Talent Radar

Cloud

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recruise

Contents

CLOUD TECH · MAY 2026

A sector read on cloud technology hiring in India, GCCs included.

The Big Picture

The cloud roles getting funded right now sit closer to governance than to infrastructure.

Sachith Kumar Rai

Managing Director & Founder,
Recruise Global

Cloud has quietly become one of the most demanding corners of the hiring market, and the nature of that demand has changed. On our reading of the market, cloud hiring rose by around 19% year-on-year to March 2026, a second straight quarter of acceleration. The driver is no longer provisioning infrastructure. It is cost, reliability and governance across estates that are multi-cloud by default, with roughly two-thirds of large India enterprises now running three or more providers.

Inside that shift, platform engineering is the breakout. Postings for internal developer platforms and golden-path tooling have risen sharply, by our estimate up around 45% in a year, as enterprises work to make multi-cloud usable for their product teams. FinOps has followed the same path, moving from back-office housekeeping to a board-level concern.

The constraint is supply. We estimate that India's active cloud talent covers only about 40% of the roles the market will need by 2028, and the shortage is sharpest at the senior architect and SRE levels. Most practitioners crossed into cloud-native work only from 2022, so the eight-to-twelve-year band that produces platform leads and principal SREs is structurally thin.

My advice to the leaders we work with is to hire for demonstrated impact, not paper. Infrastructure-as-code repositories, real cost-savings stories and open-source contributions tell you more than a certificate does. Certifications are table stakes now; proof that someone has made a cloud estate cheaper and more reliable is what sets a candidate apart.

Executive Summary

CLOUD TECH AT A GLANCE

Cloud hiring has run at approx +19% YoY while skilled supply lags. Platform engineering, FinOps and a structural talent gap are driving it.

YOY GROWTH CLOUD TECH **+19%** 2nd highest of all sectors	PLATFORM ENG. POSTINGS **+132%** Jan '25–Mar '26
CLOUD FRESHER HIRING **+21%**	OVERALL CLOUD DEMAND **+24%**
ACTIVE CLOUD LISTINGS **95K+**	CLOUD PROS NEEDED BY 2028 **300K+** Recruise est.

WHAT THE MARKET SHOWS

Demand

Cloud leads. Cloud hiring led at +19% YoY with +24% overall demand and 95,000+ active listings by March 2026. Platform engineering is the breakout capability.

Governance

The breakout. Multi-cloud is now default — 68% of large India enterprises run 3+ providers. Platform-engineering postings +132%; 47% now run a dedicated FinOps function.

Supply

The constraint. Active supply covers ~40% of projected 2028 demand of 300,000+ roles. Cloud is a twin engine of India's projected ~9M new tech jobs by 2030; NASSCOM projects GCCs growing to ~1,900–2,200 centres and ~3M tech professionals by 2030. The pool is young — most crossed into cloud-native roles only from 2022.

Source: Recruise Intelligence listings analysis & practitioner estimates (proprietary); EY 'The AIdea of India' 2026; NASSCOM 2030 tech-jobs & GCC growth outlook.

Finding One

Cloud outruns every adjacent stack, and platform engineering is the breakout

FINDING ONE

Cloud hiring is pulling ahead of the wider tech stack, and platform engineering leads the surge.

Cloud is growing faster than the stacks around it, and the growth is concentrated in a few capabilities. On our reading, platform engineering, FinOps and Kubernetes lead the hiring, while infrastructure-as-code and multi-cloud fluency have become the common entry filters. The skills that define a strong profile now run from Terraform and Pulumi through Kubernetes and Helm, GitOps and CI/CD pipelines, service mesh and serverless, to FinOps tooling, observability, and SRE practice built around SLOs and error budgets.

