

SIXTY-EIGHTH REPORT

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE (1988-89)

(EIGHTH LOK SABHA)

MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (DEPARTMENT OF
POSTS) — POSTAL SERVICES IN RURAL AREAS

**Action Taken by Government on the recommendations
contained in the Fifty-Eighth Report of
Estimates Committee (Eighth Lok Sabha)**



Presented to Lok Sabha on 4 April, 1989

**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

March, 1989 / Phalgun, 1910(S)

Price : Rs. 4.00

CONTENTS

	PAGE
COMPOSITION OF THE ESTIMATES COMMITTEE	(iii)
COMPOSITION OF THE STUDY GROUP ON ACTION TAKEN REPORTS OF ESTIMATES COMMITTEE (1988-89)	(v)
INTRODUCTION	(vii)
CHAPTER I Report	1
CHAPTER II Recommendations/Observations which have been accepted by Government	7
CHAPTER III Recommendations/Observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of Government replies.	18
CHAPTER IV Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies of Government have not been accepted by the Committee...	33
CHAPTER V Recommendations/Observations in respect of which final replies of Government are awaited	34
APPENDIX Analysis of Action Taken by Government on the recom- mendations contained in the 58th Report of Estimates Committee (8th Lok Sabha)	44

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE
(1988-89)

CHAIRMAN

Shri Asutosh Law

MEMBERS

2. Shri Jagdish Awasthi
3. Shri G.M. Banatwalla.
4. Shri R.M. Bhoje
5. Smt. M. Chandrasekhar
6. Smt. Chandresh Kumari
7. Shri A. Charles
8. Shri Narayan Choubey
9. Shri Hussain Dalwai
10. Prof. Chandra Bhanu Devi
11. Shri Janak Raj Gupta
12. Shri V.S. Krishna Iyer
13. Shri Aslam Sher Khan
14. Shri Suresh Kurup
15. Shri Dharam Pal Singh Malik
16. Shri Shantaram Naik
17. Dr. Manoj Pandey
18. Shri Sriballav Panigrahi
19. Shri Mohanbhai Patel
20. Shri K.S. Rao
21. Shri M. Raghuma Reddy
22. Shri P.M. Sayeed
23. Dr. B.L. Shailesh
24. Shri A.C. Shanmugam
25. Shri Rana Vir Singh
26. Shri Surendra Pal Singh
27. Shri N. Sundararaj
28. Shri G.G. Swell
29. Shri Gopala Krishna Thota
30. Shri Ram Singh Yadav

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri G.L. Batra—*Joint Secretary*
2. Shri R.L.L. Dubey—*Director*
3. Shri S.M. Mehta—*Senior Financial Committee Officer.*

**STUDY GROUP ON ACTION TAKEN REPORTS
OF ESTIMATES COMMITTEE
(1988-89)**

1. **Shri Asutosh Law—*Chairman***
2. **Shri K.S. Rao—*Convener***
3. **Shri V.S. Krishna Iyer**
4. **Shri Shantaram Naik**
5. **Shri A. Charles**
6. **Shri P.M. Sayeed**
7. **Shri Narayan Choubey**
8. **Dr. Manoj Pandey**
9. **Shri Ram Singh Yadav**

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman of the Estimates Committee having been authorised by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf present this Sixty-Eighth Report on action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the Fifty-Eighth Report of the Estimates Committee (Eighth Lok Sabha) on the Ministry of Communications (Department of Posts) — Postal Services in Rural Areas.

2. The Fifty-Eighth Report was presented to Lok Sabha on 19th April, 1988. Government furnished their replies indicating action taken on the recommendations contained in that Report on 20th January, 1989. The replies were examined and the Draft Report was adopted by the Estimates Committee at their sitting held on 16th March, 1989.

3. The Report has been divided into following chapters:—

- (i) Report
- (ii) Recommendations/Observations which have been accepted by Government.
- (iii) Recommendations/Observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of Government's replies.
- (iv) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies of Government have not been accepted by the Committee.
- (v) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which final replies of Government are still awaited.

4. An analysis of action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in Fifty-Eighth Report of Estimates Committee (Eighth Lok Sabha) is given in Appendix. It would be observed that out of 26 recommendations made in the Report 11 recommendations *i.e.* about 42.3 per cent have been accepted by Government. The Committee have desired not to pursue 12 recommendations in view of Government's reply *i.e.* about 46.1 per cent. Final replies of Government in respect of 3 recommendations *i.e.* about 11.6 per cent are still awaited.

NEW DELHI ;
March 28, 1989

Phalguna 7, 1910 (S)

ASUTOSH LAW
Chairman,
Estimates Committee.

CHAPTER I

REPORT

1.1 This Report of the Estimates Committee deals with Action Taken by Government on the recommendations contained in their 58th Report (8th Lok Sabha) on the Ministry of Communications, Department of Posts — Postal Services in Rural areas which was presented to Lok Sabha on 19th April, 1988.

1.2 Action Taken Notes have been received in respect of all the recommendations contained in the Report. These Action Taken Notes have been categorised as follows:—

- (i) Recommendations/observations which have been accepted by the Government:

Sl. Nos. 1, 3, 4, 8, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, 20, 21.

(Total 11—Chapter II)

- (ii) Recommendations/observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of Government's replies:

Sl. Nos. 2, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 18, 19, 22, 23, 24, 25.

(Total 12—Chapter III)

- (iii) Recommendations/observations in respect of which Government's replies have not been accepted by the Committee:

NIL

(Chapter IV—Nil)

- (iv) Recommendations/observations in respect of which final replies are still awaited:

Sl. Nos. 14, 15, 26.

(Total 3—Chapter V)

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

Criterion for the opening of rural post offices

Recommendation, Sl. No. 3, (Para 1.12)

1.4 The Committee had observed that whereas the programme of 1947 fixed the limit of loss at Rs. 750 per annum, the present criterion fixed the limit of loss at Rs. 2400/- per annum. Taking into account the erosion in the value of a rupee over the years and the substantial increase in wage rates the Committee had observed that the financial loss criterion had failed to keep reasonable pace with the basic factors that affected cost of operations. The Committee viewed that both the norms based on population and quantum of annual loss were totally out of tune with the present day objective of the Government to provide maximum facilities for the welfare of the people. The Committee recommended that altogether different norms should be evolved taken into account the need of the facilities, distance of other post offices from the nearest village having a post office and means of communications in the area as basic parameters.

1.5 In their reply the Ministry of Communications Department of Posts stated that the permissible limit of loss of Rs. 2400 per post office per annum related only to normal rural areas and that for post offices opened in hilly, backward and tribal areas, a more substantial subsidy of Rs. 4800 per post office per annum had been provided. It was also stated that the permissible limits of loss (PLL) were based on the recommendations of the Committee of Enquiry on Extra Departmental System (1986). The aforesaid Committee had also recommended that the loss limits should be reviewed once in two years and appropriately re-fixed with regard to prevailing levels of remuneration and tariffs. This recommendation had been accepted by the Department and according to this policy the next review of the permissible limits of loss was due in January, 1989. The Ministry also took due note of the recommendation of the Committee that the basic parameters should be, the need of the facilities, distance from the nearest village having a post office and means of communications in the area and observed that besides these, the population and financial norms were equally important in order to have a rational system of priorities and also to ensure that within the limited resources available, postal facilities were provided in the rural sector to the maximum extent.

1.6 The Committee are happy to note that the recommendations of the Committee of Enquiry of Extra Departmental System have been accepted and that the next review of the permissible limits of loss was due in January, 1989. The Committee hope that the proposed review would take into consideration the basic parameters viz. (a) the need of the facilities,

(b) distance of other Post offices from the nearest village having a post office, and (c) means of communications in the area, as recommended by the Committee earlier, as all these aspects have a vital bearing on the welfare of the community. They would like to be apprised of the further development in this regard.

Preparation of Comprehensive Basic Data for villages

Recommendation, Sl. No. 4, (Para 1.13)

1.7 The Committee had observed that a comprehensive basic data of villages or group of villages which stood eligible for provision of post offices but had not been provided post offices so far had not been collected. They had viewed that the whole question of opening post offices in rural areas had been dealt with by the Department of Posts in a lackadaisical manner and that there was an immediate need for rejuvenating the Department so as to ensure that the post offices were opened in all the eligible villages without any further loss of time.

1.8 In its reply the Ministry stated that before the formulation of the 7th Plan the Department made a projection to the Planning Commission based upon the norms prevalent at that time. In the draft presented to the Planning Commission it was mentioned that about 18000 villages was the possible target for the 7th Plan and it was proposed to open 12000 post offices keeping the past experience and resource constraints in view. It was also stated that they intended to make realistic projections for the 8th Plan, 1990—1995. Preliminary exercises had already been started in this regard and a firm projection, based on a proper survey with reference to the current norms, was expected to be available on a national basis during 1989-90. The Ministry also stated that the opening of post offices in rural areas had already been given the highest priority in the Department's programmes.

1.9 The Committee note that the Ministry has still not prepared a comprehensive basic data of villages or group of villages which have become eligible for provision of post offices but have not been provided post offices so far. This is amply clear from the contention of the Ministry that a proper survey with reference to the current norms is expected to be available on a national basis during 1989-90. The committee hope that the Ministry would continuously monitor the completion of this work so that a firm projection for opening of new rural post offices is made available on a national basis during 1989-90 and it is possible to ensure that the post offices are opened in all the eligible villages without any further loss of time. They would like to be apprised of further developments in this regard.

