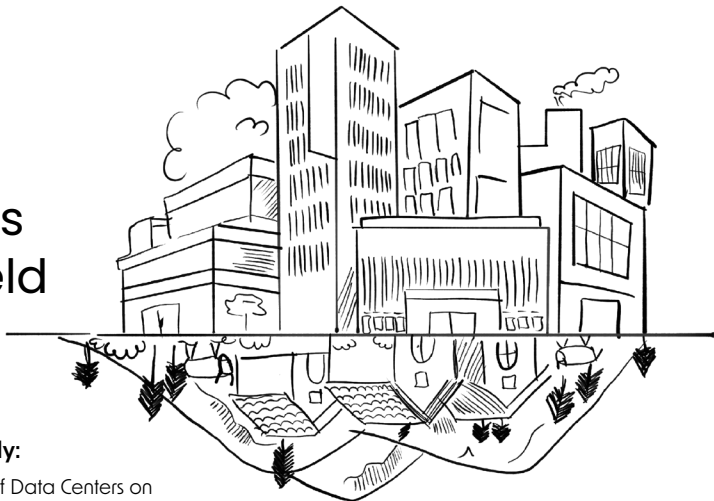




Just AI, Just Land: Perspectives from the Field



Based on the research study:

Just AI, Just Land: Implications of Data Centers on Communities and Rights-Based Data Governance By Dr. Arpita Kanjilal, Maitri Singh, and Mili Dangwal

Illustrated by: Yuvasree Mohan
Conceptualised by: Maitri Singh



CHAINWALLA

PIB

TAX HOLIDAY TILL 2047 FOR FOREIGN CLOUD PROVIDERS USING INDIA - BASED CENTERS FOR GLOBAL OPERATIONS

RELIANCE INDUSTRIES AND JIO ANNOUNCED PLANS TO INVEST \$110 BILLION OVER SEVEN YEARS TO BUILD AI AND DATA INFRASTRUCTURE ACCESS INDIA.



NEWS TODAY

ADANI TO INVEST \$100B IN AI DATA CENTERS BY 2035.



INDIA TO INVEST \$ 200 B IN AI INFRASTRUCTURE





WHILE INDIA LACKS A UNIFIED NATIONAL-LEVEL REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR DATA CENTRES, GROWTH HAS BEEN DRIVEN BY STATE-LEVEL POLICIES FOCUSED ON INCENTIVES AND EASE OF DOING BUSINESS. THIS APPROACH HAS SUCCESSFULLY ATTRACTED MAJOR PLAYERS SUCH AS ADANI, AWS, AND ST TELEMEDIA, ALONG WITH STRONG INTEREST FROM REAL ESTATE AND PRIVATE EQUITY INVESTORS. AS A RESULT, THE SECTOR RECORDED INVESTMENT COMMITMENTS OF AROUND USD 95 BILLION BETWEEN 2019 AND 2025, INCLUDING USD 30 BILLION IN 2025 ALONE. HOWEVER, AS INVESTMENTS ARE PROJECTED TO EXCEED USD 100 BILLION BY 2027, THE ABSENCE OF A COHESIVE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK MAY WARRANT GREATER POLICY COORDINATION GOING FORWARD.







COMMUNITIES, PARTICULARLY FARMERS, IN MEKAGUDA AND BEGARIKANCHA, TELANGANA, ARE PROTESTING AGAINST THE INADEQUATE COMPENSATION BEING OFFERED FOR LANDS ACQUIRED FOR DATA CENTER PROJECTS. MANY AFFECTED INDIVIDUALS HAVE LEGALLY CHALLENGED THESE ACQUISITIONS AND ARE CURRENTLY PURSUING CASES IN THE COURTS. THEIR PRIMARY DEMAND IS THE PROVISION OF FAIR AND JUST COMPENSATION FOR THEIR LAND.





DID YOU
HEAR PROTEST
YESTERDAY?

I HEARD THERE ARE
SOMETHING LIKE DATA
CENTRE COMING UP

□

Use
me



CONVERSATIONS AROUND DATA CENTERS ARE GRADUALLY TAKING SHAPE WITHIN COMMUNITIES, UNDERSCORING THE IMPORTANCE OF CREATING BROADER SPACES FOR DIALOGUE TO ADDRESS MISCONCEPTIONS, CLARIFY DOUBTS, AND BUILD A MORE INFORMED AND COLLECTIVE UNDERSTANDING.



