

of pesticides and works with State Governments, State Agriculture Universities, pesticide dealers, farmers etc. towards this end.

**Broad-gauging of Indore-Khandwa railway line**

†\*532. DR. CHANDAN MITRA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for which the broad-gauging of the railway line from Indore to Khandwa is being done at an extremely slow pace;

(b) the scheduled date for completion of broad-gauging of this line and the cost escalated in this project due to delay; and

(c) the concrete steps taken by Government to provide fast and convenient railway transport between Western Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra for the convenience of people of this area?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) Gauge conversion of Indore-Khandwa has been taken up as a part of Ratlam-Fatehabad-Indore-Mhow-Khandwa-Amalakhurd-Akot-Akola (472.60 km.) sanctioned gauge conversion project. Project execution has been taken up from both ends. On Ratlam end, conversion of Ratlam-Fatehabad section (80 km.) has been completed in 2012-13 and Fatehabad-Indore section (40 km.) is targeted for completion in 2013-14. On Akola end, part estimate for Akot-Akola section has been sanctioned, but execution could not be taken up for want of forestry clearance of Amalakhurd-Akot section which lies ahead and passes through Melghat Tiger Reserve. Approximately, expenditure of Rs. 120 crore has been incurred upto March, 2013. An outlay of Rs. 119.83 crore has been proposed for this project in the Budget 2013-14. Project is progressing as per availability of resources.

(b) Target date for entire project has not been fixed. Cost escalation of railway projects is on account of large shelf of ongoing projects, having huge throwforward with limited availability of resources. As a result, funds are thinly spread out thus prolonging period of completion. Projects also get delayed for want of forestry clearance, delay in land availability, law and order issues and failure of contractor. Depending upon their relative priority, projects get completed.

(c) Indian Railways do not operate trains on State-wise basis as railway network

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

cuts across State boundaries. However, introduction of trains is an ongoing process on Indian Railways, subject to operational feasibility, availability of resources, traffic justification, etc. At present, Broad gauge connectivity with change-over at Khandwa is available for passengers.

#### Modernising post offices

\*533. SHRI D.P. TRIPATHI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has decided to modernise all post offices in the country with latest facilities; and

(b) if so, the details of the post offices modernised during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) and (b) Under the Plan Scheme Project Arrow, the Department is modernizing departmental post offices in a phased manner by improving their look and feel with focus on Branding, IT, Human Resource and infrastructure and to get the Core Operations Right through improving the quality of service relating to Mail Delivery, Remittances, Savings Bank and Office Service Levels.

Circle-wise details of post offices modernized in 'Look and Feel' activities under Project Arrow in last 3 years are given below:—

Sl. No.	Name of the Circle	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Andhra Pradesh	66	15	48
2.	Assam	08	05	18
3.	Bihar	17	15	48
4.	Chhattisgarh	04	00	15
5.	Delhi	19	05	25
6.	Gujarat	27	15	48