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Published in The New Indian Express
July 24, 2025 | 07:40 AM IST

'Andhra Pradesh set to lead South Asia in data revolution': Nara Lokesh



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Article Content:

Nara Lokesh outlined the State's ambitious plans to leverage artificial intelligence (AI) and digital technologies for economic advancement and improved public services.

Andhra Pradesh is poised to lead South Asia in capitalising on opportunities arising from the data revolution, according to Nara Lokesh, Minister for HRD and IT.

Speaking at the Investopia Global – Andhra Pradesh Summit, organised by the Andhra Pradesh Economic Development Board at a private hotel in Vijayawada on Wednesday, Lokesh outlined the State's ambitious plans to leverage artificial intelligence (AI) and digital technologies for economic advancement and improved public services.

Addressing a session on AI and data centers, he announced that South Asia's first 152-bit quantum computer will be unveiled in Amaravati in January 2026, a development expected to transform the region's technological ecosystem.

He highlighted Visakhapatnam's emergence as a data city, with several global companies expressing interest in establishing data centers in the coastal hub. "Andhra Pradesh is at the forefront of embracing the data revolution, and we are ready to seize the opportunities it brings," Lokesh asserted.

The IT Minister emphasised the need to modernise education to align with global technological advancements. The State is introducing AI and quantum computing courses in polytechnic, degree, and engineering curricula to equip students with cutting-edge skills.

"Transitioning from traditional education to advanced technologies like AI is challenging, but we are making transformative changes to our curriculum to meet global standards. These reforms aim to prepare Andhra Pradesh's youth for the demands of a digital economy," the HRD Minister explained.

Lokesh underscored the government's commitment to using AI to enhance public services. Drawing from his observations during public outreach programmes, he noted the difficulties citizens faced in accessing basic land records. To address this, the State government has launched 'Mana Mitra', a

WhatsApp-based governance platform that delivers 600 types of citizen services efficiently.

This initiative is supported by a robust back-end data lake that integrates various government departments, ensuring seamless service delivery.

“Our goal is to make public services faster and more accessible through AI-driven governance,” Lokesh explained.

Taking inspiration from the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the first country to establish a dedicated AI ministry, Andhra Pradesh aims to emulate its success in leveraging AI for governance and economic growth. Lokesh cited the UAE’s use of AI in traffic management as a model for smart governance.

Rejecting concerns that AI could lead to job losses, he argued that every industrial revolution creates new opportunities. “I firmly believe AI will generate more jobs, and Andhra Pradesh is gearing up to become a \$2.4 trillion economy in the coming years,” the Minister averred.

The IT Minister highlighted the potential for collaboration with the UAE to strengthen Andhra Pradesh’s digital economy. Through government-to-government partnerships, the State aims to drive growth in AI, data centers, digital innovation, and smart governance.

Discussions with UAE Minister of Economy Abdullah bin Touq Al Marri focused on investment opportunities in renewable energy, infrastructure, digital governance, AI-first universities, genome sequencing, quantum computing, and logistics. Lokesh urged the UAE to extend its support for these initiatives, to which Al Marri responded by inviting him for an official visit to the UAE to further explore collaborative opportunities.

In a fireside chat, Lokesh revealed that ChatGPT is his favourite AI application, reflecting his enthusiasm for AI-driven solutions. The summit saw participation from key figures, including G42 India CEO Manu Jain and Primus Partners Vice President Raksha Sharda, who served as the moderator.