

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. Facilities of booking and delivery of Telegrams, STD Calls, Trunk Calls and fax services are available at the telegraph office Bellary between 0700-2200 Hours. The present Traffic load does not justify extension of the working hours of Telegraph office. However for the purpose of STD calls, franchised private operators are available in the city.

Teesta Barrage Project

775. KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether due to delayed decision regarding finalisation of construction process of the work for formation of Teesta Jaldhaka Main Canal, the project costs has gone up;

(b) the latest position of Teesta Barrage Project in West Bengal; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken for early completion of the project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI SIS RAM OLA): (a) The project was delayed on account of problems concerning land acquisition.

(b) Presently sub-stage-I of Stage-I of Teesta Barrage (Phase-I) is under execution. The present stage of constructions of different components of the project as on March, 1997 is as below :

Three Barrages namely Teesta, Mahananda and Dauk Nagar Barrages, Teesta Mahananda link canal and Mahananda main canal have been completed. The progress of other three main canals and distribution system is as given below :

1. Dauk Nagar main canal	—	66%
2. Nagar Tangon main canal	—	0%
3. Teesta Jal Dhaka main canal	—	55%
4. Distribution system	—	25%

(c) The Planning Commission approved Additional Central Assistance of Rs. 150 crores for the project during VIII Five Year Plan. Further, a Central Loan Assistance of Rs. 5.0 crore under Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme was released to the project during 1996-97 and an instalment of Rs. 15 crores has been released this year.

However irrigation is a State subject. The completion of the project will depend upon the priority attached to it by the State Government.

[*Translation*]

Expenditure on Defence Projects

776. SHRI D.P. YADAV: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the total amount spent on various defence projects during the year 1997 till date; and

(b) the details of defence projects successfully launched during 1997?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV): (a) The defence budget for the financial year 1997-98, including funds for new and ongoing defence projects is Rs.32000 crores.

(b) Disclosing specific details of defence projects will not be in the interest of national security.

[*English*]

Talwar Committee

777. SHRI JAGDAMBI PRASAD YADAV:

SHRI RASA SINGH RAWAT:

SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the department treats Extra Departmental Agents as Government Staff;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of E.D. employees in the country and the details of their pay structure and working conditions;

(d) whether the Government have constituted Justice Talwar Committee for examining the service conditions, emoluments and facilities available to E.D. employees/agents, has submitted its report;

(e) if so, the main recommendations made by the Committee;

(f) the action taken by the Government thereon;

(g) whether Fifth Pay Commission has made any recommendations in this regard; and

(h) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) As on 31.3.1997, the number of ED Agents was 3,08,307. Details of pay structure and working conditions are given in the Statement laid on the Table of the House.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) A summary of the Committee's recommendations is also laid on the Table of the House.

(f) Some of the recommendations have been implemented and others are under the active consideration of the Government.

(g) No, Sir. Talwar Committee on ED Agents is, however, found to have formulated its recommendations keeping in view the Fifth Pay Commission's recommendations for Government employees.

(h) Does not arise.

Statement

Allowances and working conditions of Extra Departmental Agents in the Department of Post

The emoluments of ED agents are termed allowances. The following allowances are being given to them category wise here as under.

Category	Allowances	
	Minimum	Maximum
Extra Departmental Sub Postmaster & Extra Departmental Sorter.	385	620
Extra Departmental Branch Postmaster	275	535
Extra Departmental Stamp Vendor	270	420
All other Extra Agents:		
For less than 2 hours workload	240	(fixed)
For workload of 2 hours and above	270	240

It has been agreed to increase the aforesaid allowances to 3.25 time.

In addition to the allowances indicated above, Extra Departmental agents are also eligible to draw the following additional allowances :

(i) Dearness Allowance at the rates comparable with those applicable to the Central Government employees.

(ii) Interim Relief-Minimum Rs. 150/- p.m. and Maximum Rs. 174/- p.m.

(iii) Delivery & Conveyance Allowance to Extra Departmental Branch Postmasters where applicable : Rs. 75 p.m.

(iv) Office Maintenance Allowance to Extra Departmental Sub Postmasters & Branch Postmasters : Rs. 25 p.m.

(v) Fixed Stationery Charges to Extra Departmental Sub Post-masters & Branch Postmasters : Rs. 5 p.m.

(vi) Fixed Stationery Charges to EDDAs & EDMCs performing delivery work : Rs. 2 p.m.

(vii) Cycle Maintenance Allowance wherever applicable : Rs. 30 p.m.

(viii) Ex-gratia Bonus is payable to the Extra Departmental Agents on the basis of their actual emoluments.

(ix) Remuneration of EDBPMs for doing PCO/ Telegraph work : Rs. 20/- p.m. 0.40 Paise per call for outgoing trunk calls and 0.50 paise per call for inward calls being messenger fee. 0.40 paise for inward and outward telegrams transmitted on phone.

