Case Study — Zanskar Technology & Nubra

Quant-trading infrastructure + brokerage; the ₹25 Cr raise, business model, and clientele — with direct answers to the five diligence questions

Prepared: 2026-07-07 · **Subject:** Zanskar (Bengaluru) — systematic trading / execution infra / Nubra brokerage

> **Name-collision warning (important for diligence):** "**Zanskar**" (this company, trading tech, zanskar.xyz) is routinely confused with **Zenskar** (an unrelated US *billing-SaaS* firm, ~$3.5M seed) *and* with a US **geothermal** startup also named Zanskar — even Tracxn's profile mistakenly describes this company as "pinpoint[ing] prolific geothermal systems." Verify you're looking at the right entity before acting on any database figure.

1. Snapshot

Group	Zanskar (brand: **Zanskar Research** / Zanskar Technology; consumer brokerage brand: **Nubra**)
Founded	2022 (trading); broker entity incorporated 05 Jul 2023
HQ	Bengaluru, Karnataka
Founders	Mayank Sachan (Founder & CEO; ex-Goldman Sachs VP, IIT Kanpur) · Vandana Jain (Co-founder)
What it is	Systematic prop-trading + market-making firm that has **productized its stack into a brokerage/execution business** (Nubra) for institutions and retail
The ₹25 Cr	**Venture DEBT** from **BlackSoil Capital** (Apr 2026); equity-backed by **Peak XV Partners**
Also on the balance sheet	Broker entity: **₹30 Cr paid-up capital** + **₹142 Cr bank charges** (Axis ₹110 Cr, HDFC ₹32 Cr)
Traction	25,000+ retail demat accounts; multiple institutional clients within ~6 months; authorised ETF market maker; revenue < ₹10 Cr (FY ending Mar 2025, ~10 employees per Tracxn)

2. Corporate structure & regulatory standing

There are effectively three layers under one brand — worth separating because they carry different risk/capital:

Entity / brand	Role
Zanskar Research / Zanskar Technology Pvt Ltd	The quant/prop-trading & technology arm — builds systematic strategies, market-making algos, and the in-house trading stack.
Zanskar Securities Pvt Ltd (CIN U64199KA2023PTC175635)	The **SEBI-registered stock broker** (INZ000316631) with memberships at **NSE (90370), BSE (6870), MSEI (85550)**. Paid-up capital ₹30 Cr. This is the regulated brokerage entity.
Nubra (nubra.io; app com.zanskar.nubra)	The consumer/retail brokerage **brand & platform** — where the 25,000+ demat accounts sit.

> Being a **SEBI-registered broker with NSE/BSE/MSEI membership** is the single most important fact: it confirms Zanskar didn't just build tech for others — **they became the broker.**

3. Founders

- **Mayank Sachan** — Founder & CEO. Ex-**Goldman Sachs (Vice President)**; **IIT Kanpur**. Quant/markets pedigree fits a systematic-trading + execution-infra business.
- **Vandana Jain** — Co-founder (Nubra). (Also on the Securities board with Abhay Sachan, added Jan 2025.)

Direct answers to the five diligence questions

Q1 — What tech has he built beyond the HFT/prop core?

A **fully in-house, vertically-integrated trading + brokerage stack**, not just prop algos:

- Proprietary **OMS** (Order Management System) and **RMS** (Risk Management System)
- **Exchange co-located infrastructure** + **low-latency execution algorithms**
- **Market-making** engine — authorised MM for several **ETF** products; building MM infra for **international markets**
- **Nubra** retail/institutional trading platform: option chain + multi-leg strategy builder, "Flexi Orders" (rule-based automation), scanners, tick-level data, institutional-grade charts, and **API access** (algo/quant access for retail)

Net: he took prop/HFT engineering and turned it into a **broker + execution + market-making** product line.

Q2 — What clientele?

- **Institutional:** AMCs (mutual-fund houses), **PMS**, **AIF** funds, **VC/PE** firms, **family offices**, **proprietary trading desks**.
- **Retail:** 25,000+ demat accounts on Nubra.
- **Exchanges:** authorised market maker for ETF products.

Q3 — What does he provide to each — esp. MF houses, AIFs, PE/VC?

- **AMCs / PMS / AIFs: low-latency, institutional-grade execution + brokerage** — executing large fund orders with minimal slippage/market impact (OMS + co-lo + smart algos). For AMCs with **ETFs**, he provides **market-making** (continuous two-way quotes/liquidity) — a concrete, valuable fund-house relationship.
- **Family offices:** the same execution/brokerage (family offices genuinely trade public markets — legitimate).
- **PE/VC firms: the weakest claim — the "just buzz" suspicion is warranted.** PE/VC firms do *private* deals, not listed-equity execution. Any real relationship is more likely the principals'/associated family-office public-market trading or treasury — or name-dropping for credibility. **Worth asking him to name the PE/VC clients and what they actually transact.**

Q4 — How does the retail platform work — broker tech, or his own brokerage?

