allowing them to move across disciplines and explore new areas in science and technology.

LG HVAC system on display at ACREX

BIZZ BUZZ BUREAU
HYDERABAD

LG Electronics India Limited (LGE India) has participated at ACREX ISHRAE India 2026 - South Asia's largest exhibition for HVAC and Intelligent Business Solutions. The company presented its most comprehensive product portfolio at the exhibition, spanning residential, commercial, and industrial applications, highlighting innovations that deliver intelligent, reliable, and energy-efficient climate solutions for India. LG Electronics showcased its advanced VRE, Chillers & Cas-

sette range ACs best suited for diverse Indian climate & consumers requirements.

Commenting on the company's participation in ACREX, Hong Ju Jeon - Managing Director & Chief Sales & Marketing Officer, LG Electronics India Limited said, "LG Electronics has been part of India's journey for nearly three decades, and has during this period built unparalleled expertise in addressing the country's infrastructure requirements, while meeting performance standards that developers, consultants, and facility managers demand.

'Smartphone volumes may see headwinds from global RAM prices'

NEW DELHI

INDIAN smartphone makers are likely to face a challenging period as global memory or RAM prices surge, squeezing volumes and pushing up average selling prices, a new report has said.

Brokerage CLSA said in a report that Indian smartphone shipments remained under pressure on a YoY and

sequential basis in January, with volumes falling about 25 per cent, due to a sharp rise in RAM prices that began in August 2025.

NDTV Profit has earlier reported that RAM prices have tripled since last year amid unprecedented demand from large artificial intelligence (AI) players, which has diverted supply away from the retail market.



The spike in RAM prices has translated into higher device prices and availability concerns, with industry

sources pointing to an 8 per cent increase in average selling prices since September.

Nothing CEO Carl Pei has previously warned that smartphone prices are likely to rise this year because of the RAM shortage, which CLSA forecasted could last at least until FY27. The brokerage noted that pricing pressure is most notable in the entry level segment.

Major handset makers, such as Motorola, Oppo, and Realme, which source components from Dixon Technologies, have seen annual volume declines ranging from 20 per cent to 68 per cent, the firm said. The brokerage also raised doubts about component manufacturers meeting fiscal year guidance and growth targets for FY27.



THE POLITICA

Nothing political about it

DEEPIKA BHAN

THE image of a ship carrying cooking gas safely heading home may not ordinarily evoke strong emotions. But in a world shaken by conflict and uncertainty, the sight of two Indian-flagged LPG carriers cutting through the tense waters of the Strait of Hormuz felt like something more than routine maritime movement. It felt like reassurance.

At a time when the US-Israel confrontation threatens to destabilise one of the world's most critical energy corridors, the successful passage of the Indian vessels 'Shivalik' and 'Nanda Devi' has quietly demonstrated the strength of India's diplomatic balancing. In the midst of a volatile geopolitical storm, New Delhi managed to do what many countries struggle to do -- protect its strategic interests without being dragged into the conflict.

The two LPG tankers, owned by the Shipping Corporation of India (SCI), began their journey back home after what officials described as a "carefully coordinated operation" conducted with the cooperation of Iran and other regional stakeholders. Such operations rarely happen overnight.

Behind the scenes were multiple diplomatic engagements,

sensitive negotiations, and constant monitoring of developments in a rapidly evolving conflict zone.

The breakthrough reportedly came after several rounds of inter-governmental discussions between India and Iran. Prime Minister Narendra Modi held a telephonic conversation with Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian, while External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar engaged with his Iranian counterpart Seyed Abbas Araghchi on issues related to maritime safety and energy security.

For India, the significance of this development extends far beyond the safe movement of two ships. The Strait of Hormuz is one of the world's most important energy arteries, through which a large portion of global oil and gas shipments pass. Any disruption there has immediate implications for countries dependent on energy imports, including India.

In that context, the safe transit of Shivalik and Nanda Devi sends a reassuring message to Indian households. It indicates that even in the midst of international tensions, India's diplomatic and logistical mechanisms remain capable of safeguarding critical supplies.

The development has also unfolded against the backdrop of a heated political debate at home.



The Opposition, particularly the Congress party, has questioned the government's foreign policy choices during the ongoing West Asian crisis. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has said that India has drifted away from its traditional non-aligned stance and is moving closer to the US and Israel.

According to Gandhi, such a tilt could potentially damage India's long-standing ties with Iran and undermine strategic initiatives like the Chabahar port project.

Speaking in the Parliament premises recently, the Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition suggested that India's energy se-

curity had been "compromised due to flawed foreign policy decisions" and alleged that the government had effectively allowed Washington to influence its relationships with oil suppliers.

In a healthy democracy, criticism of government policy is both legitimate and necessary. But the larger global reality must also be acknowledged. The tensions between the US-Israel and Iran are not an isolated regional dispute; they have the potential to affect global energy markets, shipping routes, and economic stability.

If the conflict intensifies or stretches into a prolonged

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confrontation -- as seen in the Russia-Ukraine war -- its ripple effects will be felt across continents.

In such circumstances, governments worldwide are focused on ensuring domestic stability while maintaining diplomatic channels abroad.

India is no exception. The priority in such moments is to ensure that citizens do not face unnecessary disruptions in essential supplies. Panic and speculation can often create bigger crises than the conflict itself.

So far, the situation on the ground suggests that fears of an immediate energy disruption have not materialised. Petrol prices have remained stable,

gistical assistance -- an act that reflects continued engagement rather than diplomatic distance.

These developments underline the nature of India's evolving foreign policy approach. Rather than rigid alliances, New Delhi increasingly pursues what policymakers describe as "multi-alignment" -- maintaining functional relations with competing global powers while prioritising national interests.

In a world where geopolitical rivalries are intensifying, this balancing act is not easy. But it allows India the flexibility to navigate crises without becoming entangled in them.

Ultimately, diplomacy is often most effective when it works quietly, away from the glare of political noise. The journey of Shivalik and Nanda Devi through one of the world's most sensitive maritime corridors is a reminder of that truth.

The real story of those ships goes far beyond cargo moving across the sea. It is the story of a nation ensuring that, even in the midst of global turbulence, its vital lifelines continue to flow -- steady, silent, and secure. For once, Rahul Gandhi could acknowledge this reality, for it concerns India and the strength of its diplomacy, not the fortunes of the BJP. But that, one suspects, is unlikely to happen.