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India Post (Department of Posts)

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India Post (Department of Posts)

Practice: 6 MCQs
India Post is the Department of Posts, the government's postal service.

This page covers its history from the 1854 Act, post office savings, IPPB, the PIN code and the record quarter of 2026-27.

- **Body:** the Department of Posts.
- **Modern form:** the 1854 Act.
- **IPPB:** launched 1 September 2018.
- **PIN code:** six digits, since 15 August 1972.
- **Q1 2026-27:** Rs 4,008.95 crore, a record.

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1. What India Post is

1.1 What is India Post, and how big is it?

India Post is the Department of Posts. It is the government's postal service.

It reaches every corner of the country. A 2018 PIB release counted 1.55 lakh post offices. It also counted over 3 lakh postmen and Grameen Dak Sewaks.

1.2 What does the department do besides carry letters?

It runs six major business verticals. Four are named in the July 2026 review: parcel services, mails, international business and citizen-centric services.

Postal life insurance and rural postal life insurance are also part of the work. So India Post is part courier, part insurer and part bank.



An India Post letter box at Anand Head Office, Gujarat. Photo: Niraj Hitesh Chauhan, Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 4.0.

Sources:

- PIB release, 31 Aug 2018 (repost)
- Organiser: India Post crosses Rs 4,000 crore in Q1
- Swarajya: India Post's highest-ever first quarter

True or false: India Post lists only mail services as its business.

2. How the postal system began

2.1 How did the first post offices start?

The East India Company opened its first post office in 1727. In 1766, Robert Clive set up a regular postal system.

In 1774, Warren Hastings opened the posts to the public. The Calcutta General Post Office was set up the same year. Madras GPO followed in 1786 and Bombay GPO in 1794.

2.2 What did the 1837 and 1854 laws change?

The Post Office Act of 1837 gave the government the sole right to carry letters in Company territory.

In 1850, Dalhousie ordered a report on the Post Office. It said rates should depend on weight alone, not on weight and distance. Act XVII of 1854 followed from that study.

2.3 When did the first stamps appear?

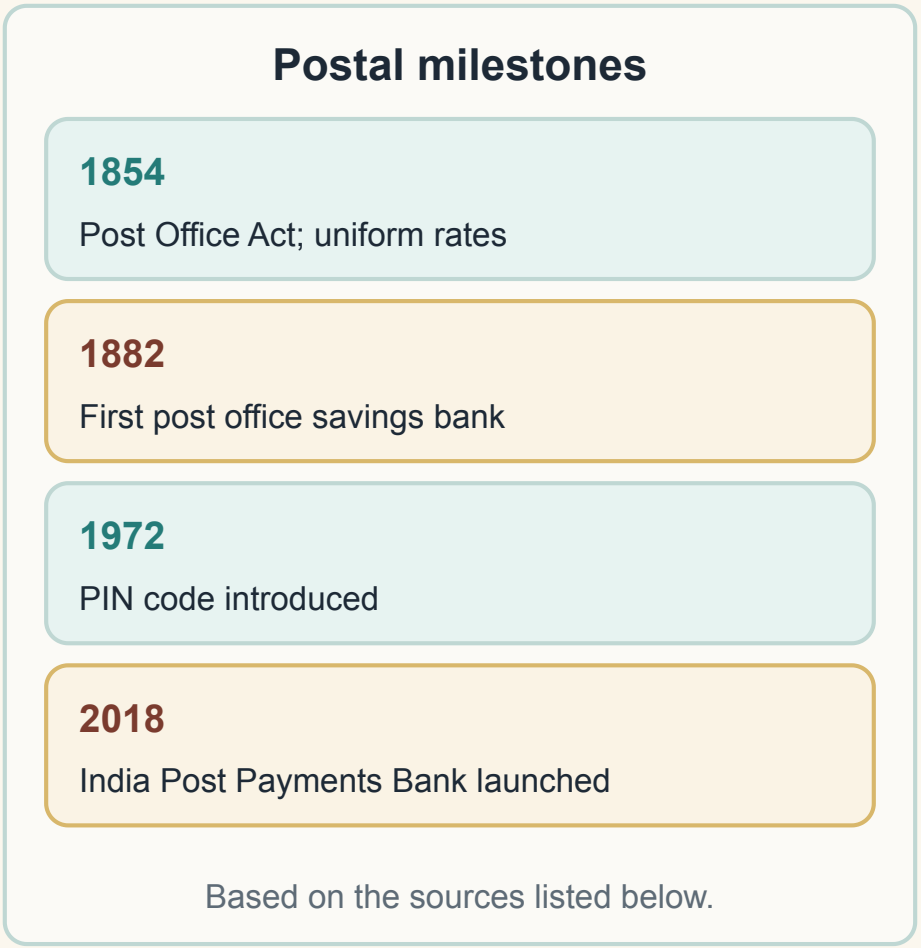
The first adhesive stamp in India was the Scinde Dawk of 1852. Sir Bartle Frere introduced it in Sind.