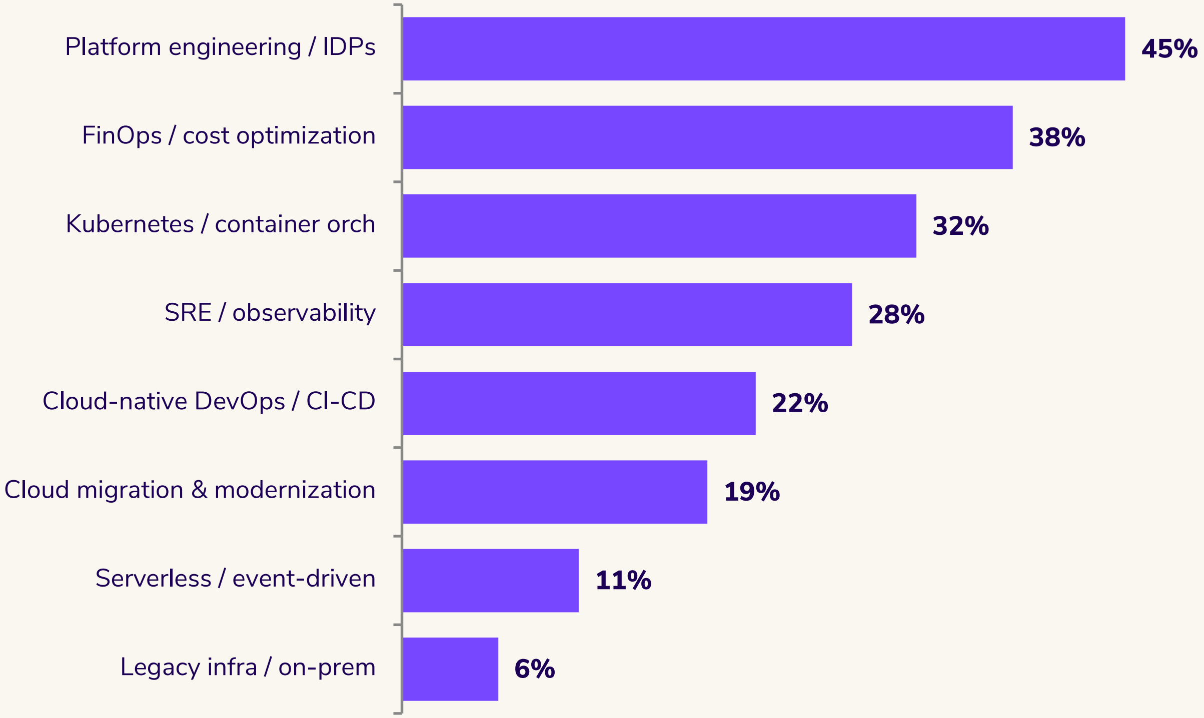
Two shifts explain why. Multi-cloud is now the default rather than the exception; by our estimate around two-thirds of large India enterprises run three or more providers, which turns platform engineering and FinOps into board-level concerns rather than infrastructure housekeeping. FinOps in particular has gone mainstream: on our reading close to half of large enterprises now run a dedicated function, and a majority name cost overruns as their single biggest cloud concern.

What hiring leaders should act on:

The practical implication is that "cloud" is no longer one search. Brief each mandate by the specific capability it needs, whether that is platform engineering, FinOps, SRE or security, and by the band it sits in. Above all, treat platform engineering as its own search with its own brief, not a rebadged general DevOps requisition. The profile that builds an internal developer platform is not the profile that keeps the lights on.

Sub-segment growth and top skills

SUB-SEGMENT HIRING, YoY



TOP CLOUD SKILLS IN DEMAND

May 2026, India cloud roles. Platform engineering, FinOps and Kubernetes lead the growth; IaC and multi-cloud fluency are the common entry filters.

Terraform / Pulumi (IaC)	Multi-cloud (AWS/Azure/GCP)
Kubernetes / Helm	GitOps (Flux/ArgoCD)
CI/CD (GitHub Actions)	Service mesh (Istio/Linkerd)
Serverless (Lambda/Cloud Run)	FinOps tooling (Kubecost)
Observability (Datadog/OTel)	SRE (SLOs / error budgets)

Multi-cloud is default

68% of large India enterprises run 3+ clouds, making platform engineering and FinOps board-level concerns rather than infra housekeeping.

