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STANDING COMMITTEE ON
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(2015-16)

SIXTEENTH LOK SABHA

MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(DEPARTMENT OF POSTS)

[Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/ Recommendations of the Committee contained in their Tenth Report (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) on 'IT Induction and Modernization in the Department of Posts']

TWENTY-EIGHTH REPORT

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

August, 2016/Shravana, 1938 (Saka)

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Presented to Lok Sabha on 11.08.2016
Laid in Rajya Sabha on 11.08.2016

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NEW DELHI

August, 2016/Shravana, 1938 (Saka)

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2.	Shri Y. M. Kandpal	-	Director
3.	Dr. Sagarika Dash	-	Deputy Secretary
4.	Shri Abhishek Sharma	-	Executive Assistant

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*   Nominated to the Committee w.e.f. 20.05.2016 _vide_ Bulletin Part-II dated 23.05.2016.

\#   Shri Vijay Jawaharlal Darda, M.P. and Shri Salim Ansari, M.P. retired from Rajya Sabha w.e.f. 01.07.2016 and 04.07.2016 respectively.

@   Ms. Mehbooba Mufti, M.P. resigned from Lok Sabha w.e.f. 04.07.2016 _vide_ Bulletin Part-II dated 05.07.2016.

**   Nominated to the Committee w.e.f. 28.07.2016 _vide_ Bulletin Part-II dated 28.07.2016.

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson, Standing Committee on Information Technology (2015-16) having been authorized by the Committee, do present the Twenty-eighth Report on Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations of the Committee contained in their Tenth Report (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) on 'IT Induction and Modernization in the Department of Posts' of the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (Department of Posts).

2.   The Tenth Report was presented to Lok Sabha/Laid on the Table of Rajya Sabha on 7th August, 2015. The Department of Posts furnished their Action Taken Notes contained on the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Tenth Report on 9th November, 2015.

3.   The Report was considered and adopted by the Committee at their sitting held on 8th August, 2016.

4.   For facility of reference and convenience Observations/Recommendations of the Committee have been printed in bold in Chapter-I of the Report.

5.   An analysis of Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Tenth Report (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee is given at *Appendix-II*.

New Delhi;
08 August, 2016
17 Shravana, 1938(Saka)

Anurag Singh Thakur,
Chairperson,
Standing Committee on
Information Technology

CHAPTER-I

REPORT

This Report of the Standing Committee on Information Technology deals with the action taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations of the Committee contained in their Tenth Report (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) on IT Induction and Modernization in the Department of Posts relating to the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (Department of Posts).

2.   The Tenth Report was presented to Lok Sabha/laid in Rajya Sabha on 7th August, 2015. It contained 13 Observations/Recommendations.

3.   Action Taken Notes in respect of all the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Report have been received from the Department of Posts and are categorized as under:-

(i)	Observations/ Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government Sl. Nos.:- 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12 and 13	09
(ii)	Observations/ Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the replies of the Government Sl. Nos.:- Nil	Nil
(iii)	Observations/ Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration Sl. Nos.:- 7	01
(iv)	Observations /Recommendations in respect of which replies are of interim nature Sl. Nos.:- 4, 5 and 10	03

4. **The Committee trust that utmost importance will be given to implementation of the Observations/Recommendations accepted by the Government. The Committee further desire that Action Taken Notes on the Observations/Recommendations contained in Chapter-I and final action taken replies to the Observations/Recommendations contained in Chapter-V of this Report should be furnished to them at an early date.**

5.   The Committee will now deal with action taken by the Government on some of their recommendations

(Recommendation No. 7)

6.   The Committee, in their original Report, had recommended as under:-

"The Committee note that the implementation of the eight components of the IT Modernization Project is planned to be completed between 2015 and 2017. As estimated by the Department, the entire operation and maintenance of these units is to be completed between 2020 and 2025. A review of implementation of the plan schemes indicates that achievement in the year 2012-13 was nil. The year 2013-14 witnessed fair progress with the commissioning of the Data Centre, networking of 2795 locations, development and deployment of CBS in 124 POs and PLI in 220 post offices, etc. It is disquieting to note that milestones could not be achieved in respect of some important schemes, namely, Supply of Mail Office Hardware and Rural Hardware and development and deployment of Rural ICT solution in the year 2013-14. The Committee observe that the IT Modernization Scheme of the Department of Posts got the maximum outlay of Rs. 3046.75 crore amongst all the schemes for the Twelfth Five Year Plan. A scrutiny of the financial performance of the Department during the past four years indicates that there has been significant shortfall in utilization of funds against the allocation at the BE stage. The shortfall in utilization is attributed to reasons like complex and time-consuming nature of finalization of RFPs, interdependence amongst the eight RFPs, need for re-tendering in RH and MOH due to the vendors opting-out after being selected, delay in RFP meetings, queries and clarifications sought by bidders leading to extension of last date of submission of bid documents, delay in evaluation of RFPs, resolution of complaints regarding certain aspects of the Project, etc. The Committee do understand that some of these factors may have hindered the timely

utilization of funds but would like to point out that such challenges are often encountered in implementation of mega projects of this nature. It is for the Department to have anticipated such problems and factor them in the implementation mechanism. The Committee, therefore, recommend that greater efforts should be made by the Department to ensure that the problem areas are addressed in an expeditious manner for the smooth execution of the plan schemes with better utilization of funds. The Committee also emphasize that the monitoring mechanism in place be appropriately strengthened to ensure that various components of the Project are rolled out in a time-bound manner. The Committee would like to be apprised of the progress of achievement of all the components of the IT Modernization Project."

7.   The Department of Posts, in their action taken note, have stated as under:-

"All the eight stream of the IT Modernization Project including Rural ICT Solutions have entered into the implementation phase. The monitoring mechanism has been put in place and various committees meet regularly to address the challenges both for execution of the Project and utilization of funds. The progress of the achievement of all the components of the IT Modernization Project as on 26-10-2015 is furnished hereunder.

