ENCOURAGEMENT OF FOSS

214   SHRI RAVIKUMAR D:

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

(a)   whether the Government is taking any measures to encourage Free and Open Source Software (FOSS);
(b)   if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
(c)   the reasons for India's slow progress in proliferating FOSS projects as compared to its global counterparts;
(d)   whether the Government has any plan to encourage the States to replicate the Kerala's public sector FOSS initiatives; and
(e)   if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR)

(a) to (c): Yes, Sir. Government of India (GoI) is committed to promote use of Open Source technologies and their adaptation in e-Governance/ Digital Governance applications including public platforms in the country. Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has released the "Policy on Adoption of Open Source Software for Government of India" in July, 2016. MeitY has also established "National Resource Center for Free and Open Source Software" at C-DAC Chennai to provide design, development and support services to the FOSS community in the country and also strengthen the global FOSS ecosystem by contributing to the open source pool & promote use of Open Source solutions.

C-DAC has been deploying the open source solutions to various Central/ State sectors. Around 6.5 Million deployments of Bharat Operating System Solutions (BOSS) have been carried out across the country. There are many Government of India projects which are leveraging FOSS. These include Aadhaar, DigiLocker, DIKSHA, CoWIN, AarogyaSetu amongst other.

(d) to (e): MeitY has organized capacity building sessions on FOSS in which various State FOSS models including that of State of Kerala has been showcased. MeitY through its various initiatives is promoting use of free and open source software at various Central and State Government organizations in e-Governance domain in order to leverage economic and strategic benefits. GoI policy on adoption of Open Source Software for Government of India emphasizes that 'Request for Proposals' (RFPs) of e-governance projects shall include a mandatory clause for considering Open Source Software (OSS) as a preferred option in comparison to Closed Source Software (CSS).

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