

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3019
ANSWERED ON:18.08.2004
MEGHDOOT CARDS
Mishra Dr. Rajesh Kumar

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

- (a) the purpose behind printing of `Meghdoot Cards` by the Government and not distributing them by all post offices in the country;
- (b) the number of ordinary and `Meghdoot Cards` printed and distributed separately during the year 2003-2004;
- (c) the reasons of the difference between these two cards and the reasons for not providing such cards in rural areas; and
- (d) the steps proposed to be taken to check and rectify such unwanted system which goes against public interests?

Answer

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

(a) Meghdoot Postcard is one of the premium products introduced by the Department of Posts in September, 2002. The distinctive feature of the Meghdoot Postcard is that the space on the left half of the address side of the postcard is used as a media vehicle for carrying advertisements for marketing of products and services or propagation of messages by the advertisers in rural as well as urban areas.

The purpose of printing of Meghdoot Postcard is to generate additional revenue for the Department. The Department gets Rs. 2/- for each Meghdoot Postcard because of the advertisement it carries (minimum order quantity is 1 lakh card). This enables the Department to sell Meghdoot Postcard at a lower price of Re. 0.25. Since advertising is always directed at some target audience, the advertiser can indicate the area of distribution of Meghdoot Postcards. Therefore, such cards are available mostly in the areas indicated by the advertisers. This may include rural areas also. Till now orders have been received from advertisers located in various States like Andhra Pradesh, Tamilnadu, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Delhi, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal and MP. The Department has succeeded in generating advertising revenue of Rs. 2.19 crore since introduction of this product in 2002.

(b) Ordinary Post Cards printed and distributed during the financial year 2003-04 - 2054.51 lakh.

Meghdoot Post Cards printed and distributed during the financial year 2003-04 - 70.35 lakh.

(c) Meghdoot Post Card carries a sponsored message or an advertisement on the left half of the address side of the postcard. Meghdoot Post Card is printed only on receipt of orders from advertisers. Their quantity, therefore, is limited to the orders received. The ordinary post card printed by the Department is as per annual forecast of the Department and is one of the traditional mail products of the Department of Posts.

The advertiser is allowed to indicate the area(s) of distribution of the Meghdoot Post Card (which may include rural areas) and, therefore, the availability of such cards is mostly in the areas indicated by the advertiser, whereas ordinary post cards are provided from Post Offices all over India.

(d) Does not arise in view of (a) and (c) above.