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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(2006-2007)**

FOURTEENTH LOK SABHA

**MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(DEPARTMENT OF POSTS)**

REAL ESTATE MANAGEMENT IN DEPARTMENT OF POSTS

FORTY-EIGHTH REPORT



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

August, 2007/Sravana, 1929 (Saka)

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INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(DEPARTMENT OF POSTS)

REAL ESTATE MANAGEMENT IN
DEPARTMENT OF POSTS

Presented to Speaker, Lok Sabha on 03.08.2007

Presented to Lok Sabha on

Laid in Rajya Sabha on



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

August, 2007/Sravana, 1929 (Saka)

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COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE
ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(2006-2007)

Shri Nikhil Kumar — *Chairman*

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Abdullakutty
3. Shri Nikhil Kumar Choudhary
4. Shri Sanjay Shamrao Dhotre
5. Smt. Jayaprada
6. Shri Bhubaneshwar Prasad Mehta
7. Shri Harish Nagpal
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16. Shri P.C. Thomas
17. Shri Kinjarapu Yerrannaidu
18. Smt. Rubab Sayeda*
19. Shri Narahari Mahato**
20. Shri Badiga Ramakrishna##
21. Shri Ramesh Dube@

* Nominated *w.e.f.* 25th September, 2006 in place of Shri Rajnarayana Budholia, MP (L.S.)

** Nominated *w.e.f.* 28th November, 2006.

Nominated *w.e.f.* 23rd February, 2007.

@ Nominated *w.e.f.* 21st June, 2007.

Rajya Sabha

22. Vacant[#]
23. Shri Praveen Rashtrapal
24. Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad
25. Shri Dara Singh
26. Shri A. Vijayaraghavan
27. Shri N.R. Govindraj
28. Shri Motiur Rahman
29. Shri Eknath K. Thakur
30. Shri Shyam Benegal
31. Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri M. Rajagopalan Nair — *Additional Secretary*
2. Shri P. Sreedharan — *Joint Secretary*
3. Shri P.C. Koul — *Deputy Secretary*

[#]Vice Shri Vijay J. Darda nominated to Committee on Finance *w.e.f.* 14 December, 2006

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman, Standing Committee on Information Technology (2006-07) having been authorised by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present this Forty-Eighth Report on "The Real Estate Management in the Department of Posts" relating to the Department of Posts, Ministry of Communications and Information Technology.

2. The Committee were orally briefed by the representatives of the Department of Posts on 26th December, 2006 and took oral evidence of the representatives of the Department on 26th June, 2007.

3. The Report was considered and adopted by the Committee at their sitting held on 2nd August, 2007.

4. The Committee wish to express their thanks to the representatives of the Department of Posts for appearing before the Committee and furnishing the information in connection with the examination of the subject.

5. For facility of reference and convenience, the observations and recommendations of the Committee have been printed in bold in Part II of the Report.

NEW DELHI;
2 August, 2007

11 Sravana, 1929 (Saka)

NIKHIL KUMAR,
Chairman,
Standing Committee on
Information Technology.

PART I

Introductory

1. The Indian Postal System is expected to fulfil the Universal Service Obligation in terms of providing basic postal services throughout the country, irrespective of terrain, at an affordable price. For meeting this requirement, the Department of Posts (DoP) have set up a network of 1,55,333 Post Offices as on 31st March 2006. The operational arm of DoP is divided into 22 Postal Circles, 37 Regional Offices, 441 Postal Divisions, 70 Railway Mail Service Divisions, 46 Postal Stores Depots, 19 Central Stamp Depots, 6 Postal Training Centres and one Postal Staff College.

2. Post Offices can be categorized mainly into three categories *viz.* Head Post Offices, Sub Post Offices and Extra Departmental Post Offices.

3. Accommodation for running an Extra Departmental Post Office is provided by the Extra Departmental Postmaster known as Gramin Dak Sevak. Accommodation for other categories of Post Offices is provided by the DoP. The Department have their own as well as rented buildings housing their various offices. Besides, they have staff quarters. The Department also have vacant plots of land all over the country on which construction of departmental buildings is undertaken with assistance from Plan funds. These plots were acquired/purchased/gifted for construction of postal buildings over a period of time.

4. Thus, land and buildings constitute an important asset for the Department, which requires prudent management.

5. The real estate management in the Department of Posts as of now incorporates reorganization, restructuring, renovation and maintenance of already existing departmental buildings, *i.e.* administrative and operative offices and staff quarters, heritage buildings and also the construction of infrastructure on vacant plots lying idle across the country.

6. The Committee have been informed that the properties of the Department which include their own buildings, departmental staff quarters and vacant plots, can be categorized as under:—

- (i) Land and building inherited before 1921.
- (ii) Land acquired through land acquisition proceedings with the local authorities for specific purpose of constructing post-office buildings/staff quarters. (In these cases, the land price has been paid from the funds allocated under the Five-Year Plan Scheme).
- (iii) Direct purchase on concessional rates the cost of which was again met under the Plan activity for development of postal property.
- (iv) Land gifted by private parties and trusts for construction of Post Offices.

7. When the Committee wanted to be apprised of the number of HPOs and SOs in this regard, the Department at one place mentioned that the total number of HPOs are 818 and total number of SOs are 24683 which add up to the figure of 25501. However, at another place the Department mentioned that, as on 31-03-2005 there are 822 HPOs and 25113 SOs totalling to 25935.

8. Similarly, about the break up of the Post Offices functioning through departmental buildings and the rented ones, the Department informed the Committee that the number of Post Offices functioning through departmental buildings are 3922 and the number of Post Offices working through rented buildings is 21175 making a total of 25097. In a subsequent clarification, however, it was mentioned that as on 31-03-2006 a total of 26504 Post Offices are operating through 4484 departmental and 22020 rented premises. In addition to this there are 24676 departmental staff quarters. 37 Post Offices are working through the Heritage buildings. Most importantly, there are 1871 vacant plots of land measuring about 38224902 sq. feet lying vacant in various parts of the country out of which 403 plots are lying vacant in prime locations. Construction of departmental buildings, which includes operative offices, administrative offices and staff quarters, on these vacant plots is undertaken with assistance from Plan funds.

9. When asked as to what was the annual rental outgo for hired buildings the Department informed the Committee that it was Rs. 45 crore per annum. However, from the data indicating the State-wise, year-wise rent paid by the Department in the last five years (Appendix-I)

it was seen that the rental liability of the Department never exceeded Rs. 34 crore in any of the last five years.

10. When asked about the desirability of having more and more Post Offices in departmental buildings, DoP have stated that apart from saving the rental outgo there were several other compelling reasons for constructing more departmental Post Offices. During an oral presentation before the Committee the then Secretary of the Department stated:—

“As you have rightly pointed out, there is a need for additional Departmental buildings for which currently we have about 1800 vacant plots. The Departmental buildings provide a suitable ambience both for the employees and the customers, since they are built to suit the work flow and operational requirements.”

11. The Department of Posts stated further that they face genuine difficulty in hiring accommodation for Post Offices and Railway Mail Service purposes as most landlords are not keen to have the Post Offices as tenants and if Post Office was a tenant, he was unwilling to make structural changes and internal modifications to suit the requirements of the Department of Posts. Furthermore, the Head Post Offices require large office area, hence involve very high rent liability making it imperative to construct departmental buildings for the Head Post Offices which are presently located in rented buildings (at present 70 in number) thus creating the need to acquire more land. With emphasis on modernization, computerization and upgradation of technology, building requirements are also undergoing changes with the use of hi-tech computer hardware and the Automatic Mail Processing Centres (AMPCs), which the Department is gradually acquiring at the metropolitan cities. Hence, departmental buildings are absolute necessity as modifications required for computerization are not possible in rented buildings. In addition, in those departmental buildings where the available accommodation was cramped due to increase in workload, possibility of vertical/horizontal extension is required to be explored.

II. Non-Utilization of Vacant Plots

12. Given the ever-evolving need for having more and more post offices and the desirability of housing them in departmental buildings, the Committee examined in depth the vacant plots presently in possession of the Department of Posts. Here again, conflicting figures were furnished to the Committee. In the material furnished to the Committee the number of the vacant plots varied from about 1800 to 1851 and

1871 from time to time. According to the information furnished the Department is sitting on 3.82 crore sq. ft. of vacant land, the State-wise break up of which is as follows:—

S.No.	Name of State	Total No. of Plots	Total Area (in Sq. ft.)
1	2	3	4
1.	Andhra Pradesh	229	3288073
2.	Assam	33	4558630
3.	Bihar	86	888577
4.	Chhattisgarh	8	78501
5.	Delhi	20	510896
6.	Gujarat	112	1618648
7.	Haryana	19	197247
8.	Himachal Pradesh	28	112486
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	9	5331274
10.	Jharkhand	65	968445
11.	Karnataka	364	5330961
12.	Kerala	145	2803796
13.	Maharashtra	87	581428
14.	Goa	4	89669
15.	Madhya Pradesh	26	218629
16.	Arunachal Pradesh	10	16686
17.	Tripura	2	14810
18.	Meghalaya	3	159435
19.	Manipur	3	52322
20.	Nagaland	7	185465
21.	Mizoram	10	369758

1	2	3	4
22.	Orissa	42	730650
23.	Punjab	17	335085
24.	Rajasthan	200	2392307
25.	Tamil Nadu	154	2914529
26.	Uttar Pradesh	80	1428430
27.	Uttarakhand	20	351808
28.	West Bengal	87	2694252
29.	Sikkim	1	2105
	Total	1871	38224902

13. The Committee wanted to know the number of vacant plots in prime locations throughout the country. In reply, DoP stated that out of 1871 vacant plots, 403 plots are in prime locations, as follows:—

S.No.	Name of State	No. of Plots in prime locations
1	2	3
1.	Andhra Pradesh	15
2.	Assam	15
3.	Bihar	5
4.	Chhattisgarh	Nil
5.	Delhi	4
6.	Gujarat	21
7.	Haryana	18
8.	Himachal Pradesh	Nil
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	5
10.	Jharkhand	12
11.	Karnataka	35

1	2	3
12.	Kerala	63
13.	Maharashtra	42
14.	Goa	4
15.	Madhya Pradesh	3
16.	Arunachal Pradesh	9
17.	Tripura	2
18.	Meghalaya	Nil
19.	Manipur	Nil
20.	Nagaland	7
21.	Mizoram	1
22.	Orissa	12
23.	Punjab	17
24.	Rajasthan	62
25.	Tamil Nadu	19
26.	Uttar Pradesh	16
27.	Uttarakhand	5
28.	West Bengal	11
29.	Sikkim	Nil
Total		403

14. The Committee desired to know since when the postal lands have been lying vacant across the country. Responding to this query the Department furnished a statement which has been shown as *Appendix-II*. The statement *inter alia* shows that several plots had been lying vacant for more than 50 years.

