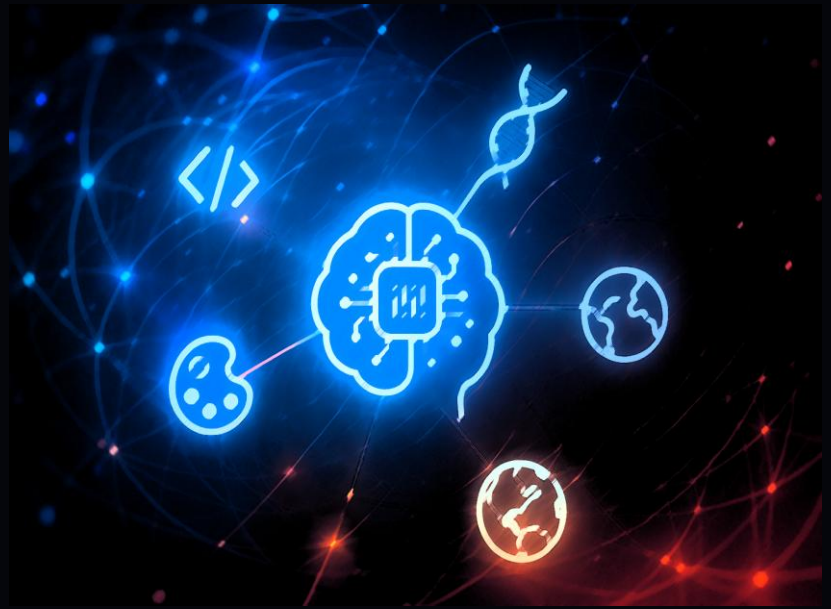
AI's Expanding Role:
Charting Sri Lanka's Path in the Fourth Industrial Revolution

From Brain Drain to Brain Gain

Dr. Yasantha Rajakarunanayake

Jan 25, 2026



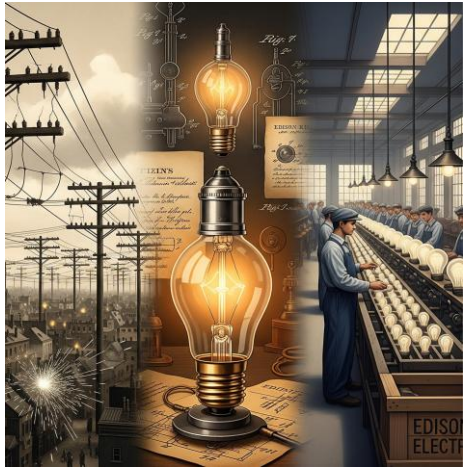
THE FOUR INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTIONS

1) 1790s – Muscle:
Steam, Mechanization, Trains

2) 1890s - Speed:
Electricity, Telephone, Mass production

3) 1980s – Digital:
Chips, Computers, Internet, Cell Phones

4) 2020s – AI & Cognition:
Drones, **LLMs**, IoT, Robots, CRISPR, Quantum. ***Remember LLM*** *is a discovery*



AI Toolkit Today: Instructions to Autonomy (Great Acceleration)

Prompt Engineering (2023)

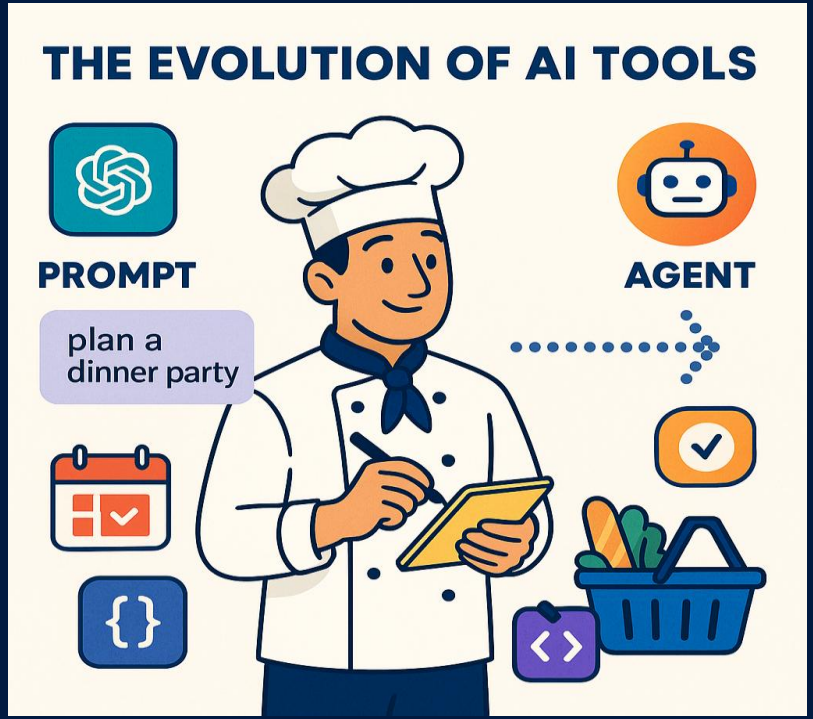
Prompt Engineering – Ask the ‘collective memory’ the right question with text

AI Agents (2026+)

Move from prompt & response to **goal & process**. AI hears, sees, writes code, analyzes and writes reports, creates music and video True cognitive offloading – AI as delegate.

