Talent Radar

Cybersecurity

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recruise

Contents

CYBERSECURITY · JUN 2026

A sector read on cybersecurity hiring in India, GCCs included.

The Big Picture

Cybersecurity demand has held strong for two years, but job-ready supply still falls short.

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Cybersecurity is the rare corner of Indian tech where demand never cooled. Through two years in which the broader market slowed, security budgets kept climbing — and hiring climbed with them. The constraint has never been appetite; it's supply. DSCI-SANS finds that 73% of Indian firms still can't find the skilled people they need, and senior roles now sit open for as long as six months.

Two forces are carrying that demand. Cloud security has grown to close to a quarter of all security hiring, and governance, risk and compliance to about a sixth — pulled forward by the DPDP Act, which puts accountability for personal data at board and CEO level and mandates a Data Protection Officer for Significant Data Fiduciaries. Compliance has become a hiring driver in its own right.

It would be easy to read this as a numbers problem, but it isn't. India's cyber workforce is now over a million — the shortage is one of readiness, not headcount. Few candidates arrive ready for SOC operations, cloud security, DevSecOps, pen-testing or IAM, and that finished profile is both rare and expensive.

My advice to the leaders we work with is to stop waiting for it. Hire engineers who can learn the stack, fund the certification path, and build your senior layer internally. The open market will rarely hand you the complete profile, but it is full of people who can become it. That, more than any single hire, is how you close the gap.

Executive Summary

CYBERSECURITY HIRING AT A GLANCE

Security hiring has stayed resilient while broader tech cooled, and skilled supply lags. Cloud security, GRC and a widening skills-readiness gap are driving it.

FIRMS CAN'T FIND TALENT
73%

TIME TO FILL SENIOR ROLES
up to 6 mo

SAY AI-SECURITY SKILLS ESSENTIAL
83%

CLOUD SECURITY SHARE OF HIRING
~25%

GRC & COMPLIANCE SHARE
~15%

FIRMS RAISING SECURITY BUDGETS
87%

WHAT THE MARKET SHOWS

Demand

Broad and steady. Security hiring stayed resilient while broader tech cooled. Cloud security is ~25% of roles, GRC ~15%, with pen-testing, AppSec, IAM and architecture splitting the higher-paid remainder.

Compliance

The new driver. The DPDP Act places board/CEO-level accountability on the organisation and mandates a Data Protection Officer for Significant Data Fiduciaries, pulling DPOs, GRC analysts and security architects forward. PwC India reports 87% of firms raising cyber budgets, with nearly a third planning increases above 10%.

Supply

The constraint is skills-readiness, not headcount. India's cyber workforce is over a million ((ISC)²), but too few are job-ready for the scarce specialisms.

Source: DSCI-SANS Skilling Landscape 2026, (ISC)² Workforce Study 2025, PwC Digital Trust Insights 2026 (India edition), LinkedIn India, Naukri.com, Glassdoor (public), Recruise Intelligence.

Finding One

Demand is broad, and cloud security leads it

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Demand is broad, and cloud security leads it.

Security hiring in India is broad, but it is not evenly spread. Cloud security is the single largest segment, close to a quarter of all security roles, as engineering teams work to secure workloads and pipelines across AWS and Azure. Governance, risk and compliance comes next, about a sixth, pulled forward by the DPDP Act, which places board and CEO-level accountability on the organisation and mandates a Data Protection Officer for Significant Data Fiduciaries. That single law has turned compliance into a hiring engine, lifting demand for DPOs, GRC analysts and auditors well beyond the usual IT-audit base. The rest of the demand spreads across OT/ICS, penetration testing, application security and identity, each smaller but harder to fill.