His own brokerage. Nubra is powered by **Zanskar Securities**, a SEBI-registered broker with NSE/BSE/MSEI membership. Retail users open a **demat/trading account directly with Nubra** (25,000+ so far) and get the in-house low-latency execution. It is **not** white-labeling tech to third-party brokers. The common hunch — *"with 25 Cr he might as well become a broker"* — is exactly what happened; and the **venture debt** (plus ₹142 Cr bank lines) is precisely the capital structure one uses to run a brokerage/market-maker without diluting equity.

Q5 — How does he monetize? Is it a % of volume?

Four streams (Nubra's public pricing is discount-broker style; the split across streams is informed inference):

Stream	How it earns	Volume-linked?
Retail brokerage (Nubra)	₹0 on equity delivery; **₹5/lot or ₹20/order** on intraday & F&O (some sources cite 0.03% intraday turnover) + likely float/interest & exchange rebates	Yes (per-order/per-lot)
Institutional execution	Brokerage/commission (basis points) on large AMC/PMS/AIF flow	Yes — and higher value per ₹ than retail
Market-making	Captures bid-ask **spread** on ETFs + exchange MM **incentives** (a P&L/spread business, not a fee)	Indirectly (inventory/turnover)
Proprietary trading	Own systematic-strategy P&L (the firm's origin)	N/A (own capital)

> **The "% of volume" intuition is right — with a nuance.** "% of volume = good money" holds most cleanly for **intraday equity** (a few bps of turnover; an active retail trader doing crores/day generates real brokerage). But India's discount-brokerage economics are thin (₹5–₹20/order flat), so the **differentiated** money is in **market-making spreads + institutional execution bps + prop P&L**, not thin retail flat fees. The volume story works best as *institutional* flow, not retail count.

4. What he had to build *on top* of the prop engine — by segment

The starting point was a **prop/HFT core**: in-house OMS, RMS, exchange co-location, and low-latency execution algorithms (built to trade the firm's own capital). To turn that into a business serving **retail, AIFs/PMS, and AMCs**, each segment required a distinct **additional layer** on top. (Core stack + SEBI broker + Nubra + ETF market-making are confirmed; segment-specific plumbing marked "typical/required" is standard infrastructure for that offering.)

a) For retail users → an entire regulated B2C discount-brokerage

- **Regulatory shell (confirmed):** SEBI stock-broker registration (INZ000316631) + **NSE/BSE/MSEI** memberships + depository-participant link (CDSL/NSDL) to hold client demat. This is the biggest "on top" piece — it's what made him *the broker*.
- **Onboarding at scale (required):** digital account opening / eKYC (PAN/Aadhaar), nominee/DDPI, funds ledger — 25,000+ demat accounts.
- **Client apps (confirmed):** Nubra web + Android/iOS — order tickets, live **option chain + multi-leg strategy builder**, institutional-grade charts, scanners, watchlists, price/indicator alerts, **"Flexi Orders"** (rule-based automation), portfolio/P&L, plus **retail API** for algo users.
- **Retail RMS (required):** real-time margining (SPAN+exposure, peak margin), MTM auto square-off, exposure limits — protects the firm from client default.
- **Money movement + compliance (required):** UPI/payment-gateway, settlement, contract notes, tax P&L/statements, surveillance and regulatory reporting.

b) For AIFs / PMS (institutional buy-side) → an execution-services layer

- **OMS/EMS with FIX connectivity (required):** so a fund's own PMS/OMS can route orders in electronically.
- **Execution algos (confirmed core, extended):** VWAP / TWAP / POV / Implementation-Shortfall + **smart order routing** to minimise **market impact** on large orders — the actual value to a fund.
- **Multi-account / block handling (required):** order allocation across schemes, average-price allocation, block trades, give-up/give-in.
- **TCA + best-execution reporting (required):** transaction-cost analysis and audit-ready execution reports for the fund's compliance.
- **Co-located low-latency path (confirmed):** the same infra used for prop, offered as institutional-grade execution.

c) For AMCs (mutual-fund houses, esp. ETFs) → market-making / Authorised-Participant infra

- **Authorised ETF market-maker engine (confirmed):** continuous two-way quoting on ETF units with obligation-level spreads/presence — Zanskar is an authorised MM for several ETFs.
- **Inventory + hedging (required):** manage the ETF-unit book and hedge against the underlying basket/futures.
- **Create/redeem (AP) workflow (required):** assemble and deliver the underlying constituent basket in exchange for ETF units (and vice-versa) with the AMC.
- **Basket / program trading + iNAV tracking (required):** execute the constituents and arbitrage ETF price vs NAV to keep the ETF tight to fair value.
- **Large fund-flow execution (confirmed/extended):** low-impact algos for AMC dealing-desk order flow.

