

POSTAL NEWS

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1. Confusion between Postal HQ and couriers over deliveries

April 20, 2008.

By Tharindri Rupesinghe

In a recent crackdown, Postal authorities have been warning local ‘courier’ companies against delivering letters in the country, saying that according to the law, the sole authority of delivering letters is the Postal Department.

According to Post Master General K.B.Dissanayaka, while the law says that the right of delivering is with the postal authorities, when the open economy came in 1977, private companies started delivering as well.

“It was against the law but because of the open economy it was allowed,” he said. This has been going on for a long time now, but according to Dissanayaka the postal authorities’ sudden response came because some courier firms began delivering even the most basic of letters. “When they started to deliver the basic documents like letters, cards, bills etc., we decided to take action,” he said. This phenomenon, he said, had started in the past two to three months. Contrary to this, many firms have been using couriers to deliver invitations, statements, letters etc.

A man who has been carrying out these deliveries has been seized in the Peliyagoda area. According to the Post Master General, the man is currently facing legal proceedings.

According to the Post Office Ordinance that the system works under, wherever posts or postal communications are established, the sole authority of delivering letters is in the hand of the postal authorities. However, the rule does have a few exceptions: friends who are carrying the letter on a personal request are allowed, as are individuals who have been hired by the sender or receiver but are not generally in the business of delivering such letters and who will not receive a fee or reward from the exercise. Also, promotional materials such as flyers and brochures which are generally circulated and have no specific recipients are allowed to be privately distributed.

In the “Monopoly of carriage of letters” section of the ordinance, “common carriers of passengers or of goods” are expressly prohibited from delivering letters if post or postal communications have been set up in the area.

The Post office Ordinance was brought into being in 1908, however, and its latest amendment was in 1957. Contradicting all this, Udaya Dewage, General Manager of Delmon Express, an agency which delivers some documents within the country, says the government regulation under which the business is registered-a Certificate of Incorporation-states that the companies are authorized to deliver “ letters and parcels” with no other specification given. “We deliver to banks and private companies as well as some leading hotels,” he revealed adding that so far door-to-door services are carried out by various couriers and delivery agents. Dissanayaka says there is no plans for regularization of private delivery of letters.

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2. Postal and RMS staff threaten to launch nationwide protest

D N DIVAKAR

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Ambala, April 18 The National Postal and RMS Employees’ Unions Organisation has threatened a nationwide agitation if their demands concerning anomalies in the 6th Pay Commission Report are not met.

The report has not covered more than 3.5 lakh Gramin Dak Sewa employees, said organisation secretary D Tayagrajan.

He said the pay commission recommendations have been rejected because it provided no relief to them.

Tayagrajan was speaking on the Postal and RMS employees union convention on Friday. He criticised the pay commission recommendation for not hiking the minimum pay of postal and RMS employees. He said the minimum pay should be raised to Rs10,000 along with other allowances.

A 10-point memorandum of demands has been handed over to the cabinet secretary highlighting the pending demands of the employees.

Tayagrajan said gramian dak sewaks comprised 50 per cent of the total workforce of the department.

“We don’t want any interim relief but insist on implementation of pay revision by modifying the recommendations of the pay commission. If the demand of lakhs of employees is not accepted we will be compelled to agitate at the national level.”

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Collected by Chairul Anwar, Bandung, Indonesia.

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