India-wide stamps came in 1854, with the uniform rates. Postal use then rose sharply.

2.4 Which later firsts should you remember?

Year	What happened
1873	Government Savings Bank Act passed
1876	India joined the Universal Postal Union
1879	Postcards began
1880	Post Office money-order service began
1882	First post office savings bank opened

Year	What happened
1884	Postal life insurance began
1911	First official airmail flight, on 18 February
1986	Speed post introduced



Four dates to remember. Original explanatory diagram.

Sources:

- ClearIAS: Postal history of India
- GKToday: Postal system in British India

True or false: the Scinde Dawk of 1852 was the first adhesive stamp in India.

Think it through: why did uniform rates by weight help the post?

One rate for any distance made postage simple. Use then rose sharply, as the sources note.

3. From savings to payments banking

3.1 When did post offices start taking savings?

The Government Savings Bank Act was passed in 1873. The first post office savings bank opened in 1882.

Postal life insurance began two years later, in 1884. These two services are the roots of India Post's banking and insurance work.

3.2 What is India Post Payments Bank?

IPPB is a bank built on the post office network. The PIB called it an accessible, affordable and trusted bank for the common man.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched it at Talkatora Stadium, New Delhi, on 1 September 2018.

3.3 What did IPPB start with, and what does it offer?

On launch day it had 650 branches and 3,250 access points. All 1.55 lakh post offices were to be linked by 31 December 2018.

It offers savings and current accounts, money transfer, direct benefit transfers and bill payments. Services come through counters, micro-ATMs, a mobile app, SMS and IVR.

Sources:

- ClearIAS: Postal history of India (section 3)
- PIB release, 31 Aug 2018 (repost) (section 3)

True or false: IPPB was launched on 1 September 2018.

4. The PIN code

4.1 Who made the PIN system, and when did it start?

PIN stands for Postal Index Number. It is a six-digit code. Shriram Bhikaji Velankar created it.

It was introduced on 15 August 1972 by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

4.2 How do you read the six digits?

The first digit is the zone. The second digit is the sub-zone. The third digit is the sorting district.

The last three digits point to the delivery post office. So the number narrows from a wide area to one office.

Sources:

- ClearIAS: Postal history of India (section 4)
- BankBazaar: What is a PIN code?

Think it through: what do the PIN digits tell a sorter?

They narrow the address step by step: zone, sub-zone, sorting district, then post office. A sorter can route a letter from the number alone.

5. India Post's record quarter

5.1 What record did India Post set?

India Post earned Rs 4,008.95 crore in the first quarter of 2026-27. It was the highest first-quarter turnover ever.

It was the first time Q1 revenue crossed Rs 4,000 crore. Revenue grew 22.2 per cent over the same quarter a year earlier.

5.2 Which businesses grew fastest?

Business	Growth
Citizen-centric services	85.7 per cent
Parcel services	49.9 per cent
Mails	41.9 per cent
International business	34.3 per cent

Citizen-centric services grew fastest of all.

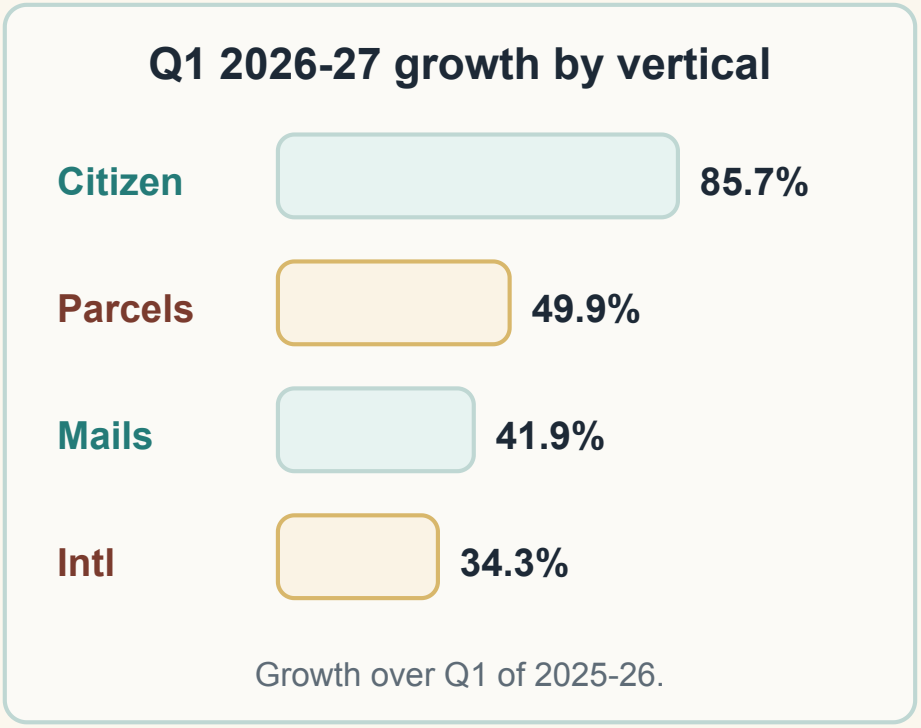
5.3 Who reviewed it, and where?