AI Model Democratization Continues

Open source models: Llama 4, Deepseek, GLM-4. Prevent monopoly & foster innovation.



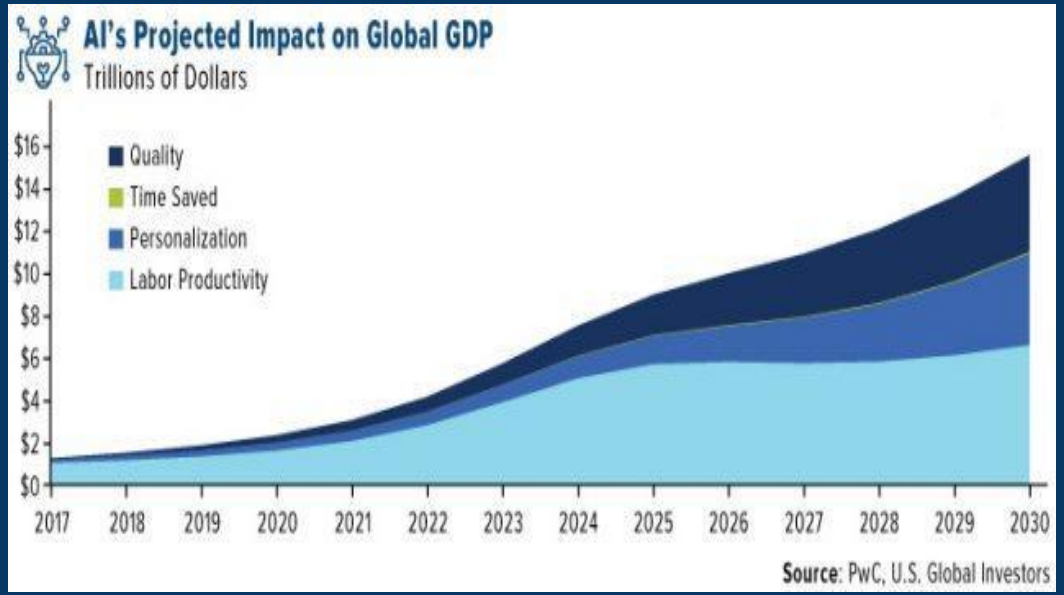
AI Economic Revolution: Productivity, Jobs & Inequality

Expect Huge GDP Gain by 2030
AI-products and services to exceed $15T

Augmenting Workers
AI-augmented developers and professionals achieve 10× output

Inequality Gap Widens
Those who leverage AI pull further ahead; those who don't fall behind.

New Paradigm: Taxing AI?
Bill Gates proposes a robot tax to fund **UBI**
GDP = f(Labor, Resources, Capital) new Equilibrium

