

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1600

ANSWERED ON:06.03.2000

REGULARISATION OF E.D. EMPLOYEES

BRIJBHUSHAN SHARAN SINGH;LAKSHMAN CHANDRA SETH;RAM SHAKAL

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the extra departmental employees working in the post offices of the country are providing significant service;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the number of E.D. employees in the country during the last three years till date, State-wise;
- (d) whether the postal employees went on a strike for over a week to press for their demand of their regularisation;
- (e) if so, the details thereof and the decision taken by the Government in this regard; and
- (f) the number of E.D. employees regularised in the country during the last three years and till date, State-wise?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR)

(a)&(b) : ED Agents numbering 3,09,915 as on 31.03.99 man more than 1,28,193 ED Post Offices in the entire rural area. The extra-departmental system is a practical and viable method of extending basic postal facilities to the rural areas where due to inadequate workload full-fledged Departmental Post Offices are not feasible. The ED Agents are engaged on terms and conditions which vary significantly from those of regular Government employees. They are engaged for a period of two to five hours per day and have alternative source of independent livelihood. Being the local residents of the post village or from within the delivery jurisdiction of the Branch Post Office they enjoy acceptability in the local community they serve. They provide all basic postal services including agency functions which are of benefit to the rural population and help in socio-economic development.

(c) The information is being collected from the field units who are responsible for appointment, control etc. of ED Agents and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(d)&(e): Two Federations of postal employees gave notice on 09.05.98 for postal strike from 08.07.98 on a 10-Point Charter of Demands, one of which was the demand for implementation of positive recommendations of Justice Talwar Committee (JTC) on Postal Extra Departmental Agents. Postal Employees went on strike from 8/9 July, 1998 to 16th July, 1998. The strike was eventually withdrawn on the assurance of the then Minister of Communications for sympathetic and expeditious settlement of the issues. The Government thereafter extended a package of benefits to ED Agents vide orders dated 17.12.98 in full and final settlement of all pending demands relating to implementation of Justice Talwar Committee recommendations. The benefits extended are:

(i) Raising their basic monthly allowance by a factor of 3.25 for the period 01.01.96 to 28.02.98.

(ii) Thereafter with effect from 01.02.98 placing them in Time Related Continuity Allowance (TRCA) corresponding to the first two scales of pay recommended by the NTC in case of different categories of ED Agents and the first scale in respect of the ED Sub Postmasters.

(iii) Increasing the maximum permissible amount of Ex-Gratia Gratuity from Rs. 6,000/- to Rs. 18,000/-

(iv) Increasing the Office Maintenance Allowance from Rs. 25/- to Rs. 50/- per month.

(v) An entirely new facility for paid leave of 10 days for every half year for EDAs without the provision of carry forward or encashment.

(vi) Further, a provision for lumpsum Severance Amount for EDAs as a form of post-employment benefit. These benefits involved a total additional expenditure of Rs. 459.09 crores as additional annual expenditure.

(f) The information is being collected from the field units and will be laid on the Table of the House.