

**PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE
(1977-78)**

(SIXTH LOK SABHA)

TWENTY-FIFTH REPORT

DELAYS IN FURNISHING ACTION TAKEN NOTES

**[Action taken by Government on the recommendations
of the Public Accounts Committee contained in their
220th Report (Fifth Lok Sabha)]**

Presented in Lok Sabha on

13 DEC 1977

Laid in Rajya Sabha on

13 DEC 1977



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

November, 1977 Agra-hayana 1899 (Saka)

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(iii)	6 and 13	Put asterisk mark on Sr.No.2 and 9 and add footnote - 'Elected w.o.f. 23.11.1977 <u>vice S/Shri Sheo Narain &</u> Jagdambi Prasad Yadav ceased to be Members of the Commi- tee on their appointment as Ministers of State.'	
5	19	Put asterisk mark on the word 'Note'.	
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56	3	Ministry Deptt.	Ministry/Deptt.
56	5	All Minis- tries Deptts.	All Ministries/ Deptts.
57	1	notic	notice

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PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE
(1977-78)

Shri C. M. Stephen—Chairman

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Halimuddin Ahmed
3. Shri Balak Ram
4. Shri Brij Raj Singh
5. Shri Tulsidas Dasappa
6. Shri Asoke Krishna Dutt
7. Shri Kanwar Lal Gupta
8. Shri P. K. Kodyan
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14. Shri M. Satyanarayan Rao
15. Shri Vasant Sathe

Rajya Sabha

16. Smt. Sushila Shanker Adivarekar
17. Shri Sardar Amjad Ali
18. Shri M. Kadershah
19. Shri Piare Lall Kureel *ur* Piare Lall Talib
20. Shri S. A. Khaja Mohideen
21. Shri Bezawada Papireddi
22. Shri Zawar Hussain

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri B. K. Mukherjee—*Jt. Secretary.*
2. Shri Bipin Behari—*Senior Financial Committee Officer.*

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee as authorised by the Committee, do present on their behalf this Twenty-Fifth Report on the action taken by Government on the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee contained in their Two Hundred and Twentieth Report (5th Lok Sabha) on 'Delays in furnishing Action Taken Notes'.

2. On 10 August, 1977 an 'Action Taken Sub-Committee' consisting of the following Members were appointed to scrutinise the replies received from Government in pursuance of the recommendations made by the Committee in their earlier Reports:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. Shri C. M. Stephen—Chairman | |
| 2. Shri Asoke Krishna Dutt—Convener | |
| 3. Shri Gauri Shankar Rai | } Members |
| 4. Shri Tulsidas Dasappa | |
| 5. Shri Kanwar Lal Gupta | |
| 6. Shri Zawar Hussain | |
| 7. Shri Vasant Sathe | |

3. The Action Taken Sub-Committee of the Public Accounts Committee (1977-78) considered and adopted the Report at their sitting held on 17 October, 1977 (AN). The Report was finally adopted by the Public Accounts Committee (1977-78) on 11 November, 1977.

4. For facility of reference the conclusions/recommendations of the Committee have been printed in thick type in the body of the Report. For the sake of convenience, the conclusions/recommendations of the Committee have also been appended to the Report in a consolidated form.

5. The Committee place on record their appreciation of the assistance rendered to them in this matter by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India.

NEW DELHI;
November 28, 1977
Agrahayana 7, 1899 (S).

C. M. STEPHEN,
Chairman,
Public Accounts Committee.

REPORT

1.1. This Report of the Committee deals with the action taken by Government on the recommendations/observations contained in their 220th Report (Fifth Lok Sabha), which was presented to Lok Sabha on 28th April, 1976, on 'Delays in Furnishing Action Taken Notes.'

1.2. The Public Accounts Committee in successive years had expressed their concern and dissatisfaction over the abnormal delays in the submission of Action Taken Notes on the Committee's recommendations. The Public Accounts Committee (1975-76) had considered this matter and decided to conduct a review in this regard. The recommendations made by the Committee in paragraphs 1.36 to 1.39 are reproduced below:

“1.36. Parliamentary control over Government's financial activities and all executive processes relative thereto can only be meaningful and effective if the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee are promptly implemented or adequate reasons for non-compliance are communicated without undue delay. Repeatedly, in the past, the Public Accounts Committee have called for Action Taken Notes being sent in time. Wherever reasonable extension has been requested, it has been invariably allowed. And yet, as the narrative pages of this Report will show, the entire issue has been dealt with by Government in a routine manner and without any apparent appreciation of the P.A.C.'s feeling of seriousness and urgency about it. In paragraph 2.4 of their 186th Report (Fifth Lok Sabha), the Committee have been constrained to observe that unless Government devise an adequate machinery to see that the recommendations of the Committee receive prompt attention and the assurances held out to the Committee from time to time, are sought to be translated into positive action not only at the higher levels of the administration but in all relevant spheres, the labours of the Committee would be largely in vain and the functioning of our parliamentary system would seriously suffer.

1.37. It is disconcerting that in respect of as many as 7 out of the 24 reports presented during 1974-75 by the Public

Accounts Committee (1974-75), Action Taken Notes on all the recommendations/observations had not been received even after the lapse of nearly a year. While Action Taken Notes on 27 out of the 50 recommendations/observations contained, in the Committee's 149th Report (Fifth Lok Sabha) on 'Bangladesh Refugees' had not been furnished to the Committee even 11 months after the presentation of the Report to the House, not even a single Action Taken Note on the 173rd Report (Fifth Lok Sabha) on the Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity had been furnished to the Committee, despite repeated requests, till the finalisation of this Report. In respect of the 170th Report (Fifth Lok Sabha) on the 'Crash Scheme for Rural Employment' Action Taken Notes on 10 out of the 39 recommendations/observations contained in the Report are still awaited. From these instances, which are not exhaustive but only illustrative, it is evident that an urgent toning up of things is needed badly. The Committee would urge particularly the Cabinet Secretariat to review this thoroughly unsatisfactory state of affairs and take immediate remedial measures.

- 1.38. The Committee take a serious view, in particular, of the total non-receipt of any Action Taken Note from the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting on the Report relating to the Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity, which was presented to the Lok Sabha as far back as May, 1975, despite an assurance given in September, 1975, that these would be sent 'shortly'. What is even more disturbing is that communications addressed in this regard to the Secretary of the Ministry have not been acknowledged, let alone, answered. This, in the Committee's view, is entirely impermissible and unwarranted. The Committee would like the reasons therefor to be looked into immediately with a view to fixing responsibility. All the Action Taken Notes should also be made available immediately to enable the Committee to do their duty by Parliament and finalise their Report.
- 1.39. Apart from asking for all reasonable expedition on the part of Government in sending action Taken Notes, the Committee required that the response of the Ministries/ Departments should also be explicit and categorical and not couched as it sometimes is, in ambiguous language. For

instance, often the Ministries/Departments merely remain content with informing the Committee that their observations have been 'Noted' or are 'under examination', 'under consideration', etc. As pointed out in paragraph 1.18 of their 200th Report (Fifth Lok Sabha), the Committee expect a positive and helpful reaction on the part of the administration to their observations/recommendations. Merely, 'noting' the observations or the intimation of 'no comments' where positive action had been called for, renders virtually nugatory the entire purpose of parliamentary scrutiny on the basis of mutual exchange of facts and reasoned conclusions. Parliament has laid on the Public Accounts Committee a duty and a responsibility which just cannot be shirked or diluted. This requires consistent and constant co-operation of the administration with the Committee. In this matter of the highest importance to the country's political system as well as to the interests of our people, the Committee stress their hope that the agencies of Government would help by processing the Committee's recommendations/observations with greater earnestness and promptitude and also in a more positive and purposeful manner than at present."

1.3. The Action Taken Notes received from the following Ministries/Departments of the Government of India in respect of the recommendations/observations of the Committee are appended to this Report (Appendices I to XII):

- *1. Department of Expenditure
- *2. Cabinet Secretariat
- 3. Ministry of Home Affairs
- 4. Department of Rehabilitation
- 5. Department of Supply
- 6. Ministry of Shipping and Transport (Transport Wing)
- *7. Department of Health
- 8. Ministry of Works and Housing
- *9. Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
- *10. Department of Rural Development
- *11. Department of Statistics
- 12. Department of Mines.

*Not vetted in Audit.

1.4. With reference to these recommendations/observations of the Committee, the Cabinet Secretariat were also requested, on 28 April, 1976, as follows:

'The Cabinet Secretariat is requested to bring to the notice of the Ministries/Departments of the Government of India the recommendations made by the Public Accounts Committee in their 220th Report (Fifth Lok Sabha). That Secretariat may also please request all the Ministries that their replies to the recommendations may be furnished to them (*viz.*, Cabinet Secretariat), and coordinate those replies so received by them from various Ministries/Departments of the Government of India. The Coordinated Action Taken Notes on the recommendations may please be furnished to this Secretariat

1.5. In his reply dated 26 June, 1976 (reproduced in Appendix II), furnished in this connection, the Cabinet Secretary has stated, *inter alia*, as under:

"The recommendations contained in the 220th Report of the PAC on delays in furnishing Action Taken Notes by Government are under examination and a final report will be sent to the Lok Sabha Secretariat soon."

'As regards the request that the Action Taken Notes from various Ministries/Departments of the Government of India may be obtained by the Cabinet Secretariat and furnished to the PAC, it is felt that the proposed course of action will lead to avoidable delay. It is proposed, therefore, to continue the existing practice under which Action Taken Notes are submitted direct by the Ministries/Departments to the Lok Sabha Secretariat as and when they are ready. A watch on their timely submission will, however, be kept by the Ministry of Finance (Department of Expenditure) which has the nodal responsibility for matters relating to the PAC. With this end in view all Secretaries to Government are being advised to send copies of their communication forwarding Action Taken Notes together with particulars of the latter to Secretary, Department of Expenditure.'

1.6. The Chairman, Public Accounts Committee had also addressed a letter to the Finance Minister, on 30 April, 1976 seeking the help and cooperation of the Minister in setting up some machinery in Gov-

ernment whereby it could be ensured that the agencies of the Government would help by processing the Committee's recommendations with greater earnestness and promptitude and also in a more positive and purposeful manner than at present. This was followed up by another D.O. letter dated 20 July, 1976.

1.7. The Finance Minister, in his reply dated 12 August, 1976, (reproduced in Appendix XIII), replied *inter alia* as follows:—

“In pursuance of the PAC's recommendations in para 1.37 of the 220th Report, the procedure for processing the Action Taken Notes has been reviewed and it has been decided to instal 'focal Points' for the work connected with the PAC's Reports in each Ministry/Department and Central 'Focal Point' for the Government as a whole in the Ministry of Finance, Deptt. of Expenditure.

.....With the arrangements now introduced the time taken in processing recommendation of the Committee will be reduced and Action Taken Notes will be sent in time.”