Provision of letter boxes for villages

Recommendation, Sl. No. 8, (Para No. 1.40)

1.10 The Committee had observed that during the 7th Plan it had not been possible to install letter boxes in rural areas on a systematic basis on account of ban on creation of new posts though according to the standards there was scope for providing more rural letter boxes in some of the States and Union Territories. The Committee also pointed out that while the States like Kerala and Tamil Nadu had achieved their targets, certain States like Andhra Pradesh, Assam, West Bengal etc. were much behind targets and apprehended that this lop-sided growth could be due to lack of balanced planning, absence of targets for each circle and ensuring accountability therefor. The Committee desired the Department to initiate immediately necessary corrective measures and install letter boxes in such States on priority basis which were lagging far behind and cover all the villages with a population of 500 and above within the 7th Plan.

1.11 In its reply the Ministry stated that it was intended to provide a much higher target in annual Plan 1989-90 (about 10000 to 15000). It was also stated that under Annual Plan for 1989-90 the programme of providing letter box facilities in rural areas was to be implemented mainly through the following means:-

- (i) Opening of new rural post offices: The ED Staff sanctioned for these new offices will be required to clear letter boxes installed in the attached villages.
- (ii) Scheme of Panchayat Dak Sewaks: Whenever a panchayat dak sewak is appointed by a gram panchayat a letter box will also be provided in the panchayat ghar or other public place to be cleared regularly by the dak sewak.

1.12 It was also stated that although the number of villages with 500 plus population without letter boxes was large in Andhra Pradesh, Assam and West Bengal yet this did not necessarily lead to a conclusion of defective planning as the number of villages of that class was more in those States measures in this regard under intimation to them.

1.13 In the opinion of the Committee provision of letter boxes in villages is the barest minimum step essential for providing basic communication facilities. Hence it is imperative that all-out efforts are made to provide letter boxes in rural areas on a systematic basis. The Committee hope that it would be possible to provide letter boxes in all villages with population of 500 and more on priority basis and that the Government would initiate necessary measures in this regard under intimation to them.

Delay in the delivery of letters

Recommendation, Sl. No. 17, (Para 2.24)

1.14 The Committee had observed that only 82% of the letters were delivered at their destination within the normal time and in 14% of the

cases there were delays in delivery. It was found that nearly 4% of the letters were not delivered after posting. On the findings of the sample survey and the clarification given in this regard to the effect that the exercises in this connection were continued on a continuous basis at Divisional/Regional/Circle levels, the Committee observed that the efficiency of performance had been left entirely at the circle level without any superintendence from Department's angle. Further, it was observed that such examination was done on a highly routine basis without any effort to identify the place and/or the causes that contributed to the delay in delivery of the letters or to non-delivery of letters for appropriate action. The Committee had desired the Department to conduct a detailed study of the contributory causes for the delays in delivery as also non-delivery of the letters and had desired to be apprised of the results thereof together with the action taken for improvement of the situation.

1.15 In its reply the Ministry stated that 3.58% of test letters were not received back after posting. The receipt of the test letters depended upon the willingness of the addressee to sign the letter and post it back in the letter box. It did not necessarily mean non-delivery of letters. It was also stated that the Department would conduct a drive to study and identify the areas where more delay to rural mails occurred.

1.16 The Committee hope that the Department would take appropriate steps to ensure that letters are delivered at their destination within the normal time and steps are taken to reduce the delays in delivery to the barest minimum period. They also hope that the Department would conduct a detailed study of the reasons for delays in delivery as also non-delivery of the letters with due promptitude and also take effective remedial measures so that the public is not put to any inconvenience due to delay/non-delivery of letters. They would like to be apprised of the results of the study proposed to be undertaken by the Department.

Cases of losses and frauds

Recommendation, Sl. No. 19, (Para 2.41)

1.17 The Committee had observed that in each quarter roughly about 1000 cases of losses and frauds were identified in the Postal Department and in each of the quarters of 1986-87 the value of such identified losses and frauds amounted to Rs. 27,02,010.00, Rs. 30,31,089.00, Rs. 40.80 lakhs and Rs. 35.69 lakhs. As on 1st April, 1987 there were more than 4616 cases pending investigation/action for a period of over 3 years. It was stated that in the data so compiled there was no indication of the contributory causes which led to such a large number of cases of losses and frauds that took place day after day with impunity. The Committee recommended that an investigating Team assisted by the Comptroller & Auditor General of India should be constituted to look into the contributory causes for the large number of losses and frauds that took place and to take appropriate remedial measures by a time-bound programme.

1.18 In its reply the Ministry stated that action for constituting an Investigating Committee had been initiated and Comptroller & Auditor General of India had been addressed to nominate an officer to associate with the Committee.

1.19 The Committee are of the opinion that the frauds caused not only financial loss to the Department but also generate tension and anguish to the depositors who in the rural side belonged mainly to the Low Income Group. The Committee expect the Department to ensure that all the instructions on the subject are observed scrupulously and preventive checks are conducted with meticulous care so that all such frauds are nipped in the bud. They would also like to be apprised of further developments relating to the constitution of an Investigating Committee assisted by the Comptroller & Auditor General of India.

Implementation of Recommendations

1.20 The Committee would like to emphasise that they attach the greatest importance to the implementation of recommendations accepted by Government. They would, therefore, urge that Government should keep a close watch so as to ensure expeditious implementations of the recommendations accepted by them. In cases where it is not possible to implement the recommendations in letter and spirit for any reasons, the matter should be reported to the Committee in time with reasons for non-implementation.

1.21 The Committee desire that reply in respect of the recommendation contained in Chapter V of the Report may be finalised and final reply of the Government furnished to Committee expeditiously.

CHAPTER II

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY GOVERNMENT

Recommendation Sl. No.1, (Para 1.10)

Judging from the criteria laid in pre-Independence era and the modifications effected therein till recently for opening post offices in rural areas, the Committee cannot help concluding that conditions for opening rural post offices have been made more and more stringent over the years and operate substantially to the disadvantage of the rural population, contrary to the expectations that with the advent of Independence and implementation of successive Five Year Plans, the approach for providing post offices in rural areas would be more liberal. All that has taken place over the years has been a minor variation so as to give more extra consideration for hilly, tribal and backward areas or for places that acquired importance by becoming headquarters of a gram panchayat or by falling on the road, mail line etc. The Committee therefore, recommend a thorough re-examination of the validity of these criteria in present day situation to attain the avowed goal of covering all the villages in the country with postal facilities in the minimum possible time.

Reply of Government

The Department has taken a careful note of the feeling of the Committee that conditions for opening of rural post offices have been made more and more stringent over the years. It is, however, submitted that in practical terms, until the ban on creation of posts came into effect in 1984, the rural postal network has steadily expanded as revealed by the following figures.

As on	No. of Rural Post Offices	Percentage increase
1-4-1961	69513	-
1-4-1966	88023	26.63
1-4-1971	98835	42.18
1-4-1976	106424	53.10
1-4-1981	124689	79.38
1-4-1984	129394	86.14

Whenever there has been a revision of norms, the main consideration has been to reach out to as many villages as possible. The following specific policy developments deserve to be noted in this connection.

- (i) Until 1986, in normal rural areas, post offices were considered with reference to the population of a single village (2,000). In January 1987 for the first time, grouping of villages for the purpose of fulfilment of population criteria was introduced. This step has enabled post offices being opened even in villages with population of less than 2,000.
- (ii) In January 1987, action was also taken to substantially increase the permissible limits of loss on opening of new post offices in rural areas. The limits fixed namely Rs. 2400 per annum per post office in normal rural areas and Rs. 4800 per post office per annum in hilly, backward and tribal areas, were the highest loss limits prescribed since independence.
- (iii) In November 1987, a further progressive policy was introduced in respect of hilly areas which is that in such areas; the condition of a minimum distance of 3 kms. between two post offices can be relaxed if there is justification.

The Committee's recommendation for a thorough re-examination of the validity of these criteria in the present day situation to attain the avowed goal of covering all the villages in the country with postal facilities in the minimum possible time has been carefully considered.

In this connection the following submissions would be relevant :

- (i) Government have already announced in Parliament, on 24-2-1988, their desire to undertake a massive programme of providing postal facilities in all gram panchayats in the next two years.
- (ii) The modalities of achieving this desired objective are currently under consideration. To this end, on an experimental basis, a scheme of 'Panchayat Dak Sewak' is being introduced in two selected districts in each State. Depending upon the results of this experiment, the Department will decide how best to achieve the goal of universal coverage of gram panchayats.
- (iii) The current norms for opening of post offices were revised and liberalised with effect from 9-11-1987 specifically with a view to achieve the Seventh Plan (1985—90) target of 6,000 new post offices.

In the circumstances stated above, it is felt that the appropriate occasion for a further review of the existing norms would be in connection with the Eighth Plan (1990—95), the work in respect of which is expected to be

taken up during 1989-90. By that time not only will the Department have a clearer picture of the feasibility of taking up 'Panchayat Dak Sewak' Scheme on a large scale, but an indication is also likely to be available of the order of resources the Planning Commission is likely to allocate for postal development.

[Ministry of Communications, Department of Posts OM [NO:13-188/Bgt
(PA) 1960-61 dated 6.12.1988]

Recommendation Sl. No. 3, (Para 1.12)

Further, the Committee note that whereas the programme of 1947 fixed the limit of loss at Rs. 750/- per annum, the present criterion fixes the limit of loss at Rs., 400/- per annum. If the erosion in value of a rupee over the years and the substantial increase in wage rates alone are taken into consideration, it would be apparent that the financial loss criterion has failed to keep reasonable pace with the basic factors that go to affect the cost of operations. It has also, unfortunately, not kept pace with the percentage of increase in postal charges that have been effected since 1947. The Committee consider that both the norms based on population and quantum of annual loss are totally out of tune with the present day objective of the Government to provide maximum facilities for the welfare of the people. The Committee, therefore, recommend that altogether different norms should be evolved taking into account the need of the facilities, distance of other Post Offices from the nearest village having a Post Office and means of communications in the area as basic parameters.

