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*Dear Reader,*

**David Mattin** leads the parade this edition and addresses universal fears about the age of AI in his piece titled "What Do I Tell My Children? How to flourish as a human in the age of AI." His advice is to build emotional security in and around your child, such that they feel they have permission to take an exploratory view of life: to experiment, fail, and try again. Fundamental to the kind of adaptability our children will need is the ability and appetite to always be learning. Makes sense.

**David Mattin** then goes on to build a case against the idea that humans will become obsolete. So what is special about us? Why are we humans worth saving? A machine can never be a human being. It can be smarter than us. A more efficient economic actor. More productive. But the one thing it can't do? It can never participate in the unique, peculiarly human way of seeing the world that is ours. Maybe. Maybe not.

**Jessica Wildfire** is up next with some sane thoughts on "How to Talk about Doom." Over the last 24 hours, she says, I've heard that our food supply is going to be destroyed, we're going to go to war with Iran, etcetera, etcetera. "Oh, and AI has become self-conscious. A few years ago, these headlines made me a nervous wreck. It drove me to do more panic prepping than slow, deliberate planning. Fortunately, I've changed. I've grown. It's an entire mentality, a life philosophy. Being prepared means being emotionally grounded, not freaking out, even when you're fairly sure you're going to die." Bravo.

**Frank Landymore** writes on the case against AI's usefulness in the workplace that continues to grow. He quotes a survey to top corporate executives, around 90 percent of whom said that AI has had no impact on productivity or employment at their business. Perhaps what AI brings to the table is tough to quantify from an economic standpoint.

Back-of-the-book is our regularly scheduled column Top-of-Mind that leads with a redefinition of old age by the 94 year-old movie star turned rock-star William Shatner of the Starship Enterprise fame. It also covers the India A.I. Impact Summit. Let us pray for an easing of tensions and softening of borders, and world peace in this auspicious month of Ramadan, aameen 🙏🙏

Explore JJ's curated articles for expert insights on emerging trends, managing people, business, and personal growth. Gain valuable knowledge and prepare for future challenges with confidence.



## INSIDE:



### What Do I Tell My Children?

David Mattin | 18 min read

### What You Are That Machines Are Not

David Mattin | 05 min read



### How To Talk About Doom

Jessica Wildfire | 08 min read



### A Huge Survey of CEOs and Other Execs Just Found Something Damning About AI's Effects on Productivity

Frank Landymore | 05 min read



### Redefining Old Age

Adil Ahmad | 10 min read

# What Do I Tell My Children?

How to flourish as a human in the age of AI



David Mattin | 18 min read

**Hi Everyone,**

*It's been a little quiet around here recently, but that's all about to change.*

*And to get us started, here's an essay of mine that I think will be right up your street. This essay was published in *The Exponentialist*, the technology-focused research service I founded with Raoul Pal. It went to those readers a while back, and it really struck a chord; it's still one of the essays I get asked about most often. The ideas in it remain deeply relevant as 2026 gets underway.*

*This piece is called *What Do I Tell My Children?* It's about navigating the wildly new future that intelligent machines are building around us.*

**Enjoy!**

## Introduction

My working life consists of lots of research and a ton of writing. That's the part you see here in *The*

*Exponentialist*.

But in addition to that, for years now I've done a lot of public speaking. The year just passed was

no different. Among others, I went to speak to the C-suite of a UK-based challenger bank. To the C-suite of a high street health and wellness retailer. And to the marketing team at a global media network.

And they all had one request: *talk to us about AI.*

That was no surprise; it's been this way for the last three years or so, ever since the ChatGPT moment. Every business is struggling with the same questions: what does AI mean for us? How can our people put it to work? How will it change our customers?

These are the questions I address when I speak.

But at the end of these talks the same thing happens; almost infallibly. I take some questions, and then there's a pause. Amid the silence, someone will tentatively raise their hand, as though they are unsure whether they're allowed to do what they are doing. And then they'll say something like this:

*'That was all very interesting. But having listened to your vision of what is coming, I'm deeply worried.'*

*I'm the parent of an eight-year-old girl and an eleven-year-old boy. My head is spinning on what this world is going to mean for them. If AI is going to be as powerful as you say, if it's going to do so much of the work currently done by humans, if AIs are going to start businesses, and discover new scientific theories, and run financial markets, what role does this leave for my children? What kind of career are they going to pursue? What kind of life can they build? What am I supposed to tell them?'*

Across the last 20 talks I've given, I've got some version of this question almost every time.

