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Inaugural Meeting of The Board of Advisors

In a recent gathering on 3rd September 2024, the Board of Advisors of AKCJ Ventures came together to chart a progressive path forward for the firm in this dynamic startup ecosystem. The meeting served as an excellent platform for members to share insights, reinforce the firm's vision and mission, and discuss innovative investment strategies. The key attendees were Maj. Gen. (Retd.) Mandip Singh, Mr. Ritesh Khandelwal, Mr. Avdhesh Maheshwari, Mr. Amit Jain, Mr. Namit Vijh, Ms. Shivani Kapoor, Mr. Rakshit Kejriwal and Dr. Tony Parmar (via VC)

One of the key highlights was the presentation of the firm's investment thesis, which laid out a comprehensive framework for selecting promising startup investments. The interactive discussions that followed allowed board members to provide invaluable feedback, enhancing the portfolio strategy and emphasizing a balanced approach to risk allocation.

The board embraced the concept of a sector-agnostic strategy for the firm's inaugural fund, recognizing the importance of capturing a diverse range of opportunities. Additionally, a collective focus on investing in startups located in Tier-2 cities was agreed upon, tapping into the significant potential these markets offer compared to more saturated Tier-1 regions.

A notable outcome was the consensus on the necessity of obtaining unanimous consent for high-risk investments, ensuring that all decisions align with the firm's strategic objectives. The discussions also highlighted the importance of securing anchor investors and the intention to make initial self-investments in select startups before engaging external capital.

Celebrating the Board of Advisors

The AKCJ Ventures Board of Advisors is composed of distinguished professionals from various sectors, bringing a wealth of experience and expertise to the table. Their collaborative efforts are instrumental in guiding the firm's strategy and ensuring its competitive edge in the startup landscape.

Positive Learnings and Forward Outlook

The meeting underscored the importance of collaboration, strategic alignment, and adaptability in achieving the firm's goals. With a commitment to periodically revisiting and refining the investment strategy, AKCJ Ventures is poised to respond effectively to market dynamics. This proactive and positive approach aims to foster sustainable growth and make impactful contributions to the vibrant startup ecosystem.

As AKCJ Ventures moves forward, the insights gained from this meeting will play a crucial role in shaping the firm's future endeavors, reinforcing its dedication to supporting innovative startups and driving meaningful change.

India's Startup Ecosystem: Insights from the Heart of Innovation



In an exciting step forward for AKCJ Ventures, Neha Lakhwara, the Founding Partner, recently had the honor of participating in two vibrant panel discussions: the "Chalo Delhi BestVantage Startup Meet 2024" and "Startup Mixer Noida by Startupnews.fyi."

These events were more than just gatherings; they were an immersion into the driving force behind India's entrepreneurial wave. What struck her most was the sheer energy, innovation, and grit displayed by founders, especially those from emerging regions.

The experience not only reaffirmed her belief in India's boundless potential but also deepened her understanding of the evolving startup landscape.

The rise of AI and Machine Learning

–Shivam Mittal, Manager, Investment & Research 

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) have moved from futuristic concepts to transformative forces shaping today's industries, offering a wealth of investment opportunities. Valued at \$136 billion in 2023, the global AI market is projected to grow to over \$1.8 trillion by 2030, driven by increased adoption across sectors like healthcare, finance, transportation, and retail.

Healthcare innovation, particularly in predictive analytics, robotic surgery, and drug discovery, is a key area attracting investors. Startups like Tempus and PathAI are leveraging AI to offer personalized treatments and improve diagnostic accuracy. The financial services sector is also benefiting from AI through algorithmic trading, portfolio optimization, and robo-advisors, enabling more efficient, automated investment strategies. In addition, AI is transforming risk management by enabling real-time assessments and early detection of market risks.

The autonomous vehicle industry presents exciting prospects, with AI driving advancements in self-driving cars and transportation infrastructure. Retail and e-commerce are utilizing AI for personalized recommendations, customer service automation, and demand forecasting.

