

Tepid campus hiring reflects changing contours of IT industry

CAMPUS hiring of engineering graduates has been moving at a snail's pace in recent years. One of the major employers, which are Indian IT firms— are altogether missing or hiring very low numbers. According to HR consultancy firm— Xpheno, fresher hiring in India's IT sector has fallen from a peak of 600,000 in FY22 to about 120,000 in FY25. Many analysts see no change in the overall numbers for FY26, which will be known in a few weeks.

Such tepid hiring trend is driven by a combination of factors. Firstly, demand environment in the IT industry remains subdued. With geopolitical situation remaining volatile owing to Russia-Ukraine war, Iran versus US & Israel conflict and Trump tariffs; enterprises

are cautious in their technology spend since last financial year.

Especially, the US government's decision to impose tariffs on its trading partners has created an uncertainty in several sectors. Though deal pipeline remained robust for most Indian IT companies, the implementation rate of those projects was low. That is the reason that freshers are not required in large numbers as they used to be in earlier years. Second and the most important change has been driven by adoption of AI (artificial intelligence)-powered solutions in the industry.

Many of the entry-level works are getting automated through agentic AI tools. It means companies no longer require as many fresh engineering graduates as

compared to previous years. Such fundamental shift is driving the recruitment trend in engineering colleges. For three decades, Indian IT industry's operational model has been focussed heavily on hiring of new engineering graduates from college campuses.

In a project, freshers and junior employees with 2-3 years of experience comprise the bulk of the man power. Such employee pyramid has helped IT services companies to keep their employee cost lower as entry level salaries remain low for the industry as whole. However, such established operating model is going through a shift as of now. Many L1 & L2 work loads are being handled by agentic AI tools in recent quarters.

In a way, these AI tools should

be seen as responsible for replacing new engineering graduates in India for now. Do these factors make engineering graduates redundant in the evolving landscape? Answer to this question is still not known to the industry. Because Accen-ture- world's biggest IT services & consulting company- recently added headcount by hiring freshers.

The CEO of Accenture has said during analyst call that AI will create more jobs for freshers with new roles emerging under the AI domain. This is in contrast to the popular narrative given by analysts, company management and other stakeholders for the last two years. So, no body exactly knows how fresher hiring landscape will evolve in the coming quarters.

But one view that has started

rolling out from HR experts in recent months is that AI is creating demand for new kind of roles. Job roles like prompt engineer, AI ethics analyst, AI data scientist, AI Product Manager, AI product developer, AI data curator, AI integration consultant and others are getting created with the development of AI. It means new job roles are getting created for which young graduates need to be trained for leading in the future. Therefore, the demand for freshers may have come down temporarily but is likely to continue in the wake of new technology developments. Moreover, Indian IT industry's whole operating model revolves around hiring freshers and any pivot from such established way will take time to evolve.

When global fragility becomes everyone's burden

APURVA RAKESH PANDEY

SEARCH FOR STABILITY IN AN UNEQUAL GLOBAL ORDER

WHEN fuel prices surge on the streets of Colombo, fertilisers slip beyond the reach of African farmers, and Asian governments exhaust fiscal space to hold down subsidies, the reflex explanation is domestic mismanagement. That diagnosis is convenient—and often wrong. The drivers of these crises are frequently located far from national capitals, embedded in strategic decisions taken by a handful of power centres whose economic aftershocks travel effortlessly across borders. Contemporary conflicts may be geographically contained, but their costs are anything but.

This asymmetry—between where decisions are made and where consequences are felt—has become a defining feature of the global order. Power is concentrated; risk is globalised. Energy markets, shipping routes, insurance premia, and capital flows no longer merely reflect economic fundamentals. They have become transmission belts for geopolitics, carrying strategic intent into household budgets, food prices, and balance sheets across the developing world.

History makes this pattern unmistakable. The oil shocks of the 1970s did not remain an OPEC-West confrontation; they translated into 10-15 per cent inflation and debt crises across much of the Global South. The 1991 Gulf War and the sanctions regime that followed erased nearly half of Iraq's GDP, but their secondary effects reverberated through energy markets and regional

economies. The lesson was clear even then: when conflict intersects with global systems, its radius expands dramatically.

