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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY  
(2019-20)**

**SEVENTEENTH LOK SABHA**

**MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS  
(DEPARTMENT OF POSTS)**

**DEMANDS FOR GRANTS  
(2019-20)**

**THIRD REPORT**



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT  
NEW DELHI**

*December, 2019/ Agrahayana, 1941 (Saka)*

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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON**  
**INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**  
**(2019-20)**

**(SEVENTEENTH LOK SABHA)**

**MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS**  
**(DEPARTMENT OF POSTS)**

**DEMANDS FOR GRANTS**  
**(2019-20)**

*Presented to Lok Sabha on 10-12-2019*

*Laid in Rajya Sabha on 10-12-2019*



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT**

**NEW DELHI**

*December, 2019/ Agrahayana, 1941 (Saka)*

## CONTENTS

		Page
<b>Composition of the Committee</b>		(ii)
<b>Abbreviations</b>		(iii)
<b>Introduction</b>		(iv)
<b>REPORT</b>		
<b>PART- I</b>		
<b>I.</b>	Introductory	1
<b>II.</b>	Implementation status of recommendations of the Committee contained in the Fifty Second Report on Demands for Grants (2018-19) of the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (Department of Posts)	2
<b>III.</b>	Budget Analysis: Overview of Demands for Grants for 2019-20	2
	<b>(i)</b> Revenue Section	3
	<b>(ii)</b> Revenue receipts	4
<b>IV.</b>	Overall status of implementation of schemes	8
<b>V.</b>	Postal Operations	10
	<b>(i)</b> Rural Business and Access to Postal Network	10
	<b>(ii)</b> Post Office Saving Bank Operations	12
	<b>(iii)</b> Postal Life Insurance and Rural Postal Life Insurance	13
	<b>(iv)</b> IT Induction and Modernisation	15
<b>VI.</b>	Human Resource Management	18
<b>VII.</b>	Estate Management	20
	<b>(i)</b> Status of encroachment of plots	21
	<b>(ii)</b> Construction of post offices	22
<b>VIII.</b>	India Post Payments Bank	23
	<b>(i)</b> Challenges before IPPB	25
<b>IX.</b>	Miscellaneous	26
	<b>(i)</b> Promotion of e-commerce	26
	<b>(ii)</b> Post Office Passport Sewa Kendra (POPSK)	27
	<b>(iii)</b> Sukanya Samridhi Yojana	29
<b>PART- II</b>		
	<b>Observations/Recommendations</b>	31
<b>Appendices</b>		
<b>I.</b>	Minutes of the Third sitting of the Committee held on 11 <sup>th</sup> October, 2019.	
<b>II.</b>	Minutes of the Ninth sitting of the Committee held on 27 <sup>th</sup> November, 2019.	

# COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

(2019-20)

**Dr. Shashi Tharoor - Chairperson**

## **Lok Sabha**

2. Smt. Locket Chatterjee
3. Shri Karti P. Chidambaram
4. Shri Sunny Deol
5. Dr. Nishikant Dubey
6. Shri Vijay Kumar Dubey
7. Choudhary Mehboob Ali Kaiser
8. Smt. Raksha Nikhil Khadse
9. Dr. Sukanta Majumdar
10. Shri Dhairyasheel Sambhajirao Mane
11. Ms. Mahua Moitra
12. Shri P. R. Natarajan
13. Shri Santosh Pandey
14. Shri Nisith Pramanik
15. Col. Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore
16. Dr. Gaddam Ranjith Reddy
17. Shri M V V Satyanarayana
18. Shri Sanjay Seth
19. Shri L.S. Tejasvi Surya
20. Dr. T. Sumathy (A) Thamizhachi Thangapandian
21. Shri Bhanu Pratap Singh Verma

## **Rajya Sabha**

22. Dr. Anil Agrawal
23. Dr. Subhash Chandra
24. Shri Y. S. Chowdary
25. Shri Suresh Gopi
26. Shri Md. Nadimul Haque
27. Shri Syed Nasir Hussain
28. Dr. Narendra Jadhav
29. Shri D. Kupendra Reddy
30. Shri Ronald Sapa Tlau
31. Shri Beni Prasad Verma

## **Secretariat**

- |    |                       |   |                             |
|----|-----------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| 1. | Shri Ganapati Bhat    | - | Additional Secretary        |
| 2. | Shri Y.M. Kandpal     | - | Director                    |
| 3. | Shri Shangreiso Zimik | - | Deputy Secretary            |
| 4. | Smt. Rinku Awasthi    | - | Assistant Executive Officer |

## Abbreviations

BOs	Branch Post Offices
SOs	Sub Post Offices
LWE	Left Wing Extremism
PLI	Postal Life Insurance
NAAC	National Assessment and Accreditation Council
AICTE	All India Council for Technical Education
MCI	Medical Council of India
CIS	Core Insurance Solution
PTCs	Postal Training Centres
WTCs	Workplace Training Centres
ZTCs	Zonal Training Centres
RCE	Revised Cost Estimate
AePS	Aadhaar Enabled Payment Services
IPPB	India Post Payments Bank
MEA	Ministry of External Affairs
POPSKs	Post Office Passport Seva Kendras
DoP	Department of Posts
RTC	Regional Training Centres
HPOs	Head Post Offices
BE	Budget Estimates
BPO	Branch Post Office
CBS	Core Banking Solution
EDBO	Extra Departmental Branch Office
MoF	Ministry of Finance
POSB	Post Office Savings Bank
RE	Revised Estimate
RPLI	Rural Postal Life Insurance
SB/CC	Savings Bank/Cash Certificate

## INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson, Standing Committee on Information Technology (2019-20), having been authorized by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present this Third Report on Demands for Grants (2019-20) of the Ministry of Communications (Department of Posts).

2. The Standing Committee on Information Technology (2019-20) was constituted on 13<sup>th</sup> September, 2019. One of the functions of the Standing Committee, as laid down in Rule 331E of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, is to consider the Demands for Grants of the Ministry/Department concerned and make a Report on the same to the Houses.

3. The Committee considered the Demands for Grants pertaining to the Ministry of Communications (Department of Posts) for the year 2019-20 which were laid on the Table of the House on 17<sup>th</sup> July, 2019. The Committee took evidence of the representatives of the Ministry of Communications (Department of Posts) on 11<sup>th</sup> October, 2019.

4. The Report was considered and adopted by the Committee at their sitting held on 27<sup>th</sup> November, 2019.

5. The Committee wish to express their thanks to the officers of the Ministry of Communications (Department of Posts) for appearing before the Committee and furnishing the information that the Committee desired in connection with the examination of the Demands for Grants.

6. The Committee would also like to place on record their appreciation for the assistance rendered to them by the officials of the Lok Sabha Secretariat attached to the Committee.

7. For facility of reference and convenience, Observations/Recommendations of the Committee have been printed in bold letters in Part-II of the Report.

**New Delhi;**  
**6 December, 2019**  

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**15 Agrahayana, 1941 (Saka)**

**DR. SHASHI THAROOR,**  
**Chairperson,**  
**Standing Committee on**  
**Information Technology**

## **Report**

### **Part-I**

#### **I. Introductory**

The Department of Posts, with its network of 1,55,531 Post Offices, is the largest postal network in the world. The beginnings of this vast postal network can be traced back to the year 1727 when the first Post Office was set up in Kolkata. Subsequently, General Post Offices (GPOs) were also set up in the then three Presidencies of Kolkata (1774), Chennai (1786) and Mumbai (1793). To bring some uniformity amongst the then Post Offices, the Indian Post Office Act of 1837 was enacted. This Act was followed by the more comprehensive Indian Post Office Act of 1854. The Act reformed the entire fabric of the postal system and its provisions granted the monopoly of carrying mail in the British territories in India to the Indian Post Offices. The present postal system in India thus came into existence with the Indian Post Office Act of 1854. In the same year, Railway Mail Service was introduced as also the Sea Mail Service from India to Great Britain and China. Thereafter, the India Post Office Act of 1898 was passed which regulated the postal services in the country.

The mission of the Department of Posts is to sustain its position as the largest postal network in the world touching the lives of every citizen in the country, to provide mail, parcel, money transfer, banking, insurance and retail services with speed and reliability, to provide value-for-money services to the customers, to ensure that the employees are proud to be its main strength and serve its customers with a human touch and to continue to deliver social security services and to enable last mile connectivity as a Government of India platform.

## **II. Implementation status of recommendations of the Committee contained in the Fifty Second Report on Demands for Grants (2018-19) of the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (Department of Posts)**

2. The Forty eighth Report of the Standing Committee on Information Technology on Demands for Grants (2018-19) of the Ministry of Communications (Department of Posts) was presented to Parliament on 13 March, 2018. The Fifty-second Report on Action Taken by the Government on the Forty eighth Report was presented to Lok Sabha on 7 August, 2018. Out of the 22 recommendations contained in the said report, 13 recommendations were accepted by the Government. The Committee did not desire to pursue 7 recommendations in view of the replies of the Government and had reiterated on 02 recommendations. The final Action Taken Statement on the recommendations contained in the Fifty Second Report was laid on the table of Parliament on 2 January, 2019.

