

SPECIALS

Celebrating Innovation and Entrepreneurship: National Startup Day Highlights the Power of New Businesses- Expert comments

 OXtoday News Desk

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National Startup Day, celebrated annually on January 16, is a day to honor and recognize the contributions of startups to the global economy. Startups are often associated with innovation, disruption, and entrepreneurship, making this day a perfect opportunity to highlight their importance. Here's a listicle of key industry experts who have shared their thoughts on the country's business landscape:

Mr Rikant Pittie, CEO & Co-founder of EaseMyTrip
At EaseMyTrip, we believe that the spirit of entrepreneurship is the foundation of innovation and progress. National Startup Day is a tribute to the bold spirit that drives thousands of startups across India to challenge conventions, disrupt industries, and create meaningful change.

The startup ecosystem in India has evolved rapidly, with over 160,000 recognized startups and more than 110 unicorns—startups valued at over \$1 billion. This remarkable growth reflects the success of the Startup India initiative, launched in 2016, and signifies the immense potential of young entrepreneurs who are not only fueling economic growth but also creating job opportunities across diverse sectors. The resilience and creativity of startups, especially in the face of unprecedented challenges like the pandemic, have proven that India is emerging as a global hub for innovation.

Our recent partnership with the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC), marked by the launch of our innovative product ScanMyTrip during the Startup Mahotsav, reflects our unwavering commitment to empowering startups and strengthening India's digital commerce ecosystem. This initiative is designed to create a seamless, unified platform that bridges the gap between buyers and sellers, driving inclusive growth and fostering a more vibrant entrepreneurial landscape.

As India continues its journey toward becoming a global innovation powerhouse, the government's focus on entrepreneurship, digital transformation, and ease of doing business is paving the way for limitless opportunities. We are confident that Indian startups will keep breaking barriers, redefining industries, and driving the nation's economic progress.

This National Startup Day, we celebrate the dreamers, doers, and disruptors shaping India's future. Your vision and determination are building the India of tomorrow, and we are proud to stand beside you on this journey.

Anand Agrawal, Co-founder & CPTO, Credgenics
On this National Startup Day, we celebrate the spirit of innovation, resilience, and collaboration that defines the Indian startup ecosystem. Startups across India are addressing critical gaps across industries, including finance, agriculture, healthcare, education, and sustainability, by offering creative and impactful solutions. Their ability to identify problems and craft empathetic, technology-driven responses has been instrumental in their rapid growth. The fintech sector, in particular, is driving remarkable changes within the financial services landscape, leveraging advanced technologies like AI and data-driven approaches to solve complex challenges.

As we look ahead to 2025, the Indian startup ecosystem is expected to continue transformation, fueled by global expansion, talent development, and a relentless focus on innovation. This momentum ensures that startups will remain key contributors to India's economic progress and global standing in the years to come."

Yuvraj Shidhaye, Founder and Director, TreadBinary
Startups are the architects of change, thriving in an ecosystem shaped by challenges and opportunities. In the ever-expanding landscape, startups are not just reshaping the IT sector but are driving innovation across industries.

In the Startup India initiative post getting recognition, a Startup may apply for Tax exemption under section 80 IAC of the Income Tax Act. Post getting clearance for Tax exemption, the Startup can avail tax holiday for 3 consecutive financial years out of its first ten years since incorporation.

In addition to it, we can also avail rebates on patent filings, thus facilitating smoother operational processes. It allows startups to focus on their core mission of innovation and growth. National Startup Day 2025 reminds us to celebrate the indomitable spirit of entrepreneurs and the ecosystem supporting them. As Dhirubhai Ambani wisely said, 'Ideas are no one's monopoly. Think big, think fast, and think ahead.' Let this be the guiding mantra for all aspiring entrepreneurs as they navigate the ever-evolving startup landscape and contribute to building a resilient and future-ready economy.

