

who have been rehabilitated by the Government so far; and

(b) the total amount of expenditure on their rehabilitation?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) The Government of India have not so far rehabilitated the repatriated Indians from Iraq and Kuwait.

(b) Does not arise.

Recommendations of Expert Committee on Excellence in Postal Services

196. SHRI SHANKAR SINGH
VAGHELA
DR. A.K. PATEL:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) when were the recommendations of the Expert Committee on Excellence in Postal services in respect of Organisational Structure, Service Quality, finances and Level of Technology received by the Government;

(b) when was the report of the Expert Committee presented to Parliament;

(c) the details of the recommendations accepted by the Government and their stages of implementation in respect of each cat-

egory;

(d) the details of the recommendations not accepted by the Government and reasons therefor; and

(e) the reaction and response of the Trade Unions of the Department to these recommendations?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS AND DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI JAI PARKASH): (a) The Expert Committee on Excellence in Postal services submitted its interim report on 31st December, 1988 and the final report on 30th September, 1989, which inter alia, deal with the organisational structure, service quality, finance and level of technology.

(b) The reports of the Expert Committee were not presented to Parliament.

(c) and (d). 36 recommendations were made by the Expert committee on Excellence in Postal services on the subjects referred to in (a) above. The stages of implementation in respect of 16 recommendations are indicated in the statement enclosed. The other recommendations are at various stages of evaluation.

(e) the copies of the reports have been made available to the service unions and their views have been invited.

STATEMENT

The Stages of Implementation of the Recommendations Categorised as Accepted in Principle/with Modification/Accepted in Respect of (A) Finance, (B) Level of Technology, (C) Service Quality

| Sl. No. | Text of recommendation | Stages of Implementation |
|---------|--|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 |
| (A) | FINANCE | |
| | 1. The heavy deficits from year to year in the operation of the postal services are attributable to : | The Postal Services Board considered the Pricing Policy and Financial objectives of the Postal Services as recommended by the Expert Committee on Excellence in Postal Services, while the financial objectives in the short-run, having self-sufficiency and in the long run generating profit to pay for depreciation and development was laudable, it was felt that the Department should adopt the strategy of raising tariffs as much as possible to their actual cost and try to recover the cost from other departments on whose behalf it works as an agent. |
| | (i) Increasing cost of operation of the postal service and | |
| | (ii) An unrealistic pricing policy | |
| | 2. The deficits of the postal services are subsidized by the general exchequer without adequate justification on clearly demonstrable socio-economic considerations. The quantum of such subsidies has resulted in developing softness in the postal administration in tackling management problems and also in penalising non-users as well as users equally thus imposing a burden on the poorer section of the society. | |

| Sl. No. | Text of recommendation | Stages of Implementation |
|---------|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 3. | <p>In the short-run (i. e. within a period of five years) the postal service in India must aim at balancing its revenue and expenditure and in the longer run (i. e. within ten years), it must produce a surplus to finance its own depreciation and development.</p> | <p>The questions relating to costing of postal services by professional Cost Accountants and scrutiny by an independent Postal Rates Commission, are matters requiring indepth examination and a final view is yet to be taken.</p> |
| 4. | <p>To achieve the short-term objective of balancing the postal revenue and expenditure the electric approach to pricing by which the postal service would fix the subsidization either internally from one service to another or externally from the government in general should be adopted. But while fixing the consumer prices, the Government, to attain its equity and welfare objectives, would be free to give a subsidy on such published prices. This would quantify the subsidy in clearly delineated areas and force the postal services to efficiently manage the resources.</p> | |
| 5. | <p>For achieving the long term objective of self-financing for development and depreciation, cross-subsidy free prices of the postal products and services with marks up on the prices for certain premium services are recommended.</p> | |

| Sl. No. | Text of recommendation | Stages of Implementation |
|---------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 |

6. A proper cost determination system would require its linking with the work study/efficiency bureau so that the cost containment, determination of norms of quality of service and pricing can be inter-linked.

7. Costing of postal services should be done by professional Cost Accountants and subjected to the scrutiny of an independent postal Rates Commission so that the fairness and equity of the prices of postal products and services can be demonstrated both to the Government and the consumers.

8. While there need not be any fixed periodicity for the revision of postal prices, these should be closely aligned to the costs.

(B) TECHNOLOGY :

9. The efforts of the postal services up till now for mechanisation have been only marginal. For more than 30 years the service has ritualised modernisation and mechanisation by introducing more and more functional mechanical General observation Needs no action.

| <i>Sl. No.</i> | <i>Text of recommendation</i> | <i>Stages of Implementation</i> |
|----------------|--|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | <p>aids without strategic goals. Without paradigmatic change introduction of technology will continue to be only an icing for the Postal Service cake.</p> | |
| | <p>10. It has to be emphasized that the end objective of all technological improvements in the post office has to be three fold; to increase the productivity of its employees thus reducing the operational cost, ensure better quality of service to the consumer and increase staff satisfaction. More and more premium services have to be added to provide for the communication needs of a developing economy. Upgrading the skills of the employees through appropriate training would take out the drudgery of repetitive work and lead to better motivation and performance of a very large work force.</p> | <p>General observation Needs no action.</p> |
| | <p>11. In the first phase the Department should :</p> <p>(a) start using PC based multipurpose counter machines at 20,000 counters in post offices</p> <p>(b) Computerise Savings Bank operations, PLI and Head Post Office accounts.</p> | <p>The software has been developed and six machines have been installed on experimental basis in Delhi and Bangalore. In the light of experience gained by this experiment, the question of extending to more post offices in other cities will be considered.</p> <p>Behind the counter, ledger accounting of SB, LI has already been computerised in Parliament Street HPO, Central Base Post Office (Army</p> |