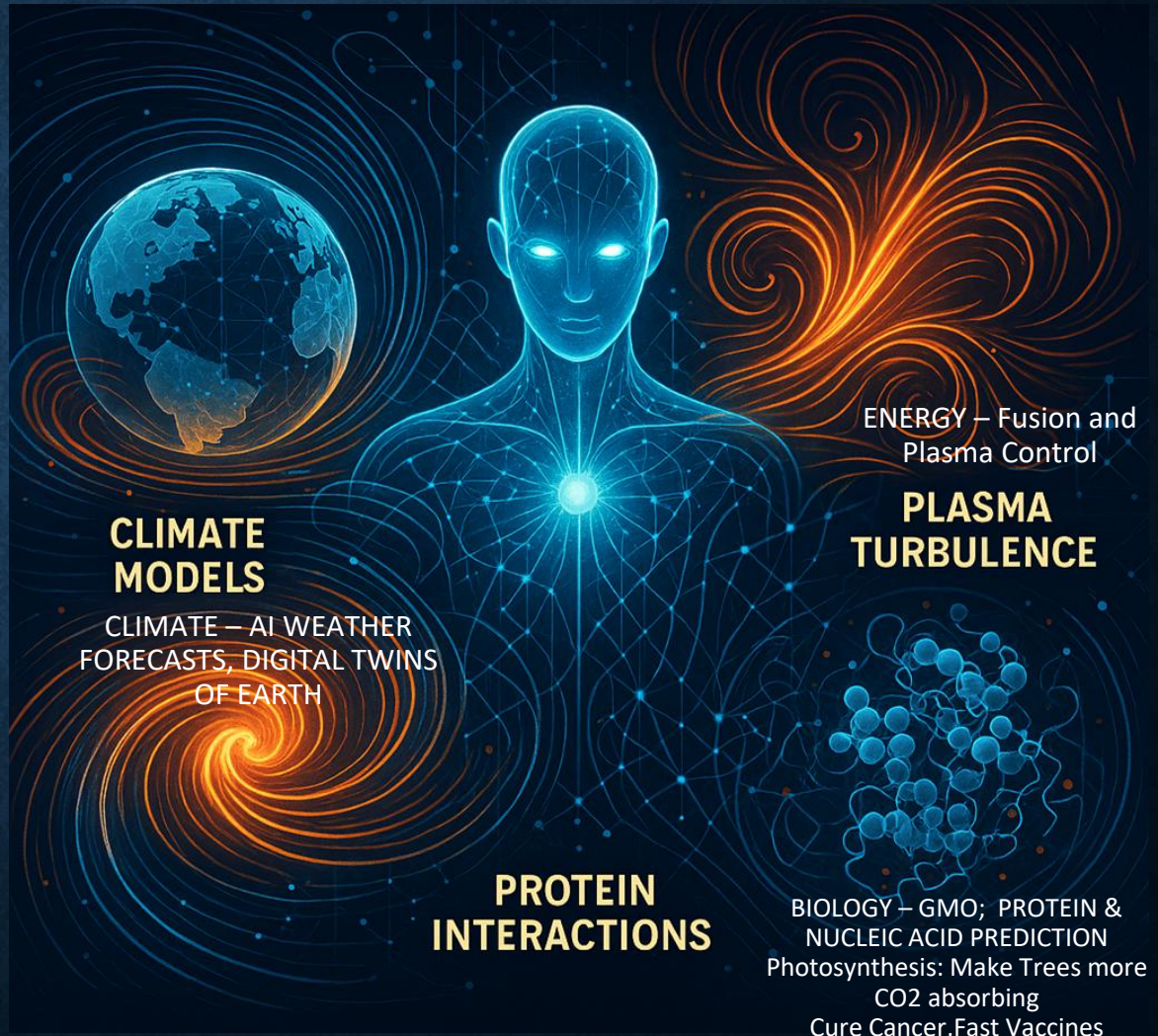


This graphic from 2017 is incorrect even in 2025..
(pre ChatGPT/LLM)

Tackle hardest technological challenges with AI

ENERGY
PROTEINS
CLIMATE

AGI Optimism
Let us optimize beyond the tribe



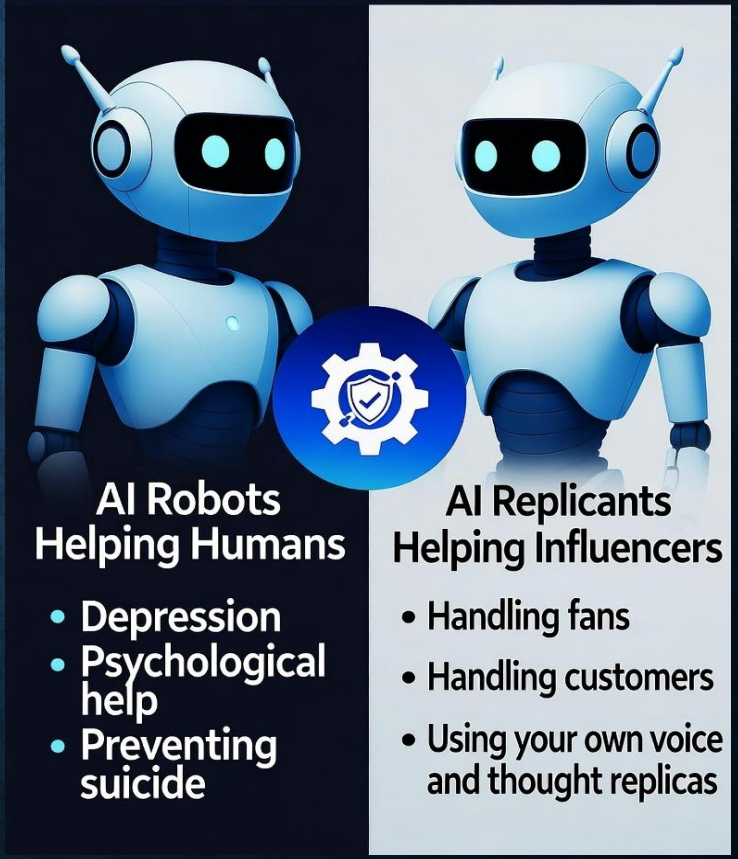
SOCIETY & ETHICS

AI Companions / Robot Nurses
Battling loneliness, depression and suicide

Replicants & Digital Clones
Reconstructing personality, voices & faces of the famous, even deceased, Youtube influencers can replicate!

AI Governance divide
EU (strict compliance),
US/China (fast innovation)

AI Social Impact



How AI ‘Thinks’ (1): Prediction & Meaning
Is Intelligent thought highly mechanized?

