

**PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

EXTENDING THE REACH OF BANKING FACILITIES TO VILLAGES

**New Delhi, Bhadrapada 1, 1933
August 23, 2011**

As reported by Reserve Bank of India (RBI), there are 28,921 rural centers, where Scheduled Commercial Banks are functioning as on 31st March, 2011. RBI defines a rural population group as those centres which have population of less than 10,000.

In order to extend the reach of banking to the rural hinterland, to begin with, banks were advised in 2010-11 to provide appropriate banking facilities to habitations having a population in excess of 2000 (as per 2001 census) by March, 2012, using the Business Correspondent and other models, with appropriate technology back up. Approximately 73,000 such habitations across the country have been identified and allocated to Public Sector Banks, Regional Rural Banks, Private Sector Banks and Cooperative Banks for extending banking services by March, 2012. As per reports received from banks, 29,569 villages have been covered as on 31.03.2011.

This information was given by the Minister of State for Finance Shri Namo Narain Meena in a written reply to a Question in Rajya Sabha today.

DSM/SS/PM