Sandlip Bhammer, Managing Partner, Green Frontier Capital
India's startup ecosystem is thriving, standing as the third-largest globally, fueled by innovation across diverse sectors such as climate technology, renewable energy, digital transformation and financial inclusion. This robust growth is supported by government initiatives like Startup India, which offers critical backing and, separately, increased access to venture capital is empowering entrepreneurs to transform their ideas into reality. Resultantly, the numbers tell a compelling story...India now boasts over 140,000 DPIIT-registered startups and more than 115 unicorns, a testament to the country's dynamic entrepreneurial landscape. These factors collectively establish a thriving ecosystem that continues to drive the growth and long-term success of startups in India. Indian startups are growing rapidly fueled by technological advancements, increased funding access and supportive platforms like Startup India. Sectors such as climate tech, fintech and health tech are thriving, in particular, driven by a digitizing economy, skilled talent and global collaborations. Furthermore, the rise of incubators, accelerators and access to international capital is also enabling efficient scaling. The outlook for Indian startups is highly promising with continued innovation in climate tech, fintech and AI leading the charge. Increased global funding, government support and a growing focus on sustainability are expected to drive growth. Expanding digital infrastructure and talent pools will also enable startups to scale further.

Rohan Bhargava, Co-Founder of CashKaro and EarnKaro
India's startup journey has been remarkable. In just eight years, the country transformed from a budding hub with 50 startups in 2016 to hosting over 1.28 lakh startups by April 2024. Today, India stands as the world's third-largest startup ecosystem, with over 100 unicorns and a thriving culture of innovation across sectors like e-commerce, fintech, and health tech. Despite global uncertainties, Indian startups exhibit resilience, prioritizing sustainable growth, profitability, and customer-centric solutions. Government initiatives, such as the DPIIT's focus on funding in smaller cities and the Fund of Funds scheme, have been instrumental in fostering growth. With advancements in digital infrastructure and rising investor interest, the future holds promise for deeper technological integration and stronger market penetration. This decade is poised for Indian startups to shine on the global stage, solving real-world challenges through scalable, impactful solutions.

Mr. Prabhat Shrivastava- Promoter, Founder & CEO, VitusCare
India's startup ecosystem has proven to be a key driver in solving critical challenges, especially in sectors like healthcare, where there has been a significant need for innovation and disruption. Healthcare startups are helping address the gaps in accessibility, affordability, and quality, particularly in underserved regions.

The Indian healthcare ecosystem, though robust in major cities, still faces considerable challenges in smaller towns and rural areas. There is an urgent need to bridge the gap in healthcare infrastructure, especially for chronic conditions like chronic kidney disease (CKD) that demand long-term care such as dialysis. For millions of people, the lack of access to affordable, high-quality care is a harsh reality.

At VitusCare, we are addressing these gaps by making dialysis more accessible and affordable. The focus is on providing quality renal care in underserved regions and we are committed to improving the lives of people suffering from chronic kidney disease and making a lasting impact on healthcare accessibility.

Kupplakshmi Krishnamoorthy, Global Head of Zoho for Startups
"Today, we celebrate the relentless spirit of entrepreneurs who continue to push boundaries, innovate, and drive change, despite the challenges they face. However, it is equally important to ensure these startups are equipped with the tools and skills required to build sustained business resilience. Digital adoption is still one of the biggest hurdles for many early-stage businesses, whether it is the high costs, lack of expertise, or the complexities of integration. To thrive in the current environment, it is critical for startups to own their niche while understanding the nuances of local demographics and leveraging technology by making it their strength. Additionally, to gain a competitive edge startups need to invest in building robust customer experience (CX), driven by empathy. This enables them to not only retain existing customers, but attract new ones, and ultimately build long-term brand loyalty," said Kupplakshmi Krishnamoorthy, Global Head, Zoho for Startups.

"At Zoho, we strive to bring down this barrier to technology by not just offering our technology, but also investing in guiding the startups on how they should approach their SaaS architecture. Through our Zoho for Startups (ZFS) program, we are committed to helping startups overcome digital adoption obstacles by offering pro-bono enterprise software that enables seamless digital transformation. So far, we've empowered over 15,000 startups, providing them with the tools they need to thrive. Our suite of apps has played a pivotal role in completing the circle of support for early-stage businesses—helping them stay both tech-led and team-led right from the idea stage. By offering our suite of scalable solutions, we enable startups to focus on what truly matters: growth, innovation, and turning their ideas into reality," she added.

