



Event Report

Power, Protection, and Progress: Legislators and the AI Era

India AI Impact Summit 2026

Organised by



In collaboration with



AILF
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE
LEGISLATORS' FORUM

SESSION DETAILS

SESSION MODERATOR

Mr. Ujjwal Kumar

PANELISTS

Shri Krishna Lavu

Shri Raghav Chadha

Sarith Felber

VENUE

India AI Impact Summit 2026,
Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi

THEME

Shaping Democratic AI Governance:
Balancing Innovation, Sovereignty,
and Citizen Protection

MESSAGE FROM FOUNDERS



Mr. Nitin Narang

Founder, Future Shift Labs

The India AI Impact Summit 2026 was conceived as a platform where critical conversations about technology, governance, and society converge with clarity and purpose. As artificial intelligence reshapes institutions, economies, and democratic processes, the responsibility to guide its trajectory cannot rest solely with technologists. Legislators, policymakers, and public institutions must be equally equipped to understand and shape this transformation.

The session “Power, Protection, and Progress: Legislators and the AI Era” reflects this core belief. AI today is not merely a tool of efficiency; it is a force that influences information systems, public trust, economic structures, and national sovereignty. Democracies must therefore respond with foresight, building sovereign capabilities, strengthening institutional literacy, and ensuring that regulation protects citizens without constraining innovation.

At Future Shift Labs, we believe that progress and protection are not opposing goals. They are complementary pillars of responsible innovation. This dialogue with members of Parliament and global thought leaders underscores the urgency of equipping our legislative ecosystem with both knowledge and institutional support.

The future of AI will not be determined by code alone, but by the values embedded within the frameworks we build around it. It is our collective responsibility to ensure that these frameworks are democratic, inclusive, and aligned with long-term public interest.

MESSAGE FROM FOUNDERS



Mr. Sagar Vishnoi

Director, Future Shift Labs

Artificial intelligence has moved from research labs into the core of governance, finance, defence, education, and public discourse. With this shift comes a fundamental question: how do democratic institutions remain both adaptive and accountable in the age of algorithmic decision-making?

The session on “Power, Protection, and Progress: Legislators and the AI Era” was designed to explore precisely this intersection. It brought together legislators and experts to deliberate on strategic autonomy, regulatory balance, public trust, and the preservation of cultural and linguistic knowledge.

As AI systems grow more powerful, governance must become more informed. Institutional capacity-building, expert advisory mechanisms, and thoughtful legislative frameworks are essential to prevent both overreach and under-regulation. The aim is not to slow innovation, but to ensure it serves society equitably and responsibly.

India stands at a pivotal moment. With its digital public infrastructure, demographic strength, and vibrant democracy, the country has the opportunity to shape a uniquely balanced AI governance model, one that advances economic growth while safeguarding constitutional values.

This report captures a dialogue that is only the beginning. The work ahead lies in translating these conversations into sustained policy engagement, cross-sector collaboration, and long-term institutional readiness.

ABOUT FUTURE SHIFT LABS

Future Shift Labs Future Shift Labs, established in 2024, is a think tank devoted towards a sustainable and equitable future, valuing openness, diversity, and innovation. Our core goal is to make India a global leader by offering research, strategic consulting, and training on AI's impact, while fostering collaboration among researchers, policymakers, and industry leaders for responsible AI development.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

“In the age of artificial intelligence, the true measure of progress is not the power of our algorithms, but the wisdom of our governance and the values we choose to protect.”

Future Shift Labs expresses its sincere gratitude to all those who contributed to the success of the session “Power, Protection, and Progress: Legislators and the AI Era” at the India AI Impact Summit 2026.

We extend our profound appreciation to the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) for hosting the India AI Impact Summit 2026 and for providing a national platform that fostered critical dialogue at the intersection of technology, governance, and public policy. The Summit’s guiding framework of the Three Sutras — People, Planet, and Progress — and the Seven Chakras of multilateral cooperation offered a principled and civilisational foundation for discussions on AI’s global and societal impact. This vision reinforced the importance of aligning technological advancement with human welfare, sustainability, institutional trust, and inclusive growth.

We are deeply thankful to the distinguished panellists: Shri Krishna Lavu, Shri Raghav Chadha, and Sarith Felber for their thoughtful and forward-looking insights on legislative responsibility in the AI era. Their reflections on sovereign compute capacity, regulatory balance, democratic safeguards, and the preservation of linguistic and civilisational knowledge enriched the Summit’s broader objectives, particularly those relating to Safe and Trusted AI, Democratizing AI Resources, and AI for Economic Growth and Social Good.

We are especially grateful to Mr. Ujjwal Kumar for moderating the session with clarity and depth, ensuring that complex technological issues were examined through the lens of constitutional values, institutional preparedness, and long-term public interest.

Our heartfelt thanks to the Artificial Intelligence Legislators’ Forum (AILF) for its collaboration and commitment to strengthening informed legislative engagement with emerging technologies.

Finally, we acknowledge the dedicated research, program, communications, and operations teams at Future Shift Labs, whose meticulous efforts ensured the seamless execution of this dialogue. We also thank the delegates, policymakers, scholars, and participants whose engagement reflects a shared responsibility: to ensure that AI’s power is guided by protection, and that progress remains anchored in democratic integrity and societal good.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Power, Protection, and Progress: Legislators and the AI Era, held at the India AI Impact Summit 2026 by Future Shift Labs in collaboration with Artificial Intelligence Legislators' Forum, explored how legislators can shape AI governance responsibly. Moderated by Ujjwal Kumar, with Shri Krishna Lavu, Shri Raghav Chadha, and Sarith Felber, the session examined AI's impact on democracy, economic systems, and strategic power.

