

(c) whether stamps issued earlier in honour of Netaji will be re-printed for fresh circulation;

(d) whether stamps issued in honour of Pandit Nehru and others have been either re-printed or printed in large number are still found in circulation;

(e) if so, the reasons for printing Netaji Stamp in smaller number; and

(f) whether Netaji stamp will be re-printed for large circulation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI NARHARI PRASAD SUKHDEV SAI): (a) There is no proposal under consideration for the present

(b) Does not arise.

(c) By convention commemorative stamps are not re-printed after their original issue.

(d) Commemorative stamps issued in honour of Pandit Nehru or Netaji have been exhausted practically. A stamp on Nehru in the Fifth Definitive Series of Stamp issued on 27-5-76 is in circulation.

(e) Does not arise.

(f) As in the reply to (c) above.

Statute of Netaji in Rangoon

4202. SHRI SAMAR GUHA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether steps have been taken for preservation of the memory of INA struggle and in honour of Netaji in the South East Asian countries; and

(b) if so, the facts thereabout?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S. KUNDU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government have already directed Missions in South-East Asia to collect information and documentary material on the INA and Netaji and to explore the possibility of suit-

able memorials in their honour being erected in places associated with them.

With the active participation of our Missions, local organisations/institutions in some countries have, for the first time this year, observed the birth anniversary of Netaji. We hope that such activities would gain momentum and receive full support and cooperation of the people and governments of those countries.

Relations with South-East Asian Countries

4203. SHRI SAMAR GUHA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether steps have been taken for strengthening Indian Missions in the S. E. Asian countries;

(b) whether greater efforts are being made for socio-cultural solidarity with the people of S.E. Asia; and

(c) if so, facts thereabout

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S. KUNDU): (a) and (b). Yes, Sir.

(c) 1. After the new Government came to office, a Conference of Heads of Missions in South-East Asia was held in New Delhi in August 1977. It reviewed *inter-alia* our bilateral relations with the countries in South-East Asia in the cultural field and made a number of useful recommendations to the Government for promoting cultural links with the countries of the region.

2. In the light of these recommendations, efforts are being made to step up our cultural cooperation with the countries in South-East Asia in various fields, for example;

(i) Establishment of Cultural Centres;

(ii) Entering into Cultural Agreements and Cultural Exchange Programmes with the countries with

which we do not have such agreements/programmes at present;

(iii) Increased facilities in India for the study of national languages of the region;

(iv) Establishment of Centres for Area Studies at selected universities;

(v) Increase in number of scholarships and other educational facilities for foreign students in India and mutual recognition of university degrees;

(vi) Exchange of scholars, academicians, artists and journalists;

(vii) Support to research projects by India to Indian or foreign scholars from the region;

(viii) Organize film festivals;

(ix) Participation in art exhibitions;

(x) Promotion of Hindi in the region; and

(xi) Cooperation in the field of sports.

3. The Government also appointed an Evaluation Committee under Shri Ashok Mehta to evaluate the performance of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations and to suggest guide lines for its future activities. This Committee has already submitted its recommendations which are under consideration of the Government.

Statement

State-wise position of Post Offices opened in rural areas from 1-4-77 to 28-2-78

Sl. No.	Circle/States	PO's opened in rural areas from 1-4-77 to 28-2-78
1	2	3
1. Andhra	Andhra	155
2. Bihar	Bihar	100
3. Delhi	Delhi (U.T.)	10
4. Gujarat	Gujarat	03

4. Staff requirements of the Indian Missions in South East Asia, and of those in other areas, are kept constantly under review. Additional staff is provided, wherever necessary.

Post Offices in Rural Areas set up after Formation of Janata Government

4204. SHRI SAMAR GUHA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the facts about the new Post Offices set up in the rural areas after formation of the Janata Government;

(b) the State-wise break up of the number of such Post Offices; and

(c) the State-wise break up of the proposed Post Offices in the rural areas during 1978-79?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI NARHARI PRASAD SUKHDEV SAI): (a) and (b). 3121 post offices have been opened in the rural areas of the country from 1-4-77 to 28-2-78. State-wise break-up of these Post Offices is enclosed.

(c) It is proposed to open 5,000 post offices in the rural areas during 1978-79. State-wise allocation has not yet been made and will be laid on the table of the House.