## **III. Budget Analysis: Overview of Demands for Grants for 2019-20**

3. The Department of Posts presented the Demand for Grants under Demand No. 8 to Parliament for the year 2019-20 on 17 July 2019. The Revenue and Capital Expenditure under the voted and charged sections is as under:

(Rs. in Crore)

		Revenue	Capital	Total
Charged		0.8	0	0.8
Voted		30411.2	947.74	31358.94
	Total	30412	947.74	31359.74



### (i) Revenue Section

4. A comparative analysis of the Demands for Grants 2019-20 in respect of the Department of Posts indicating the actual for 2016-17, 2017-18, Budget Estimate, Revised Estimate and Actual for 2018-19 along with BE for 2019-20 is as under-

(Rs. in crore)

Particulars	Actual 2016-17	Actual 2017-18	BE 2018-19	RE 2018-19	Actual 2018-19	BE 2019-20
1	2	3	4	5		6
Revenue Section						
Gross expenditure	24211.9	26018.84	28515.04	29082.38	27994.35	30412.00
Deduct Recoveries	730.90	770.25	820.27	828.68	821.29	857.35
Net expenditure	23480.95	25248.59	27694.77	28253.70	27173.06	29554.65
Postal Receipts	11511.00	12832.76	16956.11	18000.44	13195.68	19203.29
Deficit	11969.95	12415.83	10738.66	10253.26	13977.38	10351.36

5. Department. of Posts have primarily two major components of Gross expenditure: Salaries and Pensions, which constitute more than 90% of the gross expenditure. The gross expenditure regarding salaries has increased due to hike in D.A., encashment of leave during LTC, etc. India Post have the largest postal network with 1.55 lakh Post offices, out of which nearly 90% are in rural areas. In order to fulfill Universal Service Obligation, Post Offices in Rural areas are considered justified if they are able to cover 33.33% of the expenditure (15% in hilly/tribal areas) and to keep these offices operational, the necessary cost has to be incurred by the Department. Increase in cost of materials, hike in cost of carriage of

Mails through Railways/Air /Road, Broad band connectivity, IT induction, AMC, fuel cost, increase in rental etc. have resulted in increase of expenditure.

6. On the measures being taken to control expenditure, the Department have informed the Committee that they have adopted a number of steps to control expenditure and keep it within the allocated funds. Some of them are conducting regular Video Conference with all Heads of Circles, and budget holders, monthly meeting to review of scheme expenditure under the chairmanship of Secretary (Posts), compliance of various guidelines and instructions with regard to austerity measures and expenditure management issued from time to time by the Ministry of Finance, organisation of special meetings of Divisional Heads with Heads of Circles, monthly report on expenditure management and control, issue of instructions to all the fund spending authorities to keep the expenditure within the budgetary allocations at the various levels and also at apex level, day to day review of expenditure after complete roll out of CSI project etc.

## **(ii) Revenue receipts**

7. The details of revenue receipts of the Department of Posts under various heads/items during the last three years i.e. 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2018-19 and also BE 2019-20 in various items of revenue receipts are as under –

	(Rs. In Crore)											
Year -->	2016-17			2017-18			2018-19			2019-20		
Commercial Receipts (` in Crore)	BE	RE	Actual	BE	RE	Actual	BE	RE	Actual	BE	Actual upto Aug, 2019	
Speed Post	1680	1825	1783	2420	2500	1830	2795	2505	1738	2508	724	
Business Post	1000	865	753	1320	1335	747	1535	791	261	792	52	
Bill Mail Service	110	120	77	165	166	57	190	40	30	40	8	
Express Parcel Post	69	79	64	165	166	54	191	60	30	60	6	
Business Parcel Post	92	157	95	275	275	84	326	135	70	135	45	
Retail Post	97	80	68	110	70	109	117	117	73	117	19	
Logistic Post	20	20	16	27	19	15	21	21	13	21	4	
Sale of Postage & Service Stamps	560	567	471	610	660	367	702	769	125	770	90	
Commission on Money Orders & IPOs	711	571	285	769	569	228	731	732	249	733	101	
Others*	1442	1496	814	1770	1871	1239	2173	3619	2346	3623	839	
Total Rev. from P.O.	5780	5780	4425	7631	7631	4730	8780	8789	4933	8800	1888	
Agency Charges												

Management of SB A/cs	7484	6304	6816	7048	7248	7677	7611	8574	7893	9684	3288
Management of Saving Certificates	563	475	270	531	539	425	565	637	370	719	119
Total SBCC	8047	6779	7086	7579	7787	8102	8176	9211	8263	10403	3407
Total Revenue	13827	12559	11511	15210	15418	12833	16956	18000	13196	19203	5295

9. When asked by the Committee on the initiatives taken by the Department to increase revenue receipts in order to reduce the net deficit, the Department in a written reply have stated that revenue deficit of the Department has been increasing since the last three years on account of two factors – first increase in expenditure and second decline in revenue. Business Development & Marketing Directorate offers a number of premium services like Speed Post, Express Parcel, Business Parcel, Logistics Post etc to generate additional revenue for the Department. Further, the Department of Posts periodically reviews its services and products keeping in view the changing market scenario, customer needs, industry benchmarks etc and takes steps/action to modify service features to improve the postal services and boost the revenue growth of the Department. Technology integration and infrastructure up-gradation is also being done in a systematic manner to increase the efficiency and reduce the cost of operation and thereby revenue deficit would be decreasing. The Department has focused approach to cater to the needs of the emerging markets viz. e-Commerce to increase its revenue.

8. It is further stated that rationalization of tariff of various postal services namely Registered Newspapers, Value Payable Book Packets containing Printed Books etc, registration fee, renewal and late renewal fee for Registered Newspapers as well as imposition of higher penalty on the violation of condition of transmission of Letter, Parcel containing Gold, Bullion etc. are being done to increase the revenue receipts.

10. Further, the Post Office network is leveraged to provide third party products and services like sale of application forms of various educational institutions & recruiting agencies, sale of railway reservation tickets, passport related services, Aadhaar related services, sale of Rakhi envelopes etc. The Post Offices are being transformed into a 'one stop shop' to provide a range of utility services to the customers in association with third party.

11. On constraints being faced to fulfill the needs of the various premium services and measures being taken to remove those constraints, the Department in a written reply have stated that the Postal Operations Division deals with the traditional services of Department of Posts. The major constraints have been the highly subsidized tariff structure of various traditional services namely Registered Newspapers, Value Payable Book Packets containing Printed Books etc which leads to relatively low revenue generation vis-à-vis cost incurred on providing these services. Therefore, as remedial steps, rationalization of tariff structure of various such services along with introduction of registration fee, renewal and late renewal fee for Registered Newspapers, imposition of higher penalty on the violation of condition of transmission of Letter, Parcel containing Gold, Bullion etc and increase the fine in case of unauthorized sale of stamps has been proposed. This assumes

greater importance in the context that last tariff revision of various postal services was carried out in 2002 i.e. seventeen years back.

#### **IV. Overall status of implementation of schemes**

12. At present the Four Central Sector Schemes in the Department of Posts are Postal Operations, Human Resource Management, Estates Management and India Post Payments Bank. Budget Estimate, Revised Estimate and Actual for 2017-18 to 2018-19 along with BE for 2019-20 are as under-

(Rs. in Crore)

Sl No.	Plan Scheme/Activity	BE 2017-18	RE 2017-18	Actuals 2017-18	% Exp wrt RE	BE 2018-19	RE 2018-19	Actuals 2018-19	% Exp wrt RE	BE 2019-20
	Postal Operations									
1.1	Rural Business & Access to Postal Network	17.70	17.48	16.41	93.88%	25.00	35.80	10.96	30.61%	25.67
1.2	Mail Operations	110.83	70.77	57.32	80.99%	200.00	98.37	83.89	85.28%	133.1
1.3	Post Office Savings Bank Operations	5.00	6.75	4.94	73.19%	20.00	9.90	0.02	0.20%	11
1.4	Postal Life Insurance Operations and Promotion	11.40	13.90	12.93	93.02%	20.00	20.00	17.04	85.20%	12.4
1.5	IT Induction & Modernisation	279.60	475.07	454.57	95.68%	375.00	432.13	442.60	102.42%	507.9
1.6	Business Promotion, Marketing Research and Product Development	11.10	216.00	193.49	89.58%	50.00	50.00	47.85	95.70%	66.5
1.7	Philately Operations	6.90	8.50	7.13	83.88%	20.00	10.96	11.33	103.38%	15.8
1.8	Quality of Service	0.03	0.14	0.14	100.00%	5.00	4.50	4.43	98.44%	1.1
	Scheme Total	442.56	808.61	746.93	92.37%	715.00	661.66	618.12	93.42%	773.47
2	Human Resource Management	33.94	22.34	18.87	84.47%	60.00	25.11	24.48	97.49%	34.46
3	Estates Management	73.50	95.35	81.75	85.74%	85.00	85.00	71.37	83.96%	62.7

4	Setting up of India Post Payments Bank	500.00	500.00	499.55	99.91%	300.00	300.00	300.00	100.00%	335
	Project Arrow									
	Grand Total	1050.00	1426.30	1347.10	94.45%	1160.00	1071.77	1013.97	94.61%	1205.63

13. A statement indicating the amount proposed and the amount allocated at BE during 2019-20 is as under-

(Rs in crore)

Sl. No.	Plan Scheme/Activity (Rs. in Crore)	Proposed	BE 2019-20
1	Postal Operations	1805.045	773.47
2	Human Resource Management	71.500	34.46
3	Estates Management	93.500	62.7
4	Setting up of India Post Payments Bank	335.000	335
Total		2305.045	1205.63

14. On being asked whether the allocated funds during 2019-20 will be sufficient for execution of various schemes, the Department in a written reply have stated that the allocated funds are justifiable except for Sub Scheme – IT Induction and Modernization for which additional funds have also been proposed in the Revised Estimates 2019-20 to the tune of Rs. 1366.86 crore over the BE allocation of Rs. 507.90 Crore which will adversely affect this Sub Scheme in view of the reduced allocation.