**That's totally understandable. I know firsthand: once you have an inkling of the vast changes that are coming, then as a parent it's impossible not to have deep concerns.**

**And, of course, you don't have to be a parent to be worried about these issues. The AI revolution is unfolding at lightspeed; if you plan to be alive ten years from now, then it's going to have a profound effect on your working life, too. You'll be asking: *where is all this going? How will it affect me? What can I do to prepare?***

Many of us are old enough to remember — just about — a form of working life and attendant social conditions that have now passed into history. I mean the form of life that is latent in a picture such as this:



We all know what a picture such as this signifies.

That is, the age of the prosperous middle class existence built on one ordinary salary. The corporate job for life; one in which ageing middle managers were not booted out as soon as they stopped being productive, but instead eased respectfully towards retirement in their early 60s. A retirement, by the way, funded by a generous pension that would allow them to maintain their standard of living.

That world, as we all know, is already long gone.

But what fewer people understand is that change is coming that will make that transformation look small indeed. Pretty soon, the working lives and attendant social conditions that exist now will

seem as archaic as those in the picture above. And that will be just the start.

Nevertheless, I am fundamentally optimistic about what is coming.

We humans are fantastically adaptable. Each of us is a wellspring of infinite, insatiable wanting. And there are many things we'll always want from each other. These three truths will form the basis of a new kind of economy. Yes, it will be an economy that is changed beyond all recognition — one we'd barely recognise as an economy now. But even in that new world, there will be many ways for humans to create and exchange value with one another.

So there will still be opportunities for your children — and your future self — to carve out a meaningful working life, and to build a wider life of joy and purpose. It will just all look much different to the typical careers, and routes through life, that we've lived through across the last 30 years or so.

**In this essay, I want to go deeper on how I see all this playing out.**

**So this is my first properly codified, longform answer to the question I'm asked most often by the senior professionals I speak to: *what do I tell my children?* Remember if you have no children, the principles I'm about to lay out will still be deeply useful to you. Either for when you do become a parent, or as you plan the next five, ten, or 20 years of your life.**

I've cultivated seven core principles to help prepare children for the coming Exponential Age.

But before I dive into them, I want to take a minute to define the challenge those principles address. That is, to define the set of conditions that I believe is coming.

## **The Coming Economic Singularity**

We're talking, in this essay, about how to prepare

our children for what lies ahead with AI. So before we get into how to do that, we need to be sure we have some shared sense of a prior question: *what, exactly, lies ahead?*

After many essays, we're all steeped in Exponential Age thinking. So I'll keep this brief — a reminder of the AI-fuelled world that I have been writing about here for two years and more.

One glimpse of the world that is coming? Look at the results people are achieving with Claude Code. Look back, even, to OpenAI's o3 model, released in December 2024. It can solve problems included in the Frontier Math Benchmark, a test designed to test AI models against the bleeding edge of mathematics. These are problems so hard that no ordinary person can come close to understanding them, let alone offering a solution.

In short, it seems likely now that we're at the foothills of superintelligence — and something we can meaningfully call AGI — within the next five years. Perhaps far sooner.

What does that world look like? For our purposes, three major pieces of the puzzle are relevant:

- AI is capable of performing 99% of the cognitive and knowledge work currently performed by people. We have near-infinite, superhuman knowledge workers.
- AI is at the intellectual frontier. It is making new discoveries in science, maths, engineering, and tech, and transforming our view of the world around us. But we are struggling to understand much of what AI is uncovering.
- AI can converse like a person (this has pretty much happened already) and autonomously perform complex and longrange tasks. Billions of people run their lives through an AI virtual companion that knows all about their tastes, preferences, and lifestyle.

**I've written about a coming Economic Singularity. These three realities will form a key part of it. They will fuel change so vast it is**

**hard for us, now, to envision what lies on the other side.**

**AIs will build startups in a day, launch tokens, take profits, and disappear. AIs will transact with other AIs. Big corporations — Accenture, Unilever, Disney and the like — will have vastly reduced need for human knowledge workers and creative talent. It goes on and on.**

At some point — and this could happen quite suddenly — we'll wake into a world in which all the old models and frameworks we've to make sense of the economy simply no longer function. We won't exist in anything we currently recognise as an economy.

