

condition, up from existing limit of US\$ 50 million (Budget announcement 2002-03).

31. Indian Companies making overseas investment in joint ventures abroad by market purchases may now do so without prior approval upto 50% of their net worth, up from existing limit of 25% (Budget announcement 2002-03).
32. To induce more investment for R&D activities, a weighted deduction of 125% on the sums paid to any university, college or an institution or a Scientific research association for the purposes of scientific, social or statistical research is available.
33. For reduction of transaction time for export/import clearance, Ministry of Civil Aviation has finalised the scheme of 'Known-shippers' for doing away with the 24 hours cooling off period.
34. Two shifts have been introduced on week days and single shift on holidays at the Air Cargo Complexes at Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Delhi and Goa.
35. Information Technology Act 2000 dealing with Cyber Security, Cyber Crime and other information security related legal aspects is in place to encourage expansion of e-commerce through internet.

### **Telephone Facility in Villages**

4525. SHRI HARENDRA SINGH MALIK: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of villages/Gram Panchayats proposed to be provided with telephone facilities in the country during 2002-2003, State-wise;

(b) whether any concrete steps have been worked out to provide the said facility in all the villages of the country by March, 2003, and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) The statement regarding number of villages proposed to be provided with telephone facility during 2002-03 is attached. (See below).

(b) and (c) The department has framed policy to cover all the revenue Villages in the country by end of 2002 and since Gram Panchayats are situated in revenue Villages, it will be covered under above policy. Concrete steps are being taken to provide the said facility in all the revenue villages of the country such as induction of the state of the art technology viz. C-DOT TDMA/PMP, WLL, satellite phones in addition to the wired lines.

**Statement**

*VPT's to be provided during 2002-2003*

Sl. No.	State/Circle	by BSNL	by Pvt. optr.	Total
1.	Andaman & Nicobar	4	—	4
2.	Andhra Pradesh	0	6096	6097
3.	Assam	7667	—	7667
4.	Bihar	10129	—	10129
5.	Jharkhand	11965	—	11965
6.	Gujarat	0	6911	6911
7.	Himachal Pradesh	545	—	545
8.	Jammu & Kashmir	2692	—	2692
9.	Karnataka	6	—	6
10.	Kerala	0	—	0
11.	Madhya Pradesh	4	19168	19172
12.	Chhattisgarh	340	—	340
13.	Maharashtra	0	11091	11091
14.	North East-I	4172	—	4172

Sl. No.	State/Circle	by BSNL	by Pvt. optr.	Total
15.	North East-II	4811	—	4811
16.	Orissa	11632	—	11632
17.	Punjab	0	0	0
18.	Rajasthan	0	17338	17388
19.	Tamil Nadu	0	—	0
20.	Uttar Pradesh (E)	5688	—	5688
21.	Uttar Pradesh (W)	0	—	0
22.	Uttaranchal	5607	—	5607
23.	West Bengal	4178	—	4178
24.	Calcutta	0	—	0
25.	Delhi	0	—	0
<b>TOTAL:</b>		<b>69440</b>	<b>60604</b>	<b>130044</b>

#### Branch Post Offices in H.P.

†4526. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the prescribed norms are relaxed for opening of branch post offices in remote, hilly and border States, like Himachal Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details of the conditions that are relaxed;

(c) the number of branch post offices targeted to be opened and upgraded in Himachal Pradesh during the Ninth Five Year Plan and whether this target has been achieved and if so, the details; and

(d) the target fixed for the Tenth Five Year Plan along with the details of the action plan for its completion?

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.