15. With regard to plan of the Department to effectively utilize the allocated funds for maximum output in the execution of various schemes, the Committee have been informed that the Department plans to better monitor the utilization of allocated funds for maximum output in the execution of the Schemes by way of Core System Integrator, Monthly Review Meetings and Quarterly Video Conferencing with all Heads of Circles.

16. Thrust areas of Postal Operations Division during the year 2019-20 include improving Electronic Money Order Service, issue of Digital Life Certificates through Jeevan Pramaan Centres in the Head Post Offices, improving the service of Registered Newspapers, zonalisation of Returned Letter Offices and formulation of Counter Management Policy etc.

## **V. Postal Operations**

17. "Postal Operations" is an umbrella Central Sector scheme of the Department of Posts w.e.f. 2016-17. There are 8 sub schemes in this scheme, such as Rural Business & Access to Postal Network, Mail Operations, Post Office Savings Bank Operations, Postal Life Insurance Operations and Promotion, IT Induction & Modernisation, Business Promotion, Marketing Research and Product Development, Philately Operations and Quality of Service.

### **(i) Rural Business and Access to Postal Network**

18. The objective of the scheme "Rural Business and Access to Postal Network" is to increase access to the postal network especially in remote and LWE affected areas and supply of basic infrastructural equipment to rural BOs to increase operational/functional efficiency of the rural post offices. The scheme also aims at rationalizing the existing postal network for serving the under-served areas. Activities undertaken under this scheme are opening



of Branch Post Offices (BOs) & Sub Post Offices (SOs) by relocation & redeployment including opening of Branch Post Offices(BOs) in Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected areas by creation of new posts, opening of Franchise Outlets in urban and rural areas, supply of infrastructural equipment for BOs in rural areas, installation of new Letter boxes & signage in rural areas and provision of iron safes in rural BOs.

19. On being asked that out of RE during 2018-19 of Rs. 35.80 crore, only Rs. 10.96 crore could be utilised on the scheme, the Department furnished the reply that the physical targets were achieved. Shortfall in expenditure was due to exclusion of cost of handheld devices and salary component from the Scheme expenditure. Necessary corrections have been made in the figures for 2019-20.

20. When enquired about the physical achievements made during FY 18-19, the Department have replied that 1559 BOs in LWE were opened and BOs/SOs by redeployment/relocation opened, 177 Franchise Outlets in Urban Areas Opened, 1626 Infrastructure for EDBOs provided, 24459 New improved letter boxes and signages were installed, 4129 Cash Chests were embedded.

21. Explaining the constraints being faced in accomplishing the targets, the Department informed that as per a decision of the Cabinet Committee on Security, DoP is mandated to open 5962 Branch Post Offices in LWE districts, for which posts of Branch Postmasters and Assistant Branch Postmasters are to be newly created. Sanction of MoF for creation of BPM and ABPM posts in connection with the opening of these Branch Post Offices has been sought for the years 2019-20 and 2020-21, which is still

pending. Hence the progress of booking of funds under this activity during the current year till September, 2019 is not satisfactory. The matter is being pursued with MoF and MHA by DoP.

## **(ii) Post Office Saving Bank Operations**

22. Department of Posts, with its physical access of network of 1.5 lakh post offices, is well situated to play a critical role in opening of Saving Accounts in both Rural and Urban areas for Financial inclusion. Department has implemented Core Banking Solution in majority of Departmental Post Offices and has also setup ATM infrastructure across the country (target 1000 ATMs). The objective of the scheme is to bring in facilities of ATM Banking, Internet Banking and Mobile Banking to Post Office Saving Bank customers. It will enable POSB customers to transact 24 X 7. The induction of technology into system will help in offering quality service and meet the enhanced expectations of customers. This will also help in achieving the objective of reducing operational cost. DoP ATMs have become inter-operable with effect from 31.12.2016. They utilize this fund to procure and supply ATM cards to POSB customers.

23. On being enquired about the reasons for under-utilisation of the allocated funds during 2017-18 and 2018-19 on the scheme, the Department responded that the contract for supply of magnetic stripe based ATM/Debit cards was signed with M/s CMS Info. Systems Pvt. Limited and the contract was signed for a period of 2 years i.e. 2015-16, 2016-17 and the same was further extended for a period of 3 months i.e. upto June, 2017. In the meantime, there was a direction from the RBI to henceforth procure and supply only EMV chip based ATM card. In view of this development we needed to go for a fresh tender/RFP for procurement of ATM cards as the

previous one was for magnetic ATM cards only. It took considerable time to draft/float and finalize fresh tender. This was the reason for less utilization in 2017-18 and 2018-19 as fresh tender was not in place. Now after finalization of fresh tender, the supply has commenced and we are in a position to fully utilize the funds. The contract for supply of ATM/Debit cards expired in the month of June, 2017 and the fresh contract took time to get finalized. Accordingly, the budget requirement was reduced for the period of 2018-19.

24. Explaining the measures taken to optimally utilise the funds of Rs. 11 crore allocated during 2019-20, the Department responded that FS Division is planning to procure total 47.5 lakh ATM/Debit cards in this financial year with a total estimated amount of Rs. 11 crore. The tender has been finalized and order for procurement of 40 lakh ATM/Debit cards has already been placed with the vendor and supply has commenced.

**(iii ) Postal Life Insurance and Rural Postal Life Insurance**

25. Postal Life Insurance (PLI), introduced in 1884, is the oldest life insurance scheme for benefit of the Government and semi Government employees. Initially meant only for the Post Office employees, today it caters to employees of the Civil and Military personnel of the Central and State Governments, Local Bodies, Government aided educational institutions, Universities, Nationalized Banks, Autonomous institutions, Public Sector Undertakings of the Central and State Government, employees of organizations such as Scheduled Commercial Banks, Credit Co-operative Societies, Deemed Universities and Educational institutes accredited by recognized bodies as much as National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE ), Medical Council of India (MCI) etc., joint

ventures having a minimum of 10% stake of Central/State Governments/PSUs and employees engaged/appointed on contract basis by Governments where the contract is extendable.

26. Further, following category of employees/ professionals have been brought under the PLI coverage:

(i) Employees (teaching/non-teaching staff) of all private educational institutions/schools/ colleges etc. affiliated to recognized Boards (recognized by Centre/State Governments) of Secondary/Senior Secondary Education i.e. CBSE, ICSE, State Boards, Open Schools etc.

ii) Professionals such as Doctors (including Doctors pursuing Post Graduate degree courses through any Govt/Private Hospitals, Resident Doctors employed on contract/permanent basis in any Govt/Private Hospitals etc.), Engineers (including Engineers pursuing Master's /Post Graduate degree after having passed GATE entrance test), Management Consultants, Chartered Accountants registered with Institute of Chartered Accountants of India, Architects, Lawyers registered with Bar Council of India /States. Bankers working in Nationalized Banks and its Associate Banks, Foreign Banks, Regional Rural Banks, Scheduled Commercial Banks including Private Sector Banks etc.

(iii) Employees of listed companies of NSE (National Stock Exchange) and Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) in IT, Banking & Finance, Healthcare/Pharma, Energy/ Power, Telecom Infrastructure Sector etc, where employees are covered for Provident Funds/Gratuity and/or their leave records are maintained by the establishment.

27. Facility of web portal and mobile portal allow customers to view and carry out transactions relating to their postal life insurance policies on real time basis. The premium can be paid through various methods i.e. cash, cheque, pay deduction, credit/debit card. Payment through ECS, ATMs. Net Banking will also be provided as a part of the 'Core Insurance Solution'(CIS)

**(iv) IT Induction and Modernisation**

28. The IT Modernization Project of Department of Posts was approved by the Government of India in November 2012 as a Mission Mode e-governance Project with an outlay of Rs. 4909 crore. The Project aims at transforming the Department of Posts' operational efficiency and improving service delivery of operational and administrative units through upgraded technology and connectivity. Networking of all 1,55,531 post office covering the remotest parts of the country will enable tracking and tracing of all kinds of accountable mails and parcels in the country, besides providing real-time information to facilitate customer feedback and management functions. The implementation of the Project started in the year 2012-13. The Project is being implemented in eight segments.

29. Brief status of achievements made for each segment as on 30.09.2019 is as under-

Sl. No	Name of the segment & its scope	Present position/Targets achieved
1	Change Management  (CM): Preparing the workforce for the complete change in Departments' working after implementation of IT project.	Completed.