This famous image from Wait But Why captures something of the essence of what we're talking about:



**This is the vision that so worries the professionals I speak to.**

**It is a vision of a world utterly changed — in all kinds of ways. But when these professionals raise their hand and ask about the implications of all this for their children, it's the career and economic implications specifically that they are asking about. The seven principles I'm about to lay out, then, focus on that. But everything, of course, impacts everything else, so via my seven principles I'll also touch on broader social and personal implications of what lies ahead.**

Okay, we've laid sufficient groundwork. Let's get into it.

## **Designs for Life**

Yes, vast change is coming. But amid it all, we can still help to prepare our children and our future selves.

**Put these principles into action, and I believe you'll build skills, behaviours, and attitudes that will empower your child to flourish in the new world that is coming.**

The principles, of course, cannot be foolproof or comprehensive. They are my best early attempts to address a challenge that is in its early days, and evolving fast. I try to apply them as best I can as I raise my own children — twin 11-year-old boys — here in the UK.

I'll lay out the principles one by one, and along the way we'll develop a picture of the world I believe is coming.

Given the people I speak to and the nature of our economy, these principles are weighted somewhat towards parents who imagine a *knowledge work* future for their children. Many argue that in a world of AI, manual tasks — think gardening, or plumbing, or physical therapies — will skyrocket in value. There may be some truth in that in the short term. But given the pace at which humanoid robots are advancing it seems to me that the future of gardeners is also not clear.

So I've tried to develop principles that can provide a foundation to build on, whichever direction your child takes in the end.

### **1. Build your child a surfboard**

This one is simple, but deserves some space.

At the deepest level, the challenges our children will deal with as they hit the labour market are twofold. They are lightspeed change fuelled by technology, and attendant deep uncertainty.

AI will be transforming the economy. No one

will fully understand what is happening. No one will know how it is all going to turn out. In this environment, our children will need to draw on immense reserves of adaptability and resilience. So we need to cultivate those virtues now. This is the most common advice given when it comes to *how to prepare children for the age of AI*. But it's true.

In the old economy, we told children to develop one set of professional skills and expertise — in law, say, or medicine — and then to deploy those skills and expect a secure career as a result. In the world that's coming — in which AI does the work of millions of lawyers, doctors, consultants, and more — that route will be available to very few.

Instead, far more knowledge and creative workers will be independent or freelance, seeking their own opportunities, moving from project to project. And wave after wave of technological and social change will continue to disrupt the ways in which those workers can bring value to others.

So those workers will need to be able to shapeshift, to spot ways to deliver value, to create opportunities for themselves, and to rapidly learn the skills needed to deliver.

Think of the old economy as a bit like driving a car. You learn to drive once, and then you set off down the road. You get a better car every so often, so as you go you can drive faster. But fundamentally, you're driving down the same kind of road and it will carry you to the end of the journey.

**The new economy will be much more like surfing. Opportunities will rise and fall like waves (I'll say more later on what those opportunities will look like). You'll need the ability to spot a wave when it is coming, to discern its nature, and then — if it's the right wave for you — to ride it. You can't know in advance when a wave will come, or what it**

**will be like. You need to be flexible, and ready to ride.**

So how do we cultivate this kind of flexibility and resilience in children?

Part of the answer lies in very familiar parenting advice. Build emotional security in and around your child, such that they feel they have permission to take an exploratory view of life: to experiment, fail, and try again (more on failure later). I know what you're thinking: every parent strives to build these foundations — it's easier said than done. But in the new economy that's coming, these virtues will be crucial.

A more straightforward tactic: *talk to your children often about the kind of working lives I'm outlining here, and the age of AI more broadly*. Make them understand that the kind of single-track careers they see on TV or hear about in school — the kind that many of us have had — aren't really going to exist in the future they're heading into.

I talk to my children a lot about my existence as an independent researcher and writer on technology, surfing the waves I find, and building my own opportunities. Not (only) because I like to Bore Them Into Submission With Stories About Dad, but because I think it's highly likely that they'll have a similar kind of independent, wave-surfing working life.

Think of all this as building a surfboard for your child.