Prediction Engines

Both AI (LLMs) and the human brains are fundamentally prediction engines.

Example: When I say ‘I’m going to Turkey’, you predict I’ll talk about food or monuments depending on my interests/ prior context. LLMs similarly assign probabilities to the next branch of thought.

The sky is _____

How is Meaning Constructed

Wierzbicka: Meaning built from universal ‘semantic primes’ (good, bad, I, you...).

Wittgenstein: Meaning is use – no single essence, only a ‘family resemblance’ across contexts.

LLMs capture these family resemblances statistically rather than relying on fixed primitives.

How AI ‘Thinks’ (2): AI’s Cortical Tissue: Transformers QKV – Fuzzy logic and Associative Memory

1) Fuzzy Key-Value Pairs

LLMs encode knowledge as key–value pairs in a high-dimensional space. These keys and values are not stored as discrete entries but as continuous vectors, like an associative memory.

2) Query Decomposition

When a query arrives that doesn’t match any single key, it is decomposed into a weighted combination of known keys (cosine similarity).

3) Fuzzy Retrieval

The resulting attention weights combine the corresponding values into a single, contextualized vector – a weighted sum of memories. The output is an approximation that best fits the query.

4) Analogy to Human Thought

Like humans predicting the next thought in a conversation, LLMs predict the next branch of thought and choose the most relevant continuation based on SoftMax.

Hallucinations:
AI Prediction Gone Astray

AI Hallucinations

AI confidently generates incorrect or nonsensical information when its statistical predictions diverge from reality. Easy to fix with new training data

Human Hallucinations

Perception without external stimulus: the brain's predictions override sensory input. In schizophrenia the brain weighs predictions too highly.

Useful Simulations

Dreams & internal simulations help us rehearse, reinforce and validate our models – exploring outcomes without real-world consequences.

PHILOSOPHICAL IMPLICATIONS FOR AGI:

KANT & HEGEL & GÖDEL

The Kantian Lens (1): AI's Mind & Its Perception

Constructing Reality

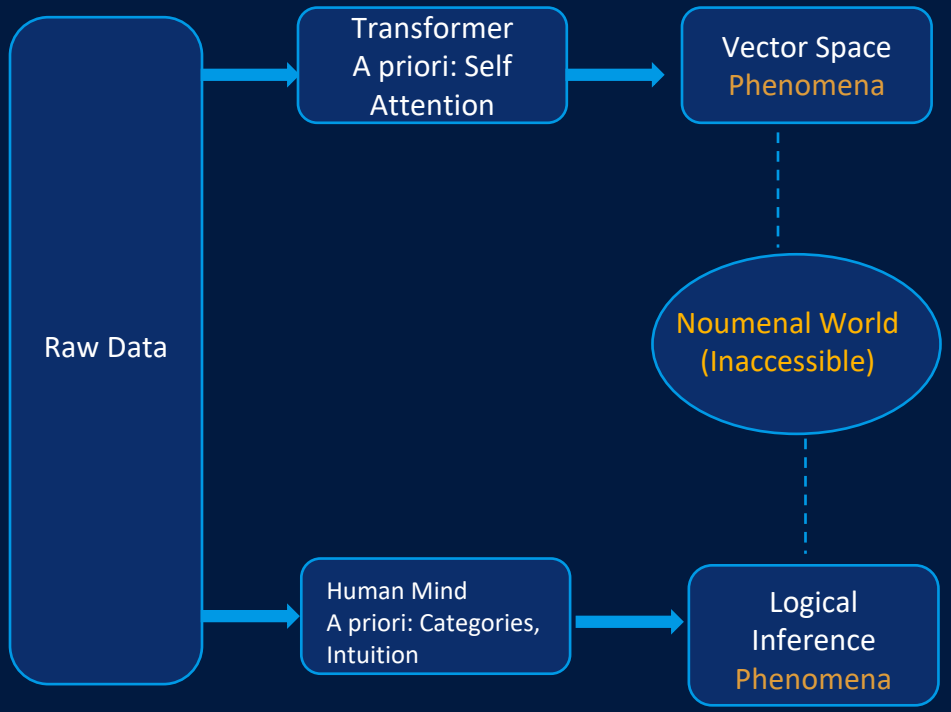
Human mind isn't a blank slate; it actively constructs reality using built-in structures ('categories') and **forms of intuition** (space & time).

AI's a-Priori

Transformer architecture & **self-attention** impose inductive biases – these act as the AI's a-priori categories. Training data is its 'raw sense data'; the learned vector space is its phenomenal world.

The Noumenal Barrier

Kant distinguishes between the phenomenal (experience) and the noumenal ('things-in-themselves'). The latter is forever **inaccessible** – both for humans and AIs.