15. When asked as to whether there were any such instances where post offices/departmental offices were functioning through rented

buildings and plots owned by the Department were lying vacant the following data was furnished by the Department:—

Sl.No.	Name of Circle	No. of POs/AOs functioning in rented buildings where plots are lying vacant
1.	Andhra Pradesh	119
2.	Assam	15
3.	Bihar	86
4.	Chattisgarh	6
5.	Delhi	12
6.	Gujarat	110
7.	Haryana	8
8.	Himachal Pradesh	28
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	Nil
10.	Jharkhand	27
11.	Karnataka	289
12.	Kerala	138
13.	Maharashtra	67
14.	Madhya Pradesh	9
15.	N.E.	27
16.	Orissa	35
17.	Punjab	13
18.	Rajasthan	103
19.	Tamil Nadu	132
20.	Uttar Pradesh	67
21.	Uttarakhand	15
22.	West Bengal	83
Total		1389

16. The Committee wanted to know about the Department's policy on Estate Management in the light of so many vacant plots on the one hand and also the need for new buildings for varied purposes on the other. The Department of Posts stated that they plan to have administrative offices, operative offices and residential accommodation in view of demand, suitability and reasonable cost by following activities under the scheme "Construction of Buildings":—

- (i) Construction of Post/Mail Office Buildings.
- (ii) Construction of Administrative Office Buildings
- (iii) Re-construction of Old Buildings
- (iv) Preservation of Heritage Buildings
- (v) Construction of staff quarters
- (vi) Purchase of land

17. During evidence in response to the Committee's query about the repercussions of the inaction regarding vacant plots, it was stated by a representative of the Department of Posts:—

".....since the Department have done nothing about these Government properties, they, over a period of time, have been rendered into non performing assets."

18. The Department of Posts further stated that a large number of vacant plots stand acquired/purchased on concessional rates or taken on lease with a clause of constructing buildings within a fixed time frame. However, many such plots for Post Offices are lying underdeveloped for many years compelling DoP for payment of penalty for non-construction of buildings on one hand and on the other, the Department of Posts are facing the threat of resumption of the plot by local revenue authorities on grounds of non-construction of buildings.

III. Encroachment of Vacant Land

19. The Committee noticed from the information provided by the Department that out of 1871 vacant plots across the country 187 plots are under illegal occupation owing to the inaction of the Department. In case of these 187 encroached plots, 118 plots have been encroached upon for more than ten years. Commenting on the same, the then Secretary, Department of Posts stated during the presentation made before the Committee on 26th December, 2006:—

"We are aware of the fact that we have a very large number of vacant plots and this has resulted in a lot of problems. Some of

these plots have been encroached upon and it becomes very difficult to evict the persons who have occupied these plots”.

20. However, during the evidence held on 26th June 2007, the Secretary DoP stated:—

“Out of 1800 plots, only 187 are encroached, which is of course, not a very high percentage of the total number of plots”.

21. When the Secretary of the Department was asked about the steps being taken by the Department for the protection of their properties, he stated:—

“...certainly we should. In fact, we can have a crash programme. We should adopt whatever means are required whether they are legal or physical immediately. We would come up with the plan.we do not want our plots to be encroached or remain encroached. Definitely, it is our duty to get the plots free from encroachment. From my personal experience I can say that our officers in the field do make a lot of efforts. They do contact the civil authorities, do file the FIRs with the police. Then, there are legal cases. We have to go to courts. People obtain relief from the courts. So many times, it has happened.”

22. When asked about legal measures and other means adopted to resolve the issue, a representative of the Department of Posts stated:—

“...the concerned circles have been instructed from time to review all encroachment cases personally and to take earnest steps to free the land from encroachment. The State Government and local revenue authorities are addressed by various Circles for vacation of the encroachments where there is no court case pending.”

23. It was also stated in written reply that in order to protect plots from encroachment, construction of boundary walls on important/sensitive plots is being taken up in phased manner subject to availability of Plan funds. The Department during last two years have allotted funds to the tune of Rs. 85 Lakhs and Rs. 105 Lakhs during the years 2005–2006 and 2006-2007 respectively for boundary walls around 39 vacant plots. In addition to this all legal means are also being explored to protect the vacant plots. In this connection, the Committee were also informed that the Secretary, Department of Posts on 28th June, 2007 has written demi-officially to the Chief Secretaries of the concerned State Governments to help in the removal of

encroachment on Postal land in their States. The Department were also examining the possibility of using other means to protect the vacant plots commensurate with the cost adding to the litigation part. It was also stated that the court cases are regularly monitored at the Circle headquarters and at the Directorate level.

24. Asked further as to whether the Department would at least construct boundary walls around all the plots that are not encroached without any further delay the witness stated:—

“No Sir, I cannot assure you that at this moment.”

25. He further added:—

“Before I give any assurance, I will have to make sure as to what will be the cost involved and all that”.

IV. Disputes/Court Cases

26. In reply to a question of the Committee, DoP in a note stated that there are 360 courts cases pending all over the country which have arisen due to disputes regarding rent of the buildings, vacation of the buildings, shifting of post offices, damage charges for staff quarters, acquisition of land/properties and encroachment of land etc. The details of disputes/courts cases and amount spent for litigation in last five years are given below:—

S. No.	Name of Postal Circle	No. of Disputes /Court Cases	Amount spent for litigation in last five years (in Rs.)				
			2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	Andhra Pradesh	6	250	500	7156	8601	856
2.	Assam	1	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	4695
3.	Bihar	2	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	800
4.	Chhattisgarh	2	57500	62712	Nil	Nil	Nil
5.	Delhi	10	1940	1300	Nil	Nil	Nil
6.	Gujarat	44	38697	4050	9625	2900	45885
7.	Haryana	10	Nil	Nil	2310	3080	Nil

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
8.	Himachal Pradesh	11	3765	1883	1250	Nil	Nil
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
10.	Jharkhand	2	5780	5920	7145	9890	11162
11.	Karnataka	12	9625	3320	11370	6600	13320
12.	Kerala	34	1174	5260	9600	36333	15614
13.	Maharashtra	41	62850	100795	159153	183798	283929
14.	Madhya Pradesh	8	Nil	3000	6000	5700	Nil
15..	N.E.	2	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	4200
16.	Orissa	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
17.	Punjab	29	77911	61056	68077	82202	105374
18.	Rajasthan	50	13112534	22859	31911	55701	2603716
19.	Tamil Nadu	55	51600	73335	87515	2611199	489259
20.	Uttar Pradesh	19	391177	1267431	33162	55425	10880
21.	Uttarakhand	10	13600	15800	17300	20765	30508
22.	West Bengal	12	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Total		360	13828403	1629221	451574	3082194	3620198

V. Disposal of Unwanted Plots

27. The Committee pointed out that the Department were facing a situation whereby they were neither able to construct buildings on the vacant plots for years together nor were they able to put in place adequate safeguards for preventing encroachments on these plots. The Secretary, DoP stated before the Committee:—

“Sir, your suggestion is very valuable and well taken. We will review whether we need to retain all these plots. Then, those which we have no prospect of building on, maybe it is better that we return them to the Government, which has given it to us or perhaps sell off”.

28. He added:—

“That is something we can examine. We would see whether we need to retain all those plots because it is a problem just keeping

care of them.... We would carry out a review. For what we retain, we would have a plan to see how best they can be secured."

29. Asked pointedly whether some of the vacant plots were not required and whether the Department of Posts have any policy with regard to such unwanted plots, the Secretary, Department of Posts stated:—

" We have been reviewing the entire situation. We have made out the list of all the plots that we do not require so that they can be disposed off later as there are some localities where the Department of Posts do not need any Post Offices."

30. However, when asked to clarify further, the Department informed the Committee through a written reply after evidence that as on date no such plan is there for disposal of vacant plots.

VI. Renovation/Reconstruction of Dilapidated Buildings

31. The Committee desired to know the status of DoP buildings, which were in dilapidated or unusable condition. In reply, DoP furnished the following statement:—

S.No.	Name of State	No. of Buildings/SQs
1	2	3
1.	Andhra Pradesh	11
2.	Assam	Nil
3.	Bihar	11
4.	Chhattisgarh	Nil
5.	Delhi	1
6.	Gujarat	100
7.	Haryana	8
8.	Himachal Pradesh	1
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	Nil
10.	Jharkhand	Nil
11.	Karnataka	20

1	2	3
12.	Kerala	13
13.	Maharashtra	11
14.	Goa	Nil
15.	Madhya Pradesh	1
16.	Arunachal Pradesh	Nil
17.	Tripura	Nil
18.	Meghalaya	Nil
19.	Manipur	Nil
20.	Nagaland	Nil
21.	Mizoram	Nil
22.	Orissa	1
23.	Punjab	13
24.	Rajasthan	Nil
25.	Tamil Nadu	5
26.	Uttar Pradesh	5
27.	Uttarakhand	8
28.	West Bengal	8
29.	Sikkim	Nil
	Total	217

32. When asked about the future plan of action for their repair/ renovation/reconstruction, the Department stated that in the Eleventh Five Year Plan a requirement of Rs. 55 crores has been projected for 55 departmental buildings requiring re-construction.

VII. Preservation of Heritage Buildings

33. To a question, the Committee were informed that the Department owned 37 heritage buildings. Asked about the particulars

of these buildings and the measures being taken by the Department to conserve and maintain these buildings, the Department informed the Committee that according to the guidelines given by the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritages (INTACH), the following buildings which were constructed before 1939 and survive in anything like their original condition and have significance in Indian history, architecture and archaeology, have been identified as "Heritage Buildings" of the Department:—

(1) Patna GPO (2) Bhagalpur HPO (3) PTC Darbhanga (Bihar Circle) (4) Delhi GPO (5) New Delhi GPO (Delhi Circle) (6) Shimla GPO (7) Mandi HPO (8) Chota Shimla S.O. (9) Ambedkar Chowk SO (10) Kasauli SO (H.P. Circle) (11) PTC Mysore (12) Bangalore Circle Office (13) Bellari Divisional Office (Karnataka Circle) (14) Thiruvananthapuram Circle Office (Kerala Circle) (15) Mumbai GPO (16) Nagpur GPO (17) DAP Nagpur (18) Pune HPO (19) Panaji HPO (Maharashtra Circle) (20) Berhampur HPO (Orissa Circle) (21) Amritsar HPO (Punjab Circle) (22) Nagapattinam HO (23) Chennai GPO (24) Udhagamandalam PO (Tamil Nadu Circle) (25) Lucknow Circle Office (26) Lucknow GPO (27) Agra HO (28) Varanasi HO (29) Varanasi City PO (U.P. Circle) (30) RLO Kolkata (31) Kolkata GPO (32) Cooch Behar HPO (33) Darjeeling HPO (34) Diamond Harbour PO (35) Mud Point PO (36) Baroipur HPO (37) Alipur HPO (W.B. Circle).

