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## Postmen to carry GPS devices from next week

These handheld devices will enable real-time money transactions

Mansi Taneja | New Delhi  
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The Department of posts (DoP) plans to roll out its ambitious project of giving global positioning system (GPS)-enabled handheld devices to postmen from next week. This will make possible real-time transactions of e-money orders, booking of Speed Post, payments of insurance premium and other related services.

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This is part of India Post's modernisation programme, beside cashing on the rising e-commerce boom in small towns and rural areas.

Also, deposits and withdrawals of savings bank and other equated monthly instalments and claim payments would be done electronically through these devices, which will to be connected through a network. Money would be credited on a real-time basis to a firm's or individual's account. For instance, cash on delivery (CoD) collected for parcels will be immediately sent to the account of e-commerce companies, while e-money

orders will reach the destination post office instantly. Currently, the money order is digitised at the nearest computerised post office and then delivered.

Initially, the solar-powered, biometric device will be given to postmen in three circles - Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan. Subsequently, this will be expanded across the country. The plan is to have 130,000 such devices, aimed at promoting financial inclusion in small towns and rural areas, a senior DoP official told Business Standard.

The biometric module will authenticate an individual's identity using the Aadhaar number, while GPS will enable tracking of the postmen. The project, valued at Rs 1,300 crore, has been in the pipeline for some years and will be formally launched by Communications & Information Technology Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad next week.

Receipts for all the transactions will be generated instantly via these devices.

The data of the transactions of the users will also be immediately uploaded, using mobile network of state-run Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd (BSNL) to DoP's main server.

The parcel revenues of India Posts, which registered a two per cent decline in 2013-14, grew 37 per cent in 2014-15 and 107 per cent in the first quarter of 2015-16, on a year-on-year basis. CoD from e-commerce is expected to touch Rs 1,000 crore by March 2016 from Rs 500 crore a year ago. India Posts is eyeing revenue of Rs 200 crore by 2015-16 from e-commerce. The five-year target is Rs 5,000 crore.

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