(x) Uttarakhand Division Allowance :

The Extra Departmental Agents of Uttarkhand Division are being paid an extra allowance of Rs. 40/- per annum in the month of September every year provided they have worked continuously as Extra Departmental Agent since March of that year.

(xi) Group Insurance Scheme :

The Extra Departmental Agents are also covered by a Group Insurance Scheme with effect from 1.4.1992. The Scheme is optional for the Extra Departmental Agents already in employment before 1.4.1992 and is compulsory for the Extra Departmental Agents appointed on or after 1.4.1992. The Scheme gives a risk cover for Rs. 10000/- on payment of Rs. 10/- per month. Out of this, Rs. 3.50 goes for insurance cover and Rs. 6.50 is the savings component. If an Extra Departmental Agent retires or leaves his job, he is paid the accumulated savings component with interest. In case of death, the nominee is paid Rs. 10000/- plus the accumulate savings component.

(xii) Ex-Gratia Gratuity

Rs. 6000/- The minimum mandatory service required for payment of Ex-gratia Gratuity is ten years.

(xiii) Incentive to Extra Departmental Sub Postmasters & Branch postmasters in connection with Mahila Samridhhi Yojna, 1993.

Rs. 10/- per month from the month in which third account have been opened so long as three or more accounts remain in operation. In addition, for subsequent accounts Re. 0.50 per account on recurring basis subject to a maximum of Rs. 300/- per month. Incentive of Rs. 10/- per month on opening three account is within the ceiling of Rs. 300/- per month fixed for additional incentive.

Working Conditions :

The Extra Departmental Agents work only for a part of the day for this Department ranging between two and five hours and are paid consolidated allowance on graded basis determined on the basis of the workload. One of the basic conditions of service of Extra Departmental Agents is that they must have adequate means of independent livelihood apart from the work they do for the Department of Posts.

SUMMARY OF JUSTICE TALWAR COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS ON POSTAL EXTRA DEPARTMENTAL SYSTEM:

Scales of Pay

The scales of pay have been recommended for a minimum of 3 hours 45 minutes to 7.5 hours for all categories of ED Agents other than EDBPMs/EDSPMs. In the case EDBPMs and EDSPMs, the minimum scale fixed is for 3 hours and 5 hours respectively. For excess workload of half an hour or more, a lumpsum pay has been prescribed. The lumpsum pay be treated as 'pay' for all purpose. The recommended scales are given in Annexure I. The combined duty scales have also been recommended for BPMs/EDSPMs doing delivery and conveyance of mails and for EDDAs conveying mails.

Assured Career Progression

Since, the Committee has recommended that the ED Agents should look forward to an assured career progression within the E.D. System, the Committee has, further, recommended financial upgradations for all categories of E.D. Agents.

Weightage to the length of service

The Committee has recommended that ED Agents be given the following increments in the proposed pay scales for different lengths of service :

1 to 5 years	—	Nil
6 to 10 Years	—	1 increments
11 to 15 years	—	2 increments
16 to 20 years	—	3 increments
21. to 25 years	—	4 increments

Split Duty

The Committee has recommended that a split duty allowance of Rs. 100/- be given to the extra-departmental agents whenever the gap between one duty and the other is more than one hour.

Compensation to ED Agents if detained beyond duty hours or detained beyond 5 hours

(i) Compensation to ED Agents for detention beyond 5 hours

The Committee has recommended that if extra-departmental agents are brought on duty for a period beyond 5 hours, they should be duly compensated and paid for the same subject to a maximum of 7.5 hours.

(ii) Compensation to ED Agents for detention beyond duty hours for exchanging mails with outside agency

The committee has recommended that the detention compensation should be increased.

The Committee has also recommended that ED Agents, like the whole-time employees, should be suitably compensated whenever they are brought on duty beyond working hours and holidays/week off days.

Other Allowances

The Committee has recommended that the E.D. Agents working in A, B-1, B-2, C Class cities and unclassified places should be granted House Rent Allowance and City Compensatory Allowance on the same lines as applicable to the whole-time employees subject to the same conditions.

Compensatory Allowances

The Committee has recommended that the ED Agents should be granted the various types of compensatory allowances subject to the same conditions as are applicable to the whole-time employees.

Travelling Allowance/Daily Allowance

The Committee has recommended that Travelling Allowance and Daily Allowance be paid to the ED Agents on the same lines as applicable to whole-time Government employees subject to a minimum of YA/DA admissible to a group 'D' employee. The Committee has further recommended that on transfer, an ED Agent should be given all the transfer benefits as prescribed for a regular departmental employee.

