

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.

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Bharti after extension of licence period from 10 to 20 years, without any extra charge, diluted approximately 30 per cent of stake in 2001 for around Rs. 2100 crores, thereby increasing its valuation to Rs. 7000 crores; and

(d) if so, the action taken against the officials of DoT so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI MILIND DEORA): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Losses to exchequer due to underestimation of subscriber base

3314. SHRI JAI PRAKASH NARAYAN SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Bharti Airtel was issued licence for Delhi Metro region in 1994 without entry fee, and condition to pay Rs. 2 crores in 1st year, Rs. 4 crores in 2nd year, and Rs. 8 crores in third year and thereafter a licence fee of Rs. 6023/- per person per annum;

(b) if so, the details of fee paid by the company in first four years of its operation;

(c) whether CAG had indicted in 1998 that the actual number of subscribers were more than actual projections made by DoT for fixing licence fee; and

(d) if so, the quantum of loss incurred due to underestimation of subscriber base?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI MILIND DEORA): (a) and (b) Sir, M/s Bharti Cellular Limited (now Bharti Airtel Limited) had been granted Cellular Mobile Telephone Service (CMTS) Licence with effective date as 29.11.1994 for providing cellular mobile telephone service in Delhi Metro service area. As per licence condition, the Licence fee payable by Licensee for Delhi Metro service area was as follows:

Service Area	1st Year	2nd Year	3rd Year
Delhi	Rupees 2 crores	Rupees 4 crores	Rupees 8 crores