

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:530
ANSWERED ON:03.05.2010
REVIEW OF POSTAL SERVICES
Gangaram Shri Awale Jaywant;Owaisi Shri Asaduddin

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

- (a) whether the Government or any other agency has reviewed the quality of services rendered by Department of Posts (DoP) in the recent past;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the follow-up action taken thereon;
- (d) whether the DoP proposes to modernise the Post Offices and introduce new services including ATMs for the benefit of the public; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI A. RAJA)

(a) to (e) 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 (e) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 530 FOR 3RD MAY, 2010 REGARDING "REVIEW OF POSTAL SERVICES"

(a) Yes, Madam. The Department of Posts reviews the quality of services rendered by the Posts Offices at various administrative levels viz – Divisional, Regional and Circle levels on regular basis. The reviews are carried out through a number of well established systems such as – periodical inspections, surprise visits of Post Offices and mail offices, live mail surveys, test letter runs, trail cards etc., put in place for the purpose of performance appraisal of various offices. Also continuous operational monitoring is done through various prescribed daily/fortnightly/monthly/quarterly/annual reports and statements. Based on the results of such reviews appropriate steps are taken to improve the functioning of Posts Offices.

The Department had commissioned an external audit of its path breaking initiative "Project Arrow" by TUV India Pvt. Ltd., in respect of the 50 Post Offices where Project Arrow was first implemented on a brief concept basis.

(b) The external audit of post offices covered under Project Arrow was conducted over a period of two months during which reports pertaining to receipt, dispatch and delivery of registered post, ordinary post, money orders and Speed Post letters in the post offices were verified. Customer satisfaction survey was done randomly by selecting 30 customers in larger offices and 15 for smaller offices. The survey included review of availability of forms and stationery in post offices, staff courtesy and diligence, queuing time, availability of customer facilities in the public hall etc. Similarly, a staff satisfaction survey was also conducted for 2027 staff persons. The major findings of the external audit were as follows:-

Same day delivery of registered letters was 99%.

Same day delivery of Speed Post articles ranged between 98% to 99%.

90% to 92% of the test letters posted during three rounds of audit were received back with same day delivery performance ranging from 94% to 100%.

Performance of computerized Banking operations (data digitization and signature scanning) increased from 72% to 81% during the course of the audit.

All 50 post offices were found to be having adequate infrastructure including computer hardware and other facilities.

Average customer satisfaction score was found to be 9.52 on a scale of 10.

Employees were found to be motivated and satisfied in general. The score of average staff satisfaction level was observed to be 5.8 on a scale of 6.

(c) Based on the result of the audit as well as the overwhelming response from the customers and the staff of the Project Arrow post offices, the Department decided to extend the initiative to the rest of the post offices in a phased manner. Thus, 450 post offices were covered under Project Arrow in phase-II in 2008-09 and 500 more were covered under phase-III in 2009-10. In 2010-11 also provision has been made for covering another 500 post offices across the country under Project Arrow.

(d) & (e) The Department has undertaken a massive modernisation of its infrastructure and core operations in mail, money remittances, banking and insurance services through IT induction at an unprecedented scale. The aim is to make the neighbourhood post office, the focus for delivery of all communication services, socio-economic initiatives of the Government and most importantly for enhancing financial inclusion of the unbanked rural population so that the infrastructure available can be put to multiple use for reaching the common man across the urban-rural divide. The Department is optimizing the rationalizing its mail grid and setting up Mail Business Centres, automating mail handling in major metro cities to speed up mail transmission, undertaking a concerted drive to increase the insurance cover available to the rural poor under its Rural Postal Life Insurance Policies. The Department also proposes to introduce core banking solutions in post offices in the current five year plan which will enable provision of new generation e-enabled financial services including ATMs for the benefit of public.