Medical Facilities

Keeping in view the limitations of the infrastructure, the Committee has recommended that a reasonable fixed minimum lumpsum amount per month as medical allowance be given to the ED Agents in rural areas. However, full benefit may be given to ED Agents and their family members in case of indoor treatment i.e. hospitalisation. ED Agents working in the urban and semi-urban areas may be given same medical facilities as in the case of whole-time departmental employees.

Bonus

The Committee has recommended that the ED Agents should be treated on the same lines as whole-time departmental employees and paid bonus accordingly.

Financial relief to the dependents of the deceased ED Agents

The Committee has recommended that the dependents

of ED Agents should be given the same amounts of financial relief and assistance as are admissible in the case of whole-time departmental employees.

Social Security

The Committee has recommended that the ED Agents be granted pension, gratuity and General Provident Fund. The minimum pension has been fixed at Rs. 610/- per month.

Other pension related issues

The Committee has made recommendations on all other pension related issues.

Voluntary retirement

(i) Based on the recommendations of the Fifth Central Pay Commission, the Committee has recommended the Golden Handshake Scheme for ED Agents on the same lines as admissible to whole-time employees.

(ii) The Committee has also recommended that the services of ED Agents who have put in a service of less than 3 years may be terminated by giving a fixed lumpsum amount which should not be less than 6 months of pay and allowances in the recommended grades per year of service.

(iii) It has further been recommended that all the ED Agents who are over 60 years of age may be retired subject to the condition that they be paid all the pensionary benefits as recommended this Committee.

METHOD OF RECRUITMENT AND CONDUCT RULES

Educational qualifications

It has been recommended that the minimum educational qualifications for EDSPMs and EDBPMB should be raised to 10+2. For EDDAs and EDSVs, the educational qualifications be raised to matriculation. No weightage should be given for higher educational qualifications.

Method of recruitment

It has been recommended that an opportunity in the matter of employment as an ED Agent be made available not only to the candidates whose names are sponsored by the employment exchange but also through other means.

Age of retirement

It has been recommended that the maximum age to retirement be reduced from 65 to 60 years.

Age at the time of appointment

It has been recommended that the maximum age of entry in the system should be 35 years subject, however, to the usual relaxations upto 5 years to be given to SC, ST, OBC candidates and also to the ex-servicemen.

Condition of Ownership of Property

It has been recommended that the condition of owning

immovable property be deleted and instead the amount of the fidelity bond may be enhanced to Rs. 10,000/- for the BPMs and to Rs. 5,000/- for other categories of ED Agents.

Office rent allowance

The Committee recommended that the obligation of RDBPMs/EDSPMs to provide space for the post office preferably in business area should continue. If the it said premises is not situated in the business area it should be ensured that it is exclusively earmarked for the post office purpose having an independent approach to it without the public having to enter the living quarter. Instead of maintenance allowance of Rs. 25/-, the Committee has recommended an office Rent Allowance of Rs. 100/- per month in rural areas. However, in urban areas it should be Rs. 200/-.

Selection on merit

The committee has recommended that, subject to the reservation quota for some categories as prescribed by the Government from time to time, the selection of ED Agents should be strictly based on merit.

Recruiting authority

The Committee recommended that the recruiting authority of all categories of ED Agents should be Divisional Superintendent.

Leave

The Committee has recommended the following kinds of leave for ED Agents.

(i) Earned Leave: One days' E.L. for each completed calendar month of service.

(ii) Half Pay Leave: 8 days half pay leave in a year.

(iii) Commuted Leave: Half the amount of the half Pay leave due to be granted on medical certificate.

(iv) Leave without pay: The leave of 180 days at a stretch has been reduced to 60 days in a year.

(v) Casual Leave: 5 days casual leave in a year.

(iv) Maternity leave: It has been recommended that female ED Agents be granted the same maternity leave as applicable in the case of full-time female employees of the Government of India as per CCS (Leave) Rules, 1972.

Leave encashment

The Committee has recommended that the same principle may be applied to ED Agents as in the case of whole-time departmental employees.

Put off duty

The Committee has recommended that the put off duty allowance may be increased from 25% to 50%.

35. The Committee has recommended that the 1964 ED Rules should be made statutory.

Facilities to be Provided to Public

The Committee has recommended that the limit of withdrawal of Rs. 500/- in Savings Bank by the SPM be increased to Rs. 1000/- This limit of Rs. 2000/- by the Regional PMsG/CPMsG.

RE-ORGANISATION

37. The Committee has recommended that there should be no further creation of posts of ED Agents and neither should any post office in ED category be opened atleast for the next 10 years.

It has been recommended that there should be total freeze in filling up of the posts. All vacant posts should be abolished and the work be managed by combination of duties. In case of operational requirements and exigencies of service, the post may be filled up by re-deployment.