Globalisation was supposed to temper such outcomes. Interdependence, it was argued, would raise the cost of conflict and therefore restrain it. In practice, interdependence has done something else—it has accelerated the export of conflict-related costs. The Russia-Ukraine war of 2022-23 offers a textbook illustration. Wheat prices rose by 35-40 per cent; fertiliser exports were disrupted by 20-25 per cent. For low- and middle-income countries, this translated into food inflation of 8-12 per cent, fiscal stress, and renewed balance-of-payments pressures. The war did not have to be global to destabilise global livelihoods.

The problem intensifies when conflict threatens strategic chokepoints. The Strait of Hormuz, through which roughly a quarter of the world's seaborne oil trade—and significant volumes of LNG and LPG—passes, has once again become a pressure point amid escalating tensions involving the United States, Israel, and Iran. Even limited disruption here sends oil prices swinging and insurance costs soaring, with immediate consequences for transport, manufacturing, and household energy bills far beyond West Asia. Geography, in such cases, becomes a multiplier of instability.

What emerges is a consistent sequence. Strategic choices are taken first, often



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with narrow security or political objectives. Economic consequences follow later, diffusing through global markets. Advanced economies, cushioned by deeper capital markets and institutional buffers, absorb part of the shock. States with limited fiscal capacity and high import dependence absorb far more. When Papua New Guinea's Prime Minister James Marape remarked that countries like his are forced to pay for conflicts in which they have no role, he was not making a moral appeal; he was describing a structural reality.

This is why the prevailing international order increasingly looks less like a system that resolves imbalances and more like one that manages them—often poorly. It reacts

to crises after costs have already been socialised across vulnerable economies, rather than preventing those costs from being externalised in the first place.

It is in this context that India's contemporary diplomacy merits attention. Its shift from Cold War non-alignment to present-day multi-alignment is not rhetorical flexibility; it is strategic realism. India's engagement with the Global South has focused less on symbolism and more on stabilisation—through vaccine diplomacy, food and fertiliser assistance, and diversified energy sourcing. Securing permanent membership for the African Union in the G20 was not merely an act of inclusion; it linked representation to agenda-setting

in the world's premier economic forum.

Yet stabilisation cannot rest on ad hoc measures alone. The next phase demands institutional ballast. Groupings such as BRICS and the wider Global South offer part of the answer, not as ideological counterweights but as shock absorbers. Instruments like the Contingent Reserve Arrangement and the New Development Bank, combined with local-currency trade and cross-border payment systems, can reduce exposure to volatile capital flows and dollar liquidity cycles. Their promise, however, depends on political discipline—on whether members can place collective resilience above bilateral competition. Still, alternative platforms are not substitutes for systemic reform. The architecture of global governance itself must be recalibrated to internalise the costs it currently externalises. Sanctions regimes need clearer economic impact assessments; trade rules must become more flexible in the face of supply-chain disruptions; financial systems require mechanisms that prioritise crisis liquidity for vulnerable economies.

Coordinated responses through the United Nations could strengthen multilateral crisis management, while the World Trade Organisation needs the mandate and agility to keep trade flowing during geopolitical shocks. In parallel, the United Nations Security Council must become more representative

and more accountable, particularly when sanctions and interventions impose diffuse economic costs far beyond their intended targets.

Representation alone, however, is insufficient without accountability. Emerging powers must deploy their growing economic weight not just to expand markets, but to shape rules. Rule-making, not rule-following, is where lasting stability is built.

None of this assumes an end to power politics. Competition will persist; rivalry is intrinsic to international life. The challenge is not to abolish it, but to contain it within frameworks that dampen volatility rather than amplify it. If that effort fails, global fragility will cease to be episodic and become structural—a permanent condition rather than a recurring crisis.

A more inclusive and accountable decision-making order would not eliminate conflict, but it could prevent its costs from being indiscriminately exported. Stability, then, would no longer be a privilege enjoyed by a few resilient economies, but a shared global public good. The question confronting the international system is stark: will competition be allowed to slide into cascading instability, or will it be balanced by cooperation capable of sustaining a more predictable world?

(The writer is an alumnus of the University of Allahabad and writes on International Relations and Strategic Affairs)

BR Ambedkar: A national thinker and reformist beyond misconceptions

DR KIRAN KUMAR GOLLA

BR AMBEDKAR, whose birth anniversary is celebrated on April 14, is often misunderstood, seen narrowly as a Dalit leader or as a critic of Hinduism. The fact is that he was neither anti-Hindu nor anti-national. He was a reformer who challenged social injustice, not religion itself, and a patriot who sought to strengthen India's unity through justice and fraternity. His writings and books reveal a thinker deeply committed to building a modern, democratic India.

