

Gauge conversion of Lumding-Silchar-Agartala line

3354. SHRIMATI JHARNA DAS BAIDYA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has any proposal to convert Lumding to Silchar to Agartala rail line from metre gauge to broad gauge in the current financial year;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, and the details of preparation made for transport and storage of essential items for Tripura and Silchar area of Assam; and
- (c) the probable date of completion of the above conversion of railway line?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) and (c) No, Sir. Only gauge conversion work of Lumding-Silchar is planned for completion in current financial year.

(b) The following areas are likely to get affected by the proposed conversion from Metre Gauge to Broad Gauge of Lumding-Silchar: South Assam, Tripura, Manipur and Mizoram. For moving essential commodities to these States, coordination meetings have been held with the State Governments and the concerned Ministries of the Central Government. Essential Commodities are moved to these States/areas after unloading at 6 terminals on the Broad Gauge and *via* Lumding after transshipment of material from Broad Gauge to Metre Gauge wagons. Movement to the railway terminals has been increased. The rate of movement by rail would depend on the rate at which the wagons are unloaded. All the concerned agencies which move material to the area have been notified about the likely block and have been asked to make alternative arrangements. In addition to this, the concerned State Governments have been requested to identify additional storage capacity in their respective States and utilize them as intermediate storage points for storing more food grains to build up stocks in the affected areas.

Zonal Offices in the country

3355. SHRI PRAVEEN RASHTRAPAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of zonal offices in the country as on 31 March, 2013;
- (b) whether it is a fact that there are two zonal offices in Mumbai; and
- (c) the reasons that Gujarat has not been given a zonal office in spite of justification of the demand?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) There are 17 zones in Indian Railways including the Metro Railway/ Kolkata.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The zonal railways are neither based on regional considerations nor are these contiguous with State boundaries. Location of the head quarters of a zonal railway is decided on the basis of operational and administrative requirements, consistent with the needs of economy and efficiency. Providing a zonal office in Gujarat, in the light of above, has not been considered feasible.

Recruitments in Railways

3356. SHRI PRAVEEN RASHTRAPAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of Group A, B, C and D, employees recruited during 2011-12, 2012-13 and 2013-14;

(b) how many of them belong to SCs and STs category; and

(c) the backlog vacancies of SC and ST employees in Group B and C as on 31 March, 2013, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) and (b):

(i) The recruitment of Group 'A' employees through UPSC is conducted exam year-wise. For exam year 2013 and 2014, the Group 'A' candidates have not yet been allotted to Railway Services. Information pertaining to the years 2010, 2011 and 2012 is as under:-

Year	Total	SC	ST
2010	598	93	32
2011	569	78	42
2012	531	72	44

(ii) There is no direct recruitment in Group 'B' on Indian Railways.

(iii) The number of persons empanelled for various Group 'C' posts through Railway Recruitment Boards for Railways is as under:-