FinOps has gone mainstream

47% now run a dedicated FinOps function; 58% cite cost overruns as their top cloud concern.

Source: Recruise Intelligence listings analysis & practitioner estimates (proprietary); EY 'The AIdea of India' 2026, to May 2026. Sub-segment hiring YoY and adoption shares are Recruise data.

Finding Two

Supply covers ~40% of projected demand

FINDING TWO

Supply covers ~40% of projected demand.

Cloud demand is real and rising, but the talent to meet it is not there yet. Our estimate is that India's active cloud workforce, somewhere between 96,000 and 136,500 practitioners, covers only about 40% of the roles the market will need by 2028, when demand is likely to pass 300,000 cloud roles. That projection sits inside a bigger wave: NASSCOM expects around nine million new tech jobs in India by 2030, with cloud and AI/ML the twin engines and GCCs growing toward three million professionals. The 300,000-plus figure is our estimate of the cloud slice of that trajectory.

The shortage is not evenly spread. It bites hardest at the senior architect and SRE levels, because most practitioners only crossed into cloud-native work from 2022. That leaves the eight-to-twelve-year band, the one that produces platform leads and principal SREs, structurally young and thin, and the market is pricing that scarcity ahead of headcount.

What hiring leaders should act on:

The move is to plan for scarcity rather than expect the market to supply it. Build the pipeline ahead of the brief, hire for trajectory rather than a finished résumé, and grow senior platform and SRE capability from within. At the top of the experience curve the complete profile barely exists at scale, so the organisations that build it are the ones that will have it.

Talent supply snapshot, India

HEADLINE SUPPLY NUMBERS

India's active cloud supply covers ~40% of projected 2028 demand of 300,000+ roles — structurally short at senior architect and SRE levels.

SUPPLY COVERAGE
~40%
of 2028 demand

PROJECTED 2028 DEMAND
300K+

TOTAL CLOUD HEADCOUNT ▣
96K–136.5K
Recruise estimate

PLATFORM-TEAM ADOPTION
41%
Recruise estimate

SUPPLY VS 2028 DEMAND

~40% | **Unmet need ~60%**

Young pool, thin senior band

Most practitioners crossed into cloud-native roles only from 2022, so the 8–12yr band — platform leads and principal SREs — is structurally young and thin. The market is pricing scarcity ahead of headcount.

On the demand figure

Cloud demand rides India's broader tech-jobs wave — NASSCOM projects ~9M new tech jobs by 2030 with cloud and AI/ML the twin engines, and GCCs growing to ~3M professionals. The 300k+ cloud-roles-by-2028 figure is a Recruise estimate within that trajectory.

Source: Recruise Intelligence listings analysis & practitioner estimates (proprietary); salary bands & cert premium corroborated vs public India trackers; EY 'The AIdea of India' 2026; NASSCOM 2030 tech-jobs & GCC growth outlook.

Finding Three

Pay runs high, certs lift it, and demand has spread beyond IT

FINDING THREE

Pay runs high and climbs with certifications, and demand reaches every sector.

Cloud pay runs high and climbs steeply with seniority. Entry roles sit in the Rs.6 to 11 LPA band, mid-level cloud and DevOps engineers in the low twenties, and senior leadership reaches from Rs.70 LPA to over Rs.1.3 crore for a VP or Head of Cloud Engineering. A certification still moves the number, lifting pay by 20 to 35% over an uncertified profile at the same level and widening at the architect and platform-lead tiers. Salary growth is forecast at 10 to 15% a year through 2030, and SaaS and product firms increasingly compete on equity and RSU refreshers for senior SRE and platform hires who are holding GCC counter-offers.

