

Over 9 lakh new telephones soon

BSS, Dhaka

Over nine lakh telephone connections will be provided to subscribers in Dhaka as well as district and upazila headquarters soon with financial assistance from China.

A discussion with China is underway through Economic Relations Division (ERD) to get easy loans equivalent to 400 million US dollars to bolster telecommunications sector, official sources said.

They said that Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao signed a MoU in this connection during his recent visit to Dhaka.

Secretary of the Ministry of Post and Telecommunications Hasan Mahmud said that the number of land phone connection has increased to 9,98,592 in January 2005 which was only 6,85,400 in October 2001.

He said the Internet popula-

tion has increased and 175 upazila headquarters now have access to information superhighway. The government plans to establish necessary backbones for data communications.

Initiatives are underway to increase Internet facilities for the common people through 'infobahan' project. The Korean government has assured of providing a fund of 25 million US dollars to strengthen Internet systems in the country.

Official sources said packet switching exchanges of BTTB in Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna, Rajshahi, Barisal, Sylhet, Bogra, Mymensingh and Comilla are now equipped with data communications facilities.

The optic fibre links have been extended to new towns and cities like Bogra, Brahmanbaria, Sylhet, Rajshahi, Chapainawabganj and Munshiganj, they added.

