

located across the country. Some important achievements of the Department's own R&D efforts are development of application software for counter operations, money order transmission, on-line handling of public grievances, track and trace of speed post articles and designing a new look modern letter box.

New post offices

743. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of requests pending with Government for opening of new post offices in various parts of the country alongwith the details of the post offices opened in the current financial year; and

(b) the procedure adopted for opening a new post office after receipt of a request?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) There are 311 requests pending with the Department, for opening of new post offices in various Postal Circles. So far, during the current financial year, 57 post offices have been opened in the country by relocation. Circle-wise details are as under:

SI. Circle No	Number of Post Offices opened during 2005-06
1. Assam	3
2. Bihar	1
3. Delhi	1
4. Gujarat	5
5. Haryana	4
6. Jammu & Kashmir	4
7. Jharkhand	1
8. Karnataka	3
9. Kerala	2
10. Maharashtra	14

Sl. No.	Circle	Number of Post Offices opened during 2005-06
11.	North East	1
12.	Punjab	2
13.	Rajasthan	10
14.	Tamil Nadu	2
15.	Uttaranchal	2
16.	West Bengal	2
Total:		57

(b) A request received for opening of a new post office, is examined as per norms prescribed by the Department. In consonance with the policy directives of the 10th Five Year Plan, plan targets are not being allotted for opening of new post offices from the year 2004-05. Therefore, if justification for opening a post office is found, it can only be opened by relocation of an existing post office which is no longer justified, on the Departmental norms in its present location.

Connecting villages through wireless phone

†744. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the progress made in connecting villages with telephone services and the number of villages where this service is not available at present;

(b) whether it is a fact that Government are in the process of connecting villages with wireless phones;

(c) if so, the details thereof,

(d) the States selected for the said purpose; and

(e) by when the work regarding connecting all the villages of the country with wireless phones would be completed?

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.