Speakers highlighted the need for sovereign compute capacity, institutional preparedness, and balanced regulation that protects citizens without stifling innovation. Concerns over deepfakes, misinformation, and digital divides were discussed, alongside the importance of preserving linguistic and civilisational knowledge through initiatives like Bhashini.

The session concluded that effective AI governance requires legislative clarity, institutional capacity, and societal resilience to ensure AI advances progress while safeguarding democratic integrity



BACKGROUND

Artificial intelligence (AI) is no longer a niche technological development; it is increasingly shaping governance, markets, and everyday life. From public service delivery and financial systems to healthcare and infrastructure, AI influences decision-making, resource allocation, and citizen engagement. As such, lawmakers and democratic institutions are now at the forefront of ensuring that AI is deployed responsibly, equitably, and in alignment with constitutional principles.

Legislators face the dual challenge of understanding AI's technical capabilities and its broader societal implications. AI systems can amplify efficiency and innovation, but they also introduce risks such as algorithmic bias, misinformation, concentration of technological power, and potential threats to privacy and civil liberties. Without appropriate oversight, these risks can undermine public trust and democratic accountability.

The Power, Protection, and Progress: Legislators and the AI Era session at the India AI Impact Summit 2026, organized by Future Shift Labs in collaboration with the Artificial Intelligence Legislators' Forum (AILF), was designed to address these challenges. By bringing together legislators, policymakers, and experts, the session explored how Parliament can respond to the rapid expansion of AI across sectors. Key areas of focus included closing regulatory gaps, safeguarding citizens, building institutional capacity for AI governance, and creating frameworks that enable technological innovation while ensuring accountability, transparency, and public trust.

Ultimately, the session highlighted that the role of legislators is not only reactive but proactive: shaping AI's trajectory in ways that balance progress with protection, ensuring that the benefits of AI are realized while democratic values and human rights remain central.



OBJECTIVES

The Panel Discussion sought to:

- Examine Parliament's role in AI governance
- Discuss technological sovereignty and compute capacity
- Address regulatory frameworks for emerging AI risks
- Explore institutional readiness and public trust
- Consider preservation of languages and cultural knowledge in the AI era

These objectives align with the broader aim of assessing how legislators can effectively engage with AI, balancing innovation and technological progress with regulatory oversight, citizen protection, and democratic accountability.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

1. AI and Democracy as Information Systems

Moderator Mr. Ujjwal Kumar opened the discussion by noting that AI's trajectory significantly shifted after 2018, accelerating machine learning and deep learning capabilities. He referenced warnings by Elon Musk and Stephen Hawking regarding the risks of advanced AI.

He observed that democracy itself functions as an information system built on citizens' experiences, expression, and participation and that AI introduces a new layer shaping this system. He posed a central question: How should AI be governed to ensure it serves societal welfare?

He also highlighted India's digital public infrastructure such as Aadhaar and Unified Payments Interface as examples of sovereign technological architecture.

A key question raised: Is it more important for legislators to personally understand Large Language Models (LLMs), or for institutions to build enabling frameworks and expert support systems?

2. Legislative Preparedness and Institutional Capacity

Shri Krishna Lavu stressed that lawmakers must understand AI not only technically, but economically and socially, particularly its long-term impact on future generations. He argued that parliamentarians require foundational literacy before engaging with technical depth.

Institutional capacity-building, advisory mechanisms, and expert frameworks were identified as essential for informed policymaking.



3. Strategic Autonomy and GPU Sovereignty

Shri Raghav Chadha highlighted the geopolitical implications of AI infrastructure. He underscored the imperative of building sovereign GPU and compute capacity, noting that control over compute influences economic growth, defence capability, and strategic power.

Concerns were raised about concentration in chip manufacturing and GPU supply chains, including first-mover advantages held by companies like Nvidia and manufacturing concentration in Taiwan.

The discussion emphasised diversification of supply chains, domestic data centres, and chip manufacturing to prevent technological dependency.

4. Public Trust, Governance, and Regulation

Sarith Felber emphasised that AI integration into Parliament and public governance must be deliberate and trust-driven. Adoption in civil services should not outpace public confidence.

On regulation, panellists agreed that overregulation could stifle innovation, while under-regulation could risk harm. Regulation must define clearly:

- What should be regulated
- Why it should be regulated
- When intervention is necessary

Raghav Chadha compared AI regulation to constitutional safeguards under Article 19 (freedom of speech), arguing for a balanced and principled approach.

5. Social Media, Deepfakes, and Democratic Integrity

The panel discussed age restrictions for social media and its psychological impact on children. Shri Krishna Lavu noted growing evidence of addictive patterns and emphasised shared responsibility between legislators and parents.

Deepfakes and misinformation were identified as serious risks to democratic trust. While deception through AI may increase, speakers stressed bridging the digital divide to prevent an “intelligence divide.” Regulation should target harm without restricting access to innovation.

6. Language Preservation and Cultural Knowledge

The discussion concluded with concerns about disappearing languages and the loss of cultural wisdom.

Sarith Felber cited efforts in Israel to support Hebrew-language LLM development to preserve linguistic heritage.

Raghav Chadha highlighted India’s linguistic diversity and the risk that non-digitised civilisational knowledge may be excluded from future AI models. Initiatives such as Bhashini were referenced as steps toward digitising regional languages and preserving oral knowledge traditions.

Conclusion

The session underscored that AI governance is not solely a technological challenge but a democratic responsibility. Legislators must balance power with protection, and innovation with accountability.

Building sovereign capacity, fostering institutional expertise, safeguarding public trust, and preserving cultural knowledge will define how democracies navigate the AI era.

The discussion reinforced a central message: the future of AI must be shaped deliberately, responsibly, and in the public interest.