2	Data Centre Facility ( DCF):Hosting Primary Data centre and building Disaster Recovery centre for the DoP	Data Centre (DC) active since 03.04.2013 and Disaster Recovery Centre (DRC) went operational in 2015.
3	Financial Services Integrator (FSI): Implementation of solutions for Core Banking and Core Insurance in all Post Offices.  Providing multiple delivery channels- internet banking, mobile banking, ATM and Interactive Voice Response (IVR) and SMS	So far total 23,772 POs (Including DAPs) have been migrated under Core Banking Solution (CBS) and 25,573 POs have been migrated under Core Insurance Solution (CIS) (Postal Life Insurance) (PLI). A total of 996 ATMs have been installed. ATMs are inter-operable w.e.f. 31-12-2016 so customers of all banks are able to transact on Postal ATMs and likewise the customers of post office savings bank can transact on all bank ATMs.
4	Network Integrator (NI): Providing connectivity for each Departmental post office location in order to ensure uninterrupted network connectivity through one single WAN	27775 locations have been networked on a single Wide Area Net work (WAN).
5	Core System Integrator (CSI): Implementation of the solutions for Mail Operation, Retail, logistic Post, Philately, Finance and Accounts & Human Resources and integration with other SIs.	Roll out is completed in all Technically feasible offices of 513 divisions ( 501 Postal & RMS Divisions + 12 independent Head post offices/GPOs) in 22 circles (Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Odisha, Telangana ,Tamilnadu, Rajasthan, Haryana , Delhi ,Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Jharkhand , Gujarat, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand , West Bengal and J&K)
6	DARPAN  Rural Hardware (RH): Providing connectivity, hardware & solar power panels to Branch Post Offices in rural areas.	Dispatches of Rural Hardware handheld devices to all 129338 Rural post offices have been completed.
7	Rural System Integrator (RSI): Implementation of the solution for integrating all the FSI/CSI applications to the Branch Post Offices.	DARPAN solution has been rolled out in 129090 Branch Post Offices.

8	Mail Operation Hardware (MOH): Providing hardware to Mail Offices and handheld devices to Postmen.	Under Mail Operations Hardware, 38477 smartphones to postmen, supply of desk top computers, and Gen Sets to RMS offices have been completed. UPSs and Weighing Scales have also been procured. The procurement of other MOH hardware has been decentralized to circles and 38477 Smartphones already procured.
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30. IT Modernization Project of Department of Posts is its largest project both in terms of investments made as well as in terms of the impact on the postal services. The total project size is Rs 4909 crore. The Project involves computerization and networking of all the Post Offices in the country, including 1, 29,000 Branch Post Offices in rural areas run by Gramin Dak Sevaks and about 29000 post offices in urban areas. The completion of the Project has enabled the post offices to diversify beyond their traditional mandate to provide citizen centric services digitally in tune with the Digital connectivity agenda of the Government.

31. Supply of Computer Hardware and peripherals with updated software to Post Offices, Administrative Offices and Postal Accounts Office to support effective implementation of IT Induction & Modernization Scheme of DoP is a part of the Scheme .

32. The Committee wanted to know whether the allocation of Rs. 507.9 crore during 2019-20 was sufficient to carry various projects proposed to be taken during the year under the scheme, the Department submitted that the allocation of Rs. 507.9 Crore during Financial Year 2019-20 is not sufficient to carry on the various projects during the year under the scheme "IT Induction and Modernization" as funds to the tune of Rs 225.44 Crore has already been utilised and in view of committed liabilities, fund requirement

of Rs 1267.00 Crore has been requested for in RE Stage. If the funds are not allocated Network Integrator Project, Financial Services Integrator Project and DARPAN Project can get affected as the funds allocated under these heads have almost been utilised and there are committed liabilities as per contractual obligations which have to be met. The Sub Scheme Supply of Hardware is allotted BE funds of Rs.55.50 Crores under total allocation of Rs.507.90 Crores under IT Induction & Modernization. The actual projection for 2019-20 is Rs.99.86 Crores as per the EFC and therefore demand made for Rs.99.86 Crores in RE to cater to the Computer hardware & peripherals requirement of DoP.

33. When asked on how does the Ministry propose to raise the issue for enhancement of funds for the scheme at RE stage, the Department, in a written note stated that the request for enhancement in allocation at RE stage based on the assessment of funds utilised and committed liabilities have already been submitted. The RE for the year 2019-20 is proposed as Rs. 1267.00 Crore keeping in view the committed and anticipated liabilities, upto December 2019. This is in tune with the stated policy of the Government to make all outstanding payments to the vendors.

## **VI. Human Resource Management**

34. The Postal Service is the backbone of country's communication services & plays an important role in the Socio-economic development of the nation. Hence, its employees are required to play varied roles of a Business Manager, HR Manager, Marketing Executive, Trainers, Counter operating staff etc. at the same time.



35. The Department has a well-established training infrastructure. The following training institutes take care of training needs of the Department:

- (i) Rafi Ahmed Kidwai National Postal Academy (RAKNPA) at Ghaziabad – is the apex training institute of the Department recognized by the DoP&T as a Central Training Institute for higher managerial cadres. This imparts induction as well as in-service training to the officers of Indian Postal Service and other managerial cadres of India Post. It also imparts training to managers of foreign Postal Administrations and officers of various Central Government Departments and PSUs, in areas of common interest.
- (ii) Postal Training Centres (PTCs) are functioning at Darbhanga, Guwahati, Madurai, Mysore, Saharanpur and Vadodara for training operative staff and inspectorial cadres. Besides, these also organize other specialized training programmes. These six training centres have well equipped computer labs, class-rooms and hostel facilities to take care of the bulk of the training needs of operative staff of the Department.
- (iii) Besides, there are 452 Workplace Training Centres (WTCs), 5 Zonal Training Centres (ZTCs) and 03 Regional Training Centres (RTC). The WTCs/ZTC/RTC are delivering trainings at local level with minimum dislocation of trainees from the workplace.

36. The Department provided the reasons for substantial reduction in allocation from BE of Rs. 60 crore to Rs. 25.11 crore at RE in 2018-19. Rs. 23.674 crore were booked against Rs. 24.41 Cr at RE stage. The Department had replied that this was mainly due to non completion of building projects since there was delay in Tender

processes or Municipal approval etc. However, against a physical target of training 45060 officials, 300243 were trained during the year.

37. The Committee wanted to know whether the funds allocated at BE would be sufficient for the scheme during the year to which the Department replied that during 2019-20, at RE stage the BE of Rs. 33.46 Cr. has been reduced to Rs. 29.23 Cr. on account of building projects likely to take off during the said financial year. Accordingly, the funds allotted would be sufficient to carry out identified training activities during the year.

## **VII. Estate Management**

38. Under the 'Estates Management Scheme', the activities undertaken by the Department of Posts are construction of new Post Offices, Administrative Offices and Staff Quarters, Construction of Toilets under Swachh Bharat Mission, Construction of Ladies Toilets, crèches and retiring rooms under Gender Concern, Construction of Toilets for differently abled persons under Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan, Construction of rails & ramps for differently abled persons under Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan, Installation of Solar Power Packs, Construction of Rain Water Harvesting Structures, Installation of LEDs, Preservation of Heritage Buildings belonging to Department of Posts, Renovation/Maintenance of Postal Buildings, Painting of letter boxes and fixing the signages.

39. The Committee observed that during 2018-19, BE and RE of Rs. 85 crore was allocated, against which Rs. 71.37 crore (83.96 %) was utilised. BE, 2019-20 of Rs. 62.7 crore has been fixed. On the reasons for keeping the allocation at BE 2019-20 on a lower side, the Department responded that the funds proposed under Swacchh Bharat Mission for the year 2019-20 to the tune of Rs. 20 crore

have not yet been allocated. If this fund is allocated, it would be sufficient for Estates Management Scheme. The fund allocated for renovation of buildings is not adequate

**(i) Status of encroachment of plots**

40. On encroachment of plots, the Department has submitted that it makes all-out efforts to remove encroachment with the help of local public representatives, public administrations and judiciary. Further, in order to check the threat of encroachment, Estate Officers have been appointed/nominated in postal circles under the Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act, 1971 and notified in the Gazette of India to exercise the powers of Estate Officers to deal with cases related to unauthorized occupation of Departmental lands and buildings. Further, in order to check encroachments of the Departmental lands, boundary walls are being constructed, on availability of funds. Despite best efforts of the Department, at present 204 plots are under encroachment. Department is working with public representatives and local administration to get the encroachments removed. Legal action is also resorted to as and when required.

41. The details of encroached plots is as under-

<b>S. No.</b>	<b>Circle</b>	<b>No. of plots encroached</b>
1.	Andhra Pradesh	15
2	Assam	07
3	Bihar	27
4	Chhattisgarh	01
5	Delhi	-
6	Gujarat	07

7	Haryana	02
8	Himachal Pradesh	-
9	Jammu and Kashmir	02
10	Jharkhand	12
11	Karnataka	38
12	Kerala	09
13	Madhya Pradesh	05
14	Maharashtra	13
15	North East	06
16	Odisha	04
17	Punjab	-
18	Rajasthan	16
19	Tamil Nadu	02
20	Telangana	12
21	Uttar Pradesh	10
22	Uttarakhand	01
23	West Bengal	15
	TOTAL	204

**(ii) Construction of post offices**

42. The Committee have noted that as on date, the Department of Posts has 1738 vacant plots of land of which 1139 are in rural areas and 599 in urban areas. On being asked about the plans for utilization, the response was that the Department is constructing new post office building on those lands where cost benefit analysis suggests that construction of building is profitable than running post office from a rented accommodation. In due course, Department will construct new postal buildings on those vacant lands on the basis of cost benefit analysis and availability of funds.

43. The Committee have been informed that many MPs/MLAs came forward for offering MPLAD funds for construction of post office buildings in vacant plots, however, MPLAD funds cannot be utilised for construction of any government building/govt. offices as per the MPLAD guidelines. In this regard, the Department informed that the matter has been taken up with Secretary, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation who was requested by Secretary (Posts) to revise the MPLAD guidelines so that MPLAD funds could be utilized for works related to public utilities like construction of ramps and rails, public toilets, counters and other value added activities for the public in Post Offices. However, this request for the inclusion of funding for Post offices in the Guidelines has been rejected by Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.