1.8. In their Action Taken Note dated 5 August, 1976, the Ministry of Finance (Department of Expenditure) had informed the Committee as under:—

“The existing procedure for processing the reports of the Public Accounts Committee has been reviewed in consultation with the Department of Cabinet Affairs and the following identified as some of the major reasons contributing to the delays:—

- (a) While the 6 months period allowed for sending Action Taken Notes begins from the date of presentation of the PAC Report to Parliament, the printed copies of the Report become available several months later. A cyclostyled copy is supplied in advance but this is not adequate for commencement of processing as additional copies are needed for consulting the various sub-units of the Ministry.
- (b) Where State Governments act as agencies of the Central Government as in construction of National Highways, correspondence has to be entered into with State Governments.

- (c) Delays are also inherent in the situation where work is given by a Central Ministry to an organisation or agency, under the administrative control of another Ministry.
- (d) where the Central Government provide a subvention and the State Government uses these funds as well as their own funds for specified purposes e.g., relief operations and the PAC raises questions about misutilisation which only the State Government is in a position to answer.
- (e) Cases in which the PAC wants responsibility for lapses to be fixed, and references have to be made to the vigilance authorities, the UPSC etc.

2. The following remedial measures have been suggested *seriatim*:—

- (a) *above*: The period of six months should count from the date of receipt of sufficient number of cyclostyled or printed copies in the concerned Ministry.
- (b) *and (c) above*: Extension of time may be requested as necessary if the requisite information cannot be obtained within 6 months.
- (d) *above*: A point has been raised for consideration if the Public Accounts Committee could leave these matters to be taken up by the PAC of the concerned State Legislatures.
- (e) *above*: The PAC could leave it to Government to pursue the question of disciplinary action once it has given an assurance that the responsibility would be fixed and action taken. These processes are time taking.

3. The following institutional arrangements have also been made to monitor timely submission of Action Taken Notes:

- (a) In each Ministry/Department, the Integrated Financial Adviser would function as a focal point directly responsible to the Secretary. He should coordinate and watch progress, monitor delays and take necessary action to expedite the examination of PAC Reports in the Ministry/Department.
- (b) Besides the focal points in individual Ministries Secretary (Expenditure) in the Ministry of Finance should be focal point for the Government as a whole to monitor the timely

submission of Action Taken Notes by Ministries/Departments. Copies of all communications to Lok Sabha Sectt. forwarding Action Taken Notes together with particulars of the letter as also of copies of communication seeking extension of time, should be invariably endorsed by the administrative Ministry concerned to the Ministry of Finance (Department of Expenditure).

Appropriate instructions have been issued to all Secretaries, Special Secretaries, Additional Secretaries etc. to the Government of India.

1.9. The necessary instructions issued in this regard by the Ministry of Finance on 28 July, 1976 are reproduced in Appendix XIV.

1.10. In reply to their recommendations contained in Paragraph 1.38 of the 220th Report (5th Lok Sabha), the Secretary, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, in his letter* dated 5 July, 1976, (reproduced in Appendix XV) expressed his deepest regrets for the delay in submitting Action Taken Notes on 173rd Report (5th Lok Sabha) of the Public Accounts Committee. He had also stated, *inter alia*, as follows:

'.....such delays would not recur in future and notes on action taken or proposed to be taken on the PAC's Reports relating to this Ministry would be processed on a top priority basis.'

1.11. In their Action Taken Note on their recommendations contained in paragraph 1.36 of the 220th Report, the Department of Rehabilitation had stated as under:—

''Instructions have been issued that the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee received from time to time should be dealt with promptly at all levels and Action Taken Notes submitted within the prescribed period of six months; wherever the Action Taken Note cannot be submitted in time, approval of the Lok Sabha Secretariat for extension of the time limit would be obtained.

The procedure for dealing with the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee has been streamlined to ensure fortnightly review of the progress made in the

*Not vetted in Audit.

finalisation of Action Taken Notes by the Branch Officers concerned. Instructions have also been issued that wherever delay is anticipated in getting the Note vetted by Audit, advance copies thereof should be forwarded to the Lok Sabha Secretariat and whenever the Note is sent after the expiry of due date, the reasons for delay should invariably be explained to the Lok Sabha Secretariat. All out efforts continue to be made to furnish the Action Taken Notes within the prescribed period of six months."

1.12. As regards the delay in furnishing Action Taken Notes on the recommendations contained in the 166th Report of the Public Accounts Committee (1974-75), the Secretary, Central Board of Excise and Customs, in his D.O. letter* dated the 30 August, 1976 (reproduced in Appendix XVI), stated *inter alia* as follows:—

'....The delay in the finalisation of the "Action Taken Notes" could not be avoided because fairly important questions of law are involved in the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee, and the matter had to be examined at the highest levels in the Government, both before making a reference to the Attorney General through the Ministry of Law and after the receipt of his advice.'

'While this unavoidable delay in sending the "Action Taken Notes" is regretted, I would like to add that the Central Board of Excise and Customs attaches great importance to the recommendations/observations of the PAC.....'.

1.13. In view of the fact that the life of the Fifth Lok Sabha was not expected to be beyond early 1977 and the work of the PAC during their term was to be completed before the end of 1976, all the Ministries/Departments of the Government of India were called upon to cooperate with the Committee by sending in Action Taken Notes on all Reports presented during 1975-76 by the end of August, 1976 so that much of labour already put in by the Committee and by Government did not prove infructuous. Accordingly the Department of Expenditure on whom the 'nodal responsibility' for monitoring timely submission of Action Taken Notes for Government as a whole was fixed, had asked on 21 July, 1976 for a statement showing the details of the recommendations contained

*Not vetted in Audit.

in the PAC Reports in respect of which action taken notes had not been received. The necessary information furnished to the Department of Expenditure is reproduced in Appendix XVII.

1.14. The Department of Expenditure had again emphasised upon the various Ministries/Departments of the Government on 13 August, 1976, 'that if, for any reason, the Action Taken Note in respect of a particular recommendation cannot be furnished to the Lok Sabha Secretariat before the 31st August, 1976 the Ministries/Departments concerned should seek extension of time giving reasons for the delay' and copies of all such communications be endorsed to that Department.

1.15. While Committee are happy to note that measures aimed at securing timely submission of Action Taken Notes on the Committee's recommendations have now been taken, though belatedly, by setting up a 'Monitoring Cell' in the Department of Expenditure as the 'focal point' for the Government as a whole, to coordinate the progress in this regard and monitor delays with Ministries concerned, the Committee hope that the Integrated Financial Advisers/Internal Financial Advisers in each Ministry would discharge their responsibility effectively in examining the Reports of the Committee and in coordinating and monitoring the expeditious submission of the Action Taken Notes thereon to the Committee. The Committee would watch the position in this regard for sometime and approach the Government again in case they find any laxity in attending to the recommendations of the Committee made in their reports.

1.16. One of the major reasons advanced by the Ministry of Finance contributing to the delays in submission of Action Taken Notes is that the number of cyclostyled copies supplied to the Ministries/Departments at the time of presentation of reports is inadequate. No such specific instance has ever been brought to the notice of the Committee. However, the Committee do not envisage difficulty in the supply of sufficient number of copies of their reports cyclostyled or printed to the Ministries concerned to facilitate quick processing.

1.17. The Committee recognise the need for extension of time if the requisite information cannot be obtained within six months in the cases where the State Governments act as agencies of the Central Government or where work is given by a Central Ministry to an organisation or agency under the administrative control of another Ministry. The Committee, however, cannot agree to the

suggestion made by the Ministry to leave to the PAC of the concerned State Legislature the matters where the Central Government provide a subvention and the State Government uses these funds as well as their own funds because it involves the broader question of accountability for any expenditure out of Consolidated Fund of India for which Central Government is responsible to Parliament.

1.18. In respect of the Ministry's suggestion that "The PAC could leave it to Government to pursue the question of disciplinary action once it has given an assurance that the responsibility would be fixed and action taken", the Committee would like to treat the assurance given by the Ministry as an interim reply to the recommendation and would insist on a final reply showing the nature of action taken in a further period of six months (i.e. within a year of the presentation of the original Report).

NEW DELHI;
 November 28, 1977.
 Agradayana 7, 1899 (Saka).

C. M. STEPHEN,
 Chairman,
 Public Accounts Committee.

Appendix I

(Vide para 1.3)

MINISTRY OF FINANCE

(DEPARTMENT OF EXPENDITURE)

Recommendations

Parliamentary control over Government's financial activities and all executive processes relating thereto can only be meaningful and effective if the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee are promptly implemented or adequate reasons for non-compliance are communicated without undue delay. Repeatedly, in the past, the Public Accounts Committee have called for Action Taken Notes being sent in time. Wherever reasonable extension has been requested, it has been invariably allowed. And yet, as the narrative pages of this Report will show, the entire issue has been dealt with by Government in a routine manner and without any apparent appreciation of the P.A.C.'s feeling of seriousness and urgency about it. In paragraph 24 of their 188th Report (5th Lok Sabha), the Committee have been constrained to observe that unless Government devise an adequate machinery to see that the recommendations of the Committee receive prompt attention and the assurances held out to the Committee, from time to time, are sought to be translated into positive action not only at the higher levels of the administration but in all relevant spheres, the Labours of the Committee would be largely in vain and the functioning of our parliamentary system would seriously suffer.

It is disconcerting that in respect of as many as 7 out of the 24 reports presented during 1974-75 by the Public Accounts Committee (1974-75), Action Taken Notes on all the recommendations/observations had not been received even after the lapse of nearly a year. While Action Taken Notes on 27 out of the 50 recommendations/observations contained in the Committee's 149th Report (5th Lok Sabha) on 'Bangladesh Refugees' had not been furnished to the Committee even 11 months after the presentation of the Report to the House, not even a single Action Taken Notes on the 173rd Report (5th Lok Sabha) on the Directorate of Advertising & Visual Publicity had been furnished to the Committee, despite repeated requests, till the finalisation of this Report. In respect of the 170th Report (5th Lok Sabha) on the 'Crash Scheme for Rural Employment' Action

Taken Notes on 10 out of the 39 recommendations/observations contained in the Report are still awaited. From these instances, which are not exhaustive but only illustrative, it is evident that an urgent toning up of things is needed badly. The Committee would urge particularly the Cabinet Secretariat to review this thoroughly unsatisfactory state of affairs and take immediate remedial measures.

[Paragraphs 1.36 and 1.37 of 220th Report of the P.A.C. (5th Lok Sabha)]

Action Taken

The existing procedure for processing the reports of the Public Accounts Committee has been reviewed in consultation with the Department of Cabinet Affairs and the following identified as some of the major reasons contributing to the delays:—

- (a) While the 6 months period allowed for sending Action Taken Notes begins from the date of presentation of the PAC Report to Parliament, the printed copies of the Report become available several months later. A cyclostyled copy is supplied in advance but this is not adequate for commencement of processing as additional copies are needed for consulting the various sub-units of the Ministry.
- (b) Where State Governments act as agencies of the Central Government, as in construction of National Highways, correspondence has to be entered into with State Governments.
- (c) Delay are also inherent in the situation where work is given by a Central Ministry to an organisation or agency, under the administrative control of another Ministry.
- (d) Where the Central Government provide a subvention and the State Government uses these funds as well as their own funds for specified purposes e.g., relief operations and the PAC raises questions about misutilisation which only the State Government is in a position to answer.
- (e) Cases in which the PAC wants responsibility for lapses to be fixed, and references have to be made to the vigilance authorities, the UPSC, etc.