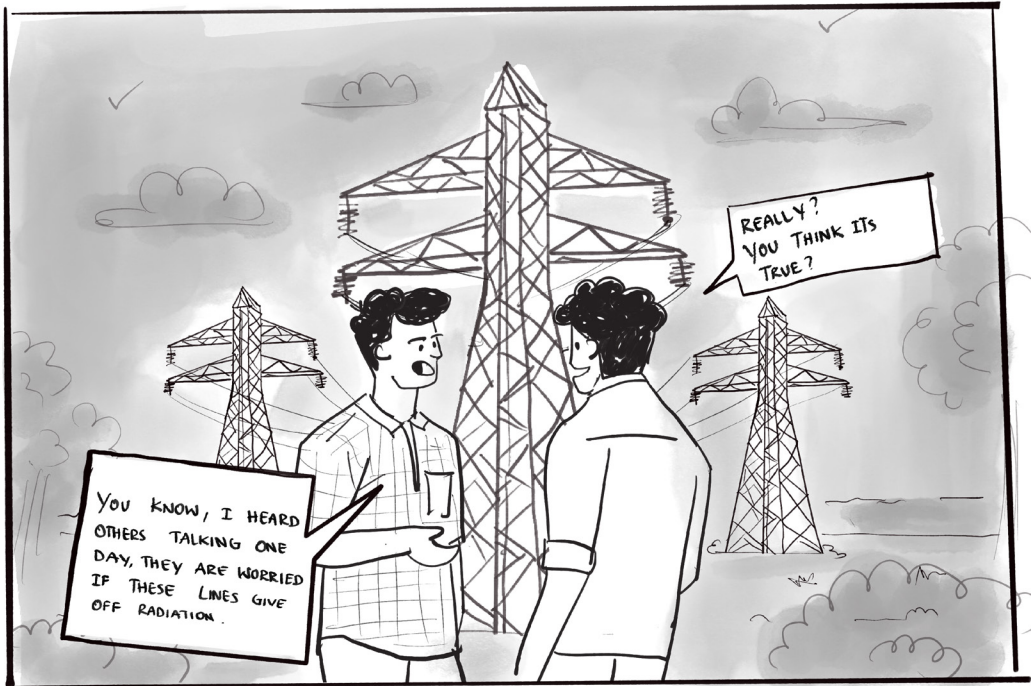




THE GROWING INVOLVEMENT OF BIG TECH COMPANIES IN “SUPPORTING” COMMUNITIES NEEDS CLOSER ATTENTION. WHILE THESE EFFORTS ARE OFTEN PRESENTED AS SUPPORTING LOCAL DEVELOPMENT, THEY CAN ALSO PLAY A ROLE IN BUILDING ACCEPTANCE FOR LARGE-SCALE PROJECTS LIKE AI DATA CENTRES.

THEREFORE, IT IS IMPORTANT TO LOOK AT THE BROADER PICTURE. THESE PROJECTS RELY HEAVILY ON SHARED STATE RESOURCES, SUCH AS LAND, WATER, AND ELECTRICITY, WHICH ARE NOT LIMITED TO THE IMMEDIATE LOCALITY. IN THAT SENSE, THE “COMMUNITY” IS NOT JUST THOSE LIVING NEARBY, BUT THE WIDER PUBLIC WHOSE RESOURCES ARE BEING USED. THIS MAKES IT IMPORTANT TO ASK WHETHER THE OVERALL BALANCE IS FAIR.





YOU KNOW, I HEARD
OTHERS TALKING ONE
DAY, THEY ARE WORRIED
IF THESE LINES GIVE
OFF RADIATION.

REALLY?
YOU THINK IT'S
TRUE?



DATA CENTRES EMIT LOW-LEVEL, NON IONIZING ELECTROMAGNETIC RADIATION THAT IS WIDELY CONSIDERED SAFE. THEY DO NOT PRODUCE HARMFUL IONIZING RADIATION MORE RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS INCLUDE AIR QUALITY, HEAT DISSENSION AND NOISE LEVELS. HOWEVER, ADDRESSING PUBLIC CONCERNS ARE IMPORTANT, ESPECIALLY PEOPLE LIVING NEAR THESE FACILITIES.





