

through Rajasthan border and due to the threat of being caught, the smugglers leave the consignment of heroin at the border, but the main culprit, the gang leader manages to escape? Will the hon. Minister be pleased to state the quantity of unclaimed heroin confiscated and the number of people who crossed over to Pakistan because of the protection provided by Pakistani forces?

[English]

SHRIM.M. JACOB: I have already given the number of people who have been caught this year as 185. I don't know the exact quantity of the heroin seized.

Public Telephone Facility in Post Offices of Uttar Pradesh

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*611. SHRI BHAGWAN SHANKAR RAWAT:
SHRI VIRENDRA SINGH:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of post offices/sub post offices in Uttar Pradesh which do not have public telephone facility;

(b) whether the Government propose to provide such facility in all post offices sub postoffied in Uttar Pradesh; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P. V. RANGAYYA NAIDU): (a) As on 31.7.1991 the number of branch post offices/sub post offices in Uttar Pradesh not having public telephone facilities is 15296.

(b) and (c). There is no Plan to provide telephone facility in all post offices in Uttar Pradesh. The Department of Telecom has, however, planned to provide public telephones in Panchayat villages which can be installed in post offices, Panchayat Head Quarters, Grocer's shop or any other suitable place with public access.

[Translation]

SHRI BHAGWAN SHANKAR RAWAT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, first of all I would like to know the number of post offices and sub post offices to be provided with the Public Telephone facility during the current financial year. Secondly, I would like to know the number of post offices where these facilities have been provided so far. Thirdly, why is the Government not making a scheme for providing Public telephone facility in all the post offices of the State? Fourthly.....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Not like this, the question will become very lengthy.

(Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): Mr. Speaker, Sir, Post Office is simply a part in the scheme of providing Public Telephones. When we provide telephone in villages, we give priority for its installation in a post office if there is any. But the post office does not remain open for 24 hours. The purpose of providing telephone is that if some message is to be conveyed to a Police Station or to a nearby place at 2.00 o'clock in the night, telephone facility should be available to the people. The facility should reach the people. If postman, or the staff of the Post Office or the Extra Departmental employees live in or near the premises of the Post Office, who work for certain fixed hours, the facility of telephone should be provided there, because Extra-Departmental employees are not employed in the Department and they work for certain fixed hours. But provision of a telephone is of no use at a place where the Post Office remains open only for 4 hours. So another place to which the people of the village may agree is chosen, or it is provided at a shop whose owner may be awakened even at late hours in the night. Or it is provided at the residence of Sarpanch or that of a reputed person who might be ready to provide this facility to the people. The scheme has been framed in such a way that the facility could be

provided to the people. The hon. Member would not be able to achieve the target for which this scheme is framed, if both these things are linked together. So far as part "B" of the question is concerned, the number of sub-post offices where telephone facilities are available is 1587, and the number where such facilities are not available is 1687. The number of Branch Post Offices where such facilities are available is 2620 and the number of Branch Post Offices where the telephone facility is not available in U.P. is 13,609. In part "C" of the question you have asked regarding dacoit or terrorist infested area. Our Department has organised a separate Task Force for these areas, which include Punjab, Kashmir and Assam and other parts of such States where such activities are frequently taking place. We give top priority to such areas, so that communication facility is available there. The Government has announced that telephone would be provided to every Panchayat headquarters by March 1995. It is on that basis that we are giving priority to these areas so that these facilities reach there at the earliest.

SHRI BHAGWAN SHANKAR RAWAT:

Mr. Speaker, Sir, as the hon. Minister has said that telephone connections are being provided not only in Post Offices but in Panchayats and retail shops for providing the facility to the customers. My next question is also related to the same. May I know the number of village Panchayats, Panchayat head quarters or Retail dealers in the whole state where Public Telephones are proposed to be provided? What is the process of selection of Waces for installation of telephone and the time by which the scheme of providing Public Telephones would be implemented in the villages of all the States?

