

- (b) Sir, some complaints of overcharging are being received.
- (c) In order to curb the practices of over-charging the customers by the franchisees, various steps have been taken which included the following:—
- (i) Complaint Cell has been set up under each area General Managers to look into the complaints of over-charging.
 - (ii) Periodical surprise check of the PCOs are done.
 - (iii) Additional CCB PCOs are being introduced regularly.
 - (iv) More local PCOs are provided in the city in order to increase the competition and reduce the monopoly of the existing **PCO** operators.

Provision of Internet facility in Bihar

† 1741. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government have a proposal to provide the facility of internet in the country specially in various districts of Bihar;
- (b) if so, the names of the cities in Bihar where the facility of internet has already been provided is proposed to be provided in the current year; and
- (c) the steps being taken by Government in this regard?

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

(b) and (c)

- (i) The following cities/Districts Headquarters in Bihar have been provided with Internet Nodes:

Ara, Begusarai, Bhagalpur, Chapra, Durbhanga, Dhanbad, Hajipur, Jamshepur, Khagaria, Munger, Muzzaffarpur, Motihari, Patna and Ranchi.

- (ii) Government has also extended Internet facility to all District Headquarters of Bihar through access to the nearest Internet node on local call charges basis.

(iii) In order to further improve the services in the State of Bihar, Internet nodes, in the current year, are planned to be set up at the following

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

[8th August, 2000]

RAJYA SABHA

District Headquarters of Bihar, for which equipment orders have been placed:

Bokaro, Gaya, Daltonganj, Dumka, Hazaribagh, Katihar, Sasaram, Saharsa, Samastipur, Supaul and Siwan.

- (iv) It is also proposed to progressively provide Internet nodes in all District Headquarters of Bihar.

Replacement of Indian Telegraph Act, 1885

1742. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a legislation providing for creation of a Communications Commission on the lines of the Federal Communications Commission of the US to handle all the regulating and licensing functions in the area of telecom, broadcasting and internet is proposed to be introduced;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether proposed legislation will replace Indian Telegraph Act of 1885 and other such old laws, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) to (c) Sir, a Group has been constituted under the chairmanship of the Finance Minister with one of the mandates to prepare the draft of new legislation to replace Indian Telegraph Act, 1885; keeping in view the rapid convergence of telecom, computers, television and electronics. The Group is examining all these aspects. The Group has not yet submitted its report.

Siphoning of Bank Drafts

1743. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there have been several complaints about the siphoning of Bank Drafts worth crores of rupees by the city's postal department employees in connivance with the bank employees and the middlemen having bank accounts;