#### **VIII. India Post Payments Bank**

44. The India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) has been set up by Department of Posts (DoP) as a Public Limited Company with a mandate to become most accessible, affordable and trusted bank for the common man by removing the barriers for the unbanked and promote the adoption of cashless transactions in a predominantly cash based economy. IPPB has created a platform to bridge a critical gap in access to formal financial services in every part of country, by leveraging the Department of Posts' (DoP's) unparalleled reach, through its post offices. Today IPPB is offering Payments Bank services through 650 branches and 1.36 lakh post offices as its access points.

45. When asked whether funds allocated for the project during the current year would be sufficient to carry out physical targets, the Department replied that the funds of Rs. 335 crores has been

allocated for IPPB in accordance with the activities/operation of the Bank as per Revised Cost Estimate (RCE) dated 09<sup>th</sup> August, 2018. The funds are sufficient to carry out the operations for the current financial year as per the RCE. However, in the next financial year IPPB may face shortage of funds as some revenue streams have decreased as RBI has imposed certain limits on them. Therefore IPPB is exploring additional sources of revenue/funding.

46. Regarding the plan to spend Rs. 335 crore allocated for the IPPB project during 2019-20, the Department stated that they plan to enable the remaining 18,000+ TNF (Technically not feasible) access points to provide banking services. Approved head count for the bank is 3500 employees. As the operations scale up during the year, IPPB will fill in the remaining vacancies to ensure smooth operations and optimal utilization of resources. Conduct refresher training programmes for new/ existing products for all end users (Postal Assistants, Postmen and Gramin Dak Sevaks)

47. The Department also stated that the following key services have been rolled out in the current financial year- Aadhaar Enabled Payment Services (AePS) - enabling IPPB to be the single largest platform in the country for providing Interoperable Doorstep banking services to any bank customer and RuPay Virtual Debit Card – enabling IPPB customers to digitally consume e-commerce services. Rollout of new products and services including third-party products as approved under the Payments Bank guidelines will be rolled out during the second half of the current financial year.

48. As regards the progress of the Scheme 'India Post Payments Bank', it has been stated that the Department of Post has rolled out 136078 access points of IPPB in as many post offices from 1st Sep 2018 till date. However, due to unavailability of network connectivity and manpower (regular Gramin Dak Sewaks) in far

flung and remote areas across the country, around 18000 Post offices are yet to be covered under IPPB. As soon as the network connectivity and regular manpower is available, these remaining Post Offices will also be rolled out as access points of IPPB.

### **(i) Challenges before IPPB**

49. On being asked about the shortcomings in the functioning of the IPPB and the measures taken to overcome them, the Department have stated that one of the critical objectives of IPPB is to enable last mile digital and financial literacy and empowerment. It is important to understand customer's needs and offer customized product offerings and create a less-cash and digital economy. This calls for disproportionate and extended investments into enabling digital and financial literacy at the last mile. IPPB has invested in an assisted model to achieve scale and make a discernible impact. However, Payments Banks have limited avenues of income and there has been a continuous erosion of margin across various lines of businesses, posing serious challenges to the continued sustainability of the business model. To address the same, IPPB has invested in a technology led interoperable business model leveraging, Aadhaar and the readily available payments and settlement infrastructure to ensure delivery of services at very low costs. In line with the Payments Bank framework, the bank is also investing in enabling various third-party partnerships for loans, insurance/ investment products to generate incremental avenues of income.

50. One of IPPB's key challenges has been to attract the right skill set to deliver against the challenging mandate as detailed above. IPPB has also faced the challenge of an extended recruitment cycle.

To address the same, the bank has established a progressive Recruitment Policy to attract talent through various channels including direct recruitment, deputation from PSBs/ DoP and specialized resources through professional search firms.

## **IX. Miscellaneous**

### **(i)\_Promotion of e-commerce**

51. In order to ensure safe and secure transmission of Speed Post articles and parcels, particularly e-commerce articles, a Plan Scheme 'Development of Road Transport network' has been approved for the Department. Under the Plan Scheme, 42 routes have been made functional which will ensure secure transmission of Speed Post articles and e-commerce shipments across the country. Alternate/ additional routes which can be operationally advantageous for transmission of mail are also being identified continuously.

52. With the growing e-commerce market, the Department. has implemented a Parcel Network Optimization Project vide which L1 and L2 parcel hubs have been setup across the country.

53. Elaborating on the portal launched by the Department, the DoP stated during evidence-

"We do logistic servicing for big players like Amazon etc. and we also have an e-commerce portal. We are basically focusing on MSMEs, handlooms, handicrafts which have a wider reach. This is called India Post E-Commerce Portal. We are actually shipping these products to the consumers. The MSME products which are locally available, the Department of Posts portal is actually showing those products and somebody can directly



order and pay through the portal and then we basically deliver these items to the consumers. The total revenue of e-commerce and parcel business of the Department of Posts is about Rs. 700 crores for domestic and around Rs. 300 crores for the international market. we are tying up with various MSMEs and also with handicrafts and other organisations. It is going to be basically a niche market. But our main revenues are from the delivery arm. We work as a delivery partner for e-commerce companies like Amazon, Flipkart, Naptol, Myntra etc. There is a lot of home-grown companies also like Jiva and various other Ayurvedic companies. The main source of revenue is from the delivery partner. The ecommerce portal has been launched recently, it is yet to take off, but we are working on it. It will basically have both forward and backward integration because we will be picking up the articles from the handicraft manufacturers and the MSME sector and then through our channel we will be delivering. Our portal will work as a market place. So, we are working basically as a market place model. Our USP is coming from the backward and the forward integration. But the main source of revenue is coming from the delivery arm as of now.”

**(ii) Post Office Passport Sewa Kendra (POPSK)**

54. It has been decided by the MEA to extend Passport Seva Kendra facilities to the citizens seeking passport in their close vicinity with a view to save citizens from travelling long distance for obtaining a passport. Subsequently, it was mutually agreed by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and the Department of Posts (DOP) to extend the passport services to the citizens on a wider scale by setting up Post Office Passport Seva Kendras (POPSKs) in 491 select Post Offices across the country. The pilot project for the

POPSKs commenced on 25th January, 2017 at Metagali Post Office, Mysuru, Karnataka and Dahod Head Post Office, Gujarat. 420 POPSKs opened till September 2019 are presently functioning.

55. It has been informed that Setting up of POPSKs involves feasibility/availability of space, manpower etc. in the post offices with the final decision being taken in consultation with MEA. Hence, the action plan for opening new POPSKs during 2019-20 is being finalised accordingly.

56. The Department has provided the figures of applications processed during 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20 (till August, 2019) as under:-

Year	Applications processed	Passport issued
2017-18	754723	Information regarding the passport issued is not available in the POPSKs which is mandated for processing of the applications only.
2018-19	1827028	
April 2019 – August 2019	954178	

57. The Department has submitted the details of revenue earned during 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20 (till 13.9.19) as under-

Year	Revenue earned
2017-18	18,78,58,440
2018-19	Nil

April 2019 – 13 <sup>th</sup> September 2019	41,59,03,197
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(Ref: Reply to LoP for evidence P.No. 36-39)

58. During the period from Jan, 2018 to March, 2019, around 22.02 lakh applications have been processed in these POPSKs.

59. To a query on any constraints faced in effective implementation of this service, the DoP replied that delayed and inadequate payment of the transaction charges to the DoP by the MEA is a hurdle.

**(iii) Sukanya Samridhi Yojana**

60. Sukanya Samridhi Account scheme is a flagship programme of the Government of India, aimed at overall development and well being of the girl children in the country. The progress is periodically monitored at the highest levels. The salient features of the scheme are, a legal guardian/natural guardian can open an SSA account in the name of a Girl Child, a guardian can open only one account in the name of one girl child and maximum two accounts in the name of two different girl children, account can be opened in the name of a girl child up to age of 10 years, account can be opened with initial deposit of Rs 250, account can be closed after completion of 21 years, normal premature closure will be allowed after completion of 18 years provided that the girl is married and there can be any number of deposits. However, in a financial year the minimum deposit is Rs 1000 and maximum is Rs 1, 50,000.

61. The scheme carries very attractive rate of interest (Presently 8.4% annually). SSY was introduced in DoP on 22.01.2015. The Department have informed that as on 30.09.2019, total number of SSY accounts opened from the date of inception is 152.28 lakhs.

Total 16.95 lakh accounts were opened during F.Y.2017-18 with total deposit of Rs. 5926.37 crores and 2426891 accounts have been opened during 2018-19 with total deposit of Rs. 10615.79 crores upto March 2019.

62. On a query by the Committee on the public response to the Scheme, the DoP informed that the response of public towards SSY is encouraging. In fact, about 85 % of the total SSY accounts throughout the country are opened by the DoP.

