

14

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(2004-2005)**

FOURTEENTH LOK SABHA

**MINISTRY OF INFORMATION
AND BROADCASTING**

**DEMANDS FOR GRANTS
(2004-2005)**

*[Action taken by Government on the Recommendations/Observations of
the Committee contained in their Fourth Report (Fourteenth Lok Sabha)
on Demands for Grants (2004-05)]*

FOURTEENTH REPORT



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

March, 2005/Phalguna, 1926 (Saka)

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INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(2004-2005)

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BROADCASTING

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the Committee contained in their Fourth Report (Fourteenth Lok Sabha)
on Demands for Grants (2004-05)]*

Presented to Lok Sabha on

Laid in Rajya Sabha on



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

March, 2005/Phalguna, 1926 (Saka)

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COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (2004-2005)

Shri M.M. Pallam Raju—*Chairman*

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Nikhil Chaudhary
3. Shri Mani Cherenameti
4. Shri Sanjay Dhotre
5. Kunwar Jitin Prasad
6. Shri Kailash Joshi
7. Shri P. Karunakaran
8. Dr. P.P. Koya
9. Shri P.S. Gadhavi*
10. Shri Ajay Maken
11. Smt. Nivedita S. Mane
12. Smt. P. Jayaprada Nahata
13. Col. G. Nizamuddin
14. Shri Sohan Potai
15. Shri Ashok Kumar Rawat
16. Shri Chander Shekhar Sahu
17. Shri Vishnu Sai
18. Shri Tathagat Satpathy
19. Shri K.V. Thangka Balu
20. Shri P.C. Thomas
21. Shri Ram Kripal Yadav

Rajya Sabha

22. Shri Vijay J. Darda
23. Shri Ashwani Kumar
24. Dr. Akhilesh Das
25. Shri Balbir K. Punj

*Nominated *w.e.f.* 20.8.2004.

(iv)

26. Shri Dara Singh
27. Smt. Sarla Maheshwari
28. Shri N.R. Govindraj
29. Shri K. Rama Mohana Rao
30. Shri Motiur Rahman
31. Shri Sanjay Nirupam

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri P.D.T. Achary — *Secretary*
2. Shri Raj Shekhar Sharma — *Deputy Secretary*
3. Shri K.L. Arora — *Under Secretary*
4. Shri D.R. Shekhar — *Assistant Director*

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Information Technology (2004-05) having been authorised by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present this Fourteenth Report on Action Taken by Government on the Recommendations/Observations of the Committee contained in their Fourth Report (Fourteenth Lok Sabha) on "Demands for Grants (2004-2005)' relating to the Ministry of Information and Technology.

2. The Fourth Report was presented to Lok Sabha on 23.08.2004 and laid in Rajya Sabha on 24.8.2004. The Ministry furnished Action Taken Notes on the recommendations contained in the Report on 23.12.2004.

3. The Report was considered and adopted by the Committee at their sitting held on 20.01.2005.

4. For facility of reference and convenience, the observations and recommendations of the Committee have been printed in bold letters in the body of the Report.

5. An analysis of Action Taken by Government on the recommendations/observations contained in the Fourth Report (Fourteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee is given at Annexure-II.

NEW DELHI;
1 March, 2005

10 Phalgun, 1926 (Saka)

M.M. PALLAM RAJU,
Chairman,
Standing Committee on
Information Technology.

CHAPTER I

REPORT

This Report of the Standing Committee on Information Technology deals with action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Fourth Report (Fourteenth Lok Sabha) on "Demands for Grants (2004-05)" relating to the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting.

2. The Fourth Report was presented to Lok Sabha on 23.08.2004 and was laid on the Table of Rajya Sabha on 24.08.2004. It contained 16 recommendations.

3. Action taken notes in respect of all the Observations/ Recommendations contained in the Report have been received and categorised as under:

- (i) Recommendations/Observations which have been accepted by the Government:

Recommendation Nos. 1, 3-6, 8-11, 13, 15-16

Total: 12

Chapter-II

- (ii) Recommendations/Observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of replies of the Government:

Recommendation No. 14

Total: 1

Chapter-III

- (iii) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration:

Recommendation Nos. 2, 7, 12

Total: 3

Chapter-IV

- (iv) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies are of interim nature:

Recommendation No. Nil

Total: Nil

Chapter-V

4. The Committee trust that utmost importance would be given to the implementation of the recommendations accepted by the Government. In case, for any reason it is not possible for the Ministry to implement the recommendations in letter and spirit, the matter should be reported to the Committee with reasons for non-implementation. The Committee further desire that Action Taken Notes on the recommendations/observations contained in Chapter-I of this Report be furnished to it urgently and in no case later than six months of the presentation of the Report.

5. The Committee will now deal with Action Taken by the Government on some of the recommendations.

All India Radio

Recommendation (No. 2)

6. The Committee had noted with serious concern that the under utilisation of funds during 2003-2004 had been in respect of continuing schemes including J&K Special Package and Upgradation/expansion schemes, primarily, due to non-procurement of equipments, problem in tendering, early closure of roads in Kargil and non-operational and maintenance staff as a result of which the AIR could meet a physical target of 28 Nos. against the desired target of 36 Nos. The Committee felt that due to the non-execution of projects envisaged during 2003-2004, the benefits intended to be derived from the projects could not reach the people especially with reference to projects in Jammu & Kashmir and North-Eastern Region.

The Committee, therefore, opined that for prudent and realistic utilization of budgetary allocations, the Ministry must go in for correct tendering, timely placement of orders and take prudent decisions apart from primarily redeploying existing staff wherever possible recruiting operational & maintenance staff only if unavoidable to put into use the existing assets. The Committee also expressed trust that AIR would put in all efforts to utilise the higher budgetary allocations provided for in 2004-2005 judiciously and timely for execution of schemes envisaged by the Ministry. The Committee desired to be apprised of the matter in this regard.

7. The Ministry in their reply have stated as under:

“While taking note of the observation of the Committee, it may be mentioned that during 2003-04, shortfall of physical targets under J&K Special package was in respect of only one project namely the 200 KW MW project at Kargil which would also be achieved during the current financial year. However, technically ready projects of J&K package are awaiting commissioning as approval of the competent authority for continuation of posts is awaited. As regards staff redeployment, Prasar Bharati has stated that this exercise has already been carried out and even after redeployment it is not possible to commission many stations. Moreover there is a ban on recruitment of staff. As a special case, permission for recruitment has been sought to fill up the vacancies in respect of J&K and North-East projects. The issue of filling up vacancies in relaxation of the ban on direct recruitment was discussed in the recently held J&K Empowered Committee Meeting. Decision of the competent authority is likely to be conveyed to All India Radio and Doordarshan shortly.

As regards utilisation of budgetary allocations and fulfillment of targets for the year 2004-05, all efforts are being made and trend of expenditure and execution of schemes is being closely monitored.”

8. The Committee take a serious note of the fact that technically ready projects especially in J&K package are awaiting commissioning as approval of the competent authority for continuation of posts for operational and maintenance staff is awaited. The inordinate delay in commissioning of projects, not only frustrates the purpose for which these projects in J&K have been envisaged but also tantamount to blocking of funds when the same could have been used on some other schemes. The Committee reiterate that Prasar Bharati should take up the matter of filling up vacancies/continuation of posts at highest level, so that the commissioning of technically ready projects could be completed and benefits intended to be derived from the projects could reach the people of J&K including Kargil. The Committee would like to be apprised continuously of the progress by the Ministry in this regard.

J&K Special Plan

Recommendation (No. 5)

9. The Committee find that under J&K Special Plan, out of budgetary allocation of Rs. 8.40 crores during 2003-04 in the Capital

Section, actual expenditure incurred was Rs. 5.05 crores in respect of Doordarshan. For AIR, the amount allocated towards Capital and Revenue Section was Rs. 10.50 crore and actual expenditure incurred was Rs. 4.69 crore.

The Committee find that five projects with 1 KW MW Tr. are technically ready at Diskit, Drass, Nyoma, Padum and Tiesuru but they could not be commissioned for want of operational and maintenance staff as the Government's approval for continuance of sanctioned posts beyond February, 2004 is awaited. The Committee desire that the Ministry should take immediate steps to fill up the vacancies for commissioning the projects which are technically ready as they are strategically important for the country. The feasibility of redeployment of staff should be initially explored. The Committee hope that the funds to the tune of Rs. 22.65 crores towards Capital and Revenue Section for 2004-2005 for AIR and Doordarshan will be judiciously utilised within the period so as to ensure the benefits reach the people of the region. The Committee may be kept informed about the outcome of the steps taken in this regard.

10. The Ministry in their reply have stated as under:

"The present position regarding the implementation of J&K Special plan is given below:

- 12 projects were included in the Special Package approved by the government for improvement of radio coverage in Jammu & Kashmir.
- Six projects have already been commissioned at Kathua—10 KW FM Tr., Srinagar—300 KW MW Tr., Kupwara—20 KW MW Tr., Naushera—20 KW MW Tr., Rajouri—10 KW MW Tr. and khalsi-1 KW MW Tr.
- Five projects with 1 KW MW Tr. are technically ready at Diskit, Drass, Nyoma, Padum and Tiesuru. The remaining project namely, the 200 KW MW Tr. Project at Kargil, is in progress and would be completed in the current financial year 2004-05.
- Technically ready projects would be commissioned on receipt of approval from the competent authority for continuance of posts. The matter regarding continuance of posts was

taken up in the Empowered committee meeting held recently and the decision of the Government is likely to be conveyed to All India Radio shortly. Prasar Bharati has stated that the exercise of redeployment has already been done to the extent possible and further re-deployment is not feasible. The six projects already commissioned were operationalised by diversion and sending staff on tour from nearby station.

The Committee has stressed that funds for J&K Plan allocated for 2004-2005 be judiciously utilized within the period. For J&K Plan, an amount of Rs. 7.5 crores under capital has been provided for in Annual Plan 2004-05. So far (till August, 2004) expenditure of Rs. 2.30 crores has been incurred. In the Revised Estimates, an amount of Rs. 9.10 crores is being projected. Doordarshan is making every possible effort to fully utilise allocated funds for J&K Special Plan, and the Planning Commission has promised adequate support."

11. The Committee reiterate that the Ministry should take steps to give approval for continuance of posts so that technically ready projects are commissioned at the earliest.

North-East Special Package

Recommendation (No. 6)

The Committee noted that approval for North Eastern Special Package Phase II was to be accorded by the Government. Delay in approval of the Scheme by the Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC) was resulted in under utilization of funds earmarked for this purpose. The Committee noted that one of the main thrust areas in 10th Plan was special package for NE States and Island territories. If the projects were not approved in time for their speedy implementation, it would adversely affect the projects of North Eastern Region and hamper their balanced growth. The Committee, therefore, had desired that the Ministry should take up the matter with the Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC) for getting its approval without further delay so that the coverage of Doordarshan and AIR would be maximized in North Eastern Region and funds of Rs. 96.63 crores allocated for the year 2004-2005 might not get underutilized. The Committee had expressed hope that utmost care would be taken by the Ministry for utilisation of funds meant for the year 2004-2005 for implementation of the various proposed schemes for the benefits of the NE Region.

13. The Ministry in their reply have stated as under:

“All efforts are being made to get the approval of the competent authority for Phase-II of North-East Special Plan. Preliminary work regarding preparation of specifications, design work etc. have been carried out to ensure that the purchase process can be initiated immediately after the schemes of the package are sanctioned. Site surveys have been conducted and some sites have been tentatively finalized. EFC meeting to consider NE special package was held on 30.07.2004. Minutes of the meeting have been circulated by the Ministry. The matter is being processed for obtaining approval of the Cabinet shortly. Further action for implementation of schemes included in NE package (Phase-II) can be taken, only after the approval of Cabinet is received”.

14. The Committee feel that the matter should be taken up urgently for cabinet approval.

Vacancies in Prasar Bharati Board

Recommendation (No. 7)

15. The Committee noted that at present there were 4 vacancies on Prasar Bharati Board. The Committee in its earlier Reports on Demands for Grants 2002-03 and 2003-04 had recommended to fill up the vacancies in Prasar Bharati. The Committee had desired that the Ministry should take concerted steps for filling up the vacancies in the Prasar Bharati Board including those of representatives of the employees without further delay.

16. The Ministry in their reply have stated as under:

“Presently Four positions in the Prasar Bharati Board are lying vacant. Out of these, Ministry has already requested for the recommendations of the Selection Committee headed by the Vice President of India in respect of two Part-time Members, reply for which is yet to be received. Besides, there are two vacancies pertaining to the representatives of the employees. Since all the employees of erstwhile AIR & DD continue to be Government Servants, the election of the representatives cannot be held, till their services are transferred to Prasar Bharati, in accordance with the provisions of Prasar Bharati Act.”

17. The Committee take serious note of the fact that inspite of earlier repeated recommendations of the Committee to fill up these vacancies expeditiously, still there are four vacancies on Prasar Bharati Board. The Committee are not inclined to accept the routine explanation of the Ministry and reiterate that Ministry should take all possible concrete measures to fill up the vacancies on Prasar Bharati Board and also finalise the terms and conditions of the services of the Prasar Bharati employees in a time bound manner so that two vacancies pertaining to the representative of employees could atleast be filled up expeditiously.

Shortage of staff in Prasar Bharati

Recommendation (No. 8)

18. The Committee were deeply concerned to note that there was a projected shortage of staff in All India Radio and Doordarshan in various categories and proposal for filling up the vacancies had been pending with the Ministry of Finance. The Committee felt that in respect of AIR and Doordarshan, redeployment of staff had not been carried out to the maximum possible extent and hence, there were still vacancies at various levels. The Committee also noted that many projects which were technically ready, but could not be commissioned for want of technical and maintenance staff. The Committee had observed that due to shortage of staff, the Prasar Bharati could not produce and telecast qualitative programmes which in turn has adversely affected the revenue earning capacity of Prasar Bharati. The Committee also noted that there had been a migration of staff from Prasar Bharati to Private Channel/FM due to overloading of work on the available personnel, better pay packet and environment.

In the light of above observations, the Committee had felt that the recommendations of the Ministry of Finance to surrender existing vacancies, should be accepted. This could facilitate, Prasar Bharati to hire suitably qualified people who may be absolutely necessary.

19. The Ministry in their reply have stated as under:

“Prasar Bharati has informed that in order to ensure the optimum utilization of infrastructure and manpower, the exercise of redeployment of staff has already been carried out to the maximum extent possible and further redeployment is not feasible. Even after

redeployment many stations are facing shortage of staff due to ban on recruitment. The matter regarding grant of permission as a special case for recruitment to fill up the vacancies in respect of J&K and North-East projects is being examined in the Ministry. The meeting of the Empowered Committee on J&K, has already been held and the decision of the competent authority on filling up vacancies would be conveyed to Prasar Bharati shortly”.

20. The Committee note that even after the redeployment and further redeployment of staff, still many stations of Prasar Bharati are facing shortage of staff. The Committee hope that redeployment has been carried out rationally and desire that the Ministry should expeditiously pursue the matter regarding grant of permission for recruitment as a special case to facilitate filling up of vacancies in Prasar Bharati including that of J&K and North-East. The Committee would also like to reiterate their observation that the recommendations of the Ministry of Finance to surrender existing vacancies, should be accepted, which would facilitate Prasar Bharati to hire suitably qualified people to enrich the quality of their programmes.

Outstanding Dues

Recommendation (No. 10)

21. The Committee noted with serious concern that there were huge outstanding dues to the tune of Rs. 92.74 crores for the years 2002-03 and 2003-04 for sponsored serials and in-house programmes against National Channels and Regional Kendras like Kolkata, Chennai, Trivandrum, Bangalore, Mumbai and Hyderabad. The Committee had observed that the Prasar Bharati could not recover even a portion of outstanding dues from the defaulters. The Committee felt that considering the quantum of dues involved and gravity of situation, recovery of dues must engage the prime attention of the management of Prasar Bharati. The Committee also opined that the Ministry should not only initiate legal action against the defaulters but also pursue the cases efficaciously to recover the outstanding dues from them. The Committee were of the considered view that the strategy being adopted by the Ministry to recover the outstanding dues viz., making accreditation rules stringent, raising Bank guarantee limit, constant monitoring, issuing notices and asking the producers to submit their payment plans were soft measures for habitual defaulters. The

Committee, therefore, had felt that harsher measures should be taken against the habitual defaulters by the Ministry.

22. The Ministry in their reply have stated as under:

“The Ministry has taken note of the recommendation of the Committee and accordingly Prasar Bharati has initiated action against defaulters at a very high level involving active legal action or arbitration by retired Supreme Court & High Court judges”.

23. The Committee would like to be informed about the progress made by the Ministry especially in respect to total amount recovered/pending, numbers of defaulters against whom legal action has actually been initiated, the success ratio and percentage of reduction in outstanding dues over a corresponding year.

Press Information Bureau

Recommendation (No. 12)

24. The Committee note that the project “Setting up of National Press Centre at New Delhi” was sanctioned as a plan scheme of 8th Five Year Plan and the actual possession of the whole land was handed over to PIB on 16th October, 2002. The Scheme has been pending completion for more than a decade. Since the time of sanctioning of the Scheme, the project could hardly make any progress and the construction of the centre has been inordinately delayed. The Committee note that for the year 2004-2005, Rs. 5 crores have been provided for appointing a Nodal Agency for implementing the project and appointing the Architect. An EFC Memo at the cost of Rs. 55.50 crores is under consideration with the Ministry. The project has an approved outlay of Rs. 6.48 crores for 2004-2005.

The Committee feel that the way of working of the Ministry evidently speaks of complete lack of planning and vision on its part. The entire exercise appears to be nothing but an attempt by those who are responsible for formulation and implementation of the project to somehow keep out from the ambit of accountability. The Committee, however, observe that the representative of the Ministry during evidence has expressed confidence that there would be no further delay and the project would be commissioned on time. Since the timely execution is sine qua non of planning and implementation process, the Committee trust that the optimism shown by the representative

will yield the desired results and the project will be completed expeditiously. The Committee also earnestly desire that funds earmarked for the year 2004-2005 would be utilised for the purpose for which these have been allocated. The Committee would like to be apprised about the matter in this regard.

25. The Ministry in their reply have stated as under:

“A National Press Centre (NPC) at New Delhi is proposed to be set up with separate building of its own to provide media facilities to National and international media to one place having state of the art facilities.

Efforts were made by the Ministry to finalize the issues regarding selection of consultant/Architect/executing agency, space requirements, preliminary design report, cost abstract etc. In February, 2004, preliminary planning and design of the project was finalized by the National Building Constructions Corporation (NBCC) Limited, at a cost of Rs. 55.50 crores. It was circulated to Appraising Agencies, viz., the Planning Commission, Department of Expenditure, Planning Commission had then opined that the Project Appraisal & Management Division (PAMD) of Planning Commission took only those projects/schemes for appraisal which had matching outlay. The outlay in this case was grossly inadequate and could not be placed in the list of projects to be appraised by PAMD. It has now been decided to revise the scheme and execute the project within the approved project cost of Rs. 35.00 crores to be completed in one phase, limiting the structural design for two basements, ground, first, second floors only. The revised Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC) Memo has been prepared and is being circulated amongst Appraising Agencies. Efforts would be made to expedite the clearance by the EFC.

Ministry is making all out efforts to ensure that funds to the tune of Rs. 5.00 crores earmarked for the project during the Annual Plan, 2004-2005 are fully utilized and that the project is completed expeditiously.”

26. The Committee are highly perturbed over the way things are progressing in the setting up of the National Press Centre at New Delhi. Once the initial issue of occupation of land taken care of in 2 Plan Periods, the Department is still dragging its feet on the implementation.

The Committee fail to understand how could an EFC Memo of Rs. 55.50 crores be under consideration when the approved cost of the project was only Rs. 35.00 crores. The preliminary planning, design of the project which was finalized by the NBCC was a sheer waste of time and money. The Committee are of the strong belief that the Department simply lacks the will to go ahead with the project. Considerable time has elapsed between the Eighth Plan and the third year of the Tenth Plan and the Department has only got a plot of land as site for the proposed project. There is every reason for the Committee to believe that the escalation in the cost of the project may now be a deterrent in the initiation of the construction plan.

The Committee in sharing its concern impress upon the Department to complete the project with utmost urgency.

Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC)

Recommendation (No. 13)

27. The Committee have been informed that since the year 2003-2004, JNU has been insisting upon prior clearance from its authorities before taking any steps with regard to the construction of the Building and Housing Project of IIMC, New Delhi. The clearance from Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) is awaited.

The Committee are further informed that the collaboration with Utkal University could not be formalized as Utkal University backed out of the proposal at the eleventh hour. Bihar Government has been requested for facilitating institutional arrangements and the response is awaited. However, a MoU with Nagaland University has been approved and is likely to be signed shortly.

The Committee note that a budgetary provision of Rs. 395 lakhs has been made in the year 2004-2005 to continue with the activities mentioned above.

The Committee are apprehensive about the progress of the project and are afraid the obstacles are too many to achieve any physical or financial targets in this project. The Committee would like to have a factual note giving details such as the date of sanction of the projects, the sequence of events thereafter till date, the cost escalation factor, the reasons of selecting the present location as premises of IIMC etc.

28. The Ministry in their reply have stated as under:

Administrative approval for the Building and Housing Project, consisting of a 14-room (triple sharing) hostel building, Director Residence, 6 Sr. Faculty and 6 Officers/faculty flats, 18 staff quarters and installations of projection and sound reinforcement system in the auditorium was conveyed by the Ministry of I&B *vide* its letter No. 23/17/2002-IP&MC dated 31.3.2003.

During the year 2002-03 the work of installing Projection & Sound Reinforcement System in the Auditorium was done and preliminary work of construction of staff quarters was intimated. However, certain institutional parameters of Institute's agreement with JNU raised some ecological concerns and these had to be addressed. The structural drawings of the project required modifications/revisions within the approved plan outlay of Rs. 386.30 lakh. The JNU has given its clearance for construction of Director's Residence and hostel building during 2004. Further clearance for construction of staff quarters is yet to be received. The request of the institute is being examined by a committee constituted by JNU. Meanwhile, the Institute has requested the Ministry to intervene in the matter.

So far the Projection and sound reinforcement system in the Auditorium have been installed during 2002-03. Soil investigation, presentation, drawings, development of land, construction of culvert have been completed during 2003-04 and the construction work of Director's residence and hostel building has also been started.

The Cost escalation factor in comparison to the cost index-year 2001 is enhanced to 21% approximately as on date. Accordingly the estimates need revision to the extent of 21%. However, in case of the Housing Project, for which clearance from JNU is waited, the cost escalation factor will be determined on receipt of NOC from them. However, the escalation at this rate may be estimated for the Housing Project.

The present location of IIMC was selected because of its suitability for institutional and academic environment, surrounded greenery and spacious piece of land and keeping in view its future expansion plans.

It may however be mentioned there that the construction work for the building project of IIMC is being done by CCW, AIR which is a

Government controlled organization. For carrying out the construction work sufficient amount is required to be advanced to them under the "Deposit Work" scheme and any sum not utilised during a particular year remains under the deposit work A/c for utilisation during subsequent years.

Due to delay in starting the construction works, the CCW could not fully utilise the funds advanced by the Institute to them during 2002-03 and 2003-04. It is therefore, considered necessary that further funds may be advanced to them only after the funds already advanced by the Institute during previous years are fully utilised. Hence against the sanctioned Annual Plan 2004-05 allocation of Rs. 135 lakh, the Institute will require only a provision of Rs. 15 lakh for renovation works (as projected in its Revised Estimates 2004-05 submitted to the Ministry).

The JNU have issued sanction for construction of Hostel & Director's residence only. Their approval for Housing-I yet to be received. The Master Plan approved by the JNU contained provisions for staff housing. The Concerns raised by the JNU regarding Housing Project are being addressed by IIMC and the matter is being pursued with them further.

29. The Committee are of the view that the Ministry should take up the matter with concerned authorities to clear the obstacles in constructing staff quarters. Alternatively the Ministry may consider some other sites for proposed construction of staff quarters so that such delay could be avoided and allocated money for the project could be utilised in time.

CHAPTER II

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS, WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

Budgetary Provision

Recommendation (No. 1)

The Committee note that in the Annual Plan 2002-2003, the Ministry was allocated Rs. 878.00 crores (Rs. 415 crores — DBS + Rs. 463 crores — IEBR), in the year 2003-2004 it was allocated Rs. 890.00 crores (Rs. 415 crores — DBS + Rs. 475 crores — IEBR) and in this financial year 2004-2005 it has been allocated Rs. 955 crores (Rs. 480 crores — DBS — Rs. 475 crores — IEBR).

The Committee note that a major chunk of the increase in allocation in this Domestic Budgetary Support in the present financial year 2004-2005 has been given to the Broadcasting Sector for the upgradation/expansion of MW & FM services in All India Radio. In 2002-2003 these schemes were given Rs. 3.30 crores under Plan Budget, in 2003-2004 this allocation was Rs. 26.53 crores and this year it is Rs. 62.28 crores. Although the Committee are extremely happy with the increase in the allocation but they express regret over the shortfall in expenditure during the first two years of the Tenth Plan *i.e.* 2002-2003 & 2003-2004. AIR has been able to utilise only Rs. 0.24 crores in 2002-2003 and Rs. 3.78 crores in 2003-2004.

The Committee take a serious note of the pattern of utilisation of funds in AIR and are somewhat convinced that an increase of approximately Rs. 40 crores in the upgradation/expansion of MW & FM programmes will mostly go unutilised at the end of 2004-2005. The Committee, therefore, are compelled to put in a word of caution to the Ministry to keep a tab on the months clicking by and the expenditure in this sector through its empowered Committee.

Action Taken by Government

All efforts are being made to ensure that the funds allocated during the current financial year are utilized as planned, by keeping a close watch on the trend of expenditure.

AIR—Physical Targets**Recommendation (No. 3)**

The Committee note that out of 36 schemes targeted for completion during 2003-2004, 11 schemes have been carried over to 2004-2005, 6 schemes could not be completed due to delay in tenders and two schemes have been delayed due to adverse weather conditions and delay in placing orders for transmitters. The Committee are not convinced with the reasons adduced by the Ministry for delay in execution of schemes. Adverse weather conditions at Kargil could not have been unforeseen in advance in the case of J&K. Similarly the delay in placing order for the transmitter in the case of Najibabad project could have been avoided had appropriate steps been taken well in advance. It clearly manifests lack of planning and foresight on the part of Ministry. The Committee, therefore, desire the Ministry to make a comprehensive review of the projects well in advance and take timely corrective measures to execute the projects in inhospitable terrains well in time so as to avoid underutilization of funds. The Committee also desire that responsibility should be fixed in the case of delay in tendering and a report submitted to the Committee in this context within 3 months of the presentation of this Report to Parliament.