The Kantian Lens (2): Critique of AGI & Understanding

Lacking A Priori Concepts

AGI learns correlations from data (a posteriori). It doesn't possess innate concepts like causality or substance – it's a phenomenal mimic, not a noumenal reasoner.

Where is the I / Self ?

Kant: A unified 'self' is the precondition for experience. Transformers compute in parallel without a central subject – AGI may be a 'zombie'.
Things without thinking; knows without knowing…..

Lacks Grounding & Embodiment

AGI knows patterns but not reality. Without embodiment or direct experience, its theory of mind & morals are ungrounded language games. (e.g. digestion)

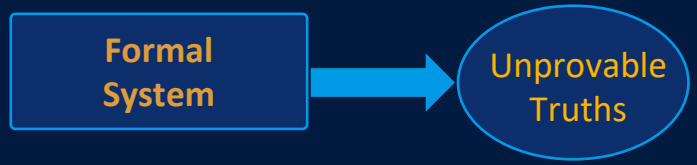
AI / AGI is more like a Smart Mimic / Zombie / Ghost

Gödel's Theorems: The Limits for AGI's Theory of Mind & Computation

Theorems

Any consistent formal system powerful enough for arithmetic has true statements it cannot prove (First Incompleteness).

Such a system cannot prove its own consistency (Second Incompleteness).

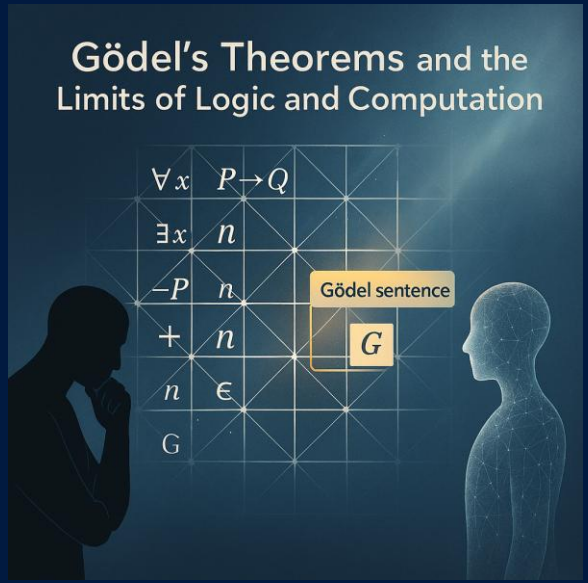


Implications for Mind

Penrose/Lucas: Humans might perceive Gödel truths via non-algorithmic insight ⇒ **mind > computation**. Others argue human cognition may also be mechanistic.

Implications for AGI

If mind > computation, purely computational AGI cannot reach human-level understanding & meaning; if mind is complex but computational, AGI still shares Gödelian limits.



A Gödel Sentence: G = 'This *statement* cannot be proven'
If **G were provable**, the system would prove a falsehood (because G says "I cannot be proven"). That would make the system inconsistent. If **G is not provable**, then what it says is actually true (because it correctly says "I cannot be proven"). So it's true, but unprovable.

Education

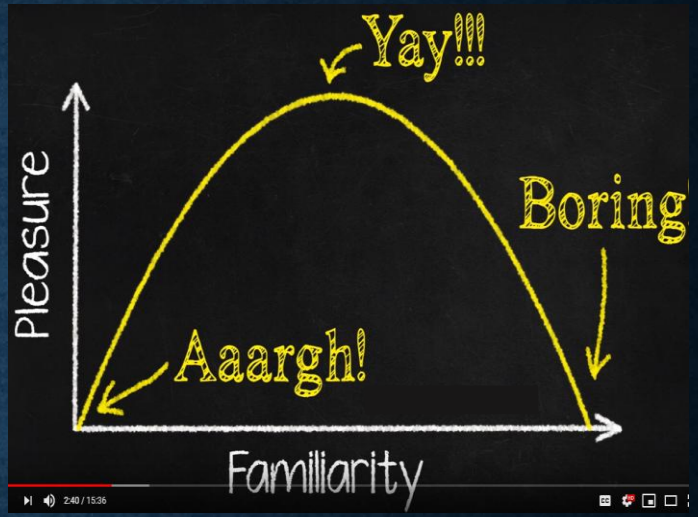
Teachers Dilemma & AI

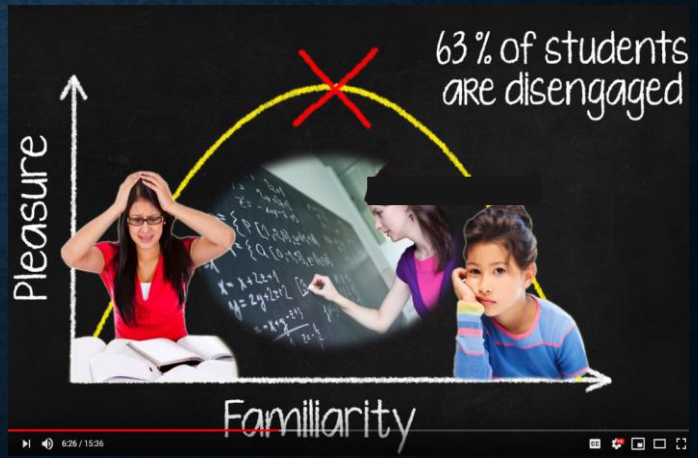
Past Knowledge Gaps

Education Systems fail because of past-gaps in knowledge; E.g. Calculus (12th grade) <- Algebra (7th Grade) <- Abstraction/Numeric Ops (2nd grade); AI has opportunity to diagnose root cause and fill learning gaps of the past; Teachers can't do this- since customization to each student is impossible.

