

People's Convention on AI Data Centers

6th September 2026, Visakhapatnam

Organized by Society of Green Visakha

Visakhapatnam, a living landscape of hills, wetlands, and forests, is witnessing an alarming surge of Hyperscale AI data center projects in water-stressed and densely populated neighbourhoods. The rapid expansion to nearly 8 GW is turning into a massive resource grab. At a juncture when the rest of the world is demanding a pause/closure, India is referring to them as development projects and welcoming them through fast-track approvals and non-transparent clearances. It is in this context that the convention brings together activists, researchers, legal experts, and community leaders to demystify the material costs of data infrastructure, the unequal burdens of displacement, and regulatory lapses, and, crucially, to build a people-centric movement to safeguard our resources, livelihoods, and environment.

Talks (Telugu)

Time	Session	Speaker
09:00 AM	<i>Registration, Expo Visit, Tea</i>	
10:00 AM	<i>Culturals</i>	
10:20 - 10:30 AM	<i>Opening Remarks and Inaugural</i>	
10:30 - 11:00 AM	Keynote: Whose Development? Whose Resources? Whose Future?	EAS Sarma, Retd IAS Officer
11:00 - 11:30 AM	Understanding Big Tech's AI Data Centers and the Myth of Inevitability	Sripath Roy, Swecha AP
11:30 - 12:00 PM	The Larger Footprint of Vizag Data Centers and People's Opposition	VS Krishna, Human Rights Forum
12:00 - 12:30 PM	Bypassing the Law: Data Centers, Environmental Justice and the Right to Know	D Nagasaila, Advocate, Madras High Court
12:30 - 02:00 PM	<i>Lunch</i>	
01:45 - 02:00 PM	<i>Culturals</i>	
02:00 - 02:30 PM	The Hidden Cost of "Green" Data Centers: Energy, Renewables, and Environment	Sagar Dhara, Researcher, SAPACC
02:30 - 02:35 PM	AI Data Centers: A 'Sword of Damocles' for power supply	Ashok Rao, Patron, AIPEF
02:35 - 02:50 PM	Negotiating the Right to Water: Polavaram and the State's Promises	U Narayana Raju, Retd Chief Engineer
02:50 - 03:05 PM	Silencing Dissent: Intolerance and Surveillance	Ajay Kumar Dara, Creator
03:05 - 03:20 PM	Our Heritage. Before Us. Beyond Us...	Jayshree Hatangadi, Heritage Narrator
03:20 - 03:50 PM	The Mode of Development in North Andhra: Data Centers and People's Struggles	Dr B Gangarao, Ex-Corporator
03:50 - 04:45 PM	<i>Praja Darbar</i>	
04:45 - 05:00 PM	<i>Solidarity Statements, Vizag Declarations, Call for Action</i>	

Panels (English)

Time	Panel Theme	Panelists
11:00 - 11:45 AM	Subversion of the Law, Regulatory Lapses and the State	• Sherley Hepsiba, Teaching Associate, DSNLU • D Nagasaila, Advocate, Madras High Court • Chakradhar, LibTech India • Rohith G, HRF, Advocate, AP High Court
11:45 - 12:30 PM	Big Tech Monopolies, Expansion of AI and the Question of Sovereignty	• Sai Phanindra, Swecha AP • Dr Suruchi Kumari, Researcher, DEF • Sushmita, Pulitzer Fellow, Researcher • Sameer Bajaj, Aapti Institute
02:00 - 02:45 PM	Social Impacts & Resistance Against Data Centers	• Sohan Hatangadi, Environmental, Civic activist • Dr B Gangarao, Ex-Corporator • Sushmita, Pulitzer Fellow, Researcher • Prasanth Reddy, Lawyer
02:45 - 03:30 PM	The Uncounted Costs of AI Data Centres	• Manideep Gudela, Energy Researcher • Sagar Dhara, Researcher, SAPACC • Prof Byragi Reddy, Andhra University • Sherley Hepsiba, Teaching Associate, DSNLU

Concept Notes

Talks

Keynote: Whose Development? Whose Resources? Whose Future?

The 'development' in the name of AI data centers is examined in relation to ecological and human rights violations, state-mediated relaxations and subsidies, and non-transparent channeling of resources. Whose development do these capital-intensive projects serve through negligible employment generation? Whose resources are redirected to cool and run these massive servers uninterrupted? And whose future is being decided without either knowledge or agreement of those living here?

Talk 1: Understanding Big Tech's AI Data Centers and the Myth of Inevitability

What are AI Data Centers? What caused the sudden boom? Know the story of the 'cloud' to understand the aspects of data storage and control- by contrasting traditional data centers with the recently and aggressively emerging AI data centers. The effects of the concentration of computational power into the hands of a few are unpacked to expose the making of digital monopolies by design- and what it means for us?

