



Chintan
Research
Foundation



The Dialogue®
INFORM ENGAGE IDEATE

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION ON

ROADMAP FOR AI AND SUSTAINABILITY IN INDIA

Mapping India's AI Value Chain Through Distributed and Sustainable Compute Infrastructure

16 April 2026 | The Grand, New Delhi

BACKGROUND CONTEXT

With the conclusion of the IndiaAI Impact Summit, India's Artificial Intelligence ambitions are entering a new and decisive phase. As a leader in data generation, we are positioned to play a defining role in the future of the global AI economy. However, the future of AI in India will not be determined solely by algorithms or AI applications, but it will depend on the design, location, and sustainability of the infrastructure that powers AI computation at a large scale. Recent fiscal measures and infrastructure recognition in the Union Budget signal a shift in how we approach compute infrastructure. Data centres and AI-ready compute capacity are no longer treated as peripheral digital assets; they are now seen as strategic infrastructure with implications for energy systems, regional development, digital sovereignty, and long-term economic growth.

At the same time, India faces structural constraints, which include concentration of data centres in a few metropolitan cities, limitations of grid capacity, water stress, climate exposure, and rising energy demand, all of which shape the feasibility of rapid AI expansion. Furthermore, at present, conversations often assume a GPU-centric model of AI growth, without sufficiently examining whether workload-aware and heterogeneous compute strategies may offer more sustainable and cost-efficient pathways.

In this context, the Chintan Research Foundation and The Dialogue are jointly organising a roundtable discussion with the aim of designing a sustainable AI infrastructure roadmap for India by advancing compute architectures, setting environmental benchmarks, and aligning policy frameworks across the AI value chain. The session will bring together senior stakeholders from government, industry, academia, and policy research institutions to move the conversation forward on how India can design an AI infrastructure model that is distributed, energy-conscious, resilient, and inclusive.

OBJECTIVES OF THE ROUNDTABLE

This roundtable seeks to:

- Situate data centre development within the broader AI value chain, from semiconductor design and compute architectures to deployment and end-use applications.
- Examine whether India's AI growth strategy should evolve beyond a GPU-only paradigm toward heterogeneous and workload-appropriate compute architectures.
- Assess the sustainability implications of AI expansion, including energy demand, renewable integration, water intensity, and climate resilience.
- Deliberate on the merits of multi-dimensional sustainability benchmarks tailored to India's climatic and grid realities.
- Explore how fiscal incentives, regulatory frameworks, and institutional coordination can enable balanced, regionally distributed AI infrastructure growth

KEY THEMES OF THE DISCUSSION

- AI as a Value Chain, not a Single Layer
- Distributed Infrastructure and Heterogeneous Compute
- Energy Systems and AI Infrastructure Growth
- Circular Energy and Waste Heat Reuse
- Multi-Dimensional Sustainability Benchmarking
- Governance, Incentives, and Institutional Coordination

The objective is not to reach immediate consensus on all issues, but to clarify trade-offs, surface institutional constraints, and identify areas where policy design must balance growth, sustainability, and resilience.

AGENDA

Schedule	Particulars
2:45 pm-3:00 pm	Registrations & Tea
3:00 pm-3:10 pm	Welcome Address <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ms Jamila Sahiba, Associate Director, The Dialogue
3:10 pm-3:20 pm	Opening Address <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr Debajit Palit, Centre Head, Climate Change and Energy Transition, Chintan Research Foundation
3:20 pm-3:30 pm	Context Setting Presentation by The Dialogue
3:30 pm-3:45 pm	Special Address <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr Ravi Shankar Prajapati, Joint Director, Bureau of Energy Efficiency, Govt. of India
3:45 pm-3:55 pm	Special Address <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ms Shreepriya Gopalakrishnan, DGM Policy, IndiaAI, Ministry of Electronics & IT, Govt. of India
3:55 pm-4:00 pm	Release of Discussion Paper “GREENING THE CODE: A Roadmap for Environmentally Responsible AI Innovation in India”
4:00 pm-5:25 pm	Moderated Roundtable Discussion Moderators – Dr Debajit Palit, Centre Head, Chintan Research Foundation & Mr Kamesh Shekar, Associate Director – Strategy & Research, The Dialogue
5:25 pm-5:30 pm	Closing Remarks
5:30 pm onwards	High-Tea and Networking

ABOUT CHINTAN RESEARCH FOUNDATION

Chintan Research Foundation (CRF) is an emerging independent think tank dedicated to shaping policy through rigorous research and thought leadership. With a strong focus on fostering collaboration between policymakers and industry, CRF integrates practical insights into its research and advocacy efforts. It conducts comprehensive research to support informed decision-making and engages with stakeholders through discussions, events, and publications. CRF's research is focused on three core areas – Climate Change & Energy Transition, Economy & Trade, and Geopolitics & Strategic Studies. The Centre for Climate Change & Energy Transition aims to be a research and expertise hub, focusing on sustainable and clean energy, environmental stewardship, and climate actions.

For further information about CRF, please visit: crfindia.org

ABOUT THE DIALOGUE

The Dialogue is a public-policy think tank with a vision to drive a progressive narrative in India's policy discourse. Founded in 2017, we believe in facilitating well-researched policy debates at various levels to help develop a more informed citizenry, in areas around technology and development issues. With its ninth-year running, The Dialogue has focused its attention on building a credible and constructive voice in India's technology policy discourse. We are the country's leading think tank, having been recognised as one of the top 10 think tanks to watch out for by the University of Pennsylvania. The Dialogue is now recognised as a leading change maker in India's policy discourse, working and engaging closely with policy-makers, parliamentarians, government officials, and stakeholders such as the media, research community, corporates, and academia.

For further information about The Dialogue, please visit: thedialogue.org.in