2. The following remedial measures have been suggested serially:—

- (a) *above*: The period of six months should count from the date of receipt of sufficient number of cyclostyled or printed copies in the concerned Ministry.

(b) and (c) *above*: Extension of time may be requested as necessary if the requisite information cannot be obtained within 6 months.

(d) *above*: A point has been raised for consideration if the Public Accounts Committee could leave these matters to be taken up by the PAC of the concerned State Legislatures.

(e) *above*: The PAC could leave it to Government to pursue the question of disciplinary action once it has given an assurance that the responsibility would be fixed and action taken. These processes are time-taking.

3. The following institutional arrangements have also been made to monitor timely submission of Action Taken Notes:

(a) In each Ministry/Department, the Integrated Financial Adviser would function as a focal point directly responsible to the Secretary. He should coordinate and watch progress, monitor delays and take necessary action to expedite the examination of PAC Reports in the Ministry/Department.

(b) Besides the focal points in individual Ministries Secretary (Expenditure) in the Ministry of Finance should be the focal point for the Government as a whole to monitor the timely submission of Action Taken Notes by Ministries/Departments. Copies of all communications to Lok Sabha Sectt. forwarding Action Taken Notes together with particulars of the letter as also of copies of communication seeking extension of time, should be invariably endorsed by the administrative Ministry concerned to the Ministry of Finance (Department of Expenditure).

Appropriate instructions have been issued to all Secretaries, Special Secretaries, Additional Secretaries etc., to the Government of India.

Sd/- (J. P. DAS)

Joint Secretary to the Govt. of India.

[Min. of Fin., Deptt. of Expenditure, O. M. No. F.12(24)-E-(Coord)/76 dated the 31st July, 1976.]

Recommendation

Apart from asking all reasonable expedition on the part of Government in sending Action Taken Notes, the Committee required that the response of the Ministries/Departments should also be

explicit and categorical and not couched, as it sometimes is, in ambiguous language. For instance, often the Ministries/Departments merely remain content with informing the Committee that their observations have been 'Noted' or are 'under examination' 'under consideration', etc. As pointed out in paragraph 1.18 of their 220th Report (5th Lok Sabha) the Committee expect a positive and helpful reaction on the part of the administration to their observations/recommendations. Merely, 'nothing' the observations or the intimation of 'no comments' where positive action had been called for, renders virtually nugatory the entire purpose of Parliamentary scrutiny on the basis of mutual exchange of facts and reasoned conclusions. Parliament has laid on the Public Accounts Committee a duty and a responsibility which just cannot be shirked or diluted. This requires consistent and constant cooperation of the administration with the Committee. In this matter of the highest importance to the country's political system as well as to the interests of our people, the Committee stress their hope that the agencies of Government would help by processing the Committee's recommendations observations with greater earnestness and promptitude and also in a more positive and purposeful manner than at present.

[Paragraph 1.39 of 220th Report of the P.A.C. (5th Lok Sabha)]

Action Taken

The recommendation has been examined in consultation with the Department of Cabinet Affairs.

The observations have been brought to the notice of all Secretaries, Special Secretaries, Additional Secretaries & Integrated Financial Advisers of the Government of India for compliance.

Sd/- J. P. DAS

Joint Secretary to the Govt. of India.

[Ministry of Finance, Department of Expenditure, O.M. No. 12(24)-E(Coord)/76 dated 31st July, 1976]

Appendix—F

(Vide Paras 1.3 & 1.5)

No. 71/1/3/76-CF.
CABINET SECRETARY
NEW DELHI
26th June, 1976.

Dear Shri Paranjpe,

Please refer to your letter No. 2/1/50/76/PAC, dated 17th June, 1976, regarding the recommendations contained in the 220th Report on the Public Accounts Committee and modification in the time limit for sending Action Taken Notes on the Reports presented during 1975-76.

2. We have noted that since the life of the present Lok Sabha does not extend beyond early 1977 and the work of PAC during its present term may have to be completed before the end of 1976, the normal time limit of six months for submission of Action Taken Notes has to be modified. As desired by the Chairman, PAC, we are advising the Secretaries of Ministries/Departments that Action Taken Notes on all reports presented during 1975-76 be sent to the Lok Sabha Secretariat by the end of August, 1976. They are being advised further that where in exceptional circumstances difficulty in compliance with this time limit is apprehended, timely action should be taken to seek extension.

3. The recommendations contained in the 220th Report of the PAC on delays in furnishing Action Taken Notes by Government are under examination and a final report will be sent to the Lok Sabha Secretariat soon.

4. As regards the request (of the Lok Sabha Secretariat in their letter dated 28th April, 1976) that the Action Taken Notes from various Ministries/Departments of the Government of India may be obtained by the Cabinet Secretariat and furnished to the PAC, it is felt that the proposed course of action will lead to avoidable delay. It is proposed therefore, to continue the existing practice under which Action Taken Notes are submitted direct by the Ministries/Departments to the Lok Sabha Secretariat as and when they are ready. A watch on their timely submission will, however, be kept

by the Ministry of Finance (Department of Expenditure), which has the nodal responsibility for matters relating to the PAC. With this end in view all Secretaries to Government are being advised to send copies of their communication forwarding Action Taken Notes together with particulars of the latter to Secretary, Department of Expenditure.

Yours sincerely,

(B. D. PANDE)

Shri H. G. Paranjpe,
Chief Financial Committee Officer,
Lok Sabha Secretariat,
New Delhi.

APPENDIX—III

(Vide Para 1.3)

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS

Recommendation

Parliamentary control over Government's financial activities and all executive processes relative thereto can only be meaningful and effective if the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee are promptly implemented or adequate reasons for non-compliance are communicated without undue delay. Repeatedly, in the past, the Public Accounts Committee have called for Action Taken Notes being sent in time. Wherever reasonable extension has been requested, it has been invariably allowed. And yet, as the narrative pages of this Report will show, the entire issue has been dealt with the Govt. in a routine manner and without any apparent appreciation of the P.A.C.'s feeling of seriousness and urgency about it. In paragraph 2.4 of their 186th Report (Fifth Lok Sabha), the Committee have been constrained to observe that unless Government devise an adequate machinery to see that the recommendations of the Committee receive prompt attention and the assurances held out to the Committee from time to time, are sought to be translated into positive action not only at the higher levels of the administration but in all relevant spheres, the labours of the Committee would be largely in vain and the functioning of our Parliamentary system would seriously suffer.

[Paragraph 1.36 of 220th Report of the P.A.C. (5th Lok Sabha)]

Action Taken

The recommendation of the Committee has been brought to the notice of all concerned officers for guidance and strict compliance vide this Ministry's circular No. 7/7/76-AC.III, dated 13th August, 1976 (Copy enclosed).

MOST IMMEDIATE

No. 7/7/76-ACII

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA/BHARAT SARKAR

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS/GRIH MANTRALAYA

New Delhi-110001, the 13th August, 1976.

22 Sravana, 1898.

SUBJECT.—*Para 1.36 of Public Accounts Committee 220th Report (5th Lok Sabha).*

The undersigned is directed to enclose an extract of the recommendation of the PAC contained in para 1.36 of its 220th Report (5th Lok Sabha). The observation of P.A.C. may please be noted for guidance and strict compliance.

Sd/- B. M. SINGH,

Under Secretary to the Govt. of India.

1. All Sections/Desks in the Ministry of Home Affairs.
2. Copy for information to all Joint Secretaries/Directors/Deputy Secretaries/Under Secretaries in the Ministry of Home Affairs.
3. Copy to Registrar General, India.

Recommendation

Apart from asking for all reasonable expedition on the part of Government in sending Action Taken Notes, the Committee require that the response of the Ministries/Departments should also be explicit and categorical and not couched, as it sometimes is, in ambiguous language. For instance, often the Ministries/Departments merely remain content with informing the Committee that their observations have been 'Noted' or are 'under examination', 'under consideration' etc. As pointed out in paragraph 1.1.8 of their 200th Report (Fifth Lok Sabha), the Committee expect a positive and helpful reaction on the part of the administration to their observations/recommendations. Merely, 'noting' the observations or the intimation of 'no comments', where positive action had been called for, renders virtually nugatory the entire purpose of parliamentary

scrutiny on the basis of mutual exchange of facts and reasoned conclusions. Parliament has laid on the Public Accounts Committee a duty and a responsibility which just cannot be shirked or diluted. This requires consistent and constant cooperation of the administration with the Committee. In this matter of the highest importance to the country's political system as well as to the interests of our people, the Committee stress their hope that the agencies of Government would help by processing the Committee's recommendations/Observations with greater earnestness and promptitude and also in a more positive and purposeful manner than at present.

[Para No. 1.39 of P.A.C.'s 220th Report (5th Lok Sabha)]

Action Taken

The instructions issued by the Cabinet Secy. in his D.O. letter No. 71/1/3/76-CF, dated 21st July, 1976 have been circulated to all concerned officers for guidance and strict compliance *vide* this Ministry's letter No. 3/9/76-AC.III, dated 3rd August, 1976 (copy enclosed).

**MOST IMMEDIATE
CONFIDENTIAL**

No. 3/9/76.AC.III

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA/BHARAT SARKAR

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS/GRIH MANTRALAYA

New Delhi-110001, the 3rd August, 1976.

12th Sravana, 1898.

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT.—*Para 1.39 of Public Accounts Committee 220th Report (5th Lok Sabha).*

The undersigned is directed to enclose for information and necessary action a copy of Cabinet Secretary's D.O. letter No. 71/1/3/76-CF, dated 21st July, 1976 on the above subject. The observation of the PAC reproduced therein may please be noted for guidance and compliance.

AUTHORISED FOR ISSUE

Sd/-

(A. K. SEN)

Director (Finance)

(J. N. MOHAN)

SECTION OFFICER.

1. All Sections/Desks in the Ministry of Home Affairs.
2. Copy for information to all Joint Secretaries/Directors/Deputy Secretaries/Under Secretaries in the Ministry of Home Affairs.
3. Copy to Registrar General of India.

Copy of immediate/confidential D.O. letter No. 71/1/3/76-CF, dated 21st July, 1976 from Shri B. D. Pande, Cabinet Secretary, New Delhi addressed to Shri S. L. Khurana, Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, New Delhi.

The Public Accounts Committee in para 1.39 of their 220th Report (5th Lok Sabha) have observed as under:—

“Apart from asking for all reasonable expedition on the part of Government in sending Action Taken Notes, the Committee require that the response of the Ministries/Departments should also be explicit and categorical and not couched, as it sometimes is, in ambiguous language. For instance, often the Ministries/Departments merely remain content with informing the Committee that their observations have been ‘Noted’ or are ‘under examination’, ‘under consideration’, etc. As pointed out in paragraph 1.1.8 of their 200th Report (Fifth Lok Sabha), the Committee expect a positive and helpful reaction on the part of the administration to their observations/recommendations. Merely, ‘noting’ the observations or the intimation of ‘no comments’, where positive action had been called for, renders virtually nugatory the entire purpose of parliamentary scrutiny on the basis of mutual exchange of facts and reasoned conclusions. Parliament has laid on the Public Accounts Committee a duty and a responsibility which just cannot be shirked or diluted. This requires consistent and constant cooperation of the administration with the Committee. In this matter of the highest importance to the country’s political system as well as to the interests of our people, the Committee stress their hope that the agencies of Government would help by processing the Committee’s recommendations/observations with greater earnestness and promptitude and also in a more positive and purposeful manner than at present.”