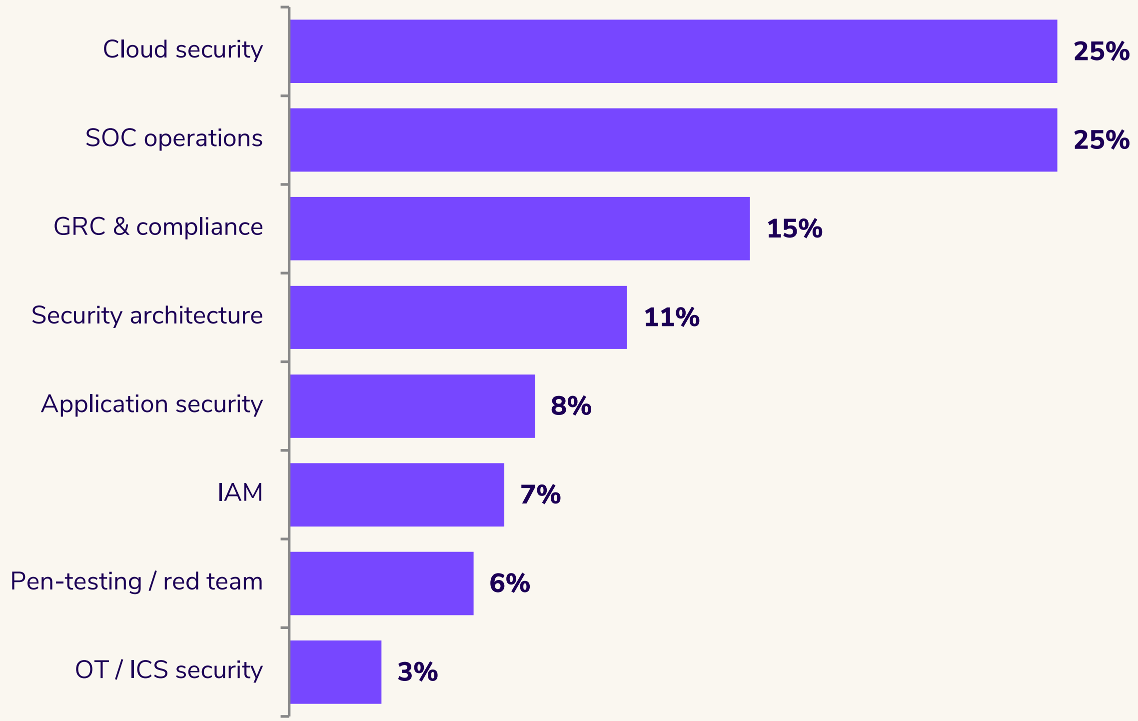
The skills that clear the first screen are consistent. Cloud platform security and SIEM/SOAR lead the postings, with DevSecOps, Zero Trust and incident response close behind, and SOC-tooling fluency the common entry filter. A credential does more than a degree here: CISSP, OSCP or a cloud-security certification moves a mid or senior profile to the top of the pile faster than anything else on the CV.

What hiring leaders should act on:

Define each mandate by the specific domain and the band it sits in, rather than a generic "security" requisition. Treat cloud security and GRC as the volume hires, where the pool is deepest, and run penetration testing and OT/ICS as scarce specialist searches, where it is not.

Segment demand and top skills

SHARE OF SECURITY HIRING



TOP SKILLS & CERTS IN DEMAND

Jun 2026, India security roles. Cloud platform security and SIEM/SOAR lead the postings; SOC tooling fluency is the common entry filter.

Cloud security (AWS/Azure)	**SIEM / SOAR**
DevSecOps	**Zero Trust**
CISSP	**OSCP**
Incident response	**Secure coding**
IAM	**Threat intelligence**

DPDP compliance pulls GRC forward

The data-protection law places board/CEO-level accountability on the organisation and mandates a DPO for Significant Data Fiduciaries, driving demand for DPOs, GRC analysts and auditors beyond the usual IT-audit base.

Certifications clear the first screen

CISSP, OSCP and a cloud-security credential move a profile to the top of the pile faster than a degree does, especially for mid and senior roles.

Source: DSCI-SANS 2026, (ISC)^2 Workforce Study 2025, LinkedIn India, Naukri.com, Gartner, Glassdoor (public, to Jun 2026). Segment shares are from Recruise data; OT/ICS, pen-test, AppSec and IAM splits are approximate.

Finding Two

Skilled supply covers a fraction of demand

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Skilled supply covers a fraction of demand.

The instinct is to read a talent shortage as a numbers problem, but the cybersecurity gap is not about headcount. India's cyber workforce is now over a million, and in 2025 (ISC)² stopped publishing a global headcount estimate altogether, reframing the shortage around readiness rather than raw supply.

The country produces plenty of IT graduates; the constraint is how few arrive ready for SOC operations, cloud security, DevSecOps, pen-testing or IAM. That readiness gap shows up wherever firms try to hire. DSCI-SANS finds 73% of Indian firms short of the skilled people they need, and only 27% consider themselves adequately staffed.

Senior roles take up to six months to fill, and inside India's GCCs the mid-senior shortfall runs an estimated 25 to 30% (Recruise data), where cloud security, GRC and pen-test seniority all compete for the same thin pool.