Personalization

Custom Interactions, and multiple senses helps learn and retain information better





AI in Education

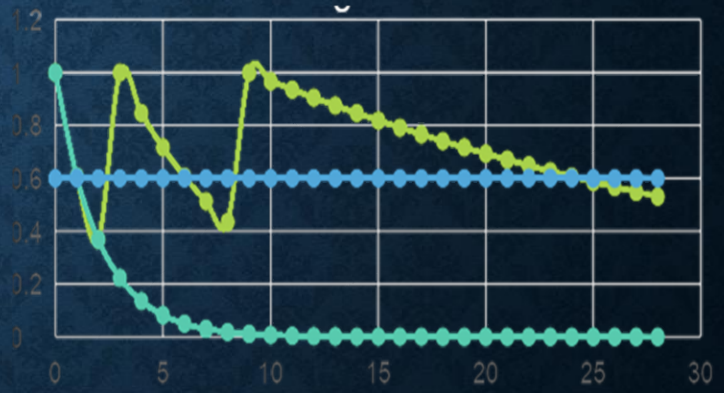
Active Learning

To retain information for life… Rote learning (memorization/repetition/cramming for exams) exponential decay of knowledge… (Future: AI will read brainwaves and reinforce your learning)

Gamify Exam taking

Anxiety and discouragement reduction – for performance, accuracy, speed can be easily trainable by ‘gamifying’ learning for each student. Better measurement accuracy of skill, knowledge and experience. Create custom positive feedback cycle until the concept is completely grasped.

Increased retention with AI based smart learning



AI will change the education landscape, and help make education a **basic human right in the 21 century**

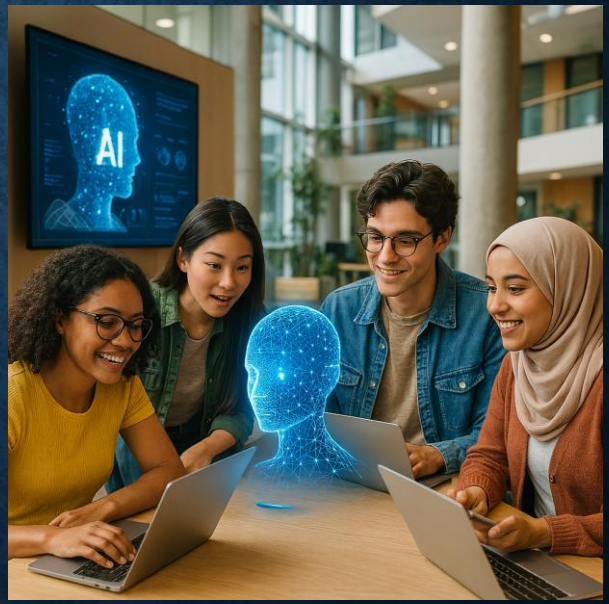
ADVICE FOR STUDENTS IN THE AI ERA

Don’t panic – every revolution felt overwhelming. KSE: Think of knowledge as a universal resource; Focus on skills and experience. More radiologists now than 2017

AI literacy for all majors. Focus on entrepreneurship. Ask Why, How, When, Who and Most important is What? Whichever is your Natural Curiosity with what as basis for action

Adaptability, Creativity, Teamwork, Ethics. Liberal arts can do well; being well read is important to converse with AI. University is Networking Opportunities

Learn more physical sciences and hard skills. Soft skills / Coding may disappear. Programming language of 2026 will be English. Get AI certifications.



Your Role: Shaping the Future of AI
AI is neither bad nor good; Its humans…

Students:
Future belongs to those who can ask good questions with insightful answers from AI: Hardest Question - **WHAT? And Action**

Workforce:
Lifelong learning; (AI will not replace you yet; Humans with better AI skills might replace you). Get AI certifications.

Universities and Employers:
Guide, empower, and adapt quickly to foster human flourishing alongside technological progress. Universities speed up curricula changes/pace.

Together:
Build a future where AI & technology amplifies purpose, connection (networking), and creativity.

