

**Present situation in USSR**

461. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI:  
CHOWDRY HARI SINGH;  
KUMARI ALIA:  
SHRI RAM NARESH YADAV:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what is Government's assessment of current events in the Soviet Union; how have they affected the Indo-Soviet Union ties and its effect on other parts of the World; and

(b) whether any contracts have been made with President Gorbachov; if so, what is his attitude towards India after recent events and stand taken by Indian Government during the crisis?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) Political developments in the USSR are taking place at a rapid pace. Government are constantly monitoring and analyzing these developments with a view to ensuring that they do not have adverse impact on Indo-Soviet relations. It is too early to predict the impact of these changes on the world at large.

(b) Yes Sir. Prime Minister had sent a message to President Gorbachev on 22 August 1991 expressing relief and happiness on his and his family's well-being and satisfaction of the Government and people of India on his resumption of duties as the President of the USSR. President Gorbachev has sent a reply to Prime Minister's message in which he has conveyed his gratitude for the stand that the leadership of India and the Prime Minister personally had taken in regard to the attempted putsch in the USSR on 19 August, 1991.

**Allotment of ISD/STD Telephone connections**

462. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI:  
Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are liberally allotting ISD/STD telephone connections on commercial basis;

(b) if so, what are the guidelines in this regard; and

(c) the number of such connections allotted during the last one year. State-wise?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P. V. RANGAYYA NAIDU):

(a) Yes, Sir. A franchise scheme for establishing public payphones by voluntary organisations/private agencies individuals has been introduced since July, 1988 to provide the general public better accessibility to telephones.

(b) Existing guidelines are given in the Statement.

(c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

**Statement**

To provide the general public better accessibility to public telephones, it has been decided to franchise voluntary organisations as well as private entrepreneurs to install, maintain and operate such payphones subject to following terms and conditions, in general:—

(i) The number of agencies to be franchised in a city/town will depend on population.

(ii) The payphones may be coin/token or Card operated, at the choice of the operating agency.

(iii) For each payphone, the Department will provide a telephone connection parented to a suitable telephone exchange, with an appropriate termination at the location of payphone.

(iv) The operating agency will provide and maintain its own coin/token/card operated payphone duly approved by the DOT and operate it. DOT will maintain the telephone connection except the instruction.