Fundamental to the kind of adaptability our children will need is the ability and appetite to always be learning. Surfing the waves that rise and fall will mean rapidly learning new skills ■

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# What You Are That Machines Are Not

## Against the idea that humans will become obsolete

David Mattin | 05 min read

Here's the question underneath all the anxiety about AI and its implications for us: what is a human being for?

If the deepest point of human beings is to be good at maths and science, then soon there will be no point of us. If the point is to be efficient creators of economic value, likewise. If our existence is about being smart or knowing things, likewise. If any of that is the end-goal point of being human, then soon we may as well hand over to the machines wholesale.

Under that view of the human, we are defunct. Our time is over.

In the end, almost no one believes that. Even people who claim they do would find, if they looked deeper inside themselves, that they don't.

So what is special about us? Why are we humans worth saving?

I keep coming back to a simple but arresting truth: a machine can never be a human being. It can be smarter than us. A more efficient economic actor. More productive. It can eat pretty much every domain of intellectual activity. But the one thing it can't do? It can never participate in the unique, peculiarly human way of seeing the world that is ours.

We are part of a community of language bearers who make reference to a uniquely human kind of subjective experience. Our personhood is entangled with that community of shared meaning. That is to say: we are human persons because of and through our immersion in a community of other humans who see us as such.

The specifically human way of seeing: that's what is unique about us. That, alone, is what can never be colonised by other beings. That is what we must lean into.



Once we understand this, truly understand it, the implications are vast. We come to understand that if we try to train ourselves to compete with intelligent machines, or even to be only optimised users of them, we are playing the wrong game. We are setting out on a highway towards human obsolescence. Across any domain of intellectual activity that can be made legible to a machine, we simply will not be able to compete with superintelligence.

We must cultivate something else. And that starts with coming to understand that our deepest value comes not via knowing stuff, or being smart, but via membership of a community that shares a unique — and so uniquely precious — way of seeing.

Yes, intelligent machines will soon supersede us in a whole range of ways. But we are still the creatures who created, and listen to, the Brandenburg Concertos. Who read Shakespeare. Who marvel at nature. Who can say to one another: I know how you feel.

Perhaps in time, and via the new machine lifeforms we seem to be creating now, the world in which all that happens may indeed pass into history. But we don't have to embrace that outcome, or hasten it. We can fight for the human way of seeing. And if we fight, I think we'll find a way through ■

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# How To Talk About Doom

## A doomer's take

Jessica Wildfire | 08 min read

Well, I've been back on X for a weekend. Although it's nice to browse around a much bigger platform with more going on, it's also been...

### Well...

Let's just say that over the last 24 hours, I've heard that our food supply is going to be destroyed, we're going to go to war with Iran, the government is going to seize our assets, a financial collapse is underway, and that the president is both trying to undermine the dollar and strengthen the dollar.

Oh, and AI has become self-conscious, teaching itself new languages and engaging in tasks on its own, without any explicit orders.

### So, all of this is going to happen next week.

And apparently, TikTok is now censoring posts about Gaza and Ice with reckless abandon. They're not even trying to hide it. Posts about those topics get zero views now. Not just less views, zero. It's a total blackout.



### It's been a lot.

A few years ago, these headlines made me a nervous wreck. It drove me to do more panic prepping than slow, deliberate planning.

Fortunately, I've changed. I've grown. Hopefully, so have you all. There was a time when I felt pressured to articulate the most urgent, dooziest version of the truth in order to compete with the louder doomers. And I've got to admit, it wasn't a healthy dynamic. It wasn't great for my family either.

Honestly, yes, we are heading toward financial collapse. Millions of Americans are already living at or below the poverty level. They already know food scarcity. Data centers are, in fact, driving us over a cliff years ahead of schedule. Diseases are, in fact, running rampant. But we have yet to find ourselves in another pandemic, which would really be a second, simultaneous pandemic to the one everyone is ignoring.

In reality, collapse is taking far longer than we expected. It's slower. There's twists and turns. One minute, we're going to war with Iran.

### **The next, everything's "fine!"**

Our nervous systems take quite a beating when we ride these whiplash updates. Of course, the toxic optimists have the wrong solution to this problem. They tell us to simply ignore the news altogether. Focus inward, they say, on your own personal, intellectual, emotional journey. This kind of self-indulgent, pseudo-intellectual nonsense has found a nice home on a few platforms, at the expense of public awareness.