Mrityunjaya Prajapati, CEO, Kalp Studio
"With the third-largest startup ecosystem globally, India is supporting businesses with programs like Startup India that facilitate funds support, tax advantages, and ease of doing business. Startups in the blockchain space are transforming sectors including supply chain management and banking, and the market is expected to grow at an astounding compound annual growth rate **CAGR of 87.7%** between 2023 and 2030. At Kalp Studio, we are redefining blockchain development by providing a comprehensive platform that supports multiple programming languages alongside low-code and no-code options. This approach empowers organizations to prioritize solving business challenges over navigating technical complexities. Our vision is to bridge the gap between blockchain innovation and practical implementation. In order to do that, we are working on capability building among the youth, through our **BUILD Bharat initiative**. The initiative aims to empower the coming generation of blockchain enthusiasts by uniting multiple DAOs across India and building a community of capable blockchain developers, who will be the driving force of the blockchain industry tomorrow and will play a pivotal role in the integration of blockchain systems across various industries and real-world use cases. On National Startup Day, we celebrate the pioneers addressing today's challenges and shaping tomorrow's opportunities, showcasing how India's startup ecosystem can lead the world toward a brighter and more inclusive future through innovation, collaboration, and commitment."

Avi Chanodia, Co-Founder, CREATE, Influencer Marketing and Talent Management startup
"The startup ecosystem in India is witnessing significant growth, especially in industries like talent management and influencer marketing. With advancements in technology, increasing digital adoption, and a supportive investment landscape, the environment for entrepreneurs has never been more promising. There are now more opportunities than ever for startups to scale quickly, innovate, and address evolving market needs. For entrepreneurs, the barriers to entry are lower, and the resources to build and scale businesses are more accessible than ever. The future holds immense potential, and the startup community is poised to drive this industry forward with fresh ideas and disruptive solutions."

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Hanuman Tripathi, Partner, Fintech, Lead Angels.
"On National Startup Day, we salute the relentless spirit of entrepreneurs driving innovation and shaping India's Fintech landscape. Startups are redefining financial services, making these more inclusive, accessible, and efficient. At Lead Angels we are committed to empowering visionary founders who are transforming ideas into impactful solutions. Our Investors look for promising Startups with proven revenue models and committed founders, who are ready to invest in building an inspired team and aggressively grow business. We are committed to uphold our portfolio companies for their all round needs, specially market access, process maturity and organisation development. This would ensure building maturity with time in each Investee. This also helps our investors as their returns improve and are better assured.India is one of the top markets for fintech business. With the thrust of the government, Indian Fintech companies are innovating the country's Fintech landscape rapidly".

Sushanto Mitra, CEO, Lead Angels
"On National Startup Day, we celebrate the spirit of innovation driving India forward. At Lead Angels, our commitment goes beyond funding—we focus on creating lasting value for our investors by identifying high-potential startups and actively supporting their growth. By combining strategic guidance with deep market insights, we bridge the gap between visionary entrepreneurs and discerning investors. Our goal is to empower startups to scale sustainably while ensuring robust returns for our investors. Together, we are building a thriving ecosystem where innovation meets impactful investment".

Ankit Kedia, Founder and Lead Investor, Capital-A.
National Startup Day is a testament to the transformative journey of India's entrepreneurs, who are reshaping industries with unprecedented boldness. Once considered niche or high-risk, sectors like hardware, manufacturing, and climate tech are now driving innovation in the Indian startup landscape. This evolution goes beyond funding ideas—it's about empowering visionaries tackling challenges that matter on a global scale. Policies like the National Deep Tech Policy and PLI schemes have been pivotal, instilling confidence in startups to dream big and aim higher. At Capital-A, we have always championed the spirit of breaking traditional boundaries, and today's startups are proving that the impossible can be achieved with the right ecosystem. What stands out most is the surge of entrepreneurial energy from Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities, reflecting a truly democratized spirit of innovation. National Startup Day is a call to action—a reminder to keep pushing boundaries and establish India as the global hub for innovation and excellence.

