

Development of rail network in North-east region

*174. SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any special provision has been made by the Ministry to expedite development of rail network in the North-East region considering the Vision 2020 document;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of the steps taken, projects sanctioned and targets set for their timely completion; and

(d) the details of steps being taken to accelerate better rail connectivity and services in the North-East region to expedite industrial growth under the North-East Industrial and Investment Promotion Policy (NEIIPP)?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DINESH TRIVEDI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A dedicated non lapsable fund namely "North Eastern Region Rail Development Fund" (NERRDF) has been created for providing assured fund flows to National Projects of Northeast Region.

(c) and (d) Railway has taken up 12 new line, 4 gauge conversion and 2 doubling projects in N.E. Region. Completion of these projects would provide connectivity to all State capitals except Sikkim. During 2011-12, Rs.1963 crore have been allotted for projects of Northeast Region. Completion of 76 km of new line section and 165 km of gauge conversion section is targeted during 2011-12.

Opening of new post offices

*175. SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to open new post offices in the country, including in Gujarat;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise;

(c) whether all post offices in the country have internet facility; and

(d) if not, by when all post offices in the country are likely to be provided with this facility?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) and (b) Opening of Post Offices is an on-going activity. Post Offices are opened subject to fulfilment of prescribed norms, availability of Plan support and manpower. The Circle-wise physical targets allotted for opening of Post Offices including Gujarat for the current year 2011 -12 are given in Statement-I (See below).

(c) No, Sir. As on date, 12,202 Departmental Post Offices have been provided with internet connectivity. Circle-wise break-up of these Post Offices are given in Statement-II (See below).

(d) The IT Modernization Project of Department of Posts (Phase-2) is proposed to be completed by 2012-13. After completion of the project, all Departmental Post Offices will have internet connections.

Statement-I

*Circle-wise Physical Targets for opening of Branch Post Offices (BOs)
and Sub-Post Offices (SOs) by relocation/redeployment during
current financial year 2011-12*

Sl. No.	Name of the Circles	BOs	SOs
1	2	3	5
1	Andhra Pradesh	7	4
2	Assam	3	2
3	Bihar	3	2
4	Chhattisgarh	3	2
5	Delhi	3	2
6	Gujarat	3	2
7	Haryana	3	2
8	Himachal Pradesh	3	3
9	Jammu & Kashmir	2	2
10	Jharkhand	3	2

1	2	3	5
11	Karnataka	4	4
12	Kerala	3	2
13	Madhya Pradesh	5	3
14	Maharashtra	7	4
15	North East	3	2
16	Orissa	4	3
17	Punjab	4	2
18	Rajasthan	6	2
19	Tamil Nadu	7	4
20	Uttarakhand	3	3
21	Uttar Pradesh	7	4
22	West Bengal	4	4
TOTAL		90	60

Statement-II

*Circle-wise break-up of Departmental Post Offices
having Internet Connectivity*

Sl. No.	Name of the Circles	Post Offices having Internet Connectivity [in number]
1	2	3
1	Andhra Pradesh	824
2	Assam	525
3	Bihar	291
4	Chhattisgarh	142
5	Delhi	245
6	Gujarat	872
7	Haryana	278
8	Himachal Pradesh	256

1	2	3
9	Jammu & Kashmir	79
10	Jharkhand	181
11	Karnataka	840
12	Kerala	1070
13	Madhya Pradesh	481
14	Maharashtra	1342
15	North East	181
16	Orissa	450
17	Punjab	431
18	Rajasthan	329
19	Tamil Nadu	1448
20	Uttarakhand	1023
21	Uttar Pradesh	182
22	West Bengal	732
TOTAL		12202

Debt ridden farmers in the country

*176. SHRI PRABHAT JHA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether around half of the farmers in the country are debt ridden as per a recent survey report of a Government agency;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise, with reference to the number of indebted farmers in U.P., district-wise;

(c) whether the main reason for large number of farmers being debt ridden in the country is that agriculture has become unprofitable;

(d) whether Government has conducted any study to ascertain the percentage of increase in cost of production of foodgrains, particularly wheat and paddy, during the last five years; and