

### **Change in Priority Pattern for STD Booths**

7566. SHRI K. MURALEEDHARAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have changed the priority pattern for allotting the ISD/STD Public Telephones to SC/ST and other weaker sections of the society;

(b) if so, the details with reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government propose to review this decision;

(d) if so, when; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) to (e). The entire policy of providing ISD/STD, public Telephones/Local Public Telephones is being reviewed.

[Translation]

### **Use of Telephones in Gram Panchayats**

7567. SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria adopted for providing telephone connections to Gram Panchayats in the country;

(b) whether telephone connections provided at the houses of Gram Pradhans are being utilised properly;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) The Government have adopted a policy to provide telephone facility to all Panchayat Villages without any consideration of profit or loss progressively by 31st March, 1995 subject to availability of resources. The criteria adopted by the Department is to provide one telephone in each Panchayat Village for connecting rural areas to the mainstream of telecom network in the country. These telephones are essentially meant to meet the socio-economic need of the public.

(b) The above telephones are to be provided at a place easily accessible to the public e.g. Post Office, Panchayat Headquarter, or a Grocer's shop and not at the houses of Gram Pradhans or any other individual.

(c) Question does not arise.

(d) Since the inception of above policy in January, 1991, the Department has covered 21,752 Panchayat Villages during 1991-92 and 30,072 during 1992-93 under the above policy.

### **Bangladesh Immigrants**

7568. SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the issue relating to the return of the illegal Bangladeshi immigrants was discussed during his recent talks with the foreign Minister of Bangladesh; and

(b) if so, the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. BHATIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The issue of illegal immigration from Bangladesh was discussed during the meeting between External Affairs Minister and the Foreign Minister of Bangladesh in Dhaka on April