Communications Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia chaired the review on 14 July. It was the Quarterly Business Review Meeting of the Department of Posts, at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi.

Chief Postmasters General from all 23 postal circles attended.

5.4 What should you remember for the exam?

- India Post’s modern form dates from the 1854 Act.
- IPPB was launched on 1 September 2018.
- The PIN code began on 15 August 1972.
- Q1 revenue in 2026-27 was Rs 4,008.95 crore, up 22.2 per cent.



Citizen-centric services led. Original explanatory diagram.

Sources:

- Organiser: India Post crosses Rs 4,000 crore in Q1 (section 5)
- Swarajya: India Post’s highest-ever first quarter (section 5)
- ClearIAS: Postal history of India (section 5)
- PIB release, 31 Aug 2018 (repost) (section 5)

True or false: parcel services were the fastest-growing vertical in Q1 of 2026-27.

Your understanding checks

Your 4 quick checks Answered 0 of 4 · Correct 0

This score resets when the page reloads.

Practice: 6 MCQs

Practice MCQs

1. On which date was the PIN code system introduced in India?

A. 15 August 1972

B. 15 August 1947

C. 1 September 2018

D. 1 October 1854

See answer ↓

2. Where was India Post Payments Bank launched on 1 September 2018?

A. Rashtrapati Bhavan

B. Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi

C. Red Fort, Delhi

D. Talkatora Stadium, New Delhi

See answer ↓

3. The post office study of 1850 asked for postal rates to depend on what?

A. The type of letter

B. Weight alone

C. Distance alone

D. Weight and distance

See answer ↓

4. In the six-digit PIN code, what does the first digit show?

A. Sorting district

B. Zone

C. Delivery post office

D. Postal circle

See answer ↓

5. Who introduced the first adhesive postage stamp in India, the Scinde Dawk, in 1852?

A. Robert Clive

B. Sir Bartle Frere

C. Lord Dalhousie

D. Warren Hastings

See answer ↓

6. Which India Post vertical grew fastest in the first quarter of 2026-27?

A. Mails

B. Citizen-centric services

C. Parcel services

D. International business

See answer ↓

Answer Key

1. **A.** The answer is **15 August 1972**. The Postal Index Number is a six-digit code. Shriram Bhikaji Velankar created it. Why the others fail: 1947 is independence. 1 September 2018 is the IPPB launch. 1 October 1854 is the date India Post's modern form is linked to. Memory hook: PIN began on Independence Day, 25 years on. ↑ Q1
2. **D.** The answer is **Talkatora Stadium, New Delhi**. Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched it. Why the others fail: Vigyan Bhawan hosted the July 2026 quarterly review, not the launch. Memory hook: launch at Talkatora, review at Vigyan Bhawan. ↑ Q2
3. **B.** The answer is **weight alone**. Earlier, prices depended on weight and distance. Act XVII of 1854 followed that study. Why the others fail: weight and distance was the old system. Distance alone was never the proposal. Memory hook: one rate for the whole country. ↑ Q3
4. **B.** The answer is the **zone**. The first two digits show the sub-zone or postal circle. The first three show the sorting district. The last three identify the delivery post office. Why the others fail: each belongs to a longer part of the code. Memory hook: the number grows from big area to small. ↑ Q4
5. **B.** The answer is **Sir Bartle Frere**. He was the East India Company's administrator of Sind. Why the others fail: Dalhousie ordered the 1850 study. Hastings opened the posts to the public in 1774. Clive set up a regular postal system in 1766. Memory hook: Sind stamp, Sind administrator. ↑ Q5
6. **B.** The answer is **citizen-centric services**, up 85.7 per cent. Why the others fail: parcels grew 49.9 per cent, mails 41.9 per cent and international business 34.3 per cent. Memory hook: the citizen-facing services led. ↑ Q6

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