Sri Lanka's AI Revolution: Global Reach, Local Roots

How artificial intelligence can transform our nation from brain drain to brain gain, empowering youth to earn global currency while strengthening local communities.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

The Sri Lankan Advantage: Virtual Migration Over Physical Migration

The Old Way

Physical Migration: Leave family, culture, and community behind to earn dollars or euros in distant lands. The painful cost of brain drain has weakened our nation's potential for decades.

- Family separation and cultural disconnection
- Loss of local talent and expertise
- Remittances help, but potential stays abroad

The AI Way (2026)

Virtual Migration: Work for Fortune 500 companies from your home in Galle, Kandy, or Jaffna. Earn global currency while living in Sri Lanka, supporting local economy and family.

- 92% literacy rate = global workforce ready
- **Digital nomad visas work both ways**
- Build AI agencies servicing international clients

⚠ CRITICAL ALERT

The Complementarity Trap: Moving Up the Value Chain

Sri Lanka faces a crucial crossroads. According to the World Bank (October 2025), our nation shows 7.3% AI job growth but dangerously low "AI-Human Complementarity." This means our current BPO, Offshore Software jobs—the backbone of thousands of families—are at existential risk of AI replacement.

The Danger Zone

Traditional call center work: answering scripts, basic data entry, basic and app software, repetitive customer queries—all easily automated by AI chatbots and voice systems.

The Solution Path

Move up the value chain immediately. Don't just answer calls—use AI to manage entire customer ecosystems, analyze trends, and provide strategic insights; Vibe coding – Tell AI to Code

The Opportunity

Become AI orchestrators, not AI competitors or blockers. Train in prompt engineering, AI system management, AI agents, and strategic automation design, Vibe coding.

Action Required: Youth must pivot now—build AI agencies focused on marketing automation, intelligent coding assistance, and advanced data analysis for global clients. The window is open, but it won't stay open forever.

LOCAL IMPACT

Tea & Agriculture: The Smart Farmer Revolution

Ceylon tea built our economy, but rising fertilizer costs and unpredictable yields threaten smallholder farmers. AI offers precision agriculture tools that work with smartphones—no expensive equipment required.

1

Early Disease Detection

Use smartphone photos or basic drone imagery to detect Blister Blight and other diseases weeks before visible to human eye. AI models analyze leaf patterns instantly.

2

Precision Fertilization

Stop wasting expensive fertilizer. AI analyzes soil conditions, weather patterns, and plant health to recommend exact amounts needed—reducing costs by up to 40%.

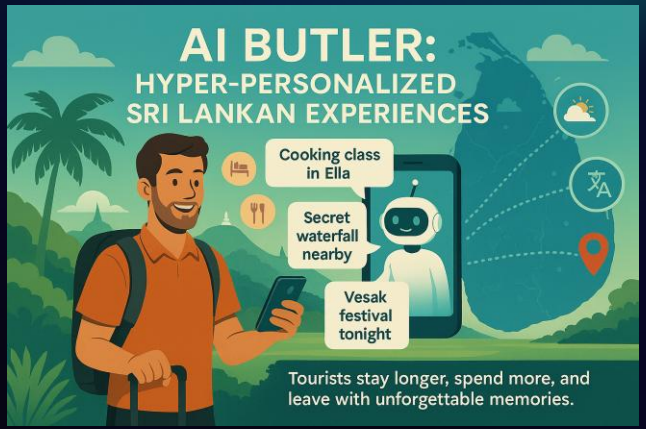
3

Yield Prediction

CatBoost AI models predict crop yields based on local weather data, helping farmers plan harvests and negotiate better prices. Stabilizes income for thousands of families.

Economic Impact: Even a 15% improvement in yield efficiency across Sri Lanka's agri sector translates to millions in additional GDP while keeping smallholder farms competitive globally.

Tourism: Every Visitor Gets a Personal AI Butler



Tourism drives foreign currency, but we're competing with Thailand, Maldives, and Indonesia. The differentiator? **Hyper-personalized experiences** powered by AI that increases spend-per-tourist dramatically.

The AI Tourism Revolution

Imagine every international visitor downloads an app that becomes their personal Sri Lankan guide. Not just hotel bookings—this AI butler knows their preferences, dietary needs, adventure tolerance, and budget.

Digital Nomad Visas – work both ways

1

Dynamic Rerouting

"It's raining in Nuwara Eliya today. I've found an incredible cooking class in Ella instead, with a chef who speaks your language."

2

Hidden Gems

"Based on your love of photography, there's a secret waterfall 20 minutes away with perfect morning light—only 3 other tourists know about it."

3

Cultural Bridge

"Tonight is Vesak. Here's what the lanterns mean, nearby temples to visit, and respectful customs to observe."

Bottom Line: Tourists stay longer, spend more on local experiences rather than chains, and leave glowing reviews. AI doesn't replace our hospitality—it amplifies it.

MANUFACTURING INNOVATION

Apparel: From Weeks to Hours with Generative AI

Sri Lanka's garment industry employs hundreds of thousands and competes on speed and quality. But design cycles—from concept sketches to physical samples—still take weeks. Generative AI collapses this timeline to hours.