Ambedkar's intellectual legacy is preserved in his books, which show the breadth of his concerns. In *The Problem of the Rupee: Its Origin and Its Solution* (1923), his doctoral thesis at the London School of Economics, he analysed India's monetary system and argued for a managed currency. This was not a sectional concern but a national economic vision, anticipating debates that would later shape India's financial policy. In *Annihilation of Caste* (1936), perhaps his most famous work, Ambedkar evaluated caste as a social system, not Hinduism as a faith. He argued that caste was incompatible with democracy and justice, and importantly, appealed to Hindu reformers to reinterpret scriptures in ways that aligned with equality.

His *Thoughts on Linguistic States* (1955) examined how India should reorganize states based on language, showing his concern for national integration and federal stability. Finally, *The Buddha and His Dhamma* (1957), published posthumously, outlined his interpretation of Buddhism as a rational, ethical, and egalitarian philosophy. His turn to Buddhism was not anti-Hindu but a reaffirmation of India's plural spiritual heritage.

Ambedkar's take on caste was often misread as hostility toward Hinduism. In An-



nihilation of Caste, he wrote: "The Hindu society must be reorganized on a religious basis which would recognize the principles of liberty, equality and fraternity."

This shows he was not rejecting Hinduism but urging reform so that its ethical core could shine through. His challenge was to social practices, not to faith itself. He believed that religion, when aligned with justice, could be a force for national unity.

Ambedkar's nationalism was pragmatic and ethical. In *Thoughts on Linguistic States*, he warned that ignoring linguistic identities could weaken India; however, his solution was not separatism. Instead, he proposed a federal structure that respected diversity while preserving unity. Similarly, his role in drafting the Constitution was a patriotic act, as he embedded safeguards for minorities and fundamental rights to strengthen the country's democratic fabric.

In his final speech to the Constituent Assembly, Ambedkar cautioned against hero worship and authoritarianism, saying democracy in India must rest on "constitutional morality." Such warnings were not anti-national; they were protective of India's demo-

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cratic experiment. His economic writings reveal his concern for national development. In *The Problem of the Rupee*, Ambedkar argued for stability in currency to protect India's economy. He also wrote on agricultural reforms, advocating redistribution of land to ensure productivity and fairness. These were not sectional demands, but national policies aimed at uplifting all Indians. His economic vision was about creating a fair system for all, ensuring that India's modernization did not leave its rural majority behind.

Ambedkar's embrace of Buddhism was a reclamation of an Indian tradition that embodied rationality and compassion.

In *The Buddha and His Dhamma*, he presented Buddhism as a philosophy of equality and ethics. His choice was not a rejection of India's heritage but a reaffirmation of its pluralism. He sought a spiritual foundation for modern India within its own civilizational resources. By turning to Buddhism, Ambedkar was not abandoning the country's traditions but reinterpreting them to meet contempo-

rary needs. Ambedkar's vision of democracy went beyond institutions. He insisted democracy must be a social ethic, respect for dignity, equality of opportunity, and fraternity. His writings and speeches consistently warned that political democracy could not survive without social democracy. This was a profoundly nationalist concern, as he wanted India's democracy to endure and flourish. His insistence on fraternity was not divisive but integrative, binding India together across caste, religion, and language.

Examples of his national spirit abound. In the Constitution, Ambedkar ensured fundamental rights and affirmative action were enshrined in law, not to divide but to integrate India.

His work on currency and agriculture addressed national stability and growth. His ideas on linguistic states balanced diversity with unity. His call to reinterpret Hindu scriptures was aimed at strengthening India's moral foundation. Each of these contributions shows a thinker deeply invested in India's future, not an adversary of its traditions or unity.

Ambedkar was not anti-Hindu or anti-national. He was a reformer who sought to purify religion of social distortions and a patriot who worked tirelessly to build a just and united India. His books—*Annihilation of Caste*, *The Problem of the Rupee*, *Thoughts on Linguistic States*, and *The Buddha and His Dhamma* illustrate his breadth as a thinker.

His legacy is one of integration, bringing together India's ancient values and modern aspirations. To honour Ambedkar is to recognize him as a national visionary whose ideas belong to all Indians.