It is possible that the re-organisation of the system may involve transfer of ED Agents. The Committee has recommended that the ED Agents be made liable to transfer within Accounts Office jurisdiction or maximum within the sub-division.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

Financial implications as on 1.1.1996

The net annual expenditure of the allowances being paid to the ED Agents in the existing system of fixed allowances is Rs. 394.58 crores. Based on the recommendations of the Fifth Central pay Commission, it would increase to Rs. 475.63 crores on fixed allowances. On giving scales of pay, based on the Fifth Central Pay Commission's recommendations the annual expenditure would be Rs. 578.54 crores. The increase in the annual expenditure due to pay the dearness allowance, therefore, would be Rs. 183.96 crores. There would be an additional liability of Rs. 72.33 crores per annum due to pensionary benefits, leave expenditure, uniforms, split duty allowance, house rent allowance, city compensatory allowance and office rent allowance. The net increase in expenditure due to pay and other benefits would be Rs. 256.29 crores. However, increase in expenditure due to medical facilities, LTC, bonus, transfers and other compensatory allowances have not been taken into account.

Scale of Pay

1. Scales of pay for EDMCs/ED Packers' ED Runner, ED Messengers and all other categories of ED Agents who do the same work as Group 'D'

(i)	Rs. 1220-20-1600	3 hrs 45 mts	19 Years
(ii)	Rs. 1545-25-2020	4 hrs 45 mts	
(iii)	Rs. 1870-30-2440	5 hrs 45 mts	
(iv)	Rs. 2195-35-2860	6 hrs 45 mts	
(v)	Rs. 2440-40-3200	7.5 hours	

For excess workload of half an hour or more a lumpsum pay of Rs. 162/- be given.

2. Scales of pay for EDDAs/EDSVs:

(i)	Rs. 1375-25-2125	3 hrs 45 mts	30 Years
(ii)	Rs. 1740-30-2640	4 hrs 45 mts	
(iii)	Rs.2105-35-3155	5 hrs 45 mts	
(iv)	Rs. 2470-40-3670	6 hrs 45 mts	
(v)	Rs. 2750-50-4250	7.5 hours	

For excess workload of half an hours or more, a lumpsum pay of Rs. 183 be given.

3. Scales of pay for EDBPMs:

(i)	Rs. 1280-35-1980	3 hrs	20 Years
(ii)	Rs. 1600-40-2400	3 hrs 45 mts	
(iii)	Rs. 2025-50-3025	4 hrs 45 mts	
(iv)	Rs. 2450-60-3650	5 hrs 45 mts	
(v)	Rs. 2875-70-4275	6 hrs 45 mts	
(vi)	Rs. 3200-80-4800	7.5 hours	

For all BPMs the minimum scale is for 3 hours of attendance. But those whose workload is beyond 3 hours, they would be entitled to the higher scale of 3 hours 45 minutes. For excess workload of half an hour or more, a lumpsum pay of Rs. 212/- be given. This lumpsum pay will also be given if workload increases from 3 hours to 3.5 hours.

4. Scales of pay for EDSPMs:

(i)	Rs. 2125-50-3125	5 hrs	20 Years
(ii)	Rs. 2550-60-3750	6 hrs	
(iii)	Rs. 2975-75-4475	hrs	
(iv)	Rs. 3200-85-4900	7.5 hours	

For excess workload of half an hour or more, a lumpsum pay of Rs. 212/- be given.

Combined Duties

5. EDBPM-cum-EDDA-cum-EDMC

Instead of giving a delivery allowance, it is necessary to have separate scales for BPMs who are doing delivery work and/or conveying mails. The scales proposed are:

			Lumpsum pay per half hour
(i)	Rs. 1550-35-2145	3 hrs 45 mts (17 yrs)	Rs. 206/-
(ii)	Rs. 1920-45-2685	4 hrs 45 mts	Rs. 202/-
(iii)	Rs. 2285-55-3220	5 hrs 45 mts	Rs. 198/-
(iv)	Rs. 2650-65-3755	6 hrs 45 mts	Rs. 196/-
(v)	Rs. 2925-75-4200	7.5 hrs	
6. EDDA-cum-EDMC			
(i)	Rs. 1300-20-1860	3 hrs 45 mts	28 yrs
(ii)	Rs. 1645-25-2345	4 hrs 45 mts	
(iii)	Rs. 1990-30-2830	5 hrs 45 mts	
(iv)	Rs. 2335-35-3315	6 hrs 45 mts	
(v)	Rs. 2600-40-3720	7.5 hours	

For excess workload of half an hour or more, a lumpsum pay for Rs. 173/- be given.

World Bank Aided Irrigation Projects

778. SHRI BIR SINGH MAHATO: Will the Minister of

WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of ongoing World Bank aided irrigation projects in the country;

(b) whether there has been inordinate delay in