

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3870

ANSWERED ON:17.05.2006

EXTENDING POSTAL FACILITIES THROUGH A FRANCHISING SCHEME

Das Gupta Shri Gurudas;Rajendran Shri P.;Reddy Shri Suravaram Sudhakar

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

- (a) whether the Government is considering a proposal for extending postal facilities through a franchising scheme;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether any formal discussion held on this issue with the Federations/Unions of the department; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the outcome thereof?

Answer

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

(a) & (b) Yes, Sir. The Postal Network consists of 1,55,516 Post Offices (as on 31.3.2005). In consonance with the policy directives of the 10th Plan for attaining financial self-sufficiency and consequently for rationalization of the postal network, targets for opening of new Post Offices are not being assigned since 2004-05. Therefore, if justification for opening a post office is found, it can only be opened by relocation of an existing post office, which is no longer justified on the Departmental norms in its present location. In order to improve access to postal facilities in areas where there is a demand and justification but it is not possible to open a post office by relocation, the Department is considering a proposal for a franchise scheme. The details of the franchise scheme are also under consideration.

(c) & (d) An interaction has been held with several Federations/Unions/Associations to apprise them of the proposal. As a result of the interaction, the Department has been able to understand their viewpoint, and will taken note of it while formulating the proposal.