Ministry of Electronics & IT

Union Minister Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw Outlines India's AI Priorities for Manufacturing Engineering Technology (MET) at Strategic Convening of Industry and Academia

Minister launches White Paper Concept on "AI for Manufacturing Engineering Technology (AI-MET)" to advance responsible, and scalable AI adoption

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The Union Minister for Electronics and Information Technology, Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw, today chaired a strategic convening of industry leaders and global academicians, policymakers and technology experts to articulate India's AI priorities especially for the Manufacturing Engineering Technology (MET) ecosystem with a strong focus on adoption, skills development and inclusive growth.

At the India AI Impact Summit 2026, this convening was curated by NAMTECH under the leadership of Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY). It brought together academicians from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT-M), and other prominent universities alongside C-suite executives from industry such as from Microsoft India, Dell Technologies, Cisco India, Hitachi India, Tata Electronics, Rockwell Automation, Palo Alto Networks, PayPal, and Intel among others.

The industry-academia-government discussion featuring leading industry and academic leaders highlighted AI as a foundational enabler of productivity, competitiveness and innovation across India's industrial sectors, aligned with the national vision of Viksit Bharat @2047.

This convening builds on the momentum of the Industry-Academia Roundtable held in May 2025 at Bharat Mandapam, which underscored the need for collective action to enable India's industrial transformation. Consequently, the Manufacturing Engineering Technology (MET) platform is being envisaged – convened and catalysed by NAMTECH – to bring together industry, academia, and government in a shared governance and execution model, and place manufacturing at the core of India's accelerated growth and decarbonization agenda.

The event also marked the launch of the White Paper Concept on “AI for Manufacturing, Engineering Technology (AI-MET)”, by the hon’ble Minister Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw. The White Paper Concept presents a strategic framework for embedding AI across manufacturing and associated value chains to drive productivity, sustainability and global competitiveness. It outlines a process for putting together coordinated pathways for industry, academia, and policymakers for embedding AI across India’s MET ecosystem.

Speaking at the event, Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw said: “Artificial intelligence is a foundational pillar in India’s journey towards Viksit Bharat. By integrating AI across Manufacturing Engineering Technology, we can enhance productivity, strengthen competitiveness, and unlock new opportunities for innovation and entrepreneurship. Our focus is on building an inclusive AI ecosystem that empowers enterprises and MSMEs alike, while preparing India’s workforce for the future. Initiatives such as the AI-MET White Paper reflect the kind of collaborative, mission-driven approach needed to translate technological capability into outcomes on the ground. I am happy that NAMTECH has taken the lead in convening industry, academia and policymakers towards this shared national objective. My request to NAMTECH would be to use this opportunity to develop the next level of talent that can enable India to emerge as a major manufacturer of precision equipment.”

Prof. Eric Grimson, Chancellor for Academic Advancement, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Boston, USA, added:“The next phase of India’s AI journey will be defined by its ability to move from capability to application – embedding AI across industry, enterprises and MSMEs, investing in skills at scale, and ensuring that innovation remains inclusive. This requires sustained collaboration across academia, industry and government to build systems that can translate research and technology into real-world outcomes.”

Mr. Pravin Panchagnula, Executive Director – Manufacturing & Conglomerates, Microsoft India remarked: “The impact of AI in India’s industrial sectors will be determined by its deployment on the shop floor and across complex engineering systems. Enabling adoption among MSMEs, alongside targeted skilling and upskilling of the workforce, will be essential for building resilient and globally competitive manufacturing value chains.”

Mr. Vinod Karumampoyil Director – Digital Transformation, Cisco India added: “As AI becomes integral to modern manufacturing, building strong application-oriented skills across the workforce is essential. Closer collaboration between industry and academic institutions will be key to ensuring that talent is prepared to deploy AI responsibly and at scale, strengthening productivity and competitiveness across India’s manufacturing ecosystem.”

Ms. Swapna Bapat, MD & Vice President – India & SAARC, Palo Alto Networks remarked: “In the landscape of cybersecurity and IT, poorly designed Operational Technology (OT) poses a significant risk. Designing a secure, enterprise-grade network requires three critical elements. As AI becomes a cornerstone of modern manufacturing, we must prioritize building application-oriented skills across the workforce. Our goal is to bridge the gap between education and industry, bringing modern network security principles into schools to ensure students are ready for immediate workplace deployment.”

Mr. Dilip Sawhney, Managing Director – India, Rockwell Automation added: “For India’s manufacturing sector, the real impact of AI will be realised when it is integrated into industrial automation systems and deployed at scale across production environments. Bridging the gap between digital innovation and shop-floor execution requires strong collaboration between industry, academia

and government. Initiatives such as this create the ecosystem needed to accelerate adoption, strengthen workforce capability, and enhance the global competitiveness of India's manufacturing value chains."

Dr. Ibrahim Hafeezur Rehman, Operating Director General & CEO, NAMTECH remarked: "By grounding education in real-world industrial contexts, NAMTECH aims to show how application-oriented learning can enable day-zero deployment of talent into production environments. Through the MET Platform and partnerships with industry and academia, this approach can help shape scalable models for preparing the workforce for India's Manufacturing Engineering Technology transformation."

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