

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2768
ANSWERED ON:15.03.2010
PROVISION OF COMPUTERS
Kataria Shri Lal Chand

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government proposes to make computers and laptops available as subsidized rates or loan at public Data Services Centers in rural areas;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to grant subsidy to the companies providing reliable and high speed data services in rural areas;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the steps taken/being taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SACHIN PILOT)

(a): No, Sir.

(b): Does not arise.

(c): Yes, Sir.

(d) and (e): The following steps have been undertaken by Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) for providing broadband services in rural areas:

(i) The Indian Telegraph Rules have been amended, and stream IV has been added under the title `Provision of broadband connectivity to villages in a phased manner` to bring provisioning of broadband connectivity to the rural areas under the purview of the USOF.

(ii) For providing broadband connections in rural areas, including Gram Panchayats, USOF has signed an Agreement with BSNL on January 20, 2009 under the Rural Wireline Broadband Scheme to provide wire-line broadband connectivity to rural & remote areas by leveraging the existing rural exchanges infrastructure and copper wire-line network. The speed of each of the broadband connections shall be at least 512 kbps always on.

Under this scheme, BSNL will provide 8,88,832 wire-line Broadband connections to individual users and Government Institutions and will set up 28,672 Kiosks over a period of 5- years, i.e., by 2014. The subsidy disbursement is for

(i) broadband connections, Customer Premises Equipment (CPE), Computer/Computing devices

(ii) setting up of Kiosks for public access to broadband services. The estimated subsidy outflow is Rs. 1500 crore in 5 years time that includes subsidy for 9 lakh broadband connections, CPEs, computers/computing devices and Kiosks. As on 31 January 2010, 106070 broadband connections have been provided and 4 kiosks have been set up in the rural and remote areas.