

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:181  
ANSWERED ON:21.07.2014  
PROMOTION OF IT IN RURAL AREAS  
Patel Smt. Jayshreeben

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

- (a) whether the Government has formulated any scheme to promote and develop Information Technology (IT) in rural areas of the country and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government is aware that regional language barriers have impeded the e-Governance initiatives in rural India and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether efforts have been made to develop and adopt Hindi and other Indian Languages computing tools and methodologies to deliver various services in rural areas efficiently in transparent manner and if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the further initiatives taken or being taken by the Government to dismantle Urban-Rural digital divide and reach out to rural population effectively?

**Answer**

MINISTER FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD)

(a) to (d): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 181 FOR 21.07.2014 REGARDING PROMOTION OF IT IN RURAL AREAS

(a): Yes, Madam. The Department of Electronics and Information Technology (DeitY) has launched the Common Services Centres (CSCs) scheme to promote and develop information technology in rural areas of the country.

The CSC Scheme, as approved by the Government of India in September 2006 for setting up of more than 100,000 internet enabled centres in rural India, envisions CSCs as the front-end delivery points for Government, private and social sector services to rural citizens of the country in an integrated manner. As on date, 1,34,589 CSCs have been rolled out covering all the 36 States/UTs.

(b): Yes, Madam. The Government of India is aware that regional language barriers have impeded the e-Governance initiatives in rural India. India is a multilingual country with 22 official languages. Less than 10 percent of the people in the country can read & write English. There are various issues regarding Indian languages such as orthography (spelling issues), pronunciation (may be directly mapped but not always), one script for many languages & many languages with one script, etc.

The mobile web in regional languages also has many challenges such as character encoding, bandwidth cost, presentation issues, device limitations, lack of standardization, fonts, backward compatibility with legacy devices, rendering issues, lack of availability for all characters, issue of multiple scripts, standardization of glyph support, syllable composition and logic dependency on the implementation level of handset manufacturer.

Further there are issues with software applications, e.g. some applications are completely in English, some applications have static content in local language but forms in English and some applications are multi-lingual but only in limited languages (e.g. English and only one local language).

(c): Yes, Madam. DeitY is implementing Localisation Projects Management Framework (LPMF) project which envisages to make Government websites and online services available to the citizens in their own languages. A portal <http://localization.gov.in> has been launched on 18th Feb 2014 for dissemination of information and providing basic localization tools and services.

Besides this, under the Technology Development for Indian Languages (TDIL) Programme, free language CDs containing language computing tools for 22 constitutionally recognized Indian languages including Hindi have been developed. There are about 250 training centers (Programme for Advancing Computer Education - PACE) under CDAC (centre for Development of Advanced Computing) in rural and urban areas which impart training in language technology software usage.

(d): Government of India has taken various initiatives to dismantle Urban-Rural digital divide and reach out to rural population effectively.

i. Common Services Centres (CSCs): CSCs are the front-end delivery points for Government, private and social sector services to rural citizens of the country in an integrated manner. A Rural Outreach campaign has been conducted in 9 states (Himachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Tripura, Odisha, Kerala, Jharkhand and Maharashtra) covering 1,282 CSCs during 2013-14. The aim of campaign is to promote and create awareness about the services being delivered by the CSCs among the rural population.

ii. Technology Development for Indian Languages (TDIL): Under TDIL program, language CDs can be freely downloaded from <http://www.ildc.nic.in> and are also being sent by post to the doorstep of any user free of cost on request. Using software contained in these language CDs, a rural user can carry out various activities like letter/application writing, content creation, database creation, presentation making, online messaging, e-mailing and web browsing etc. in local languages.

iii. Localisation Projects Management Framework (LPMF): Under LPMF project, tools, resources and services are being developed. In 2014-15, 15 additional URLs covering another 7 MMPs have been taken up for development and deployment of the Surface Localization Plug-in on <http://localization.gov.in/>. The final deployment of LPMF has been planned to be hosted on cloud platform. Interfaces are being developed and integrated for use of TDIL outcomes such as Machine Translation Systems with LPMF for facilitating translation support through a contributor's plug-in developed specifically for MMPs.