34. It was further stated that since it is the policy of the Department to preserve the invaluable assets of the Department, special efforts are made to preserve these 37 heritage buildings and funds under the Plan sub head "*Preservation of heritage buildings*" are allotted to the concerned Circles for its preservation/maintenance.

35. Asked if there were any general impediments faced in the proper maintenance and upkeep of these buildings, the Department stated that no impediments are being felt. However, there may be lack of expertise for which we have to go to outside agencies.

36. Asked further about the level and periodicity of interactions between the Department and Ministry of Culture, etc. in regard to these heritage buildings particularly for showcasing their heritage value, the Department informed the Committee that guidelines for declaring buildings as heritage have been issued by INTACH and based on such guidelines the Department have declared 37 buildings as heritage. 'No further interaction is required in our case,' the Department added.

VIII. Vacant Space in Departmental Buildings

37. From the information submitted to the Committee it was seen that as many as 99 Departmental buildings had space lying idle for varying number of years. As per the information initially furnished to the Committee, in 10 cases in respect of U.P. Circle space had been lying vacant since period between 1854 and 1896. In Hamirpur, space had been lying vacant since 1854. After this was pointed out during evidence, the DoP furnished a corrected statement, which is shown in *Appendix-III*.

38. DoP in their post evidence note also added that, '...the information furnished earlier was reviewed and it was found that due to misconstruing of the term vacant space as vacant land by U.P. Circle, the picture got distorted.....'

39. Asked about the steps being taken to utilize this vacant space the Department stated that they have plans to utilize the surplus space for various business and operational requirements and Heads of Circles have been given authority to even rent out the surplus space.

IX. Improvement in General Ambience

40. In reply to a query of the Committee regarding what was being done by the Department to improve the ambience and aesthetics of the post-offices in general, the Department informed the Committee that to enable provisions for techno-savvy, customer friendly environment and to attract a wider clientele to visit the post office in this era of competition and for developing a corporate look for the post offices externally, a decision was taken to evolve a design for the post office buildings to make the brand image of India Post visible and identifiable. In order to evolve essential and desirable features for the façade of buildings, School of Planning & Architecture (SPA), Delhi was engaged as a consultant. The consultant classified the post office buildings in three broad groups based on site, size/scale, frontage/ location and departmental building or rented. Accordingly, new look "Brand Image" post offices have been launched and the Department have proposed to introduce the new look post offices through essential modifications in existing buildings as a part of maintenance activity with the minimum funds in due course. As regards new buildings the Department informed that the School of Planning & Architecture (SPA), Delhi recommended incorporation of elements to enhance the height, increased height of ground floor to create an impressive entrance and ambience, integration of outside and inside spaces to enhance image of large owned sites, multiple use of public places and advance

planning and phasing of projects for a holistic look. The School provided designs for run across signage, canopies for entrance and also modules for exhibiting services being provided by the post offices. The recommendations of SPA are proposed to be taken cognizance of when designing the buildings so that the brand image of India Post emerges as unique and distinctly identifiable within a short span of time and to introduce essential modifications in existing buildings as a part of maintenance activity with the minimum funds in due course.

41. Asked as to how the Department intended to fund the Scheme it was stated that it would be done from the proposed new sub-head "Improving Environment and Ergonomics".

42. Clarifying further in this regard the then Secretary, Department of Posts stated during the oral presentation before the Committee:—

"...We have engaged School of Planning and Architecture, Delhi as consultant to give us a brand image for the exteriors of the post office."

43. She further added:—

"...in our Plan funds, we have a certain allocations for modernization of Post Offices and according to this we distribute this fund to all the Circles. In all the Circles, a definite number of post offices are modernized and face lift is given to them."

44. When asked further during the oral evidence of the Department that rather than focusing on exterior only would it not be better to plan holistically for improvement of both exterior and interiors, the Secretary of the Department admitted:—

"That was a very valuable suggestion and I welcome it".

45. Queried further as to whether the National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad would be the appropriate body in this context, the Secretary said:—

"NID is a premier institute for designing and we would certainly explore the possibility of getting its consultancy on this".

46. The Committee enquired about constraints, if any, in making available more number of staff quarters to the employees of the Department. The Department of Posts in a note stated:—

".....the staff satisfaction level in respect of staff quarters in the Department is only about 8% because of the falling demand for staff quarters due to attractive HRA made available to the staff by the 5th Pay Commission."

47. The Committee enquired whether the customer friendly measures aimed at providing modern facilities and amenities to the users include any provisions for the disabled and has any plan with specific time frame been drawn for the purpose. The Department of Posts in the post evidence reply stated that instructions have been issued to all Heads of Circles from time to time to provide ramps and low height counters etc. for physically challenged persons. It was also reported that though there is no specific time frame prescribed, but it has been clarified in the instructions that all new buildings will ensure the requirement prescribed under the Disability Act.

X. Working of Postal Civil Wing

48. The Committee found that one of the main reasons for the delays in execution of the projects in the Department of Posts was the unduly long time taken in completion of pre-construction formalities. When asked about the reasons behind such delays the Department informed the Committee that this was mainly due to shortage of manpower in Civil Wing particularly in the Architectural Wing.

49. It was further added by the Secretary of the Department during the oral presentation before the Committee:—

“As regards construction of building projects and less amount being spent, it is a fact. We are always short of target. This is mainly because the Plan for the building is prepared in the beginning of the year and the initial formalities take a lot of time. Sometimes, the municipal clearance has not come or the Plan is not prepared. The Architect is not available. So these sorts of problems are there and then calling the tenders by the Civil Wing takes a lot of time.”

50. The Committee asked about the sanctioned and actual strength of engineers and architects in the Department and also enquired about the steps being effected to fill up the vacant posts at the earliest. The Department of Posts in written replies, stated that at present actual sanctioned strength including all posts stands at 777 employees and total vacancies pertaining to these posts stand at 478, clearly indicating that there are only 299 employees as against a requirement of 777. Giving out reasons for the presence of alarming number of vacancies the Secretary, the Department of Posts informed the Committee that according to the Government of India policy, against all vacancies in one year, only one third are supposed to be recruited and rest 2/3 posts are to be abolished.

51. The Department of Posts further added that no reorganization of Postal Civil Wing can be taken up because finalization of absorption in BSNL, MTNL of various grades, such as Group 'A' and 'B' is still not completed. However, a proposal to get the work—study done with regard to requirement of engineers/architects by the staff inspection unit of the Ministry of Finance is under consideration by the Department.

52. Dwelling further on this aspect the Secretary of the Department stated during the oral presentation before the Committee:—

“.....earlier it was Post & Telegraph Civil Wing and now we have a Postal Civil Wing as there has been bifurcation of the Government and the Public Sector Undertaking. For example some engineers have opted for BSNL and MTNL and some have opted for the Government. Therefore, we are facing a lot of shortage of engineers and architects in this transition phase.”

53. Elaborating further the representative of the Department stated:—

“Actually, the issue is not between post and telecom. The issue is, when BSNL was formed as a company, as per the orders of the Government, all the employees of the Department of Telecommunications – in fact the Civil Wing is still controlled by the Department of Telecommunications – were required to give an option whether they want to continue in the Government or they want to join the public sector undertaking. It so happened that finally when people gave options, maximum number of employees opted to go to BSNL rather than stay with the Government. So, the Government is now left with some portion of the Department of Telecommunications and a large Department of Posts. Since those employees have exercised that option, they have been absorbed in BSNL. So, we are left with vacant posts.”

54. Asked as to what was being done to salvage the situation the representative of the Department stated:—

“...we are trying to set up our own postal civil wing. It will take a little time because this is the first time we are getting into this really. So, far, the Department of Telecommunications has been managing this. I have no doubt it may take a year or two, but I think, we will build up the civil wing.”

55. Subsequently, the Committee were also informed by the Department that an agreement has been reached with the BSNL (Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited) for preparation of drawings, supervision, etc. by architects available in BSNL so that the hurdles of non-availability of drawings, obtaining clearance of local authorities, etc. are overcome. Moreover, the agreement with the BSNL for preparation of drawings etc. by BSNL architects will also help in early municipal clearances, etc. In addition, efforts are also being made to fill up the vacant posts of Civil Wing.

56. As for filling up the vacant posts, efforts have been made to fill up the vacant posts in the grades of Executive Engineer and Senior Architect on charge holding basis. Besides, the vacancy position of Group 'A' and 'B' posts has been intimated to the Department of Telecom *vide* letter dated 31-03-2007 for filling up the vacant posts. The examination for recruitment of 74 Junior Engineer (Civil) and 8 Junior Engineer (Electrical) was conducted by the Department in 2005. 33 JEs (Civil) and 5 JEs (Electrical) have reported for duty and process of recruitment of 41 JEs (Civil) & 3 JE (Electrical) is in progress due to non-receipt of their police verification. The Screening Committee in the year 2006 approved 34 JEs (Civil) & 8 posts of JEs (Electrical) for vacancies occurred in the year 2005. The requisition for candidates has been placed with Staff Selection Commission in March 2007 and candidates are expected by 2008. The examination for promotion to the grade of JE (Civil/Electrical) against the promotion quota is being conducted by the Department on 21 and 22 July 2007.

XI. Commercial Evaluation of Vacant Land

57. The Committee desired to know as to whether the Department had made any assessment about the asset potential of these vacant plots and the action that had been initiated to realize the same. In response, the representative of the Department stated:—

“Certainly, we are sitting on a potentially very valuable asset and we are aware of the need to make it produce results for us. We are in agreement with Chairman that it is high time that this potential be exploited and made available not only for use for our requirements, but even for other people’s use. So, I, fully endorse the view that it is time that we realize these things to some good use rather than have all these assets locked up.”

58. Asked further as to whether the Department were aware of the value of these vacant plots, the Secretary of the Department informed the Committee during the oral evidence that:—

“Sir, as you know bureaucrats are averse to guesstimate.”

59. He further added:—

“...my own feeling is that a large proportion of these plots are small, small plots in small villages and small towns and they do not have that much value.”

