



Their Intelligent Design

Artificial Intelligence has become a virtual brainstorm among Indian-American scientists



Alok Aggarwal

Indian-American scientists have made substantial presence and contributions.

"There is no denying that Indian-Americans are playing a very important role and making solid contributions to AI research, whether in Google or outside Google, in labs at MIT, Princeton or Carnegie Mellon," said Alok Aggarwal, who taught at MIT and worked at IBM Watson Research Center before founding the San Jose-based Stry Analytics, a proprietary machine-learning and natural language processing products and services company.

Late last month, three Indian-American researchers were named Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence Fellows for 2018 in recognition of their work in AI: Amit Sheth, former University of

Georgia professor; Gaurav Sukhatme, professor at Robotics Research Lab at University of Southern California and Dinesh Manocha, Berkeley Computer Engineering professor. There are other AI researchers too at places like Stanford, MIT and Georgia Tech as well as in companies like Vicarious, Caspar and Pluto who are working for AI's advancement.

Pluto was founded by Prateek Joshi, an AI researcher and TEDx speaker. Joshi has built an intelligence platform for water facilities to reduce energy consumption and minimize operating costs. He was featured in Forbes' "30 Under 30" list of entrepreneurs last month. Pluto AI raised \$2.1 million in seed funding.

"There are 25 to 37 percent Indian-American scientists in the U.S. who are employed by social media, computer and IT companies, and academia. I think Indian-Americans are strong in their mathematical capabilities and they leverage this field of AI very well," said Rajiv Joshi, research scientist at IBM's T.J.

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By Suman Guha Mozumder

A robot bartender or a restaurant waiter serving guests is no longer solely the stuff of Hollywood movies or the pages of science fiction. This is a reality that seemed implausible until a few years ago.

As advancements are made in artificial intelligence, more and more tasks conventionally performed by humans are being done by devices inspiring a mix of both awe and anxiety.

In October last year, bartenders were replaced by robots at the Miracle Mile Shops in Las Vegas to make signature cocktails. In Chennai, bots now serve food at India's first robot-themed restaurant that opened in December last year.

The increasing use of AI is letting machines replace – and in some cases rival – humans in ordinary and not-so-ordinary tasks.

Experts say a turning point has been reached in artificial intelligence, the latest buzzword in technological advancement. Technology based on AI can increasingly perform tasks relegated once only to humans: medical diagnosis, such as skin cancer, medical treatment, drug development, speaking and visual recognition.

In many of these fields,



Sofia, the humanoid robot, made its first appearance in India at the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay, during its cultural extravaganza TechFest in Mumbai, Dec. 30, 2017.

Observers worry that job loss will follow as devices take on tasks in more fields