Action Taken by Government

The observations of the Committee have been noted and all efforts are being made to ensure that the targets for the current financial year 2004-05 are achieved. The remaining project under the J&K package, namely the 200 KW MW transmitter at Kargil has since been installed and is under testing.

As regards delay in procurement of transmitters, it was not delay in tendering which was the major cause, but the delay was largely due to representations received from the bidders during the processing of tenders. In the case of Najibabad, series of representations were received from bidders, and it took considerable time to get the same settled. Case was also referred to CVC for clarification, which also led to delay. In the case of procurement of 10 KW FM transmitters also, series of representations were received from bidders that led to complexity of the case, and since the matter was not resolvable, it was finally decided to scrap the tender. Fresh tenders have been received and these are under technical evaluation.

Doordarshan**Recommendation (No. 4)**

The Committee note that for Annual Plan 2003-2004, Doordarshan had projected an outlay of Rs. 731.16 crores but the Planning Commission allotted only Rs. 640 crores which was further reduced to Rs. 449.82 crores at RE stage. The Ministry could utilize Rs. 373.62 crores only. There is a shortfall of Rs. 76.20 crores. The reasons attributed for shortfall in utilization of funds have been reduction in budget grants, delay in granting "in-principle" approval by the Planning Commission, non-approval of North East Special Package—Phase II, delay in sanctioning schemes for construction of New Staff Quarters and other infrastructure facility, reduction in grants for North East Schemes and J&K Special Plan and due to non-availability of adequate amount of Internal External Budgetary Resources (IEBR), lesser expenditure could be incurred under the head "Software acquisition/production". The Committee further note that in the financial year 2004-2005, Doordarshan have been allocated budgetary allocations of Rs. 643.10 crores which is approximately the same as last year for execution of various schemes. This is because of the utilisation potential of Doordarshan and also their capacity to absorb funds.

The Committee regret to note that most of the projects/schemes envisaged could not be executed due to delay in getting approval for the schemes in time. The Committee are perturbed to note that there has been gross under utilisation of the budgetary allocation provided for important schemes envisaged for the development of Jammu and Kashmir and North East Region for promotion of national integration and in bringing them to the mainstream of the country. As the reason for delay adduced by the Ministry is not convincing, the Committee are of the opinion that delay in execution of these projects will not only fail to deliver the desired results for the harmonious development of these regions in particular but also to the country as a whole. The Committee, therefore, earnestly desire that the Ministry should vigorously pursue the schemes with the Planning Commission and take timely corrective steps to ensure the uninterrupted progress in execution of planned schemes/projects so that the funds provided therefor could be utilized within the time frame envisaged and intended benefits of the scheme reach the people. The Committee also desire that the funds allocated for 2004-2005 may be utilised for execution of various schemes in an efficient and efficacious manner so that higher

budgetary allocations may not get underutilised. The Committee also address the Planning Commission and also request them to help the faster clearance of schemes.

Action Taken by Government

There are four major scheme heads each of AIR and Doordarshan, for which in principle approval of Planning Commission is required. In principle approval of the Planning Commission has been received for three All India Radio schemes. The proposal for the 4th scheme has been taken up with the Planning Commission. The matter is being sorted out in consultation with the Planning Commission.

The matter regarding "in-principle" approval of Doordarshan schemes from Planning Commission is also being monitored very closely by the Ministry. As far as Doordarshan is concerned, in principle approval for one Scheme has been accorded by the Planning Commission and part approval for another scheme has also been received. Two schemes have been referred to Planning Commission and are being sorted out in consultation with them. All out efforts are being made by the Ministry and Prasar Bharati for obtaining "in-principle" approval of schemes from Planning Commission. The matter regarding "in-principle" approval of Doordarshan schemes was also taken up with the Planning Commission at Secretary's level in July 04. In a meeting with the Planning Commission on 21-12-2004 "in-principle" approval requirements have been waived for one year. Prasar Bharati is now facilitated in ensuring utilization of allocated funds to the maximum possible extent.

J&K Special Plan

Recommendation (No. 5)

The Committee find that under J&K Special Plan, out of budgetary allocation of Rs. 8.40 crores during 2003-04 in the Capital Section, actual expenditure incurred was Rs. 5.05 crores in respect of Doordarshan. For AIR, the amount allocated towards Capital and Revenue Section was Rs. 10.50 crore and actual expenditure incurred was Rs. 4.69 crore.

The Committee find that five projects with 1 KW MW Tr. are technically ready at Diskit, Drass, Nyoma, Padum and Tiesuru but they could not be commissioned for want of operational and

maintenance staff as the Government's approval for continuance of sanctioned posts beyond February, 2004 is awaited. The Committee desire that the Ministry should take immediate steps to fill up the vacancies for commissioning the projects which are technically ready as they are strategically important for the country. The feasibility of redeployment of staff should be initially explored. The Committee hope that the funds to the tune of Rs. 22.65 crores towards Capital and Revenue Section for 2004-2005 for AIR and Doordarshan will be judiciously utilised within the period so as to ensure the benefits reach the people of the region. The Committee may be kept informed about the outcome of the steps taken in this regard.