PROJECT DETAILS AND POSITION		
Sl.	Name of the segment & its scope.	Position as on 26-10-2015
1	Change Management (CM): Preparing the workforce for the complete change in Departments' working after implementation of IT Project.	Implementation started on 15-10-12. Training activities are in progress. It is an ongoing exercise in tandem with the implementation of various other streams of the Project.
2	Data Centre Facility (DCF): Hosting Primary Data centre and building Disaster Recovery centre for the DoP	Data Centre is operational w.e.f. 3rd April 2013 at Navi Mumbai.
	Disaster Recovery Centre (DRC):	DRC has been powered on at Mysore on 15th May, 2015.
3	Financial Services Integrator (FSI): Implementation of solutions for Core Banking and Core Insurance in all Post Offices.	Implementation started on 28-09-12. 6629 POs for CBS and 17285 Post offices for CIS (PLI) have been migrated. ATM Services- installed at 125 locations.

		Providing multiple delivery channels- internet banking, mobile banking, ATM and Interactive Voice Response (IVR) and SMS etc.	Circle Processing Centers (CPC) have been commissioned in all the 22 Circles.
4		Network Integrator (NI): Providing connectivity for each departmental post office location in order to ensure uninterrupted network connectivity through one single WAN	Implementation started on 28-09-12. So far 27713 locations have been net worked on a single Wide Area Net work (WAN).
5		Core System Integrator (CSI): Implementation of the solutions for Mail Operation, Retail, logistic Post, Philately, Finance and Accounts & Human Resources and integration with other SIs.	Implementation started on 15-04-13. E-mail roll out for all staff and officers is completed. Anti-virus has been deployed in 19389 offices and active directory has been deployed in 16828 offices. Pilot roll out has started in Mysore Division of Karnataka circle on 30-09-15/1-10-15
6		Rural Hardware (RH): Providing connectivity, hardware & solar power panels to Branch Post Offices in rural areas.	Implementation phase started on 19-06-15. It has dependency on Rural System Integrator (RSI). The RH devices have been submitted for STQC audit and once software is ready, deployment of hardware will start.
7		Rural System Integrator (RSI): Implementation of the solution for integrating all the FSI/CSI applications to the Branch Post Offices.	Implementation phase started on 05-05-15. Development of the proposed application software is under way.
8		Mail Operation Hardware (MOH): Providing hardware to Mail Offices and handheld devices to Postmen.	Action is underway for procurement of Mail Operations Hardware through DGS&D RC.

8.   While noting that during the past four years, there has been significant shortfall in utilization of funds against the allocation at the BE stage in IT Induction and Modernization Scheme, the Committee had recommended that greater efforts should be made by the Department to ensure that the problem areas are addressed in an expeditious manner for the smooth execution of the Plan schemes with better

utilization of funds. The Committee had also emphasized that the monitoring mechanism put in place be appropriately strengthened to ensure that various components of the Project are rolled out in a time-bound manner. The Department of Posts, in their Action Taken Note, have stated that all the eight streams of the IT Modernization Project, including Rural ICT Solutions, have entered the implementation phase. The monitoring mechanism has been put in place and various committees are meeting regularly to address the challenges, both for execution of the Project and utilization of funds, and have furnished the updated progress in all the components of the IT Modernization Project. The Committee stress that IT Induction and Modernization is an important Scheme with a comprehensive IT roadmap aimed at improving the performance and efficiency of the Department across multiple functional areas. The Committee, therefore, stress that sustained efforts should be made by the Department to ensure execution of various components of the scheme as per the revised timelines.

(Recommendation No. 10)

9.   The Committee, in their original Report, had recommended as under:-
"The Committee also note that the Task Force on leveraging India's Post Office network has envisaged a new role for the Department in the realm of banking, insurance and e-commerce. The new set-up will require a technologically augmented environment which will be created by implementation of the IT Modernization Project. The Committee understand that as part of the IT Project, India Post plan to implement core banking in all Departmental Post Offices (more than 25,000) and install 1000 ATMs in major Post Offices. The project will bring in facilities of ATM banking, Internet Banking and Mobile Banking to the Post Office Savings Bank customers. Implementation of IT induction will also facilitate insurance customers to pay premium or get policy update through any Post Office or online, apply for loan against policy as well as submit final claim at any Post Office. The settlement of claims will also be easier and smoother as all documents shall be available in a digitized and easily

retrievable format. The Departmental processing of investments will be more efficient as the corpus at the disposal of the Department will be known and made available to the Investment Desk on a real time basis. The Committee stress that e-Commerce is a technology driven business involving seamless data transmission, visibility of articles across mail flow pipeline and smooth and transparent remittance of collected amount. With the implementation of the IT project in the Department, eCommerce transmission and delivery services can be provided through an integrated IT system. The Department shall thus be able to bring the benefits of e-Commerce to the rural and semi-urban areas, both as a market as well as supplier of goods.

The Committee fully recognize the critical role of the IT Induction and Modernization Project in the realm of banking, insurance and e-commerce. The successful roll-out of the IT Project is a necessary pre-requisite for the Department to make any significant foray into the banking, insurance and e-Commerce domain. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the utmost emphasis should be accorded to the implementation of the Project so that the future expansion of products/services in these areas is not hampered for want of requisite IT infrastructure."

10.   The Department of Posts in their action taken note have stated as under:-

"The Core Banking Solution and Core Insurance Solution programmes under the Financial Services Integrator segment of the IT Modernization Project has entered into the implementation phase in full swing. These Services, after complete implementation, will enable the customer to get the facility of internet banking, mobile banking, SMS alerts, ATM, insurance through internet and mobile etc. Now, 6629 Post offices are providing Core Banking Service and 17285 Post Offices are providing insurance solutions. ATM facility is available in 125 locations.
The Department has witnessed considerable growth in e-Commerce business. Keeping in view the growth of the e-Commerce market, Department has done Application Programme Interface (API) integration with a few e-Commerce customers and also developed 'Single Account' facility. Further Department has developed a 'Circle Business Package' where Circles have been authorized to have an association with e-tailers

to provide online sale platform to rural artisans to extend the benefit of e-Commerce in rural areas also

The recommendation of the Standing Committee will be considered while taking further decisions in this regard."

