

- (iv) offering of acreages for private participation under exploration bidding rounds;
- (v) exploring possibility of obtaining gas from Coal Bed Methane; and
- (vi) exploring possibilities of importing LNG.

Hydrocarbon in Assam

1024. SHRI ARJUN SETH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Oil India Limited has found very prospective areas of Hydrocarbon in Assam and in the North-East; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) Some discoveries in the older and deeper Paleocene/Eocene formations in Kathaloni, Dikom etc. have been made in the recent past. The latest of such discoveries include Kagorijan and Moran. With the discovery of hydrocarbons in Kagorijan which is located in the vicinity of Brahmaputra river bed and its north bank, the prospectivity of these areas has been further enhanced. Further, the deeper discovery in the older Paleocene/Eocene formations in Moran has opened up new opportunities for exploration beyond the so far provided limits. The life of depleting Moran oilfield will now be further enhanced.

Telecom, Post and Telegraph Facilities in J&K

1025. SHRI CHAMAN LAL GUPTA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of post offices, telephone exchanges, telegraph offices proposed to be set up in J&K during 1999-2000;

(b) the number of places proposed to be connected with STD during the said period;

(c) the places connected with STD so far in the Distt. of Kathua, Udhampur and Doda; and

(d) the details of the development plan for the posts and telecommunications sectors during Ninth Five Year Plan in the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA):

(a) *Department of Post:*

Post Offices are opened subject to norm based justification and availability of resources and targets. Targets are fixed postal circle-wise for each Annual Plan at the beginning of each Annual Plan.

Department of Telecom:

It is proposed to open 30 exchanges in J&K Circle. Telegraph offices to be opened; Nil

(b) 85 stations are planned to be connected with STD facility during the said period (1999-2000) subject to availability of resources.

(c) The places connected with STD facility so far in Kathua, Udhampur and Doda districts are shown in the attached statement.

(d) *Department to Posts:*

The outlay for the draft Ninth Year Plan is yet to be finally approved and has been pruned from Rs. 580 crores to Rs. 507.25 crores. State-wise or postal Circle-wise outlays have not been proposed in the Ninth Plan. Postal Circle-wise provision of funds is made when Annual Plans are implemented. During 1997-98 the first year of the Ninth Plan, 11 Extra Departmental Branch Post Offices and 1 Departmental Sub Post Office has been opened in the state. Apart from this, 22 PC based counter machines, 5 Electric franking machines have been provided to the Circle during the said year, and 1 post office was modernised.

During 1998-99, there is a target for opening 30 Extra Departmental Branch Post Offices and 1 Departmental Sub Post Office, subject to availability of resources. Further, there is a target for providing 10 PC based counter machines and 106 stamp hand cancellers in the state during the said year. 1 post office namely, Anantnag head post office has been taken up for modernisation during the current year.

Department of Telecom:

For Ninth Year Plan, broad objectives are to provide telephone on demand, STD facility on stable media for all exchanges and village public telephones in all remaining villages.