

**Withdrawal of facilities from All India SC/ST Telecom Employees Welfare Association**

1649. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether any letter or Office Memorandum was received by the Deptt. of Communications regarding withdrawal of facilities provided to earlier All India SC/ST Telecom Employees Welfare Association, and

(b) if so, what action has been taken by the MTNL Management thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The department had written a letter to CMD, MTNL and BSNL on 28.5.2004, requesting them to formulate their own rules and plans for extending certain facilities to SC/ST Welfare Associations in consultation with National Commission for SC/ST. The matter is in process in MTNL.

**Public sector telecom growth**

1650 SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government owned telecom companies have failed to keep pace with the private sector in the country;

(b) if so, the facts and the details thereof;

(c) whether the telecom growth in private sector has increased manifold than that of public sector; and

(d) if so, the details of the plans formulated to increase the public sector telecom growth in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) to (c) Comparative table showing total telephone connections working with Government owned PSUs and Private Operators as on 31st March for the last four years and their growth rate during last three years is given below: