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OUTSIDE PRODUCTION—DOORDARSHAN

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION & BROADCASTING

HUNDRED AND SIXTH REPORT



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

HUNDRED AND SIXTH REPORT
PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE
(1995-96)

(TENTH LOK SABHA)

OUTSIDE PRODUCTION—DOORDARSHAN

**MINISTRY OF INFORMATION &
BROADCASTING**

***ACTION TAKEN ON 57TH REPORT OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS
COMMITTEE (10TH LOK SABHA)***



Presented to Lok Sabha on 22 Aug., 1995
Laid in Rajya Sabha on 22 Aug., 1995

**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

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**COMPOSITION OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE
(1995-96)**

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4. **Shri P. Sreedharan** — *Under Secretary*

INTRODUCTION

1. I, the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, as authorised by the Committee, do present on their behalf this Hundred and Sixth Report on action taken by Government on the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee contained in their 57th Report (10th Lok Sabha) on Outside production-Doordarshan.

2. In their earlier Report the Committee had pointed out that the Doordarshan authorities had failed in acting upon the recommendations made by the Zutshi Committee as far back as in 1987-88 for the formation and operation of a panel of producers for outside production of programmes. Expressing their unhappiness over the same, the Committee had recommended that the reasons for the same should be thoroughly looked into and the responsibility fixed for the omissions. In this Report the Committee have noted with regret that the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting have merely stated that the panel prepared in pursuance of the recommendations of the Zutshi Committee was made operational in the case of commissioned programmes after a period of four years without explaining the reasons for the delay in doing so and also not indicating the action taken against the officers responsible for the omissions. Rejecting the reply of the Ministry the Committee have reiterated their earlier recommendation.

3. The Committee had also observed in their earlier Report that about rupees one crore was due to the Government from the defaulting producers though no meaningful exercise was undertaken by the Ministry to estimate the exact amount recoverable from them. They had recommended that all the pending contracts should be reviewed and prompt action taken to effect recoveries from the defaulters expeditiously. In this Report the Committee have been distressed to note that as against the pending dues of about rupees one crore, recovery of Rs. 6.60 lakh have been partly made in just one case out of the 26 such instance. Thus, no progress has been made by the authorities to recover the governmental dues from the defaulting producers. The Committee have expressed their concern over the delay in the recovery process and desired that concerted efforts should be made to realise the governmental dues from all the defaulting producers as against the amount of one crore.

4. The Committee had drawn attention of Government to the inordinate delay of over 15 years on the part of the Doordarshan in the finalisation of their proforma accounts. Criticising the inordinate delay of more than 15 years in the finalisation of the accounts, the Committee had expressed

(vi)

their firm view that the officers in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and Doordarshan who were responsible for the maintenance and overseeing of these accounts were negligent in their duties and responsibilities should be fixed for the lapses. They had also recommended that the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting should in consultation with the Comptroller and Auditor General of India find out ways and means of maintenance of the proforma account up-to-date. In this Report the Committee have noted that the proforma accounts for 1977-78 and 1978-79 have only been finalised and sent for certification and the accounts for the rest of the years are stated to be under the process of completion. Evidently, the Ministry have not made any substantial headway in the finalisation process which is a matter of deep concern to the Committee. Further no action has been taken against the officers responsible for their negligence in the maintenance and timely finalisation of the accounts. The Committee have therefore, reiterated their earlier recommendation and desired that the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting/Doordarshan should act in the matter in a serious manner. They should consult Comptroller and Auditor General of India and finalise a plan of action within three months with a view to ensuring that the pending proforma accounts are finalised within a period of two years.

5. The Report was considered and adopted by the Public Accounts Committee at their sitting held on 2 August, 1995. Minutes of the Report from Part II of the Report.

6. For facility of reference and convenience, the recommendations of the Committee have been printed in thick type in the body of the Report and have also been reproduced in a consolidated form in the Appendix to the Report.

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

NEW DELHI;
4 August, 1995

13 Sravana, 1917(Saka)

RAM NAIK,
Chairman,
Public Accounts Committee.

CHAPTER I

REPORT

This Report of the Committee deals with the action taken by Government on the recommendations/observations of the Committee contained in their Fifty-Seventh Report (Tenth Lok Sabha) on paragraph 5 of the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for the year ended 31 March, 1990, No. 13 of 1991, Union Government (Civil) relating to Outside production—Doordarshan.

2. The Fifty-Seventh Report which was presented to Lok Sabha on 4 March, 1994 contained 25 recommendations/observations. Action taken notes on all these recommendations/observations have been received from the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting. The action taken notes have been broadly categorised as follows:

- (i) Recommendations and observations which have been accepted by Government:
1 to 4, 8 to 10, 14 to 16, 18, 20 to 23 and 25
- (ii) Recommendations and observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in the light of replies received from Government:
5 to 6, 13, 17 and 19
- (iii) Recommendations and observations, replies to which have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration:
7, 11, 12 and 24
- (iv) Recommendations and observations in respect of which Government have furnished interim replies:

—NIL—

Shortcomings in the Production of Commissioned programmes in Doordarshan by Outside Producers

3. In addition to the programmes produced in-house Doordarshan also assign production of programmes to outside producers. The system of outside production was launched in Doordarshan in the Eighties with the basic objective of keeping track with the rapid expansion of Doordarshan and the immense diversity of its programme requirements for which the in-house effort was found inadequate. The system was also contemplated with a view to providing an outlet to the talent pool of young producers. The programmes farmed out to outside producers are basically of two types, namely, commissioned programmes and sponsored programmes. The

former is essentially a programme of Doordarshan except that after the approval of the conceptualisation and other essential parameters by Doordarshan, actual production is done by outside producers, known as Executive Producers. In the case of the latter, the producer invests his own money and Doordarshan only approves the programme offered by him.

4. In their 57th Report (Tenth Lok Sabha), the Committee had found several glaring inadequacies/shortcomings in the implementation of the scheme relating to the production of commissioned programmes by outside producers. Briefly these were, absence of planning regarding programme requirements, absence of procedure in the selection/empanelment of producers, defects in the costing techniques, delay in production/telecast of programmes, incorrect procedure adopted in respect of security deposit and deduction of income-tax at source, sharing of copyright with the producers, absence of guidelines/instructions to regulate the administration of the scheme and above all, lack of control of the Ministry over Doordarshan in this regard. Summing up their examination, the Committee in paragraph 176 of their Report had recommended:—

“From the foregoing it is evident that an atmosphere of non accountability was prevalent in the Ministry of I&B and Doordarshan. The Committee desire that this should be rectified without any loss of time”.

5. Responding to the above, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting have in their relevant action taken note stated:—

“The recommendation of the Committee has been examined and corrective measures initiated wherever warranted.”

6. The action taken notes furnished by the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting on the various observations/recommendations of the Committee have been reproduced in the relevant Chapters of the Report. In the succeeding paragraphs the Committee, however, deal with the action taken on some of their recommendations/observations.

Selection/Empanelment of Producers

(S. No. 7—Paragraph 158)

7. In their earlier Report, the Committee had found that Doordarshan had neither any system prescribed for selection of producers for production of outside programmes nor any panel of such producers. Proposals submitted by producers *suo moto* were selected on the basis of the eminence of the producers, track record, qualifications etc. In this connection, the Committee in para 158 of their 57th Report (10th Lok Sabha) had recommended:

“Curiously enough, the Committee during the course of the examination found that as far back as in 1987-88 a Committee known as Zutshi Committee had recommended a panel of producers for outside production of programmes. However, it was

not made operational. During evidence the representatives of the Ministry and Doordarshan admitted this omission. But they were unable to adduce any convincing explanation for not acting upon the recommendations of the Zutshi Committee. It was only after the selection of the subject by the Public Accounts Committee that the Ministry in a circular issued in January, 1992 and amended subsequently drew attention to the Zutshi Committee Panel and sought to streamline the procedure of selection of producers. This is unfortunate, to say the least. The Committee desire that the reasons for not acting upon the recommendations of the Zutshi Committee should be thoroughly looked into and the responsibility fixed for the omissions."

8. In their action taken note, the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting stated:

"The concept of maintaining a panel of producers was first contemplated by Doordarshan in 1987 with a view to streamlining the procedure for selection of programmes of outside producers. It invited applications for the registration of producers and directors for sponsored programmes in October, 1987. A panel of 581 directors and 723 producers was accordingly prepared by a selection board constituted for this purpose.

Four years later, it was decided to introduce this concept for the commissioned programmes too. Thus, the comprehensive guidelines for commissioned programmes issued - on 1.1.1992 required Doordarshan to commission programmes only through the producers empanelled with it. For this purpose, the panel prepared in 1987 was adopted as the basic panel to which additions could be made in the future on the basis of the criteria prescribed in the said guidelines."

9. In their earlier report while commenting upon the unsatisfactory system of selection of outside producers for commissioned programmes, the Committee had observed that there was neither a proper system in vogue in Doordarshan for selection nor had they maintained and made operational any panel for the purpose. Proposals submitted by producers *suo moto* were selected on the basis of eminence of the producers, track record, qualifications etc. In this connection, the Committee had pointed out that the Doordarshan authorities had failed in acting upon the recommendations made by the Zutshi Committee as far back as in 1987-88 for the formation and operation of a panel of producers for outside production of programmes. Expressing their unhappiness over the same, the Committee had recommended that the reasons for not acting upon the recommendations of the Zutshi Committee should be thoroughly looked into and the responsibility fixed for the omissions. The Committee regret to note that the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting have in their action taken

note merely stated that the panel prepared in pursuance of the recommendations of the Zutshi Committee was made operational in the case of commissioned programmes after a period of four years without explaining the reasons for the delay in doing so and also not indicating the action taken against the officers responsible for the omissions. The reply of the Ministry is, therefore, unacceptable and the Committee, reiterate their earlier recommendation and would like to be apprised of the action taken against the officers responsible for the omissions.

Delay in Production of Programmes

(S. No. 11—Paragraph 162)

10. As per the agreements executed, the programmes farmed out to the outside producers were required to be generally completed within three to four months. Producers were granted advances, normally 40% of the total cost initially and the remaining amount at different stages. In their earlier Report the Committee had found inordinate delays in the production of programmes. Audit had reported that 72 programmes involving advance payment of more than Rs. 2 crores for which agreements were entered into between February, 1986 and March, 1990 were pending completion till October, 1990. In their earlier Report presented in March, 1994 the Committee had found that out of the 72, 18 programmes were yet to be completed. To their dismay, the Committee had observed that Doordarshan had miserably failed to make use of the several options before them while dealing with the defaulting producers. The options *inter alia* included, forfeiture of security deposits, terminating of agreements, black-listing of defaulting producers etc. While pointing out that the failure of the Doordarshan on the score indicated serious lapses if not nepotism, the Committee in paragraph 162 of the Report had recommended that the laxity shown by Doordarshan in initiating timely action against defaulting producers should be thoroughly inquired into and responsibilities fixed for the lapses. Emphasising the need for taking effective steps to monitor the progress for the production schedule in terms of the contracts executed and for taking timely action against defaulters, the Committee had also desired to be apprised of the latest position in respect of completion of programmes by outside producers.

11. In their action taken note furnished, the Ministry of I&B have stated that the Committee's recommendations have been considered in the Doordarshan Directorate and notices have been sent to the defaulting producers for legal action. In their reply, the Ministry also stated:

"Another corrective measure taken is the introduction of the system of obtaining a bank guarantee from the producers which has proved to be an effective step towards timely completion of programmes. In exceptional circumstances, however, if for

unavoidable reasons an outside producer approaches Doordarshan for extension of time limit, the request is considered on merit and extension granted whenever warranted by the facts of the case."

12. The Ministry in their action taken note also stated that out of the 72 programmes referred to by the Committee, 61 programmes had already been telecast. The Ministry also intimated the status of the remaining 11 programmes. The status position revealed that out of the 11, notices have now been issued to the Producers concerned for legal action in six cases. The programmes in three cases were expected to be telecast soon, while one programme was to be re-edited and telecast and offer for another programme was stated to have been withdrawn.

13. The Committee take a serious note of the fact that 11 programmes for which contracts were entered into between Doordarshan and outside producers between February 1986 and March 1990 and where producers had been granted advances, are yet to be completed even now. The Committee regret to note that the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting have in their action taken note merely mention that notices have been issued without indicating the dates when such notices had been issued and explaining the fate of the notices. The reply is also silent about the action taken against the officers responsible for the delay in initiating action against the defaulting producers as desired by the Committee. This clearly indicates the lack of seriousness on the part of the Ministry in dealing with defaulting producers and the officers responsible for their failure in monitoring the production, which is a matter of concern to the Committee. The committee, therefore, reiterate their earlier recommendation and would like to be informed of the conclusive action taken in the matter. They would also like to be apprised of the latest pendency position in respect of commissioned programmes assigned to outside producers.

Delay in Recovery of Amount from Defaulting Producers

(S.No. 12 - Paragraph 163)

14. In paragraph 163 of their 57th Report (10th Lok Sabha), the Committee had observed that about rupees one crore was due to the Government from the defaulting producers though no meaningful exercise was undertaken by the Ministry to estimate the exact amount recoverable from them. The Committee had recommended that all the pending contracts should be reviewed and prompt action taken to effect recoveries from the defaulting producers.

15. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in their action taken note stated that "the recommendation made by the Committee has been considered in the Directorate of Doordarshan" and also furnished a statement indicating the status of 26 defaulting producers referred to above against whom recoveries had to be effected. The statement indicated that notices had been issued in about 15 out of 26 cases. Recovery was stated

to have been partly effected (Rs. 6.60 lakhs) in one case. The rest of the cases were stated to have been under discussion, further consideration, review etc.

16. In their earlier report the Committee had observed that about rupees one crore was due to the Government from the defaulting producers though no meaningful exercise was undertaken by the Ministry to estimate the exact amount recoverable from them. The Committee had recommended that all the pending contracts should be reviewed and prompt action taken to effect recoveries from the defaulters expeditiously and also to be apprised of the further action taken in the matter. The Committee are distressed to note that as against the pending dues of about rupees one crore indicated to them earlier, recovery of Rs. 6.60 lakh is stated to have been partly made in just one case out of the 26 such instances. Evidently, no progress has been made by the authorities to recover the governmental dues from the defaulting producers. The committee are concerned over the delay in the recovery process and desire that concerted efforts should be made to realise the governmental dues from all the defaulting producers and would like to be apprised of the precise extent of recovery made from them against the amount of one crore indicated to the Committee during examination. They would also like to be informed of the latest position of recoveries to be made from the defaulting producers.

Guidelines for Doordarshan's Commissioned Programme Scheme
(S.No. 20, Paragraph 171)

17. The system of assigning programmes to outside producers had been prevalent in Doordarshan at least since the eighties. During the period 1985-86 to 1989-90 an amount of Rs. 56 crores had been spent on the same. In their earlier report, the Committee had noted with surprise that even then, no guidelines had been issued by the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting to regulate the scheme of production till January 1992. It was only after the selection of the subject by the Public Accounts Committee for detailed examination that the Ministry had chosen to issue guidelines initially in January 1992 followed by March 1992 and later in May 1993 in the light of the discussions held during the course of evidence before the Committee. The Committee in paragraph 171 of their report had emphasised by outside producers was done within the laid down procedures and policies.

18. The Ministry of Information & Broadcasting have in their action taken note stated that the provisions contained in the guidelines issued by them in January 1992 and later amended in May 1993 were being scrupulously followed.

19. The Committee trust that the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting would keep a close watch on the production of programmes by outside producers under the commissioned programme of Doordarshan

and ensure that the guidelines are followed in letter and spirit with a view to ensuring that the scheme is implemented methodically and that the inadequacies/shortcomings observed by the Committee do not recur.

Delay in Finalisation of Proforma Accounts in Doordarshan
(S. No. 24—Paragraph 175)

20. When the operations of a Department include undertaking of a commercial or quasi-commercial character and the nature and scope of the activities of the undertaking are such as cannot suitably be brought within the normal system of Government account, the head of the undertaking shall be required to maintain such subsidiary and proforma accounts in commercial form as may be agreed between Government and the Comptroller and Auditor General of India. In their earlier Report the Committee had observed that the proforma accounts of Doordarshan had not been finalised since the year 1977-78 onwards. Criticising the inordinate delay of more than 15 years in the finalisation of the accounts the Committee had expressed their firm view that the officers in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and Doordarshan who were responsible for the maintenance and overseeing of these accounts were negligent in their duties and responsibilities should be fixed for the lapses. The Committee had recommended that the Ministry of I&B should in consultation with the Comptroller and Auditor General of India find out ways and means of maintenance of the proforma account up-to-date.

21. In their action taken note, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting have stated as follows:

“Doordarshan is making all out efforts to settle the pending proforma accounts for the period 1977-78 and beyond.

The proforma accounts for the period 1977-78 have been finalised and sent to the Resident Audit for certification. Pending authentication of the closing account that needs to be included as opening account for the subsequent financial year, further progress relating to the pending work cannot be made. Nevertheless with a view to complete the back-log work expeditiously and to avoid further delay in the matter the proforma account for 1978-79 have also been consolidated and sent to the Resident Audit by incorporating the uncertified closing balances provisionally, subject to audit certification. The work for the period 1979-80 is also under progress and is expected to be completed on the Doordarshan's side by the end of this financial year.

Further work relating to the subsequent years has also been taken in hand.”

22. In their earlier report the Committee had drawn attention of Government to the inordinate delay of over 15 years on the part of the Doordarshan in the finalisation of their proforma accounts. The Ministry of Information & Broadcasting have in their reply stated that the proforma accounts for 1977-78 and 1978-79 have been finalised and sent for certification. The accounts for the rest of the years are stated to be under the process of completion. Evidently, the Ministry have not made any substantial headway in the finalisation process which is a matter of deep concern to the Committee. Further, the action taken reply is also completely silent about the action taken by the Ministry/Doordarshan against the officers responsible for their negligence in the maintenance and timely finalisation of the accounts. The Committee, therefore, reiterate their earlier recommendation and desire that the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting/Doordarshan should act in the matter in a serious manner. They should consult Comptroller and Auditor General of India and finalise a plan of action within three months with a view to ensuring that the pending proforma accounts are finalised within a period of two years. They would also like to be informed of the latest position in the finalisation of proforma accounts of Doordarshan.

CHAPTER II

RECOMMENDATIONS AND OBSERVATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY GOVERNMENT

Recommendation

In addition to the programmes produced in house, Doordarshan also assigns production of programmes to outside producers. The programmes produced outside include those on centenaries and anniversaries, news and current affairs, sports, national intogrations, films, teleplays, documentaries and serial on youth, environment, culture, development, science and technology, etc. The programmes farmed out to outside producers are basically of types namely, commmissioned programmes and sponsored programmes. The former is essentially a programme of Doordarshan except that after the approval of the conceptualisation and other essential parameters by Doordarshan, actual production is done by outside producers, known as Executive Producers. In the case of the latter, the producer invests his own money and Doordarshan only approves the programmes offered by him.

[Sl. No 1, Para 152 of Appendix III to 57th Report of PAC (10th Lok Sabha)]

Action Taken

Needs no comments as the contents are factual.

[Ministry of 12B O.M. No. 900/2/94—TV(PI) dated 23-3-1995]

Recommendation

The Committee note that the basic objective behind the launching the system of outside production was to keep track with the rapid expansion of Doordarshan and the immense diversity of its programme requirements in recent years for which the in house effort was found inadequate. The system was also contemplated with a view to providing an outlet to the talent pool of young producers that has been built up in this country since the early eighties. Further, this system is also stated to encourage the production of programmes which may not be found attractive in the strict commercial sense but for which there is a distinct need in the larger interest of the society. The Audit paragraph based on a test check of records of Director General, Doordarshan and Delhi Doordarshan Kendra relating to the production of commissioned programmes by outside producers for the years 1986-90 and further examination of the subject by

the Committee have revealed several inadequacies and disquieting aspects relating to the production of programmes by outside Producers which are dealt with in the succeeding paragraphs.

[Sl. No.2, Para 153 of Appendix III to 57th Report of PAC (10th Lok Sabha)]

Action Taken

Action Taken Notes with reference to the items discussed by the PAC are given parawise.

[Ministry of 12B O.M.No. 900/2/94—TV (PI) dt. 23.3.1995]

Recommendation

The Committee have been informed that 748 contracts were concluded by Doordarshan with outside producers during the period 1985 to 1990 and out of that 562 programmes have been completed so far. However, the Ministry were unable to furnish the details about the number of proposals received and the programmes accepted there against year wise. Expressing his inability to furnish the same the secretary Ministry of Information and Broadcasting admitted during evidence that Doordarshan had not maintained records systematically and that there was no diarisation of the proposals received. He also stated that even that he had been receiving enquiries from producers on the fate of thier proposals submitted two years back. The Committee are surprised that proper procedure was neither evolved by Doordarshan nor prescribed by the Ministry when the scheme of outside production was launched to systematically record the position in respect of receipt of proposals and completion of programmes which were the essential input require for evaluating and monitoring the progress of outside production of programmes.

[Sl. No. 3, Para 154 of Appendix III to 57th Report of PAC (10th Lok Sabha)]

Action Taken

The deficiency of non-maintenance of proper records pointed out by the PAC has since been rectified. Doordarshan is now maintaining a proper record of the various proposals received by it for commissioned programmes in a computerised form. A copy of the print out of the said record is annexed.

[Ministry of 12B O.M. No. 900/3/94—TV (PI) dt 23.3.1995]

Recommendation

As regards the corrective action taken for ensuring proper system of data and records, the Ministry have stated that the revised guidelines issued on 17 March 1992 on commissioned programmes now provide that all proposals received by Kendras/Directorate will be registered by them and allotted a serial number. Further, according to the Ministry with the setting up of the Central Commissioning Unit and computerisation, the data base will be streamlined. The Committee desire that the Ministry should keep a close watch and ensure that all records relating to outside

production are systematically maintained by Doordarshan so that they are able to develop a solid data base and effectively monitor the production of programmes.

[SI No.4, Para 155 to Appendix III to 57th Report of PAC (10L5)]

Action Taken

The Ministry has taken note of the observations of the PAC.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No. 900/2/94—TV (P1) dt. 23.3.1995]

Recommendation

The Committee have been informed that after the issue of instructions in 1992 a system has now been evolved in Doordarshan for empanelment of outside producers. A Committee known as Empanelment Committee under the Chairmanship of the Director General, Doordarshan now prepares a panel of producers. A scrutiny of certain relevant documents by the Committee, in this connection, however, revealed that the system of empanelment continues to suffer from certain inadequacies. For instance, the reasons for rejection of applications for empanelment are neither recorded nor communicated to the applicant concerned. In one case it was observed that a producer whose case for empanelment was rejected had represented to the then Minister of Information and Broadcasting seeking justice. However, even after the Minister had desired to know the reasons for rejection. No further action was taken in the matter. When this was brought to the notice of the Director General, Doordarshan in evidence, he admitted the lacunae. The Committee are of the view that the functioning of the Empanelment Committee leaves a lot to be desired so that the process becomes much more transparent.

[SI. No.8, Para 159 of Appendix III to 57th Report of PAC (10th Lok Sabha)]

Action Taken

The deficiency pointed out by the PAC has been accepted by Doordarshan. As per extant practice, the reasons for arriving at a decision in respect of commissioned programmes are now being recorded on the respective files. It is, however, felt that there is perhaps no need for Doordarshan to spell out all these reasons while communicating its decision to the applicant producer be it for approving or rejecting the proposal. Thus, approval letters only contain details about the proposed budget, number of episodes etc. whereas rejected letters only inform the applicant about Doordarshan's inability to accept the proposal.

[Ministry of I & B O.M. No. 900/2/94—TV (P1) dt. 23.3.1995]

Recommendation

The committee also desire that the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting should in future ensure that the revised guidelines are scrupulously followed, the programme requirements over a period of time are methodically planned and the selection of producers is made on a rational basis.

[Sl No. 9, Para 160 of Appendix III to 57th Report of PAC (10th LS)]

Action Taken

The Ministry has taken note of the observations of the PAC.

[Ministry of I & B O.M.No 900/2/94-TV(P1) dt. 23.3.1995]

Recommendation

The Committee note that after the concept of a programme has been cleared, it is submitted to a costing committee who are required to assess the cost of each programme. The Costing Committee is headed by the Director General and consists of five other members. After the programme is approved by the costing committee, the agreement is signed between the outside producers and Director of the Kendra spelling out the format, duration, number of episodes, time schedule, mode of payment etc. The Committee are concerned to note that till March, 1992 no specific guidelines/norms were issued either by the Ministry or by Doordarshan for the functioning of the costing committee. There were no standard rates prescribed for production of different categories of programmes and the cost of each programme was determined by the costing committee taking into account the budget break-up projected by the producers and after mutual consultation and deliberations in the Committee. However, no written minutes of the deliberations were maintained. Evidently, no steps had been taken either by the Ministry or by Doordarshan to regulate the working of the Costing Committee. The Committee are not convinced with the arguments advanced that such guidelines could have curbed the creative functioning of the Costing Committee and that the reasonableness of the cost could have been entirely left to the knowledge, judgement and awareness of the members of the Costing Committee without any standard norms being laid down. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting have assured the Committee that as per the revised guidelines issued on 17 March, 1992, the Costing Committee is required to clearly specify in the minutes the rationale in the total budget approved for a programme. The Committee would like the Ministry to ensure that the cost of each programme is assessed correctly on a rational basis and the basis of costing properly recorded so that it does not give rise to any dispute with the producer subsequently.

[Sl. No. 10, Para 161 of Appendix III to 57th Report of PAC (10th LS)]

Action Taken

Doordarshan is now endeavouring to see that the files dealing with commissioned programmes clearly provide the basis for all decisions taken in respect of the proposal under consideration especially in respect of the budget.

[Ministry of I & B O.M. No. 900/2/94-TV (PI) dt. 23.3.1995]

Recommendation

The Committee note that apart from the defaults in production, there had also been inordinate delays in the telecast of programmes which had already been completed. The Audit had pointed out that 49 programmes received by Doordarshan between June, 1987 and March, 1990 involving an expenditure of Rs. 1.21 crores could not be telecast to October, 1991, scrutiny of the information furnished to the committee in this regard in January, 1993 has revealed that of the 49 programmes, 26 have been completed and telecast, but the remaining 23 programmes were still awaiting telecast. The reasons attributed for the non-telecast of certain programmes were, change in political situation, sensitiveness of the subject, programmes lacking balance, etc. In the opinion of the Committee, this clearly indicative of the inadequacies in the conceptualisation and planning of the programme requirements and the acceptance of the programmes by Doordarshan. The Committee are convinced that this area requires further attention so that infructuous expenditure on such programmes are avoided in the future. The Committee would also like the Ministry to apprise them of the latest position in respect of the programmes produced till end of 1993 pending telecast together with reasons therefor and its financial implications.

[Sl. No. 14, Para 165 of Appendix III to 57th Report of PAC (10th LS)].

Action Taken

The status of the programmes produced till the end of 1993 is annexed.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No. 900/2/94—TV(P1) Dt. 23.3.1995]

Annexure to Para 165

S. No.	Title	Date of Telecast	Sanctioned Amount
1.	Balishth Se balwan	Scheduled for telecast in April/May 1995	1,46,400/-
2.	Ntkhat Khargosh	-do-	70,000/-
3.	Srikant (24 episode)	-do-	61,00,000/-

S. No.	Title	Date of Telecast	Sanctioned Amount
4.	How the Peacock Got Beautiful Feather	Scheduled for telecast in April/May 1995	1,15,000/-
5.	King Khong	-do-	12,00,000/-
6.	Civil Infiltration from Bangladesh	The programme was shown to Ministry of External Affairs who advised against the telecast	1,50,000/-
7.	In Search of Survival	Scheduled for telecast in April/May 1995	1,90,000/-
8.	The Call of Campus America	-do-	1,00,000/-

Recommendation

Another disquieting practice observed by the Committee was that the amounts collected from the producers earlier as security were not being deposited in the Government account, as a matter of practice. In most of the cases these security deposits in the form of demand drafts were kept separately on files and returned to the producers after the completion of the programmes. However, after the mistake was pointed by the audit, Doordarshan issued instructions in March, 1990 for all Kendras that the amount of deposit should be credited to Government account soon after its receipt. The Ministry of Information & Broadcasting admitted that in this case Doordarshan had violated the established financial practices. The Committee wish to point out that this is indicative of a serious lack of control exercised by Doordarshan/Ministry in the administration of the scheme of outside production of programmes.

[Sl. No. 15, Para 166 of Appendix III to 57th Report of PAC (10th LS)].

Action Taken

Doordarshan is now obtaining a bank guarantee from the producers of commissioned programmes.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No. 900294—TV(P1) Dt. 23.3.1995]

Recommendation

As per the Income Tax Act, 1961, income tax was required to be deducted at source at the rate of 2% in respect of payments for contracts exceeding Rs. 10,000 which was applicable in the case of contracts for programmes commissioned to outside producers. The Committee regret to

note that no provision for deduction of tax at source was made in the agreements executed by Doordarshan with the producers and income tax amounting to Rs. 71.93 lakhs had not been deducted at source from the payments made to the producers during the period 1985-86 to 1989-90. The Ministry of Information & Broadcasting while admitting the lapse stated that the implications of the income tax regulations were not clearly understood at the initial stage and that instructions were subsequently issued in June 1989 to effect income tax deductions at source which is now being made regularly. The Committee can not accept ignorance as a valid explanation for the failure to comply with the statutory requirements in this case. They desire that the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting in consultation with income tax authorities should take effective steps to ensure recovery of income tax from producers in cases where deductions had not been made in the past.

[Sl. No. 16, Para 167 of Appendix III to 57th Report of PAC (10th LS)].

Action Taken

Doordarshan have since taken up the matter with the Department of Income Tax and furnished to it details of all the producers in whose cases tax was not deducted.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No. 900294—TV(PI) Dt. 23.3.1995]

Recommendation

Audience rating is an important input for deciding production and telecast of programmes. The Committee note that based on surveys carried out by Doordarshan itself, viewership of various programmes produced by outside producers had not been very encouraging over the years. While the Committee are conscious of the fact that Doordarshan cannot adopt a purely commercial attitude in deciding the programmes to be telecast, in order to achieve success in winning over viewership in the highly competitive environment prevailing in the present conditions, it is imperative that a high standard is maintained in the quality of the programmes produced and telecast. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry should make sustained efforts in this direction so that the viewership of programmes gets widened. Steps should also be taken to obtain a correct assessment of the viewership so that it acts as an effective feedback.

[Sl. No. 18, Para 169 of Appendix III to 57th Report of PAC (10th L.S)]

Action Taken

A system of getting weekly/monthly rating of the programmes telecast by Doordarshan has been introduced. These rating are obtained from a cross section of viewers of 30 cities as under:—

Delhi*	Bombay*	Calcutta*	Madras*
Lucknow*	Ahmedabad*	Bhubaneswar*	Hyderabad*

Gorakhpur*	Nagpur*	Guwahati*	Bangalore*
Jaipur	Pune	Barasat	Thiruvananthapuram*
Basti	Bhopal	Newgaon	Guntur
Udaipur	Amravati	Cuttack	Warangal
Bareilly			Vellore
Jalandhar			Tiptur
Kanpur			Kottayam

In cities (marked with a star) the panel members report every week. In other places the reporting is for only one week in a month. The schedule for each week is drawn in a way so as to have a proper mix up of cities in Hindi and non-Hindi speaking areas

The ratings are based on the diary method, the members of the panel keep a record of their daily TV viewing in a diary. The reference period is from Sunday to Saturday of a week.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No. 900294—TV(PI) Dt. 23.3.1995]

Recommendation

The System of assigning programmes to outside producers had been prevalent in Doordarshan at least since the eighties. Significantly, during the period 1985-86 to 1989-90 an amount of Rs. 56 crores was spent against the budget allocation of Rs. 49 crores on programmes made by outside producers. Surprisingly, no guidelines were issued by the Ministry to regulate the scheme of production till January, 1992. It was only after the selection of subject by the Public Accounts Committee for detailed examination that the Ministry chose to issue guidelines initially in January 1992 followed by March 1992 and later in May 1993 in the light of the discussions during evidence before the Committee. The Secretary of the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting stated during evidence "I have nothing on record to show that any orders were issued on the subject by the Ministry". The Committee need hardly comment further on this self-admitted dereliction of duty on the part of the Ministry. They hope that the Ministry would atleast now keep a close watch on the guidelines issued with view to ensuring that the production of commissioned programmes by outside producers is done methodically and within the laid down procedures and policies.

[Sl. No. 20, Para 165 of Appendix III to 57th Report of PAC (10th LS)].

Action Taken

The provisions contained in the guidelines issued by the Ministry in January, 1992 later on amended in May, 1993 are being scrupulously followed.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No. 900/294—TV(PI) Dt. 23.3.1995]

Recommendation

During the course of their examination, the Committee's attention has also been drawn to certain reported irregularities in the selection of sponsored serials from outside producers. The Committee find that on 28 February, 1992, Doordarshan released a list of 432 provisionally short listed serials from outside producers under the new sponsorship scheme. After the provisionally approved serials was made public, certain discrepancies in the list were reported and a preliminary enquiry was conducted by Doordarshan in the matter. Based on the preliminary enquiry, the matter was entrusted to the Central Bureau of Investigation. The Committee have been informed that CBI submitted an interim report towards the end of 1992 intimating that their discrete verifications had disclosed the possibility of irregularities with regard to 62 serials and that the CBI were proposing to register preliminary enquiry against some officials of Doordarshan and conduct an open probe to ascertain whether the officials had committed any criminal misconduct. According to the Ministry, no further communication had been received from the CBI. The Committee desire that the CBI enquiry and the action against the officers found guilty of having indulged in corrupt/irregular practices should be expedited. The Committee would like to be informed of the progress made in the matter within three months.

[SI. No. 21, Para 172 of Appendix III to 57th Report of PAC (10th LS)].

Action Taken

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) registered a PE in 1991 against some officials of the Directorate General, Doordarshan to investigate into complaints regarding selection of serials under the New Sponsorship Scheme, 1990. The CBI has since furnished its report according to which the charges levelled against the charged officials of Doordarshan could not be substantiated. The case has accordingly been closed.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No. 900/294—TV(PI) Dt. 23.3.1995]

Recommendation

The instant audit paragraph was selected for detailed examination by the Public Accounts Committee (1991-92) and a list of points eliciting advance information on the subject was sent to the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting on 20 November, 1991. However, the Ministry were able to furnish replies only on 22 January, 1993, that is after a lapse of more than

14 months. The Secretary, I&B during evidence attributed the delay to the non-maintenance of proper records by Doordarshan. Although the Committee had completed recording of oral evidence on the subject in February, 1993. There was a further delay of more than 4 months on the part of the Ministry in furnishing replies to the points arising out of evidence. Even the replies furnished belatedly had failed to make available several important data having a direct bearing on the examination of the subject. The Committee cannot but express their strong displeasure over this and desire that the Ministry should thoroughly inquire into the reasons for the inordinate delay in furnishing information to the Committee.

[Sl. No. 22, Para 173 of Appendix III to 57th Report of PAC (10th LS)].

Action Taken

The absence of proper records and the absence of any centralised monitoring mechanism largely responsible for the delay as information in respect of many points had to be obtained from the different Doordarshan kendras. The delay and the consequential inconvenience to the PAC is sincerely regretted by the Ministry.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No. 900294—TV(PI) Dt. 23.3.1995]

Recommendation

To sum up, the facts stated in the foregoing paragraphs have revealed several shortcomings in the Doordarshan's Commissioned Programme Scheme. Briefly, the inadequacies/shortcomings were absence of planning regarding programme requirements, absence of procedure in the selection/empanelment of producers, defects in the costing techniques, delay in production, delay in telecast of programmes, incorrect procedure adopted in respect of security deposit and deduction of income-tax at source, sharing of copyrights with the producers, absence of guidelines/instructions to regulate the administration of the scheme and above all, lack of control of the Ministry over Doordarshan in this regard. The Ministry of Information & Broadcasting have admitted the shortcomings and irregularities. They have assured the Committee that with the laying down of guidelines in 1992 and 1993, computerisation and setting up of the Central Commissioning Unit in Doordarshan, the administration of the scheme of commissioned programme will be streamlined. The Committee are, however, not inclined to share this optimism. They recommend that the Ministry should undertake a comprehensive review of the scheme in the light of the facts stated in this report and take appropriate corrective/remedial measures with a view to ensuring that the inhouse talents are exploited to the maximum and the outside production is undertaken in a manner so as to achieve the underlined objectives behind the scheme within the laid down guidelines/policies.

[Sl. No. 23, Para 174 of Appendix III to 57th Report of PAC (10th LS)]

Action Taken

The Committee's recommendations to review the scheme of commissioning programmes have been considered. In view of the increase in the transmission time and introduction of new channels and satellite services in 11 regional languages, the demand for software has increased considerably while the in-house resources have remained more or less the same. All this has made it necessary to supplement, in greater number, the in-house production of Doordarshan with programmes produced by outside producers.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No. 900/2/94-TV (P1) dt. 23.3.1995]

Recommendation

From the foregoing it is evident that an atmosphere of non accountability was prevalent in the Ministry of I&B and Doordarshan. The Committee desire that this should be rectified without any loss of time.

[Sl. No. 25 Para 176 of Appendix III to 57th Report of PAC (10th LS)]

Action Taken

The recommendation of the Committee has been examined and corrective measures initiated wherever warranted.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No. 900/2/94-TV (P1) dt. 23.3.1995]

CHAPTER III

RECOMMENDATIONS AND OBSERVATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DO NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN THE LIGHT OF REPLIES RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENT

Recommendation

The Committee are surprised to note that there had been no planning in Doordarshan to assess the requirements of programmes over a period of time and no separate exercise had been undertaken to decide the total number of commissioned programmes to be approved in a particular years. The proposals were predominately received from the producers *suo moto* and decisions taken thereon. During evidence the Secretary, I&B admitted that "earlier there was no such planning." In fact, even the guidelines issued in 1992 after the audit paragraph appeared and the selection of the subject by the Public Account Committee, did not clearly specify in detail about the requisite programmes requirements. It was only after the Committee pointed it out during evidence that the Ministry issued revised guidelines on 7 May, 1993 stating that the commissioned programmes to be assigned during a financial year should be worked out by the Doordarshan Directorate in the third quarter of the preceding financial year. This is clearly indicative of the lack of planning and also of the casual manner in which the whole issue of outside production was dealt with by Doordarshan.

[Sl. No. 5 Para 156 of Appendix III to 57th Report of PAC (10th LS)]

Action Taken

Television being a very subjective medium, it was very difficult for Doordarshan to plan its requirements in so far as commissioned programmes are concerned well in advance especially since the system prevailing before the framing of comprehensive guidelines in 1992, allowed the submission of *suo-moto* proposals by private producers. The net result was that Doordarshan had to process a very large number of proposals, even though many eventually had to be rejected, and pick up those that were found interesting. The proposals were, however, approved keeping in mind the overall budgetary provisions for this purpose in each financial year even though no specific number was fixed for each year.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No. 900/2/94-TV (P1) dt. 23.3.1995]

Recommendation

What is further surprising is that Doordarshan had neither any prescribed system of selection of producers for production of outside programmes nor any panel of such producers. Proposals submitted by producers *suo-moto* were selected on the basis of the eminence of the producers, track record, qualifications etc. pertinently, the Films Divisions working under the administrative control of the same Ministry viz. Information and Broadcasting, prepares a panel of producers every two years and invites tenders from producers out of the approved panel for production of films. Also, Doordarshan neither followed a system of making public lists of eminent and experienced producers in different grades nor had any surveys/studies conducted by outside agencies for evaluation of the competence of the producer/programmes. The Ministry were also unable to convince the Committee about the prevalence of any definite system in Doordarshan of evaluating the relative merit of in-house talent *vis-a-vis* outside production. From the foregoing the Committee can only conclude that there was no proper systems in vogue in Doordarshan for the rational selection of producers.

[Sl. No. 6 Para 157 of Appendix III to 57th Report of PAC (10th LS)]

Action Taken

Considering the gradual increase in the number of channels and the hours of telecast it was not possible for Doordarshan to meet its entire programme requirements from in-house source. Furthermore, being a publically funded organisation it was also incumbent upon it, being the only television network in the country, to provide access to the abundant talent abounding in the country. In these circumstances an evaluation of in-house productions *vis-a-vis* outside productions could never have been more than an academic exercise.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No. 900/2/94-TV (P1) dt. 23.3.1995]

Recommendation

The Committee find that in several instances certain producers who had failed to produce the programmes within the stipulated period were awarded contracts for further programmes. To quote a few examples, the producer of programmes "Morning Moods" was required to complete the programmes by September, 1988. Although the firm failed to complete the programme within the stipulated period, yet he was awarded contracts for three more programmes costing Rs. 7.45 lakhs in December, 1988, February and March, 1989 and advance payments of Rs. 2.98 lakhs were also made. Surprisingly, in two of the three cases even the due dates of the

completion of these programmes were not recorded in the contracts. These programmes were completed in a period of nine and nineteen months respectively against the normal completion period of 3 to 4 months. The argument that the commission to record the due dates of completion of the programmes in the contracts was due to oversight is not acceptable to the Committee at all. The Committee desire that proper explanation be called from the officers concerned for the lapses and punishment meted out. Similarly, in another case a firm was entrusted with the production of a programme. "Golden Hawks" at a cost of Rs. 7.5 lakhs in March, 1988. The programme which was required to be completed by July, 1988 was completed only in July, 1990. Yet the same firm was awarded another programme costing Rs. 17.50 lakhs and given advance payment of Rs. 7 lakhs in July, 1988. This programme which was required to be completed by December, 1988 was actually completed in October, 1989 only. The Ministry of Information & Broadcasting while admitting the mistakes stated that in the absence of a centralised monitoring unit in Doordarshan, the necessary inputs regarding the status of other proposals of producer for commissioned programmes were not made available to the Costing Committee and no one in the Committee was in possession of all information regarding the assignments awarded to the various producers. The Ministry assured that with the introduction of computerisation and setting up of a Central Commissioning Unit, such mistakes will not recur. The Committee desire that the circumstances in which contracts were awarded to the producers in the above mentioned cases before, completion of the programmes assigned to them earlier should be inquired into and responsibility fixed for the lapses. Steps should also be taken to streamline the procedure so that such cases do not recur. The Committee also desire that the Ministry should examine the desirability of fixing of a ceiling on the number of programmes to be assigned to one producer.

[SI. No. 13, Para 164 of Appendix III to 57th Report of PAC (10th LS)]

Action Taken

The Ministry would like to submit once again that the cases pointed out by the PAC all took place when Doordarshan did not have any centralised monitoring arrangement in respect of commissioned programmes. In the light of the changes effected in guidelines and procedures it is expected that the lapses pointed out by the PAC will be eliminated. Doordarshan is also taking steps to see that defaulting producers are not given other programmes during the pendency of earlier assignment. This Ministry feels that fixing of any numerical ceiling on the number of programmes to be assigned to one producer may really not be necessary once more effective monitoring of the commissioned programmes at all stages is accomplished.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No. 900/2/94-TV (P1) dt. 23.3.1995]

Recommendation

Another area where the Committee found lack of adequate attention was the manner in which copy right of such programmes were being shared with the producers. While it was maintained that Doordarshan had full copyrights of its commissioned programmes insofar as the question of telecast right in India was concerned, it was observed by the Committee that there was neither any laid down criteria nor any consistent practice in regard to foreign telecast. In one case it was observed that Doordarshan had set 30 per cent of the foreign telecast rights with the producer even though the entire cost of programme was borne by Doordarshan. In another case Doordarshan had surrendered 40% of foreign telecast right with the producer of a programme costing about Rs. 75 lakhs for a saving of just Rs. 5 lakhs. Evidently, there was no system in Doordarshan to regulate the share of copyrights with the producers. Pertinantly, during the period 1985-90, Doordarshan had shared copyrights with 19 producers for foreign telecast. The Ministry of Information & Broadcasting while admitting that the basis for sharing copyrights in the former case mentioned above was not justifiable stated that as per the revised guidelines issued on 7 May, 1993 it has been decided that Doordarshan will not share its rights with the producers. The Committee desire that the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting should review all the cases where Doordarshan had shared copyrights in the past with a view to ensuring that the financial interest of Government are protected.

[Sl. No. 17, Para 168 of Appendix III to 57th Report of PAC (10th LS)]

Action Taken

While it may not be possible to withdraw the sharing of rights provisions in the agreements already signed with the Producers as it may lead to litigation/disputes etc., the practice of sharing of rights with outside producers has since been discontinued.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No. 900/2/94-TV (P1) dt. 23.3.1995]

Recommendation

During the course of examination the Committee came across several individual instances of irregularities in the programmes produced by outside producers under the commissioned programmes. Briefly, some of those cases involved, the following irregularities:—

- (i) Lack of co-ordination between two branches of Doordarshan resulted in payment of an additional amount of Rs. 3.90 lakhs on a programmes (National Integration) earlier contracted with the producer at a lower rate.
- (ii) One programme (Lotus Temple on Bahais) already produced inhouse and telecast thrice was awarded further to an outside agency resulting in avoidable expenditure of Rs. 1.25 lakhs.

- (iii) A telefilm approved earlier (Angootha Chaap) as a sponsored programme and subsequently proposed for exhibition on payment of royalty at Rs. 0.32 lakhs per telecast was purchased for Rs. 4 Lakhs as the producer could not find a sponsor for the film.
- (iv) Advance payment of Rs. 10.5 lakhs was made in February 1989 for a six part documentary serial (Crossing—The Indians Abroad) for a total budget of Rs. 70 lakhs in contravention of the prescribed schedule of payment. The contract with the producer did not give prescribable scheduled date of completion the serial had not been completed.
- (v) An amount of Rs. 5 lakhs sanctioned for the production of a film (Khamoshi Kay Dairey) was enhanced to Rs. 8.5 lakhs without justification. The production of the film was also delayed by 14 months. The film was telecast after 31 months of its receipt although Doordarshan was aware that the print quality was not worthy of telecast.
- (vi) Doordarshan agreed to enhance the cost of a documentary (Spirit Possession) from Rs. 6.3 lakhs to Rs. 8 lakhs and gave 30 per cent foreign sale rights in favour of the producer after the contract was signed. The producer was also allowed more favourable schedule of payment.
- (vii) The cost of a serial of seven episodes (Ekas Ke Hum Barik) accepted by Doordarshan in November 1988 was enhanced from Rs. 12.6 lakhs to Rs. 14 lakhs. The serial was yet to be completed through advance payment of Rs. 5.60 lakhs was made in December 1988 and December 1990.
- (viii) An increase of 10 minutes in the total duration of a serial with 10 episodes (Rishta) led Doordarshan to bear an additional expenditure of Rs. 3.5 lakhs when the contracted rate was Rs. 1.75 lakhs per episode of 30 minutes duration. Although all the episodes were stated to have been delivered in January 1990, their telecast was yet to be decided.
- (ix) A telefilm contracted in February 1987 (Tripti) for which Doordarshan made advance payment of Rs. 2 lakhs had not been produced so far.
- (x) Two programmes (News Magazine in Hindi) for which advance payment of Rs. 9.6 lakhs was made in March 1990 were cancelled; the producers refunded the amount of advance in July 1990 after deducting Rs. 2.03 lakhs on account of expenditure already incurred.

Some of the above mentioned cases have been dealt with in more details elsewhere in the report. The Committee deplore that the laxity on the part

of the authorities resulted in delay, extra expenditure, accommodation to the producers at the cost of the exchequer and several other irregularities. They recommended that all the above mentioned cases as well as those mentioned in the audit paragraph should be thoroughly inquired into and responsibility fixed for the lapses. The Committee would like to be informed of the action taken in the matter.

[Sl. No. 19, Para 170 of Appendix III to 57th Report of PAC (10th LS)]

Action Taken

The cases mentioned by the Committee are dealt with seriatim:—

(i) The enhancement of the budget for the programme *Meera Bharat* (on national integration) by Shri Syed Naqvi was done by the Costing Committee of Doordarshan after a review of costs and keeping in mind the scope of the programme and extensive touring, all over the country, involved.

(ii) Certain subjects lend themselves to varied interpretations and treatments and this subject was one of that kind. Such subjects are presented in more than one programme. The proposal submitted by the outside producer was considered suitable for commissioning.

(iii) The telefilm (*Angootha Chaap* by Sai Pranjpe) effectively deals with the subject of adult education. It has been highly acclaimed for its innovative presentation of an otherwise dry subject. Normally films are procured for telecast on payment of royalty for single telecast. However, since the producer was confident that she would get a better price from the sponsors than the rates of royalty prescribed by Doordarshan, it was agreed to allow its broadcast under sponsorship scheme. Ultimately, the producer could not find a sponsor. Doordarshan then reviewed the matter and it was decided that considering its repeat value, it could be more cost effective to make an outright purchase of the film. The film has been sold to a Italian Company for US \$ 3000/- for exhibition in Italy.

(iv) This programme was of a different kind in as much as that its shooting was spread over various countries and therefore normal production and payment schedule could not be applied in this case. Further, the production of programme got delayed due to foreign exchange crisis followed by devaluation of the Indian rupee making the project exorbitantly expensive. The matter was reviewed by the Costing Committee and keeping in view all these factors, the programme was curtailed to two episodes only which have already been telecast.

(v) The producer had originally submitted a budget of Rs. 10.62 lakhs. However, the Costing Committee sanctioned only Rs. 5.00 lakhs, keeping telecast rights with Doordarshan and surrendering all other rights to the producer. The producer, however, later represented for enhancement of the budget by agreeing to forgo all the rights. The Costing Committee

considered the representation and agreed to enhance the budget by Rs. 3.50 lakhs in lieu of acquiring all rights for Doordarshan.

(vi) The Costing Committee agreed to enhance the budget of the programme after considering the representation from the producer about escalation in the cost of travel and location shooting. Foreign rights were granted to the producer as she was in a better position through her contracts to sell the film abroad. The producer assisted Doordarshan to sell the film to a French network for Rs. 1.15 lakhs.

(vii) The proposal was sanctioned for 7 episodes @ Rs. 1.80 lakhs per episode. The producer had originally proposed Rs. 4.50 lakhs per episode and expressed his inability to undertake the production at the commissioned cost of Rs. 1.80 lakhs per episode, as the theme required reconstruction of authentic locales/sets and preparation of period costumes. The Costing Committee agreed to a nominal increase of Rs. 20,000/- per episode. The serial has since been telecast.

(viii) The serial was initially approved for 8 episodes. However, as the production progressed, it was represented by the producer that he was unable to condense the storyline in 8 episodes without seriously effecting the overall effect. The matter was considered by the Costing Committee which approved two additional episodes. The serial has since been telecast.

(ix) Several communications to the producer have received no response. Doordarshan has approached the police to trace out the absconding producer. Separately, notice for legal proceedings has also been issued to the party. In the meanwhile, the producer has been blacklisted.

(x) The programme was assigned to the producer in March, 1990. However, the matter was reviewed in April, 90 and it was decided to produce the same inhouse. All accounts for the expenditure already incurred were rendered to Doordarshan by the producer. The material shot had also been obtained for use in future programmes against advances given to him.

2. The mechanism for monitoring outstanding productions from defaulting producers has been tightened so as to ensure that in future timely action is taken in such matters. The system of asking Bank Guarantee from the producer is another effective step towards timely completion of the programmes. Doordarshan has also started allotting a schedule of target dates of completion of programmes in the contract itself. This, it is hoped would help prompt action against defaulting producers.

As regards the issue of fixing of responsibility for lapses committed in the past, Doordarshan Directorate have gone into the matter and have

come to the conclusion that since the decisions were taken collectively by the Costing Committee, it will not be possible at this stage to fix responsibility on any particular officer.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No 900/294-TV (P1) dt. 23.3.1995]

CHAPTER IV

RECOMMENDATIONS AND OBSERVATIONS REPLIES TO WHICH HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE AND WHICH REQUIRE REITERATION

Recommendation

Curiously enough, the Committee during the course of the examination found that as far back as in 1987-88 a Committee known as Zutshi Committee had recommended a panel of producers for outside production of programmes. However, it was not made operational. During evidence the representatives of the Ministry and Doordarshan admitted this omission. But they were unable to adduce any convincing explanation for not acting upon the recommendations of the Zutshi Committee, it was only after the selection of the subject by the Public Accounts Committee the Ministry in a circular issued in January, 1992 and amended subsequently drew attention to the Zutshi Committee panel and sought to streamline the selection of producers. This is unfortunate to say the least. The Committee desire that the reasons for not acting upon the recommendations of the Zutshi Committee should be thoroughly looked into and the responsibility fixed for the omissions.

[Sl. No.7, Para 158 of Appendix III to 57th Report of PAC (10th LS)]

Action Taken

The concept of maintaining a panel of producers was first contemplated by Doordarshan in 1987 with a view to streamline the procedure for selection of programmes of outside producers. It invited applications for the registration of producers and directors for sponsored programmes in October, 1987. A panel of 581 directors and 723 producers was accordingly prepared by a selection board constituted for this purpose.

2. Four years later, it was decided to introduce this concept for the commissioned programmes too. Thus, the comprehensive guidelines for commissioned programmes issued on 1.1.1992 required Doordarshan to commission programmes only through the producers empanelled with it. For this purpose, the panel prepared in 1987 was adopted as the basic panel to which additions could be made in the future on the basis of the criteria prescribed in the said guidelines.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No. 900/2/94-TV (P1) dt. 23.3.1995]

Recommendation

The Committee note that as per the agreement executed, the programmes framed out to outside producers were required to be generally

completed within three to four months. The producers were granted advances, normally 40 per cent of the total cost initially and the remaining amount at different stages. Audit had reported that 72 programmes involving advance payment of more than Rs. 2 crores for which agreements were entered into between February, 1986 and March, 1990 were pending completion till October, 1990. As regards the latest position in this regard, the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting informed the Committee that out of the 72 programmes, 42 have been completed and telecast, six have been completed and awaiting telecast, six were being dropped and 18 programmes were yet to be completed. Thus, there had been inordinate delays in the production of programmes. The scrutiny of information furnished in this regard, in fact revealed that there had been considerable delays in the completion of most of the programmes. Significantly, Doordarshan had several options before them to deal with the defaulting producers. Under the agreement with the producers, in the event of failure to complete the production work within the stipulated period, the security deposit of the producers was liable to be forfeited. It was also open for Doordarshan to terminate the agreement and take any other action which might have been deemed necessary. Further, according to the instructions issued by Doordarshan in October, 1984 in cases of inordinate delays, the Kendras were required to send recommendations for black-listing of defaulting producers. The Committee are, however, distressed to note that Doordarshan did not invoke any of these provisions. The Ministry of Information & Broadcasting admitted that Doordarshan exhibited laxity in initiating timely action for effecting the recoveries from the defaulting producers through available modes. It was also admitted that many cases of delay were due to the weak monitoring by the Kendras. While conceding the lapses, the Secretary, Information & Broadcasting stated during evidence "We have now said that any producer who defaults should be black-listed and should not be given the programmes." It was also stated that the computerisation and the newly introduced system of obtaining bank guarantees would further enable Doordarshan to monitor slippages in production schedule. All these indicate serious lapses, if not nepotism. The Committee recommend that the laxity shown by Doordarshan in initiating timely action against defaulting producers should be thoroughly enquired into and responsibilities fixed for the lapses. The Ministry should also ensure that in future effective steps are taken to monitor the progress in the production schedule in terms of the contracts executed and that timely action is taken against defaulters. The Committee would also like to be apprised of the latest position in respect of completion of programme by outside producers.

[Sl. No. 11, Para 162 of Appendix III to 57th Report of PAC (10th LS)]

Action Taken

The Committee's recommendations have been considered in the Doordarshan Directorate and notices have been sent to the defaulting producers for legal action.

Another corrective measure taken is the introduction of the system of obtaining a Bank Guarantee from the producer, which has proved to be an effective step towards timely completion of programmes. In exceptional circumstances, however, if for unavoidable reasons an outside producer approaches Doordarshan for extension of time-limit, the request is considered on merit and extension granted whenever warranted by the facts of the case.

Of the 72 programmes mentioned by the Committee, 61 programmes have already been telecast. The status of the remaining 11 programmes is given below:—

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Tripti | Notice issued to the producer for legal action. Producer has been black-listed. |
| 2. Bharat ke Kile | Notice issued to the producer for legal action. Producer has been black-listed. |
| 3. Balisht Se
Balwan | Scheduled for telecast in April/May 1995. |
| 4. Some Body
Else Kids | Notice issued to the producer for legal action. |
| 5. Rites of
Passage | The producer has shown the roughcuts which have been approved. She has promised to submit the final production by the end of April/May 1995. |
| 6. Natkhat
Khargosh | Will be telecast in April/May 1995. |
| 7. Innsaniyat | Notice issued to the producer for legal action. |
| 8. Chaurah Se | The programme lost its topicality in the changed socio-economic scenario. Nevertheless, it has now been decided to re-edit the programme and telecast it in April/May 1995. |
| 9. Technology
Mission on
Immunisation | Notice issued to the producer for legal action. |
| 10. Sanskrit
Vangmay | Producer did not sign the contract. No money has been paid. The offer has been withdrawn. |
| 11. Living Stones | Notice issued to the producer for legal action. |

[Ministry of I&B O.M. No. 900/2/94-TV (P1) dt. 10.5.1995]

Recommendation

The Committee regret to observe that no meaningful exercise seems to have been undertaken even now to estimate the amount recoverable from the defaulting producers. While the Ministry were unable to inform the Committee of the precise amount recoverable it was stated during evidence that the said figure could be about rupees one crore. The absence of any monitoring of the production agreement executed by the producers has resulted in certain cases even in non-tracing of producers/sureties etc. (Discussed elsewhere). The Committee recommend that all the pending contracts should be reviewed and prompt action taken to effect recoveries from the defaulting producers. The Committee would like to be informed of the further action taken in the matter.

[Sl. No.12, Para 163 of Appendix III to 57th Report of PAc (10th LS)]

Action Taken

The recommendations made by the Committee has been considered in the Directorate of Doordarshan and the status of the action taken against the defaulters is annexed.

[Ministry of I&B O.M. NO. 900/2/94-TV (P1) dt. 23.3.1995]

Annexure to Para (Item) 163

STATUS OF DEFAULTING PRODUCERS

S.No.	Title	Status
(1)	(2)	(3)
1.	Tripti	Notice issued to the Producer for legal action. The Producer has also been blacklisted.
2.	Bharat Ke Kile	Notice issued to initiate legal action. The Producer has also been blacklisted.
3.	Dhwani	Notice issued to initiate legal action. The Producer has also been blacklisted.
4.	Some Body Else Kids	Notice issued to the Producer for legal action.
5.	Azadi Ki Shikhayen	Notice issued to the Producer for legal action.
6.	Off Springs of Prostitute	Notice issued to the Producer for legal action.
7.	Insaniyat	Notice issued to the Producer for legal action.
8.	Living Stones	Notice issued to initiate legal action.
9.	Rites of Passage	The Producer has shown the rough cuts which have been approved. Final production is expected by the end of January, 1995.
10.	Pinjara	Producer has refunded Rs. 6.60 lakhs i.e. 30% of the total amount sanctioned. Efforts are being made to recover Rs. 2.20 lakhs i.e. 10% of the total sanctioned.
11.	Aakhir Kaun	Rough cuts of six episodes received from the Producer have been seen and approved. He has been given notice to submit the remaining episodes.

(1)	(2)	(3)
12.	Mitro Marjani	Notice issued to the Producer for legal action.
13.	Technology Mission on Immunisation	Notice issued to the Producer for legal action.
14.	Peer Parai	The Producer transferred the contract to another party which has not been accepted. Notice issued for legal action.
15.	Ramakrishna Paramhans	The Producer submitted the script. Advice has been sought from the Ramakrishna Paramhans Mission to avoid controversy. This is still awaited.
16.	Aur Kisan Jag Utha	Rough cuts have been approved. Final programme is awaited. Notice issued to the Producer to complete it by 31st March, 1995.
17.	Vartman	Rough cuts have been submitted by the Producer. Certain changes have been suggested.
18.	Bharat Rattan	The programme requires lot of research work, interviews and discussion with family members and acquaintances of Awardees. Scripts approved and Producer has been advised to complete it by April, 1995.
19.	J&K Kya Sach	One part received and telecast. Other parts awaited. Notice sent to the Producer for legal action.
20.	Arab World Today	Notice sent to the Producer for legal action.
21.	Decades of Success	The production was delayed for various reasons. The matter was discussed with the Producer in 1994 and the concept of the programme revised in order to make it more relevant and topical.

(1)	(2)	(3)
22.	Peace in Assam	When the programme was finally received, it was found that the programme is not very relevant in the changed scenario. It has been decided to re-edit the programme and schedule it in February, 1995.
23.	Your, Mine and Ours	The series is under production. The Producer has been asked to expedite the work and complete the project expeditiously failing which legal action would be taken.
24.	Development and Common man	Five parts received, previewed and found suitable for telecast. They would be scheduled in March, 1995. Other parts under production.
25.	Introspection	The series is under production. The Producer has been asked to expedite the work and complete the project expeditiously failing which legal action would be taken.
26.	Insaniyat	—do—

Recommendation

The Committee in the course of their examination of the subject, also come across certain disturbing facts relating to the maintenance of accounts in Doordarshan. When the operations of a department include undertaking of activities of commercial or quasi-commercial character and the nature and scope of the activities of the undertaking are such as cannot suitably be brought within the normal system of Government account, the department was required to maintain such subsidiary and proforma accounts in commercial form as may be agreed to between Government and the Comptroller and Auditor General. Astonishingly, the proforma accounts of Doordarshan have not been finalised since the years 1977-78 onwards. This delay has been attributed by the Ministry *inter alia* to the delay in bifurcation of assets and liabilities between Doordarshan and All India Radio, destruction of records at Doordarshan Kendra, Hyderabad in a mob attack, non availability of complete documentation at subordinate field offices, non availability of adequate inspection machinery, the rapid expansion of Doordarshan etc. The Committee cannot accept these as

valid explanations for the inordinate delay of more than 15 years. They are of the firm view that the officers in the Ministry and Doordarshan who were responsible for the maintenance and overseeing of these accounts were negligent in their duties and responsibilities should be fixed for the lapses. They recommended that the Ministry of I&B should in consultation with the Comptroller and Auditor General of India find out ways and means of maintenance of the proforma accounts up-to-date. The Committee would like to be informed of the precise action taken in the matter.

[Sl. No. 24, Para 175 of Appendix III to 57th Report of PAC (10th LS)]

Action Taken

Doordarshan is making all out efforts to settle the pending proforma accounts for the period 1977-78 and beyond.

The proforma accounts for the period 1977-78 have been finalised and sent to the Resident Audit for certification. Pending authentication of the closing account that needs to be included as opening account for the subsequent financial year, further progress relating to the pending work cannot be made. Nevertheless, with a view to complete the backlog work expeditiously and to avoid further delay in the matter the proforma accounts for 1978-79 have also been consolidated and sent to the Resident Audit by incorporating the uncertified closing balances provisionally subject to audit certification. The work for the period 1979-80 is also under progress and is expected to be completed on the Doordarshan's side by the end of this financial year.

Further work relating to the subsequent years has also been taken in hand.

[Ministry of I&B O.M.No. 900/2/94-TV (P1) dt. 23.3.1995]

CHAPTER V
RECOMMENDATIONS AND OBSERVATIONS IN RESPECT OF
WHICH GOVERNMENT HAVE FURNISHED INTERIM REPLIES

—NIL—

NEW DELHI;
4 August, 1995

13 Sravana, 1917 (Saka)

RAM NAIK,
Chairman,
Public Accounts Committee.

APPENDIX

CONCLUSIONS / RECOMMENDATIONS

Sl. No.	Para No.	Ministry / Deptt. concerned	Conclusions / Recommendations
1	2	3	4
1	9	Ministry of I&B	<p>In their earlier report while commenting upon the unsatisfactory system of selection of outside producers for commissioned programmes, the Committee had observed that there was neither a proper system in vogue in Doordarshan for selection nor had they maintained and made operational any panel for the purpose. Proposals submitted by producers <i>suo moto</i> were selected on the basis of eminence of the producers, track record, qualifications etc. In this connection, the Committee had pointed out that the Doordarshan authorities had failed in acting upon the recommendations made by the Zutshi Committee as far back as in 1987-88 for the formation and operation of a panel of producers for outside production of programmes. Expressing their unhappiness over the same, the Committee had recommended that the reasons for not acting upon the recommendations of the Zutshi Committee should be thoroughly looked into and the responsibility fixed for the omissions. The Committee regret to note that the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting have in their action taken note merely stated that the panel prepared in pursuance of the recommendations of the Zutshi Committee was made operational in the case of commissioned programmes after a period of four years without explaining the reasons for the delay in doing so and also not indicating the action taken against the officers responsible for the omissions. The reply of the Ministry is, therefore, unacceptable and the Committee, reiterate their earlier recommendation</p>



1	2	3	4
			and would like to be apprised of the action taken against the officers responsible for the omissions.
2	13	Ministry of I&B	The Committee take a serious note of the fact that 11 programmes for which contracts were entered into between Doordarshan and outside producers between February 1986 and March 1990 and where producers had been granted advances, are yet to be completed even now. The Committee regret to note that the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting have in their action taken note merely mentioned that notices have been issued without indicating the dates when such notices had been issued and explaining the fate of the notices. The reply is also silent about the action taken against the officers responsible for the delay in initiating action against the defaulting producers as desired by the Committee. This clearly indicates the lack of seriousness on the part of the Ministry in dealing with defaulting producers and the officers responsible for their failure in monitoring the production, which is a matter of concern to the Committee. The Committee, therefore, reiterate their earlier recommendation and would like to be informed of the conclusive action taken in the matter. They would also like to be apprised of the latest pendency position in respect of commissioned programmes assigned to outside producers.
3	16	Min. of I&B	In their earlier report the Committee had observed that about rupees one crore was due to the Government from the defaulting producers though no meaningful exercise was undertaken by the Ministry to estimate the exact amount recoverable from them. The Committee had recommended that all the pending contracts should be reviewed and prompt action taken to effect recoveries from the defaulters expeditiously and also to be apprised of the further action taken in the matter. The Committee are distressed to note that as against the pending dues of about rupees one crore indicated to them earlier, recovery of Rs. 6.60 lakh is stated to have been partly made in just one case out of the 26 such instances. Evidently, no progress has been made by the authorities to recover the governmental

1	2	3	4
			<p>dues from the defaulting producers. The Committee are concerned over the delay in the recovery process and desire that concerted efforts should be made to realise the governmental dues from all the defaulting producers and would like to be apprised of the precise extent of recovery made from them against the amount of one crore indicated to the Committee during examination. They would also like to be informed of the latest position of recoveries to be made from the defaulting producers.</p>
4	1	Min. of I&B	<p>The Committee trust that the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting would keep a close watch on the production of programmes by outside producers under the commissioned programme of Doordarshan and ensure that the guidelines are followed in letter and spirit with a view to ensuring that the scheme is implemented methodically and that the inadequacies/shortcomings observed by the Committee do not recur.</p>
5	22	—do—	<p>In their earlier report the Committee had drawn attention of Government to the inordinate delay of over 15 years on the part of the Doordarshan in the finalisation of their proforma accounts. The Ministry of Information & Broadcasting have in their reply stated that the proforma accounts for 1977-78 and 1978-79 have been finalised and sent for certification. The accounts for the rest of the years are stated to be under the process of completion. Evidently, the Ministry have not made any substantial headway in the finalisation process which is a matter of deep concern to the Committee. Further, the action taken reply is also completely silent about the action taken by the Ministry/Doordarshan against the officers responsible for their negligence in the maintenance and timely finalisation of the accounts. The Committee, therefore, reiterate their earlier recommendation and desire that the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting/Doordarshan should act in the matter in a serious manner. They should consult Comptroller and Auditor General of India</p>

1	2	3
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4

and finalise a plan of action within three months with a view to ensuring that the pending proforma accounts are finalised within a period of two years. They would also like to be informed of the latest position in the finalisation of proforma accounts of Doordarshan.

PART II

MINUTES OF THE EIGHTH SITTING OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE (1995-96) HELD ON 2 AUGUST, 1995.

The Committee sat from 1500 hrs. to 1600 hrs. on 2 August, 1995 in
Committee Room 'C', Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Shri Ram Naik—*Chairman*

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Dr. F. Azam
3. Shri Anil Basu
4. Shri Dileep Singh Bhuria
5. Shri Gopi Nath Gajapathi
6. Dr. K.D. Jeswani
7. Maj. Gen. (Retired) Bhuwan Chandra Khanduri
8. Shri Peter G. Marbaniang
9. Shrimati Geeta Mukherjee
10. Shri Shravan Kumar Patel
11. Shrimati Vasundhara Rajc

Rajya Sabha

12. Shri Rahasbihari Barik
13. Shri Misa R. Gancsan
14. Shri Rajubhai A. Parmar

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri G.C. Malhotra—*Joint Secretary*
2. Smt. P.K. Sandhu—*Director*
3. Shri P. Sreedharan—*Under Secretary*

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL OF INDIA

1. Shri B.P. Mathur — *Addl. Dy. C&AG*
2. Shri A.K. Thakur — *Pr. Director*
(Reports-Central)

3. Shri S.P. Singh — *Pr. Director of Audit (E&SM)*
4. Shri K.S. Menon — *AG (Audit) Delhi*
5. Shri Vikram Chandra — *Pr. Director (INDT)*
6. Shri Rakesh Jain — *Director (INDT)*
7. Shri S.C.S. Gopalkrishnan — *Director (Rlys.)*

2. The Committee considered the following draft Reports:

(i) xxx xxx xx xxx

(ii) xxx xxx xx xxx

(iii) Outside Production—Doordarshan
[Action Taken on 57th Report (10th Lok Sabha)]

The Committee adopted the draft Reports at (i), (ii) and (iii) above with certain modifications as shown in Annexures I,* II* & III respectively.

3. The Committee authorised the Chairman to finalise these draft Reports in the light of the comments of Audit arising out of factual verification and also to present the Reports to the House.

4. Some of the Members appreciated the draft Reports prepared by the Secretariat and expressed their satisfaction that all aspects discussed by the Members during evidence on the relevant subjects by the Committee had been appropriately reflected and incorporated in the draft Reports. While endorsing this view, the Chairman observed that these Reports were result of the keen interest evinced by the Members during evidence.

5. The Chairman informed the Members that it had been the practice in the Committee to constitute different Working Groups for which letters had already been sent to them for giving their options. He also informed that such options were still awaited from two Members. He however, observed that the Members might not be able to devote much time to the Working Groups in view of the tight work-schedule which the Committee had prescribed for themselves. He therefore, suggested that the Working Groups might not be constituted by the present Committee. The Members agreed with this suggestion.

6. The Committee also decided that a Study Tour might be undertaken commencing from around 15 September, 1995. The Chairman was requested to finalise the tour schedule.

The Committee then adjourned.

*Not appended

ANNEXURE-III

Amendments/Modifications made by the Public Accounts Committee in the draft Report on action taken on 57th report (10th Lok Sabha) relating to outside production-Doordarshan.

<i>Page</i>	<i>Para</i>	<i>Line</i>	<i>Amendments/Modifications</i>
12	22	3rd from bottom	After 'and' Add 'desire that the Ministry of I&B/Doordarshan should act in the matter in a serious manner. They should consult Comptroller and Auditor General of India and finalise the plan of action within three months with a view to ensuring that the pending proforma accounts are finalised within a period of two years'.
-do-	-do-	-do-	Add 'They' before 'would'.