(The writer is Asst. Professor, EFLU, Hyderabad)

LETTERS

Defining moment for Indian democracy

WITH reference to the article published in The Hans India newspaper on April 9, the call to push forward women's reservation marks a defining moment in India's democratic journey. The essence of the article is to bring out the urgency of stepping up women's participation in legislative bodies and to carry forward the long-pending vision of equality rooted in our Constitution. The origin of this initiative can be traced back to decades of debates, draft bills, and committees that sought to carve out space for women but could not see it through. Now, with renewed political will, the nation is set to take this reform forward and turn it into a transformative force. It seeks to reach out to women from all walks of life: rural homemakers, urban professionals, tribal women, and those from marginalized communities thereby opening up equal opportunities. Women from both rural and urban areas will benefit as the policy aims to break down structural barriers and bring them into the mainstream. Language, too, should not stand in the way, as empowerment cuts across linguistic divides and builds on shared aspirations. Only when institutions and citizens come together can this initiative truly turn into a nationwide movement that lifts up women and strengthens democracy.

Raju Kolluru, Kakinada

Is Pakistan the new 'Vishwa Guru'?

THE proposed ceasefire for two weeks between Iran and the USA was indeed a welcome move. The entire world was looking forward to freedom from war's repercussions namely the energy crisis and crippling of the world economy. Pakistan taking the aid of China took the initiative of arranging a meet of warring nations in Islamabad. Pakistan, despite its record of sheltering the terrorist groups, seems to succeed in assuming a 'Vishwa Guru' facade.

P R Ravinder, Hyderabad

II

THOUGH fragile, the two week US-Iran truce is crucial for stopping a high casualty, 39-day regional conflict, reopening of critical Strait of Hormuz to stabilize global oil prices, and creating a temporary diplomatic window to manage nuclear tensions. The temporary truce has helped global markets react positively with falling oil prices and rising stocks, while regional sectors seek stability amid continued yet restricted military threats. A lasting truce could ease global supply chain pressures and reduce shipping insurance premium. Despite the truce, deep disrupt persists with reports of continued violation in Lebanon and potential for a swift return to a conflict if negotiations fail. Anyway, President Trump's acceptance of Pakistan's proposal for a two week ceasefire in the war with Iran is a welcome move, since the truce has brought a sigh of relief to the international community especially to the Indians.

P Victor Selvaraj, Tirunelveli

III

THE terrorist country like Pakistan is not a "credible player" in the ongoing Iran-US diplomatic process, even as Islamabad has been involved in facilitation efforts. United States is using Pakistan's role for its own strategic reasons. Under President Donald Trump has given importance to Pakistan by trusting them and sidelining the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and has back stabbed him in the name of bogus friendship which is humiliation and insult to Modi in the eyes of the world countries.

Bhagwan Thadani, Mumbai

Sooryavanshi, the man of the moment

VAIBHAV Sooryavanshi is making waves in the cricket world with his explosive batting style. The 15-year-old sensation is known for his fearless approach, as evident from his record-breaking performances in the IPL and Youth ODIs. He smashed a 35-ball century in the IPL, the fastest by an Indian, and a 52-ball hundred in the Youth ODI series against England U-19. His fearless way of hitting sixes came to view when he hit Jasprit Bumrah for a first ball six. His deft placements and sound defence add to his repertoire as a class batsman in the top order. Moreover he is confidence personified and would like to become top star in the days to come.

Gundu C K Maniam, Tiruchi

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BENGALURU ONLINE

Despite losing mother during exams, student tops state

MANGALURU: In an extraordinary story of courage and determination, Disha, a student of Alva's College in Moodbidri, has emerged as the state topper in the Commerce stream of the Second PUC examinations—despite losing her mother in the middle of her exams. A Commerce stream student from Moodbidri, Disha secured the first rank in the state by scoring a perfect 600 out of 600 marks. Alva's PU College authorities and lecturers congratulated Disha on her outstanding achievement. Disha, daughter of Dinesh and Savita from Puttige Padavu near Vidyagiri, was preparing for her board examinations when tragedy struck. Her mother suffered a sudden fall on the eve of her Mathematics exam and passed away just a day before her Economics paper.

Even as she grappled with profound grief, Disha chose to continue writing her exams, refusing to let the setback derail years of hard work. Her disciplined preparation played a crucial role. She had been waking up as early as 3.30 am daily to study and had completed her syllabus well in advance through rigorous internal assessments conducted by her college. In her darkest hour, support came from her lecturer Veena, who not only comforted her but also provided her a place to stay, ensuring she could attend the examinations without interruption.

"I was slightly worried about scoring full marks in English, but my teachers' guidance helped me overcome that," Disha said. She credits the student-friendly teaching approach, timely syllabus completion, and continuous evaluation system at her college for her success.

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