

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3596
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 22.03.2023

BHASHINI PROJECT

3596. SHRI KUMBAKUDI SUDHAKARAN:
SHRI P.C. MOHAN:
SHRI LALLU SINGH:

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

- (a) the details of the progress made and current status of the Bhashini project of the National Language Translation Mission (NLTm) launched in 2022?
- (b) the aim of the project and the manner in which it is likely to leverage the power of artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies;
- (c) the details of the languages which are going to be included in the project;
- (d) Whether it is a fact that the Whatsapp-based chatbot being created for this project will rely on information generated by ChatGPT to provide answers to queries raised by users and if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether in view of the severe reliability concerns associated with ChatGPT, the Government intend to ensure reliability and informational integrity of the chatbot being created under this mission; and
- (f) 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): The National Language Technology Mission (BHASHINI), has been launched by the Hon'ble Prime Minister in July' 2022 to provide Artificial Intelligence (AI) driven language technology solutions through Bhashini platform (<https://bhashini.gov.in>) as 3 year mission for all 22 Scheduled Indian Languages.

Currently, 350+ pre-trained AI-driven language models have been made available on Bhashini platform in 10 Indian Scheduled Languages (Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Odia, Punjabi, Tamil, and Telugu) and English. The Bhashini open Application Programming Interface (APIs) for language translation in text and voice have been listed on API Setu (<https://apisetu.gov.in>).

(d) to (f): Bhashini APIs are available for anyone to integrate with any application. The industry or startups may build applications leveraging any interface including WhatsApp to provide easy to use services to the citizens.

Large Language Models (LLMs) such as ChatGPT have shown promise as a tool to provide information to users in a convenient and easy to understand manner. At the same time Mission Bhashini is aware of the reliability issues of LLMs if they are used without appropriate safeguards.

Large Language Models (LLMs) may be used for providing voice bots in the citizen's local languages. Bhashini development team is aware of the potential of new and emerging technologies like ChatGPT for providing relevant information to citizens, but the same will be deployed only after doing due diligence.