What hiring leaders should act on:

The lesson for a hiring leader is to plan for scarcity rather than expect the market to close it. Build the pipeline ahead of the brief, hire for trajectory rather than the finished résumé, fund the certification path, and grow the senior layer from within. The complete profile barely exists on the open market, so the organisations that win are the ones building it.

Talent supply snapshot, India

HEADLINE SUPPLY NUMBERS

India's cyber workforce is over a million, yet firms still can't fill the scarce senior roles — a skills-readiness gap, not a headcount one. 73% of firms are short of skilled cybersecurity talent.

CYBER WORKFORCE, INDIA	FIRMS CAN'T FIND TALENT	TIME TO FILL SENIOR ROLES	MID-SENIOR SHORTFALL
>1M	**73%**	**up to 6 months**	**25–30%**
(ISC)² 2025	DSCI-SANS	DSCI-SANS	Recruise estimate, India GCCs

FIRMS REPORTING A SKILLS SHORTAGE

A readiness gap at the core

India produces plenty of IT graduates. Few arrive ready for SOC operations, cloud security, DevSecOps, pen-testing or IAM.

Source: DSCI-SANS Skilling Landscape 2026, (ISC)² Workforce Study 2025, PwC Digital Trust Insights 2025, LinkedIn India, Naukri.com, Glassdoor (public), Recruise Intelligence.

Finding Three

Pay runs high, certifications lift it, and demand spans every sector

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Pay runs high, certifications lift it, and demand spans every sector

Cybersecurity pay in India runs high and rises steeply with seniority. Entry SOC roles sit in the Rs 4 to 8 LPA band, mid-level specialists in the mid-teens, and senior leadership reaches from Rs 60 LPA to well over a crore for a CISO. A credential moves the number as much as a title does. CISSP or OSCP can lift pay by roughly 20 to 40% over an uncertified profile at the same level, and a CISSP paired with the right experience can reach the top of the senior bands.

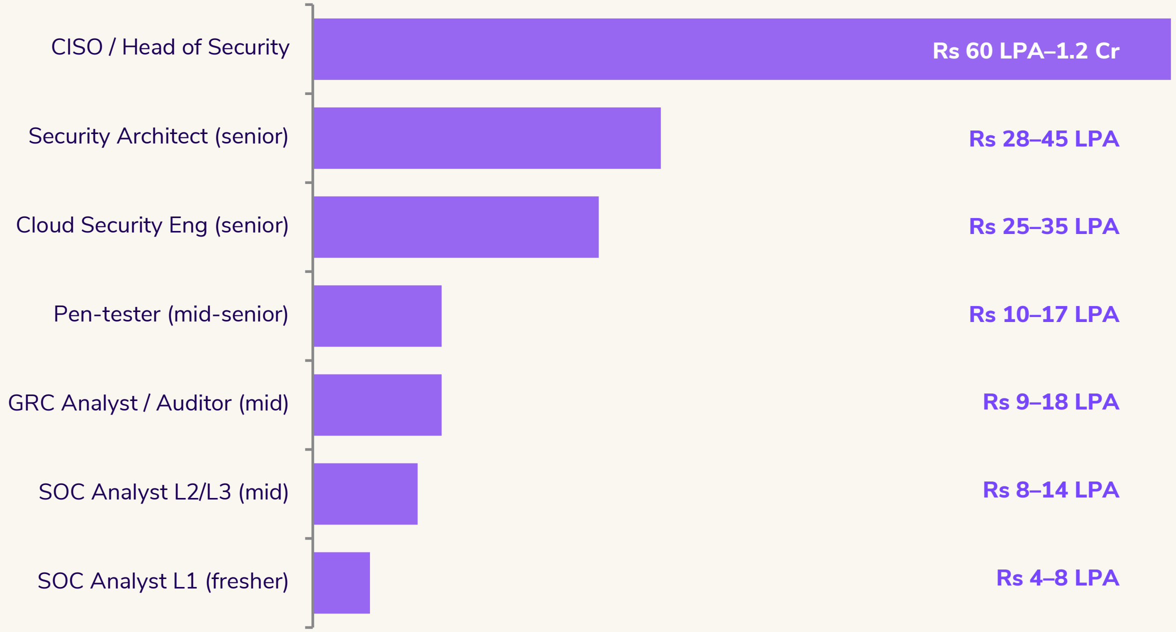
Demand is not confined to tech; it spans every regulated sector, and the pressure is heaviest where the regulatory load is. BFSI is severely undersupplied, with the fewest senior specialists. GCCs are building global SOC teams against an estimated 25 to 30% mid-senior shortfall. IT and product firms are standing up internal DevSecOps, healthcare and pharma demand is emerging fast as DPDP exposure pulls in GRC roles, and public and critical-infrastructure OT/ICS sits on a tiny pool that is now a national-security priority. Bengaluru sets the top pay benchmark, with Gurgaon and Mumbai close behind on BFSI demand.

