

**Electronic Telephone Exchanges in the Country**

†\*227. SHRI RAMJI LAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of electronic and other types of Telephone Exchanges in the country till date;

(b) by when all the Exchanges are likely to be converted into Electronic Exchanges;

(c) the number of villages where telephone facility was available and villages where this facility was not available as on 31st October, 1999; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to clear the waiting list in the villages?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) to (d) At present, 35523 electronic and 15 non-electronic exchanges are functioning in the country. All the non-electronic exchanges are likely to be converted into electronic exchanges by 31-03-2000. As on 31-10-1999, out of total number of 6,07,491 villages in the country, 3,44,508 villages have been provided with telephone facilities. 2,62,983 villages are not having telephone facility. To clear the waiting list in rural areas, new exchanges are being opened and the existing exchanges are being expanded.

**Improvement in Post, Telegraph and Communications Services in Punjab**

\*228. SHRI LAJPAT RAI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the inferior quality of essential services available in the field of Post, Telegraph and Communications in each District of Punjab;

(b) whether there is a need to improve the quality of these services; and

(c) if so, the instructions issued regarding improvement in Post, Telegraph and Communication services in Punjab circles?

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†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) to (c) *Postal Services:*

The quality of essential postal services available in each district of Punjab is generally satisfactory, as will be evident from the following details:

(i) Live mail survey results indicate that as against the All India average of 80% of the mails delivered within the prescribed norms, the percentage of mails delivered in Punjab within norms is 88.65% in the urban areas and 83.25% in the rural areas which is far above the All India average;

(ii) On an average a post office in Punjab serves an area of 13.04 sq. kms and a population of 5392 against the All India average of 21.42 sq. kms and a population of 5502 respectively;

(iii) The receipt of postal complaints in Punjab Circle for various essential postal services has also shown a declining trend in the quarter ending September, 1999 as compared to the receipt of complaints in the last three years;

(iv) The Department of Posts has been closely monitoring the quality of services and making all out efforts for improvement by more effective management and using latest technology which includes computerisation of counter services including Savings Bank operations, transmission of Money Orders through V.SAT, setting up of Computerised Customer Care Centres for expeditious handling of complaints, establishment of computerised registration centres, etc.

*Telegraph Services*

In general, the quality of Telegraph Service in each district of Punjab is quite satisfactory. The overall quality of service of Punjab Telecom Circle as a whole for the last five years measured in terms of percentage of delivery of telegrams in 12 day light hours is as follows:—

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Years	Target	Achievement
1994-95	93%	93.2%
1995-96	93%	94.5%
1996-97	94%	95.2%
1997-98	95%	96%
1998-99	95%	96.2%

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The improvement of the quality of service is a constant and continuous process. The quality of Telegraph Service is continuously improving.

*Telecommunication Services*

In general, the Telecommunication services in each district of Punjab are satisfactory. However, improvement in the quality of service is a continuous process and there is a need to further improve the quality of service to achieve the yearly and the Ninth Plan targets fixed by the Department in this regard. During the year 1998-99 the fault rate of Punjab was 17.0 against an All India average of 16.9. The Trunk efficiency during the year was 90.6% against the All India average of 82.7%

For further improving the communication services in Punjab Circle, instructions have been issued for achieving single digit fault rate by end of Ninth Plan, rehabilitation and upgradation of external plant and use of 5 pair underground cable for providing internal DPs.