

country and in Government procurement; and Scheme for mandatory registration of identified electronic products for meeting specified safety standards have already been approved.

Spectrum refarming

56. DR. KANWAR DEEP SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has come up with a policy on spectrum refarming;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether this will involve taking back high-quality spectrum from the existing players and auctioning off of low-quality spectrum;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether this would imply that existing players that re-purchase spectrum during the auctions would have to set up new infrastructure to tap this new auction; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI MILIND DEORA): (a) to (d) The National Telecom Policy 2012 (NTP 2012) stipulates, among others, to reframe spectrum and allot alternative frequency bands or media to service providers from time to time to make spectrum available for introduction of new technologies for telecom applications.

(e) and (f) The license terms and conditions do not provide any guarantee for retention of spectrum held by the Telecom Service Providers. However, such telecom service providers may also participate in the auction of spectrum in the frequently band, which they currently hold.

Postal services in rural areas of Uttar Pradesh

†57. SHRI DARSHAN SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

- (a) whether a large number of post boxes installed in Uttar Pradesh especially in rural areas remain open;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether a number of post offices have been closed down; and
- (d) if so, the details of post offices closed down during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. (SHRIMATI) KRUPARANI KILLI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. Only one Branch Post Office named Kaithwali Branch Office has been upgraded into Sub Post Office in the name of NBAIM Kushmaur SO, in the year 2012-12.

Telephone facility for gram panchayats in Uttar Pradesh

†58. SHRI DARSHAN SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has provided the facility of telephones to all Gram Panchayats in the country;
- (b) if so, the number of Gram Panchayats where the facility of telephone has not been provided so far, especially in Uttar Pradesh, district-wise; and
- (c) the steps taken by Government to improve the telephone facility for Gram Panchayats?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI MILIND DEORA): (a) 5,81,610 villages out of 5,93,601 (*i.e.* 97.97%) of the census 2001 inhabited revenue villages have been covered with Village Public Telephones (VPTs) as on 31.01.2013 with subsidy support from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF). Agreement(s) has been signed with Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) on 27.02.2009 for provisioning of VPT facility in all remaining feasible inhabited villages as per census 2001 with subsidy support from USOF.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.