

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2463
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 13.03.2026

WATER CONSUMPTION BY AI DATA CENTRES

2463. SHRI HARIS BEERAN:

Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) the disaggregated, facility-wise data regarding the quantum of daily groundwater extraction and off-site municipal water diverted for cooling turbines at Tier-III and Tier-IV Artificial Intelligence (AI) data centres established under the IndiaAI Mission specifically within Kerala;
- (b) whether the Ministry maintains a dedicated registry of mandatory Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) specifically auditing algorithmic water-stress impacts in drought-prone districts of Kerala; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI JITIN PRASADA)

(a) to (c): IndiaAI Mission was started in line with the Hon'ble Prime Minister vision of democratising access to technology. It is a strategic initiative to establish a robust and inclusive AI ecosystem that aligns with the country's development goals.

The government is working on all the five layers of India AI stack. These include application, AI models, compute, infrastructure and energy.

Our strategy is to ensure that AI is used to solve real life problems at population scale. It is being used in across sectors such as agriculture, healthcare, education, manufacturing, transport, governance, and climate action.

To meet the computing needs of AI applications and models, IndiaAI mission provides compute as a Service for indian researchers, startups and academia for training their AI models.

Around 38,000 GPUs are being provided at a subsidised average rate of Rs. 65 per hour, which is one-third of the global average cost. The mission does not establish data centres. The common compute is made available through 14 empanelled service providers/data centres.

The government is developing the ecosystem for these data centre and network infrastructure. The Union Budget 2026–27 announced a long-term tax holiday until 2047 for foreign cloud service providers and data centre operators position India as a global data hub.

The data centres are seeing continuous innovation in the way they are developed and operated. New approaches are improving cooling systems, enhancing water efficiency, and reducing overall energy consumption.

The data centres in India are spread across the country and for regulation & control ground water extraction, guidelines have been issued by Ministry of Jal Shakti vide notification no. S.O. 3289(E) dated 24.09.2020 & amendment notification dated 29.03.2023.

The water requirement depends on the type of cooling mechanism data centre deploys. The data centre industry is adopting advanced cooling technologies such as direct-to-chip liquid cooling, adiabatic cooling, immersion cooling etc.

Industry is also deploying high density racks to efficiently support high-performance computing & AI workloads for further reduction of power and water consumption.

Together, these technologies are significantly improving water use efficiency (WUE) by lowering the water requirement across data centre operations.

Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) is mandated by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) under the Environment Protection Act of 1986.

The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) register is managed through the PARIVESH portal (*Pro-Active and Responsive facilitation by Interactive, Virtuous and Environmental Single-window Hub*).

This portal acts as the official, unified digital platform for submitting, tracking, and monitoring Environmental Clearances (EC) and related approvals.
