

been abolished and now STD/ISD PCOs are provided to all the eligible applicants as per their registration.

(c) In Uttar Pradesh 39,020 persons had applied for PCO booths during the last three years.

(d) and (e) The registration of application for allotment of PCOs is a continuous process. Applications from all the eligible persons are accepted and allotment is made to eligible candidates as per their registration.

Telephone connection in U.P. villages

4613. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA': Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) how many villages have been connected by telephones till date and its percentage to the total;

(b) by when the remaining villages are proposed to be covered; and

(c) whether any target date has been fixed for covering U.P. villages in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Out of 607, 491 villages in the country, 374,605 villages, *i.e.* 61.7% have been provided with public telephone facilities till 31st March 2000.

(b) and (c) All the remaining 232,886 villages, including those in Uttar Pradesh will be covered progressively by March 2002.

Telephone on demand in Gujarat

†4614. SHRI BACHANI LEKHRAJ: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government provides telephone on demand in Delhi;

(b) if so, the number of people to whom telephone

† Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

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connections has been provided during the last six months under the said rule;

(c) whether Government provides telephone in Gujarat also under the said rule;

(d) if so, the number of people to whom telephone connection has been provided under the said rule; and

(e) if not, by when the said facility is likely to be provided?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) In MTNL, Delhi the telephones are available on demand in most of the exchanges in Technically feasible localities.

(b) During last six months 30308 new telephone connections were provided within 7 days from the date of their registration.

(c) to (e) During last six months 26390 telephones have been provided within seven days from the date of registration in Gujarat. Department of Telecom Services proposes to provide telephone on demand in Gujarat by 31-3-2002. So far upto 31-3-2000 19.22 lakh telephone connections have been provided in Gujarat. During the current financial year, it is proposed to provide 3.3 lakh new telephone connections.

Setting UP OF VPT by Private Operators

4615. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that private basic phone operators have reneged on conditions to set up village public telephone;

(b) how many such private basic telephone operators are in the country;

(c) how many village public telephone were to be set up by them;

(d) how many have actually been set up;

(e) whether there is a shortfall in the actual public phones installed and the agreed number; and

(f) the steps proposed to take action against such operators?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF