

9. The second round of country level tiger status assessment completed in 2010, with the findings indicating an increase with a tiger population estimate of 1706, lower and upper limits being 1520 and 1909 respectively, as compared to the last country level estimation of 2006, with an estimate of 1411, lower and upper limits being 1165 and 1657 respectively.
10. The second round of independent assessment of Management Effectiveness Evaluation of Tiger Reserves done in 2010-11 for 39 tiger reserves based on globally used framework.
11. Increase in the allocation for Project Tiger with additional components.
12. Providing special assistance for mitigation of human-tiger conflicts in problematic areas.
13. As an outcome of the fourth Trans-border Consultative Group Meeting held in New Delhi, a joint resolution has been signed with Nepal for biodiversity/ tiger conservation.
14. Regional Offices of the National Tiger Conservation Authority sanctioned at Nagpur, Bengaluru and Guwahati.
15. Launching of Phase-IV tiger reserve level monitoring.

Deregulation of natural gas price

*72. SHRI JAI PRAKASH NARAYAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is considering to deregulate the prices of natural gas on the lines of crude oil and petroleum products;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Ministry of Law and Justice has also opined that the gas prices rate be linked to the price at which India imports LNG and be made applicable to the price at which private operators are producing gas and that prices of gas be increased to international level; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) No, Madam.

- (b) Does not arise in view of reply to (a) above.
- (c) No, Madam.
- (d) Does not arise in view of reply to (c) above.

Road development projects in North Eastern Region

*73. SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there has been adequate progress in Road Development Projects undertaken by Government in the North Eastern Region;
- (b) if so, the details of the projects undertaken and progress made so far;
- (c) whether Government has estimated the time required for completion of these projects; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the details of the funds allotted for the same over the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI C.P. JOSHI): (a) The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways is primarily responsible for development and maintenance of National Highways (NHs) in the country. The Government has sanctioned National Highway Development Programme (NHDP) II, III and Special Accelerated Road Development Programme in North East (SARDP-NE) for development of roads in North East region. SARDP- NE, however, also includes State roads and Strategic Roads. There has been improvement in the progress of road development projects in the North Eastern Region under the NHDP II, III and SARDP-NE despite constraints hampering the progress of work.

(b) to (d) Under NHDP II, out of total length of 670km, 416km has been completed and target for completion of balance length is March, 2014. Under NHDP III, work for the entire length of 102km has been awarded and is targeted for completion by Dec. 2016. Under SARDP-NE programme, out of total sanctioned length of 3723km, 904km has been completed as on 30.06.2012. The target for completion of entire sanctioned length under SARDP-NE is March, 2017. The funds allocated during the last 3 years is given below: