



# Learning AI: The way to flourish in the future

Since Klaus Schwab drew attention to the arrival of the 4th Industrial Revolution in January 2016, we are witnessing the significant impact of Artificial Intelligence and its more well known subset, often seen as its synonym of Machine Learning that led Andrew Ng to propound “ AI is the new electricity”.

India created the IITs in the 1960s that helped some Indians to achieve places of eminence in the technical and business world of the 3rd Industrial Age. Today, India is a ‘ KRANTI’ nation poised to play centre-stage in the AI age leveraging the opportunity as a ‘ learning movement’ amongst its masses, evidenced by the rapid adoption of the mobile phone.

A group of former IIT faculty and students led by Prof. MM Pant have started a movement of AI awareness and lifelong learning to spread knowledge about AI as per one’s need. Their Mission 2020 is to prepare not only the young but all ages for their future in the 4th Industrial Age. It begins with massive awareness followed by ubiquitous adoption. A kind of “citizen AI” movement. A weekend Whatsapp course on “Why Learn AI?” just launched by the group had a very good response, a housefull 256 members in the WhatsApp group. The audience was a diverse set ranging from School children to Octogenarians.

The support to these Whatsapp modules would be enhanced by a Gig Economy operations framework with opportunities for hands on work and mentoring at brick and mortar 'co-learning spaces'. The learners attend session formats like Bootcamps and Hackathons to acquire and demonstrate the skills in addition to the smaller group study models. Mentoring is the key component in the Co-Learning spaces. The industry professionals, Teacherpreneurs, and Innovative startup founders have a greater role to play adding respective values to the movement of AI Awareness.

The learners may be School goers or post-retirement seniors and everyone in between. They can follow their individual paths based on learning goals. There is no pressure to become only an AI engineer. The well thought course modules comprise three strands: a 21st Century Technologies Strand, a Learning Strand developing one into a intrinsically motivated self-directed learner and an Entrepreneurship Strand covering innovation, grit, ethics and empathy. Every learner "braids" his various competencies to create a unique persona that adds to the individual as well as national cognitive capital.

Author: Prof M M Pant can be reached on Twitter @mmpant