Reply of Government

It may be pointed out in this connection that the permissible limit of loss of Rs. 2400 per post office per annum relates only to normal rural areas. For post offices opened in hilly, backward and tribal areas, a more substantial subsidy of Rs. 4800 per post office per annum has been provided, taking into account the limited scope for revenue as well as the higher costs of maintaining postal services in such areas.

It may be further mentioned that the permissible limits of loss (PLL) at present followed are based on the recommendations of the Committee of Enquiry on Extra-Departmental system (1986) (Paragraph 5.6 of the Report). While recommending these limits the Committee has stated that it has duly taken note of the "present levels of income and expenditure of offices and of tariffs". It cannot, therefore, be said that "the financial criterion has failed to keep reasonable pace with basic factors that go to affect the cost of operations" or that "it has also not kept pace with the percentage of increase in postal charges that have been effected since 1947".

It may further be added that the said Committee had also recommended (Para 5.63 of the Report) that the loss limits should be reviewed once in two years and appropriately refixed with regard to prevailing levels of remuneration and tariffs. This recommendation has also been accepted by the Department. According to this policy, the next review of the permissible limits of loss is due in January 1989.

The Department has taken due note of the recommendation of the Committee that the basic parameters should be (a) the need of the facilities (b) distance from the nearest village having a post office and (c) means of communications in the area should be the basic parameters. In fact, even now, these parameters are being given due consideration when specific proposals are examined. However, the population and financial norms are equally important in order to have a rational system of priorities and also to ensure that within the limited resources available, postal facilities are provided in the rural sector to the maximum extent.

[Ministry of Communications, Department of Posts O.M.NO. 13-188/
Bgt (PA) 1960-61 dated 6-12-1988]

Recommendation, Sl. No. 4, (Para 1.13)

A comprehensive basic data of villages or group of villages which stand eligible for provision of post offices but have not been provided post offices so far has not been collected. It is only in October 1987, that all heads of Postal Circles were asked to carry out surveys and formulate proposals for opening of new rural post offices. The Committee consider that the whole question of opening post offices in rural areas has been dealt by the Department of Posts in a lackadaisical manner and there is an immediate need for rejuvenating the Department so as to ensure that the post offices are opened in all the eligible villages without any further loss of time.

Reply of Government

Before the formulation of the Seventh Plan (1985—90) the Department made a projection to the Planning Commission based upon the norms prevalent at that time (introduced in 1987): The draft presented to the Planning Commission by the Department, *inter alia* stated:

“On the basis of these norms, as per a survey carried out in 1982, about 30,000 villages, including 4,973 in backward areas and 6000 in the tribal areas were found eligible for opening of post offices. Out of this about 5,000 post offices would have been opened by the end of 1984-85. It is likely that about 25% of these villages may not qualify for opening of post offices on financial criterion. Thus about 18,000 villages is the possible target for the Seventh Plan. Keeping the past experience and resources constraints in view, it is proposed to open 12,000 post offices.”

It is submitted that in view of this statement the criticism that basic data has not been collected does not appear to be well founded. Out of 12,000 new post offices projected for the Seventh Plan (1985—90) Planning Commission had approved a target of 6,000 new post offices.

The following further factors also need to be taken into account in this connection:

- (i) The ban on creation of posts introduced in 1984 had the effect of disrupting the smooth implementation of the Seventh Plan targets. New Post Offices could be opened only during 1985-86 and 1986-87.
- (ii) Since, in the light of the ban, postal expansion could take place only on a selective basis, a review/revision of the norms had to be carried out in January 1987. With this revision, the earlier projections had lost their relevance.
- (iii) During 1987-88, it became clear that a positive approach would be adopted in respect of posts needed for the execution of Plan Schemes. This occasioned a further review of the norms (November 1987). These norms were specifically attuned to the Seventh Plan target of 6,000 new post offices and based on these norms, the Heads of Circles have been asked to submit proposals for 3,000 new post offices during the current year's Annual Plan. Statewise targets have been laid down for both 1988-89 and 1989-90 (Annex. I) The need for a fresh survey would arise only in order to make realistic projections for the Eighth Plan (1990—95). Preliminary exercises have already been started in this regard and a firm projection, based on a proper survey with reference to the current norms, is expected to be available on a national basis during 1989-90.

It is submitted that the actual growth of rural postal network over the years does not justify the conclusion that the whole question has been dealt in a lackadaisical manner. On the contrary, this subject (Post Offices in rural areas) has always been given the highest priority in the Department's programmes.

[Ministry of Communications, Department of Posts O.M.No. 13-1/88/
Bgt (PA) 1960-61 dated 6-12 1988]

Recommendation, Sl. No. 8, (Para 1.40)

The Committee are unhappy to note that more than 76400 villages with a population of 500 and above are yet to be provided with a basic necessity like letter boxes. The Committee feel all the more unhappy to be informed

that during the Seventh Plan so far, it has not been possible to instal letter-boxes in rural areas on a systematic basis on account of ban on creation of new posts, though according to standards, there was scope for providing more rural letter-boxes in some of the States and Union Territories. The Committee are also constrained to observe that whatever progress has been achieved so far in the installation of letter-boxes, has been on an uneven basis in as much as States like Kerala and Tamil Nadu have achieved their targets, while certain States like Andhra Pradesh, Assam, West Bengal etc. are much behind targets. The Committee apprehend that this lopsided growth could be due to lack of balanced planning, absence of targets for each Circle and ensuring accountability therefor. The Committee would, therefore, like the Department to initiate immediately necessary corrective measures and instal letter-boxes in such States on priority basis, which are lagging far behind and cover all the villages with a population of 500 and above within the Seventh Plan.

Reply of Government

In the Annual Plan 1988-89, provision of letter-boxes in 5000 villages with a population of 500 or more has been provided for. Subject to availability of resources, the Department intends to provide for a much higher target in Annual Plan 1989-90 (about 10,000 to 15,000).

Installation of rural letter-boxes has always been a planned activity, suitable targets being assigned to each Circle. During the Sixth Plan it was possible to deploy additional manpower for rural post offices (8040 additional ED agents). Though primarily intend to ensure daily delivery service in rural areas, this additional input facilitated clearance of 12,832 newly installed letter-boxes. During the Seventh Plan period, however, in view of the continuing ban on creation of posts, only a limited number of additional posts can be provided for on the basis of a special relaxation. Therefore, under Annual Plan 1988-89 and 1989-90, the programme of providing letter box facilities in rural areas is to be implemented mainly through the following means:

(i) Opening of new rural post offices:

The ED Staff sanctioned for these new offices will be required to clear letter boxes installed in the attached villages.

(ii) Scheme of panchayat Dak Sewaks:

Whenever a panchayat dak sewak is appointed by a gram panchayat a letter box will also be provided in the panchayat ghar or other public place to be cleared regularly by the dak sewak.

No doubt, the number of villages with 500+population without letter boxes is large in Andhra Pradesh, Assam and West Bengal (while it is nil in Kerala and Tamil Nadu) but this need not necessarily lead to a conclusion of defective planning. The number of villages of that class is also a point to be taken into account as revealed by the following figures:

State	No. of villages with a population of 500 or more	Total No. of Rural Letter Boxes
Andhra Pradesh	18521	35557
Assam	7357*	9438
West Bengal	22101	32775
Tamil Nadu	13305	43816
Kerala	1214	14238

[*No Census was conducted in 1981 in Assam. Hence earlier available figures have been taken]

[Ministry of Communication, Department of Posts O.M.No. 13-1/88/Bgt (PA)/1960-61 dated 6.12.1988]

Recommendation, Sl. No. 11, (Para 1.54)

The Committee are distressed to note that progress made in the achievement of physical targets in the expansion of postal network i.e. opening of post offices and installation of letter boxes in the first two years of Seventh Plan has almost been nil. Out of the target of 600 post offices, only 12 post offices could be opened during the first two years of the Plan. This insignificant progress has been attributed to the ban on creation of posts. Now that the Ministry of Finance has liberalised this ban order and also the Department has modified the criteria for opening of post offices, the Committee would urge upon the Department to take all necessary steps for achieving the physical targets set out in the Seventh Plan, by rescheduling the opening of post offices in the remaining years of Plan period.

Reply of Government

The recommendations of the Committee are accepted. The Seventh Plan target of 6,000 new post offices is proposed to be achieved as per the following phasing:

Plan Year	No. of Post Offices
1987-88	880
1988-89	3000
1989-90	2120

[Ministry of Communications, Department of Posts O. M. NO. 13-1/88/Bgt (PA) 1960-61 dated 6.12.1988]

Recommendation, Sl. No. 12, (Para 1.55)

The Committee do not find any logic in the argument that the transfer of a post from a place where a post office has been closed to a place where a post office is to be opened needs clearance from the Ministry of Finance. It is only a question of redeployment of resources at a place which need urgent attention. The Committee therefore recommend that the matter may be taken up again with Ministry of Finance and the problem sorted out so as to avoid any difficulty in future.

Reply of Government

Powers for deployment of surplus Group 'C' & 'D' posts have since been delegated to the Heads of Circles with the approval of Cabinet *vide* Department of Posts letter No. 2-18/88. PEI dated 10-6-88 (copy enclosed) Powers for deployment of surplus Groups 'B' posts have, however, been delegated to the Postal Services Board.

[Ministry of Communications, Department of Posts O.M.No. 13-1/88
Bgt (PA) 1960-61 dated 6.12.1988]

Recommendation, Sl. No. 13, (Para 2.8)

The Committee need hardly point out and that even though in all post offices, all types of services are stated to be offered, the Department cannot ignore the findings of the Savor Committee in this regard to the effect that extra departmental postmasters were relatively ignorant on performance of specialised services and that they normally direct the customers to the nearest departmental office. The Committee also note that albeit its incompleteness, the statement on number of post offices that conduct specialised business, as furnished by Department, clearly indicates that the recommendations of Savor Committee as a follow up on implementation of Madan Kishore Committee's recommendations, are based on realities of the situation. The Committee are therefore unhappy to observe that despite acceptance and issuance of instructions, the implementation of Madan Kishore Committee's recommendations was not ensured. The committee recommend that the necessity of all types of facilities to be offered in rural ED post offices should be reviewed objectively and the policy laid down in unequivocal terms. The Committee also recommend that EDP Agents should be subjected to short term initial training course to equip them for rendering proper and efficient service. They should also be given refresher training at suitable intervals.