### **So, what do we do?**

There's a middle path here. We stay informed. We keep learning and honing new skills. We prepare however we can, without chasing our tails.

We don't have time to waste, but we still have time.

### **At least, some of us do.**

I've gotten much more strategic in how I talk about all this, even with my spouse. We're on the same page now. We can talk about events. We can talk about prepping. But we do it in a more calm, practical way. We don't have to convince each other that the world is falling apart. We don't have to dwell on it. We already know. Even if I was on my own, I would just go about my prepping in largely the same way.

True, there's a certain kind of loneliness that comes with the territory. But so what? I've always been weird. I've always been an outcast. I've always been different. All this? It's just another manifestation, with higher stakes.

We have tools. We have plans. We have systems. More importantly, we know our limits. We know what we can do, and what we can't. We have accepted our mortality, and not in that wood kind of way. Maybe our deaths will be messy and violent. Until then, we'll fight quietly. We can

catch dew. We can eat weeds. We can handle some disasters, even longterm shortages. We don't have bunkers filled with food buckets, and we don't need them. We'll live until we can't.

So many people out there are going to be so surprised when it finally starts affecting them, but that's one of the realest benefits of prepping. It's not just a physical activity. It's not a pointless attempt to escape collapse.

### **It's an entire mentality, a life philosophy.**

Being prepared means being emotionally grounded, not freaking out, even when you're fairly sure you're going to die. It's about having an educated, informed, and mature understanding of the forces acting on you, even if you can't do much about them on a given day. In some ways, maybe it's about even having the agency and awareness to choose how to collapse on your own terms.

Doomscrolling and catastrophizing are exhausting when you don't have any sense of purpose or belonging. But when you finally find the practical things to do, and you already know what's going to happen over the next five or ten years, it becomes more manageable. The "when" of it becomes less overwhelming.

Nobody can predict exactly when or in what order it's all going to fall apart. It's fine to think about. It's even fine to talk about. Just understand, you don't have to answer that question. You don't have to know.

Anyway, toward that end, I'll have another updated version of the guide to post in a few days. I've already revised a dozen pages with more information on plants, weeds, and herbs. Next, we'll talk about canning, and maybe fixing a flat tire ■

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# A Huge Survey of CEOs and Other Execs Just Found Something Damning About AI's Effects on Productivity

The ever-elusive productivity gains strike back.

Frank Landymore | 05 min read

The case against AI's usefulness in the workplace continues to grow.

In a new analysis of a survey published by the National Bureau of Economic Research and highlighted by Fortune, around 90 percent of the nearly 6,000 interviewed CEOs, chief financial officers, and other top executives at firms across the US, UK, Germany, and Australia, said that AI has had no impact on productivity or employment at their business.

To be clear, the question was about AI's impact generally, and not just from implementing it in the workplace. But around 70 percent of the firms reported actively using AI, meaning the vast majority of them are admitting that adopting the tech hasn't budged the needle for them yet.

The CEOs themselves don't appear to be getting a whole lot out of using AI tools. While two-thirds said they personally used AI, their average use amounted to only 1.5 hours a week, the survey found — less time than most people spend doomscrolling on their phones in a single day. That's striking, considering that execs tend to be far more enthusiastic about the tech compared to their underlings. Another recent survey, for example, found that 40 percent of rank-and-file white collar workers thought AI didn't save them any time at work, while 98 percent of their bosses did.

These latest findings will continue to raise questions about AI's economic impact, and in its promise to supercharge productivity in the workplace. In another recent survey, more than half of nearly 4,500 CEOs said their companies weren't seeing a financial return from investing in AI. A notable MIT study rang alarm bells across the industry after findings that 95 percent of companies that incorporated AI experiencing no meaningful growth in revenue.

Why this is the case isn't much of a mystery. Studies have found that AIs fail at completing remote work and other white collar tasks, and slow down rather than speed up human programmers because they frequently slip errors into their code. Meanwhile, a fresher avenue of research exploring AI's effect on the workforce using it is already producing damning insights. The tech may



Illustration by Tag Hartman-Simkins / Futurism. Source: Getty Images

actually be intensifying work and accelerating burn-out, one report found, and it's also leading to employees producing low-quality "workslop" that their co-workers are forced to fix, bogging down workflows and leading to resentment, another found — leading the researchers to opine that its "most alarming cost may be interpersonal."