> **Summary of the "on top" build:** a prop engine became a business by adding (a) a **regulated retail brokerage** (the heaviest lift — licences, demat, apps, RMS, KYC), (b) an **institutional execution/TCA layer** for AIFs/PMS, and (c) an **ETF market-making + Authorised-Participant** stack for AMCs. The prop DNA (low-latency, OMS/RMS, algos) is the shared foundation under all three.

5. How the business is actually funded (the real "25 Cr" story)

The headline ₹25 Cr is **only part** of the capital stack — and the smaller part:

- **Equity:** backed by **Peak XV Partners** (the marquee name; amount undisclosed — likely an early/seed cheque).
- **Venture debt: ₹25 Cr from BlackSoil Capital** (Apr 2026) — to "expand the brokerage business and strengthen technology." Debt, not equity → no dilution; suits a capital-intensive, cash-generative brokerage/MM.
- **Bank lending lines:** the broker entity carries **₹142 Cr of registered charges** (Axis Bank ₹110 Cr + HDFC ₹32 Cr) and **₹30 Cr paid-up capital**. These fund **margin/working capital and market-making inventory** — the true engine of a broking/MM operation.

> **Analytical takeaway:** this is **not** a "raised 25 Cr, spends it on product" SaaS story. It's a **capital-markets balance-sheet business**: a lot of the capital is *debt/bank lines* deployed as trading/margin capital, where returns come from spreads, execution bps, and prop P&L. Judge it like a broker/market-maker, not like a startup burning equity.

6. Traction & stage

- 25,000+ retail demat accounts within ~6 months of Nubra's launch.
- Multiple institutional clients onboarded; authorised market maker for several ETFs; international MM infra in build.
- Revenue < ₹10 Cr (FY ending Mar 2025), ~10 employees (Tracxn) — **early stage**; the ₹30 Cr capital + ₹142 Cr bank lines show the broker is being *capitalized ahead of revenue*, typical for MM/broking.

7. Competitive landscape

- **Retail discount brokers:** Zerodha, Groww, Dhan, Angel One, Upstox — huge, entrenched, thin margins. Nubra's wedge = **"institutional-grade / low-latency / algo-friendly"** pitch to serious/active traders (scalpers, options strategists), not mass-market.
- **Quant / market-making / execution:** AlphaGrep, Graviton, Quadeye (prop); uTrade/Symphony/Greeksoft (broker tech). Zanskar's differentiator is the **combination** — prop/MM DNA + its own regulated brokerage + retail distribution under one roof.

8. Risks & things to verify

- **Thin retail economics** vs. giants — 25k accounts is small; CAC and activation matter more than headline account count.
- **Capital-markets risk:** market-making + margin lines (₹142 Cr) carry inventory, funding, and tail risk; RMS quality is existential.
- **PE/VC-client claim** — verify it's real (see Q3) rather than positioning.
- **Regulatory:** SEBI broking/MM + algo/API rules; ongoing compliance burden.
- **Data hygiene:** third-party databases conflate Zanskar with Zenskar and a geothermal namesake — treat aggregated figures with care.

9. Bottom line

Zanskar is a **credible, quant-pedigreed** attempt to build a vertically-integrated Indian trading business: prop/market-making DNA → its own SEBI broker (Nubra) → institutional execution + retail distribution. The tech (in-house OMS/RMS, co-lo, low-latency, MM) is real and the SEBI/exchange memberships are verifiable. The

MF-house/AIF/family-office relationships are plausible and valuable (esp. ETF market-making); the **PE/VC** angle is the part most likely to be "buzz." Monetization is genuine and partly volume-linked, but the **real** profit pools are institutional execution + market-making spreads + prop P&L, funded largely by **debt and bank lines** — so evaluate it as a capital-markets balance-sheet business, not a pure-SaaS startup.

Sources

zanskar.xyz · nubra.io (product & pricing) · Indian Startup News — ₹25 Cr BlackSoil / Nubra · Entrackr · Entrepreneur India (Peak XV backing) · Indian Startup Times · TheCompanyCheck — Zanskar Securities (capital, charges, directors) · Tracxn · Mayank Sachan (LinkedIn)

Nubra's per-trade pricing figures differ slightly across sources (₹5/lot or ₹20/order per nubra.io; 0.03% intraday / ₹10 lot cited elsewhere) — likely plan/tier or timing differences; the model is discount-broker. Revenue models across client segments are not officially published; the monetization breakdown is informed inference clearly labeled as such. Compiled from public sources for information/diligence support only.