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, as I said that our scheme aims to cover all the Panchayats of the country by 1995. Today there are nearly 2,17,000 Panchayats in our country. Till now this facility has been made available to 40,000 Panchayats. There is an amendment also in our scheme. We will find out in February, 1995 as to how many village Panchayats have been linked by tele-

phone and how many Panchayats have not been linked. We have decided that from 1st September onwards 100 Panchayats would be provided telephone every day so that we could achieve our target. Because if we wait upto December, 1994 and then enquire to find out as to how many Panchayats have been linked with telephones, we will not be able to achieve our target. We have fixed a target for every circle to provide connections to 100 panchayats every day so that we could achieve our target. Second question asked by the hon. Member is about such Panchayats Panchayats differ from State to State. If the hon. Member wants information with regard to any particular state, I would be able to supply the necessary information.

SHRI BHAGWAN SHANKAR RAWAT:

I have asked about Uttar Pradesh.

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: The number of

such village Panchayats is 3517.

SHRI VIRENDRASINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister has given the reply quite efficiently and told that the number of Post Offices where Telephone facility has not been provided is 15296. But I would ask the hon. Minister whether there are some efficient technicians also where such telephones have been provided so that these telephones could function properly.

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is a fact that in certain cases there are some difficulties. But the House will agree to the fact that the task we have undertaken involves some minor teething problems, and if due to these problems we do not go ahead to implement this scheme it would not be good. In certain cases we give a telephone connection to certain individuals e.g., if we have given telephone connection to Sarpanch, the group opposed to the Sarpanch is not prepared to go there. Such practical problems are faced. Therefore, we have decided to go there and have a meeting of the people of the village, and we will give new telephone connections at the place agreed to by the villagers. Next comes the question of maintenance. Although the performance

of the telephone manufactured by C-Dot has been very good and people say that any other phone may function properly or may not function at all, but the RAX phone functions properly in all the conditions. Even then we will make efforts to have proper maintenance and will try to have periodical check after every 2-3 months to see that telephone functions properly. When all these Panchayats are connected and the communication is improved; we will be able to find out very quickly as to which telephone is not working properly. It is not that we are connecting one Panchayat with the other, but we are connecting Panchayats with the District Head-quarters. We should give such telephone connections which may link Panchayats to District head-quarters and from district to every nook and corner of the country through district STD.

SHRI ARVIND NETAM: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister has just now said that all the Panchayats would be provided with telephone connections by 1995. Sir, the hon. Minister has also said that Government is making efforts to improve the functioning of telephones. I would like to submit that telephone connection is not functioning at all in many forest areas and even at Block Head-quarters, since the day it was installed there. It is not functioning at least in my district. Will you make some special efforts so that these could function at least for some time. If telephones have been installed five years back, but these phones did not function for a day during these 5 years?

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the problem is on both sides. My problem is something else. I want that pillar should at least be spared and one may take away the instrument, but at least the box may be left there. Problem is on both the sides. What the hon. Member has said is also true. At certain places telephones are not functioning properly and there are a few cases where these are not functioning at all. I would get these particular cases examined, but where these telephones have been installed, people do not allow these phones to work properly. We are trying to maintain the telephones at these

places by involving the people in these areas. Although we may have to bear some losses in the beginning, but we are trying to improve the functioning of telephones. There is tremendous need of communications in the country. Therefore, we are ready to bear any loss to the department, but we shall definitely try to bring communication system closer to the people.

SHRI CHHEDI PASWAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, in reply to the question the hon. Minister stated that telephones would be installed in all the panchayats within a period of five years. He proposes to install the telephones by 1995, but I would like him first to install the telephones at sub-division level within a year. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would also like to ask whether, keeping in view the unemployment problem among the youth, there is a proposal to give the contract of installing public telephone booths to unemployed youth?

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I agree with hon. Member. We have taken a decision to give priority to handicapped, unemployed people and ex-servicemen and also to people belonging to S.C./S.T. who fall in this category for operating the P.C.Os.

SHRI ARVIND TRIVEDI: I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to when that auspicious day would come when all the panchayats would be linked with the telecommunication system by installing 100 telephones a day, as has been said by the hon. Minister.

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have already said earlier that it will start from 1st September and we will monitor it.