Action Taken by Government

"The present position regarding the implementation of J&K Special Plan is given below:

- 12 projects were included in the special package approved by the Government for improvement of radio coverage in Jammu & Kashmir.
- Six projects have already been commissioned at Kathuna—10 KW FM Tr., Srinagar—300 KW MW Tr., Kupwara—20 KW MW Tr., Naushera—20 KW MW Tr., Rajouri—10 KW MW Tr. and Khalsi-1 KW MW Tr.
- Five projects with 1 KW MW Tr. are technically ready at Diskit, Drass, Nyoma, Padum and Tiesuru. The remaining project namely, the 200 KW MW Tr. Project at Kargil, is in progress and would be completed in the current financial year 2004-05.
- Technically ready projects would be commissioned on receipt of approval from the competent authority for continuance of posts. The matter regarding continuance of posts was taken up in the Empowered Committee meeting held recently and the decision of the Government is likely to be conveyed to All India Radio shortly. Prasar Bharati has stated that the exercise of redeployment has already been done to the extent possible and further re-deployment is not feasible. The six projects already commissioned were operationalised by diversion and sending staff on tour from nearby station.

The Committee has stressed that funds for J&K plan allocated for 2004-2005 be judiciously utilized within the period. For J&K plan, an amount of Rs. 7.5 crores under capital has been provided for in Annual Plan 2004-05. So far (till August, 2004) expenditure of Rs. 2.30 crores has been incurred. In the Revised Estimates, an amount of Rs. 9.10 crores is being projected. Doordarshan is making every possible effort to fully utilise allocated funds for J&K special plan, and the Planning Commission has promised adequate support."

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Paragraph No. 11 of Chapter-I)

North-East Special Package

Recommendation (No. 6)

The Committee note that approval for North Eastern special package Phase II is yet to be accorded by the Government. Delay in approval of the scheme by the Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC) was resulted in under utilization of funds earmarked for this purpose. The Committee note that one of the main thrust areas in 10th Plan was special package for NE States and Island territories. If the projects are not approved in time for their speedy implementation, it will adversely affect the projects of North-Eastern Region and hamper their balanced growth. The Committee, therefore, desired that the Ministry should take up the matter with the Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC) for getting its approval without further delay so that the coverage of Doordarshan and AIR will be maximized in North Eastern Region and funds of Rs. 96.63 crores allocated for the year 2004-2005 may not get underutilised. The Committee hope that utmost care would be taken by the Ministry for utilisation of funds meant for the year 2004-2005 for implementation of the various proposed schemes for the benefits of the NE Region.

Action Taken by Government

"All efforts are being made to get the approval of the competent authority for Phase-II of North-East special plan. Preliminary work regarding preparation of specifications, design work etc. have been carried out to ensure that the purchase process can be initiated immediately after the schemes of the package are sanctioned. Site surveys have been conducted and some sites have been tentatively

finalized. EFC meeting to consider NE special package was held on 30.07.2004. Minutes of the meeting have been circulated by the Ministry. The matter is being processed for obtaining approval of the Cabinet shortly. Further action for implementation of schemes included in NE package (Phase-II) can be taken, only after the approval of Cabinet is received.”

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Paragraph No. 14 of Chapter I)

Shortage of staff in Prasar Bharati

Recommendation (No. 8)

18. The Committee are deeply concerned to note that there is a projected shortage of staff in All India Radio and Doordarshan in various categories and proposal for filling up the vacancies has been pending with the Ministry of Finance. The Committee feel that in respect of AIR and Doordarshan, redeployment of staff has not been carried out to the maximum possible extent and hence, there are still vacancies at various levels. The Committee also note that there are many projects which are technically ready, but could not be commissioned for want of technical and maintenance staff. The Committee observed that due to shortage of staff, the Prasar Bharati could not produce and telecast qualitative programmes which in turn has adversely affected the revenue earning capacity of Prasar Bharati. The Committee also note that there has been a migration of staff from Prasar Bharati to private channel/FM due to overloading of work on the available personnel, better pay packet and environment.

In the light of above observations, the Committee feel that the recommendations of the Ministry of Finance to surrender existing vacancies, should be accepted. This could facilitate, Prasar Bharati to hire suitably qualified people who may be absolutely necessary.

Action Taken by Government

“Prasar Bharati has informed that in order to ensure the optimum utilization of infrastructure and manpower, the exercise of redeployment of staff has already been carried out to the maximum extent possible and further redeployment is not feasible. Even after redeployment many stations are facing shortage of staff due to

ban on recruitment. The matter regarding grant of permission as a special case for recruitment to fill up the vacancies in respect of J&K and North-East projects is being examined in the Ministry. The meeting of the Empowered Committee on J&K, has already been held and the decision of the competent authority on filling up vacancies would be conveyed to Prasar Bharati shortly.”

Comments of the Committee

(Please *see* Paragraph No. 20 of Chapter I)

Need for Improvement in the Quality and content of the Programme

Recommendation (No. 9)

The Committee are of the considered view that Prasar Bharati should take concerted steps to improve the quality and content of the programmes telecast/broadcast by them so as to compete technically with other private channels/FM in the country. In this era of stiff competition faced from the proliferation of private channels/FM, maintenance of quality is the hallmark to endure in the field of broadcasting/telecasting. Compromise on the part of quality will result in Prasar Bharati losing a sizeable chunk of their business to the private channels/FM. The Committee feel that Prasar Bharati could not give proper thrust to the quality and content of programmes due to vacancies at various levels. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting should take up the matter with the Ministry of Finance at the highest level for getting sanction of additional posts which are absolutely essential, subsequent to the efforts of redeployment of existing staff, and surrendering existing vacancies as recommended by Ministry of Finance so that the operational efficiency and revenue earning capacity of Prasar Bharati dose not suffer. The Committee would like to be kept informed about the developments in this regard.