11.   The Task Force on leveraging India's Post Office network had envisaged a new role for the Department in the realm of banking, insurance and e-commerce. While recognizing the critical role of the IT Induction and Modernization Project in the realm of banking, insurance and e-commerce wherein the successful roll-out of the IT Project is a necessary pre-requisite for the Department to make any significant foray into the banking, insurance and e-Commerce domain, the Committee had recommended that utmost emphasis should be accorded to the implementation of the Project so that the future expansion of products/services in these areas is not hampered for want of requisite IT infrastructure. The Department of Posts, in their Action Taken Note, have stated that they have witnessed considerable growth in e-Commerce business and keeping in view the growth of the e-Commerce market, the Department have also done Application Programme Interface (API) integration with a few e-Commerce customers and developed 'Single Account' facility. Further, the Department have developed a 'Circle Business Package' wherein Circles have been authorized to have an association with e-tailers to provide online sale platform to rural artisans to extend the benefit of e-Commerce in rural areas. The Department have also stated that recommendation of the Standing Committee will be considered while taking further decisions in this regard. While recognizing that the Department have done API integration with a few e-Commerce customers and have also developed 'Single Account' facility, the Committee reiterate that utmost emphasis should be accorded to implementation of IT Induction and Modernization Project facilitating future expansion of products/services in the emerging banking, insurance and e-Commerce domain.

Chapter-II

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

(Recommendation Sl. No. 1)

The Committee note that during the early 1990s, with the advent of technology that led to electronic substitution of postal mail, introduction of core banking solutions and easy accessibility to mobile and internet based services, the Department of Posts (DoP) had started inducting technology by way of supplying hardware to Post Offices and implementing standalone software solutions for various operations in a Local Area Network (LAN) based environment. A Software Development Centre was also set up at Mysore to cater to the needs of the Post Offices. To improve the quality of its services in line with the public expectations and to meet the increasing competition, technology upgradation in Post Offices was identified as a necessary prerequisite and to achieve this objective, the Department decided to improve and augment their IT infrastructure and introduce a new integrated software platform for its operations through an end-to-end IT Project. The India Post IT Project was designed to realize this vision. The Project was approved by the Government with a total outlay of Rs. 4909 crore in November 2012. The earlier programmes of induction of technology and computerization of Post Offices and introduction of core banking for office savings bank operations were merged in this new Project. The Committee recognize that IT Induction and Modernization is a very important Project of the Department with a comprehensive IT roadmap to develop network architecture, integrated software and effective data management, including the establishment of National Data Centre(s) and Disaster Recovery Centre. The Committee observe that there are eight segments/activities under the IT Induction and Modernization Project which are the Data Center Facility (DCF), Network Integrator (NI), Financial Services Integrator (FSI), Core System Integrator (CSI), Change Management (CM) structure, Rural Hardware (RH), Rural System Integrator (RSI) and Mail Operation Hardware (MOH).

The Committee note that the IT Induction & Modernization Project envisages improvement in the working of the Department across all functional areas, *viz.* faster and more reliable services in postal, logistics, banking, insurance and retail operations, equipping all Wide Area Network (WAN) locations with primary and secondary bandwidth connectivity for seamless connectivity, simplification of processes resulting in immediate transfer of accounts and certificates, "Anytime Anywhere Banking" through multiple channels such as Internet, ATM and mobile, interoperability with other banks/Financial Institutions, efficient controls through improved Management Information System (MIS), centralised and accurate employee information resulting in

improved and timely administrative services, efficient procurement and inventory management and reduction in operational times and costs.

The Committee further observe that by setting up an IT infrastructure spanning across all post offices, including branch post offices in rural areas, the Department will be able to harness the benefits of consolidated real time information and capabilities across various functional silos as well as geographical reach. The transformation of the physical network to a digital network will also provide a national asset for all users, apart from post offices, including various Government Departments, business houses and citizens to use the IT enabled countrywide network for communication, banking, insurance and service delivery needs with transaction data. This mega IT driven transformation would be unparalleled in its size and scope and will create a national asset of over 1, 55,000 networked post offices.

Reply of the Government

The IT Modernization Project of the Department of Posts is in implementation phase. The statement is an observation made by the   Committee based on facts.

(Ministry of Communications & IT/Department of Posts F.No.10-1/2010-PMU dated 09-11-2015)

(Recommendation Sl. No. 2)

The Committee also note that multiple types of access have been provisioned in the IT Modernization Project which will be available to the customers for getting information, availing services and for redressal of grievances. The multiple channels include the Customer Interaction Management Portal (CIM), Interactive Voice Response (IVR), Call Centre, ATM, e-Banking, Mobile phones, Post Office counters, Payment Gateway, etc. Further, the implementation of Rural ICT Solution (RH & RSI) and Core Banking Solution (CBS) will enable the Department of Posts to roll-out Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) through a network of 1.55 Lakh Post Offices in rural as well as urban Post Offices. Rural Post Offices will be enabled with a Hand Held device with biometric identification and Micro ATM enablement, wireless network, thermal printer to provide immediate receipts to customer and solar powered battery to charge and operate the Micro ATM. The Rural Information Communication & Technology (RICT) involves computerization and digital connectivity of all the Gramin Dak Sewak Post Offices including those in rural areas. The objective is to provide a technology solution (ICT Device) to each Branch Postmaster (BPM) which will enable each of approximately 1,30,000 Branch Post Offices to improve the quality of services being offered to rural customers. It will increase the rural reach of the Department and enable Branch Post Offices to increase traffic of all financial remittances, savings accounts, cash certificates and Rural Postal Life Insurance (RPLI). This is being enabled through the Rural System

Integrator (RSI) and Rural Hardware (RH) solutions. The ease of transactions will encourage rural citizens to avail the services of Post Offices, thereby having a positive impact on the rural economy, besides improving financial inclusion.