XII. Performance during the Xth Plan

60. The Committee enquired about the physical performance of DoP regarding construction of Post Offices/Mail Offices, Administrative Offices and Staff Quarters etc., during the Xth Five Year Plan (2002-2007). The information furnished by DoP is shown in the following Tables, activity-wise:—

Activity I : Construction of Post Offices/Mail Offices

Year	Target (New + Spill Over)	Achievement	
		New	Spill Over
2002-03	45	0	27
2003-04	25	4	14
2004-05	16	22	7
2005-06	20	17	0
2006-07	34	15	0
Total	140	58	48

Shortfall : (140-106)=34

Activity II : Construction of Administrative Offices

Year	Target (New + Spill Over)	Achievement	
		New	Spill Over
2002-03	9	0	5
2003-04	7	0	4
2004-05	3	3	1
2005-06	5	6	0
2006-07	9	2	0
Total	33	11	10

Shortfall : (33-21) = 12

Activity III : Construction of Staff Quarters

Year		Target (New + Spill Over)	Achievement	
			New	Spill Over
2002-03	No. of Projects	21	0	14
	No . of Qtrs.	-	0	90
2003-04	No. of Projects	9	2	10
	No . of Qtrs.	-	2	65
2004-05	No. of Projects	10	0	05
	No. of Qtrs.	-	0	93
2005-06	No. of Projects	13	4	0
	No . of Qtrs.	-	17	0
2006-07	No. of Projects	3	6	0
	No . of Qtrs.	-	18	0
	No. of Projects	56	12	29
	No . of Qtrs.	-	37	248

Shortfall : (56-41) = 15 projects

61. When asked about the reasons for the shortfalls, the following information was submitted by the Department:—

2002-03:

There was a shortfall in achieving the targets due to non-receipt of CCEA approval for the Tenth Five Year Plan during the financial year and the amount spent was for the spill over/ongoing projects and committed liabilities.

2003-04 :

The shortfall is due to late receipt of CCEA approval. In case of construction of staff quarters, some new projects could not be started due to non-receipt of approval of drawings from the local authority.

2004-05 :

In case of construction of staff quarters, some new projects could not be started due to non-receipt of approval of drawings from the local authority.

2005-06 :

In case of construction of Post Offices/Mail Offices, some new projects could not be started due to non-receipt of approval of drawings from the local authority.

2006-07:

In case of construction of Post Offices/Mail Offices and Administrative Offices, some new projects could not be started due to non-receipt of approval of drawings from the local authority.

XIII. Approach to the XIth Plan

62. The Committee enquired about the details of the approach paper, if finalized, to the Eleventh Five Year Plan on Real Estate Management. In reply, Department's proposals for XIth Five Year Plan have been projected as under:—

- (i) To construct buildings for remaining Regional Offices.
- (ii) To construct buildings for remaining Head Post Offices cum Divisional Offices.
- (iii) To construct buildings for Mukhya Dak Ghar (MDG) and Sub Post Offices with staff strength more than 15 starting from higher selection grade downwards.
- (iv) To reconstruct buildings and staff quarters which have out lived their life.
- (v) Preservation of Heritage Buildings owned by the Department.
- (vi) The Department has 500 plots of land on which construction will not be required to be done for departmental purposes for next 20 years. Hence efforts will be to exploit these commercially.
- (vii) Classification of vacant plots of land into high commercial areas and non-commercial areas has been done and accordingly construction would follow which will include:—
 - a. To construct 38 Head Post Offices in non-commercial locations with Government funds where vacant plots are already available.
 - b. To construct 23 Head Post Offices with Government funds in areas where no vacant plots are available and this also require purchase of plots.

- c. To construct 9 Head Post Offices in highly commercial locations with private partnership.
- d. 2 Regional Offices will be constructed which will house Head Post Offices too.
- e. 150 Sub Post Offices with staff strength more than 15 will be constructed with Plan Funds. As an exception, there is a plan to construct a few Sub Post Offices with staff strength less than 15 in difficult areas like North East, Ladakh (J&K) and Lakshadweep (Kerala) Region.
- f. 100 Sub Post Offices will be constructed with private partnership.
- g. Plots for 38 Head Offices are available, rest will have to be procured or constructed buildings will be procured with the help of Government funds.
- h. 55 Post Offices buildings will be re-constructed
- i. 120 new staff quarters will be constructed to meet the residential requirements of the employees.

63. Asked further as to whether apart from the usual projections for the Five Year Plan had the Department taken any other initiatives in the direction of futuristic management of its estates, the then Secretary of the Department stated during the presentation before the Committee that:—

“We appointed a consultant and gave them about three to four plots in different areas, both in smaller as well as bigger cities. We have asked them whether this venture will be worthwhile.”

64. Asked to clarify about the nature of the venture, she stated:—

“.....for development of plots in partnership with private people.”

65. Asked further as to what the Department intended to achieve with such ventures, the witness stated:—

“We will also get buildings for the post offices; we can let it out on rent or use them for commercial exploitation.”

XIV. Infrastructure and Growth of Postal Network

66. The growth of postal network is closely linked to the infrastructural provisions including buildings. In this context, the

Committee have been informed by the Department of Posts that since independence the number of Post Offices in India has increased seven fold and stands at 1,55,333 Post Offices (as on 31-03-2006), including 1,39,074 Post Offices in rural areas and 16,259 Post Offices in urban areas. Elaborating further the Secretary, Department of Posts informed the Committee:—

“Postal facilities are provided through a network of Circles, Regional Offices, Postal and RMS Divisions, and Stores and Stamps depots. Training for the Manpower is organized through the Postal Staff College, six Postal Training Centres and also through work place Computerized Training Centre. Infrastructure for this is provided in rented as well as Departmental buildings, except for the Extra Departmental or Gramin Dak Sewak Post Offices for which the accommodation is provided by the Branch Post Master.”

67. A Post Office in India serves an average population of 6623 and an area of 21.16 sq. kms. which compares favorably with countries like China and USA. When asked about the relevant figures in this regard obtaining in these two countries the Department informed that the average population served per post office in China and USA is 11191.22 and 7090.33 respectively, with the average area served per post office being 85.53 sq. kms. and 245.62 sq. kms. respectively.

68. As regards opening of new Post Offices the Committee have been informed that this is done on the basis of the certain norms of distance, income, population etc. Queried further the Department of Posts stated that norms are liberal and allow for subsidy to the extent of $66 \frac{2}{3} \%$ in normal rural areas and 85% in hilly, tribal, desert and inaccessible areas. However, there is a constant demand for opening of more Post Offices in the areas where a post office is not available in the vicinity, particularly in newly developing areas.

69. In this context the Committee enquired about the number of proposals received for opening of new Post Offices in different parts of the country during last three years and the action taken by the Department in response. The Department of Posts stated that during the financial years 2003-04, 2004-05 and 2005-06, 1455 proposals were received for opening of new Post Offices throughout the country. Year wise, the breakup being:—

2003-04	—	592
2004-05	—	502
2005-06	—	361

70. Out of the total 1455 proposals received, 248 were found justified and accordingly 248 new Post Offices have been opened to cater to the postal facility of the people of the concerned places. 1000 proposals on examination were found unjustified on the basis of prescribed norms while 207 proposals are still under examination. It was further stated that the Tenth Five Year Plan had approved Plan support for opening of new Post Offices only for the first two years of the plan period, *viz.* 2002-03 and 2003-04. During the last two years Plan support was received for opening of ten new Departmental Sub Post Offices in the year 2006-07 alone and all the 10 Departmental Sub Post Offices were opened in different circles.

71. The Department of Posts further stated that due to non-availability/meagre resources for opening of new Post Offices under the year 2003-04, action is being taken for rationalization of the network. A decision was taken in 2003 to relocate/merge the single/double handed Post Offices located in urban areas which were not justified as per norms, to areas where Post Offices are justified as per norms or to consolidate them with neighboring offices. A similar decision was taken in 2005 for rationalization of the Extra Departmental Post Offices network in normal rural areas without affecting access to the facilities. Besides this, the problem of increased access to postal network is addressed by relocation of Post Offices and opening of franchisee outlets.

72. During the course of a presentation by the Department before the Committee on 26 December, 2006 when the Committee desired to know as to whether any survey about the number of Post Offices required had been done the Secretary, Department of Posts stated:—

“Till now we have not conducted a survey because we are not able to open new Post Offices”.

73. Asked further about the desirability of such a survey, the witness admitted:—

“We will get the survey done.”

74. About six months later when the Committee wanted to know about the follow up action in the matter, the representative of Department of Posts stated that the need for postal facility is continually assessed locally by the Field Units of the Department. Moreover, opening and relocation of Post Offices is an ongoing exercise, which is carried out by the postal circles. However, in the post evidence replies it was assured that a survey shall be conducted as desired by the Committee.

XV. Need for Appointment of a Nodal Authority

75. The Committee desired to know about the Nodal Authority mandated with management and oversight of lands/estates/buildings in the Department of Posts and the specific responsibilities entrusted to it. It was also enquired as to what had been the feedback/proposals suggestions by this Authority regarding judicious use of lands/estates/buildings particularly those lying unutilized or are under utilized. In response, the Department in a note informed that, 'there is no separate Nodal Authority for the purpose in the Department. This is one of the normal functions of the administrative authorities at various levels. At every management level, all the authorities have a role to play. This is one of the normal management functions.'

XVI. Need for increase in Budgetary Support

76. From the information furnished to the Committee about vacant plots it was noticed that a large number of the vacant plots fall in the category of plots lying vacant for more than 25 years and more than 10 years. When asked to clarify in this regard, the Secretary, Department of Posts said:—

“ ...the construction of buildings on vacant plots of lands depends on availability of adequate resources and allocation of plan funds by the Planning Commission.”

77. The Department further informed that during the preceding Five Year Plans the allotment of funds for Real Estate Management has not been adequate so as to take up a large number of building projects on the vacant plots available with the Department. During the Eighth Five Year Plan against a demand of Rs. 425 crore, an amount of only Rs. 121.35 crore (deficit – Rs. 303.65 crore) was allotted by the Planning Commission. In the Ninth Plan, against a demand of Rs. 524.25 crore, Rs. 119.62 crore were allotted. In the Tenth Plan, against a demand of Rs. 745 crore, funds to the tune of Rs. 98.54 crore have been allotted. Therefore, construction on vacant plots is taken in phased manner depending upon priority and availability of funds.

XVII. Absence of System for Data Generation

78. During examination, DoP furnished different sets of data in respect of same aspects, which have been pointed out in earlier sections. This included the annual rent paid for hiring buildings, the number of post offices functioning through departmental and rented building, the period(s) since space was lying vacant in various parts of the country,

the number of Head Post Offices/Sub-Post Offices operating in the country, etc..