## **PART-II**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **DoP Budget**

**1. The Department of Posts (DoP) have laid the Demands for Grants (2019-20) in Lok Sabha on 17<sup>th</sup> July, 2019 for a total amount of Rs. 31358.94 crore consisting of Rs. 30411.2 crore under Revenue and Rs. 947.74 under Capital. An analysis of the budgetary allocation during 2018-19 indicates that under Revenue Section, an amount of Rs. 28515.04 crore had been allocated at BE which was reduced to Rs. 29082.38 crore at RE and the actual utilization made was Rs. 27994.35 crore. Under capital section in 2018-19, an amount of Rs. 757.52 crore had been allocated at BE which was increased to Rs. 824.38 crore and the actual utilization made was Rs. 811.27 crore. The Committee note that the gross expenditure of the Department has been gradually increasing over the years. The Gross expenditure under Revenue section during 2016-17 was Rs. 24211.9 crore which was increased to Rs. 26018.84 crore in 2017-18 and to Rs. 27994.35 crore during 2018-19. The Committee note that salaries and pensions are the two major components and constitute more than 90 per cent of the gross expenditure. India Post also has the largest postal network in the world with 1.55 lakh post offices, out of which nearly 90 percent are in rural areas. To keep these offices operational, the necessary cost has to be incurred by the Department. The Department have informed the Committee that to control expenditure, numerous measures, such as monthly meetings to review Scheme expenditure, compliance with various**

**guidelines on austerity measures and expenditure management issued from time to time by the Ministry of Finance, monthly report on expenditure management and control, etc have been adopted. While noting the measures taken to control expenditure, the Committee are constrained to admit that the Department needs to/must take more urgent measures to arrest recurring annual losses. The Committee are clearly of the view that the gross expenditure and revenue losses of the Department are mounting, it may not be feasible to continuously sustain the Department from the Central Government budget in the future without significant revision of its role and costs.**

**The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Department should take corrective steps such as adjusting to digital age and providing the facilities in the post offices, in order to cut down the cost and also to generate revenues. While primary concern of the Department should be to take various services to the people, the Committee are also of the view that the challenge before the Department are to turn these challenges into opportunities.**

### **Revenue Receipts**

**2. From the information provided by the Department, the Committee note that the revenue receipts of the Department have increased from Rs. 11511 crore in 2016-17 to Rs. 12833 crore in 2017-18. The total receipts in 2018-19 was Rs. 13196 crore and for the year 2019-20, the total revenue target set at BE was Rs. 19203 crore. Against the target, the revenue receipts till August, 2019 was Rs. 5295 crore. The Committee observe that this increase was mainly because of**

**increase in Revenue receipts under Heads, like Revenue from Postal operations, Commission on Money orders and IPOs, SBCC etc. The Committee are however concerned to note that revenue receipts under 10 items had declined in 2018-19 when compared with the previous year. Some of these items are Speed Post, Business post, Bill Mail Service, Express Parcel Post, Business Parcel Post, Retail Post, Sale of postage and stamps etc. Though there has been an increase in revenue receipts, the increase in the revenue receipts has not been able to keep pace with the increase in the expenditure of the Department. This has led to the increase in revenue deficit.**

**The Committee are given to understand that to increase revenue receipts, the Department are taking numerous measures, such as offer of numerous premium services under Business Development and Marketing Directorate, periodical reviews of its services and products keeping in view the changing market scenario, customer needs, industry benchmarks etc. and taking steps to modify services features to improve the postal services, technology integration and infrastructure upgradation, focused approach to cater to the needs of the emerging markets, such as e-Commerce etc. The Committee, however, observe that the above measures taken by the Department are still inadequate as the revenue receipts has not shown any significant increase during the current financial year.**

**The Committee recommend that the Department should explore opportunities in the market for growing business and continue with efforts to augment revenue and reduce deficit.**

### **Overall status of implementation of schemes**

**3. The Committee note that at present the Department of Posts are implementing four Schemes, such as Postal operations, Human Resource Management, Estates management and India Post Payments Bank. During the year 2018-19, an amount of Rs. 1160 crore had been allocated at BE, which was reduced to Rs. 1071.77 Crore at RE and the actual utilization made was Rs. 1013.97 crore, i.e. 94.61 percent w.r.t. RE. For the year 2019-20, the Department have proposed an amount of Rs. 2305.045 crore, however an amount of Rs. 1205.65 crore only has been allocated at BE. The Department have informed the Committee that due to reduced allocation at BE, IT Induction and Modernisation which is a sub-scheme under Postal operations will be adversely affected. The Committee understand that the role of the Department is rapidly changing from its traditional role of delivering letters and mails to providing e-commerce and banking services. In this regard, optimal use of digital platform has become essential to achieve the goal of financial inclusion and provide citizen-centric services to every nook and corner of the country. It is only with proper implementation of schemes and IT Modernisation , including taking full commercial advantage of the extensive presence and distribution network of the Postal Department, that the Department will be able to become relevant to the people which in turn will help the Department to improve their financial performance.**

**The Committee sincerely desire that necessary funds should be allocated to the Department for the**



implementation of the above Schemes. The concern of the Committee in this regard may be communicated to the Ministry of Finance. At the same time, the Committee recommend that the Department should take all necessary steps for the successful and optimal utilization of funds allocated for various Schemes during 2019-20.

#### **Rural Business and Access to Postal Network**

4. The Committee note that the objective of this Scheme is to increase access to the postal network especially in remote and LWE affected areas and supply of basic infrastructural equipment to rural Branch Post Offices to increase operational and functional efficiency of rural Post offices. The Committee note that during 2018-19, an amount of Rs. 25 crore has been allocated at BE for the scheme, which was increased to Rs. 35.80 crore at RE, but the actual utilization made was only Rs. 10.96 crore i.e. just 30.62 percent w.r.t. RE. As regard the physical achievements made under this Scheme, 1559 Branch Offices have been opened, 177 franchise outlets opened in urban areas, 1626 infrastructure for EDBOs (Extra Departmental Branch Office) provided, 24459 new improved letter boxes and signages were installed and 4129 cash chests were embedded. The Committee were informed that the shortfall in expenditure was due to excessive cost of handheld devices and salary component from the Scheme expenditure. For the year 2019-20, an amount of Rs. 25.67 crore has been allocated at BE. From the information provided by the Department, the Committee note that as per decision of the Cabinet Committee on Security, DoP is mandated to open 5962

**Branch Post offices in LWE districts for which posts of Branch Postmasters and Assistant Branch Post Masters are to be newly created. Sanction of MoF for creation of BPM and APM posts has been sought for the year 2019-20 and 2020-21. However, the approval is still pending. The Committee are of the view that opening of Post offices in rural areas is an important objective of the Scheme, more so in LWE affected areas.**

**The Committee are glad to know that the CCS has approved for opening of 5962 Branch Post offices, in LWE affected areas. Considering that booking of funds under this activity has not been satisfactory during 2019-20, mainly due to pending approval of creation of BPM and APM posts by the MoF, the Committee recommended that the matter may be taken up with the Ministry of Finance for approval at the earliest. The Committee also desire that the DoP should take all necessary steps for opening of all BPOs as mandated by the CCS as this will go a long way in bringing about changes in the lives of the people living in the LWE affected areas.**

#### **Post Office Saving Bank Operations**

**5. The Committee are given to understand that the DoP with its physical access network of 1.5 lakh Post offices is well situated to play a critical role in opening of Savings Accounts in both rural and urban areas for financial inclusion. The objective of the Scheme is to bring in facilities of ATM banking, Internet Banking and Mobile Banking to Post Office Saving Bank customers. The Committee note that DoP ATMs have become inter-operable with effect from 31.12.2016 and fund under this Scheme is being utilized to**

**procure and supply ATM Cards to POSB customers. With regard to utilization of funds, during 2018-19, the Committee note that an amount of Rs. 20 crore had been allocated at BE, however, it was reduced to Rs. 9.9 Crore at RE and the actual utilization made was only Rs. 0.02 Crore, i.e., 0.2 percent of the amount allocated at RE. The Department have stated that this was because the contract for supply of magnetic stripe based ATM/Debit cards was signed with M/s CMS Info systems Pvt. Limited for a period of two years i.e. from 2015-16 to 2016-17. In the meantime, there was a direction from the RBI to henceforth procure and supply only EMV chip-based ATM card. In view of this the Department had to go for fresh tender and it had taken considerable time to draft, float and finalise the fresh tender for EMV chip based ATM cards. The Department have now informed the Committee that Financial Division is planning to procure 47.5 lakh ATM/Debit Card and tender has been finalized and order for procurement of 40 lakh ATM/Debit Cards has been placed with the vendor and supply has commenced.**

**The Committee hope that utilization of funds will fairly improve, but will also bring about customer satisfaction and reduce operational loss to the Department. The Committee recommend that the Department should give special emphasis to rural and hilly areas while setting up ATMs where there are no adequate ATM facilities. Besides, special drives should be organized to encourage rural people for cashless transactions. The Committee also desired to know the steps taken by the Department for introduction of Internet Banking and Mobile Banking to POSB customers.**

**The Committee wish to be apprised of all the progress made in this regard.**

**Postal Life Insurance (PLI) and Rural Postal Life Insurance (RPLI)**

**6. Postal Life Insurance (PLI), introduced in 1884, is the oldest life insurance scheme for benefit of the Government and semi Government employees. The Committee however note that facilities under PLI have not been extended to common people. The Committee would like to know the reasons for not including the common people in the targeted group and desire that PLI should be extended to all the common people also. Postal employees enjoy high credibility especially in the rural areas, this may be utilized to bring in more subscribers into the fold of RPLI. The Committee is satisfied to note that implementation of Core Insurance Solutions (CIS) has led to the facility of web portal and mobile portal so that customers can pay premium through various modes. The 'Anytime Anywhere Policy Procurement' facility will ensure easy retrieval and quicker customer service fulfillment from anywhere in the country as the policies will be stored electronically. The Committee recommend that the Department must undertake sustained efforts for publicity of PLI to create awareness about the insurance plans on offer through organizing drives, quiz competitions, exhibitions to further expand the subscriber base.**