The Department of Posts have a vast network of approximately 1,55,000 Post Offices out of which 1,30,000 are rural Branch Post Offices. The Committee recognizes that transformation of the physical network to a digital network will also enable the Government to use the postal network to reach out to the rural population for efficient delivery of financial services such as banking and insurance, besides improving communications, mails and other service delivery needs of the citizens. The IT Modernization Project, particularly the rural ICT solutions, will rebuild the rural postal network to create an institutional infrastructure for last mile delivery of financial services to the citizens. The Project will make the Post Office the focal point for delivery of financial services and further the cause of financial inclusion by providing the rural population across the country with access to formal banking and insurance services.

Reply of the Government

The IT Modernization Project of the Department of Posts is in implementation phase. The statement is an observation made by the   Committee based on facts.

(Ministry of Communications & IT/Department of Posts F.No.10-1/2010- PMU dated 09-11-2015)

(Recommendation Sl. No. 3)

The Committee acknowledges that the IT enabled Post Offices will lead to transparent delivery of social security schemes, including Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT). The disbursement of Social Security Scheme shall be done through biometric identification using the mobile hand held devices that will not only lead to transparency but also reduce the number of complaints of wrong payment and fraudulent transactions, besides eliminating the middlemen in the system. Online monitoring shall also be faster and shall be without scope for any manipulation. The Committee observe that the Department of Posts, with a network of approximately 1,55,000 Post Offices making transition to a digital network, will enable the Government to use the postal network to reach out to the citizens for efficient delivery of social service schemes, apart from improving the communications, mails and other service delivery needs of the citizens. The IT Modernization Project, particularly the rural ICT solutions, will thus rebuild the rural postal network to create an institutional infrastructure for last mile delivery of all Government services to the citizens. The project will make the Post Office the focal point of delivery for social security and employment guarantee schemes of the Union and the State Governments, including disbursement of wages under MNREGS,

Pension and scholarship, etc. through Direct Benefit Transfer employing Biometric authentication of financial transactions.

Reply of the Government

The IT Modernization Project of the Department of Posts is in implementation phase. The statement is an observation made by the   Committee based on facts.

(Ministry of Communications & IT/Department of Posts F.No.10-1/2010-PMU dated 09-11-2015)

(Recommendation Sl. No. 6)

The Committee note that the major challenges faced by the Department in the roll-out of the lT Induction and Modernization Project include, *inter-alia,* the time consuming nature of public procurement process, selected vendors not taking up the allocated work leading to major delays, telecom network connectivity issues in areas like North East, Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand, Ladakh and Island territories, pan-India scope of operations, large number of Post-Offices (approx. 1,55,000 comprising of 25,000 Departmental Post Offices and 1,30,000 Branch Post-Offices), migration from almost 56 stand-alone applications presently being used in the Department to an integrated IT platform, and managing a workforce of almost 4.66 lakh employees having no prior experience of working in an IT-enabled environment. In their endeavour to meet these challenges, the Department have developed a focused and time-bound plan which includes roping in Change Management vendor for creation of a new work culture, imparting training to employees at all levels, simplification of procedure to ensure that manual processes are not replicated in an IT environment, large scale simplification of Rules and Procedures to bring them in synchronization with the new IT-enabled working environment and setting up Project Monitoring Units up to the Divisional levels (district level) in order to implement the Project in a synchronized manner. While appreciating the efforts made by the Department to ensure a smooth transition from a manual work environment to an IT-enabled environment, the Committee recommend to the Department to remain focused through structural monitoring of the remedial measures taken for addressing the operational impediments.

Reply of the Government

The recommendation made by Standing Committee is being followed and Department of Posts will remain focussed, in future also.

(Ministry of Communications & IT/Department of Posts F.No.10-1/2010-PMU dated 09-11-2015)

(Recommendation Sl. No. 8)

The Committee note that the Department's software development centre at Mysore (Centre for Excellence in Postal Technology) had developed most of the application software that are still being used by the Post Offices. In addition, CEPT Mysore also housed the first in-house Data Centre of the Department. The Committee have been apprised that the software developed by CEPT is working in the post offices of many friendly countries. In addition, data sanitization work required for roll-out of Core Banking Services (CBS) and Core PLI is also being done throughout the country under the overall supervision of CEPT Mysore. Insofar as the IT Induction and Modernization Project is concerned, the CEPT, Mysore, is involved in Knowledge Transfer of existing Applications, assistance in roll-out and Data migration, Acceptance Testing of respective solutions of all RFPs, and Operation and Maintenance. While appreciating the role of CEPT, Mysore, in developing the application software to cater to the specific requirements of post offices, the Committee feel that the Software Development Center at Mysore, with its unique experience in developing stand-alone software applications for Post Offices, can play a vital role in areas such as knowledge transfer of existing applications, data migration, acceptance testing of different modules of the IT Project as well as operation and maintenance matters. The Committee recommend that the accumulated experience of CEPT, Mysore, in software development for DoP may be optimally utilized in ensuring a seamless transition from stand-alone applications to a fully networked architecture served by a common data center.

Reply of the Government

The assistance of CEPT, Mysore is already being taken in implementation of the IT Modernization Project. Further, accumulated experience of CEPT Mysore would be optimally utilized as recommended by the Committee.

