

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF FINANCE
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL SERVICES

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 31

TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 14th September 2020/ Bhadrapada 23, 1942 (SAKA)
SBI Services in Rural Areas

31. SHRI KRUPAL BALAJI TUMANE:

SHRI OMPRAKASH BHUPALSINH alias PAWAN RAJENIMBALKAR:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there are so many branches of State Bank of India (SBI) in the rural areas where the number of employees is less than the required strength of the branches;
- (b) if so, whether any survey has been conducted in respect of SBI for their poor services in rural areas and if so, the details and the outcome thereof;
- (c) whether SBI is likely to take steps to provide compensation to their customers for their poor services in rural areas and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the branches of SBI are not opening accounts in such areas in Maharashtra, if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to bring improvement in services of rural branches of SBI across the country including Maharashtra?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE
(SHRI ANURAG SINGH THAKUR)

(a): No, sir. As per inputs received from State Bank of India (SBI), 98% of their rural branches do not have shortage of staff. The temporary staff deficit is on account of natural retirement, attrition or death is taken care of through fresh recruitment on an ongoing basis.

(b) and (c): Questions do not arise.

(d): No, sir. As per inputs received from SBI, its branches in Maharashtra have opened 8.83 lakh accounts during the financial year (FY) 2019-20, which is an increase of 26.14% over the previous financial year. Further, in FY 2020-21, till August 2020, 3.78 lakh accounts have been opened.

(e): SBI has apprised that a specialised FIMM (Financial Inclusion and Micro Markets) vertical has been carved out in SBI to render dedicated service to the rural and semi-urban areas. Apart from branches, 57,887 Business Correspondents / Bank Mitras have been deployed in rural areas for branchless banking.

Government has instituted key reforms in Public Sector Banks (PSBs), including SBI, as part of PSB EASE Reforms Agenda aimed at *inter alia*, deepening financial inclusion and digitalization. The Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) has enabled opening of over 40 crore bank accounts, most of which are in rural and semi-urban areas, enabling customers to receive government subsidies as Direct Benefit Transfer and to access remittances, credit and insurance products. Tech enabled smart banking has been adopted to improve the number of services offered, customer-friendliness, and local language customer-interface. Further, under PMJDY, about 1.26 lakh Bank Mitras have made available branchless banking services in rural and semi-urban areas.
