

# India must develop sovereign AI infra: IBM CEO Krishna

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Every country, including India, must have sovereign capability in artificial intelligence (AI), including large language models, according to Arvind Krishna, chairman and chief executive officer (CEO) of IBM.

Krishna, who was in the country for the B20 summit, told a select media briefing on Monday that IBM had suggested the Indian government create a national AI computing centre.

“We had a very good conversation

with (Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology) Rajeev Chandrasekhar. I believe every country ought to have some sovereign capability on AI, including large language models,” said Krishna.

In this connection, India needs to create computing and data infrastructure, he further said.

“You need such an infrastructure as you may want to use it for purposes the rest of the world may not want to invest in. You may want to use it for a purpose that you may not want to expose to others.”

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**ARVIND KRISHNA,**  
IBM, CEO

production at megawatt level by 2025, and rapidly scale up to giga scale thereafter. The earlier timeline for the scale-up to a fully integrated 5 GWh annual cell-to-pack manufacturing facility was 2024.

Reliance Retail, on the other hand, is scaling up its cola brand, Campa Cola, and is taking it global, starting with Asia and Africa. “We have invested over \$10 billion in the past two years, focusing on building integration, growing in-house brands, and improving supply chain networks,” said Isha, commenting on the retail business. Mukesh Ambani also said that several marquee global strategic and financial investors have shown strong interest in Reliance Retail.

## IBM CEO...

“You also need a way for the government and private companies to be able to leverage that in a way that is unique for India,” he added.

Asked if this could require huge investments from the government, he said that such an initiative may require a few hundreds of millions of dollars,

which is not a difficult ask for India. “Those who say \$10 billion sort of investments, they are outright hallucinating,” Krishna said.

He further noted that when it comes to the adoption of nascent technologies, government taking the first steps gives confidence to the private sector.

Krishna exuded confidence that India would successfully ride the AI wave like it rode the wave of BPO and IT services.

Asked if India had the talent base ready to take on this opportunity, his answer was affirmative. He added that there are two types of AI skills — those who invent AI and those who deploy the technology. “The opportunity now is for deploying AI. My guess is, looking at our own team, it will take three months of work to get that talent ready. For instance, we have seen that the time taken for a CA working at IBM to be proficient in AI to deploy it for financial processes is 3 months,” said he. Krishna said India remains an important geography for the firm for both talent and market.

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