

(a) Reading of the meter by one person and noting the readings in the registers by another person, and checking the readings by the reverse process. This minimises the chances of incorrect reading of meters.

(b) To avoid clerical errors, billing, work has been computerised in all the Metro Districts, the some important cities.

(c) The facility of detailed billing of STD/ISD call free of cost has been allowed to subscribers, wherever existing exchange facilities permit this.

(d) The subscribers are also allowed the facility of obtaining fortnightly meter readings on demand (on a nominal charge of Rs. 2/-) to enable them to keep a watch over the progress of calls.

(e) The following technical solutions have also been adopted to minimise such cases:

- (i) Introduction of positive battery metering in Cross-bar Exchanges.
- (ii) Provision of automatic switch-over of differential tariffs.
- (iii) Reduction of forced release period on called subscriber held condition from 1 to 2 minute to 10 to 20 seconds in the case of STD calls.
- (iv) Routine testing of subscriber's meters.
- (v) Sealing of meters.
- (vi) Locking meter room.
- (vii) Restriction of entry into the main distribution frame rooms.

(viii) Locking of Distribution Points.

(ix) Raising of Distribution Points.

(x) Formation of mobile vigilance squads.

[*Translation*]

Opening of New Offices In Parbhani District of Maharashtra

1199. SHRI ASHOK ANANDRAO DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of post offices functioning in the urban and rural areas of district Parbhani in Maharashtra;

(b) whether there is any proposal to open more post offices in the rural areas of this district; and

(c) if so, the number and the names of the places where these post offices are likely to be opened?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA): (a) The number of post offices functioning in rural and urban areas of Parbhani district are 273 and 19 respectively.

(b) and (c). In Annual Plan 1990-91, there is a programme of extension of postal network in both rural and urban areas. However, at present, the Department is engaged in an evaluation of the Seventh Plan programme so as to formulate the norms to be followed in the Eighth Plan. The programme in respect of States/Districts is expected to be finalised after the current exercise is completed.