| Sl. No. | Text of recommendation | Stages of Implementation |
|---------|---|--------------------------|
| 1 | <p data-bbox="250 1179 274 1197">2</p> <p data-bbox="250 888 1078 1511"> (c) Introduce Electronic Franking Machines in larger offices; (d) Step firmly into the area of 'Satellite Mail' initially to cover electronic fund transfer, GIRO and transmission of urgent messages through satellite; (e) Use these channels for — (i) Streamlining MIS; (ii) data transmission; and (iii) centralized accounting like money order pairing; </p> | 3 |
| | <p data-bbox="334 168 394 883">Postal Service). Computerisation in other HPOs is planned to be taken up in phased manner.</p> <p data-bbox="431 168 527 883">For PLI work, the hardware and the software and the final prototype has been developed by the NIC. The PLI work has been computerised in Bangalore.</p> <p data-bbox="563 168 587 883">Computerisation of Head Post Office accounts is under consideration.</p> <p data-bbox="623 168 695 883">Already 60 selected post offices in the country have been equipped with High Speed Franking Machines.</p> <p data-bbox="732 168 828 883">The proposal to introduce Satellite Mail on a limited network was submitted to the Department of Telecom. to secure transmission controlled by the latter. Introduction of GIRO Scheme is under examination.</p> <p data-bbox="864 168 960 883">A Committee constituted for the purpose has recommended setting up of two-tier MIS network involving the Directorate and the Circles. Necessary hardware and software is being procured through the NIC.</p> | |

| Sl. No. | Text of recommendation | Stages of Implementation |
|---------|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | <p>(f) Establish maintenance system;</p> <p>(g) Introduce new technology for improving stamps and seals.</p> | <p>Implementation action is being taken. Polymerstamps in selected Post Offices have been supplied.</p> |
| | <p>The Satellite Mail Service may initially be introduced at all district headquarters and other important places numbering 550. These centres could, however, be used for conveyance of messages over long distances to the nearest earth station, for further conveyance of the hard copy through existing modes of transportation.</p> | <p>This is a proposal for examination in the future.</p> |
| | <p>12. In the second phase of five years' duration, the Department could :</p> | <p>To be acted upon, on implementation of the first phase.</p> |
| | <p>(a) Introduce mechanised hard copy sorting and expand Satellite Mail Centres network to another 500 delivery offices;</p> | |
| | <p>(b) Link this system to international network;</p> | |

| Sl. No. | Text of recommendation | Stages of Implementation |
|---------|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 |
| (c) | Introduce Electronic Mail Boxes and direct mailing to private PCs and FAX machine. | |
| 13. | In the third stage, after 10 years, the Department think of setting up : | To be acted upon, on implementation of the second phase. |
| (a) | Dedicated telecommunication channels between major delivery offices and micro-earth station facility within metro cities, to speed up intra city transmission; | |
| (b) | Develop voice mail for economic transmission of messages; | |
| (c) | Develop voice mail for economic areas of messenger services, forwarding services, addressing services and direct advertising, etc. | |
| 14. | The recommendations made by us will transform the traditional postal service into a modern hi-technology service. The implementation of our recommendations would require a 'task Force' or 'mission' approach. We, therefore, recom- | A Technical committee has been constituted who are looking into different aspects of implementation of recommendations. |

| <i>Sl. No.</i> | <i>Text of recommendation</i> | <i>Stages of Implementation</i> |
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| 1 | <p data-bbox="331 951 487 1524">mend that a separate Division may be set up under the overall direction of Member (Development) of the Postal Services Board to coordinate and implement the projects. This new Division should be staffed by Qualified technical personnel who can :-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="535 1145 559 1524">— Select the appropriate system. <li data-bbox="595 951 656 1524">— identify the equipment that will suit the selected system. <li data-bbox="698 1071 722 1524">— Provide for maintenance and training. | 3 |
| (C) QUALITY OF SERVICE | | |
| 15. (a) | The department must lay down realistic norms for conveyance and delivery of mail and then monitor the quality of service so that in course of time a national efficiency norm for the entire country could be developed. | Implemented in respect of the first class mails. |
| (b) | The Committee feels that with the improvements | No comments. |

| <i>Sl. No.</i> | <i>Text of recommendation</i> | <i>Stages of Implementation</i> |
|----------------|--|---|
| 1 | <p>suggested by it in the area of mail transmission, it should be possible to establish certain norms for delivery of first class mail in the country such as delivery next day after posting of mail between metro cities, between cities directly connected by air and local mail to be delivered in the same city/town.</p> | 3 |
| 16. (a) | <p>The Committee feels that for monitoring quality use of statistical techniques to determine the efficiency of mail transmission systems have to be developed.</p> | <p>Standard transit norms are being monitored regularly to ensure quality of service. The National Test letter run conducted periodically is processed and analysed through a computer. Further Circle Test letter run and District Test letter run are conducted at appropriate levels. Different mail surveys are conducted to test the standard transit norms.</p> |
| (b) | <p>Most of the mail generated in India is in the urban centres and a very high percentage of it is generated in seven or eight major cities. To begin with, therefore, a pilot project using modern statistical techniques to determine the efficiency of the system in eight major cities should be taken up and gradually extended to the capitals of the remaining major States and some towns which are the hub of industries.</p> | |