COMMUNITY LIBRARY

By AWS

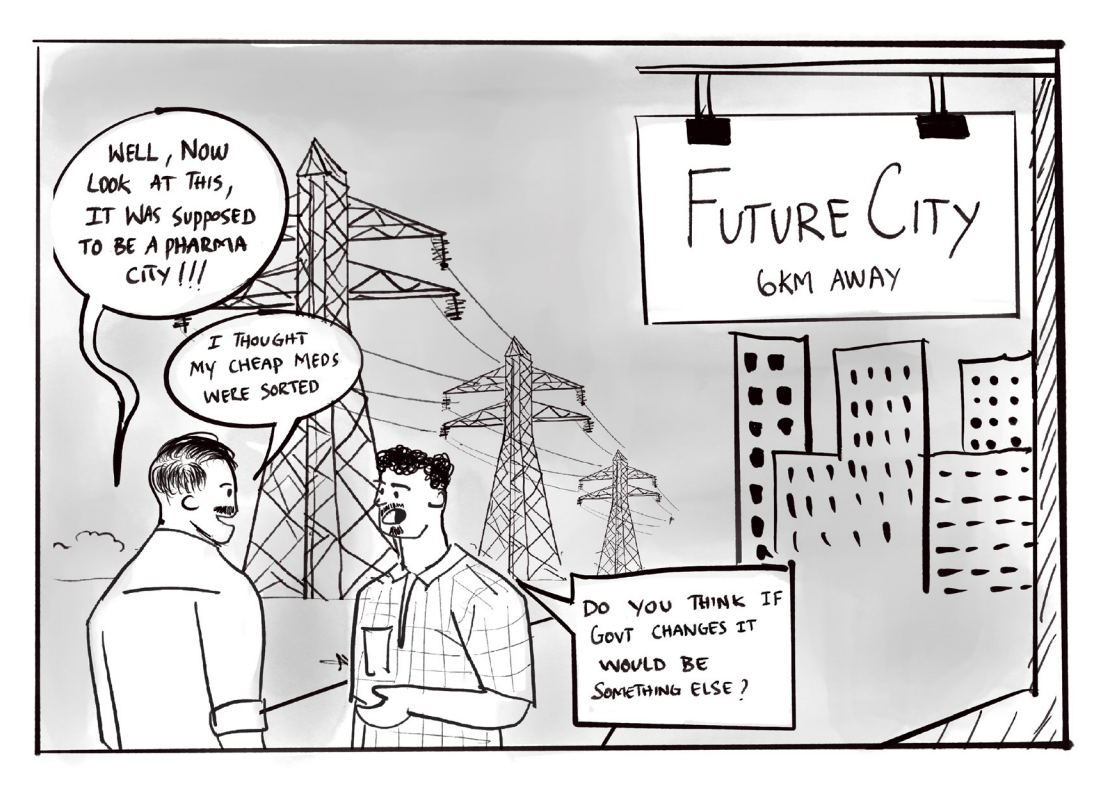
CLOSED

IS IT SUNDAY TODAY? WHY IS IT CLOSED?



OFTEN, INFRASTRUCTURE BUILT IN THE NAME OF SUPPORTING LOCAL DEVELOPMENT CAN, IF NOT PROPERLY FOLLOWED THROUGH, BECOME MORE SYMBOLIC THAN SUBSTANTIVE. WHILE SUCH EFFORTS MAY HELP BUILD GOODWILL OR LEGITIMACY FOR LARGER PROJECTS, THEIR REAL VALUE REMAINS LIMITED IF THEY ARE NOT ACTIVELY SERVING PEOPLE. THIS MAKES IT IMPORTANT TO LOOK BEYOND ANNOUNCEMENTS AND INTENTIONS, AND INSTEAD ASSESS WHETHER THESE INITIATIVES ARE GENUINELY ACCESSIBLE, FUNCTIONAL, AND ALIGNED WITH THE NEEDS OF THE WIDER PUBLIC.





WELL, NOW
LOOK AT THIS,
IT WAS SUPPOSED
TO BE A PHARMA
CITY !!!

I THOUGHT
MY CHEAP MEDS
WERE SORTED

DO YOU THINK IF
GOVT CHANGES IT
WOULD BE
SOMETHING ELSE ?

FUTURE CITY
6KM AWAY



A BROADER POLICY SHIFT IS VISIBLE ACROSS MANY INDIAN CITIES TOWARD THE DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNOLOGY-LED CORRIDORS. IN RANGA REDDY DISTRICT, TELANGANA, "FUTURE CITY" (FORMERLY REFERRED TO AS THE FOURTH CITY) IS BEING DEVELOPED ON LAND ORIGINALLY ACQUIRED FOR THE HYDERABAD PHARMA CITY PROJECT. THE REMOVAL OF THE "GREEN HYDERABAD PHARMA CITY" DESIGNATION FROM AROUND 20,000 ACRES IN CERTAIN VILLAGES REFLECTS THE EVOLVING NATURE OF LARGE-SCALE URBAN PLANNING, AS CITY PLANS ADAPT TO CHANGING INVESTMENT PRIORITIES.