(Ministry of Communications & IT/Department of Posts F.No.10- 1/2010-PMU dated 09-11-2015)

(Recommendation Sl. No. 9)

The Committee have been informed that Task Force on leveraging the Post Office network had given wide-ranging recommendations concerning IT Induction and Modernization in the Department. Some of the key recommendations include adoption of non-proprietary and open standards for hardware and software products, leveraging the inherent strengths of the India Post network to garner business in upcoming segments such as e-commerce and e-retailing, integration of information systems with those of major e-commerce companies, de-linking parcel service from normal postal services, introduction of same day delivery, providing end-to-end track and trace facility, implementation of measures for cyber security and payment security, GPS tracking and

containerized movement of parcels. The Task Force had also stressed the need to use post offices as Common Service Centers (CSCs) offering a variety of public services, diversification into other range of products/services such as Card Based Money Transfers, Mobile Banking, Collection of EMIs and bill payments, collaboration with the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) to develop new financial products based on the RuPay Indian domestic card scheme, treatment of Commercially Important Clients (CICs) as a special category and availability of Postal Services to citizens electronically through the introduction of digital stamping and franking machines at postal counters, internet postage and electronic mail boxes. The Committee are given to understand that a Group of Senior Officers has been constituted to chalk out a strategy for implementing specific recommendations of the Task Force along with timelines, in synergy with the other two reports of the Internal Task Forces set up to 'Scale up PLI Business' and 'Capture e-Commerce Market'. The Committee recommend that the Group of Officers should complete the exercise in a time-bound manner and evolve an effective strategy to implement the recommendations of the Task Force so that the vision of leveraging the Post Office network of the country can be realized. The Committee would like to be informed of the outcome in this regard.

Reply of the Government

With the approval of Hon'ble Minister of Communications and IT, a Group of Senior Officers was constituted in the Department to examine each recommendation of the Task Force; to obtain relevant inputs from the Divisions concerned within the Postal Directorate, Field Units as well as Staff Unions and Officers' Union; and to chalk out a strategy for implementing specific recommendation of the Task Force along with timelines, in synergy with the other two reports of Internal Task Forces set up to 'Scale up Postal Life Insurance Business' and 'Capturing e-Commerce Market'. Based on the report of the Group of Senior Officers, the present status of implementation of the recommendations of Task Force is summarized as under:-

1.   The Task Force has envisaged new role for the Department in the realm of banking, insurance and e-commerce. As such, in order to generate additional business and augment revenue receipt through Parcel and e-Commerce Services, the Department has already entered into partnerships with Amazon, Flipkart, Shopclues, Snapdeal and e-Bay. Regarding Banking business, subsequent to the RBI approval in September, 2015, Department is preparing for setting up of the Payments Bank.

2.   The recommendation of the Task Force to examine the best practices being followed in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana for replication in other states is in alignment with the activities being pursued by the Department of Posts such as disbursement of MNREGS wage payment using Aadhaar enabled hand held devices, Collection of

recruitment fee, admission fee etc. of various universities/departments under various State Governments under e-payment application, Collection of utility bills, Electricity Bills, property tax, water bill, at Post Offices etc. Further, the Department has also addressed all the Union Ministries/ Departments, State Governments and PSU's asking them to utilize the Postal network. Responses have been received from Election Commission of India, Ministry of External Affairs, Labour Commission of Gujarat and Indian Council of Agricultural Research. Initial discussions have been initiated with them to utilize the network of Post Offices. The Department has signed an agreement with Common Service Centre (CSC), Department of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India for setting up of Common Service Centres in rural Post Offices.

3.   Global Positioning System (GPS) is being installed in outsourced/departmental vehicles and for tracking consignments such as Express Parcels, Business Parcels, Registered Parcels, etc.

4.   As regards delinking Parcel services, a pilot project for setting up parcel booking and delivery kiosks is being developed and can be upscaled based on results. Introduction of same day delivery service, return logistics, standard and secure packaging at the booking point are other aspects where systems are being put in place.

5.   The Department already provides the e-Post service for e-transmission of written communication with printing and delivery at the other end. E-post card can thus be sent using the existing e-Post service.

6.   For a strong security system,

a)   Secured plastic seals are introduced in processing hubs of 20 cities and shall be extended to all hubs.
b)   CCTVs are installed at 20 major processing centres and depending on the availability of funds they will installed in remaining centres as well.
c)   Containerized movements of mail will be taken on 40 identified long- haul routes for enhanced security.
d)   Fund requirement for provision of X-ray machines at 6 Metro Centres is being assessed, and
e)   Outsourced security system with defined Service Level Agreements (SLAs) for identified processing centres and transportation routes will be examined at appropriate stage.

7. The Department has already started taking action to scale up Postal Life Insurance and Rural Postal Life Insurance business. The maximum sum assured limit has been enhanced from Rs 20 lakh to Rs 50 lakh in case of PLI and further Rs 5 lakh to Rs 10 lakh for RPLI. Introduction of a new girl child policy is also under examination. The

completion of IT roll out in PLI/RPLI will significantly enhance the quality of service and also enable the Department to offer new facilities as well as products.

(Ministry of Communications & IT/Department of Posts F.No.10-1/2010-PMU dated 09-11-2015)

(Recommendation Sl. No. 11)

The Committee note that the DCF located at Navi Mumbai has been functional since April 2013. Presently, DCF is handling CBS and Core PLI transactions in 9174 Post Offices. The daily average number of transactions handled at DCF is 8.52 lakh. The Department plans to scale up the DCF as more Post Offices are being connected through Wide Area Network. The Committee are given to understand that all the technical solutions and infrastructure being created under the IT Project, including the Data Centre Facility, are scalable and modular in nature, *i.e.* they are designed to take care of additional load by scaling up commensurate to the requirement; besides, the Data Centre facility is designed to handle transactions emanating from the entire postal network. Insofar as the requirement of bandwidth is concerned, the RFP and contracts have provisions relating to increasing the bandwidth as per actual requirements. The DRC facility at CEPT, Mysore, has been installed followed by the user acceptance test which has been completed and accepted on 19.03.2015. The Committee have been apprised that the DRC is expected to be operationalized shortly.

With the Data Center Facility (DCF) already in operation since April 2013 and the Data Recovery Center (DRC) expected to be operationalized shortly, the Committee recommend that the Department should expedite the networking of the remaining Post Offices so that more and more Post Offices can move their data to DCF and make optimum use of the networked architecture as envisaged in the IT Project.