In this connection, I would like to state that I have received a letter from an elderly person from Kerala. In the letter he has made a reference to my statement regarding the linking of panchayats with telecommunication system by March 1995. In his letter he has written that while taking over charge every new Minister makes this kind of state-

ments. He has enclosed the statements of ex-ministers, Shri Janeshwar Mishra and Shri Sanjay Singh. In this letter he has further stated that if the Almighty permits him live till 1995, he would either congratulate me or send a copy of my statement to the next Minister who takes charge of the department from me. As such, we have decided to set up every day's target so that it could be fulfilled on daily basis. If on a particular day the work is not completed we shall make efforts to complete the work by the end of the week and in this way we have set every day's target.

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA: This shows the capability of the Ministers.

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: You had supported that capable Government.

SHRIMADAN LAL KHURANA: You had also supported them later on but this is a matter of last forty years.

SHRIMANIKRAO HODLYAGAVIT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, while fixing poles in ground for taking telephone lines, cement concrete is not done properly, with the result, these poles fall down during rains. Will the hon. Minister be pleased to make some improvements in it.

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this has been a general complaint. We will see that the material used for fixing poles is changed so that the lines are in order during the rains, the poles do not fall and the lines are maintained properly. The serviceability should also be maintained so that the lines function with same efficiency as they function in other seasons.

MR. SPEAKER: Shrimati Girija Devi, you please ask your question.

AN HON. MEMBER: Mr Speaker, Sir, should we go back?(Interruptions)

SHRIMATI GIRIJA DEVI: Mr. Speaker, Sir the hon. Minister said that every day 100 telephone's will be installed in the rural areas.

In this connection I would like to know whether priority will be given to those areas where there is not a single telephone connection and the names of areas which fall under this category and whether Maharajanj comes under it or not and whether priority will be given to Maharajanj?

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this matter concerns the entire country. As I have already said, priority will be given to terrorist affected and disturbed areas. Telephone connections will be given speedily in backward and rural areas.

KUMARI VIMLA VERMA: Mr Speaker Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether factories manufacturing telephone equipments are adequate to meet the requirement of installing telephones in every Panchayat by the end of 1995. If not, whether any new factories would be set up for manufacturing required equipments and whether attention would be paid to backward areas for opening such factories.

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, we have seriously considered this aspect. When we do not have sufficient number of equipments how the lines would be given? The Government has taken new measures under the new industrial policy to speed up the development of the country and increase production. With this we will succeed in fulfilling the aspirations of all people.

SHRI RAM NIHOR RAI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether Mirzapur and Sonebhadra districts which are backward areas, will also be connected with telephones as it is proposed to be done in Punjab. Secondly, whether there is a proposal to connect Kachchwa, Adalpur and Jamua with U.H.F. electronic technology so that with the implementation of this system we could connect Northern parts of Mirzapur with Varanasi. I am an M.P. from that area and despite being an M.P. I do not have a telephone. Will this be done?

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I understand that his telephone is out of order and he is unable to talk to anyone with the help of this telephone.

SHRI RAM NIHOR RAI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, will Kachchwa, Adalpura and Jamua be connected with U.H.F. electronic technology. (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Neither you listen nor do you allow others to speak.

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: Mr. Speaker, sir, as I said earlier that communication has now become a bare necessity of life and the pace of development cannot be accelerated unless the communication system is streamlined. I have myself said that there are certain shortcomings and efforts are being made to rectify the system. I would request the hon. Members to give us some time. I will not be proper if I go on saying 'yes' for everything. Our efforts would be to see that the system is streamlined and shortcomings removed.

SHRI SURAJ MANDAL: Mr. Speaker, sir, I would like to point out to the hon. Minister that the number of telephones provided to Post Offices by March 1991 was much lower in Bihar than other States in the country. I would like to know as to how the Government proposes to fill up the backlog and by what time?

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, this question relates to Uttar Pradesh and you are asking about Bihar.

MOHAMMAD YUNUS SALEEM: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it has been our experience that in big cities if telephones go out of order, they are not repaired despite making several complaints the same day. I would, therefore, request the hon. Minister to employ a worker for repairing the telephonic instruments in all the villages, offices of Panchayats, post offices and in all other places where telephones will be installed so that the telephones are immediately repaired. Otherwise, even after installation of telephones

their services cannot be availed for months together in the Panchayats. Nobody will be there to lodge a complaint about it. I want the hon. Minister to specify the measures to be taken in this regard?