Investing in AI infrastructure—such as hardware, cloud computing, and data services—is another promising opportunity. With AI becoming an essential part of virtually every industry, early investments in these transformative technologies are poised to generate significant long-term rewards.

[Click here to read more](#)

Unlocking Prosperity: Wealth Beyond Tier 1 Cities

–Ishan Singh, Investment Analyst 

India's economic growth is increasingly being driven by Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities, which are emerging as significant contributors to the nation's wealth. Historically overshadowed by major metros like Delhi and Mumbai, cities such as Indore, Jaipur, and Surat are seeing a surge in high-net-worth individuals (HNWIs) and increased investments. The share of Assets Under Management (AUM) from these regions has grown substantially, reflecting a broader distribution of wealth.

Consumer behavior in these cities is evolving, with a growing focus on luxury spending, high-end goods, and travel. This transformation is supported by improved infrastructure, a skilled workforce, and government initiatives like Startup India, which are fostering innovation and business growth.

As these cities continue to rise, they are poised to play an increasingly important role in shaping India's economic future.

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Headwinds and Tailwinds in the Indian Pharma Industry

–Sarthak Nautiyal, Assistant Manager, Investment & Research 

India's pharmaceutical industry, one of the largest globally, is at a pivotal juncture. The sector is experiencing both tailwinds and headwinds. On the positive side, strong domestic demand, driven by a growing middle class and an increasing prevalence of chronic diseases, is boosting the market, now valued at \$65.2 billion.

Additionally, India continues to lead in global generic drug exports, supplying 40% of the U.S. generics market. The rise of biologics and vaccines, coupled with increased R&D investments, further propels the industry forward.

However, challenges such as stringent regulatory oversight, rising raw material costs, and global trade barriers pose significant hurdles. Despite these obstacles, the sector is poised for sustained growth, with a projected market value of \$106.67 billion by 2030.

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Generative AI: Not A Sole Competitive Differentiator

–Amit KC Jain, Founder and Managing Partner 

In the world of chess, mastery of the game doesn't come from simply learning the moves. It comes from understanding strategy, positioning, and anticipating your opponent's next play. Imagine chess as a business landscape and the recent advancements in Generative AI as a new, game-changing piece introduced to the board. This piece—like a queen—has immense power. It can dominate the board, create new opportunities, and outmaneuver others if played correctly. But as with any powerful chess piece, it doesn't guarantee victory. Success lies in how well it complements the rest of your pieces.

Let's go back to the introduction of the queen into chess centuries ago. When it was first introduced, players who quickly mastered the queen's potential gained a significant edge over their opponents. However, over time, everyone learned to use the queen's capabilities. It no longer offered a competitive advantage—just a tool to keep pace with others. The same thing happened with the steam engine and personal computers. At first, companies that adopted these technologies surged ahead, but soon the playing field leveled as more businesses embraced the innovations.



Generative AI is like that new chess piece. For now, it offers those who deploy it early a temporary advantage. Companies can use it to analyze vast amounts of proprietary data, make decisions faster, and even create new products. It's like capturing your opponent's knights and bishops early in the game, opening up more space on the board. However, as other companies begin to integrate Gen AI into their operations, the advantage starts to fade.

The real chess masters—those who win consistently—aren't just the players who have a powerful queen on the board. They are the ones who integrate the queen into a broader strategy, amplifying the strengths of their other pieces. Likewise, businesses that want long-term success with Gen AI need to do more than just adopt the technology. They must use it to enhance their unique, hard-to-replicate assets, whether that's proprietary data, customer relationships, or specialized expertise. This is like using Gen AI to improve the positioning of your pieces—your pawns, rooks, and knights—so that they work together toward a decisive victory.

In the end, Gen AI will become a standard tool across industries, much like the queen has become a fundamental piece in chess. But just having it on the board won't guarantee a win. It's how well you use it, how deeply you integrate it into your existing strengths, that will determine whether you become a chess master—or just another player in the game.

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