## **IT Induction and Modernisation**

**7. The Committee note that the IT Induction and Modernisation Project aims at transforming the Department of Posts' operational efficiency and improving service delivery of operational and administrative units through upgraded technology and connectivity. Under this Scheme, networking of all 1,55,531 post offices covering the remotest parts of the country will enable tracking and tracing of all kinds of mails and parcels in the country, besides providing real-time information to facilitate customer feedback and management functions. The implementation of the Project started in the year 2012-13 and it is being implemented in eight segments. The achievements highlighted under this scheme are setting up of Data Centre and Disaster Recovery Centre, migration of 23772 Post offices under Core Banking solution and 25573 POs under Core Insurance Solutions, installation of 996 ATMs which are inter-operable, networking on single WAN, dispatch of handheld devices, smartphones, desktop computers and other hardware to postal employees, roll out of Core System Integrator project, etc. The Committee note that the allocation of Rs. 507.9 Crore during 2019-20 is insufficient to carry out various projects as funds to the tune of Rs. 225.44 Crore has already been utilized and in view of committed liabilities, the Department has asked for fund requirement of Rs. 1267 Crore in RE stage.**

**The Committee are apprehensive that if the funds are not allocated, Network Integrator Project, Financial Services Integrator Project and DARPAN ("Digital Advancement of Rural Post Office for A New India") Project can get affected**

due to which the entire IT Modernisation project will suffer. The Committee advise the DoP to take up the issue of increased allocation for this project with the Ministry of Finance so that the committed and anticipated liabilities can be met and apprise the Committee on the same.

### **Human Resource Management**

8. Human Resource Management is one of the important schemes of the Department. The Department have informed the Committee that Postal employees are required to play roles of a Business Manager, HR Manager, Marketing Executive, trainers, Counter Operating Staff, etc. at the same time. The Committee note that the Department have set up various training institutes to take care of the needs of the Department. Some of these institutes are Rafi Ahmed Kidwai National Postal Academy (RAKNPA) at Ghaziabad which is also the apex training institute for the Department, Postal training Centres (PTC) at Darbhanga, Guwahati, Madurai, Mysore, Saharanpur and Vadodara for training operative staff and inspectorial cadres, 452 Workplace Training Centres(WTC), 5 Zonal Training Centres(ZTC) and 03 Regional Training Centres(RTC). WTCs, ZTCs and RTCs are delivering training at local level. For the implementation of this Scheme during 2018-19, an amount of Rs. 60 Crore had been allocated at BE which was drastically reduced to Rs. 25.11 Crore at RE and the actual utilization made was Rs. 24.48 crore. The Department have informed the Committee that the reasons for massive deduction from BE to RE was mainly due to non-completion of building projects since there was delay in tender processes and municipal approval, etc. With regard to achievement of physical targets during 2018-

**19, the Committee note that against the target of providing training to 45060 officials, 300243 officials had been trained. During 2019-20, an amount of Rs. 33.46 Crore has been allocated at BE, however at RE, the amount has been reduced to Rs. 29.23 crore. The Department have stated that the funds allocated would be sufficient to carry out the identified training activities during the year.**

**The Committee are of the view that the Department are not only providing various services to the people but also increasingly venturing into newer services like finance and banking. Being a service oriented Department, the Committee feel that the postal officials have to interact with the customers frequently. The changing times and nature of services provided also require that they must be equally at ease with changing technology especially relating to IT to increase their efficiency. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Department should give focused attention on training their employees so as to improve their skills and behavioural attitude. The Committee hope that this will go a long way in changing the mindset of the people to trust the service provided by the Department as most trustworthy and customer friendly.**

### **Estate Management**

**9. The Committee note that the Department are implementing numerous activities under Estate Management, such as Construction of new Post Offices, Administrative Offices and staff quarters, Construction of Ladies Toilets, Creches and retiring rooms under gender concern, Construction of toilets for differently abled persons under**

**Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan, Preservation of Heritage Buildings belonging to the Department of Posts, Renovation and maintenance of Postal buildings, etc. For the implementation of the scheme, an amount of Rs. 85 crore each had been allocated at BE and RE during 2018-19. Out of this, the Department had utilized an amount of Rs. 71.37 crore. The Department have stated that under utilisation of funds was due to not getting timely approval from Municipal Corporations and other State Government authorities for starting construction process, cancellation of tendering process due to frequent high bidding, non-settlement of litigation process pertaining to the land owned by the Department etc. For the year 2019-20, the Department have proposed an amount of Rs. 93.50 crore, however an amount of Rs. 62.7 crore had been allocated at BE. The Committee have been informed that the funds proposed under Swachh Bharat Mission to the tune of Rs. 20 crore have not yet been allocated and the funds allocated for renovation of buildings is not adequate.**

**From the aforesaid observations, the Committee clearly note that allocated funds for the scheme during 2019-20 will not be sufficient for the implementation of the scheme. The Committee hope that the Department must have taken appropriate measures for requisite allocation of funds at RE. The Committee are also of the view that apart from implementing various activities under the scheme, special emphasis should also be given for preservation of Heritage Buildings belonging to the Department. The Committee desire better utilization of funds under the scheme during 2019-20.**



### **Construction of post offices**

**10. The Committee note that as on date, the Department have 1738 vacant plots of land of which 1139 are in rural areas and 599 are in urban areas. Regarding utilization, the Department have informed that new post office buildings are being implemented on these lands where cost benefit analysis suggest that construction of building is profitable than running post office from a rented accommodation. In this regard, the Committee note that many MPs/MLAs have come forward for offering MPLAD funds for construction of post offices in vacant plots. The matter had also been taken up by the Department of Posts with the Secretary, Ministry of Statistics and Programme implementation to revise the MPLAD guidelines so that funds could be utilized for works related to public utilities like construction of ramps and rails, public toilets, counters and other value added activities for public in post offices. However, this request for the inclusion of funding for Post offices has been rejected by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme implementation. The Committee are of the view that funds are required by the Department for the construction of new Post Office buildings at various locations. Considering that there are many vacant plots where post offices could be constructed, the initiative shown by many MPs/MLAs offering MPLAD funds construction of Post Office buildings is a welcome initiative and if allowed will be of great help to DoP to construct more new Post Offices. This in turn will help the public representatives to get more opportunity to engage with the activities of the**

**Department and address the general grievances of the customers.**

**In this regard, the Committee recommend that MPLAD guidelines could be suitably amended so that MPs/MLAs can contribute from their MPLAD funds for construction of post office buildings or for modern annexes thereto. Accordingly, the recommendation of the Committee in this regard may be communicated to the Ministry of Statistics and Programme implementation for necessary action at their end. The Committee wish to be apprised of all the progress made in this regard.**

#### **Status of encroachment of plots**

**11. The Committee are deeply concerned to note that 204 plots available with the Department of Posts are under encroachment. 38 plots are under encroachment in Karnataka, 27 plots in Bihar, 16 plots in Rajasthan, 15 plots each in Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal, 13 plots in Maharashtra, 12 in Telangana, 10 plots in Uttar Pradesh and 9 plots in Kerala are under encroachment. On specific measures to reclaim the land, the Committee note that the Department is making efforts with the help of local public representatives, public administrations and judiciary. Further, in order to check the threat of encroachment, Estate Officers have been appointed in postal circles to deal with cases related to unauthorized occupation of the Departmental lands and boundary walls are being constructed, on availability of funds.**

**The Committee desire that the issue of safeguarding the land assets of the Department needs to be given greater emphasis and eviction of unauthorized encroachers may be expedited. Boundary walls may be constructed and CCTV cameras may be installed as security measures to protect the plots from encroachers.**

### **India Post Payments Bank**

**12. The Committee note that the vision of IPPB is to build the most accessible, affordable and trusted bank for the common man and the mission is to spearhead the financial inclusion agenda by removing the barriers for the unbanked. IPPB was the second payments bank to launch its operations and is one of the pioneers in this area to usher in an environment of digital payments in the country. The Committee are satisfied to note that 650 IPPB Branches have been established and 136000+ POs have been enabled to provide banking services. 195000+ Postmen and Gramin Dak Sevaks have been equipped with smartphones and biometric devices and 265000+ employees have been trained at present. The Department have informed that they plan to enable the remaining 18000+ Technically not feasible access points and fill in the remaining vacancies to ensure smooth operations. The Committee are satisfied that the allocation of Rs. 500 crore in FY 2017-18 and 300 crore in 2018-19 has been optimally utilized and the BE for 2019-20 is 335 crore. Out of this disbursement of Rs. 335 crores, the DoP has released Rs. 100 crores to IPPB in first Quarter. IPPB has now become the single largest platform in the country for**

**providing interoperable banking services to the customers of any bank. With Aadhaar enabled payment system (AePS) services, any person with a bank account linked to Aadhaar can perform basic banking services such as cash withdrawals and balance enquiry irrespective of the bank they hold their account with. IPPB now has the ability to provide interoperable doorstep banking services to customers of any bank including the Jan Dhan account holders, by leveraging the unprecedented last mile reach of IPPB. The Committee are satisfied to note that the IPPB is committed to provide a fillip to a less cash economy and contribute to the vision of Digital India but IPPB, being a payments bank has limited avenues of income and sustainability of the business model is a challenge. Setting up such a bank requires extended investments into enabling digital and financial literacy at the last mile. The Committee note with concern that in the next financial year, IPPB may face shortage of funds as some revenue streams have decreased as RBI has imposed certain limits on them. There is a constant need to improvise and upgrade the products and processes in the wake of fast evolving technology, regulatory requirements and security concerns which require integration agility and faster go-to-market processes.**

