

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2689
ANSWERED ON:17.03.2006
INCREASE IN PRIVATE POSTAL/ COURIER SERVICES
Madhwaraj Smt. Manorama; Mohite Shri Subodh

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has assessed the level of efficiency in the functioning of the postal department;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the manifold increase in the private postal/courier services is due to the poor services rendered by the Postal department;
- (d) if so, whether the Postal department is incurring huge losses as a result thereof;
- (e) whether Government proposes to amend the existing Postal Act in order to give the maximum powers and control in the hand of Postal department; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD)

- (a) Yes, Sir. Assessment of efficiency in the functioning of the Postal department is an ongoing activity.
- (b) The efficiency of the functioning of the department is continuously monitored by analyzing the quality of services provided by it. The norms for various services of the Department are declared in its Citizen's Charter. The complaints received by the department are analyzed to take corrective and preventive action to pre-empt service deficiencies. In addition, the time taken for delivery of letters from one end to the other are constantly monitored and compared against the norms declared. This is done through various tests such as All India Live Mail Survey, National Test Letter Run, Circle Test Run, Posting of Test Letters on different routes by officers at various levels. Constant dialogue with customers is maintained through Post Forums, visits, telephone calls and questionnaires directed towards customers and market surveys. Necessary action to maintain quality of services and to meet customer expectations is taken to ensure efficiency in the functioning of the department.
- (c) No, Sir. The present trends indicate that customers use facilities offered by both Government and private services operators depending on the option, which suits their needs.
- (d) The department is not suffering losses but has been in deficit. The deficit is mainly attributable to high expenditure towards committed liabilities like salary, pension etc., non-revision of postal rates for various services as per rising cost of operations, the Universal Service Obligations of the department due to which it has to run post offices in hilly, tribal, remote and rural areas without covering the costs and other related reasons. The traffic pertaining to traditional mail has declined over the years due to advancement of alternative communication media like e-mail, telephone, mobile and internet services and also services provided by private couriers to the public. However, due to the initiatives taken by the department, there is a continuous growth in traffic and revenue earned from business premium products like Speed Post, Business Post, Express Parcel Post and Retail Post. Business in Postal Life Insurance and Rural Postal Life Insurance has also shown up ward trend. There is also an increase in Saving Bank and Savings Certificate business in post offices.
- (e) & (f) Department of Posts has proposed amendments to the existing Indian Post Office Act, 1898. Since the proposed amendments have not been finalized so far, nothing can be commented thereon at this stage.