Reply of the Government

Data Centre is operational at Navi Mumbai since April, 2013. Data Recovery Centre is powered on from 15-05-2015 at CEPT, Mysore.

Department has networked 27713 locations out of ~28800 locations. The locations which have not been networked till now are either due to some technical challenges or due to some geographical challenges. These locations are mostly located in hilly or remote areas. Though BSNL has declared these places technically non feasible, the Department is looking at other alternatives.

Department has also taken action to increase the bandwidth at Data Centre level from 600 Mbps to 1024 Mbps to smoothen day to day operation. Action has also been initiated to enhance the bandwidth capacity at post office level.

(Ministry of Communications & IT/Department of Posts F.No.10-1/2010-PMU dated 09-11-2015)

(Recommendation Sl. No. 12)

The Committee note that Change Management is a vital component of the IT Modernization Project and Change Management Vendor is conducting surveys for different levels of officers/officials which forms the basis of workshops and training programmes being conducted for the staff members. The Department's website, newsletter and SMS alerts are also being used to create awareness among the staff members. Vendors are conducting training in a phased manner to train the staff in an IT enabled environment which is being augmented by training in all Training Centres of the Department, including Work Place Training Centres functioning in all Divisions, Standard Training Packages being delivered online, and Divisional level Change Agents.

The Committee observe that it is imperative that the Change Management vendor should impart requisite training which will go a long way in improving the performance of the Postal employees. Efforts to improve the skills and capabilities of employees through training is necessary to equip the workforce with the knowledge of various IT tools at their disposal, which will also lead to optimum utilization of these IT tools. The Committee feel that since the Department of Posts are a service oriented entity having a large workforce of approximately 4.66 lakh employees who have been largely working in a manual environment, special emphasis on IT training requirements of such a large workforce should be a priority area. While appreciating the ongoing efforts of the Department to meet the training requirement of their employees, the Committee stress the need to focus on training requirements of the large workforce to reorient them to work in an IT enabled environment.

Reply of the Government

Regular efforts are being made for managing the changes through various modes like Change awareness Programmes, Change Agents networks, Surveys, Workshops, News letter etc. The Standard Training Packages for training of the full range of employees are updated regularly to incorporate the IT Project related changes, and training programmes are held frequently based on training needs. The Department has involved its six Postal Training Centres and 410 Work Place Training Centers to impart training to all its employees targeting the required changes recommended by the Standing Committee.

(Ministry of Communications & IT/Department of Posts F.No.10-1/2010-PMU dated 09-11-2015)

(Recommendation Sl. No. 13)

To sum up, though the IT Modernization Project has entered the fourth year of its implementation, the pace of execution has been slow resulting in shortfall in achievements as against the envisaged physical targets. It is noteworthy that this mega IT driven transformation is the first of its kind undertaken by any postal operator in the world. The benefits of the Project after its successful implementation are expected to be immense encompassing the Government, the Department of Posts and equally importantly the customers. The Department of Posts are poised to play an important role in bridging the urban-rural divide and bringing IT-enabled services to all sections of society through its 1,55,000 IT-enabled Post Offices. It needs reiteration that the reduction of paper-based processing will enable an environmentally sustainable greener Post Office. The vision can be transformed into reality only in a technologically augmented environment of the Department, which the IT Modernization Project intends to create. Considering that it is a transformational project having far reaching impact, the Committee recommend that the Project Governance Structure of the Department should take all necessary measures for the successful execution of this mega venture in a time-bound manner which will also support the ambitious 'Digital India' Campaign.

Reply of the Government

Department of Posts, through its IT Modernization Project, is making an all out effort to transform 1, 55,000 Post Offices across the nation. These transformed post offices will play important role in financial inclusion of the marginalized population of the country. These transformed post offices will also cater the e-Commerce need of the population who are living in semi urban and rural India. These post offices will also work as Common Service Centers (CSC) for the programmes of the Government of India envisaged for the Rural India.

The IT Modernization Project of the Department of Posts, once it enters the operational phase, shall bridge the Digital Divide of Rural and Urban India and support the "Digital India" programme of Government of India. The Project is being monitored at the highest level in the Department and it shall be the endeavour of the Department to successfully deliver the project within the shortest possible time frame.

(Ministry of Communications & IT/Department of Posts F.No.10-1/2010-PMU dated 09-11-2015)

Chapter III

Observations/ Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the replies of the Government

-NIL-

Chapter IV

Observations/ Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee and require reiteration

(Recommendation Sl. No. 7)

The Committee note that the implementation of the eight components of the IT Modernization Project is planned to be completed between 2015 and 2017. As estimated by the Department, the entire operation and maintenance of these units is to be completed between 2020 and 2025. A review of implementation of the plan schemes indicates that achievement in the year 2012-13 was nil. The year 2013-14 witnessed fair progress with the commissioning of the Data Centre, networking of 2795 locations, development and deployment of CBS in 124 POs and PLI in 220 post offices, etc. It is disquieting to note that milestones could not be achieved in respect of some important schemes, namely, Supply of Mail Office Hardware and Rural Hardware and development and deployment of Rural ICT solution in the year 2013-14. The Committee observe that the IT Modernization Scheme of the Department of Posts got the maximum outlay of Rs. 3046.75 crore amongst all the schemes for the Twelfth Five Year Plan. A scrutiny of the financial performance of the Department during the past four years indicates that there has been significant shortfall in utilization of funds against the allocation at the BE stage. The shortfall in utilization is attributed to reasons like complex and time-consuming nature of finalization of RFPs, interdependence amongst the eight RFPs, need for re-tendering in RH and MOH due to the vendors opting-out after being selected, delay in RFP meetings, queries and clarifications sought by bidders leading to extension of last date of submission of bid documents, delay in evaluation of RFPs, resolution of complaints regarding certain aspects of the Project, etc. The Committee do understand that some of these factors may have hindered the timely utilization of funds but would like to point out that such challenges are often encountered in implementation of mega projects of this nature. It is for the Department to have anticipated such problems and factor them in the implementation mechanism. The Committee, therefore, recommend that greater efforts should be made by the Department to ensure that the problem areas are addressed in an expeditious manner for the smooth execution of the plan schemes with better utilization of funds. The Committee also emphasize that the monitoring mechanism in place be appropriately strengthened to ensure that various components of the Project are rolled out in a time-bound manner. The Committee would like to be apprised of the progress of achievement of all the components of the IT Modernization Project.