Reply of Government***Rationalisation of SB work in Post Offices***

The matter is under examination.

Training of EDBPMs and SPMs of single handed POs.

The suggestion has been accepted by the Department and a training programme for imparting SB training to the EDBPMs and SPMs of single handed Post Offices is being chalked out.

[Ministry of Communications, Department of Posts O.M.No. 13-1/88/
Bgt (PA) 1960-61 dated 6.12.1988]

Recommendation, Sl. No. 16, (Para 2.23)

The Committee note that in the Second Plan it was envisaged that improvement in the delivery system should be preceded by improvement in the transmission of mails which meant replacement of foot lines by motor lines or at least adoption of quicker modes of transport than the traditional mail runner. The Committee also note the increase in the route kilometrage of mail lines from 12,58,405 kms. in 1980-81, to 14,44,528 kms. in 1985-86. However, the Committee are dismayed to find that the transmission by Railways, which is the quickest means of transport (apart from air) has shrunk substantially from 1,60,128 kms., in 1980-81 to 1,39,878 kms. in 1985-86, notwithstanding the fact that by 1984-85 there has been substantial increase in the railway lines. The Committee are equally unhappy to note that the increase in kilometrage of mail lines has been achieved only in slow moving means of communication in mail carts, cycles and other means wherein route length has increased from 1,94,849 kms. in 1980-81 to 4,24,170 kms. in 1985-86. It is equally shocking to note that instead of reducing the slowest service of communication (footline) there has been an increase in the foot line from 3,24,000 kms. to 3,53,000 kms. The Committee therefore feel concerned over the lack of improvement in transmission facilities of mails for a period of over 6 years as there has been substantial erosion in the existing facilities contributing to delay in delivery and it is no wonder that the delivery of mail in the rural areas has met with a raw deal from the Department. The Committee recommend that an overall review on the mode of despatch of mails should be undertaken on a priority basis so as to ensure provision of better transport system for despatch of mails rather than depending for this purpose on foot lines or mail carts or cycles or such other means of communication in these days where substantial improvement in road transport facilities have been achieved.

Reply of Government

Instructions were issued to all Heads of Circles to review the mail arrangements to ensure that wherever mechanisation using road transport is possible and will be advantageous to the operational needs of the Department, they should implement the same. A recommendation similar to 2.23 of estimates committee report had been made by ED Committee

which had been accepted by the Postal Board. Orders in context have been issued.

Copies of the orders issued are enclosed. (Annexure II)

[Ministry of Communications, Department of Posts O.M.No. 13-1/88
Bgt. (PA) 1960-61 dated 6.12.1988]

Recommendation, Sl. No. 17, (Para 2.24)

The Committee are unhappy to note that only 82 per cent of the letters were delivered at their destination within the normal time and in 14 per cent of the cases there were delays in delivery. It is rather amazing to find that nearly 4 per cent of the letters were not delivered after posting; the percentage of non-delivery or delayed delivery is so high as to create a doubt on the efficiency of the performance of the postal department. On the findings of the sample survey and the clarification given in this regard to the effect that the exercises in this connection are continued on a continuous basis at divisional/regional/circle levels, the Committee cannot but help observe that the efficiency of performance has been left entirely at the circle level without any superintendence from Department's angle. Further the examination is done on a highly routine basis without any effort to identify the place and/or the causes that contributed to the delayed delivery of the letters or to non-delivery of letters for appropriate action. The Committee expect the Department to conduct a detailed study on the contributory causes for the delays in delivery as also non-delivery of the letters and intimate the results thereof together with the action taken for improvement of the situation:

Reply of Government

In the statistics submitted to the Committee in para 2.18 (vi), 3.58% of test letters were not received back after posting. The receipt of the test letters depends upon the willingness of the addressee to sign the letter and post it back in the letter box. It does not necessarily mean non-delivery of letters.

In pursuance of the recommendations of the Estimates Committee incorporated in para 2.24, the Department will conduct a drive to study and identify the areas where more delay to rural mails occurs.

[Ministry of Communications, Department of Posts O.M. No. 13-1/88/
Bgt(PA) 1960-61 dated 6.12.1988]

Recommendation, Sl. No. 20, (Para 2.42)

The Committee note that 52 per cent of the total complaints received relate to non-receipt, delay in receipt of acknowledgements in respect of

registered articles/Money order which are stated to be due to services failure and that the Department is taking suitable steps to reduce such complaints. The Committee would like the Department to keep a close watch to see how far these steps are proving effective. Remedial measures should also be taken in right earnest to reduce the delays in regard to delivery of letters and Money orders.

Reply of Government

Suitable instructions have been issued to all Heads of Circles.

[Ministry of Communications, Department of Posts O.M. No. 13-1/88/
Bgt (PA) 1960-61 dated 6.12.1988]

Recommendation, Sl. No. 21, (Para 2.43)

The Committee are constrained to note that "there has been a big racket where postal staff has been in league with outsiders' with regard to complaint about foreign letters etc." The Committee appreciate that the Department is keeping a close watch at various points in the matter. The Committee feel that the Department should exercise greater vigilance and take a very serious view of the corrupt practices indulged in by its staff. They also feel that unless strong action is taken to detect such cases and deterrent punishment is given to the guilty persons, this evil cannot be effectively dealt with. The Committee urge that serious attention should be paid by the Department to this matter for the eradication of this evil.

Reply of Government

Suitable instructions have been issued to all Heads of Circles.

[Ministry of Communications, Department of Posts O.M.No. 13-1/88/
Bgt (PA) 1960-61 dated 6.12.1988]

CHAPTER III

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DO NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF GOVERNMENTS REPLIES

Recommendation, Sl. No. 2, (Para 1.11)

The population norm for opening post offices in rural areas was 2000 in a village or a group of villages in the year 1947; it was raised upwards to the detriment of rural population without any rhyme or reason and for several years, it stood at 5,000. It was only in October 1987, that the population norm was brought down to 3,000. The Committee strongly feel that but for this retrograde step on the part of the Department, there would have been rapid spread of postal facilities in the villages. The Committee would like the Government to again review the population criterion for opening of post offices in rural areas taking into account the utmost necessity of covering all the villages and at least fix the criterion at 2,000 in a village or a group of villages, if not less.

Reply of Government

The Committee have observed that "the population norm was revised upwards to the detriment of rural population without any rhyme or reason and for several years it stood at 5000". The population norm of 5000 (2500 in hilly, backward and tribal areas) was in force only for a brief period of about 10 months (from 28-1-1987 to 18-11-87). The object of raising the population limit to 5000 was not intended to be detrimental to the rural population. In the past, whenever villages were grouped for determination of population it was always a condition that it should be a compact group, within a radius of 3.2 kms (or 1.5 kms in hilly/tribal/backward areas) from the villages where the post office is placed. When the norm of 5000 was prescribed in January 1987, the intention was that new post offices should be set up for a substantial population so that such post offices would have adequate work for the personnel employed and also will work within the permissible limits of loss. However, when a review was undertaken in October 1987, it was decided that gram panchayats should be the nodal points of further postal development in rural areas. In consonance with this

appraisal, it was further decided at that stage that gram panchayats with a minimum population of 3,000 (1500 in hilly, backward and tribal areas) would be eligible for a post office, subject to fulfilment of other norms. It would therefore be seen that at each stage of policy development, the population norm was determined on a rational basis.

The Department is of the view that the existing population norms of 3,000 and 1500 (per gram panchayat/village in normal areas or hilly/backward/tribal areas as the case may be) are adequate to fulfill the Seventh Plan target of 6,000 new post offices. These limits however may have to be reviewed in relation to the target that may be approved by the Planning Commission for the Eight Plan (1990—95). This exercise will be undertaken at the appropriate time and the recommendation made by the Committee "that the population criteria should be fixed at 2,000 for a village or group of villages" will be kept in view at the time of the review.

[Ministry of Communication, Department of Posts O.M.No. 13-1/88/
Bgt(PA) 1960-61 dated 6.12.1988]

Recommendation, Sl. No. 5, (Para 1.24)

The Committee are unhappy to note that the tempo achieved in opening rural post offices during the first two Five Year Plans could not be sustained in the subsequent Five Year Plans, as is evident from the fact that whereas the number of rural post offices increased by 47,397 during the first two plans (over a period of ten years), the net increase in number of post offices in subsequent four Five Year Plans, three annual plans and first two years of Seventh Five Year Plans (over a period of twenty-five years) was only 58,417. It is also really shocking to find that during the first two years of the Seventh Plan, there has been no growth in the number of post offices and that the existing facilities have been withdrawn in quite a few cases resulting in negative growth rate. The Committee need hardly stress that not only it is imperative once again to reach the growth rate as achieved in the first two plans, but also that the growth rate so achieved should be evenly spread in the remaining years of the Seventh Plan.

Reply of Government

In this connection, it will be appreciated that during the first two Five Year Plans (1951—61) the ground to be covered was very large. As, at the commencement of the First Five Year Plan (1951), in the country as a whole, there were only 21,441 rural post offices. In order to achieve a rapid expansion the network was increased by 48072 new post offices in the rural sector during the first ten years (1951—61), at an annual rate of 4,600. Subsequently also, the growth has been maintained so as to go

beyond the normal rural areas and to reach out to the remoter areas. The average annual increment of rural post offices during the period 1961—1984 was 2,600 which is by no means insubstantial. During the same period, the urban growth rate was less than 350 new post offices per annum.

