

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that a large number of consumers who have cleared their outstanding dues are waiting for re-connection in Malviya Nagar, South Delhi; and

(c) how many such cases are pending in Malviya Nagar and the reasons for delay in providing reconnection and whether MTNL would give top-priority for reconnection and if not, the reasons therefor?

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

(b) and (c) As per report available, there is no such case pending for reconnection after release of OB. However 16 cases of restoration are pending at different stages, for reasons attributable to the subscribers themselves, like unpaid Demand Notes, changes in signatures and changes in customers' names.

Additional Manpower for Gurgaon Telecom District

2031. SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item which appeared in Hindustan Times dated 24th August, 1999 captioned "Telephone on Demand by 2000 in Gurgaon";

(b) if so, whether Government propose to post additional manpower for the Gurgaon Telecom District in view of the above news-item; and

(c) if so, by when, and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The news-item which appeared in the "Hindustan Times" of 24th August, 1999 captioned Telephone on Demand by 2000 in Gurgaon' pertains to telecom services. It has been planned to make telephone available on demand in Gurgaon by March, 2000. Further, the Government is aware of the shortage of manpower in Gurgaon Telecom District which is in Haryana Telecom Circle. To improve the situation, action has been initiated for recruitment of additional

[21 December, 1999]

RAJYA SABHA

Junior Telecom Officers, Telecom Technical Assistants and Motor Drivers for Haryana Circle.

E-Mail Facilities in North-Eastern Region

2032. SHRI ONWARD L. NONGTUDU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria adopted to provide E-mail facilities in the country;

(b) the number of cities in the country particularly in the States of NER where said facility has been provided; and

(c) the details of percentage of said facilities available in the country, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) E-Mail facility in the country can be provided by any Internet Service Provider (ISP) or E-mail operator licensed by Department of Telecom (DOT). Since 1994, licenses for E-mail service were granted by DOT. Since announcement of Internet policy in Nov. 1998, licences have been granted to ISPs who are providing Internet Services. E-mail facility is a part of Internet Service.

(b) and (c) The access to Internet is available to the subscribers throughout the country on Local call basis excepting andaman & Nicobar Islands and Leh. The following are the Internet modes working in the North East Region:—

1. Shilong
2. Agartala
3. Guwahati
4. Silchar

Pending Application for STD/ISD/PCO in Meghalaya

2033. SHRI ONWARD L. NONGTUDU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of STD/ISD/PCO booths functioning in the