XVIII. Sample Survey of Commercial Development of DoP Plots

79. From the written information made available to the Committee, it transpired that a Market Survey was got conducted by the Department as per the advice of Planning Commission. This was given in regard to the note on setting up of a Special Purposes Vehicle sent to the Planning Commission for their in principle approval.

80. The Consultant (M/s Trammell Crow Meghraj Property Consultants Pvt. Ltd.) conducted a Market Survey on commercial development of land belonging to Department of Posts at 4 sites, one each in Mumbai (Maharashtra), Chikamangalur (Karnataka), Chennai (Tamil Nadu) and Ahmedabad (Gujarat). The Consultant has recommended that sites in Mumbai and Chennai should be developed as soon as possible and site in Ahmedabad should be developed simultaneously or after the Calico Mill (adjoining to the Departmental plot) redevelopment. The Consultant has, however, stated that site in Chikamangalur should not be developed until local real estate market matures. In short, the Market Survey has envisaged potential of commercial development at three of the four plots. However, the plots at Mumbai and Chennai are presently economically viable. The Consultant has also indicated that a number of developers have informally expressed interest in developing land in Mumbai and Chennai.

81. As a logical corollary to this Market Survey the Secretary of the Department informed the Committee:—

“We are now moving towards commercial exploitation of vacant plots in consultation with the Ministry of Finance and Department of Urban Development. In order to do so, we are proposing a Special Purpose Vehicle called Postal Land Development Authority for which the process has begun.....”

XIX. Setting up of Special Purpose Vehicle

82. The Special Purpose Vehicle proposal has been mooted by the Department based on the directive of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) to work out a plan for commercial exploitation of vacant plots of the Department.

83. Elaborating on the Special Purpose Vehicle, the Department of Posts said in their reply that it would attend exclusively to the development and management of Postal estates across the country. The main objectives of this Special Purpose Vehicle would be:—

- (i) To formulate plans, process and execute schemes for optimal utilization of postal land;
- (ii) To develop postal land to the maximum FSI with public-private partnership;
- (iii) To generate non-tariff revenue for the Department of Posts from Postal estates;
- (iv) To develop and provide consultancy, construction or management services and to undertake operations in India and abroad in relation to development of postal land and property;
- (v) To carry out any work and function relating to postal land as may be entrusted to it by the Department of Posts by order in writing.

84. About the present status of the proposal, the Committee were informed that a draft Note for the Cabinet regarding setting up of the Special Purpose Vehicle has been prepared and after being approved by the Minister of Communications and Information Technology, it has been circulated to the Nodal Ministries/Departments and Planning Commission with the request to send their views/comments on the proposal at the earliest. On receipt of their responses, the Note would be submitted for consideration of the Cabinet.

85. The Committee wanted to know about the contours and structure of the proposed Special Purpose Vehicle and how Postal Land Development Authority plans to fund itself. The Secretary, Department of Posts, during the evidence said:—

“There are several models available-it can be private participation, it can be partnership with another public sector and it is for the Special Purpose Vehicle itself to decide as it will have enough functional autonomy. It will function on commercial lines and on a business pattern and it will not only be able to raise funds from the market but also can enter into partnerships.”

86. Queried further the witness added:—

“As I mentioned, it will be a hundred per cent Government owned company.”

87. It was also added that when this Special Purpose Vehicle comes into being it will be a professional business body and will go ahead with the task of exploiting not only the postal vacant plots but also the property for commercial purposes.

88. The Department also informed that as the proposal for Special Purpose Vehicle is still at an initial stage, it is not possible to state clearly as to what extent the Special Purpose Vehicle would reduce or eliminate the dependence of the Department on Government funding for construction of departmental buildings. However, the Company is proposed to take independent decisions to develop the lands or buildings and to garner funds for the same. Thus, it is likely that with the coming into being of the proposed Company, need for budgetary support for construction activities is likely to reduce gradually and in long run, dependency on plan funds for the purpose might reduce.

XX. Need for Streamlining Real Estate Management in DoP

89. After identifying several deficiencies in the real estate management, the Committee pointed out that the DoP had not been careful of their assets. Over a period of time, the Department had not made optimum utilization of their assets and had allowed them to stagnate. Responding to this, the then Secretary, DoP stated:—

“That is true, I admit that. We are trying to make efforts.”

90. Considering the various prevailing aspects in the management of real estate in DoP and also keeping in view the fact that setting up of the proposed Land Development Authority/Special Purpose Vehicle may take some time, the Committee asked whether the Government proposed to take action in the short run for not only improving the system but also for rendering better quality of Universal Service Obligation by DoP. In a note furnished after evidence, DoP stated that for improving the system in the short run the following steps are proposed to be taken, ‘while SPV proposals are already under circulation for inter-ministerial consultation, the Draft Eleventh Plan proposals envisage construction of buildings for 61 Head Post Offices, which are in rented buildings. Further, construction of 150 Sub Post Offices having a staff strength of more than fifteen, 2 administrative offices and 120 staff quarter are proposed to be constructed. Besides 55 departmental buildings are to be reconstructed. Funds of Rs. 47.32 crores under Non-Plan (Building Maintenance) have been allotted to the Circles for the year 2007-08 for maintenance of buildings to bring about improvement. Plan proposals also envisage opening of 5500 new post offices and further franchisee outlets are also proposed for providing USO-related basic services.’

PART II

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

I. Introductory

1. The Indian Postal System is expected to fulfil the Universal Service Obligation in terms of providing basic postal services throughout the country, irrespective of terrain, at an affordable price. For meeting this requirement, the Department of Posts (DoP) have set up a network of 1,55,333 Post Offices as on 31st March, 2006. The Post Offices comprise of Head Post Offices, Sub Post Offices and Extra Departmental Post Offices. The operational arm of DoP dealing with the administrative aspects is divided into Postal Circles, Regional Offices, Postal Divisions, Railway Mail Service Divisions, Postal Stores Depots, Central Stamp Depots, Postal Training Centres and Postal Staff College. Accommodation for running an Extra Departmental Post Office is provided by the Extra Departmental Postmaster known as Gramin Dak Sevak. Accommodation for other categories of Post Offices and the Administrative Offices is provided by DoP. The Department have their own as well as rented buildings housing their various offices. Besides, they have staff quarters. The Department also have vacant plots of land all over the country on which construction of departmental buildings is undertaken with the assistance from Plan funds. These plots were acquired/purchased/gifted for construction of postal buildings over a period of time. Thus, land and buildings constitute an important asset for DoP, which requires prudent management. The Committee's examination has, however, revealed several disquieting aspects in the real estate management in DoP which are dealt with in the succeeding paragraphs.

II. Non-Utilisation of Vacant Plots

2. The Committee note that out of a total of 25,501 Sub-Post Offices and Head Post Offices in the country, as many as 21175 are operated from rented buildings. The Department stated that they pay an annual rent over Rs. 45 crore on this account. As against this, 1871 plots, measuring about 38224902 sq. ft. are lying vacant in various parts of the country. Several plots have been lying vacant for more than 50 years. Significantly, 403 plots are lying vacant in prime locations having high commercial value. Further, a large

number of Post Offices and Administrative Offices are functioning in rented buildings in several places across the country where plots are lying vacant. All these facts clearly show the level of unsatisfactory management of real estate, which persisted in the Department of Posts over the years. The Committee cannot but express their concern over the matter. The Department of Posts have sought to explain that construction of building activities on vacant plots is taken up in a phased manner and is subject to availability of funds. According to them, during the preceding five-year plans, the allotment of funds for real estate management has not been adequate so as to take up a large number of building projects on the vacant plots available with the Department. Indeed, scarcity of funds is a contributory factor. But, an imaginative use of the land asset in a planned manner over the years would have generated resources required for various programmes aimed at improving the overall status of the Department in general and development of vacant land in particular. Unfortunately, such an approach was conspicuously absent in the Departmental strategy. Consequently, these properties of DoP have been rendered into non-performing assets. The Committee recommend that atleast now, a concrete and a time-bound plan of action should be drawn for a prudent and effective use of vacant land owned by DoP. The Committee particularly desire that an immediate Action Plan should be drawn for using the vacant plots in prime locations with high commercial value.

III. Encroachment of Vacant Land

3. One of the possible fallouts of occupation/retention of vacant land for inordinate period(s) is the threat of encroachment by unscrupulous elements. Not surprisingly, the priceless asset of the Department of Posts was also not an exception. The Committee note with concern that out of 1871 vacant plots, 187 plots have been encroached upon. Pertinently, out of these, 118 plots are under illegal occupation for more than ten years. Evidently, this indicates the scant attention hitherto being paid by DoP authorities to the task of protecting their assets.

4. What has surprised the Committee is the casual attitude shown by DoP in the matter in utter disregard of the gravity of the issue. The Department in their initial response merely stated that the concerned circles have been instructed from time to time to review all encroachment cases personally and to take effective steps to free the land from encroachment. Further, the Secretary, DoP during

evidence held on 26th June, 2007 attempted to minimize the seriousness of the matter by stating that “out of 1800 plots, only 187 are encroached, which is, of course, not a very high percentage of the total number of plots.” However, after the Committee were seized of the matter, the Secretary (Posts) has on 28th June, 2007 written demi-officially to the Chief Secretaries of the States concerned for help in the removal of encroachments. The DoP have also assured the Committee that all legal means are being explored to protect the vacant plots. While the Committee are dismayed over the continuous inaction of the Department, they hope that the DoP will now wake up from slumber and take effective steps to protect their valuable estates. The Committee also desire that the Department should formulate a time-bound plan for construction of boundary walls/fencing with a view to checking such encroachments. There is also an imperative need for evolving an appropriate co-ordination mechanism at State level by associating state police and civil authorities for meeting the menace effectively.

IV. Disputes/Court Cases

5. The Committee’s examination further revealed that increase in the incidence of cases of encroachment has, in turn, resulted in outgo of substantial amounts from the exchequer on account of litigation. The Committee note that an amount of over Rs. 2.26 crore was spent by DoP during the last five years against encroachment of land and other matters. From the details furnished to the Committee, it is seen that out of the 360 disputes/court cases, five States, *viz*, Tamil Nadu (55), Rajasthan (50), Gujarat (44), Maharashtra (41) and Kerala (34) accounted the maximum. The Committee are also surprised to note that there is no mechanism at DoP level to monitor such cases. This situation calls for an immediate remedy. The Committee, therefore, desire that these cases should be looked into thoroughly at DoP level through a permanent standing mechanism and effective steps be taken to protect the valuable and dear assets of the Department. The Committee would like to be apprised of the precise action taken in the matter.