**The Committee, therefore, recommend that IPPB must therefore make renewed efforts to explore additional sources of revenue/funding by enhancing its products and services suite and apprise the Committee about the initiatives taken in this regard.**

## **Miscellaneous**

### **Development of E-commerce**

**13. The Committee note that in order to ensure safe and secure transmission of e-commerce articles and parcels, a Plan Scheme 'Development of Road Transport network' has been approved for the Department. Under the Plan Scheme, 42 routes have been made functional which will ensure secure transmission of Speed Post articles and e-commerce shipments across the country. Alternate/ additional routes which can be operationally advantageous for transmission of mail are also being identified continuously. With the growing e-commerce market, the Department has implemented a Parcel Network Optimization Project vide which L1 and L2 parcel hubs have been setup across the country. The Committee appreciate that the Department of Posts has setup a separate Parcel Directorate in April 2018 to focus on this rapidly growing segment keeping in view the needs of the customers.**

**The USP of the Department of Posts is that it delivers where the private courier companies who are driven by profit motive do not. Taking note of this, the Committee feel that there is a huge scope for increasing the foothold of the Postal Department in the booming e-Commerce market in the country and recommend that the Department should capture the market in the rural areas where it has unparalleled reach in the delivery of parcels and can therefore find its niche. It is also worth exploring whether post office personnel could be trained to also serve as a railway booking and ticketing**

agents, which would bring a much needed service within reach of the common man.

### **Post Office Passport Seva Kendra (POPSK)**

14. The Committee note that Post Offices are being leveraged to provide third party products and services to the customers in their neighbourhood. As a part of this initiative and in order to extend passport services to the citizens in far flung areas, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and the Department of Posts (DoP) have leveraged selected Head Post Offices (HPOs) in various States as Post Office Passport Seva Kendra (POPSK) for delivering passport related services to the citizens of our country. The Committee note that during the period from Jan, 2018 to March, 2019, around 22.02 lakh applications have been processed in these POPSKs. During the period from April to August 2019, 954178 applications have been processed.

The Committee are glad to note that the Post office is earning revenue and is also promoting the POPSK through print media and digital media. However, the Department have informed that the payment of the transaction charges to the DoP by the MEA has been delayed and inadequate. While appreciating the above initiative, the Committee recommend that the Department may follow up with the Ministry of External Affairs on a regular basis to ensure that the payment of the transaction charges to DoP are not delayed thus causing losses to the Postal Department.

## **Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana**

**15. The Committee note that Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana, a new Small Savings Scheme for the welfare of girl child, was launched on 22nd January 2015. Under the scheme, a legal/natural guardian can open only one account in the name of one girl child and maximum two accounts in the name of two different girl children up to 10 years from date of birth of the girl child. This scheme has received tremendous response and 152.28 lakh accounts have been opened from the date of its inception. Total 16.95 lakh accounts were opened during F.Y.2017-18 with total deposit of Rs. 5926.37 crores and 24.26 lakh accounts have been opened during 2018-19 with total deposit of Rs. 10615.79 crores upto March 2019.**

**The Committee note with satisfaction that 85% of the total SSA accounts throughout the country are opened by the DoP. However there is a need to increase the enrolment multi fold under these Schemes and there is a very large scope for growth in rural areas. The Committee, therefore, recommend that efforts should be made to popularize Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana in rural areas so that they can avail the benefits of such social security schemes.**

**New Delhi;  
6 December, 2019**  

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**15 Agrahayana, 1941 (Saka)**

**DR. SHASHI THAROOR,  
Chairperson,  
Standing Committee on  
Information Technology**

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY  
(2019-20)**

**MINUTES OF THE THIRD SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE**  
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The Committee sat on Friday, the 11 October, 2019 from 1415 hours to 1530 hours in Committee Room 'C', Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

**PRESENT**

**Dr. Shashi Tharoor -Chairperson**

**MEMBERS**

***Lok Sabha***

1. Smt. Locket Chatterjee
2. Shri Karti P. Chidambaram
3. Dr. Nishikant Dubey
4. Choudhary Mehboob Ali Kaiser
5. Dr. Sukanta Majumdar
6. Shri P. R. Natarajan
7. Dr. Gaddam Ranjith Reddy
8. Shri M V V Satyanarayana
9. Shri L.S. Tejasvi Surya
10. Shri Bhanu Pratap Singh Verma

***Rajya Sabha***

11. Dr. Anil Agrawal
12. Shri Y. S. Chowdary
13. Shri Syed Nasir Hussain
14. Dr. Narendra Jadhav
15. Shri Ronald Sapa Tlau

**SECRETARIAT**

Shri Y.M. Kandpal	-	Director
Dr. Sagarika Dash	-	Additional Director
Smt. Geeta Parmar	-	Additional Director
Shangreiso Zimik	-	Deputy Secretary



## **Representatives of the Department of Posts, Ministry of Communications**

1.	Shri Anant Narayan Nanda	Secretary (Posts)
2.	T.Q. Mohammad	Secretary (PSB)
3.	Ms. Meera Handa	Director General (Posts)
4.	Sh. Vishvapavan Pati	ADG (Coordination)/Member (Plg. & HRD)
5.	Sh. Suresh Sethi	CEO, IPPB
6.	Sh. Salim Haque	Member (Technology)
7.	Sh. P.K. Bisoi	Member (Personnel)
8.	Ms. Arundhati Ghosh	Member (Operation)
9.	Sh. Vineet Pandey	Member (PLI)
10.	Sh. A. P. Singh	Member (Banking & DBT)
11.	Sh. G.K. Padhy	Sr. DDG (PAF)

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the representatives of the Department of Posts (DoP) to the sitting of the Committee convened to examine the Demands for Grants (2019-20) of the DoP. The Secretary, DoP, then highlighted on the financial and physical performance of the Department during the last three years, financial allocation made during 2019-20, their transformed digital postal network and its contribution towards providing citizen centric services and enrolling Government social welfare schemes, financial security being provided through PLI in rural areas and the proposal to set up a PLI Strategic Business Unit(SBU), expansion of e-commerce activities and also their thrust areas during the current year, etc. A power point presentation was made on the salient features of the Demands for Grants(2019-20).

3. The Members, then, sought clarifications on various issues like Department's e-commerce business activities and India Post e-commerce Portal, their strategies to augment department's revenue with a view to decrease their deficit, discontinuation of the Project Arrow, non-achievement of the physical targets in respects of upgradation of post offices in spite of budget allocation, making their mail vans environment friendly by replacing them with CNG and monetization of the vacant plots, etc. The representatives of the Department of Posts responded to the same.

4. The Chairperson, then, thanked the representatives of the Department of Posts for replying to various queries raised by the Members.

The witnesses then withdrew.

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

**The Committee, then, adjourned.**

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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY  
(2019-20)**

**MINUTES OF THE NINTH SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE**

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The Committee sat on Wednesday, the 27 November, 2019 from 1500 hours to 1620 hours in Committee Room '62', First Floor, Parliament House, New Delhi.

**PRESENT**

**Dr. Shashi Tharoor -Chairperson**

**MEMBERS**

***Lok Sabha***

1. Smt. Locket Chatterjee
2. Shri Karti P. Chidambaram
3. Shri Sunny Deol
4. Dr. Nishikant Dubey
5. Smt. Raksha Nikhil Khadse
6. Ms. Mahua Moitra
7. Shri P. R. Natarajan
8. Shri Nisith Pramanik
9. Col . Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore
10. Dr. Gaddam Ranjith Reddy
11. Shri L.S. Tejasvi Surya
12. Dr. T. Sumathy (A) Thamizhachi Thangapandian
13. Shri Bhanu Pratap Singh Verma

***Rajya Sabha***

14. Shri Y. S. Chowdary
15. Shri Suresh Gopi
16. Shri Md. Nadimul Haque
17. Shri Syed Nasir Hussain
18. Shri Ronald Sapa Tlau

## **SECRETARIAT**

Shri Ganapati Bhat	-	Additional Secretary
Shri Y.M. Kandpal	-	Director
Dr. Sagarika Dash	-	Additional Director
Smt. Geeta Parmar	-	Additional Director
Shri Shangreiso Zimik	-	Deputy Secretary

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members to the sitting of the Committee convened to consider and adopt Draft Reports on Demands for Grants (2019-20) relating to the Ministries/Departments under their jurisdiction.

3. The Committee, then, took up the following draft Report for consideration and adoption.

(i) ....XXXX....XXXX...XXXX...XXXX.....XXXX....XXXX...XXXX...XXXX.....

(ii) ....XXXX....XXXX...XXXX...XXXX.....XXXX....XXXX...XXXX...XXXX.....

(iii) Draft Report on Demands for Grants (2019-20) of the Ministry of Communications (Department of Posts).

4. The Committee, thereafter, adopted the above Report with some modifications.

5. The Committee authorized the Chairperson to finalize the draft Report arising out of factual verification, if any, and present the Report to the House during the current Session of Parliament.

**The Committee, then, adjourned.**

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....XXXX....Matters not related to Report