

No. 27-20/2018-PO
Government of India
Ministry of Communications
Department of Posts
(PO Division)

Dak Bhawan, Sansad Marg
New Delhi-110 001

Dated: 1st May, 2020

To

All CPMsG/ All PMsG
Director RAKNPA/ All PTCs

Subject: Instructions regarding posting of franked mail in view of disruption caused by Covid-19 and the subsequent lock down

This is regarding disruption caused in the country due to sudden outbreak of Covid-19 and the subsequent lock down (National/ State/ District/ Local). Like various other services in the country, postal services have also been affected from it.

2. In the wake of the lock down, there was an assumption that the franking operations may get affected and the franked mail generated just before the lock down might have been held up with the franking users and thereafter could not be posted as per the extant rulings. Some Circles and Vendors of RMFMs have also expressed their concerns in this regard.

3. The situation was monitored and on the basis of reports received from CEPT & RMFM vendors and discussions held with some Circles, it has been noticed that the franking operations have not stopped completely during the lock down. Around 1041 franking machines has availed the facility of uploading credits and there is a possibility that these RMFMs would have franked the mail and also posted the same. The details of RMFMs which have uploaded credits are enclosed as **Annexure A**. Circles are requested to cross check the license number. with the designated Office through which credits have been uploaded.

Also, in over 440 RMFMs, franking of articles,(around 28 lakh articles) has taken place during the lock down. It is therefore presumed that the mail franked by these machines would have been posted. The details are in **Annexure B**. Circles are requested to cross check the same from the license number. and the Office of posting.

Circles are further requested to take necessary action for disposal of any such mail, if it has not yet been posted due to the lockdown. However, there is no

report on franking done by other machines. The details of total machines which have been licensed for franking by the Department of Posts are also enclosed as **Annexure C** for reference. **(There are around 11,124 Franking machines in India)**

4. As per the SOP dated 11.8.2010 of RMFM, the mail which is franked on a particular day and could not be presented on the same day due to any reason, it may be accepted by the Designated Office the very next day. In cases where the next day is a weekend or there are successive holidays, the mail shall be accepted on the following working day. There is no procedure to post the franked mail beyond this time frame. As such, there is a possibility that some number of articles might have been franked by the users/ mailers just before imposition of the lock down or during lock down (National/ State/ District/ Local) in their particular area of franking/ posting but the same could not be posted and are lying pending with them.

5. As per the available information with the Directorate , around 28 lakh articles have been franked during the lock down and the same have also been posted. However, there is a possibility that some mail which has perhaps been franked just before or during the imposition of lock down but could not be posted due to the lock down and is lying pending with the RMFM users. In order to tackle any such situation and provide appropriate disposal to the pending franked mail, it has been decided to give a **one time relaxation** in respect of the provision mentioned in para 4 above.

6. Accordingly, it is instructed that such pending franked mail may be accepted by the designated post offices after revocation of the lock down (National/ State/ District/ Local). This will be a **temporary arrangement** and **remain in force for the next 7 working days** from the revocation of the lock down (National/ State/ District/ Local). Further, the lock down/ Curfew has been imposed at different times in different parts of the country, and may be revoked similarly in a phased manner depending upon the gravity of spread of Covid-19 in various States/ Districts/ Local levels, hence, this relaxation period of 7 working days may vary from place to place i.e. National/ State/ District/ Local levels as per the date of revocation of the lock down, and may be applicable for the articles franked on a particular period as per the period of the lock down (National/ State/ District/ Local). The respective CPMsG may modify the dates of accepting pending franked mail accordingly, in respect of the state or any part/ district of the state, provided that the total period of such relaxation will be **7 working days only**. This Directorate may be informed about such modifications, if any.

7. The following procedure will be adopted by the Post Offices for accepting mail which has been delayed i.e. the date of frank differs by more than a day from the date of posting:

- (i) All such pending articles franked within the two days before the lock down and also during the lock down (National/ State/ District/ Local), should be franked again with a "zero" value frank impression on the day of presentation of the same in Post Office for posting.
- (ii) In case the statement of mailing is already printed on such days as mentioned in 7 (i), the mailer shall print the Statement of Mailing afresh on the actual date of presentation of mail and the same will be handed over to the post office along with mail.
- (iii) In case the statement of mailing is not printed, then the franked mail will be presented at the post office along with the statement of mailing printed on the date of presentation.
- (iv) In case the fresh statement of mailing has not been presented by the user/ mailer in respect of pending franked mail, the Postal Assistant, who accepts the mail, shall cross check and verify the franked mail presented by the Franking Machine user and check for the ascending and descending readings of the machine with respect to the last posted mail and ensure that there is no discrepancy.
- (v) Further, the Post Offices should first accept the mail franked on such days as mentioned in 7 (i) before/ during the lock down (National/ State/ District/ Local), if any, prior to accepting newly franked mail.

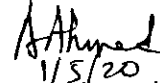
8. The Officers/ Officials shall check and ensure the following:

- (i) The articles that were franked within the two days before the lock down (National/ State/ District/ Local) may contain two distinct franking impression side by side - one of the actual postage value impressed on such days as mentioned in 7 (i) before / during the lock down (National/ State/ District/ Local) and second of "zero" value impressed on the actual date of presentation of the same at post office for posting. "Janta Curfew" imposed on 22.3.2020 will also be included in the lockdown.
- (ii) Both the franks should not be of the amount of zero.
- (iii) The frank of the amount of zero is on the actual date of posting.
- (iv) The amount of frank is not overwritten by any means viz pen, ink etc.
- (v) The mailer shall present all such articles in one instance.
- (vi) The postal officials will also count the number of articles and tally them with the total number mentioned in statement of mailing.
- (vii) Only those articles are allowed to be posted which were franked on such days as mentioned in 7 (i) before/ during lockdown in that area. **The pending mail franked prior to that, if any, will not be accepted.**
- (viii) **It is clarified that franking of advance date will not be allowed in any case and such mail will not be accepted.**

9. If any clarification related to the posting of old franked mail is required or if other unforeseen situations arise, the same may be brought to the notice of this Office for remedial action.

10. These instructions should be brought to the notice of all Mailers/ Users of Remotely Managed Franking Machines as well as all the officers/officials involved in the booking ,transmission and delivery of mail throughout the country.

11. This issues with the approval of the competent authority.


1/5/20

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Copy to:

Sr. PPS to Secretary (Posts)/ DG Postal Services
All Members (PSB)/ AS&FA/ Addl. DG (APS)
All CGM/ Sr. DDsG
ALL DDsG/ GMs
All GM (Finance)/ DAPs
All OEMs of RMFMs for information
GM, CEPT Mysure for uploading the same on India Post website.