V. Disposal of Unwanted Plots

6. The Committee note that one area where the DoP have not been able to crystallize their policy is related to the approach towards utilization/disposal of unwanted land. During the presentation before the Committee on 26th December, 2006 the then, Secretary of the Department of Posts had admitted that, “plots in some localities

where the Department did not need the post offices can be disposed of." Again, during the oral evidence of the Department on 26th June, 2007, the Secretary of the Department when confronted with the futility of the situation where the Department were neither able to construct buildings for years together and were unable to safeguard these plots, had maintained that, "*where there were no prospects of building, the land may be returned to the Government.*" However, when the Committee asked for written clarifications in the matter subsequently, the Department informed in writing that they had no plan for disposal of vacant plots. It is but obvious to the Committee that the Department seem to be in a highly indecisive state on this very crucial matter. It is, therefore, high time that the Government came up with a well thought of and clear-cut policy with regard to the utilization or otherwise of the plots presently lying vacant with the Department of Posts.

VI. Renovation/Reconstruction of Dilapidated Buildings

7. From the information made available the Committee note that as many as 217 postal buildings including staff quarters in the country are either in a dilapidated or unusable condition. Curiously enough, out of this, 100 buildings were in Gujarat alone. In the opinion of the Committee, this does not augur well for a public utility whose services depend on the reach and spread of its offices. It is all the more so in the case of Department of Posts who are already constrained in their activities due to the acute paucity of departmental buildings. The Committee were informed that the Department have made a projection of Rs. 55 crore for reconstruction of their 55 departmental buildings during the Eleventh Five Year Plan. The Committee expect the Government to make adequate provisions in this regard so that this much needed activity of the Department does not suffer due to resource crunch.

VII. Preservation of Heritage Buildings

8. The Committee note that the Department of Posts are operating 37 of their offices from "Heritage Buildings". These buildings, which were constructed before 1939 and survive in anything like their original condition and have significance in Indian history, architecture and archaeology have been identified as "Heritage Buildings" according to the guidelines given by the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH). The Committee desire that the Department should continue their good work in preserving these invaluable assets of the nation. The Committee, however, regret to

note that presently there is hardly any interaction between DoP and the Ministry of Culture, etc. in regard to these heritage buildings particularly for showcasing them as heritage sites. The Department's reply that '*no further interaction is required in our case*' is indicative of their mindset on the subject, which urgently requires a transformation. The Committee, therefore, desire that the DoP should explore the tourism potential of these heritage buildings in consultation with the Ministry of Culture, INTACH, etc., so that the Department of Posts reap the benefits therefrom.

VIII. Vacant Space in Departmental Buildings

9. Apart from vacant land in sizeable area lying idle in possession of the Department for decades and its concomitant problems, another deficiency observed by the Committee in DoP's real estate management concerns non-utilization of available space in the existing departmental buildings. The Committee's examination revealed that in 99 existing departmental buildings across the country substantial vacant space has been lying idle. In certain cases, they have been lying idle for several decades. It is strange and yet true that as per the information initially made available to the Committee, vacant space has been lying idle in Hamirpur, Uttar Pradesh since 1854! When confronted with this startling disclosure, the DoP, later, tried to wriggle out of the issue by stating that the picture got distorted due to misconstruing the term "vacant space" as "vacant land" by U.P. Circle. In the Committees' opinion neither way, the Department's position get glorified. On the contrary, this further reinforces the Committees apprehension about the criminal negligence of DoP in their asset management, which is deplorable, to say the least. The Department have now informed the Committee that they have plans to utilize the surplus space for various business and operational requirements, and Heads of Circles have been given authority to even rent out the surplus space. As location-wise, the post offices are generally situated on prime properties, the Committee desire that the Department should take initiatives well above Heads of Circle levels so that the vacant space in departmental buildings is judiciously and optimally put to use without any further delay. The Committee would like to be apprised of the steps taken and achievements of the Department in this regard at the earliest.

IX. Improvement in General Ambience

10. It is common knowledge that aesthetics of the buildings and the general ambience play an important role in the marketing of

products. The Committee are happy to note that in recognition of this, the DoP have engaged the School of Planning and Architecture, Delhi for creation of new look "Brand Image" Post Offices. In the Committees' opinion, the process of consultation in this exercise should be wider. The Committee suggest that the DoP should also consult other reputed National Institutions in the field so that attractive aesthetic concepts with mass appeal are successfully developed in the process. While going for this image makeover, the Committee would like the Department to ensure that the historicity and glorious legacy of the Postal Department is appropriately reflected and maintained.

11. In this context, the Committee have further been informed that instructions have been issued to all Heads of Circles from time to time to provide ramps and low height counters, etc. for physically challenged persons, though no specific time frame has been prescribed for the purpose. The Committee are anxious that while the new buildings, no doubt, should be designed as per the requirements prescribed under the Disability Law, even in the existing ones, the requirements/instructions should be implemented, subject to feasibility, in a time bound manner so that the physically challenged do not face any problems in utilizing the services of the Post Offices.

X. Strengthening of Postal Civil Wing

12. The Committees' examination further revealed inordinate delays in execution of projects by the Department of Posts. These delays were primarily caused due to the unduly long time taken in completion of civil works procedures. The Department, in turn, attributed this to the acute shortage of engineers and architects with the Department. According to them, this has happened because after the constitution of BSNL and MTNL, a majority of engineers and architects of what was hitherto Post and Telegraph Civil Wing opted for these Public Sector Undertakings. The Government side continued to face a lot of attrition because of the remunerative packages of the PSUs. The Committee note that as a stop-gap arrangement, the Department have reached an agreement with BSNL for technical assistance in civil works. Besides, the Department have also initiated actions to fill up the vacancies of the engineers and architects. The Committee desire that the action to fill up the existing vacancies should be expedited so that Postal Civil Wing becomes functional in right earnest and is able to contribute towards creation of new infrastructure and maintenance of the existing one at the earliest.

XI. Commercial Evaluation of Vacant Land

13. The Committee are dismayed to note that sufficient importance is not being attached to commercial evaluation of Postal land on the plea that it would be required for future developmental work of the Department of Posts. The Committee, however, did point out during evidence the enormous worth of the postal land lying vacant across the country, but the Department of Posts appeared to be blissfully unaware of its market value. Though the Department of Posts have categorized their vacant plots as plots in prime locations and plots under illegal encroachment, the status of rest of the plots have not been specified. The Committee are of the opinion that maintaining a category-wise record of postal land—both under use and vacant, will be useful for its future development. They feel that in the absence of such categorization and commercial evaluation of land, construction plans as well as asset valuation for various purposes would become unrealistic. The Committee, therefore, desire the Department of Posts not only to activate its machinery to categorize and evaluate vacant land and maintain records thereof but also to review and update at fixed periodical intervals. The Committee would like to be apprised of the further action taken in the matter.

XII. Performance during the 10th Plan

14. The Committee regret to note that the Department's performance in the matter of achieving the physical targets laid down for construction of departmental buildings in the Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-07) has not been encouraging at all. As against the stipulated targets of 140, 33, and 56 projects for construction of Post Offices/Mail Offices, Administrative Offices and Staff Quarters, the achievement had been 106, 21 and 41 projects only respectively. Thus, there have been shortfalls everywhere. The DoP attributed the shortfalls to the general administrative reasons. The Committee cannot remain satisfied with this. They, therefore, desire that the reasons for the shortfalls should be carefully analyzed so that necessary corrections could be carried out in the Eleventh Five Year Plan.

XIII. Approach to the 11th Plan

15. As regards approach to the 11th Plan is concerned, the Committee have been informed that the proposals include construction of buildings for remaining Regional Offices, Head Post Offices-cum-Divisional Offices, Mukhya Dak Ghar and Sub Post

Offices with staff strength of more than 15 starting from higher selection grade downwards, commercial exploitation of 500 plots of land on which construction will not be required to be done for departmental purposes for next twenty years, reconstruction of 55 dilapidated/unused departmental buildings, 120 new staff quarters, etc. The Committee fervently hope that considerations like Universal Service Obligation of the Department, need for provision of better quality of service and products in the emerging competitive market environment, proper amenities and working conditions of the staff, etc. will get due attention in the approach.

XIV. Infrastructure and Growth of Postal Network

16. The Committee particularly, while examining the successive Demands for Grants have time and again, commented upon various aspects in relation to the growth of postal network. They, therefore, do not wish to repeat those points here. However, they wish to emphasize that growth is closely linked to the infrastructural provisions. Land and buildings are indeed vital contributory factors. During the course of the examination of the subject the Committee were informed that no survey about the requirement of post offices in the country had been done by the Department till date. The Committee are really surprised as to why the Department never realized the need for such a survey. It could have given them a fair idea of the communication requirements across the length and breadth of the country. The Committee, therefore, desire that a survey may be conducted by DoP and they be apprised of the results at the earliest.

XV. Need for Appointment of a Nodal Authority

17. The Committee observe that one of the main reasons for the sorry state of affairs in the real estate management in DoP is that the Department do not have any nodal authority mandated with the management and oversight of their estates. The Committee find the reply of the Department in this context that *'this is one of the normal functions of the administrative authorities at various levels. At every management level, all the authorities have a role to play. This is one of the normal management functions'* as highly unsatisfactory. Bereft of a nodal authority, there has been no focus or direction in the asset management by the various Circles and functionaries at lower levels in the DOP. As a result, on the one hand, these prime properties have continued to languish and on the other hand the common man has been deprived of more accessible and better

communication facilities. In this process of inaction, the Department have also lost several opportunities of resource generation and consolidation. The Committee, therefore, are of the firm opinion that the Department should take immediate action in the direction of having a nodal authority for management of all the their assets. This nodal authority should be given a clear - cut mandate about its specific responsibilities and duties and it should be made functional without any further loss of time.

XVI. Need for Increase in Budgetary Support

18. The Committee find that one the major factors which had hampered the efforts of DoP for augmentation of departmental buildings was the non-availability of adequate budgetary support. The data pertaining to the funds sought by the Department for construction of buildings from 8th Five Year Plan onwards and the actual releases their against as indicated below are clear pointers towards this fact:—

(Rs. in Crore)		
Plan	Amount Sought	Amount Allocated
8th Plan	425.00	121.35
9th Plan	525.25	119.62
10th Plan	745.00	98.54

Considering the need for a prudent management of the assets particularly for discharging the Universal Service Obligation, the Committee are of the view that the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Finance adopt a more realistic approach towards the whole issue.