BE THANKFUL
ANNA, YOUR CATTLE
DIDN'T DRINK THAT
FACTORY'S CHEMICAL
WATER.

THE LOAN IS STILL
ON MY HEAD.

ONLY THESE COWS
AND BUFFALOES
ARE LEFT.

I WISH WE COULD
ALSO GET JOBS IN
THESE BUILDINGS

THEY WON'T
HIRE FARMERS LIKE
US...

BETTER TRY OUR
LUCK IN THE
CITY.

MICROSOFT
DATA CENTRE





IN PLACES LIKE MEKAGUDA VILLAGE IN TELANGANA, INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITY HAS ALREADY RESHAPED LOCAL LIVELIHOODS. MANY PEOPLE HAVE MOVED AWAY FROM AGRICULTURE TO DAIRY WORK, OFTEN BY TAKING LOANS, WHILE ALSO DEALING WITH THE EFFECTS OF POLLUTION, SUCH AS DECLINING WATER QUALITY AND CATTLE LOSSES.

THIS POINTS TO A BROADER CONCERN. WHEN NEW PROJECTS ARE INTRODUCED INTO AREAS THAT HAVE ALREADY EXPERIENCED ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC STRAIN, THEIR IMPACTS CANNOT BE SEEN IN ISOLATION. ADDITIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE, INCLUDING DATA CENTRES, CAN BUILD ON EXISTING PRESSURES AND DEEPEN VULNERABILITIES.



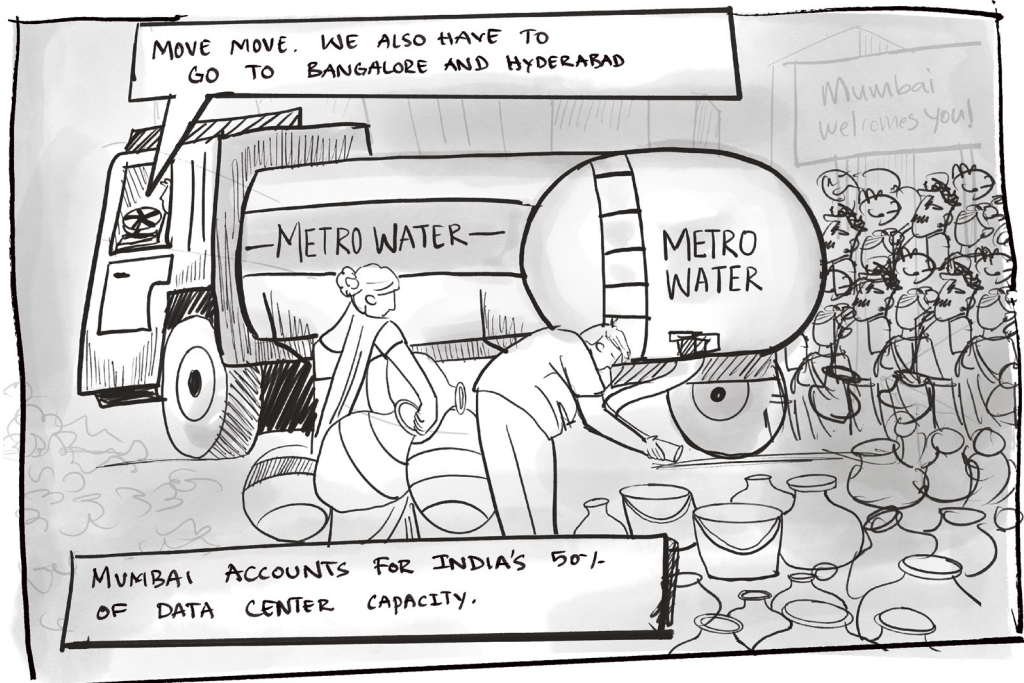
MOVE MOVE. WE ALSO HAVE TO
GO TO BANGALORE AND HYDERABAD

Mumbai
welcomes you!

METRO WATER

METRO
WATER

MUMBAI ACCOUNTS FOR INDIA'S 50%
OF DATA CENTER CAPACITY.