2. I shall be grateful if the observations of the Committee are kept in view while processing the Reports in your Ministry/Department.

[Ministry of Home Affairs, O.M. No. 7/7/76-A.C.III, dt. 1-9-1976]

APPENDIX IV

(*Vide* Para 1.3)

MINISTRY OF SUPPLY AND REHABILITATION

(Department of Rehabilitation)

Recommendation

Parliamentary control over Government's financial activities and all executive processes relative thereto can only be meaningful and effective if the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee are promptly implemented or adequate reasons for non-compliance are communicated without undue delay. Repeatedly, in the past, the Public Accounts Committee have called for Action Taken Notes being sent in time. Wherever reasonable extension has been requested, it has been invariably allowed. And yet, as the narrative pages of this Report will show, the entire issue has been dealt with by Government in a routine manner and without any apparent appreciation of the Public Accounts Committee's feeling of seriousness and urgency about it. In paragraph 2.4 of their 186th Report (Fifth Lok Sabha), the Committee have been constrained to observe that unless Government devise an adequate machinery to see that the recommendations of the Committee, receive prompt attention and the assurances held out to the Committee, from time to time, are sought to be translated into positive action not only at the higher levels of the administration but in all relevant spheres, the labours of the Committee would be largely in vain and the functioning of our Parliamentary system would seriously suffer.

[Para 1.36 of 220th Report of the P.A.C. (5th Lok Sabha)].

Action Taken

Instructions have been issued on 25th August, 1976 that the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee received from time to time should be dealt with promptly at all levels and Action Taken Notes submitted within the prescribed period of six months; wherever the Action Taken Note cannot be submitted in time, approval of the Lok Sabha Secretariat for extension of the time limit would be obtained.

The procedure for dealing with the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee has been streamlined to ensure fortnightly

review of the progress made in the finalisation of Action Taken Notes by the Branch Officers concerned. Instructions have also been issued that wherever delay is anticipated in getting the Note vetted by Audit, advance copies thereof should be forwarded to the Lok Sabha Secretariat and whenever the Note is sent after the expiry of due date, the reasons for delay should invariably be explained to the Lok Sabha Secretariat. All out efforts continue to be made to furnish the Action Taken Notes within the prescribed period of six months.

(Sd)/-

NEW DELHI;

(U. VAIDYANATHAN),

22-9-1976.

Joint Secretary to the Govt. of India.

(No. G. 25015/4/76-Bud)

Recommendation

It is disconcerting that in respect of as many as 7 out of the 24 reports presented during 1974-75 by the Public Accounts Committee (1974-75), Action Taken Notes on all the recommendations/ observations had not been received even after the lapse of nearly a year. While Action Taken Notes on 27 out of the 50 recommendations/observations contained, in the Committee's 149th Report (Fifth Lok Sabha) on 'Bangla Desh Refugees' had not been furnished to the Committee even 11 months after the presentation of the Report to the House, not even a single Action Taken Note on the 173rd Report (Fifth Lok Sabha) on the Directorate of Advertising & Visual Publicity had been furnished to the Committee, despite repeated requests, till the finalisation of this Report. In respect of the 170th Report (Fifth Lok Sabha) on the 'Crash Scheme for Rural Employment' Action Taken Notes on 10 out of the 39 recommendations/observations contained in the Report are still awaited. From these instances, which are not exhaustive but only illustrative, it is evident that an urgent toning up of things is needed badly. The Committee would urge particularly the Cabinet Secretariat to review this thoroughly unsatisfactory state of affairs and take immediate remedial measures.

[Para 1.37 of 220th Report of the P.A.C. (5th Lok Sabha)]

Action Taken

The reasons for delay in submission of Action Taken Notes in respect of the various observations/recommendations as contained in 149th Report of the Public Accounts Committee (5th Lok Sabha), have already been explained in reply to Paragraph 1.8 (S. No. 1) of

Appendix to 213th Report of the PAC—5th Lok Sabha and a copy is enclosed for ready reference.

Sd/-

(S. A. S. QUADIRI),

Joint Secretary to the Government of India.

NEW DELHI;

Dated the 26th August, 1976.

F. No. 5(4)/76-FA&BD.

Recommendation

The Committee take a serious view of the non-receipt, even after the lapse of nearly a year since the presentation of their Report, of Action Taken Notes on as many as 27 out of the 50 recommendations/observations contained in the 149th Report (Fifth Lok Sabha). That this should be so despite a specific request made by the Committee that all the notes may be furnished to them latest by 16 August, 1975 is regrettable. Even in the normal course, in accordance with the time schedule prescribed in this regard in the Committee's 5th Report (Fourth Lok Sabha), these notes were due at the latest by 22 October 1975, and it is disturbing that even this routine schedule has not been substantially—let alone fully—adhered to by the Department of Rehabilitation. The Committee, thus, are unable to assess meaningfully the action taken or not taken by Government on their recommendations/observations. Parliamentary usage and propriety require that such recommendations receive prompt attention and the Committee would like the Cabinet Secretariat to issue instructions to all Ministries/Departments to ensure that Action Taken Notes are supplied, save in extraordinary circumstances, within the prescribed time-limit.

[Para No. 1.8 of 213th Report of the P.A.C. (5th Lok Sabha)]

Action Taken

The recommendation has been considered in consultation with the Cabinet Secretariat. A Circular D.O. letter has been addressed by the Cabinet Secretary to all Secretaries, Special Secretaries, Additional Secretaries etc. to the Government of India, emphasising the need to submit Action Taken Notes to the PAC within the prescribed time-limit and in exceptional circumstances, where it is not possible to conform to this time-limit, to seek prior extension of time from the Public Accounts Committee.

2. All possible efforts are being made to finalise these cases as early as possible. So far, 'Action Taken Notes' in respect of 36 out of 50 recommendations, have been furnished to the Committee. Wherever delay has occurred, it has been due to circumstances beyond the control of the Department, since in most cases the Department has to collect information from the State Governments and other agencies concerned. In particular, in the following types of cases, delay in furnishing the 'Action Taken Notes' is inherent:—

- (a) Where State Governments act as agencies of the Central Government.
- (b) Where the Central Government provides a subvention and the State Government uses these funds as well as their own funds, as in the sphere of relief activities etc.
- (c) Where work is given by a Central Ministry to an Organisation or agency which is under the administrative control of another Ministry.
- (d) Cases in which the Committee wants responsibility for lapses to be fixed which necessitates reference to the vigilance authorities etc.

3. The various State Governments and other agencies such as Food Corporation of India/State Trading Corporation etc. were associated in the Bangladesh refugee relief operations. In most of the cases, the required information/reports etc. in respect of the various observations of the Committee had to be called for from these State Governments/agencies. Due to the delay on their part in sending the required information, it was not possible to furnish the 'Action Taken Notes' to the Committee within the prescribed time-limit.

Sd/-

(S. A. S. QUADIRI).

Joint Secretary to the Government of India.

NEW DELHI;

Dated the 13th August, 1976.

F. No. 5(1)/76-FA&BD.

Recommendation

Apart from asking for all reasonable expedition on the part of Government in sending Action Taken Notes, the Committee require that the response of the Ministries/Departments should also be explicit and categorical and not couched, as it sometimes is, in ambiguous language. For instance, often the Ministries/Departments merely remain content with informing the Committee that their

observations have been 'Noted' or are 'under examination', 'under consideration', etc. As pointed out in paragraph 1.18 of their 200th Report (Fifth Lok Sabha), the Committee expect a positive and helpful reaction on the part of the administration to their observations/recommendations. Merely, 'noting' the observations or the intimation of 'no comments', where positive action had been called for, renders virtually nugatory the entire purpose of parliamentary scrutiny on the basis of mutual exchange of facts and reasoned conclusions. Parliament has laid on the Public Accounts Committee a duty and a responsibility which just cannot be shirked or diluted. This requires consistent and constant co-operation of the administration with the Committee. In this matter of the highest importance to the country's political system as well as to the interests of our people, the Committee stress their hope that the agencies of Government would help by processing the Committee's recommendations/observations with greater earnestness and promptitude and also in a more positive and purposeful manner than at present.

[Para 1.39 of 220th Report of the P.A.C. (5th Lok Sabha)]

Action Taken

Instructions have been issued on 25th August, 1976 to all concerned to ensure that the Action Taken Notes on the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee cover the specific points raised and are unambiguous and explicit.

Sd/-

(U. VAIDYANATHAN),

Joint Secretary to the Govt. of India.

NEW DELHI;

Dated 22.9.1976.

(No. G. 25015/4/76-Bud)

[Deptt. of Rehabilitation O.M. No. 5(4)/76-FABD. dt. 13/14-9-1976]

APPENDIX V

(Vide Para 1.3)

DEPARTMENT OF SUPPLY

Recommendations

Parliamentary control over Government's financial activities and all executive processes relative thereto can only be meaningful and effective if the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee are promptly implemented or adequate reasons for non-compliance are communicated without undue delay. Repeatedly, in the past, the Public Accounts Committee have called for Action Taken Notes being sent in time. Wherever reasonable extension has been requested, it has been invariably allowed. And yet, as the narrative pages of this Report will show, the entire issue has been dealt with by Government in a routine manner and without any apparent appreciation of the PAC's feeling of seriousness and urgency about it. In paragraph 2.4 of their 186th Report (Fifth Lok Sabha), the Committee have been constrained to observe that unless Government devise an adequate machinery to see that the recommendations of the Committee receive prompt attention and the assurances held out to the Committee, from time to time, are sought to be translated into positive action not only at the higher levels of the administration but in all relevant spheres, the labours of the Committee would be largely in vain and the functioning of our parliamentary system would seriously suffer.

Apart from asking for all reasonable expedition on the part of Government in sending Action Taken Notes, the Committee required that the response of the Ministries/Departments should also be explicit and categorical and not couched, as it sometimes is, in ambiguous language. For instance, often the Ministries merely remain content with informing the Committee that their observations have been 'Noted' or are 'under examination', 'under consideration' etc. As pointed out in paragraph 1.18 of their 200th Report (Fifth Lok Sabha), the Committee expect a positive and helpful reaction on the part of the administration to their observations/recommendations. Merely, 'noting' the observations or the intimation of 'no comments' where positive action had been called

for, renders virtually nugatory the entire purpose of parliamentary scrutiny on the basis of mutual exchange of facts and reasoned conclusions. Parliament has laid on the Public Accounts Committee a duty and a responsibility which just cannot be shrunk or diluted. This requires consistent and constant cooperation of the administration with the Committee. In this matter of the highest importance to the country's political system as well as to the interests of our people, the Committee stress their hope that the agencies of Government would help by processing the Committee's recommendations/observations with greater earnestness and promptitude and also in a more positive and purposeful manner than at present.