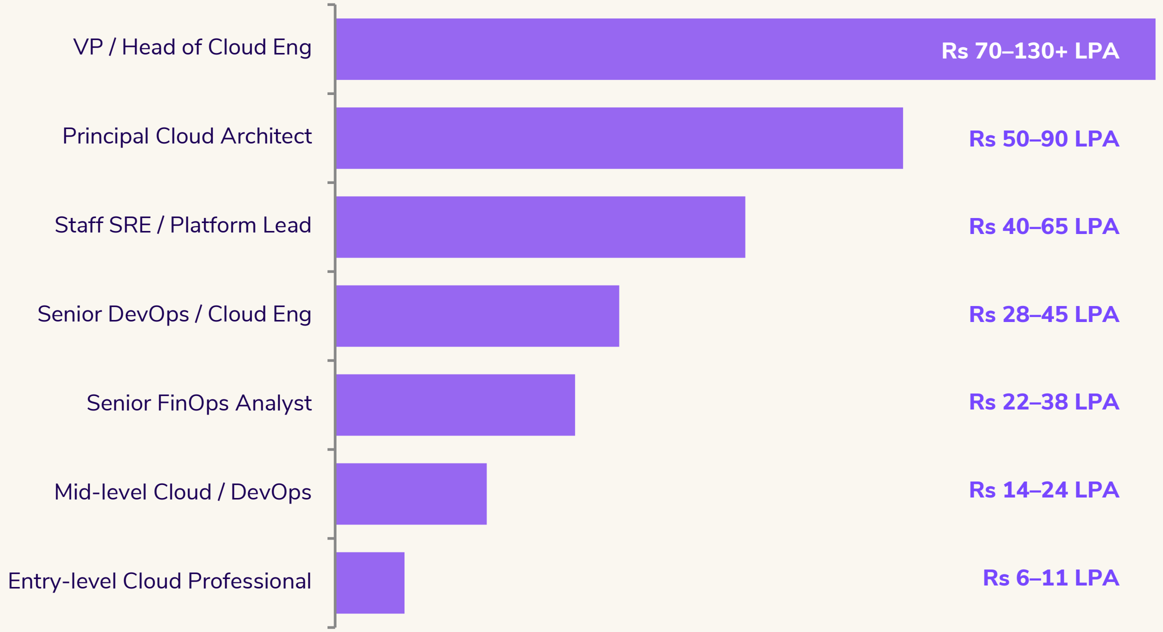
Demand has spread well beyond core IT. BFSI and the GCCs are the most undersupplied, as RBI cloud-outsourcing norms and DPDP rules drive architect and FinOps demand at the same time. IT and product firms are standing up dedicated platform teams and GCC cloud centres of excellence; e-commerce and SaaS are already cloud-native and compete on scope and equity rather than headline pay; manufacturing is only beginning its edge-to-cloud and IIoT journey; and healthcare and pharma are hiring for the cloud for the first time on the back of DPDP data-residency rules. Bengaluru sets the top pay benchmark, with Hyderabad and Pune close behind on GCC cloud investment.

What hiring leaders should act on:

Benchmark every offer against both the role-specific band and a 20 to 35% cloud premium, and move fastest in BFSI and the GCCs, where the regulatory drivers are stacking demand on the thinnest senior pools.

Salary bands and sector demand

SALARY BANDS BY CLOUD ROLE



Cloud certs lift pay 20 to 35% over an uncertified profile at the same level, widest at architect and platform-lead tiers. Salary growth is forecast 10–15% p.a. through 2030. SaaS and product firms compete on equity/RSU refreshers for senior SRE and platform hires who hold GCC counter-offers.

SUPPLY VS DEMAND BY SECTOR

BFSI / GCCs	*Most undersupplied. RBI cloud-outsourcing and DPDP rules drive architect and FinOps demand at once.*
IT / Product	*Building dedicated platform teams and GCC cloud CoEs.*
E-commerce / SaaS	*Cloud-native already; competes on scope and equity, not headline pay.*
Manufacturing / industry	*Edge-to-cloud and IIoT; almost no incumbent base.*
Healthcare / Pharma	*DPDP data-residency driving first-time cloud hiring.*

Where the pay pressure sits

Architect and platform-lead tiers carry the widest cloud premium on the thinnest pools. RBI cloud-outsourcing and DPDP rules have lifted BFSI and GCC demand. Bengaluru sets the top benchmark; Hyderabad and Pune follow on GCC cloud investment.