Reply of the Government

All the eight stream of the IT Modernization Project including Rural ICT Solutions have entered into the implementation phase. The monitoring mechanism has been put in place and various committees meet regularly to address the challenges both for execution of the Project and utilization of funds. The progress of the achievement of all the components of the IT Modernization Project as on 26-10-2015 is furnished hereunder.

PROJECT DETAILS AND POSITION		
Sl.	Name of the segment & its scope.	Position as on 26-10-2015
1	Change Management (CM): Preparing the workforce for the complete change in Departments' working after implementation of IT Project.	Implementation started on 15-10-12. Training activities are in progress. It is an ongoing exercise in tandem with the implementation of various other streams of the Project.
2	Data Centre Facility (DCF): Hosting Primary Data centre and building Disaster Recovery centre for the DoP	Data Centre is operational w.e.f. 3rd April 2013 at Navi Mumbai.
	Disaster Recovery Centre (DRC):	DRC has been powered on at Mysore on 15th May, 2015.
3	Financial Services Integrator (FSI): Implementation of solutions for Core Banking and Core Insurance in all Post Offices. Providing multiple delivery channels- internet banking, mobile banking, ATM and Interactive Voice Response (IVR) and SMS etc.	Implementation started on 28-09-12. 6629 POs for CBS and 17285 Post offices for CIS (PLI) have been migrated. ATM Services- installed at 125 locations. Circle Processing Centers (CPC) have been commissioned in all the 22 Circles.
4	Network Integrator (NI): Providing connectivity for each departmental post office location in order to ensure uninterrupted network connectivity through one single WAN	Implementation started on 28-09-12. So far 27713 locations have been net worked on a single Wide Area Net work (WAN).
5	Core System Integrator (CSI): Implementation of the solutions for Mail Operation, Retail, logistic Post, Philately, Finance and Accounts & Human Resources and integration	Implementation started on 15-04-13. E-mail roll out for all staff and officers is completed. Anti-virus has been deployed in 19389 offices and active directory has been deployed in 16828

	with other SIs.	offices. Pilot roll out has started in Mysore Division of Karnataka circle on 30-09-15/1-10-15
6	Rural Hardware (RH): Providing connectivity, hardware & solar power panels to Branch Post Offices in rural areas.	Implementation phase started on 19-06-15. It has dependency on Rural System Integrator (RSI). The RH devices have been submitted for STQC audit and once software is ready, deployment of hardware will start.
7	Rural System Integrator (RSI): Implementation of the solution for integrating all the FSI/CSI applications to the Branch Post Offices.	Implementation phase started on 05-05-15. Development of the proposed application software is under way.
8	Mail Operation Hardware (MOH): Providing hardware to Mail Offices and handheld devices to Postmen.	Action is underway for procurement of Mail Operations Hardware through DGS&D RC.

(Ministry of Communications & IT/Department of Posts F.No.10-1/2010-PMU dated 09-11-2015)

Comments of the Committee
(Please see Para No. 8 of Chapter I)

Chapter V

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES ARE OF INTERIM IN NATURE

(Recommendation Sl. No. 4)

The implementation of the IT Modernization Project is likely to improve the visibility in day-to-day operations and enable real-time interventions in case of operational problems, e.g. mail movements; further, automatic data updation will enable verified data/report availability/generation and operational planning and decision making will be facilitated by availability of reliable and up-to-date data, introduction of efficiencies in Inventory management and Procurement, ease of financial monitoring/planning and improvement in Human Resource Management. The Committee is of the view that the IT Induction and Modernization Project will facilitate quick decision making by the Department of Posts enabling real-time interventions to resolve operational problems. The Project will also lead to improved planning and decision making through the use of Management Information System (MIS) facilitated by availability of reliable and up-to-date data generated in real-time. The Committee recommend that the Department should ensure optimum use of the data generated in real-time in improving decision making, both in the operational and the policy front.

Reply of the Government

MIS & Business Intelligence Services module under CSI segment of IT Modernization Project, provisions to generate reports out of the data readily available in the system. User Acceptance Testing of these modules has been done and the Pilot roll out for the same is already underway. In its operational phase, the recommendation of the Committee will be met.

(Ministry of Communications & IT/Department of Posts F.No.10-1/2010-PMU dated 09-11-2015)

(Recommendation Sl. No. 5)

The Committee also take note of the fact that with the roll-out of the IT Induction and Modernization Project, the Department shall be in a position to introduce several new services in the future, *viz.* delivery of e-Commerce articles offering seamless track and trace facility, including returns, and immediate remittance of collections on delivery, e-Commerce (place orders / view commodity rates), Utility Bill payments - phone/electricity, etc., Commission/Fee Collection, booking and reservation of train & air tickets, data collection for other organizations, distribution of social security benefits

and Common Service Centre (CSC) services. Keeping in view the fact that the future roll-out of various products/services by the Department of Posts is closely tied-up to the successful roll-out of the IT Induction and Modernization Project, the Committee emphasize that efforts should be made for the timely and successful execution of the Project to reap the benefits of prospective business.

Reply of the Government

The CSI segment of the IT Modernization Project which deals with the above mentioned services is passing through the pilot roll out phase. The recommendation made by the Standing Committee, has been noted down by Department of Posts for necessary action.

