

The steps taken by FCI to control costs include, *inter alia*, reduction in rail demurrage charges as well as in shortages in grain handling, better storage capacity utilization and reduction in administrative overheads.

Recommendations of Justice Talwar Committee

†*380. SHRIMATI JAMANA DEVI BARUPAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are contemplating to implement the recommendations of Justice Talwar Committee with regard to status, pension, trade union facilities for three lakh employees engaged in postal services in rural areas;

(b) if so, by when; and

(c) if not, what remedial measures Government are considering in the interest of these employees?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) to (c) The Justice Talwar Committee (JTC), constituted to examine the system of Extra Departmental Agency in the Department of Posts, their conditions of employment wage structure etc., made various recommendations in this regard, which, *inter alia*, covered issues like their status, grant of pension etc. There was no specific recommendation regarding the grant of trade union facilities to them.

2. The recommendations of the JTC were examined and orders issued on 17.12.98 in full and final settlement of these recommendations and all related pending issues. This resulted in 69% enhancement in the benefits given to the 3,10,269 Extra Departmental Agents now called Gramin Dak Sevak. The benefits given included post employment benefit to be paid at the time of discharge from employment at the age of 65 years or on death of the Gramin Dak Sevak (GDS), in terms of a lump sum severance amount of Rs. 20,000/- to those who have completed 15 to 20 years of employment, and Rs. 30,000/- to those who have completed over 20 years of employment. The ex-gratia gratuity admissible to them was also enhanced from Rs. 6000/- to Rs. 18,000/-.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

3. The Extra Departmental System (now called Gramin Dak Sevaks) has its origins prior to independence and is a practical and viable method of extending basic postal facilities to the rural areas where, due to inadequate workload, full-fledged departmental post offices are not feasible. The GDSs are required to have an alternate source of livelihood, as they are required to work only for a specified period not exceeding five hours depending on workload.

4. In view of the above facts, there is no proposal at present to modify their status or grant them pension or trade union facilities. Provisions are already available for 75% recruitment to Group 'D' level posts and 50% of postmen's posts in the Department to be made from among the GDSs so that they have an opportunity to better their prospects and enter regular government service.

Basic infrastructure for tiny sector in Tamil Nadu

2336. SHRIMATI S. G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the tiny sector industrial units under the integrated infrastructure development scheme for creation of basic infrastructure in cluster basis in Tamil Nadu;

(b) whether the scheme is being extended to other parts of the State where it is not in operation now;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES (SHRI KARIYA MUNDA): (a) Under the Integrated Infrastructural Development (IID) Scheme, five IID Centres located in the districts of Madurai, Coimbatore, Kanchipuram, Chennai MGR and Thiruvallur in the State of Tamil Nadu have been sanctioned. These are at various stages of implementation except the IID Centre at Coimbatore where the developmental work is yet to commence. In all, 28 tiny and 79 small scale units have been established in these IID Centres.

(b) and (c) The IID Centres are sanctioned on the basis of the proposals received from the State Governments and no further proposal