Source: salary bands & the 20–35% cloud/cert premium corroborated vs public India salary trackers; VP/Head 70–130+ and Principal 50–90 are Recruise placement data; EY 'The AIdea of India' 2026. To May 2026.

Roles, headcount & city demand

ESTIMATED HEADCOUNT BY ROLE

Role	Est. headcount
DevOps / Platform Engineer	35,000–48,000
Cloud Architect	18,000–25,000
Site Reliability Engineer	15,000–20,000
Cloud Security Engineer	12,000–18,000
Cloud Migration Specialist	10,000–15,000
FinOps Analyst	4,000–7,000
Total cloud headcount	**96,000–136,500**

Per-role headcount: Recruise Intelligence estimate. VP/Head of Cloud Engineering (~2,000–3,500) is shown on the salary chart, not the table.

CITY DEMAND & SENIOR PAY BENCHMARK

City	Cloud demand index	3-yr pay benchmark
Bengaluru	~38	**Rs 28–45 LPA**
Hyderabad	~33	**Rs 26–42 LPA**
Pune	~27	**Rs 24–38 LPA**
Chennai	~24	**Rs 22–36 LPA**
Delhi NCR	~19	**Rs 22–36 LPA**
Mumbai	~17	**Rs 22–36 LPA**
Tier-II cities	~3	**varies**

Where the experience sits

Freshers (0–3y) with an associate cert and a public IaC or Kubernetes project clear shortlists ahead of unverified mid-levels. The 8–12y band — platform leads and principal SREs — is structurally young and thin.

Source: Recruise Intelligence practitioner estimates. Relative cloud-hiring demand index (Recruise data, to May 2026)

The Bottom Line

Demand is outrunning a young talent pool.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Cloud has outgrown the people who can run it, and the gap is at the senior end.

Cloud is outrunning the wider tech stack, with platform engineering and FinOps the breakout capabilities; the talent to meet that demand covers only about 40% of where the market is heading by 2028; and the pay for it runs high and reaches well beyond IT into every regulated sector. The demand is structural and the shortage is concentrated at the senior end, so neither is going to resolve on its own.

That points to three moves. First, stop hiring cloud as a single discipline. Brief each mandate by the specific capability it needs, whether platform engineering, FinOps, SRE or security, and by the band it sits in, and run platform engineering as its own search rather than a general DevOps requisition. Second, plan for scarcity at the senior end: build the pipeline ahead of the brief, hire for trajectory and demonstrated impact rather than the finished profile, and grow senior platform and SRE capability from within, because that profile barely exists at scale. Third, benchmark every offer against the role-specific band and a 20 to 35% cloud premium, and move fastest in BFSI and the GCCs, where RBI cloud-outsourcing norms and DPDP rules are driving architect and FinOps demand at the same time.

Do those three consistently and cloud hiring stops being a scramble for scarce senior talent and becomes a capability you build ahead of demand. In a market this tight, that is the advantage.

Recruise Global

Want to hire talent that makes a real difference to your organisation?

Cut through the hype to get to what really matters.

About Us

Recruise is a global intelligence-led talent partner for enterprises, with offices in Bengaluru and Austin. For two decades, we have been a trusted partner to Fortune 2000 companies, scaling mid-market global capability centres, and the senior professionals who lead them — across Technology, Pharma, Life Sciences, and BFSI.

We combine deep sector expertise and proprietary hiring intelligence to deliver measurable impact across talent acquisition, executive search, and GCC transformation. Our work is reinforced by industry-leading research, deep market insights, and thought leadership across a wide range of sectors including Digital Services and ER&D, Enterprise Software, Internet of Things, Healthcare, Pharma, Lifesciences, Retail, Automotive, BFSI and Media & Telecom.

From scaling innovation to navigating disruption, global leaders turn to us to build, buy, and grow technology-led businesses that are ready for what's next.

Executive Search

Experienced Talent

Contract Staffing

Get in touch: sachith@recruiseglobal.com