

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:115
ANSWERED ON:08.12.2004
RELAXATION IN CRITERIA FOR OPENING OF POST OFFICES
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Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether criteria for opening branch post offices in remote, hilly and bordering States are being relaxed;
- (b) if so, the conditions being relaxed;
- (c) the target fixed for opening or upgrading the branch post offices during the Ninth Five Year Plan;
- (d) whether this target has been achieved;
- (e) if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) the target fixed in this regard for the Tenth Five Year Plan alongwith the details of action plan to achieve the targets?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI DAYANIDHI MARAN)

(a) to (f): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT TO BE LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE LOK SABHA IN RESPECT OF PARTS (a) TO (f) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 115 FOR 8TH DECEMBER, 2004 REGARDING RELAXATION IN CRITERIA FOR OPENING OF POST OFFICES.

(a) to (f) The population and income norms fixed for opening Branch Offices in hilly, tribal, desert and inaccessible areas, including those in border States are already more relaxed than those fixed for normal rural areas. There is also provision to relax the distance norm under special circumstances. Details are given in Annexure-I.

During the Ninth Plan the target was to open 2598 Branch Offices and 250 Sub Offices in the country. Out of this target, 2154 Branch Offices and 254 Sub Offices were opened. Details are given in Annexure-II.

For the Tenth Plan, a target of 450 Branch Offices and 45 Sub Offices was approved only for first two years of the Plan period i.e. 2002-03 and 2003-04. Of these 441 Branch Offices and 45 Sub Offices have been opened. 34 Sub Offices have also been opened during the 10th Plan period by redeployment of the existing post offices. Requirements for new post offices continue to be met through redeployment of the existing post offices, without reducing the access available, as per policy, wherever justified.

ANNEXURE -I

NORMS FOR OPENING POST OFFICES

1. Norms for opening Extra Departmental Branch Post Offices:

1.1 Population:

(a) In Normal Areas:

3000 population in a group of villages (including the PPO village).

(b) In Hilly, Tribal, Desert and Inaccessible Areas:

500 population in an individual village or 1000 population in a group of villages.

1.2 Distance:

(a) In Normal Areas:

The minimum distance from the nearest existing post office will be 3 Kms.

(b) In Hilly, Tribal, Desert and Inaccessible Areas:

The distance limit will be the same as above except that in Hilly Areas, the minimum distance limit can be relaxed by the Directorate in cases where such relaxation is warranted by special circumstances which should be clearly explained while submitting a proposal.

1.3 Anticipated income:

(a) In Normal Areas:

The minimum anticipated revenue will be 331/3% of the cost.

(b) In Hilly, Tribal, Desert and Inaccessible Areas:

The minimum anticipated income will be 15% of the cost. It is further to be ensured that as a result of opening of new post office, the loss in respect of parent post office does not increase beyond the permissible limit nor is its income reduced below the minimum prescribed.

2. Criteria for upgrading/opening Departmental Sub Post Offices:

(a) In Rural Areas:

The Minimum work load of the Extra Departmental Branch Post Office, proposed to be upgraded, should be five hours per day. The permissible limit of annual loss is Rs. 2400/- in Normal Rural areas and Rs. 4800/- in Tribal and Hilly areas.

It is further to be ensured that as a result of the opening of a new post office, the loss in respect of the parent post office does not increase beyond the permissible limit nor is its income reduced below the minimum prescribed.

(b) In Urban Areas:

In Urban areas, the post office should initially be self-supporting, and, at the time of the first annual review, it should show a 5% profit to be eligible for further retention.

The minimum distance between two post offices should be 1.5 Kms. in cities with a population of 20 lakhs and above, and 2 Kms, in other Urban Areas. No two delivery offices, however, should be closer than 5 Kms. from each other.

Heads of Circles have powers to relax the distance condition in 10% of the cases.

A Delivery Post Office in Urban Area should have a minimum of 7 Postmen's beats.

Annexure-II

Year-wise details of target given for opening of Branch Offices (BO) & Departmental Sub Offices (SO) during the 9th Five Year Plan

Year Target Achievement

BO SO BO SO

1997-1998	500	50	402	52
1998-1999	598	50	598	50
1999-2000	500	50	386	49
2000-2001	500	50	363	52
2001-2002	500	50	405	51

TOTAL 2598 250 2154 254