

Modernisation and computerisation of postal services

†2699. SHRI JAI PRAKASH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is working for modernisation and computerisation of Indian Postal service, the largest postal service of the world, having more than one lakh fifty thousand post offices, so that they can prove effective in increasing its utility; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SACHIN PILOT): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government has approved the "IT MODERNIZATION PROJECT" of Department of Posts for computerization of Post Offices, Mail Offices, Administrative Offices and other field offices. The project involves establishment of required IT infrastructure and development of integrated modular scalable applications for mail, banking, postal life insurance etc.

Investment for cold storage chain

2700. DR. E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has recognised that cold storage chain is a must to stop huge wastage of fruits and horticulture which needs high investment and technology through F.D.I; and

(b) if so, whether the Twelfth Five Year Plan will have clear path for both domestic and F.D.I. route in Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode?

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI CHARAN DAS MAHANT): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The creation of cold storage chain infrastructure reduces undesirable level of wastages in perishables, increase in level of processing and value addition to agricultural produces. Setting up of cold chain facilities requires high investment. Considering the importance of cold chain facilities in the country, the Government of India has provided for special policy incentives in this regard. The Union Budget for FY 2010 provided for investment linked tax incentives for setting up and operating cold chain and warehousing facilities for agricultural produces. Under this policy, all capital expenditure, other than on land, goodwill and financial instruments would be fully allowable as deduction. Further, the Ministry of Finance has also taken a decision to include cold chains and post-harvest storage infrastructure as Infrastructure projects.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.