XVII. Absence of System for Data Generation

19. The Committee are dissatisfied to note that during examination of the subject different sets of data were furnished to them on the same aspects. This included the number of vacant plots, the annual rent for hiring buildings, the number of post offices functioning through departmental and rental buildings, the period(s) since space was lying vacant in various Circles in the country, and even the number of Head Post Offices and Sub Post Offices in the country. This clearly shows that there is hardly any authentic system

either at the national level or at subsequent levels, which generate, maintain and update such data. The Committee consider this as a highly unsatisfactory position and desire that this should be rectified forthwith.

XVIII. Sample Market Survey of DoP Plots

20. The Committee note that the Department of Posts awarded a market survey on 28 June, 2006 with a view to assessing the possible revenue generating potential of four plots of land under their jurisdiction in Mumbai, Chennai, Chikamangalur and Ahmedabad. The Survey was stated to have been undertaken as per the advice of the Planning Commission. The Committee have been informed that the final report and other deliverables were received from the consultant on 6th March, 2007. The Survey has recommended that the sites in Mumbai and Chennai should be developed as soon as possible, the site in Ahmedabad should be developed simultaneously or after the plot adjoining to it is redeveloped by the owner and the plot in Chikamangalur should be developed when the local real estate market matures. Based on the feedback from this Market Survey, the Department are now stated to have initiated follow-up action. While the Committee welcome the survey as a step in the right direction, they would eagerly await further action taken in the matter.

XIX. Setting up of Special Purpose Vehicle

21. The Committee have been informed that the DoP now propose to set up a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) for the optimum development and management of postal estates. The proposal is to set-up a wholly owned company with limited liability and 100% equity participation by the Government and registered under the Companies Act, 1956. The thrust areas of the proposed SPV would be: (i) to optimize utilization of postal land and properties and to generate non-tariff revenue for DoP from Postal Estates, (ii) to provide functionally useful modern space for post office operations and to improve the general ambience and aesthetics of postal buildings, and (iii) to provide convenience, modern facilities and amenities to the users of India Post. According to DoP, it is likely that with the coming into being of the proposed company, the need for budgetary support for construction activities is likely to reduce gradually. The DoP also assured the Committee that the proposed SPV would not impinge upon the Universal Service Obligation of DoP rather, it would facilitate USO in a better manner. As regards the status of

the proposal, the Committee have been informed that the draft note as approved by the Minister of Communications and Information Technology has been circulated to the nodal Ministries/Departments and Planning Commission for their views/comments. Since the proposal is yet to assume a final shape, the Committee would await the details.

XX. Need for Streamlining Real Estate Management in DoP

22. To sum up, the foregoing paragraphs have identified several deficient areas in the real estate management in the DoP that warrant immediate Governmental attention. The Committee regret to conclude that the DoP had not been careful about their precious assets and had not made optimum utilization of the same over a period of time. While conceding the same in evidence, the representatives of DoP have assured the Committee that with the implementation of the proposed Special Purpose Vehicle, the system will get streamlined. At this stage, the Committee are not inclined to share this optimism. Since the setting up of the proposed Land Development Authority/Special Purpose Vehicle may take some time, the Committee desire that in the light of the recommendations/observations of the Committee in the preceding paragraphs, DoP should take necessary remedial/corrective measures for not only improving the system but also for rendering better quality of Universal Service Obligation. The Committee would like to be apprised of the precise action taken in the matter.

NEW DELHI;
2 August, 2007
11 Sravana, 1929 (Saka)

NIKHIL KUMAR,
Chairman,
Standing Committee on
Information Technology.

APPENDIX I*(Vide Para 9)***STATE-WISE & YEAR-WISE DETAILS OF RENT PAID BY THE
DEPARTMENT IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS**

Sl.No.	Name of State	Year 2002-03	Year 2003-04	Year 2004-05	Year 2005-06	Year 2006-07
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	Andhra Pradesh	25120	27486	28311	38089	39230
2.	Assam	8271037	8434589	8778433	8815453	8980573
3.	Bihar	8050000	9450000	10200000	10900000	11400000
4.	Chhattisgarh	1828277	1848006	1936832	1979098	2142026
5.	Delhi	4949883	6267060	5408617	7618909	6110452
6.	Gujarat	8195522	8535690	8902352	9411667	9282707
7.	Haryana	3736215	3837933	3787764	6580349	3715600
8.	Himachal Pradesh	3105390	3205015	3519204	3879935	4268624
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	3755114	4322660	4437628	4561279	4532169
10.	Jharkhand	2560105	2577024	2605835	2724001	2475075
11.	Karnataka	59791017	61043769	63948177	73613827	65478289
12.	Kerala	3072912	3200952	3334332	3473268	3617988
13.	Maharashtra	25220000	26406000	29043000	28969000	28885000
14.	Goa	731000	731000	731000	731000	731000
15.	Madhya Pradesh	4248586	4333303	4400397	4521412	4533531
16.	Arunachal Pradesh	18953	19750	20605	21957	24969
17.	Tripura	76565	79987	81506	83049	84130
18.	Meghalaya	87205	91525	94320	96189	111897

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19.	Manipur	69046	71367	72556	73764	76740
20.	Nagaland	40369	42378	47338	53681	62600
21.	Mizoram	42257	43670	51664	55386	60086
22.	Orissa	11012559	11529374	11856838	12219359	13177431
23.	Punjab	4887579	5519609	5674985	6181918	5802182
24.	Rajasthan	16106593	16309665	16475170	17015603	16965069
25.	Tamilnadu	54402462	38349568	39400245	40566192	41800315
26.	Uttar Pradesh	31631300	31999189	32122258	31911576	32538924
27.	Uttarakhand	3591772	3814807	4099979	4193151	4254558
28.	West Bengal	55660400	56209400	73979400	57187400	45496400
29.	Sikkim	33600	33600	33600	33600	33600
Total		315200838	308334376	335072346	337510112	316681165

APPENDIX II*(Vide Para 14)***INFORMATION REGARDING VACANT PLOTS**

S.No.	Name of State	Plots lying vacant	Total No. of plots	Total Area (in Sq. ft.)
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Andhra Pradesh	(a) More than 50 years	14	141612
		(b) More than 25 years	83	892929
		(c) More than 10 years	123	2004763
		(d) More than 5 years	2	48936
2.	Assam	(a) More than 50 years	1	24192
		(b) More than 25 years	17	3929628
		(c) More than 10 years	13	593420
		(d) More than 5 years	2	14976
3.	Bihar	(a) More than 50 years	81	867493
		(b) More than 25 years	1	5230
		(c) More than 10 years	4	15854
		(d) More than 5 years	Nil	0
4.	Chhattisgarh	(a) More than 50 years	Nil	Nil
		(b) More than 25 years	5	53156
		(c) More than 10 years	2	16465
		(d) More than 5 years	1	8880
5.	Delhi	(a) More than 50 years	Nil	Nil
		(b) More than 25 years	Nil	Nil
		(c) More than 10 years	16	479853
		(d) More than 5 years	4	31043
6.	Gujarat	(a) More than 50 years	Nil	Nil
		(b) More than 25 years	16	334663
		(c) More than 10 years	94	1276063
		(d) More than 5 years	2	10922

1	2	3	4	5
7.	Haryana	a) More than 50 years	Nil	Nil
		b) More than 25 years	2	17628
		c) More than 10 years	12	79637
		d) More than 5 years	5	99982
8.	Himachal Pradesh	a) More than 50 years	Nil	Nil
		b) More than 25 years	Nil	Nil
		c) More than 10 years	27	110334
		d) More than 5 years	1	2152
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	a) More than 50 years	Nil	Nil
		b) More than 25 years	Nil	Nil
		c) More than 10 years	9	5331274
		d) More than 5 years	Nil	Nil
10.	Jharkhand	a) More than 50 years	Nil	Nil
		b) More than 25 years	65	968445
		c) More than 10 years	Nil	Nil
		d) More than 5 years	Nil	Nil
11.	Karnataka	a) More than 50 years	3	27794
		b) More than 25 years	245	3538566
		c) More than 10 years	108	1696495
		d) More than 5 years	8	68106
12.	Kerala	a) More than 50 years	1	6103
		b) More than 25 years	110	1496705
		c) More than 10 years	32	1144119
		d) More than 5 years	2	156869
13.	Maharashtra	a) More than 50 years	0	0
		b) More than 25 years	52	206269
		c) More than 10 years	31	375159
		d) More than 5 years	0	0
14.	Goa	a) More than 50 years	1	4790
		b) More than 25 years	0	0
		c) More than 10 years	3	84879
		d) More than 5 years	0	0

1	2	3	4	5
15.	Madhya Pradesh	a) More than 50 years	3	12250
		b) More than 25 years	8	67690
		c) More than 10 years	15	163855
		d) More than 5 years	Nil	Nil
16.	Arunachal Pradesh	a) More than 50 years	Nil	Nil
		b) More than 25 years	1	2658
		c) More than 10 years	9	14028
		d) More than 5 years	Nil	Nil
17.	Tripura	a) More than 50 years	Nil	Nil
		b) More than 25 years	Nil	Nil
		c) More than 10 years	1	3920
		d) More than 5 years	1	10890
18.	Meghalaya	a) More than 50 years	Nil	Nil
		b) More than 25 years	Nil	Nil
		c) More than 10 years	3	159435
		d) More than 5 years	Nil	Nil
19.	Manipur	a) More than 50 years	Nil	Nil
		b) More than 25 years	1	18480
		c) More than 10 years	1	22000
		d) More than 5 years	1	11842
20.	Nagaland	a) More than 50 years	Nil	Nil
		b) More than 25 years	2	149980
		c) More than 10 years	3	21635
		d) More than 5 years	2	13850
21.	Mizoram	a) More than 50 years	Nil	Nil
		b) More than 25 years	1	15000
		c) More than 10 years	4	262278
		d) More than 5 years	4	39200
22.	Orissa	a) More than 50 years	2	93740
		b) More than 25 years	6	65794
		c) More than 10 years	31	484900
		d) More than 5 years	2	45705

