

Governments. However in order to supplement the efforts of the States, the Central Silk Board (CSB) has set-up a country-wide network of units to extend necessary R&D, extension, training & infrastructural support without confining it to any specific State. The number of such units in the States of Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and North-East is 38, 19 and 47 respectively. Based on their agro-climatic and technical factors relevant to sericulture, the concerned States can avail of these support systems of the CSB which include various incentive programmes for development of sericulture such as supply of mulberry cuttings, augmentation of muga food plants, production development and marketing for eri etc. In addition, CSB from time to time takes up sericulture development projects (both for mulberry and non-mulberry) in collaboration with State(s). The major projects which have specifically benefited the expansion of sericulture both in Madhya Pradesh and the North-East during the last five years are the National Sericulture Project (NSP), Inter-State Tasar Project in Madhya Pradesh, Project for the Development of Nature Grown Tasar Cocoons in Madhya Pradesh and the Action Plan for the North-Eastern States.

PCO booths in urban and rural areas of Bihar

1789. SHRI GYAN RANJAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of PCOs allotted in Bihar in urban and rural areas separately;

(b) the details of post offices in rural areas which do not have PCOs, and target time to install PCOs in every village post offices, district-wise;

(c) whether SCs/STs are given preferential treatment in allotment of PCO booths; and

(d) if so, the number of PCO booths

allotted to SCs/STs alongwith details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VERMA): (a) 2352 urban PCOs and 18840 rural PCOs are working in Bihar as on 31.1.1997.

(b) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House as early as possible.

(c) and (d) Sir, preference in allotment is given to SC/ST applicants by the STD PCO allotment committee. However, no separate data is maintained in this regard.

STD/ISD failures in Jammu and Kashmir

1790. SHRI SHARIEF-UD-DINSHARIQ: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of District Headquarters connected with STD/ISD facilities in the Jammu and Kashmir and the names of District/Tehsil Headquarters are to be linked with STD/ISD facility in the year 1997 in the State;

(b) whether it is a fact that Handwara Tehsil Headquarter in Kupwara district of Kashmir valley is cut off from the State Headquarters due to non-functional telephone exchange;

(c) whether Government consider to install a thousand line electronic telephone exchange to meet the public demand there; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VERMA): (a) As per enclosed list in the State. (See below)

(b) No, Sir. The telephone exchange is working satisfactorily. Trunk calls can be booked at Kupwara and Sopore.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. The public demand justify only 256 port electronic exchange, which is planned to be commissioned during 1997-98.