Mr. Sarvagya Mishra, Co-founder & Director at Superbot
"On the National Start-up Day, we'd like to commend the Honourable PM of India and the government's earnest efforts in growing the start-up ecosystem in India. Today, we are the world's third-largest start-up ecosystem, and are only poised to grow bigger, bolder, and better! We have been able to accomplish this incredible feat, on the back of the Start-up India, Stand Up India program, and the strengthening of the overall digital infrastructure. At Superbot, we believe that emerging technologies like AI, Machine Learning, Conversational, and Gen AI are going to define the next phase of growth and start-up development. And we stay forever committed to helping the shining vision of India as a leading hub for start-up innovation and disruption, across the globe"- Mr. Sarvagya Mishra, Co-founder & Director at Superbot

Mr. Sumit Singh, CEO and Co-founder at DashLoc
"National Startup Day is a celebration of the entrepreneurial spirit that fuels innovation and drives change across industries. At DashLoc, we proudly embrace this spirit as we continue to redefine the possibilities for local businesses in the digital age. As a startup, we've embraced the challenges of the ever-evolving digital landscape and transformed them into opportunities for hyperlocal growth. In just a few years, we've empowered countless local businesses to thrive through data-driven marketing solutions, helping them engage with their customers at a deeper, more personalized level. Our journey from a vision to a thriving platform reflects the immense potential of startups to bring about meaningful change in industries. At DashLoc, we remain committed to scaling new heights in technology, innovation, and client success, as we continue to unlock growth opportunities for businesses around the world. On this special day, we honor all startups, whose relentless pursuit of creativity, resilience, and impact shape the future of the economy and the world"- Mr. Sumit Singh, CEO and Co-founder at DashLoc

Mr. Rajat Goel, Co-founder and CEO of Eye-Q Superspecialty Hospitals
"On National Startup Day, Eye-Q Super-Specialty Eye Hospitals celebrates the spirit of innovation and entrepreneurship that drives the growth of startups in India. As a healthcare organization that began with a vision to revolutionize eye care in the country, we understand the challenges and rewards of building a business from the ground up. Over the past 18 years, Eye-Q has successfully treated over 1 crore patients across more than 30 super-specialty hospitals, blending innovative treatments with advanced technology. We are particularly proud of our efforts to provide affordable, high-quality eye care to patients in smaller cities, ensuring that advanced treatments are accessible to a wider population. Startups like ours play a critical role in India's evolving economy, not only driving technological advancements but also creating jobs and offering innovative solutions to pressing healthcare challenges. In the healthcare sector, especially, startups are instrumental in improving patient care by introducing breakthrough technology and new approaches. We believe that nurturing a robust ecosystem for startups, through policies that support investments, mentorship, and innovation, will pave the way for the nation's progress. At Eye-Q, we remain committed to innovation and look forward to partnering with the next generation of entrepreneurs to build a healthier, more accessible, and equitable future for all"- Mr. Rajat Goel, Co-founder and CEO of Eye-Q Superspecialty Hospitals

Advocate Ayush Jindal- Founder of Be Legal
"On the National Start-up Day, it's important to applaud the grit and resilience of the government in making India the world's third largest start-up ecosystem. Today, India stands at the cusp of a significant greater achievements, owing to visionary initiatives like Start-up India, Stand Up India, coupled with a even voley of favourable policies and frameworks. As India's start-up ecosystem evolves, it also underscores the importance of having a robust and dynamic regulatory environment. It is with proper legal frameworks that we can safeguard intellectual property, promote innovation, and safeguard users' interest and data privacy. At Be Legal, we stay forever committed to helping India's growing start-ups carefully navigate the world of corporate governance and complex regulations, and contribute towards driving global competitiveness in India"- Advocate Ayush Jindal- Founder of Be Legal