[Paragraphs 1.36 and 1.39 of 220th Report of the P.A.C.
(5th Lok Sabha)]

Action Taken

The observations of the Committee are being kept constantly in view and every possible effort will be made to furnish the action taken notes within the time stipulated.

Sd/-

PIII-22(21)/76.

V. BALASUBRAHMANYAN,

Jt. Secy.

[Deptt. of Supply, O.M. No. PIII-22(21)/76, dt. 13-9-1976]

APPENDIX VI
(*Vide* Para 1.3)
MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT
(Transport Wing)
Recommendation

Parliamentary control over Government's financial activities and all executive processes relative thereto can only be meaningful and effective if the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee are promptly implemented or adequate reasons for non-compliance are communicated without undue delay. Repeatedly, in the past, the Public Accounts Committee have called for Action Taken Notes being sent in time. Wherever reasonable extension has been requested, it has been invariably allowed. And yet, as the narrative pages of this Report will show, the entire issue has been dealt with by Govt. in a routine manner and without any apparent appreciation of the P.A.C.'s feeling of seriousness and urgency about it. In paragraph 2.4 of their 186th Report (Fifth Lok Sabha), the Committee have been constrained to observe that unless Government devise an adequate machinery to see that the recommendations of the Committee receive prompt attention and the assurances held out to the Committee, from time to time, are sought to be translated into positive action not only at the higher levels of the administration but in all relevant spheres, the labours of the Committee would be largely in vain and the functioning of our Parliamentary system would seriously suffer.

[Para No. 1.36 of 220th Report of the P.A.C. (5th Lok Sabha)]

Action Taken

The observations of the Committee have been circulated to the concerned officers in this Ministry (*vide* this Ministry's endorsement No. BPC-8/76-II dated 15.7.76) wherein it has once more been reiterated that 'Action Taken Notes' on the recommenda-

tions of the Committee should invariably be sent to Lok Sabha Sectt. within the prescribed time.

In addition the following measures have also been taken to ensure expeditious processing of committee's recommendations in this Ministry:—

- (i) Joint Secretaries have been asked to review every month all pending recommendations in their charge and taken measures for their expeditious processing.
- (ii) Financial Adviser has been made the Focal Point for coordinating action and monitoring progress in respect of processing of Committee's recommendations.
- (iii) The pending recommendations are being reviewed periodically by Secretary in Officer's Meetings.

dated 11th August, 1976.

No. BPC-8/76-I

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT
(Transport Wing)

No. BPC-8/76-II

New Delhi, the 15th July, 1976.

SUBJECT.—*201st and 220th Reports of the P.A.C., (1975-76) regarding delays in furnishing of 'Action Taken Notes'.*

In recommendation No. 1 para 1.36 of their 220th Report (1975-76) the Public Accounts Committee have made the following observations:—

“Parliamentary control over Government's financial activities and all executive processes relative thereto can only be meaningful and effective if the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee are promptly implemented or adequate reasons for non compliance are communicated without undue delay. Repeatedly, in the past, the Public Accounts Committee have called for Action Taken Notes being sent in time. Wherever reasonable extension has been requested, it has been invariably allowed. And yet, as the narrative pages of this Report will show the entire issue has been dealt with by Government in a routine manner and without any apparent appreciation of the P.A.C.'s feeling of seriousness and urgency about it. In paragraph 2.4 of their 186th Report (Fifth Lok Sabha), the Committee have been constrained to observe that unless Government devise an adequate machinery to see that the recommendations of the Committee receive prompt attention and the assurances held out to the Committee from time to time are sought to be translated into positive action not only at the higher levels of the administration but in all relevant spheres, the labours of the Committee would be largely in vain and the functioning of our Parliamentary system would seriously suffer.”

2. It is once more reiterated that action taken notes on the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee are invariably sent to the Committee in time.

Sd/-

(Mahendra Nath)

Under Secretary to the Government of India.

To

DG(RD), & Addl. Secy./JS(P)/JS(L)/Secy. (BRDB)/Dir. (MM)|Dir. (M)|Dir. (C)|CE & A (IWT)|DS (PD)|DS (C)|DS (R)|DS (L)|DS (MAE)|DS (BRDB)|Dy. C.C.C.

All Under Secretaries/Sections in Roads Wing and Transport Wing.

Recommendation

Apart from asking for all reasonable expedition on the part of Government in sending Action Taken Notes, the Committee require that the response of the Ministries/Departments should also be explicit and categorical and not couched, as it sometimes is, in ambiguous language. For instance, often the Ministries/Departments merely remain content with informing the Committee that their observations have been 'Noted' or are 'under examination' 'under consideration' etc. As pointed out in paragraph 1.1.8 of their 220th Report (Fifth Lok Sabha), the Committee expect a positive and helpful reaction on the part of the administration to their observations/recommendations. Merely, 'noting' the observations or the intimation of 'no comments', where positive action had been called for, renders virtually nugatory the entire purpose of parliamentary scrutiny on the basis of mutual exchange of facts and reasoned conclusions. Parliament has laid on the Public Accounts Committee a duty and a responsibility which just cannot be shirked or diluted. This requires consistent and constant co-operation of the administration with the Committee. In this matter of the highest importance to the country's political system as well as to the interests of our people, the Committee stress their hope that the agencies of Government would help by processing the Committee's recommendations/observations with greater earnestness and promptitude and also in a more positive and purposeful manner than at present.

[Para 1.39 of 220th Report of the P.A.C. (5th Lok Sabha)]

Action Taken

The observations of the Committee have been brought to the notice of all concerned officers in this Ministry vide this Ministry's endorsement No. BPC-8/76 dated 22.5.76 (copy enclosed) with

the request that the requirements of the Public Accounts Committee for purposes of framing replies to their recommendations should be noted for strict compliance, in future.

dated 11th August, 1976.

No. BPC-8/76-II

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT

(Transport Wing)

No. BPC-8/76

New Delhi, dated 22 May, 1976.

SUBJECT.—*201st and 220th Reports of the Public Accounts Committee (1975-76) regarding delays in furnishing of 'Action Taken Notes'.*

In Recommendation No. 4. para 1.39 of the 220th Report (1975-76) (5th Lok Sabha) the Public Accounts Committee have made the following observations:—

“Apart from asking for all reasonable expedition on the part of Government in sending Action Taken Notes, the Committee require that the response of the Ministries/Departments should also be explicit and categorical and not couched, as it sometimes is, in ambiguous language. For instance, often the Ministries/Departments merely remain content with informing the Committee that their observations have been 'Noted' or are under 'examination', 'Under consideration', etc. As pointed out in paragraph 1.1.8 of their 200th Report (5th Lok Sabha), the Committee expect a positive and helpful reaction on the part of the administration to their observations/recommendations. Merely, 'noting' the observations or the intimation of 'no comments', where positive action had been called for renders virtually nugatory the entire purpose of parliamentary scrutiny on the basis of mutual exchange of facts and reasoned conclusions. Parliament has laid on the P.A.C. a duty and a responsibility which just cannot be shirked or diluted. This requires consistent and constant cooperation of the administration with the Committee. In this matter of the highest importance to the country's political system as well as to the interests of our people, the Committee's stress their hope that the agencies of Government would help by

processing the Committee's recommendations/observations with greater earnestness and promptitude and also in a more positive and purposeful manner than at present."

2. While demanding explicit and categorical response not couched in ambiguous language, the Public Accounts Committee have expressed the hope that the agencies of Govt. would help by processing their recommendations with greater earnestness and promptitude and also in a more positive and purposeful manner than at present. It is requested that this requirement of the Public Accounts Committee for purpose of framing replies to their observations may be noted for strict compliance in future.

Sd/-

(A. B. Datar)
Financial Adviser.

To

DG (RD) & Addl. Secy./JS (P) JS (L) Secretary BRDB/Dir. (MM)/
Dir. (C)|Dir.(M) CE & A (IWT)|DS (PD)|DS (C)|DS (R)|DS
(L)|DS (MAE)|DS (BRDB)|Dy. C.C.C. All Under Secretaries|
Sections in T.W. & R.W.

[Ministry of Shipping & Transport (Transport Wing) O.M.
No. BPC-8/76 dt. 23-8-1976]

APPENDIX VII

(Vide Para 1.3)

No. G. 25015/4/76-B.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE

Department of Health.

New Delhi, the 10 Sept., 1976.

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT.—*Action Taken on the recommendations contained in the 220th Report of the Public Accounts Committee (Fifth Lok Sabha) on the Delays in furnishing Action Taken Notes by Government.*

With reference to the Lok Sabha Secretariat O.M. No. 2/1/50/76/PAC, dated the 25th June, 1976, on the subject noted above, the undersigned is directed to say that the recommendations contained in Para 1.4 of 201st Report and para 1.36 and 1.39 of the 220th Report of PAC are of a general nature. The Action Taken Notes in respect of these recommendations have already been sent by the Ministry of Finance to the Lok Sabha Secretariat, since they are the co-ordinating Ministry. It has been indicated by them that separate action taken notes are not required to be sent by the Ministry of Health and Family Planning. In this connection, a copy of d.o. letter No. F. 12(24)-E (Coord)/76, dated the 31st August, 1976 from the Ministry of Finance (Department of Expenditure) is enclosed.

Sd/-

(N. A. SUBRAMONEY)

Under Secretary to the Government of India.

To

The Lok Sabha Secretariat,
Senior Financial Committee Officer,
Parliament House Annexe,
NEW DELHI-110001.

Copy to d.o. letter No. F. 12(24)-E(Coord)/76 dt. 31.8.76 from the Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Finance Deptt. of Expenditure.

addressed to the Deputy Secretary (IFA), Ministry of Health and Family Planning, New Delhi.

Please refer to your d.o. letter No. F. 25015/4/76-B dated the 21st August, 1976 regarding the 201st and 220th Report of the Public Accounts Officer.

The recommendations contained in para 1.4 of the 201st Report and paras 1.36 and 1.39 of the 220th Report of PAC are of a general nature and marked to all Ministries/Departments. Action Taken Notes in respect of these recommendations have already been sent by us to the Lok Sabha Secretariat on 5.8.76. Therefore, it is confirmed that separate Action Taken Notes in respect of these recommendations are not required to be sent by the Ministry of Health and Family Planning.

[Deptt. of Health O.M. No. G-25015/4/76-B dt. 10-9-1976]

APPENDIX VIII

(Vide para 1.3)

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

MINISTRY OF WORKS AND HOUSING

(Nirman Aur Awas Mantralaya)

FINANCE DIVISION

Recommendation

The Committee are constrained to record their unhappiness at the unconscionable delay on the part of Government in initiating and reporting action taken on their recommendations/observations. In spite of the Committee's repeated exhortations and also the plethora of instructions and circulars issued periodically by the Ministry of Finance and other agencies there seems to be no perceptible improvement in the situation. Except in extra-ordinary circumstances all necessary action requires to be completed and a final report furnished to the Committee within the prescribed period of six months, which should normally be considered an adequate allowance of time. The Committee regret to note a marked deterioration in this regard, with replies still awaited even after a protracted period, as in the case of this report which was presented as far back as in November, 1974. Unless the Committee are informed of the final action taken by Government on their recommendations, they would be handicapped in effectively discharging the responsibilities cast on them by Parliament, and the exercise of Parliamentary control over executive actions would, to that extent, be abridged. The Committee take a serious view of such delay and desire that positive steps are taken to ensure that the final Action Taken Notes on the Committee's recommendations are invariably furnished to them within the stipulated time-limit of six months.