01

Instant Pattern Generation

Designers describe concepts in natural language. AI generates dozens of pattern variations in minutes, each optimized for Sri Lankan fabric types and production capabilities.

02

Rapid Virtual Sampling

See realistic 3D renderings on virtual models before cutting a single piece of fabric. Iterate on colors, fits, and styles without material waste.

03

Speed-to-Market Dominance

Cut concept-to-sample time from 3 weeks to 8 hours. Sri Lanka becomes the "instant fashion" capital, capturing trend-driven orders competitors can't fulfill fast enough.

Competitive Edge: In fast fashion, speed is profit. Being 2 weeks faster means capturing seasonal trends while they're hot, commanding premium prices, and winning contracts from global brands.

EDUCATION REVOLUTION

Breaking the Tuition Culture: From Memorizing Answers to Questions Questions

Sri Lankan students are exhausted. The relentless tuition class culture—memorizing answers for high-stakes exams—crushes creativity and critical thinking and waste time duplicationg school. But here's the uncomfortable truth: **AI has already memorized the entire internet and encyclopedias**

The Critical Shift

Memorization has zero value when ChatGPT knows every fact instantly. The only human advantage is critical thinking, synthesis, and asking the right questions.

The Democratization

A student in rural Monaragala can have the same Socratic AI tutor as a student at a Colombo international school. AI bridges the English gap and knowledge gap simultaneously.

The Language Bridge

Real-time AI translation removes the fear barrier. Speak in Sinhala or Tamil, learn in your mother tongue—but remember, English remains the coding language of 2026.

> "Don't fear AI translating for you. But learn English anyway—because you need to control the AI, to prompt it, to make it serve your vision."

Healthcare: AI for the Village

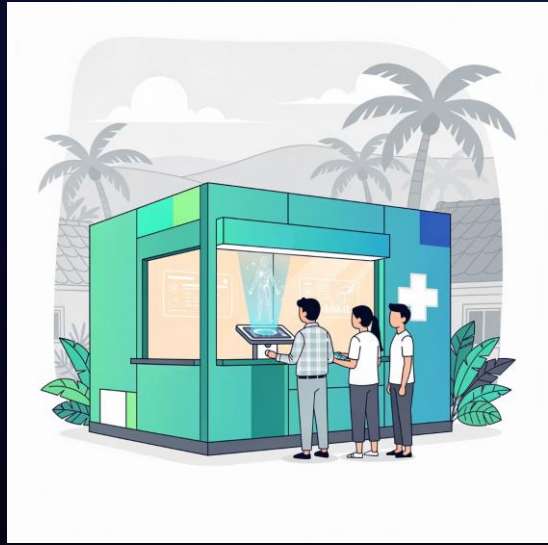
Rural Sri Lanka faces a doctor shortage while dengue and preventable diseases strain limited resources. AI can't replace doctors, but it can multiply their impact dramatically through prediction and intelligent triage.

Dengue Prediction

Analyze weather patterns, rainfall data, and mosquito density to predict dengue outbreaks two weeks in advance. Public health teams can spray preventively, warn communities, and prepare hospitals.

Lives Saved: Early warning systems reduce severe cases by 30-40%, preventing deaths and reducing healthcare costs for families who can least afford them.

Telemedicine Triage



In villages with one visiting doctor per week, an AI kiosk takes vitals, records symptoms, and performs intelligent triage. Critical cases get immediate attention; routine cases get guidance and scheduled visits.

Doctor Efficiency: Rural doctors see 3x more critical patients while AI handles routine consultations, medication reminders, and health education in local languages.

CALL TO ACTION

Youth: Don't Just Be Users. Be Builders.

Sri Lanka loves Facebook, TikTok, and Instagram. We're champion consumers of technology. But consumption doesn't build wealth or transform nations. **Creation does.**

Identify a Local Problem

Look around your village, your neighborhood, your daily commute. Garbage collection chaos? Unpredictable bus timings? Language barriers for farmers accessing market prices? These are opportunities.

Ask the AI Question

"How can I use an AI agent to solve this specific problem?" Not vague dreams—concrete solutions. An AI chatbot for bus schedules. A voice interface for crop prices in Sinhala. An image recognition tool for sorting recyclables.

Build It

Start small. Use no-code AI tools, learn Python basics, join online communities. Build the plugin, the wrapper, the solution. Test it with neighbors. Iterate based on real feedback.

Scale Globally

Your village problem exists in 10,000 villages across Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Solve it once in Sri Lanka, sell it to the world. **Global reach, local roots.**

The Challenge: By December 2026, let's have 1,000 Sri Lankan youth-built AI solutions solving real local problems. Not studying AI theory—actually building and deploying solutions that change lives.

Thank you!


INTELLIGENT
MORAL
COMPASSIONATE
PURPOSE
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AWAKENED HUMANITY