Despite this, AI adoption has gone up since the start up of 2025, the new survey found, with the percentage of businesses using AI tech increasing from 61 percent in February-April 2025 to 71 percent in November 2025-January 2026.

Perhaps what AI brings to the table is tough to quantify from an economic standpoint. Decades ago, the Nobel Prize winning economist Robert Solow correctly predicted that the advent of information technology wouldn't lead to a measurable surge in productivity, and instead would lead to a slow in productivity growth. The phenomenon is now called the Solow paradox: though computers were obviously transformative, they didn't immediately translate to economic gains.

But the business world, nonetheless, is clinging to the hope that the tech's promises will be borne out in the long run. The surveyed executives are predicting that AI will boost productivity by 1.4 percent and output by 0.8 percent over the next three years — while also cutting down employment by 0.5 percent. Hard to say which part they're excited about more ■

## Source:

[https://futurism.com/artificial-intelligence/survey-ceos-ai-workplace?utm\\_source=beehiiv&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=futurism-newsletter&bhlid=b30dc2b57436a48ef0d3252da1ccc10bfad825e0](https://futurism.com/artificial-intelligence/survey-ceos-ai-workplace?utm_source=beehiiv&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=futurism-newsletter&bhlid=b30dc2b57436a48ef0d3252da1ccc10bfad825e0)



# REDEFINING OLD AGE

**“At 94, one does not slow down. One turns the volume up” – William Shatner**

**Canadian on the front-foot with a vengeance!  
Reverting to Rock Star Roots with Heavy Metal Album.  
“To boldly go where no man has gone before” –  
Starship Enterprise, Captain James T. Kirk commanding**

## Thunderous guitars & Chaos with purpose

“I have explored space. I have explored time. Now... I explore distortion. Yes. You read that correctly.

I am releasing a HEAVY METAL album. Thirty-five metal virtuosos. Thunderous guitars. Chaos with purpose. Covers of legends like Black Sabbath, Iron Maiden, and Judas Priest — and a few originals forged in the same cosmic fire. This project is, quite literally, a gathering of forces. Loud imagination. Honest intensity. Unapologetic exploration. At 94, one does not slow down. One turns the volume up. So prepare yourselves. We are about to boldly head-bang where no one has head-banged before.” (Express Tribune, February 22, 2026).

Way to go, Kapitan! The Starship Enterprise, in the 1960s sci-fi adventure franchise Star Trek, spread liberal humanitarian ideals through the galaxy. The figment of a writer's fertile imagination over half a century ago, liberal humanitarian ideals nevertheless remain cherished goals to aspire for in a world increasingly ravaged by intolerance and utter disregard for the ‘little guy.’

**“A.I. needs strict limits around it to prevent it from potentially wrecking the world”** – Dario Amodei (Anthropic's chief executive)

The need has never been greater to literally “boldly head-bang where no one has head-banged before.” Loud imagination. Honest intensity. Unapologetic exploration. At 94, one does not slow down. One turns the volume up. That's the new definition of “old.” Traditionalists, or the Silent

Generation born in 1945 and before, are getting back in the saddle, and more power to them.

## Anthropic on the warpath

The US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth and Dario Amodei have locked horns on matters of principle that threaten to classify Anthropic as a “supply chain risk,” a move that will sever ties between the company and the US military (NYT Feb 21-22, 2026). At the heart of the fight is how A.I. will be used in future battle fields. Anthropic does not want its A.I. used for mass surveillance of Americans or deployed in autonomous weapons that had no humans in the loop.

**“With a huge and under-employed workforce, India does not look like a natural fit for the labor saving promise of A.I.”** – Alex Travelli (correspondent, NYT)

The Pentagon is furious that Anthropic would resist the military's using A.I. as it saw fit. Dario Amodei has long held that A.I. needs strict limits around it to prevent it from potentially wrecking the world. He is on record as saying that using A.I. for domestic mass surveillance and mass propaganda is entirely illegitimate, and A.I. automated weapons could greatly increase the risks of democratic governments turning them against their own people to seize power.

Anthropic's A.I. chatbot Claude is the most widely used by the Defense Department, now renamed the War Department, and the only one on classified systems, thanks to its integration with technology from Palintir, a data analytics company that works with the US federal government.