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Member is very right, Telephones are not repaired promptly in the cities. In this connection the decision of the Department which was published in the newspapers also is that complaints should be made as and when the telephones go out of order. The department will have it repaired within 24 hours. If the repair is not done, the department will inform the subscriber that due to such and such faults the repair work could not be done. They will also intimate the time by which it will be repaired. This will enable the subscriber know for how long he will not be able to avail the telephone services.

SHRI MOHAMMAD YUNUS SALEEM: You have not said anything about the action proposed to be taken in respect of the villages.

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: The hon. Members should get annoyed only when I am not agreed to their views. I agree that there is scope for improvement, Why are you annoyed when I am telling you the efforts we are making to streamline the system. If the efforts do not bear fruit you have every right to tell me that I was not successful in this endeavour. Now, if you say that the telephone was out of order a year back, I cannot reply to that... (*Interruptions*) The hon. member just said that even after the installation of telephones they will continue to remain out of order for two to three months. He was absolutely right in pointing this out. We have made arrangements for this also. A maintenance task force set up for this purpose has been entrusted with the job of keeping the survivability intact. We have taken measures after taking this aspect into consideration. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI BRISHIN PATEL: The hon. Minister said that the Government is seriously

considering over linking 100 Panchayats with telephones every day from 1st September. Through you, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether telephone connections for which recommendations have been made earlier by the hon. Members would be sanctioned and whether the number of telephone connections sanctioned on recommendations of M.Ps would be increased in view of increased demand of telephones. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: I would like to put my problem before the august House. When hon. Members place their demands for telephones and we issue sanctions for the same from here it takes about one and a half months to reach them and thereafter OB is issued. Telephone connections are not given as quickly as it is expected on the recommendation of the hon. Members (as employees are very scared of the hon. Members). If the entire House unanimously agrees my submission will be that we can give written instructions to all the C.G. Ms that hon. Members who can recommend for 15 telephone connections on priority basis may issue sanctions for such number of telephones directly...(*Interruptions*) In this way they will be able to get help from the C.G.M. in respect of their own constituencies. Besides, the hon. Members place their requisition for 5 connections at other CGM. If the august House agrees to my proposal the CGMs will have their co-ordination internally and I will also get some relief. When I step into and leave the House I feel inconvenient. They ask me of the progress, I am unable to give a quick reply. When thousands of people come to Khurana Sahab. 15 is very small a number. The hon. Member whispers in the ears of his friends to keep quiet and assures them to let them know later on. In the process, I am put in an embarrassing position. (*Interruptions*) Mr. Speaker, Sir, if you kindly take a decision in this regard I will issue necessary orders to C.G.Ms...(*Interruptions*)

Support Price of Agricultural Produce

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*612. DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEYA:

SHRIDHARAM PAL SINGH MALIK:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to increase the support prices of agricultural produce in view of the increase in the prices of fertilizers and farm machinery; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

[*English*]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) and (b). The recommendations of the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices on Price Policy for Kharif Crops of 1991-92 taking into account the hike in fertilizer prices are under the consideration of the Government.

[*Translation*]

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEYA: Mr. Speaker, sir, I did not get a correct reply to my question. In my question I have pointed out that prices of fertilizers and farm machineries have gone up. The reply given by the hon. Minister was restricted to fertilizer prices only. I want to point out that my question remains unanswered. Please let me know why it is so. Secondly, at the time of fixing the prices of agriculture produces, all the farmers i.e. the marginal, small and big, are put on an equal footing.

The support price of agriculture produces is increased by 2 to 5 per cent only. When the prices of fertiliser have been increased by 40 to 50 per cent, will the Government issue necessary instructions to Agriculture Prices Commission to fix the support price keeping view the overall situation instead of big farmers only.

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI BAL RAM JAKHAR): All these aspects are taken into consideration. Please rest assured that we will take into account all these things. Perhaps you have overlooked the fact that for the medium and small farm-