

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:125

ANSWERED ON:26.07.2010

POSTAL SERVICES

Jaiswal Shri Gorakh Prasad ;Lal Shri Kirodi

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

- (a) whether the Department of Posts is facing tough competition from private service providers especially in respect of Courier Services;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has undertaken any review of the functioning of the Post Offices in the country;
- (d) if so, the details alongwith the outcome thereof;
- (e) whether the Government has prepared any strategy to face the said challenges and for improving the postal services in the country;
- (f) if so, the details thereof; and
- (g) the steps taken/being taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI GURUDAS KAMAT)

(a) & (b) The Department of Posts provides a number of services to the people of India in the areas of transmission of mail, small savings, insurance and retail. Presence of other private service providers in these areas including that of mail transmission is a source of competition to the Department of Posts. This competition provides the Department of Posts an opportunity as well as impetus to improve its quality of service in its various areas of operations so as to meet the expectations of the customers and increase its volume of business.

In the area of mail transmission, Department of Posts has introduced Speed Post service to meet the customers' need for a faster and time bound express mail service. Speed Post service has been able to face the competition and gain the trust and the confidence of the customers, which is reflected in the steady growth of traffic of Speed Post articles booked in the country over the years. The traffic of Speed Post grew at an annual rate of 14% in the year 2009-10.

(c) & (d) Department of Posts reviews the functioning of post offices at various administrative levels viz. Divisional, Regional and Circle on a regular basis. The reviews are carried out through a number of systems put in place for the purpose which inter-alia include periodical inspections & surprise visits of the post offices as well as examination of operations etc through various reports & statements prescribed. Based on results of such reviews, appropriate steps are taken to improve the functioning of post offices.

(e) to (g) Yes, Madam, The Department has prepared an appropriate strategy to face the challenges and to improve the postal services in the country and has taken a number of steps in this regard. Under the current five year Plan, a number of Schemes are being implemented in the areas of Access to postal network, Mail operations and Technological upgradation and Modernization etc. The details are at Annexure-I.

In addition, some of the major steps taken by the Department of Posts in this regard are as under:-

Introduction of web based Track and Trace system called "SpeedNet" for Speed Post articles.

Introduction of One India One Rate in respect of Speed Post articles weighing upto 50 gms.

Reduction in local Speed Post charges.

Web based connectivity of all 1301 National and State Speed Post Centres spread across the country through SpeedNet.

Deployment of International Postal System software at Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata and Delhi for tracing of international Speed Post articles.

Technological upgradation of major Speed Post Centres for improving the efficiency of the operations.

Launch of Project Arrow in the year 2008 to make visible, tangible and noteworthy difference in Post Offices that matters to the common man. The project focuses on improving the core operations of the post office as well as on upgrading the support infrastructure. 1000 Post Offices spread across the country have been covered under this project.