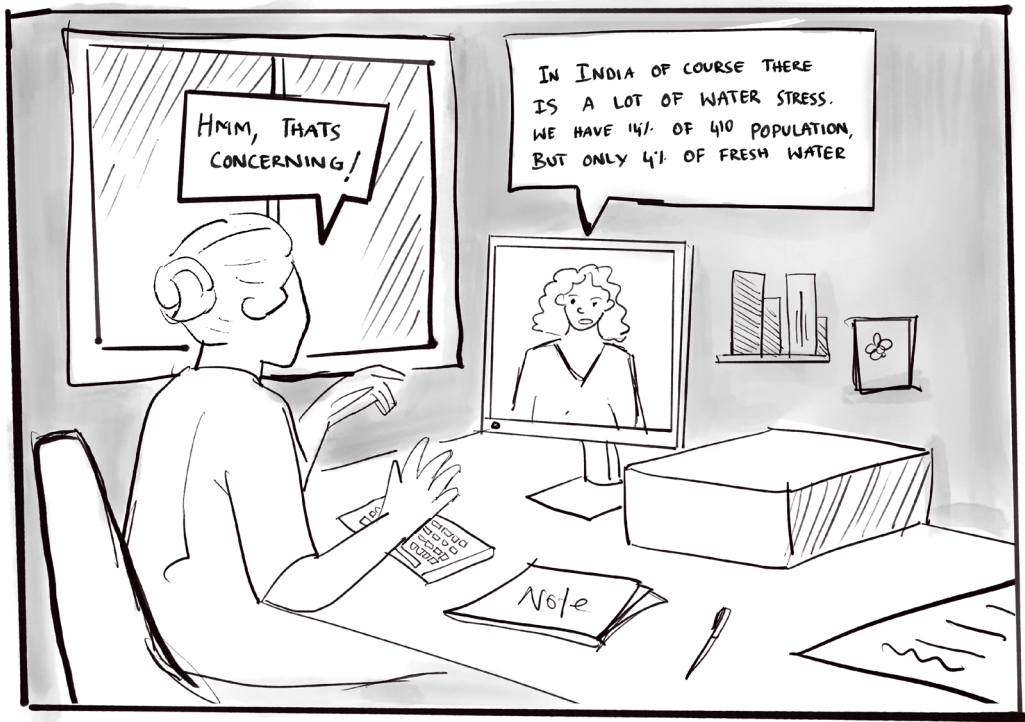




DATA CENTRES ARE INCREASINGLY CONCENTRATED IN CITIES SUCH AS MUMBAI, HYDERABAD, CHENNAI, AND BENGALURU, LARGELY DUE TO THEIR DIGITAL ADVANTAGES, INCLUDING CONNECTIVITY, EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE, AND PROXIMITY TO KEY NETWORKS. AT THE SAME TIME, THIS CONCENTRATION INTERSECTS WITH ALREADY HIGH LEVELS OF URBAN WATER STRESS IN THESE REGIONS.

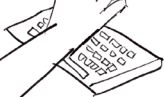
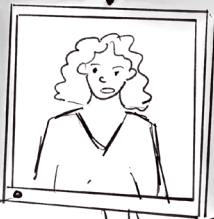
WHILE INDUSTRY ASSESSMENTS OFTEN SUGGEST THAT FUTURE WATER RISKS MAY REMAIN LOW TO MEDIUM, EMERGING RESEARCH POINTS TO A MORE DIFFERENTIATED REALITY. SMALLER DATA CENTRES, PARTICULARLY IN THE 1-5 MW RANGE, TEND TO RELY SIGNIFICANTLY ON MUNICIPAL WATER SUPPLIES, THEREBY DRAWING ON ALREADY CONSTRAINED URBAN SYSTEMS.



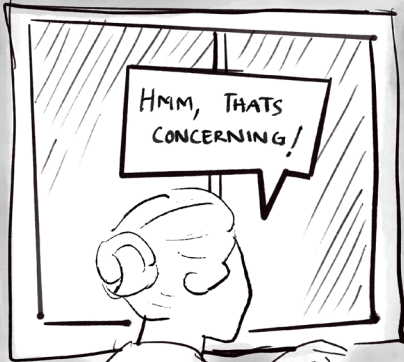
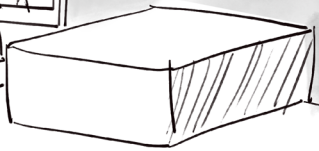


HMM, THATS CONCERNING!

IN INDIA OF COURSE THERE IS A LOT OF WATER STRESS. WE HAVE 14% OF 410 POPULATION, BUT ONLY 4% OF FRESH WATER



Note





IN AI DATA CENTRES, WATER IS NOT JUST FOR CIRCULATION,
WATER IS FOR CONSUMPTION.

