

News-item captioned "Ration Ki Chini Men Black"

802. SHRI RAM SINGH SHAKYA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn towards a news-item under the caption "Ration Ki Chini Men Black" appearing in "Vyapar Bharati" of the 25th October, 1980; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN): (a) and (b). Government have seen the news-item referred to in the Question, but have no direct knowledge about the correctness of the report in which the Minister of Food and Supplies of Uttar Pradesh Government is reported to have told the newsmen that 95 per cent of the sugar earmarked for distribution in the rural areas of the State is sold in the black market to the halwais. However the Central Government has already issued directions to the State Government to streamline their public distribution system to eliminate the chances of malpractices in the distribution of levy sugar and also to strictly enforce the various control measures under law to check hoarding and black-marketing in sugar.

Branch Post Office and Public Call Office Services in Village Khajuri, Bihar

803. SHRI BHOGEN德拉 JHA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal to open a new Branch Post Office in village Khajuri of Madhubani Block elevating Bisfe to sub-post Office and opening Public Call Offices there; opening PCO at Parsouni connected with Madhubani Exchange Office connecting Shaharghat PCO to its district head-quarters at Madhubani

directly via Banipatti, opening sub-exchange for telephones at Banipatti under Madhubani district of Bihar;

(b) if so, the details thereabout; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KARTIK ORAON): (a) to (c):

TELECOM:

Under the present policy, opening of a PCO at Khajuri in Madhubani Block is not justified. The opening of PCO at Parsouni is approved. Parenting Shaharghat PCO to Madhubani is not justified as per the present traffic. Banipatti is a PCO connected to Madhubani and there is no proposal to route the calls via Banipatti.

POSTAL:

The information is being ascertained and will be placed on the Table of the House.

Tobacco cultivation in Karnataka

804. SHRI S. B. SINDAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to assess the potential of tobacco cultivation in Karnataka and requirement of the farmers to achieve the above; and

(b) what special incentives are likely to be made available for tobacco growers in the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN): (a) Tobacco is already being cultivated in Karnataka, the area and production being 47,700 hectares and 33.00 million kgs. respectively during 1978-79. It is estimated that approximately 25 per cent of the area and production is contributed by Virginia Flue Cured