(Ministry of Communications & IT/Department of Posts F.No.10-1/2010-PMU dated 09-11-2015)

(Recommendation Sl. No. 10)

The Committee also note that the Task Force on leveraging India's Post Office network has envisaged a new role for the Department in the realm of banking, insurance and e-commerce. The new set-up will require a technologically augmented environment which will be created by implementation of the IT Modernization Project. The Committee understand that as part of the IT Project, India Post plan to implement core banking in all Departmental Post Offices (more than 25,000) and install 1000 ATMs in major Post Offices. The project will bring in facilities of ATM banking, Internet Banking and Mobile Banking to the Post Office Savings Bank customers. Implementation of IT induction will also facilitate insurance customers to pay premium or get policy update through any Post Office or online, apply for loan against policy as well as submit final claim at any Post Office. The settlement of claims will also be easier and smoother as all documents shall be available in a digitized and easily retrievable format. The Departmental processing of investments will be more efficient as the corpus at the disposal of the Department will be known and made available to the Investment Desk on a real time basis. The Committee stress that e-Commerce is a technology driven business involving seamless data transmission, visibility of articles across mail flow pipeline and smooth and transparent remittance of collected amount. With the implementation of the IT project in the Department, eCommerce transmission and delivery services can be provided through an integrated IT system. The Department shall thus be able to bring the benefits of e-Commerce to the rural and semi-urban areas, both as a market as well as supplier of goods.

The Committee fully recognize the critical role of the IT Induction and Modernization Project in the realm of banking, insurance and e-commerce. The

successful roll-out of the IT Project is a necessary pre-requisite for the Department to make any significant foray into the banking, insurance and e-Commerce domain. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the utmost emphasis should be accorded to the implementation of the Project so that the future expansion of products/services in these areas is not hampered for want of requisite IT infrastructure.

Reply of the Government

The Core Banking Solution and Core Insurance Solution programmes under the Financial Services Integrator segment of the IT Modernization Project has entered into the implementation phase in full swing. These Services, after complete implementation, will enable the customer to get the facility of internet banking, mobile banking, SMS alerts, ATM, insurance through internet and mobile etc. Now, 6629 Post offices are providing Core Banking Service and 17285 Post Offices are providing insurance solutions. ATM facility is available in 125 locations.

The Department has witnessed considerable growth in e-Commerce business. Keeping in view the growth of the e-Commerce market, Department has done Application Programme Interface (API) integration with a few e-Commerce customers and also developed 'Single Account' facility. Further Department has developed a 'Circle Business Package' where Circles have been authorized to have an association with e-tailers to provide online sale platform to rural artisans to extend the benefit of e-Commerce in rural areas also

The recommendation of the Standing Committee will be considered while taking further decisions in this regard.

(Ministry of Communications & IT/Department of Posts F.No.10-1/2010-PMU dated 09-11-2015)

Comments of the Committee
(Please see Para No. 11 of Chapter I)

New Delhi;	**Anurag Singh Thakur,**
08 August, 2016	**Chairperson,**
17 Shravana, 1938(Saka)	**Standing Committee on**
	Information Technology

MINUTES OF THE TWELFTH SITTING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (2015-16) HELD ON 8TH AUGUST, 2016

The Committee sat on Monday, the 8th August, 2016, from 1600 hours to 1640 hours in Committee Room 'D', Ground Floor, Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Shri Anurag Singh Thakur- Chairperson

MEMBERS
Lok Sabha

2. Shri Prasun Banerjee
3. Dr. Sunil Baliram Gaikwad
4. Shri Hemant Tukaram Godse
5. Shri P. Karunakaran
6. Shri Virender Kashyap
7. Smt. Hema Malini
8. Shri Keshav Prasad Maurya
9. Dr. K.C. Patel
10. Shri Raosaheb Danve Patil
11. Shri D.K. Suresh
12. Shri Ramdas C. Tadas
13. Smt. R. Vanaroja

Rajya Sabha

14. Shri Suresh Gopi
15. Shri Meghraj Jain
16. Shri Santiuse Kujur
17. Dr. Prabhakar Kore
18. Shri Derek O'Brien
19. Mahant Shambhuprasadji Tundiya

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri R.S. Kambo   -   Additional Secretary
2. Shri Y.M. Kandpal   -   Director
3. Dr. Sagarika Dash   -   Deputy Secretary
4. Shri Shangreiso Zimik   -   Under Secretary

2.   At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members to the sitting of the Committee convened to consider and adopt the following three Draft Action Taken Reports:-

I.   …..xxxxx…….…..xxxxx……..…xxxxx….…...xxxxx…..…..xxxxx….…....xxxxx….…...xxxxx….…..;

II.   Action Taken Report on the Tenth Report on the subject 'IT Induction and Modernization in the Department of Posts'; and

III.   …..xxxxx…….…..xxxxx…..…..xxxxx……...xxxxx…..…..xxxxx…..…..xxxxx….…..xxxxx…….…..

3.   The Committee, thereafter, took up for consideration the above Reports and after due deliberation adopted the same without any modification.

4.   The Committee, then, authorised the Chairperson to present the Action Taken Reports to the House during the current session of Parliament.

The Committee, then, adjourned

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…..xxxxx Matter not related to the Report.

ANALYSIS OF ACTION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT ON THE OBSERVATIONS/ RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THEIR TENTH REPORT

(SIXTEENTH LOK SABHA)

[Vide Paragraph No. 5 of Introduction]

(i) Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government

    Rec. Sl. Nos.:- 1 ,2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12 and 13

Total	09
Percentage	69.23

(ii) Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the replies of the Government

    Rec. Sl. No.:- Nil

Total	Nil
Percentage	Nil

(iii) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee and require reiteration

    Rec. Sl. No.:- 7

Total	01
Percentage	7.69

(iv) Observations/Recommendations in respect of the reply which is of interim nature

    Rec. Sl. No.:- 4,5 and 10

Total	03
Percentage	23.08