

**Forest Land Under Tribals***[Translation]*

3799. SHRI BALI RAM KASHYAP: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the total area of forest land under the possession of tribals since 1980 in various States;

(b) the names of the State Governments who have sent proposals to the Union Government for allotting forest land to tribals that had been under their possession prior to 1980; and

(c) the action taken by the Union Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(b) and (c) So far this Ministry has received 17 proposals from 8 different State/UT Governments namely; Andaman & Nicobar Island, Arunachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Rajasthan for regularisation of encroachments over forest land. Out of these, five proposals in respect of Andaman & Nicobar Island, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala and Madhya Pradesh have been formally approved under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. Two proposals pertaining to Arunachal Pradesh and Gujarat respectively have been approved in principle. One proposal has been rejected on merit. In respect of balance nine proposals, the concerned State Governments are required to furnish certain essential details.

*[English]***UGC Assistance to Tamil Nadu Colleges**

3800. SHRI A. GANESHAMURTHI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of colleges in Tamil Nadu under the UGC's assistance programme during the Eighth Five Year Plan;

(b) whether there is any proposal for the inclusion of more colleges of the State under UGC's assistance programme during the Ninth Five Year Plan period;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the criteria laid down for selecting colleges under UGC's assistance programme?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

**Opening of Post Offices in Assam and Rajasthan**

3801. COL. SONA RAM CHOUDHARY:

SHRI A.F. GOLAM OSMANI:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of insufficient number of post offices in Western Rajasthan and Assam particularly in Dubri, Goalpara, Bongaigaon, Barpeta and Nalbari districts;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to open post offices in the said areas during 1998-99;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA): (a) (i) Assam and Rajasthan States are functioning with 3834 and 10340 Post Offices respectively. Similarly the area served and population served per Post Office in Assam is 20.45 Sq. Kms. and 5846 respectively. In Rajasthan State, however, the area served per Post Office is 33.09 Sq. Kms. and population served per Post Office is 4243 as compared to national average of area served per Post Office being 21.48 Sq. Kms. and population served per Post Office being 5518.

(ii) Similarly the area served per Post Office and population served per Post Office in Western Rajasthan in Urban and Rural area is 6.10 Sq. Kms. and 51.20 Kms. The population served per Post Office in Urban and Rural areas of Western Rajasthan is 12715 and 3414 respectively.

(iii) There are 139 Post Offices in Dhubri, 95 in Goalpara, 122 in Bongaigaon, 186 in Barpeta and 242 in Nalbari Districts of Assam State.

(b) to (d) (i) Targets for opening of Post Offices during the current year 1998-99 for Assam State has been fixed as 2 Departmental Sub-Post Offices and 50 Extra-Departmental Branch Post Offices and for Rajasthan State the targets are 2 Departmental Sub Post Offices and 30 Extra-Departmental Branch Post Offices respectively.

(ii) A target of 9 Extra-Departmental Branch Post Offices has been allotted to the four Districts of Dhubri-2, Goalpara-2, Bongaigaon-2, Barpeta-3 and Nalbari-Nil. Similarly, the target of 12 Extra-Departmental Branch Post Offices has been allotted for Western Rajasthan Region. The opening of these Post Offices are subject to fulfilment of prescribed norms and availability of resources.

**Science Museum**

3802. SHRI P. UPENDRA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Science Museum has been proposed on the Gandhi hill at Vajayawada; and

(b) if so, the present status of the proposal including the allocation proposed to be earmarked for it?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) and (b) According to the information furnished by the National Council of Science Museums, a Lease Deed and a Memorandum of Understanding have been signed by them with the Andhra Pradesh