1	2	3	4	5
23.	Punjab	a) More than 50 years	1	6960
		b) More than 25 years	3	9233
		c) More than 10 years	11	313281
		d) More than 5 years	1	2800
24.	Rajasthan	a) More than 50 years	Nil	0
		b) More than 25 years	98	816336
		c) More than 10 years	100	1544329
		d) More than 5 years	2	31642
25.	Tamil Nadu	a) More than 50 years	1	10019
		b) More than 25 years	54	588082
		c) More than 10 years	92	1690599
		d) More than 5 years	4	290391
26.	Uttar Pradesh	a) More than 50 years	Nil	Nil
		b) More than 25 years	27	235190
		c) More than 10 years	51	1066209
		d) More than 5 years	2	127031
27.	Uttarakhand	a) More than 50 years	2	22643
		b) More than 25 years	10	124977
		c) More than 10 years	8	204188
		d) More than 5 years	Nil	Nil
28.	West Bengal	a) More than 50 years	4	98926
		b) More than 25 years	30	369417
		c) More than 10 years	18	1968873
		d) More than 5 years	35	257036
29.	Sikkim	a) More than 50 years	Nil	Nil
		b) More than 25 years	1	2105
		c) More than 10 years	Nil	Nil
		d) More than 5 years	Nil	Nil

APPENDIX III

(Vide Para 37)

DETAILS OF VACANT SPACE LYING IDLE IN THE DEPARTMENTAL BUILDINGS

S.No.	Name of State	Name of Deptt. Bldg. where vacant space is lying idle	Period from which vacant space lying idle
1	2	3	4
1.	Andhra Pradesh	Medak HO Amalapuram HO	Feb. 86 Nov. 85
2.	Assam	Nil	-
3.	Bihar	Nil	-
4.	Chhattisgarh	Nil	-
5.	Delhi	Timarpur PO Satyawati Nagar New Seema Puri Nand Nagari A Kalyanpuri Trilok Puri Himmatpur New Seelampur Yamuna Vihar Jhilmil Colony Anand Vihar Nirman Vihar Surajmal Vihar Patpatganj Mayur Vihar	1986 1989 1980 1980 1980 1980 1980 1980 1980 2002 1985 1985 1985 2004 1993 1980

1	2	3	4
		Chanakyapuri	2003
		Mehrauli	2004
		Paschim Vihar B	1994
		Nangal Raya	2001
		N.I.E.H.O.	1980
6.	Gujarat	Radhanpur SO	1978
		Meghraj SO	1995
		Jetpur SO	1995
		Jamnagar HO	2000
		Anand HO	1997
7.	Haryana	Nil	-
8.	Himachal Pradesh	Nil	-
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	Anantnag	2004
		Ganderbal	1988
		Baribramha	1991
		Jourian	1982
		Baramula	1986
		Basoli	1982
		Kathua	1981
		Udhampur	1988
		Rajouri	1982
		Kud	1992
10.	Jharkhand	Nil	-
11.	Karnataka	Nargund	1985
		Hukkeri	1995
		C.R. Patna	1993
		Kundapur HO	1981

1	2	3	4
		Tiptur HO	1985
		Chamarajanagra	1987
12.	Kerala	Kadakkavur PO	1979
		Murukkumpuzha PO	1983
		Chavara PO	1983
		Chatannur	1983
		Ezhukone PO	1980
		Kundara PO	1983
		Ochira PO	1974
		Perinad PO	1986
		Paravur PO	1990
		Adichanallur PO	1992
		East Kallada PO	1999
		Punalur HO	1988
		Kunnamangalam PO	1988
		Kannur HO	1972
		Chandranagar PO	1993
		Chittur PO	1989
		Kollengode PO	1987
		Nemmara PO	1971
		Tattamangalam PO	1980
		Vandithavalam PO	1994
		Templegate PO	1983
13.	Maharashtra	Chinchbunder HO	2002
		Dadar HO	2006
		Motilalnagar	2006
		Sion, PO	2006

1	2	3	4
		Akola HO	2005
		Morshi PO	1997
		Anjan Gaon Suji	1997
		Warud	1997
		Khamgaon	2006
14.	Goa	Nil	-
15.	Madhya Pradesh	Amarkantak	1990
		Shahdol	1985
		Sidhi	1987
		Singrouli Colliery	1989
		Waidhan	1989
16.	Arunachal Pradesh	Nil	-
17.	Tripura	Nil	-
18.	Meghalaya	Nil	-
19.	Manipur	Nil	-
20.	Nagaland	Nil	-
21.	Mizoram	Nil	-
22.	Orissa	Chandabli SO	1993
		Kakatpur SO	2000
		Pipli SO	1981
		Saheednagar SO	2002
		Banki SO	1991
		Paradeep MDG	1990
		Udala SO	1991
		Bolgarh SO	1989
		Khandaparagarh SO	1990
		Angul HO	2002

1	2	3	4
		Athamallik SO	2000
		Dhenkanal HO	1990
		Hindol SO	1995
		Kamakhya Nagar SO	1987
		Pallahara SO	1997
		Jeypore (K) HO	1988
		Koraput HO	1984
		Nabarangpur MDG	1972
		Pattangi SO	1988
		Rayagada HO	1990
		Boudharaj SO	1988
23.	Punjab	Nil	-
24.	Rajasthan	Nil	-
25.	Tamil Nadu	Nil	-
26.	Uttar Pradesh	Nil	-
27.	Uttarakhand	Nil	-
28.	West Bengal	Nil	-
29.	Sikkim	Nil	-

ANNEXURE I

MINUTES OF THE SIXTH SITTING OF THE STANDING
COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (2006-2007)

The Committee sat on Wednesday, the 26th December, 2006 from 1500 hours to 1630 hours in Committee Room 'B', Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Shri Nikhil Kumar—*Chairman*

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Abdullakutty
3. Shri Nikhil Kumar Choudhary
4. Shri Sanjay Shamrao Dhotre
5. Shri Bhubaneshwar Prasad Mehta
6. Shri Sohan Potai
7. Shri Lalmani Prasad
8. Shri Narahari Mahato

Rajya Sabha

9. Shri Praveen Rashtrapal
10. Shri N.R. Govindrajar
11. Shri Eknath K. Thakur
12. Shri Shyam Benegal

SECRETARIAT

- | | | |
|----------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| 1. Shri P. Sreedharan | — | <i>Joint Secretary</i> |
| 2. Shri Raj Shekhar Sharma | — | <i>Director</i> |
| 3. Shri A.K. Ahluwalia | — | <i>Assistant Director</i> |

WITNESSES

(Representatives of Department of Posts)

Sl.No.	Name	Designation
1.	Ms. Jyotsna Diesh	Secretary (Posts)
2.	Shri I.M.G. Khan	Member (O&M)
3.	Shri Harinder Singh	Member (P)
4.	Shri D. Kallasa Prasad	Member (I&FS)
5.	Shri S.C. Sarma	Pr. CGM (PLI)
6.	Ms. Anju Das Gupta	Pr. Sr. DDG (PO&I)
7.	Shri S. Samant	CGM (BD&M)

2. At the outset, the Chairman welcomed the Members of the Committee and the representatives of the Department of Posts to the sitting of the Committee. Emphasizing the significance of the Real Estate Management in the present scenario, the Chairman requested the representatives to enlighten the Committee on the subject.

3. Accordingly, the Secretary, Department of Posts briefed the Committee on various aspects of "Real Estate Management in Department of Posts" and highlighted the thrust areas for the development of Postal Estates in the Department. The representatives of the Department responded to various queries of the Members and assured to furnish the written replies in respect of information which was not readily available.

4. The Committee emphasised the need for a clear cut concept in the Department for the optimum utilization of real estate and hoped that the Department will formulate a Master Plan on the utilization of vacant plots at the earliest. The Chairman then thanked the witnesses for appearing before the Committee as well as for furnishing valuable information that the Committee desired in connection with examination of the subject.

A verbatim record of the proceedings of the sitting has been kept.

The Committee then adjourned.

ANNEXURE II

MINUTES OF THE TWENTY THIRD SITTING OF THE STANDING
COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (2006-2007)

The Committee sat on Tuesday, the 26th June, 2007 from 1500 hours to 1700 hours in Committee Room 'B', Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Shri Tathagata Sathpathy—*Acting Chairman*

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Abdullakutty
3. Shri Nikhil Kumar Choudhary
4. Shri Sanjay Shamrao Dhotre
5. Shri Bhubaneshwar Prasad Mehta
6. Shri G. Nizamuddin
7. Shri Sohan Potai
8. Shri P.C. Thomas
9. Shri Narahari Mahato
10. SHri Badiga Ramakrishna
11. Shri Ramesh Dube

Rajya Sabha

12. Shri Praveen Rashtrapal
13. Shri A. Vijayaraghavan
14. Shri Motiur Rahman
15. Shri Eknath K. Thakur
16. Shri Shyam Benegal

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri P. Sreedharan — *Joint Secretary*

WITNESSES

Representatives of the Department of Posts (DoP)

Name	Designation
Shri I.M.G. Khan	Secretary
Smt. Annie Moraes	JS & FA
Smt. Achala Bhatnagar	GM (PLI)
Ms. Anju Das Gupta	Pr. Sr. DDG (PO&I)
Shri S. Samant	CGM (BD & M)
Shri K.L. Khanna	DDG (E & PN)

2. In the absence of the Chairman, the Committee under rule 258(3) of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha chose Shri Tathagata Satpathy to preside over the meeting. At the outset, the acting Chairman welcomed the Secretary, Department of Posts and other officers accompanying him to the sitting of the Committee.

3. Thereafter, the officers of the Department of Posts gave a presentation on "Real Estate Management in Department of Posts".

4. The Members sought certain clarifications on the issues relating to the Real Estate Management of the Department of Posts. The Secretary, DoP responded to the same.

5. A list of queries pertaining to the issue of Real Estate Management which could not be clarified during the examination of witnesses was then handed over to the concerned officer of DoP for written replies with the stipulation for submission by 4th July, 2007.

6. The acting Chairman thanked the witnesses for appearing before the Committee and furnishing valuable information in connection with the examination of Real Estate Management in Department of Posts.

A verbatim record of the sitting has been kept.

The Committee then adjourned.

ANNEXURE III

MINUTES OF THE TWENTY-NINTH SITTING OF THE STANDING
COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY (2006-2007)

The Committee sat on Thursday, the 2nd August, 2007 from 1500 hours to 1530 hours in Committee Room G074, Parliament Library Building, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad—*Acting Chairman*

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Abdullakutty
3. Shri Nikhil Kumar Choudhary
4. Shri Sanjay Shamrao Dhotre
5. Shri Tufani Saroj
6. Shri Tathagata Satpathy
7. Shri K.V. Thangka Balu
8. Shri Narahari Mahato

Rajya Sabha

9. Shri Motiur Rahman
10. Shri Shyam Benegal

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri P. Sreedharan — *Joint Secretary*
2. Shri P.C. Koul — *Deputy Secretary*

2. In the absence of the Chairman, the Committee under rule 258(3) of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha chose Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad to preside over the meeting.

