

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4396
TO BE ANSWERED ON 02.04.2026

Environmental implications of AI

4396. SMT. SANGEETA YADAV:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has taken note of reports highlighting environmental aspects such as energy use and water consumption linked with Artificial Intelligence (AI) infrastructure;
- (b) whether any assessment is being undertaken regarding environmental footprint of data centres and AI-related facilities;
- (c) whether existing environmental appraisal frameworks apply to such infrastructure;
- (d) whether environmentally responsible practices are being encouraged; and
- (e) how these efforts support India's climate and sustainability commitments?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

(a) to (e) The government is aware of the impact of artificial intelligence (AI) infrastructure on energy consumption, water usage, electronic waste etc and is committed to address and mitigate these issues.

The data centres and AI facilities are not per se covered under Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) notification 2006, as amended. However, building and construction projects housing any data centre or AI facilities having built up area more than 20000 sqm are covered under item 8(a) of the schedule to the above notification and require prior environmental clearance (EC). Environmental Clearances are accorded based on the recommendations of the expert appraisal committee (EAC) after detailed appraisal and deliberations, keeping in view the need to safeguard environmental concerns. Assessments are undertaken regarding environmental footprints of such infrastructure projects. The EC stipulates general and specific conditions which are required to be complied with by the projects during the construction and operational phase including, inter alia, measures for energy efficiency, energy conservation, efficient use of water, reuse of treated wastewater etc. E- waste management rules 2022 also provide for environmental safeguards while dealing with electrical and electronic equipment's.