

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2169
ANSWERED ON:07.12.2005
USE OF IT IN AGRICULTURAL SECTOR
Reddy Shri Magunta Sreenivasulu

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

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- (a) whether IT could play a major role in educating farmers in e-trading/commerce and in tracking down movement and flow pattern of commodities
- (b) if so, whether the Government proposes to use IT extensively to educate farmers in good agricultural practices including post-harvest management of fruits and vegetables;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether there are any proposals with the Government for providing village-level kiosks backed with proper marketing extension centres to provide wider access to farmers in a user- friendly manner, and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY(DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD)

(a) and (b): Yes, Sir.

(c): The Department of Agriculture and Cooperation (DAC), Ministry of Agriculture, in collaboration with National Informatics Centre (NIC) have initiated pilot projects 'Agricultural Resources Information System (AgRIS)' to facilitate extension services, including good agricultural practices.

(d) and (e): In addition to above, DAC in collaboration with NIC made the AGMARKNET project operational in 2200 Agricultural wholesale produces Markets located through-out the country. This project provides market prices information (Maximum, Minimum and Nodal) on 300 commodities and about 2000 varieties. The Government of Andhra Pradesh have taken initiatives to display these prices information through their village level kiosks Centre (Rajiv Centres). The AGMARKNET data is available on the Internet site (agmarknet.nic.in) free of cost. Separately, Department of Information Technology is working on a Plan to establish 100,000 Information & Communication Technology (ICT) enabled Common Services Centres (CSCs) predominantly in the rural areas across the country by the year 2007. Such Centres would have the flexibility to offer a mix of services (both Government and non-Government including localized services) that may be needed by the local community. These CSCs would be promoted on a sustainable entrepreneur - based model supported by the Central and State Governments.