UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2804
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Digital Colonisation
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Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the concept of Digital Colonisation; and

(b) the steps taken to overcome the danger of digital colonisation by the country?

Answer

(a): Digital colonization is a concept where the life of citizens, culture and sovereignty of a nation may be unknowingly traded off and controlled by hi-tech and information capturing companies. Just like countries, which were falling behind in industrial revolution ended up colonized, in the same manner, countries which are not bringing digital revolution may end up Digitally Colonised.

(b): The Government of India has undertaken following initiatives to overcome the danger of digital colonisation of the country:

Net Neutrality: Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has released Regulation on "Prohibition of Discriminatory Tariffs for Data Services Regulations, 2016" on 8th Feb 2016 which, inter-alia, has mandated the following:

(i) No service provider shall offer or charge discriminatory tariffs for data services on the basis of content,
(ii) No service provider shall enter into any arrangement, agreement or contract, by whatever name called, with any person, natural or legal, that has the effect of discriminatory tariffs for data services being offered or charged to the consumer on the basis of content,
(iii) Any packs, plans or vouchers subscribed by the consumer with unexpired validity at the time of commencement of these regulations are not affected by these regulations subject to maximum period of six months.
(iv) Reduced tariff for accessing or providing emergency services, or at times of public emergency has been permitted
(v) Financial disincentive for contravention of the regulation has also been specified.

National Data Sharing and Accessibility Policy-2012: The GoI has notified a policy on data sharing and accessibility, which aims to facilitate the access to Government of India owned shareable data and information in both human readable and machine readable forms through a network all over the country in a proactive and periodically updatable manner, within the framework of various related policies, Acts and rules of Government of India, thereby permitting a wider accessibility and use of public data and information. It applies to all data and information created, generated, collected and archived using public funds provided by Government of India directly or through authorized agencies by various Ministries / Departments /Organizations / Agencies and Autonomous bodies.

Policy on Adoption of Open Source Software for Government of India: The GoI has notified policy on adoption of Open Source Software in all e-Governance systems implemented by various Government organizations, as a preferred option in comparison to Closed Source Software (CSS). The source code shall be available for the community / adopter / end-user to study and modify the software and to redistribute copies of either the original or modified software. Source code shall be free from any royalty.

Indian Patent Act 1970: The India Patent Act 1970 as amended in 2005 has excluded "Computer Software per se" for the subject matter of patentability. Section 3(k) of the patent act describes that there is no patent on invention of any mathematical or business method or a computer program me or algorithms.

Internet Governance: The following initiatives have been undertaken under Internet Governance by the Government of India:

â€¢ Internet Exchange Nodes: The Internet Exchange Nodes have been successful in ensuring peering of Internet Service Providers (ISPs) among themselves for the purpose of routing the domestic traffic within the country, instead of taking abroad.

â€¢ .IN Registry: Since 2005, NIXI also manages the .IN Registry (www.registry.in). At present, 110 Registrars have been accredited to offer .IN domain Name registration worldwide to customers. This has helped proliferation o f web hosting i n the country and promotion of Indian language content on the Internet. Over 20 lakhs .IN Domain names have been registered till 7th May 2016.

â€¢ Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs): IDNs are domain names represented in local language characters. Such domain names could contain letters or characters from non-ASCII scripts. IDN's in Hindi, Bodo, Dogri, Konkani, Maithili, Marathi, Nepali Sindhi, Bengali, Gujarati, Manipuri, Punjabi, Tamil, Telugu and Urdu languages were launched during the year 2014-15 and over 6000 IDNs

have been registered. NIXI has sought delegation of all remaining languages (Assamese, Kannada, Malayalam, Oriya, Sanskrit, Santali in Devanagari Script and Kashmiri & Sindhi in Perso-Arabic Script) from ICANN.

â€¢ Multi-stakeholder Model: India has supported for multi-stakeholder model of Internet Governance mechanisms, which would involve all stakeholders and help to preserve the character of the Internet as a unified, dynamic engine for innovation, and which encourage equity and inclusion. A series of multistakeholder consultations/ roundtable meetings are being organized by Department of Electronics & Information Technology, Government of India in collaboration with National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI).

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