[Para 1.4 to P.A.C. Report (5th Lok Sabha (1975-76)
(201st Report)]

Recommendation

Parliamentary control over Government's financial activities and all executive process relative thereto can only be meaningful and effective if the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee

are promptly implemented or adequate reasons for non-compliance are communicated without undue delay. Repeatedly, in the past, the Public Accounts Committee have called for Action Taken Notes being sent in time. Wherever reasonable extension has been requested, it has been invariably allowed. And yet, as the narrative pages of this report will show, the entire issue has been dealt with by Government in a routine manner and without any apparent appreciation of the P.A.C.'s feeling of seriousness and urgency about it. In paragraph 2.4 of their 186th Report (5th Lok Sabha) the Committee have been constrained to observe that unless Government device an adequate machinery to see that the recommendations of the Committee receive prompt attention and the assurances held out to the Committee, from time to time, are sought to be translated into positive action not only at the higher levels of the administration but in all relevant spheres, the labours of the Committee would be largely in vain and the functioning of our Parliamentary system would seriously suffer.

[Para 1.36 of 220th Report of the P.A.C. (5th Lok Sabha)]

Apart from asking for all reasonable expedition on the part of Government in sending Action Taken Notes, the Committee require that the response of the Ministries/Departments should also be explicit and categorical and not couched, as it sometimes is, in ambiguous language. For instance, often the Ministries/Departments merely remain content with informing the Committee that their observations have been "Noted" or are "under examination", "under consideration", etc. As pointed out in paragraph 1.18 of their 200th Report (5th Lok Sabha), the Committee expect a positive and helpful reaction on the part of the administration to their observations/recommendations. Merely, "noting" the observations or the intimation of "no comments", where positive action had been called for, renders virtually nugatory the entire purpose of parliamentary scrutiny on the basis of mutual exchange of facts and reasoned conclusions. Parliament has laid on the Public Accounts Committee a duty and a responsibility which just cannot be shirked or diluted. This requires consistent and constant co-operation of the administration with the Committee. In this matter of highest importance to the country's political system as well as to the interests of our people, the Committee stress their hope that the agencies of Government would help by processing the Committee's recommendations/observations with greater earnestness and promptitude and also in a more positive and purposeful manner than at present.

[Para 1.39 of 220th Report of the P.A.C. (5th Lok Sabha)]

Action Taken

The observations contained in these paras had been carefully noted and brought to the notice of all the officers concerned. It has henceforth been arranged that outstanding Recommendations of Public Accounts Committee are reviewed at regular intervals at the personal level of Joint Secretaries with a view to ensuring that timely action is being taken and "Action Taken Notes" are furnished to Lok Sabha Secretariat without delay. A copy of Office Memorandum No. G-25015/15/76-Bt., dated the 16th August, 1976, issued in this connection is enclosed (Annexure).

Sd/-

(N. K. Rewari)

Joint Secretary to the Govt. of India.

New Delhi, dated 9th September, 1976.

No. G-25015/15/76-Bt.

Annexure

Most immediate/PAC.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

MINISTRY OF WORKS AND HOUSING

(Nirman Aur Awaz Mantralaya)

(Finance Division—Budget Unit)

G-25015/15/76-Bt.

New Delhi, dated the 16th August, 1976.

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT.—*Action Taken on the recommendations contained in the 220th Report of the Public Accounts Committee (5th Lok Sabha)—Delays in furnishing Action Taken Notes by the Government.*

The Public Accounts Committee in their 220th Report (5th Lok Sabha) in paras 1.36 and 1.39 has expressed serious concern about the inordinate delays that are occurring in the Ministries/Departments in taking prompt action on their recommendations and submission of "Action Taken Notes" duly vetted by audit, within the prescribed time. They have also expressed their dissatisfaction in the matter of dealing with such matters in a routine manner. They also desire that the "Action Taken Notes" should be explicit and categorical and not couched in ambiguous language.

The Cabinet Secretary in his recent letter dated 21st July, 1976 has brought to the notice of our Secretary these observations and

had desired that as many paras as possible are attended to so that "Action Taken Notes" duly vetted by Audit are furnished to the Lok Sabha Secretariat within the prescribed time limit. It has, therefore, become imperative on the part of every one dealing with such P.A.C. paras to take immediate and prompt action with a view to finalise matters. If any delays are anticipated, it is necessary that personal contacts are established with the other Departments/Ministries which will enable the dealing officers to effectively take action to complete the formalities required in the matter of submission of "Action Taken Notes". The Joint Secretaries/Deputy Secretaries who are concerned with such paras may consider the holding of weekly meetings with other concerned officers with a view to assess the progress made and suitable machinery and strategy should be evolved for the quick finalisation of action on these paras. Highest importance to this work should be given by each and every officer so that action in a more positive manner is ensured at all levels at all times.

A copy of the recommendations referred to in para 1 has already been circulated to all the officers *vide* Memorandum No. G-25015/15/76-Bt.(ii), dated the 28th July, 1976.

Sd/-

SARDAR SINGH.

Under Secretary to the Government of India.

To

All Officers in the Secretariat.

All attached and subordinate offices.

[Ministry of Works and Housing O.M. No. G-25015/15/76-BT,
dt. 25-8-1976]

APPENDIX IX

(Vide Para 1.3)

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION & BROADCASTING

Recommendation

It is disconcerting that in respect of as many as 7 out of the 24 reports presented during 1974-75 by the Public Accounts Committee (1974-75), Action Taken Notes on all the recommendations/observations had not been received even after the lapse of nearly a year. While Action Taken Notes on 27 out of the 50 recommendations/observations contained, in the Committee's 149th Report (Fifth Lok Sabha) on 'BANGLADESH REFUGEES' had not been furnished to the Committee even 11 months after the presentation of the Report to the House, not even a single Action Taken Note on the 173rd Report (Fifth Lok Sabha) on the Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity had been furnished to the Committee, despite repeated requests, till the finalisation of this Report. In respect of the 170th Report (Fifth Lok Sabha) on the 'Crash Scheme for Rural Employment' Action Taken Notes on 10 out of the 39 recommendations/observations contained in the Report are still awaited. From these instances, which are not exhaustive but only illustrative, it is evident that an urgent toning up of things is needed badly. The Committee would urge particularly the Cabinet Secretariat to review this thoroughly unsatisfactory state of affairs and take immediate remedial measures.

[Paragraph 1.37 of 220th Report of the PAC (5th Lok Sabha)]

Action Taken

The Cabinet Secretary considered the matter at a meeting of the Secretaries' Committee on Internal Affairs on 25th June, 1976, and decided upon institutional arrangements to monitor timely submission of Action Taken Notes. As a result of the decision taken by the Committee the "focal point" for this work in this Ministry is the Integrated Financial Adviser, responsible directly to the Secretary. The setting up of the Monitoring Cell in the Ministry of Finance is also as a result of the decision of the Committee of Secretaries on Internal Affairs.

Recommendation

The Committee take a serious view, in particular, of the total non-receipt of any Action Taken Note from the Ministry of Informa-

tion and Broadcasting on the Report relating to the Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity, which was presented to the Lok Sabha as far back as May 1975, despite an assurance given in September, 1975, that these would be sent 'shortly'. What is even more disturbing is that communications addressed in this regard to the Secretary of the Ministry have not been acknowledged, let alone, answered. This, in the Committee's view, is entirely impermissible and unwarranted. The Committee would like the reasons therefor to be looked into immediately with a view to fixing responsibility. All the Action Taken Notes should also be made available immediately to enable the Committee to do their duty by Parliament and finalise their Report.

[Paragraph 1.38 of 220th Report of the PAC (5th Lok Sabha)]

Action Taken

As promised by the Secretary, Information and Broadcasting, in his D.O. letter to the Chairman of the Committee, the 'Action Taken Notes' on the 173rd Report were submitted *vide* this Ministry's letter No. G-25015/3/75-B&A, dated the 15th July, 1976. Further, as desired, in D.O. letter No. 2/1/20/74-PAC, dated the 21st July, 1976, from the Chief Financial Committee Officer, action taken notes on certain other paragraphs and clarifications sought therein were furnished to the Lok Sabha Secretariat with D.O. letter No. G-25015/3/75-B&A, dated the 30th July, 1976, addressed to the Chief Financial Committee Officer.

The Ministry has also expressed its deepest regrets for the delay *vide* Secretary's letter dated 5th July, 1976 to the Chairman of Public Accounts Committee.

[Ministry of Information & Broadcasting O.M. No. G-25015/13/76-B&A, dt. 9-8-1976]

APPENDIX X

(Vide Para 1.3)

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE & IRRIGATION

(Department of Rural Development)

Recommendation

It is disconcerting that in respect of as many as 7 out of the 24 reports presented during 1974-75 by the Public Accounts Committee (1974-75), Action Taken Notes on all the recommendations/observations had not been received even after the lapse of nearly a year. In respect of the 170th Report (Fifth Lok Sabha) on the 'Crash Scheme for Rural Employment' Action Taken Notes on 10 out of the 39 recommendations/observations contained in the Report are still awaited. It is evident that an urgent toning up of things is needed badly. The Committee would urge particularly the Cabinet Secretariat to review this thoroughly unsatisfactory state of affairs and take immediate remedied measures.

[Paragraph 1.37 of 220th Report of the P.A.C. (5th Lok Sabha)]

Action Taken

The cyclostyled copy of the 170th Report of Public Accounts Committee (Fifth Lok Sabha) was received in the Department of Rural Development on April 30, 1975. It was stipulated in the forwarding O.M. that replies to the recommendations of the Committee could be furnished within six months, but this period was subsequently reduced to 3 months. The report contained thirty nine recommendations. A large number of observations/recommendations related to the matters on which action was required to be taken by the States/Union Territories. Accordingly, the States/UTs were requested to intimate action taken by them. The Department of Rural Development forwarded to Lok Sabha Secretariat Action Taken Notes in respect of 27 recommendations on August 20, 1975. Action Taken Notes in respect of one recommendation was forwarded on October 28, 1975 and in respect of seven recommendations Action Taken Notes were forwarded on April 20, 1976. It would thus be noted that Action Taken Notes in respect of most of the recommendations/observations had been forwarded to the Public Accounts Committee. Action Taken Notes in respect of S. Nos. 14, 16, 17 and 39 have also been furnished to Lok Sabha Secretariat.