It is true that during 1985-86 and 1986-87 a negative growth rate was recorded. The reason for this is mainly that on account of the ban on creation of posts, the normal expansion had come more or less to a halt. During 1986-87 certain modifications had been introduced by the Ministry of Finance. The Department also undertook a complete review of the norms in the light of the changed circumstances, and on the other hand also worked out, in consultation with the Ministry of Finance, the modalities of clearing proposals for creation of posts for purposes of opening of new post offices under the Plan Scheme. The systematic effort towards achievement of the Seventh Plan target commenced in Annual Plan 1987-88.

As regards withdrawal of existing facilities it may be mentioned that every year for one reason or the other a few post offices are discontinued. This was the case more or less during 1985-86 and 1986-87 also, except that in compliance with the then Government orders, the effectiveness of continued expenditure or on-going schemes/facilities was brought under special scrutiny. In the context of the ban on creation of posts, this exercise inevitably led to a negative growth rate. It is however felt that undue significance need not be attached to the position that prevailed in 1985-86 and 1986-87 in as much as the Department is fully committed to achieving the Seventh Plan target of 6,000 new post offices and substantial beginning in this respect has already been made during 1987-88 with the sanctioning of 988 new post offices in spite of the continuing general ban on creation of posts. The Department has also planned to open 3,000 new post offices during the current year (1988-89) and 2120 new post offices during the last year of the Seventh Plan (1989-90).

[Ministry of Communications, Department of Posts, O.M.No. 13-1/88/
Bgt (PA) 1960-61 dated 6.12.1988]

Recommendation, Sl. No. 6, (Para 1.25)

The Committee are informed that the average population covered by each post office works out to 4107 against the policy of Government to provide one for every 5,000 population till September, 1987 and now 3,000. The Committee are, however, constrained to find that in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal the coverage is very low as the following data will indicate:—

Bihar	—	5,963
Uttar Pradesh	—	5,675
West Bengal	—	5,633

On the other hand the coverage is quite on the high side in Himachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan and Gujarat as the following data will indicate:—

Himachal Pradesh	—	1,697
Andhra Pradesh	—	2,788
Rajasthan	—	3,076
Gujarat	—	3,019

The Committee do not feel convinced by the reasons put forth by the Government that these imbalances have cropped up as many of the post offices have been opened under the discretionary powers vested with the Heads of Circles. The Committee attribute such imbalances mainly due to failure of the higher echelons of the Postal Department to ensure that the postal facilities are properly planned and rationalised to generally maintain the coverage at the same level in the various States. The present system of asking each Circle to propose the Post Offices which they would be in a position to open on the basis of the criteria provided, deprives the department of the realistic assessment of the number of villages which fulfil the criteria but are left out of such facility. Had proper superintendence and control been exercised, the Department would have been in a position to prepare a perspective plan of action to ensure minimum balanced growth in all the Circles. The Committee, therefore, recommend that a comprehensive appraisal of the progress made in all States from one plan period to another should be conducted so as to identify States and areas that failed to grow adequately and suggest ways and means to rectify the situation. It also goes without saying that the discretionary powers vested with the Heads of Circles should be used more in the case of those Circles where the progress has been rather tardy.

Reply of Government

The extent of postal development in an area is measured in terms of the average population served by a post office as well as the average area served by a post office. In heavily populated areas, the average population served by a post office will tend to be high even when post offices are provided in close proximity to one another. On the other hand, in sparsely populated areas, the average population served by a post office is bound to be low but actually the post offices may be far apart. The averages should invariably be considered in the context of density of population and also taking into account the average area served per post office.

As per 1981 census of India, the density of population in the country as a whole was 221 persons per sq. km. As against this, the density of population in West Bengal, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh was 614,402 and 377 respectively. On the other hand, the other four States, namely Himachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan and Gujarat have a density of

population substantially lower than the national index (Himachal Pradesh 76, Andhra Pradesh 194, Rajasthan 100 and Gujarat 173). The average population per post office in these States also tends to follow the same pattern and need not necessarily be taken to indicate development or under development in the postal sphere.

In Bihar the average area served by a post office is 15.85 sq. kms., in Uttar Pradesh it is 15.97 sq. kms., and in West Bengal 10.81 sq. kms. Considering that the all-India average of area served by a Post Office is 22.69 sq. kms., it will be seen that these three States are not deficient in postal facilities in relation to the national average. Himachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat are examples of a normal level of development. These States have a fairly low level of population per post office but in terms of area served per post office also the indices are favourable. (Himachal Pradesh: 1 post office for 22.88 sq. kms, Andhra Pradesh: 1 post office for 17.05 sq. kms. and Gujarat: 1 post office for 22.92 sq. kms.)

In Rajasthan the average population per post office (3552) is less than the national average (4731) not because of a higher level of postal development but because of the fact that the population, in relation to the total area is small. The average area per post office in this State (35.48 sq. kms.) is much higher than the national average (22.69 sq. kms.)

The Committee have pointed out that postal facilities have to be planned and rationalised to maintain coverage at the same level in the various States. While this stand is basically tenable, it is to some extent unavoidable that the general level of development (industrial, agricultural and educational) in the different regions have an influence on the postal networks since the financial parameters are readily met in the more developed areas.

It is not the general practice that the Department leaves it to the Circles to decide the number of post offices which they would be in a position to open on the basis of the criteria provided. Such an arrangement was made in 1987-88, because in view of the drought conditions, there were severe limits on expenditure and relaxation from the ban orders could not be taken for granted. Under normal circumstances, the practice is to work out targets for each Circle taking into account various factors such as the extent of development that has already taken place, the regional imbalances, etc. Targets have been laid down for the current year (1988-89) as well as for the next year (1989-90). In addition, certain preliminary exercises have also been initiated so as to have a clearer picture of the Programme to be drawn up for the Eighth Five Year Plan. Discretionary powers no longer vest with the Heads of Circles and hence this factor is not likely to lead to imbalances.

[Ministry of Communications, Department of Posts, O.M.No. 13-1/88/
Bgt (PA) 1960-61 Dated: 6.2.1988]

Recommendation Sl. No. 7, (Para 1.33)

The Committee feel greatly perturbed to be informed that as many as 347 post offices were closed in the rural areas during the last three years in spite of public protests. The Committee are not convinced by the reasons advanced by the Department of Posts for the closure of these post offices viz. non-fulfilment of norms, wrong advice etc. The Committee consider that these reasons could have been well taken care of had the authorities put in a letter more effort to ensure their proper functioning and their adherence to the required norms. The Committee are firmly of the opinion that a post office once opened should in no case be closed. The Committee would also like the Department of Posts to re-open the already closed post offices and also delivery centres, if any.

Reply of Government

The Department has taken note of the opinion of the Committee that a post office once opened should in no case be closed. However, it is not feasible to lay down an absolute rule in this regard for the following reasons:

- (i) There have been occasions when a post office was discontinued on account of shifting of population. (In Mizoram, during the period of insurgency, residents of some of the villages regrouped in more secure areas). This led to closure of some of the village post offices.
- (ii) There are also occasions when a post office is closed because the rented accommodation had to be surrendered the owner in compliance with a Court decree.
- (iii) Further it will also be violative of the financial norms if a post office which falls short of the prescribed revenue or exceeds the permissible limit of loss is retained indefinitely.

As regards re-opening of post offices already closed, the Department has undertaken a survey to find out whether justification now exists for re-opening of such offices. When a post office is closed, the establishment sanctioned for it is abolished or converted into matching savings for creation of some other new establishment. Therefore even where justification is established for re-opening of a closed post office the concurrence of the Ministry of Finance is required for relaxation of the ban on creation of posts. There are obvious limitations. The Department's objective is to provide the best possible service within the various limitations under which

it operates. For instance, the post office functioning in the Catholic Seminary, Rachol in Goa was re-opened on review.

[Ministry of Communications, Department of Posts, O.M.No. 13-1/88/
Bgt(PA)1960-61 Dated 6.2.1988]

Recommendation Sl. No. 9, (Para 1.44)

The Committee are constrained to observe that whereas the financial targets for the Sixth Plan were exceeded by nearly 30 per cent, the physical targets were not achieved, except in installation of letter boxes. Unless, however, the financial targets had been substantially underestimated or the expenditure incurred was outside the plan purview, the explanation for non-achievement of physical targets does not seem to be convincing. The Committee desire that the Department should in future, frame estimates on a realistic basis, keeping in view various factors likely to affect the implementation of schemes.

Reply of Government

This observation actually calls for a year by year analysis of achievement of physical targets as well as actual expenditure in relation to the outlay. The following figures would be relevant.

Annual Plan	Target	Achievement	Opening of Post Offices		(Rs. Lakhs)	
			Variation %	Outlay	Expenditure	Variation %
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1980-81	1574	1884	(+) 19.6%	2304	27.73	(+) 20.35
1981-82	1600	1601	Nil	69.12	82.81	(+) 19.8
1982-83	1000	1000	Nil	114.88	150.22	(+) 30%
1983-84	2500	2268	(-) 9.28%	362.00	375.00	(+) 3.6%
1984-85	1950	62	(-) 96.8%	524.00	409.00	(-) 21.9%

The following conclusions may be drawn from the above figures.

- (i) In first three years of the Sixth Plan (1980-81, 1981-82 and 1982-83) the physical targets were either fully achieved or exceeded. These three Plan Years were completely free from any ban on creation of posts.
- (ii) During 1983-84 even though the last quarter of the year came under the ban (Jan. to March 1984) the shortfall in physical target was a mere 9.28%. It would have been as high as 25% on a proportionate basis.