What hiring leaders should act on:

Benchmark every offer against the role-specific band and a 20 to 40% certification premium, and move fastest in BFSI and the GCCs, where the regulatory load is heaviest and senior specialists are fewest.

Salary bands & sector demand

SALARY BANDS BY SECURITY ROLE



CISSP or OSCP can lift pay 20 to 40% (indicative) over an uncertified profile at the same level. CISSP plus the right experience can reach the higher end of the senior bands.

SUPPLY VS DEMAND BY SECTOR

BFSI	*Severely undersupplied. Heaviest regulatory load, fewest senior specialists.*
GCCs	*Undersupplied. 25 to 30% mid-senior shortfall (Recruise estimate), building global SOC teams.*
IT / Product	*Undersupplied. Large firms standing up internal DevSecOps.*
Healthcare / Pharma	*Emerging demand. DPDP exposure pulling GRC roles in fast.*
Public / Critical Infra	*OT/ICS gap. Tiny pool, national-security priority.*

Where the pay pressure sits

OT/ICS and pen-testing carry the highest premiums on the thinnest pools. The DPDP Act has lifted GRC pay across BFSI and healthcare. Bengaluru sets the top benchmark; Gurgaon and Mumbai follow on BFSI demand.

Source: DSCI-SANS 2026, (ISC)² Workforce Study 2025, LinkedIn India, Naukri.com, Gartner, Glassdoor (public, to May 2026). CISO upper band varies widely by company size.

Roles, headcount and city demand

ESTIMATED HEADCOUNT BY ROLE

Role	Est. headcount
Cloud security / DevSecOps	6,000 – 10,000
SOC analyst (L1–L3)	15,000 – 22,000
GRC analyst / auditor / DPO	10,000 – 15,000
Application security engineer	12,000 – 18,000
Penetration tester / ethical hacker / red team	7,000 – 11,000
IAM / OT-ICS specialist	4,000 – 6,500
Total cyber workforce	>1M

CITY DEMAND & SENIOR PAY BENCHMARK

City	Demand	3-yr pay benchmark
Bengaluru	Highest	Rs 12–18 LPA
Gurgaon / NCR	High	Rs 11–17 LPA
Mumbai	High	Rs 11–16 LPA
Hyderabad	High	Rs 10–16 LPA
Pune	Medium	Rs 10–15 LPA
Chennai	Medium	Rs 9–14 LPA
Tier-2/3 cities	Emerging	varies

Where the experience sits

Entry SOC roles are the volume hire, screened on live tooling fluency. The mid-senior band (5 to 10 years) is the real pinch point, where cloud security, GRC and pen-test seniority all chase the same thin pool.

Source: DSCI-SANS 2026, (ISC)² Workforce Study 2025, LinkedIn India, Naukri.com, Glassdoor (public), Recruise Intelligence.

The Bottom Line

Two years of strong demand, and job-ready talent still runs short.

The demand won't cool and the shortage won't clear on its own. The advantage goes to whoever hires and builds ahead of it.

Cybersecurity demand in India has held strong for two years and shows no sign of cooling, the shortage is one of job-ready skills rather than raw headcount, and both the pay and the demand now stretch across every regulated sector. None of these pressures is temporary, and none will ease on its own. The organisations that hire well in this market are the ones that stop waiting for the finished profile and start building it.

In practice that comes down to three moves. First, brief every security mandate by the specific domain and the band it sits in, treating cloud security and GRC as your volume hires and pen-testing and OT/ICS as scarce specialist searches. Second, plan for scarcity rather than expect the market to close it: hire for aptitude, fund the certification path, and grow your senior layer from within, because the complete profile barely exists on the open market. Third, benchmark every offer against the role-specific band and a 20 to 40% certification premium, and move fastest in BFSI and the GCCs, where the regulatory load is heaviest and senior specialists are fewest.

Do those three consistently and hiring stops being a reaction to each vacancy and becomes a capability you build ahead of demand. That is the difference between filling security roles and securing the business, and it is where the advantage will sit through 2026 and beyond.

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

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