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Is It a Good Time to Enter India's Data Science & LLMOps Job Market (2025)?

Current Hiring Trends (Data Science / AI / MLOps / LLMOps)

India's IT hiring, after a slowdown in 2024, is showing signs of rebound – especially for AI and data roles. An industry report notes that **AI/ML job openings jumped ~39%** in 2024 vs. 2023 [1] . Companies emphasize specialized skills (AI, data science, cloud, cybersecurity) as priorities [2] . For example, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) – India's largest IT firm – **affirmed it will not cut hiring in 2025**, saying "AI is changing roles but also opening up new growth opportunities rather than replacing people" [2] . LinkedIn analysis projects roughly **2.3 million AI-related job openings in India over the next 3 years** [3] , highlighting strong demand (and a talent gap). Within India, hiring is also shifting geographically: Tier-2 cities saw a large jump (e.g. ~48% growth in Q3 2024 [4]), even though major hubs (Bengaluru, Mumbai, Delhi/NCR, etc.) still account for most openings. In sum, most indicators (surging AI postings, corporate hiring commitments, talent gap projections) suggest that demand for data science and related roles remains robust in India.

- • **AI/ML roles growth:** Hiring for AI/ML positions rose ~39% in 2024 [1] .
- • **Corporate outlook:** TCS and others report *no slowdown* in hiring for AI/data roles [2] .
- • **Talent gap:** India needs ~2.3M AI hires by 2028 according to forecasts [3] .

Impact of 2025 Tech Layoffs

The global tech sector has seen massive layoffs in 2025, but the effect on India's AI/data job market is mixed. Over **100,000 tech jobs** were cut worldwide in 2025 (by companies like Microsoft, Intel, Google, Amazon, Infosys, etc.) [5] . In July 2025 alone, Microsoft announced ~9,100 job cuts [6] . These cuts span roles from freshers to seniors [5] . However, many of the layoffs target legacy products, unprofitable divisions, or roles deemed non-strategic. Crucially, Indian IT leaders emphasize that **AI-related hiring will continue**: for instance, TCS reiterated it will honor all fresher offers and maintain hiring levels [2] . Thus, while the broader job market may tighten in the short term, **data science/ML roles** – being strategic growth areas – appear **better insulated**. Candidates should be aware of the competitive environment but can take confidence that demand for AI skills is a countervailing force to these cuts.

- • **Global cuts:** ~100k tech jobs eliminated in 2025 [5] (Microsoft alone ~9,100 in July) [6] .
- • **Indian context:** Top Indian IT firms (TCS/Infosys/Wipro) report *steady hiring* of specialized tech talent [2] , even as they trim other units.
- • **Demand outlook:** Layoffs may delay some openings, but companies still need data/ML experts for AI initiatives.

Remote, Hybrid and On-site Opportunities

Remote and hybrid work are now common in India's tech industry. As of mid-2024, about **20% of all Indian job postings** were remote or hybrid (up from 0.9% in 2020) [7] . In IT specifically, roughly **38%** of roles

advertised were hybrid/remote [8] . Many large employers confirm a hybrid norm: for example, ~90% of Infosys employees use a hybrid schedule [9] . A recruitment survey finds that **65% of Indian IT firms expect staff to work from office at least 3 days/week** [9] . In practice this means data science and LLMOps roles often offer flexibility. **Product companies and tech startups** in India especially tend to allow remote or partially remote work, whereas some product R&D teams still require a few on-site days for collaboration. Overall, a significant share of data/ML jobs can be done remotely or in hybrid mode [7] [9] , but candidates should check each company's policy (many Indian product firms now adopt *hybrid as the default*).

- **Flexibility:** ~38% of IT jobs were hybrid/remote in mid-2024 [8] .
- **Hybrid norm:** Infosys reports ~90% of its staff use hybrid schedules [9] ; 65% of IT firms expect ≥3 office days/week [9] .
- **Implication:** Many data/ML roles in product firms allow remote/hybrid work, though high-impact teams often meet in person a few days.

Entry-Level Salary Benchmarks (0–2 years)

Entry-level compensation in data roles remains competitive in India. Fresh data scientists (0–2 yrs exp) typically earn **₹4–8 LPA** [10] . Those at top-tier companies or in high-cost cities may start above this range. MLOps or AI-engineering roles often start slightly higher: entry-level MLOps engineers usually command around **₹6–8 LPA** [11] , reflecting added DevOps/cloud skills. LLMOps is new, but candidates with relevant ML+systems expertise can expect similar pay. Salaries vary by location – tech hubs pay more. For example, cities like Bengaluru, Pune, Hyderabad, Mumbai, and Delhi/NCR tend to offer salaries at the top of these ranges [12] , whereas Tier-2 city salaries can be ~10–30% lower. In any case, data roles generally outpay many generalist IT roles at entry level. (For context, average Data Scientist salaries across all experience levels are cited around ₹13.5 LPA [13] .)

- **Data Scientist (Entry):** ~₹4–8 LPA [10] .
- **MLOps/AI Engineer (Entry):** ~₹6–8 LPA [11] .
- **Location effect:** Higher end of range in Bengaluru/Hyderabad/Pune/Mumbai; lower in smaller cities [12] .

Outlook: Viability of Pursuing These Roles Now

Despite recent layoff headlines, the long-term **prospects for AI/ML careers in India remain strong**. Industry analyses show AI-related jobs growing rapidly (they now constitute a double-digit share of tech openings globally [14]). In India, the projected need for millions of AI hires [3] means continued opportunities even as companies trim other areas. Most major employers are explicitly pivoting to AI/LLM projects, and they keep hiring data talent [2] [1] . Moreover, the variety of remote/hybrid options [7] [9] and healthy starting salaries [10] [11] support this field's appeal.

That said, the market will be competitive. Fresh graduates should have solid foundations (strong math/CS/ ML skills, practical projects or internships, and an understanding of LLM tools) to stand out. Soft skills and the ability to quickly learn new AI technologies (e.g. generative AI tools) are also in demand. Given the **continued emphasis on data-driven AI initiatives**, entering data science or LLMOps now is generally a **viable and advisable choice**, provided one is prepared for intense learning and upskilling. In summary:

Indian AI/data roles are expected to grow, recruiting is focused on these skills [1] [2], and salaries are above average – making this a promising career path in the coming years.

Sources: Recent industry reports and news (2024–2025) on Indian IT hiring trends, tech layoffs, job postings, and salary surveys [1] [2] [5] [7] [9] [10] [11] [3].

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