[Department of Rural Development O.M. No. M-20020(3)76-RMC,
dt. 7-8-1976]

APPENDIX XI

(Vide Para 1.3)

MINISTRY OF PLANNING

(Department of Statistics)

Recommendation

Parliamentary control over Government's financial activities and all executive processes relative thereto can only be meaningful and effective if the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee are promptly implemented or adequate reasons for non-compliance are communicated without undue delay. Repeatedly, in the past, the Public Accounts Committee have called for Action Taken Notes being sent in time. Wherever reasonable extension has been requested, it has been invariably allowed. And yet, as the narrative pages of this Report will show, the entire issue has been dealt with by Government in a routine manner and without any apparent appreciation of the P. A. C.'s feeling of seriousness and urgency about it. In paragraph 2.4 of their 186th Report (Fifth Lok Sabha), the Committee have been constrained to observe that unless Government devise an adequate machinery to see that the recommendations of the Committee receive prompt attention and the assurances held out to the Committee, from time to time, are sought to be translated into positive action not only at the higher levels of the administration but in all relevant spheres, the labours of the Committee would be largely in vain and the functioning of our Parliamentary system would seriously suffer.

[Para No. 1.36 of 220th Report of the PAC 5th Lok Sabha]

Action Taken

So far Department of Statistics is concerned there has been generally no delay in sending the 'Action Taken Notes' on the original reports of the PAC in the past which is evident from the fact that in none of the extracts reproduced in this report from the previous reports of the Committee any reference has been made to this Department at any Stage. On 169th Report of the PAC 'Action Taken Notes' by this Department were sent to PAC within a period of six months. However, observations made by the PAC have been noted and will be kept in view while processing the Reports in this Department, in future also. The arrangements made

by the Ministry of Finance under which Integrated Financial Adviser or Internal Financial Adviser has been made focal point and responsible to Secretary for monitoring delays and also apprising the Associate Financial Adviser of the progress from time to time have been instituted in this Department also.

[Deptt. of Statistics O.M. No. G-25015/7/76-Bgt., dt. 31-8-76]

Recommendation

Apart from asking for all reasonable expedition on the part of Government in sending Action Taken Notes, the Committee require that the response of the Ministries/Departments should also be explicit and categorical and not couched, as it sometimes is, in ambiguous language. For instance, often the Ministries/Departments merely remain content with informing the Committee that their observations have been 'Noted' or are 'Under examination', 'under consideration' etc. As pointed out in paragraph 1.18 of their 200th Report (Fifth Lok Sabha), the Committee expect a positive and helpful reaction on the part of the administration to their observations/recommendations. Merely, 'Noting' the observations or the intimation of 'no comments', where positive action had been called for, renders virtually nugatory the entire purpose of parliamentary scrutiny on the basis of mutual exchange of facts and reasoned conclusions. Parliament has laid on the Public Accounts Committee a duty and a responsibility which just cannot be shirked or diluted. This requires consistent and constant co-operation of the administration with the Committee. In this matter of the highest importance to the country's political system as well as to the interests of our people, the Committee stress their hope that the agencies of Government would help by processing the Committee's recommendations/observations with greater earnestness and promptitude and also in a more positive and purposeful manner than at present.

[Para 1.39 of 220th Report of P.A.C. 5th Lok Sabha]

Action Taken

The observations made by the Public Accounts Committee have been noted. The replies to the recommendations/observations made by the Committee are generally dealt with by a senior officer who makes sure that all relevant information is furnished in the reply and no vague statement is made. This will also be done in future.

[Deptt. of Statistics O.M. No. G-25015/5/76-Bgt., dt. 31-8-76]

APPENDIX XII

(Vide Para 1.3)

MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES

(Department of Mines)

Recommendation

1.36. Parliamentary control over Government's financial activities and all executive processes relative thereto can only be meaningful and effective if the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee are promptly implemented or adequate reasons for non-compliance are communicated without undue delay. Repeatedly, in the past, the Public Accounts Committee have called for Action Taken Notes being sent in time. Wherever reasonable extension has been requested, it has been invariably allowed. And yet, as the narrative pages of this Report will show, the entire issue has been dealt with by Government in a routine manner and without any apparent appreciation of the Public Accounts Committee's feeling of seriousness and urgency about it. In paragraph 2.4 of their 186th Report (Fifth Lok Sabha), the Committee have been constrained to observe that unless Government devise an adequate machinery to see that the recommendations of the Committee receive prompt attention and the assurances held out to the Committee, from time to time, are sought to be translated into positive action not only at the higher levels of the administration but in all relevant spheres, the labours of the Committee would be largely in vain and the functioning of our parliamentary system would seriously suffer.

[Para No. 1.36 of 220th Report of the PAC 5th Lok Sabha]

Action Taken

The above recommendation/conclusion is of a general nature and the same has been brought to the notice of all the Officers in the Department. Instructions have also been issued to all subordinate offices of the Department that the guidelines already prescribed by the Ministry of Finance in dealing with audit objections should be strictly observed. A Committee has been set up in the Department of Mines with the Financial Adviser as Chairman to

periodically review action taken on the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee.

R. GANAPATI,

Joint Secretary to the Government of India.

Recommendation

1.39. Apart from asking for all reasonable expedition on the Part of Government in sending Action Taken Notes, the Committee required that the response of the Ministries/Departments should also be explicit and categorical and not couched, as it sometimes is, in ambiguous language. For instance, often the Ministries/Departments merely remain content with informing the Committee that their observations have been 'Noted' or are 'under examination', 'under consideration', etc. As pointed out in paragraph 1.18 of their 200th Report (Fifth Lok Sabha), the Committee expect a positive and helpful reaction on the part of the administration to their observations/recommendations. Merely 'noting' the observations or the intimation of 'no comments' where positive action had been called for, renders virtually nugatory the entire purpose of Parliamentary scrutiny of the basis of mutual exchange of facts and reasoned conclusions. Parliament had laid on the Public Accounts Committee a duty and responsibility which just cannot be shirked or diluted. This requires consistent and constant co-operation of the administration with the Committee. In this matter of the highest importance to the country's political system as well as to the interests of our people, the Committee stress their hope that the agencies of Government would help by processing the Committee's recommendations/observations with greater earnestness and promptitude and also in a more positive and purposeful manner than at present.

[Paragraph 1.39 of 220th Report of the P.A.C. (5th Lok Sabha)]

Action Taken

The above recommendation/conclusion is of a general nature and the same has been brought to the notice of all the Officers in the Department. Instructions have also been issued to all subordinate offices of the Department that the guidelines already prescribed by the Ministry of Finance in dealing with audit objections should be strictly observed. A Committee has been set up in the Department of Mines with the Financial Adviser as Chairman to periodically review action taken on the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee.

R. GANAPATI,

Joint Secretary to the Govt. of India.

[Deptt. of Mines O.M. No. 4(9)/76-IF, dt. 28-8-1976]

APPENDIX XIII

(Vide Para 1.7)

Copy of D.O. letter No. 12(24)E/(Coord.)/76/281 FM/7VIP(I) dated the 12th August, 1976 from Shri C. Subramaniam, Minister of Finance Government of India, New Delhi to Shri H. N. Mukherjee, Chairman, Public Accounts Committee.

Kindly refer to your D.O. No. 4/1/3/75/PAC dated 30th April, 1976 and the reminder dated the 20th July, 1976 suggesting the setting up of some machinery in Government for processing the recommendations of the PAC more promptly.

2. In pursuance of the PAC's recommendation in para 1.37 of the 220th Report, the procedure for processing the Action Taken Notes has been reviewed and it has been decided to instal "Focal Points" for the work connected with the PAC's Reports in each Ministry/Department and a Central "Focal Point" for the Government as a whole in the Ministry of Finance, Deptt., of Expenditure. A copy of the orders issued in the Department of Expenditure O.M. No. F. 12(24)-E (Coord.)/76 dated the 28th July, 1976 is attached for your information.

3. I also forward herewith copies of the Action Taken Notes already sent to the Lok Sabha Secretariat on the recommendations of the PAC in their 201st and 220th Reports. With the arrangements now introduced, I hope that the time taken in processing recommendations of the Committee will be reduced and Action Taken Notes will be sent in time.

With regards.

APPENDIX XIV

(Vide para 1.9)

No. F. 12(24)-E (Coord.)/76

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

MINISTRY OF FINANCE

Department of Expenditure

New Delhi, the 28th July, 1976

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT.—*Timely submission of Action Taken Notes on recommendations made by the Public Accounts Committee.*

The Public Accounts Committee has taken a serious view of the delays on the part of the Government in initiating and reporting Action Taken on their recommendations/observations. It has been decided to have the following institutional arrangements to monitor timely submission of Action Taken Notes on the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee.

- (a) The Integrated Financial Adviser in each Ministry would be responsible for examining the PAC report as a whole and would be the "focal point" responsible directly to the Secretary. He would also coordinate and watch progress, monitor delays and take necessary action to expedite the Action Taken Notes. It will be the responsibility of the Integrated Financial Adviser to seek extension of time from the Lok Sabha Secretariat in respect of the Action Taken Notes which, for unavoidable reasons, cannot be sent within the prescribed period of 6 months from the date the relevant PAC Report is presented to the Lok Sabha. Copies of all the Communications addressed to the Lok Sabha Sectt., regarding Action Taken Notes will also be endorsed to the Ministry of Finance, Department of Expenditure (Monitoring Cell).

Note: In respect of the Ministries/Departments where the Integrated Financial Scheme has not yet been introduced, the above functions will be performed by the Internal

Financial Adviser concerned, who will also keep the Associate Financial Adviser informed of the progress from time to time.

- (b) The Ministry of Finance, Department of Expenditure (Monitoring Cell) will be the "focal point" for the Government as a whole to coordinate and watch progress, monitor delays etc., with the Ministries concerned.

Ministry of Agriculture etc., may kindly note the above institutional arrangements and take necessary action.

Sd./- J. P. DAS,

Joint Secretary to the Govt. of India.

To

All the Ministries/Departments of the Government of India.

Copy to:

All Integrated Financial Advisers.

All Financial Advisers in the Department of Expenditure.

Sd./- J. S. BAJAJ,

Deputy Secretary to the Govt. of India.

APPENDIX XV

(Vide para 1.10)

Copy of D.O. letter No. 33/76-B&A dated 5th July, 1976 from the Secretary of Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to the Chairman, Public Accounts Committee.

At the very outset, I must confess that there has been avoidable delay on our part in furnishing notes on the action taken on the 173rd Report of the Public Accounts Committee relating to paragraph 34 of the Report of the C&AG for the year 1972-73. I offer my sincerest apologies for this delay and crave your indulgence to bear with us for another month, within which action on all pending Public Accounts Reports would be completed. So far as the 173rd Report is concerned. I am arranging to sent the Action Taken Report before the 15th of this month. I do hope and trust that you would be gracious enough to accept my apologies on behalf of the Ministry. I wish to assure you that such delays would not recur in future and notes on action taken or proposed to be taken on the PAC's Reports relating to this Ministry would be processed on a top priority basis.

APPENDIX XVI

(Vide para 1.12)

C. Bhujangaswamy,
Secretary,

Central Board of Excise
and Customs, New Delhi.

D.O. F. No. 411/34/76-Cus. III

30th August, 1976

My dear Sunder Rajan,

SUBJECT.—220th Report of the Public Accounts Committee, (1975-76)
(Fifth Lok Sabha)—Delay in furnishing Action Taken
Notes.

