

#### **IT benefits to rural areas**

‡3312. SHRIMATI BIMLA KASHYAP SOOD: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any plan to make schemes for providing benefits of information technology to rural areas;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government is aware that more than 90 per cent of country's population does not know English and hence the benefit of this technology could reach it through the medium of Hindi or regional languages; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by Government for development, expansion and promotion of his technology through Hindi?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SACHIN PILOT): (a) and (b) Under the National e-Governance Plan, Government of India is implementing the Common Services Centres Scheme under which 100,000 kiosks are being set up in the rural areas of the country. These centres have Internet Connectivity and are providing Government and Business Services to citizens. So far around 96000 CSCs have been set up.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. A project titled National Roll out Plan is being executed through C-DAC (Centre for Development of Advanced Computing) wherein Language CDs containing Fonts and localised Bharateeya Open Office and other software tools are being developed for free distribution. These CDs are being developed for all 22 constitutionally recognized Indian languages including Hindi. These can be downloaded from <http://www.ildc.in>. On written request these are also being mailed through post office at the doorstep of user free of cost.

#### **Sale of stake by Bharti Airtel**

3313. SHRI JAI PRAKASH NARAYAN SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Bharti, Airtel after receiving licence without entry fee in Delhi Service Area in 1994, divested 20 per cent of its stake in 1996 to M/s STET International Netherlands NV, thereby increasing its valuations to Rs. 1000 crores;

---

‡Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.