- (iii) The last year of the Sixth Plan, namely 1984-85, was completely under the ban on creation of posts. Even then, the shortfall was not 100% but 96.8%. In short, the shortfall in achievement of physical targets is easily and directly explained by the ban on creation of posts (Jan. 1984) and no other factors came into the picture.
- (iv) It is no doubt true that in all but the last year of the Sixth Plan the actual expenditure exceeded the initial outlay (BE) by 20.35 %, 19.81%, 30 % and 3.6 % respectively but this was not necessarily due to under-estimation of expenditure or incurring of expenditure outside the Plan. The basic reason was that during the first year (1980-81) on account of post offices being opened substantially in excess of the initial estimate, the final expenditure also showed a corresponding increase over the budget estimate. Since the Plan expenditure is aggregated year to year during the five years, the excess expenditure of the first year is reflected in the subsequent years also.
- (v) As regards the subsequent 3 years (1981-82, 1982-83 and 1983-84) it no doubt appears that the initial estimates of expenditure were on the low side but such variations are not abnormal in view of the following factors:
- (a) The allowances of ED employees undergo periodical revisions the extent of which cannot be anticipated accurately.
 - (b) Whereas the financial estimate is framed on certain assumptions of the progress of the physical targets, quarter by quarter, in actual practice due to various local reasons the rate of achievement may turn out to be different. This trend can also substantially affect the actual expenditure for the year.

However, the Department has taken due note of the Committee's desire that estimates should be framed, on a realistic basis, keeping in view various factors likely to affect the implementation of the Scheme.

[Ministry of Communications, Department of Posts, O.M.No. 13-1/
Bgt(PA)1960-61 Dated 6.12.1988]

Recommendation Sl. No. 10, (Para 1.45)

One reason for the shortfall in the achievement of physical targets is stated to be the ban on creation of posts, enforced in January, 1984. The targets were fixed in 1980 at the beginning of the Sixth Five Year Plan while the ban was imposed in 1984 i.e. in the fourth year of the Plan and

perhaps financial target had already been exceeded by then. The Committee, therefore, do not consider that the ban could have been the exclusive reason for the shortfall. It is really surprising that no investigation about the causes of shortfall in the achievement of physical targets was conducted which could have enabled the Department to take necessary corrective steps against their recurrence. The Committee suggest that the Department should subject itself to a self-assessment on its planning and execution and take steps to identify and tackle the short-comings and bottle-necks in achieving the physical plan targets.

Reply of Government

It may be submitted that during the first 3 years of the Sixth Plan, namely 1980-81, 1981-82 and 1982-83 there was no shortfall in physical terms as revealed by the following figures:

Annual Plan	Target	Achievement	Variation
	(Post Offices)	(Post Offices opened)	
1980-81	1574	1884	+ 310
1981-82	1600	1601	+ 1
1982-83	1000	1000	Nil

During 1983-84 however, the targets could not be achieved since the Central Government ban on creation of posts had come into effect from January 1984. It may be observed that even though only the first three quarters of the Plan year 1983-84 were free from ban, as high as 90.72% of the Annual Plan target of that year was duly achieved. It was only in 1984-85 when the ban was fully operational that the target could not be pursued at all. Even in that year the Department sanctioned 62 new post offices on the basis of a special dispensation obtained from the Ministry of Finance.

It would therefore be clear that the shortfall in achieving the Sixth Plan target is wholly attributable to the ban introduced in January 1984.

[Ministry of Communications, Department of Posts, O.M.No. 13-1/88/Bgt (PA) 1960-61, Dated 6.12.1988]

Recommendation Sl. No. 18, (Para 2.25)

In the context of the above situation, it comes as no surprise to the Committee that several private organisations are running parallel postal services for a profit whereas subsidy is the basis on which the Post & Telegraph Department is functioning. The Committee express its grave concern at the deteriorating situation and expect the Department to take appropriate steps to restructure the system so that the Postal Department is in a position to render reliable and speedy service to the public, which should alone be the hall-mark

of achievement for the Postal Department. In this connection, the Committee are firmly of the opinion that private sector should have no role to play in postal services.

Reply of Government

The observations in this para appear to be based on the presumption that parallel postal services are running because of the inefficiency of the Postal Department. It also appears to imply that while the parallel postal services are able to make a profit the Department is to be subsidized.

The Postal Department has an obligation to offer and ensure the services throughout the country. The cost of operation is much less when the postal articles are to be delivered within a small region since the number of handlings is less and transport/air freight costs are also less. Thus although the Department is to function on an overall subsidy, it will be making profit if the cost is worked out on such profitable areas only. The parallel postal services have tried to provide service only over such profitable chunks.

Secondly, the so-called parallel postal services have not offered anything similar to the postcard or the inland letter or the letter or the book post at the rates at which the Post Office is offering them. No parallel Postal Service operated privately can ever hope to make a profit on these services and at the rates offered by the Post Office. The so-called parallel services offer service similar to our registration service and that too only for limited destinations. If a courier is asked to deliver a packet in a small town he will charge almost 100 times than what we charge.

Therefore, there is no comparison between the services offered by the Postal Department and the couriers both in terms of the spread of the network and in terms of the charges. The Post Office has a wider network and far cheaper as regards charges. Consequently such a wide network cannot ensure 100% speed and efficiency which a courier can assure both because of his limited span of operation and because of his higher charges.

Precisely on account of the cross-subsidization between mail circulating within the small region and the mail travelling from one end to the other end of the country and the possibility of the private sector taking over only profitable sector of the operations, the principle of monopoly for conveyance of letters has been provided in the Post Office Act. If some private operators are violating this provision it is because of the very low penalty provided in the Act and the absence of power to search and seize the conveyance used by the private operators. An amendment to the Indian Post Office Act passed by the Parliament in 1986 but yet to be enacted, among other things, provides for powers to search and seize suspected cases of violation of monopoly and also provides for increased penalty.

To provide for the special needs of commercial urban sector, the Postal Department is providing internal as well as International Speed Post, which is as efficient, if not more efficient than the private courier. However, efficiency and economy may not be the only criteria persuading private sector to use private couriers. There may be other reasons such as unwillingness to entrust certain packets and merchandise to the Government exposing the packet to seizure if it violates some other legislation such as Customs Act etc.

The Postal Department is taking action to issue a directive from the Government to the effect that Government Institutions like Banks should use Speed Post Service wherever it is available.

[Ministry of Communications, Department of Posts O.M. No. 13-1/88/
Bgt(PA) 1960-61 Dated 6.12.1988]

Recommendation Sl. No. 19, (Para 2.41)

The Committee are distressed to note that in each quarter, roughly about 1000 cases of losses and frauds are identified in the Postal Department and in each of the quarters of 1986-87, the value of such identified losses and frauds amounted to Rs. 27.03 lakhs, Rs. 30.35 lakhs, Rs. 40.84 lakhs and Rs. 35.69 lakhs. It is also a matter of grave concern that as on 1-4-1987, there were more than 4600 cases pending investigation/action for a period of over 3 years. Instead of initiating positive measures to obviate these losses and frauds, all that the Department has done is only compilation of quarterly statistical data of losses and frauds and placing the same before the Postal Board and circulating it to all Circles. No report on action taken by the Postal Board was available. It is really amazing that in the data so compiled, there is no indication of the contributory causes which led to such a large number of cases of losses and fraud that take place day after day with impunity. The Committee recommend that an investigating team, assisted by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India, should be constituted to look into the contributory causes for the large number of losses and frauds that take place and to take appropriate remedial measures by a time bound programme. The rules and regulations on the subject also merit close scrutiny for plugging any lacunae, if found therein. It also goes without saying that the time lag between the location of a loss or fraud and action taken against the persons involved has to be reduced to the barest minimum.

Reply of Government

The action for constituting an Investigating Committee has been initiated and the Comptroller and Auditor General of India has been addressed to nominate an officer to associate with the Committee.

[Ministry of Communications, Department of Posts O.M. No. 13-1/88/
(PA) 1960-61 Dated 6.12.1988]

Recommendation Sl. No. 22, (Para 3.6)

The Committee note the circumstances which led to the initiation of the scheme of providing mobile postal services and its ultimate closure. The Committee are aware that the success of this scheme largely depended on the post masters who were entrusted with the onerous duty of visiting nearby villages in addition to their own work and the Postal Department came to the conclusion that 'the benefits were not commensurate with the expenditure incurred'. The Committee consider that the faithful implementation of this scheme would have to a large extent met the requirements of specially those villages in hilly and remote areas where the postal facilities are still lacking. Moreover, the implementation of this scheme should have been viewed more from a social angle rather than economic angle. The Committee therefore would like the Department to consider whether this scheme could be revived with such modifications as may be necessary taking into account the previous experiences. The feasibility of providing mobile vans, instead of expecting the post masters to go on foot or on cycle to nearby villages may prove useful in the implementation of this scheme.

Reply of Government

The Scheme of Rural Mobile Post Offices has been discontinued after a long period of experiment and based on the actual experience gained and results achieved. The Committee of Enquiry on Extra-Departmental System had also unequivocally recommended the discontinuance of this Scheme. The Department therefore considers that no useful purpose will be served in reviving the scheme.

Nor is it a viable proposition to provide the service with the use of motor vehicles. The expenditure involved in such a service, in terms of capital cost, expenditure on POL items and salaries and allowances of running staff, not to mention maintenance facilities to be provided in numerous base depots, would be rather colossal. In fact, on grounds of financial viability, the Department has practically discontinued motorised mobile post offices even in the metropolitan/urban centres.

It is the Department's considered view that a Scheme such as the 'Panchayat Dak Sewaks' which has been launched on an experimental basis has a greater potential in this respect, while at the same time not unduly straining the scarce resources of the country.

