

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) to (c) Sir, while every possible attempt is being made to maintain MARR systems at a reasonable level of dependability, those which are found difficult to maintain due to lack of servicing and repair support from original manufacturers or any other reason, will be progressively replaced. Some of the new technologies for rural telephony are Wireless in Local Loop, TDMA/PMP of C-DOT, Satellite, etc. This is in addition to land line telephones from rural telephone exchanges.

Delay in attending telephone complaints

4602. SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have made any special arrangement to attend the telephone complaints;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are aware that the complaints of the consumers are not attended in time and cause long delay;

(d) if so, the action taken against the concerned persons?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) A special cell has been established in the Hon'ble Minister's office to attend telephone complaints. Arrangement exists to receive complaints on fax and telephone from all over the country. These complaints are sent to concerned Telecom Circles for prompt action. The field staff have been instructed to attend these complaints on priority basis. Monitoring is done by an officer designated as OSD (PG) under the direct supervision of Hon'ble MOC.

In the field units, new technologies have also been introduced for attending to telephone complaints. These include introduction of Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS), Computerised Fault Repair System and provisioning of Pagers to Line Staff.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. Sometimes delay takes place due to cable fault, major break down of lines, prolonged power failures etc. especially in rural areas. Such faults, due to their nature, take longer

time to rectify. In case, there is delay due to negligence of staff, disciplining of staff through administrative action is prescribed.

Telephone connections in rural areas of U.P

4603. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) what steps are being taken by Government to provide telephone connections in the rural areas of the country particularly in the State of Uttar Pradesh; and

(b) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATION (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) As per the objectives of 9th five year plan, telephones will be provided on demand in all the rural and urban areas by March, 2002. Planning is being done to install telephone exchanges and provide reliable media keeping this objective in view. In the far-off rural areas, telephone connections are proposed with the help of WLL technology.

During the year 2000-2001, about 403 new telephone exchanges and 226 WLL equipment and 27,000 VPTs have been planned in the rural areas of Uttar Pradesh.

(b) Does not arise in view of reply to para (a) above.

Expansion of Telecom Services in Rural Areas

4604. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have taken a decision to expand the telecom services in the rural areas;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the private companies have so far provided phones to only five villages as against a target of 18,000;

(c) if so, what are reasons for this massive shortfall; and

(d) whether anyone has been made accountable for this failure?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Out of six private companies only one company viz M/s BTNL has provided phones to 12 villages in Madhya Pradesh.