

AMPC-A BOON OR BANE

Every one is aware that the Department is going to install AMPCs in fourteen Circles under the MNOP. We have bitter experience about AMPCs (Mumbai & Chennai). The Department established AMPC in Mumbai and Chennai in the year 1992 and 1995 respectively. Nearly two decades are over since the opening of the AMPCs. Even after two decades, India Post is unable to manufacture Postal Stationery according to the needs of the AMPC. At present, AMPCs in Chennai and Mumbai are functioning without adequate mails. The service unions have already pointed out the pros and cons of AMPC to the Department. In foreign countries, Postal administrations have decided to close down mail processing Centres saying that adequate mails are not available in their countries. They clearly mention that functioning of AMPC incurs more loss to the Postal Department. This is the statement from USA, Germany, Japan and other countries. Under the circumstances, Department is going to open AMPCs shortly in Delhi and Kolkata.

TECHNOLOGY

We do not know what type of technology is going to be adopted in the forthcoming AMPCs – whether it is video or OCR (Optical Character Reader) or Bar coding. If the Department adopts OCR it will sort 16000 of articles per hour. It will sort beat sorting also. Further it will deal with all kinds of articles such as Speed Post, Registered Letters and Parcels. The service unions are kept dark about the technology to be used in the AMPCs.

OPERATIONS COST

According to the statistics, personal mails in Delhi and Kolkata are very meager. As such, AMPC is not required to deal with public mails. If the Department desires to deal with corporate mails with the help of AMPCs, the operational cost will be more. Because the Department is collecting only Rs. 3/- per article from the Corporate mailers. Moreover, the corporate mails are pre-sorted. Hence the AMPC is not required to deal with corporate mails also. We fail to understand as to why the Department is keen to install AMPCs.

NO SCOPE FOR BRINGING MORE MAILS TO AMPCs

In foreign countries Post office Acts were amended according to the need of the Government keeping in mind to the USO obligations to the public. In other words, mails weighing upto 50 gram are monopoly to the Postal Dept. In India, the Dept. as well as Govt. are trying to amend Post office Act since last ten years. There is no scope for any amendment. Further there is no attempt on the part of the Dept. to bring the mails of less than 50 grams to its fold. Such being the case, there is no chance to bring more mails to the AMPCs.

STAFF PROBLEMS

If the AMPCs are installed in Metro Cities, it will pave way for reduction of staff, surplus of supervisory staff and merger of RMS Divisions in Metro Cities. The Department cannot avoid this. We do not know what kind of alternative they have. Moreover most of the staff were recruited between 1980 and 1985. They are not exposed to present technology. Department may say that they will be imparted training. Even after getting training, they would get acclimatized after some years of service. By that time, the officials will retire from service.

MAIL ARRANGEMENTS

AMPCs are established away from the City. To bring mails to AMPC from various Post offices, more MMS vehicles are required. Now the MMS units are in the Centre of the city. Further the number of vehicles are less in India Post. This will lead to dead mileage to MMS vehicles and undue delay to public mails.

CAG'S OBJECTION

According to our information, machine cost is about Rs. 45 crores. It requires Rs. 10 lakhs for maintenance per month such as electricity bill, employing more technicians. The colossal expenditure may lead to the audit objection from the CAG in future. The service unions are of definite opinion that AMPC is not boon to the public as well as Department but it is bane.