[Ministry of Communications, Department of Posts O.M. No. 13-1/88/
Bgt (PA) 1960-61 Dated 6.12.1988]

Recommendation Sl. No. 23, (Para 3.18)

The Committee note that the system of ED agents was started with the laudable objective to provide the basic functions of a post office in a

village, viz., sale of postage stamps and stationery, booking of registered articles and money orders, payments of money orders and despatch of mail and for this purpose, to solicit the services of a reputable literate person in the village on an allowance. They are, however, constrained to observe that over the years, the objectives for which the system was originally established have been substantially diluted and abused by including several functions whose inclusion is questionable. The Committee also take note of the fact that notwithstanding the intention to have ED System as an additional source of small income over and above normal earnings ED system has come to stay as the only source of earnings for a large number of persons employed under ED category. The Committee therefore, would like the Government to take realities into consideration and to consider no longer the ED System as avocation in addition to normal employment in these days when most of ED agents have no other means of income but on the other hand to treat it as a source of temporary employment to the educated unemployed. In this connection the salient features of ED system have also to be closely looked into and the position placed in proper perspective as the two features — one relating to need to possess adequate means of livelihood before appointment as ED sub-postmaster or branch postmaster and the other relating to offer of opportunity for appointment as Group D or postman appear to be self-conflicting as it is odd to expect that a person getting part time employment as a post master would accept employment as a Group-D or postman.

Reply of Government

ED employees are part time employees and in view of the limited amount of workload in the rural areas, it will not be possible to treat ED employment as a sort of temporary employment to educated unemployed. This has to continue to be a supplementary avocation so that the persons who take up ED employment have other sources of income while attending to limited postal functions.

[Ministry of Communications, Department of Posts O.M. No. 13-1/88/
Bgt (PA) 1960-61 Dated 6.12.1988]

Recommendation Sl. No. 24, (Para 3.19)

The Committee also view seriously that notwithstanding acceptance of recommendations of Madan Kishore Committee and issue of orders in 1973, the Postal Circles allowed proliferation of the ED System to as many as 42 categories. The Committee would urge the Department to conduct an inquiry into cases of fresh creation/appointment to ED Cadre after August 1973 against abolished categories of ED agents and fix responsibility for violating the directives.

Reply of Government

EDAs working on the abolished posts under Madan Kishore and Rajan Committee reports could not be absorbed due to non-availability of suitable alternate posts.

[Ministry of Communications, Department of Posts O.M. No. 13-1/88/
Bgt (PA) 1960-61 Dated 6.12.1988]

Recommendation Sl. No. 25, (Para 3.20)

The Committee do not find any justification whatsoever for continuance of ED System in urban areas where the services are expected to be rendered by regular paid employees. It seems to the Committee that the Department of Posts has chosen to violate the directives on ban on creation of posts by resorting to the questionable method of creation of ED agents which was solely intended for services in rural areas. The Committee therefore recommend that the system of ED agents in urban areas should be totally abolished forthwith as a permanent measure in the light of the recommendations of Savor Committee which have already been accepted by the Government and that steps be taken to rehabilitate the personnel against regular jobs to be offered to them without any retrenchment whatsoever. The Committee note from the analytical data of ED employees in various circles that in certain circles like Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Orissa and Uttar Pradesh, either the resort to ED employees is excessive or the conversion of ED cadre into regular cadre based on study of quantum of work is slow, as compared to certain other circles like Haryana, Kerala, Maharashtra, Punjab, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal when the basic principles for appointment of ED staff in the rural areas are uniform throughout the country, the Committee feel that there is no justification for such lopsided dispersal of ED employees. As several ED employees are serving for a considerable period even upto 20 years in some cases without any improvement in service conditions, the Committee feel that a comprehensive study should be undertaken to examine the causes for this situation and propose appropriate remedial solutions for implementation within a maximum period of 6 months.

Reply of Government

ED system/primarily is for rural areas and semi urban areas. It is not the intention of the department to encourage engagement of EDAs in urban areas where full time regular posts are justified. However, there are some single handed and doubled handed post offices in urban areas which will not justify employment of full time Group 'D'. In this case and also other cases where there is peak pressure of work at certain times like mornings and evenings in mail offices at railway station for exchange of

mail which will not permit engagement of full time departmental employees, it would be difficult for us to entirely do away with ED system in urban areas.

[Ministry of Communications, Department of Posts O.M. No. 13-1/88/
Bgt (PA) 1960-61 Dated 6.2.1988]

CHAPTER IV

**RECOMMENDATIONS / OBSERVATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH
REPLIES OF GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY
THE COMMITTEE**

— Nil —

CHAPTER V

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH FINAL REPLIES OF GOVT. ARE AWAITED

Recommendation Sl.No. 14, (Para 2.9)

The Committee would also like the Department to consider the feasibility of providing facilities like C.T.D., N.S.C. etc., for which separate commission is offered by the rural post offices in coordination with nearest departmental post office, rather than by the extra departmental postmasters. The Committee feel that this modification could help a great deal in reducing operational expenses.

Reply of Government

The matter is under examination.

[Ministry of Communications, Department of Posts O.M. No. 13-1/88/
Bgt (PA) 1960-61 Dated 6.12.1988]

Recommendation Sl.No. 15, (Para 2.10)

The Committee have been informed that as many as 9.22 crores savings banks accounts are being operated by the post offices and the outstanding balance is of the order of Rs. 24,657 crores as on 31-3-1987. Considering the magnitude of the funds which are available for developmental purposes through savings bank accounts at a very low rate of interest, as compared to long term investment, the Committee feel that if the Postal Department, which conducts the agency function on behalf of the Finance Ministry, is allowed even 1/2 per cent commission on the accretions made by it in a year to the Savings Bank accounts, such an income should be adequate to meet the deficit in running the Postal Department. The Committee, therefore recommend that a fresh look on the concept of deficit may be taken and a review of overall position conducted.

Reply of Government

Grant of 0.5 commission of Department of Posts for doing the SB work.

The matter has been taken up with the Ministry of Finance.

[Ministry of Communications, Department of Posts O.M. No. 13-1/88/
Bgt (PA) 1960-61 Dated 16.12.1988]

Recommendation Sl.No. 26, (Para 3.41)

The Committee note that the rules provide for inspection of all post offices by an Inspector of Post Offices in a year. The Committee also note that quite adequate organisational set up for monitoring the evaluation of efficiency of postal services is available with the Department. The Committee, however, feel that despite these provisions for inspections in the rules and availability of adequate Monitoring Evaluation Organisation to do the needful, precious little has been done to streamline the functioning of the post offices all over the country as is evident from the fact that very large number of complaints are pouring in and frauds committed every day. The Monitoring Wing has also failed to assist central planning in the Directorate to take an overall view of the manner of implementation of their projects as the Department does not possess basic data of extent of development from State to State and consequently has not been able to prepare detailed planning projects for execution in these States. The Committee consider that certain procedural lacunae or inadequacy of quality of inspection could be contributory factors for this state of affairs. The Committee would like the Department to carry out the assessment of the functioning of the Monitoring Unit as well as the *modus operandi* for inspection of post offices by an Expert Body, so that the functioning of this unit could be streamlined and the inspections of the post offices put in their right perspective.

Reply of Government

The Department is examining this issue and trying to evolve a perspective in regard to the Monitoring & Inspections.

[Ministry of Communications, Department of Posts O.M. No. 13-1/88/
Bgt (PA) 1960-61 Dated 6.12.1988]

NEW DELHI;
28, March 1988
7, Phalguna 1910(S)

ASUTOSH LAW,
Chairman,
Estimates Committee.

ANNEXURE I

(Please see Recommendations Sl. No. 4, Para 1.13)

ANNUAL PLAN 1988-89

Tentative State-wise targets for opening of new Post Offices

State/Union Territories	Number of New Post Offices proposed to be opened	
	Rural Branch Post Offices	Departmental sub-post-offices in project areas/developing areas
1	2	3
Andhra Pradesh	150	5
Assam	230	4
Bihar	225	5
Gujarat	100	5
Haryana	30	5
Himachal Pradesh	75	3
Jammu & Kashmir	75	2
Karnataka	100	5
Madhya Pradesh	230	5
Maharashtra	230	6
Manipur	30	2
Meghalaya	30	1
Nagaland	20	1
Orissa	175	5
Punjab	50	2
Rajasthan	175	5
Sikkim	25	2
Tamil Nadu	125	5
Tripura	30	2
Uttar Pradesh	225	5
West Bengal	165	5
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	15	2
Arunachal Pradesh	30	2

1	2	3
Chandigarh	—	2
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	10	1
Delhi	10	1
Goa	30	2
Lakshadweep	5	1
Mizoram	25	1
Pondicherry	5	1
	2750	100

NOTE. The Annual Plan provides for 3,000 new post offices. The balance of 150 post offices will be allocated after mid-year review to be taken up in October 1988.