Please refer to the telephonic talk I had with you a few days ago about D.O. F. No. 4/1/3/75/PAC dated 30th April, 1976 from the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee to the Finance Minister and the statement, enclosed with it, of instances of delay in furnishing 'Action Taken Notes' on the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee.

2. The statement refers to 5 recommendations in the 166th Report dealing with the BOAC Gold Case and 1 recommendation in the 135th Report dealing with Customs Receipts. Though the 135th Report deals with Customs Receipts, the recommendation on which the "Action Taken Note" is reported to have been delayed does not concern the Central Board of Excise and Customs. As the Public Accounts Committee have themselves stated in Paragraph 1.3 of their 203rd Report, the "Action Taken Note" on the recommendation had to be sent by the Ministry of Shipping and Transport whose attention had been specifically drawn by the Deptt. of Revenue to this recommendation as early as July, 1975. Accordingly in the appendix to the 203rd Report, the recommendation has been marked specifically for action by the Ministry of Shipping and Transport.

3. As we discussed on telephone, the number of recommendations in the 166th Report, dealing with the BOAC Gold case, in respect of which there was delay in sending the "Action Taken Notes" was 4 and note 5 i.e., the recommendations contained in Paragraphs 2.77 to 2.80 of the 166th Report. The "Action Taken Notes" were forwarded to the Lok Sabha Sectt. on the 15th May, 1976. The delay in the finalisation of the "Action Taken Notes" could not be

avoided, because fairly important questions of law are involved in the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee, and the matter had to be examined at the highest levels in the Government, both before making a reference to the Attorney General through the Ministry of Law and after the receipt of his advice.

4. While this unavoidable delay in sending the "Action Taken Notes" is regretted, I would like to add that the Central Board of Excise and Customs attaches great importance to the recommendations/observations of the PAC and have by and large been furnishing the "Action Taken Notes" on them within the prescribed time limits. Whenever, some delay is anticipated for very valid reasons, in the finalisation of the "Action Taken Notes", either part Action Taken Notes/interim replies have been sent or suitable extensions of time have been sought for sending the "Action Taken Notes."

With regards,

Yours sincerely,

Sd/-

(C. BHUJANGASWAMY)

Shri N. Sunder Rajan.

Sr. Financial Committee Officer,

Lok Sabha Sectt., New Delhi.

APPENDIX XVII

(Vide 1-13)

AS ON 10-8-1976

Statement showing the original Reports in respect of which action taken replies from the Ministries/Departments are still awaited.

S.No.	No. of Report & Subject	Date of Presentation	Last date on which replies were/are due	Ministry/Department to which the Report relates	Para No. of the Report on which Reply from Govt. is awaited.
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	149th Report (Bangla Desh Refugees)	23-4-1975	23-10-1975	Department of Rehabilitation.	1·89, 1·90, 1·91, 1·114, to 1·117, 1·123, 1·158, 1·162, 1·175 to 1·178.
2	174th Report (Cash Assistance)	30-4-1976	31-8-1976	Ministry of Commerce.	No reply received so far.
3	177th Report (Union Excise)	19-1-1976	19-7-1976	Ministry of Finance.	2·16 to 2·18, 2·31, 2·32, 3·12 to 3·14, 3·22 to 3·24, 5·15 to 5·17, 7·7, 7·8, 9·15 to 9·19, 12·12, 12·13, 12·24 to 12·26, 13·13 to 13·16, 16·8 to 16·10, 19·8, 19·9, 20·15 and 20·16.
4	178th Report (Cash Assistance—Export of Man-made Fabrics)	30-4-1976	31-8-1976	Ministry of Commerce.	No reply received so far.
5	181st Report (Emergency Agr. Production Programme)	7-1-1976	7-7-1976	Department of Agriculture.	7·13 to 7·15, 7·20 to 7·28, 7·30 and 7·31.
6	183rd Report (New Services)	16-1-1976	Extension upto 31-8-76 granted.	Department of Economic Affairs.	No reply received so far.
7	186th Report (Review—Income Tax and Corporation Tax Reports.)	16-1-1976	16-7-1976	Ministry of Finance.	9·18

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1	2	3
8	193rd Report (Gift Tax)	2-4-1976
9	194th Report (Import of Textile Machinery)	30-4-1976
10	195th Report (Rajdhani Express)	5-2-1976
11	197th Report (Trade Fairs and Exhibitions)	31-3-1976
12	200th Report (Foreign Participation or Collaboration in research projects in India)	25-3-1976
13	204th Report (Expansion of Srinagar Telephone Exchange)	30-3-1976
14	209th Report (Export of Leather)	14-4-1976
15	210th Report (Naval Dockyard Expansion Scheme)	15-4-1976
16	211th Report (Estate Duty)	26-4-1976
17	212th Report (Custom Receipts)	27-4-1976

31-8-1976	Ministry of Finance	1·14, 1·35, 1·96, 1·48, 1·49, 1·61, 1·72, 2·15 to 2·17, 3·12, 3·13, 3·15, 4·37 to 4·38, 4·41, 5·11, 6·13 & 6·14.
31-8-1976	Ministry of Commerce	No reply received so far.
4-8-1976	Ministry of Railways	1·77, 1·82, 1·83.
31-8-1976	Ministry of Commerce	No reply received so far.
31-8-1976	Deptt. of Health Ministry of Defence Ministry of Agriculture Ministry of Education and Social Welfare Cabinet Sectt. Min. of Science & Technology	No reply received so far.
31-8-1976	Ministry of Communica- tions (P&T Board)	1·91, 1·92, 1·96 to 1·98, 1·100 to 1·101.
31-8-1976	Ministry of Commerce	No reply received so far.
31-8-1976	Ministry of Defence	No reply received so far.
31-8-1976	Ministry of Finance	1·27, 1·29, 1·30, 1·47, 1·49 to 1·52, 2·20, 2·21, 2·31 to 2·33, 4·14, 4·15, 5·21, 5·23, 5·50, to 5·52.
31-8-1976	Ministry of Finance	All replies except in respect of paras Nos. 1·36, 7·62 and 7·66 awaited.

18 218th Report (Illegal Import of Gold) 29-4-1976

19 219th Report (Customs Receipts) 30-4-1976

20 220th Report (Delay in Action Taken Replies). 28-4-1976

21 221st Report (Computerisation in Govt. Depts). 30-4-1976

22 223rd Report (Controlled Cloth) 30-4-1976

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- 31-8-1976 Department of Revenue and Banking, Deptt. of Economic Affairs. Cabinet Sectt. Deptt. of Expenditure. 1·16, 2·59 to 2·70, 3·41 to 3·47 Interim Replies recd. in respect of paras Nos. 3·49 to 3·53.
- 31-8-1976 Ministry of Finance No reply received so far.
- 31-8-1976 Ministry of Finance Deptt. of Agriculture Ministry of Information & Broadcasting etc. Replies in respect of paras No. 1·37, 1·38 received from the Min. of Information & Broadcasting, from the Ministry of Finance in respect of Para No. 1·36 and 1·39 and from the Deptt. of Rural Development in respect of Para No. 1·37.
- 31-8-1976 Various Govt. Departments. All replies except in respect of paras No. 6·170, 6·175 and 6·176 are awaited.
- 31-8-1976 Ministry of Commerce No reply received so far.
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APPENDIX XVIII
Conclusions/Recommendations

S. No.	Para No.	Ministry Deptt. Concerned	Recommendations/conclusions
1	2	3	4
1	1.15	All Ministries Deptts.	<p>While Committee are happy to note that measures aimed at securing timely submission of Action Taken Notes on the Committee's recommendations have now been taken, though belatedly, by setting up a 'Monitoring Cell' in the Department of Expenditure as the 'focal point' for the Government as a whole, to coordinate the progress in this regard and monitor delays with Ministries concerned the Committee hope that the Integrated Financial Advisers/ International Financial Advisers in each Ministry would discharge their responsibility effectively in examining the Reports of the Committee and in coordinating and monitoring the expeditious submission of the Action Taken Notes thereon to the Committee. The Committee would watch the position in this regard for sometime and approach the Government again in case they find any laxity in attending to the recommendations of the Committee made in their reports.</p>
2	1.16	Do	<p>One of the major reasons advanced by the Ministry of Finance contributing to the delays in submission of Action Taken Notes is that the number of cyclostyled copies supplied to the Ministries/Departments at the time of presentation of reports is inadequate.</p>

quate. No such specific instance has ever been brought to the notice of the Committee. However, the Committee do not envisage difficulty in the supply of sufficient number of copies of their reports cyclostyled or printed to the Ministries concerned to facilitate quick processing.

3 I.17 -Do-

The Committee recognise the need for extension of time if the requisite information cannot be obtained within six months in the cases where the State Governments act as agencies of the Central Government or where work is given by a Central Ministry to an organisation or agency under the administrative control of another Ministry. The Committee, however, cannot agree to the suggestion made by the Ministry to leave to the PAC of the concerned State Legislature the matters where the Central Government provide a subvention and the State Government uses these funds as well as their own funds because it involves the broader question of accountability for any expenditure out of Consolidated Fund of India for which Central Government is responsible to Parliament.

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4 I.18 -Do-

In respect of the Ministry's suggestion that "The PAC could leave it to Government to pursue the question of disciplinary action once it has given an assurance that the responsibility would be fixed and action taken", the Committee would like to treat the assurance given by the Ministry as an interim reply to the recommendation and would insist on a final reply showing the nature of action taken in a further period of six months (i.e. within a year of the presentation of the original Report).

Sl. No.	Name of Agent	Agency No.	Sl. No.	Name of Agent	Agency No.
DELHI.					
24.	Jain Book Agency, Connaught Place, New Delhi.	11	33.	Oxford Book & Stationery Company, Scindia House, Connaught Place, New Delhi-1.	68
25.	Sat Narain & Sons, 3141, Mohd. Ali Bazar, Mori Gate, Delhi.	3	34.	People's Publishing House, Rani Jhansi Road, New Delhi.	76
26.	Atma Ram & Sons, Kashmere Gate, Delhi-6.	9	35.	The United Book Agency, 48, Amrit Kaur Market, Pahar Ganj, New Delhi.	88
27.	J. M. Jaina & Brothers, Mori Gate, Delhi.	11	36.	Hird Book House, 82, Janpath, New Delhi.	95
28.	The Central News Agency, 23/90, Connaught Place, New Delhi.	15	37.	Bookwell, 4, Sant Naran-kari Colony, Kingsway Camp, Delhi-9.	96
29.	The English Book Store, 7-L, Connaught Circus, New Delhi.	20	MANIPUR		
30.	Lakshmi Book Store, 42, Municipal Market, Janpath, New Delhi.	23	38.	Shri N. Chaoba Singh, News Agent, Ramlal Paul High School Annexe, Imphal.	77
31.	Bahree Brothers, 188 Lajpatra Market, Delhi-6.	27	AGENTS IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES		
32.	Jayana Book Depot, Chaparwala Kuan, Karol-Bagh, New Delhi.	66	39.	The Secretary, Establishment Department, The High Commission of India India House, Aldwych, LONDON, W. C.-2.	59

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