

Q. If the post office in the country can act as e-commerce facilitator, it could have multiplier effects on the India economy.

One of the unique strength of the Indian postal service is the presence of a post-office in every corner of the country. Some of the factors that can help in the Indian economy are as follows:

- (i) As per the Annual report (2020-21) of the department of post, currently there are 156,721 post office in the country, largest postal network in the world.
- (ii) Post offices can play a critical role in bridging one of the crucial barriers faced by start-ups and MSMEs. That is, the absence of a free online platform and efficient and affordable courier service provider to enter into online trading.
- (iii) As on December 2021, Amazon has more than 10 lakhs registered sellers and over 100 million registered customers in India.
- (iv) There exists a large barrier for the new players to successfully enter into the e-commerce market.

(i) The post-office can enter into e-commerce in two ways:-

(a) By expanding the shipping and delivery service appropriately.

(b) Through maintaining an online platform for trading various products as Amazon and Flipkart do now.

(ii) Since post-offices are spread across the country, a better management of the human resource and infrastructure can be attempted in the first phase to convert them into e-commerce facilitators.

(iii) Online trading platform can be even extended to online service as well since the post-office is easily accessible to the general public.

(iv) During the post-independence days, the public sector played a key role in economic development.

(v) It is time to consider public presence in digital markets in the context of Industry 4.0.

In the end we can government needs to implement an public sector online platform may further induced private investment like:- MSME and start-ups etc.