Talk 2: Bypassing the Law: Data Centers, Environmental Justice, and the Right to Know

Can the state make use of non-disclosure agreements, fast-tracked approvals, and wrongful categorisation in the name of ease and speed of doing business to interfere with citizens' rights in the name of development? Can botched Environmental Clearances and No Objection Certificates bypass Environmental Impact Assessment regulations and public hearings? Are our legal frameworks put in place to protect the public interest or corporate greed?

Talk 3: The Larger Footprint of Vizag Data Centers and People's Opposition

The externalities of AI data center expansion are not limited to the boundary walls of data center sites. The larger picture that is often left out of conversation is that of solar, hydro, thermal, nuclear, and pumped storage projects and the destruction and displacement that they cause. This session exposes the social injustice these projects perpetuate by narrating people's struggles.

Talk 4: The Hidden Cost of "Green" Data Centers: Energy, Renewables, and Environment

What exactly is green energy? Does 'green' automatically mean zero carbon footprint? This talk analyzes the states' claim of green energy as a justification for powering gigawatt-scale data centers. Do centralised, massively public-funded yet privately owned green-energy projects really indicate a just transition that centers people's interests?

Talk 5: AI Data Centers: A 'Sword of Damocles' for Power Supply

To satisfy Data centers' insatiable thirst for power, the state is rewriting the terms on which energy is governed. The state has made several regulatory relaxations, such as granting deemed distribution licenses, extending massive subsidies, and exemptions on power tariffs. This talk sheds light on the dangers of adding an additional capacity of 6.5 GW and questions the state's misplaced priorities in the process of endangering basic necessities of life for the vast majority.

Talk 6: Negotiating the Right to Water: Polavaram and the State's Promises

Polavaram has been proposed as the one-stop solution for the entire state's water requirements. From Rayalaseema to Srikakulam, with various projects for irrigation, drinking, and industrial needs. How practical is that? And with changing needs and priorities, and several new water-intensive industries being approved, the question that remains is: for what purpose was Polavaram constructed? What were the allocations? When the requirements keep changing,

Talk 7: Our Heritage. Before Us.. Beyond Us...

Visakhapatnam wears two faces: the postcard we sell, and the coast, hills, and springs we are quietly letting go. This is heritage as it really stands, inherited, contested, and still worth fighting for through every letter, PIL, protest, and citizen watch. What we protect now isn't ours to keep; it's what we owe to the generations who come after us.

Talk 8: Silencing Dissent: Intolerance and Surveillance

A systemic curbing of dissent through social media bans, automated takedown of content, and political intimidation has become a parallel reality since the announcement of Data Center projects in Vizag. This talk questions the blanket nature of 'reasonable' restrictions and the blatant misuse of draconian laws, digital censorship, and other surveillance tech in mass movements. And the dangers of stifling voices seeking accountability from their democratically elected governments.

Talk 9: The Mode of Development in North Andhra: Data Centers and Peoples' Struggles

Land is a primary source of livelihood for a vast majority of our population. But its ownership has been systemically separated from the marginalised communities for the benefit of corporations. This talk discusses the politics of land rights and land grabs in the Data Center sites of Tarluvada, Mudasarlova, and Rambilli, through caste and land ownership dynamics in Northern Andhra. The session further draws on the ongoing resistance against the forced displacement of livelihoods, the subversion of democratic statutory frameworks, and the broader political environment of criminalization of any opposition and public protest.

Panels

Panel 1: Subversion of the Law, Regulatory Lapses and the State

Data center projects in Vizag have been approved behind closed doors, at record speeds, bypassing protective legal and environmental safeguards. This panel aims to discuss various aspects of the non-transparent process, right from policy amendments, MoUs, land acquisition, to environmental clearances. It also covers suppression of dissent and digital censorship.

Panel 2: Big Tech Monopolies, Expansion of AI and the Question of Sovereignty

The AI boom is rushing to acquire massive compute and centralise power. Big Tech's AI has been deployed for wars, surveillance, and censorship in collaboration with states. How to keep it in check when AI is eclipsing all of our lives? And with AI Data Centers shifting to countries like India, does mere residency guarantee sovereignty?

Panel 3: Social Impacts & Resistance Against Data Centers

Globally, people are opposing AI data centers over concerns of water usage, energy consumption, noise, and heat. In India, the issue is further aggravated by the fact that the allotted land for data centers is grabbed from marginalized communities, destabilising their livelihoods. This panel explores grassroots resistance emerging in response.

Panel 4: The Uncounted Costs of AI Data Centres

The public case for hyperscale AI data centres in coastal Andhra Pradesh rests on three assurances. One that the local environment can absorb the load, that the energy footprint will be "green," and that AI at this scale is inevitable and needed. This panel takes each assurance in turn, moving from the biophysical draw on land, water and air along a coast already carrying ports, refineries and thermal plants; the accounting rules that let an operator report 100% renewable operation while drawing thermal power off the AP grid and the larger question of of who established that Andhra needs this much computing at all and whether "AI as inevitable" is itself a construct being externalised onto the public.



Website
stopdirtydatacenters.org



[STOP.VIZAG.DATACENTER](https://www.instagram.com/STOP.VIZAG.DATACENTER)