Ms. Simrat Kathuria, CEO and Head Dietitian at The Diet Xperts
"On National Startup Day, we recognize the transformative power of entrepreneurship to shape new industries and redefine the status quo. At TheDietXperts, we believe that startups have the unique ability to disrupt traditional sectors, including health and wellness, by offering personalized, scalable solutions that empower individuals to take control of their health. As a health-focused startup, our mission is to revolutionize the way people approach nutrition, making evidence-based dietary guidance accessible to all, regardless of background or circumstance. We recognize that true wellness begins with informed food choices, and we are committed to providing people with the tools, knowledge, and support to lead healthier, more fulfilling lives. On this day, we renew our pledge to drive meaningful change and make wellness a way of life for everyone"- Ms. Simrat Kathuria, CEO and Head Dietitian at The Diet Xperts

Sanandan Sudhir, Founder & CEO On2Cook
My heart swells with pride every time I see a new spark of innovation in our country. National Startup Day isn't just another date on the calendar—it's a reminder of the tremendous potential that lies in our 1.4 billion-strong population. Even if a tiny fraction of us embrace entrepreneurship, the ripple effects could reshape our economy and our place in the world.

From my own journey, I've learned that turning a promising idea into a thriving business requires more than just determination. It takes a fail fast and never-give-up attitude, mentors, investors, supportive policies, and a nurturing environment—one where people aren't afraid to dream big and where failure is seen as a stepping stone rather than a dead end.

I believe it's about time for all of us—policymakers, industry leaders, investors, and everyday citizens—to stand together and bolster our startup ecosystem. That means offering real support in terms of funding, guidance, and infrastructure so that our brightest minds have the freedom to build, experiment and grow right here at home. As we celebrate the National Startup Day, let's commit to creating an environment where innovative ideas can flourish, where every aspiring entrepreneur feels empowered, and where our collective success fuels a better future for every Indian.

San Banerjee, Co-Founder & CEO, ADDA.io
2025 is a perfect year for disruption. With a newly corrected funding scene, focus on profitability, balancing the costs of AI with the potential cost savings it brings, and new problems that have become solvable with greater compute power.

National Startup Day celebrates the spirit of innovation and resilience that defines India's startup ecosystem. At ADDA.io, we are proud to contribute to building smarter, safer, and more connected communities across the country. This day is a reminder that every idea, when nurtured, has the potential to create a lasting impact. Let's collaborate, innovate, and grow together to shape the future of living in India. Rise High!

Piyush Jain, Co-Founder and CEO, Impact Guru and CarePal Group
"National Startup Day is a tribute to the entrepreneurial spirit driving India's progress and innovation. Launched under the visionary Startup India initiative, it recognizes the pivotal role startups play in fostering economic growth, creating jobs, and solving some of society's most pressing challenges. Healthtech, insurtech, and fintech are prime examples of sectors where startups are not only disrupting traditional models but are also democratizing access to essential services. On this day, we celebrate the ingenuity, resilience, and impact of Indian startups that are shaping a future where healthcare is more accessible, insurance is more inclusive, and financial empowerment reaches every corner of the country."

Aditya Singh Ratnu, CEO & Managing Director of ZEVO
"As we celebrate National Startup Day, we recognize that startups are the vital engine powering India's future. Each startup represents not just a business, but a dream to transform our nation. At ZEVO, our journey in revolutionizing logistics through zero-emission solutions shows how startups can create meaningful impact at scale. We're proud to be part of India's startup ecosystem that's building innovative solutions for a sustainable tomorrow. Every entrepreneur's vision and determination adds to our nation's progress, making startups truly indispensable for India's growth

Mr. Rahul Nainwal, CEO, Runway Incubator and Director, School of Business, UPES
"As of October 2024, India boasted only about 1,100 active incubators. What we must realise is that incubated startups are two and a half times more likely to secure funding than their non-incubated counterparts and churn out higher revenues. With only 0.8 incubators per million people in India—compared to 8–10 in countries like the U.S. and China—there is an urgent need to establish more incubators to support the growing economy by giving a boost to the startup ecosystem. This is where university incubators come in. They bridge academic expertise with entrepreneurial support, promoting innovation in deep tech like AI and ML, and other technologies needed to navigate into the future of business. They prepare startups for real-world impact, aligning with social and economic goals while providing mentorship, resources, and networks to scale solutions. Promoting them is essential to harness talent, drive innovation, nurture startups that address real-world challenges and fuel economic growth."