

telling, share market information, Job consultation etc. The service provider is allotted a PRM service (3 to 5 digits) by the Network operator (DoT) and that number can be accessed from any point in the network. For this service, the call charges will be at a higher rate (these charges will be borne by calling users) i.e. premium rate and the revenue earned is shared between the information provider and the network provider (DoT).

3. *Virtual card calling (VCC):*

This service allows a VCC user to make a call from any telephone to any destination through Intelligent Network by using virtual card. The user is given an Account Number and a Personal Identification Number (PIN). The user invokes the service by dialling account number and his pin. After authentication by SSP, the user is allowed to dial any destination; local, national or international depending on the type of the card. The advantage in this service is that the subscriber need not be a telephone subscriber and need not carry cash for making calls.

With the addition of above features, the quality of service will improve. The subscribers will be benefitted as detailed above.

New Telephone Exchanges in Assam

966. SHRI NRIPEN GOSWAMI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of new telephone exchanges sanctioned for Nagaon and Kaliabor Districts of Assam during the last three years;

(b) the number of telephone exchanges set up and functional in the said districts during the said period;

(c) the number of telephone connections allotted in these districts from the new exchanges during the said period;

(d) whether any irregularities have been noticed by the Government regarding the excess allotment of telephone connections in the said districts from new exchanges;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the steps taken by the Government against the officials found guilty in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA):

(a) and (b) Year-wise new telephone exchanges sanctioned, setup and functional during the last three years are as under:

1995-96	2
1996-97	3
1997-98	5

(c) The year-wise new telephone connections allotted are as under:

1995-96	95
1996-97	146
1997-98	603

(d) to (f) No irregularities have been noticed.

Shortage of Materials

967. SHRI MULLAPALLY RAMACHANDRAN:
SHRI ARJUN SETHI:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any developmental projects of the Department of Telecommunications in Kerala and Orissa are pending with the Government due to shortage of telephone materials;

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

(c) the steps taken by the Government to ensure timely supply of necessary materials in these States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA):

(a) to (c) All the materials required for the developmental works for 1998-99 have already been ordered and are being received progressively.