Annual Plan 1989-90

State-wise targets for opening of new Post Offices

State/Union Territories	Number of New Post Offices proposed to be opened	
	Rural Branch Post Offices	Departmental sub-post offices in project areas/developing areas
1	2	3
1. Andhra Pradesh	80	6
2. Assam	140	5
3. Bihar	175	6
4. Gujarat	70	9
5. Haryana	20	4
6. Himachal Pradesh	70	4
7. Jammu & Kashmir	50	2
8. Karnataka	80	6
9. Kerala	70	5
10. Madhya Pradesh	175	6
11. Maharashtra	150	7
12. Manipur	20	2

1	2	3
13. Meghalaya	20	2
14. Nagaland	15	2
15. Orissa	120	7
16. Punjab	30	3
17. Rajasthan	120	6
18. Sikkim	15	2
19. Tamil Nadu	80	99
20. Tripura	20	3
21. Uttar Pradesh	275	5
22. West Bengal	140	6
23. A & N Islands	6	2
24. Arunachal Pradesh	15	2
25. Chandigarh	—	2
26. Dadra Nagar Haveli	5	1
27. Delhi	5	4
28. Goa	20	3
29. Mizoram	20	3
30. Pondicherry	4	1
	2000	120

ANNEXURE II

(Please see Recommendation Sl. No. 16 Para 2.23)

**D.O.No. 18/17/87D
Department of Posts
Dak Bhavan
New Delhi-110001.**

Dated: 4-8-88

Dear Shri Abraham,

Kindly find enclosed a photo copy of Para 2.23 of the 58th Report of Estimates Committee (8th Lok Sabha) on the Ministry of Communications (Department of Posts). The Committee feels that Department of Posts should take up urgently a review of the modes of transmission of mails, and take advantage of the large scale mechanisation of Road Transport. We have on occasion come across, cases where the Department of Posts has desired such mechanisation of mail-transmission by taking advantage of bus transport, but have found response far from encouraging. Since the Estimates Committee of the Parliament has now recommended such a measure and it is the duty of the Government of India to ensure that this recommendation is put into operation and action taken compliance given to the Parliament, I request you to kindly address all State Governments to implement this recommendation of the Estimates Committee.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,

(MRS. G.E.R. BANERJI)

**Shri P.M. Abraham,
Secretary,
Surface Transport Ministry,
Parivahan Bhavan,
Parliament Street,
New Delhi-110001.**

Copy to all Postmasters General. They may kindly review the mail arrangements in their Circles to ensure that wherever mechanisation using Road Transport is possible and will be advantageous to the operational needs of the department, they should implement the same. In case they have any difficulty, they should take up the issue with the appropriate and competent authority in the State Government. In any case, the review should be completed within the next 15 days and action taken progress report should be sent to this office addressed to Shri S.M. Chopra, ADG(D). Since we have to give compliance report to the Parliament, this may be treated as *on priority* basis. Kindly acknowledge receipt to ADG(D).

2.23. The Committee note that in the Second Plan it was envisaged that improvement in the delivery system should be preceded by improvement in the transmission of mails which meant replacement of foot lines by motor lines or at least adoption of quicker modes of transport than the traditional mail runner. The Committee also note the increase in the route kilometrage of mail lines from 12,58,405 kms in 1980-81, to 14,44,528 kms. in 1985-86. However, the Committee are dismayed to find that the transmission by Railways, which is the quickest means of transport (apart from air) has shrunk substantially from 1,60,128 kms. in 1980-81 to 1,39,878 kms. in 1985-86, notwithstanding the fact that by 1984-85 there has been substantial increase in the Railway lines. The Committee are equally unhappy to note that the increase in kilometrage of mail lines has been achieved only in slow moving means of communication in mail carts, cycles and other means wherein route length has increased from 1,94,849 kms in 1980-81 to 4,24,170 kms. in 1985-86. It is equally shocking to note that instead of reducing the slowest service of communication (footline) there has been an increase in the foot line from 3,24,000 kms. to 3,53,000 kms. The Committee therefore feel concerned over the lack of improvement in transmission facilities of mails for a period of over 6 years as there has been substantial erosion in the existing facilities contributing to delay in delivery and it is no wonder that the delivery of mail in the rural areas has met with a raw deal from the Department.

The Committee recommend that an overall review on the mode of despatch of mails should be undertaken on a priority basis so as to ensure provision of better transport system for despatch of mails rather than depending for this purpose on foot lines or mail carts or cycles or such other means of communication in these days where substantial improvement in road transport facilities have been achieved.

2.24. The Committee are un-happy to note that only 82% of the letters were delivered at their destination within the normal time and in 14% of the cases there were delays in delivery. It is rather amazing to find that nearly 4% of the letters were not delivered after posting; the percentage of non-delivery or delayed delivery is so high as to create a doubt on the

efficiency of the performance of the postal department. On the findings of the sample survey and the clarification given in this regard to the effect that the exercises in this connection are continued on a continuous basis at divisional/regional/circle levels, the Committee cannot but help observe that the efficiency of performance has been left entirely at the circle level without any Superintendence from Department angle. Further the examination is done on a highly routine basis without any effort to identify the place and/or the causes that contributed to the delayed delivery of the letters or to non-delivery of letters for appropriate action. The Committee expect the Department to conduct a detailed study on the contributory causes for the delays in delivery as also non-delivery of the letters and intimate the results thereof together with the action taken for improvement of the situation.

2.25 In the context of the above situation, it comes as no surprise to the Committee that several private organisations are running parallel postal services for a profit whereas subsidy is the basis on which the Post & Telegraph Department is functioning. The Committee express its grave concern at the deteriorating situation and expect the Department to take appropriate steps to restructure the system so that the Postal Department is in a position to render reliable and speedy service to the public, which should alone be the hall-mark of achievement for the Postal Department. In this connection, the Committee are firmly of the opinion that private sector should have no role to play in postal services.

Ministry of Communications
Department of Posts
Dak Bhavan
New Delhi-110001.

To

All Heads of Postal Circles

No. 18-17/87-(Pt.II)

Dated: 21-10-88.

Subject: Para 6.65 of recommendation of Savor Committee on Extra Departmental System regarding mail conveyance.

The Savor Committee in its report while examining the issue of conveyance of mails observed that, even though when the branch office was located on a road connecting the account office by motor service the mail was exchanged by employing an ED Mail Carrier usually on the plea that the motor timings are not suitable. The Committee did not find the argument to be convincing and was of the opinion that considering the level of traffic and revenue, the timings for an office to be kept open and

for purposes of delivery have necessarily to follow the timings of receipt of mails and therefore even it leads to some delay the additional expenditure in engaging a mail carrier would not be proper. The Committee therefore recommended as follows:

“As a rule, all routes where regular buses ply, exchange of mails should be done through the buses only, by realigning mail lines and consequent change of account office, if necessary.”

The Postal Services Board examined the recommendations of the Committee. The decision taken by the Board is reproduced below:

“Accepted. However experience in the past has shown that over short distances ED mail carriers are far more reliable than State Transport Buses plying on rural routes. Therefore, while this recommendation is accepted in principle, the Superintendent of Post Offices in all cases will be best Judge to decide whether any particular EDMC can be advantageously replaced by a mail motor Service.”

It is therefore requested to take necessary action on the above matter and a compliance report be furnished to this office.

Please acknowledge receipt of this letter.

(G.E.R. BANERJI)
Deputy Director General (M&TS)

भारत सरकार
संचार मंत्रालय
डाक विभाग
डाक भवन, संसद मार्ग
नई दिल्ली-110001

सं० 18-17/87-डी

दिनांक:

सेवा में,

सभी डाक सर्किलों के अध्यक्ष।

विषय: डाक दुलाई के बारे में अतिरिक्त विभागीय रणाली पर सबूर समिति की सिफारिशों का पैर-6.65.

डाक दुलाई के मुद्दे की जांच करते समय अपनी रिपोर्ट में सबूर समिति ने उल्लेख किया कि जब शाखा डाकघर उसे मोटर सेवा द्वारा लेखा कार्यालय से जोड़ने वाले मार्ग पर स्थित होते थे तो डाक का लेन-देन पहले इस तर्क के साथ एक अतिरिक्त विभागीय डाक वाहक लगाकर किया जाता था कि मोटर गाड़ियों का समय उचित नहीं है। समिति ने इस तर्क को संतोषजनक नहीं पाया और उसने विचार किया कि परियात और राजस्व के स्तर, किसी डाकघर को खोले रहने के लिये समय और वितरण के उद्देश्य के लिए विचार करते समय डाक की प्राप्ति के समय का ध्यान रखना आवश्यक है और इसलिए हालांकि इसमें कुछ विलम्ब होते हुए एक डाक वाहक लगाने पर अतिरिक्त ध्यय उचित नहीं होगा। अतः समिति ने निम्नलिखित सिफारिश की:

“एक नियम के बतौर, जिन मार्गों पर बसे नियमित रूप से चलती हैं वहां डाक का लेन-देन यदि आवश्यक हो तो डाक लाइन की उसी पद्धति द्वारा और लेखा कार्यालय के परिवर्तन के फलस्वरूप केवल बसों के जरिए ही किया जाना चाहिए।”

डाक सेवा बोर्ड ने समिति की सिफारिशों की जांच की थी। बोर्ड द्वारा लिया गया निर्णय इस प्रकार है:

“स्वीकृत किया गया। तथापि पिछले अनुभव से यह देखा गया है कि कम दूरी के लिए अतिरिक्त विभागीय डाक वाहक, ग्रामीण मार्गों पर चल रही राज्य परिवहन बसों की अपेक्षा अधिक विश्वसनीय है। तथापि, यह सिफारिश सिद्धान्त रूप में स्वीकार की जाती है, सभी मामलों में डाकघर अधीक्षक यह निर्णय लेने के लिए अच्छे निर्णायक होंगे कि क्या किसी विशेष अतिरिक्त विभागीय डाक वाहक को डाक मोटर सेवा द्वारा बदलना लाभप्रद होगा।”

अतः यह अनुरोध है कि उपर्युक्त मामले पर आवश्यक कार्रवाई करें और अनुपालन रिपोर्ट इस कार्यालय को भेजी जाए।

कृपया इस पत्र की पावती भेजें।

(जी० ई० आर० बैनर्जी)
उप महानिदेशक (एम एंड टी एस)

APPENDIX

(Vide Introduction of the Report)

Analysis of Action Taken by Government on the 58th Report of Estimates Committee (Eighth Lok Sabha).

I.	Total number of Recommendations.	26
II.	Recommendations/Observations which have been accepted by Government (Nos. 1, 3, 4, 8, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, 20, 21).	
	Total	11
	Percentage	42.3%
III.	Recommendations/Observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of Government's replies . (Nos. 2, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 18, 19, 22, 23, 24, 25).	
	Total	12
	Percentage	46.1%
IV.	Recommendations/Observations in respect of which Government's replies have not been accepted by the Committee	
	Total	NIL
	Percentage	NIL
V.	Recommendations/Observations in respect of which final replies of Government are still awaited (Nos. 14, 15, 26).	
	Total	3
	Percentage	11.6%