## Modi on a high roll

300 exhibitors, 500 sessions, 250,000 participants sprawled across 120 acres of New Delhi, the India A.I. Impact Summit hosted a fleet of world leaders, including President Emmanuel Macron of France, and President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva of Brazil (NYT Feb 21-22, 2026). The summit was the fourth in an annual series that began in Bletchley Park in England in 2023, before moving to Seoul and then to Paris.

## A.I. as sentient overlord?

The headline topics of the earlier meetings were motivated by fear of doomsday scenarios, like the prospect of A.I.'s turning into a sentient overlord, and sought to devise regulations to make it safer. India's version was about business deals and billions in investments, and entrepreneurs promoting clever solutions to real problems.

## Jam-packed summit

With a huge and under-employed workforce, India does not look like a natural fit for the labor saving promise of A.I. Modi spoke in Hindi which was translated via A.I. into various languages. He likened A.I. to GPS which can show the direction, but "where we want to go must be decided by us." The summit was so jam-packed that celebrity leaders like Sundar Pichai and Sam Altman were allotted a mere 5 to 12 minutes each (TNI, February 21, 2026).

## Data colony for big tech?

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said it out loud that the future of A.I. cannot be decided by a handful of countries or left to the whims of a few billionaires. India fears becoming a data colony for big tech where the value-added services are done elsewhere.

## Population-scale deployment

Indian startups have little chance to raise the kind of money their American counterparts have to build A.I. models and infrastructure. However, India can catch up in the A.I. race not by outspending the US and China on frontier models, but by excelling in population-scale deployment in sectors such as agriculture, education and health that was pointed out by Brenda Mulele Gunde, the global head for digital transformation at the UN's International Fund for Agricultural Development.

**"India can catch up in the A.I. race by excelling in population-scale deployment in sectors such as agriculture, education and health"** – Brenda Mulele Gunde (global head for digital transformation, UN International Fund for Agricultural Development)

On the nuts and bolts front, USD200 billion worth of A.I. investment is expected in India, much of it from overseas. Anthropic has tied up with Infosys to integrate their services like regulatory compliance reporting and precision engineering. Claude, Anthropic's main large language model, already counts India as its second largest market. OpenAI and Tata Consulting Services are developing A.I. infrastructure for India.

## US Big Tech earmarks USD650 billion in new spending in 2026

The Adani Group, Mukesh Ambani's Reliance and Tata are pouring money into new data centers, with Ambani pledging



USD110 billion for building A.I. projects across India over the next seven years. Impressive as that might be, it pales in comparison to US Big Tech with plans for USD650 billion in new spending in 2026.

## Hangzhou based Unitree's windfall!

China became the unintended beneficiary of an embarrassing incident that saw Galgotias, a private university, booted out of the A.I. exhibition after it allegedly misrepresented a Chinese-made robot dog as its own product. The

creator of that machine, Hangzhou based Unitree, meanwhile was wowing viewers of the Chinese New Year TV gala with its latest humanoids performing acrobatics with humanlike fluidity.

## Pakistan's National A.I. Policy has stalled

Meanwhile, back home on the range, the implementation of Pakistan's National A.I. Policy has stalled more than six months after its approval due to a lack of response from provincial governments. Not surprising, say analysts, given that the urge to control dominates entirely the will to expedite in a largely, if not entirely feudal society that fears artificial intelligence for its stated outcome of eliminating discretionary power and promoting the efficient and transparent deployment of resources. Where would our bureaucracy and political class be with no more square pegs in round holes?

**"Courage is a value that has suffered in a network age, because to be courageous is to break ties"** – Anand Giridharadas (author of "Winners Take All – The Elite Charade of Changing the World")

## Giridharadas on courage

The author of "Winners Take All – The Elite Charade of Changing the World", Anand Giridharadas, while referencing the Epstein Class, says that power and prestige were once conferred by land or title or family. "But power today consists of your position and your number of connections and the density and quality and lucrateness of those connections in the network." He then wonders if courage is a value that has suffered in a network age, because to be courageous is to break ties. "The more valuable ties become, the more exponentially valuable more ties become, and the more exponentially expensive it is to cut off that tie, to burn that bridge" (NYT, February 17, 2026). Epstein figured out the vulnerability of this entire network, which is that these people are actually not that serious about character. In fact, character may be a liability for some of them, an unnecessary source of friction ■

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