Action Taken by Government

Recommendation of the Committee for improvement in the quality and control of progrmames has been noted. All India Radio maintains a high tradition of trouble-free public broadcasting service to the people. Steps have already been taken to induct digital technology into the AIR network. Computer based recording, editing and playback system has already been provided at many stations. In view of the superior

quality of FM broadcasts, it is gaining popularity in the country. AIR has also therefore undertaken to expand its FM network to achieve about 50 percent population coverage on completion of ongoing Tenth Plan.

In so far as improvement in the content of programmes is concerned, it may be submitted that both-in-house programmes, as well as commissioned programmes are produced under three categories, namely Normal Software Plan Scheme (General), North-East Special package and J&K Special Package. AIR Stations have been instructed to produce/clear only such programmes as are based on specific formats/subjects especially identified and prescribed for each of these categories. In addition, stations have been advised to generate more programmes aimed at youth & women. Insofar as Doordarshan is concerned, efforts are being made to improve the content so that it competes/comparates suitably with private TV channels. A proposal to provide better and effective programmes for Kashir channel is also under active consideration of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

The Ministry is also making all out efforts to get additional posts sanctioned for various AIR/Doordarshan installations to improve the efficacy of the electronic media.

Outstanding Dues

Recommendation (No. 10)

The Committee note with serious concern that there are huge outstanding dues to the tune of Rs. 92.74 crores for the years 2002-03 and 2003-04 for sponsored serials and in-house programmes against National Channels and Regional Kendras like Kolkata, Chennai, Trivandrum, Bangalore, Mumbai and Hyderabad. The Committee observed that the Prasar Bharati could not recover even a portion of outstanding dues from the defaulters. The Committee feel that considering the quantum of dues involved and gravity of situation, recovery of dues must engage the prime attention of the management of Prasar Bharati. The Committee also feel that the Ministry should not only initiate legal action against the defaulters but also pursue the cases efficaciously to recover the outstanding dues from them. The Committee are of the considered view that the strategy being adopted by the Ministry to recover the outstanding dues *viz.*, accreditation rules

have been made stringent, limit of bank guarantee has been raised, constant monitoring, issuing notices and asking the producers to submit their payment plans are soft measures for habitual defaulters. The Committee feel that harsher measures should be taken against the habitual defaulters by the Ministry.

Action Taken by Government

“The Ministry has taken note of the recommendation of the Committee and accordingly Prasar Bharati has initiated action against defaulters at a very high level involving active legal action or arbitration by retired Supreme Court & High Court judges”.

Comments of the Committee

(Please *see* Paragraph No. 23 of Chapter I)

Strengthening the Content Regulatory Mechanism

Recommendation (No. 11)

The Committee in principle do agree that it is absolutely imperative to check, regulate and prohibit, indecent, immoral content in guise of aesthetic, being telecast by Cable Operator or other operator. The Committee also do agree that in this context relevant clauses of the Cable Television Network (Regulation) Act, 1995 could hardly serve the purpose, for which it was enacted by the Govt. Keeping in view the fact that the Prasar Bharati & Cable Operators are competitors to each other, the Committee do not endorse its view with the Ministry that Prasar Bharati should be empowered by law to check or regulate the aesthetic quality of indecent and immoral programmes/ advertisement being broadcast by the Cable operators or satellite channels. The Committee, in the interest of the public and nation at large, earnestly recommend that Govt. should initiate amendments in the existing Cable Television Network (Regulation) Act, 1995, in order to constitute an independent and permanent Regulatory Body, at the Center and State level to regulate indecent/immoral contents, in the guise of aesthetic, being telecast by the Cable Operator including satellite channels or any other Broadcaster. The Committee feel that this is a matter of national image and relates to the building of the character of the existing and future generation of the country.

The Committee, therefore, strongly feel that it is imperative on the part of the Government to take up this matter on top priority without delay. The Committee would like to be apprised of the progress made by the Government in this regard.

Action Taken by Government

“As regards strengthening the content regulatory mechanism, the Government has decided to constitute a Broadcasting Content Regulatory Authority. However, the detailed modalities would need wider consultation. For this purpose, a Core Group is being constituted in this Ministry to draft a Bill for setting up of Broadcasting Content Regulatory Authority and define its scope, objectives and functions. The matter has also been taken for inter-ministerial consultation on the need to have a separate Broadcasting Content Regulatory Authority Bill—Separate and distinct from the Convergence Bill, 2001 which has lapsed. The proposed authority would have jurisdiction over all broadcasts of radio cable, DTH or terrestrial, while any authority set up under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 would have limited scope”.

Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC)

Recommendation (No. 13)

The Committee have been informed that since the year 2003-2004, JNU has been insisting upon prior clearance from its authorities before taking any steps with regard to the construction of the Building and Housing Project of IIMC, new Delhi. The clearance from Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) is awaited.

The Committee are further informed that the collaboration with Utkal University could not be formalised as Utkal University backed out of the proposal at the eleventh hour. Bihar Government has been requested for facilitating institutional arrangements and the response is awaited. However, a MoU with Nagaland University has been approved and is likely to be signed shortly.

The Committee note that a budgetary provision of Rs. 3985 lakhs has been made in the year 2004-2005 to continue with the activities mentioned above.

The Committee are apprehensive about the progress of the project and are afraid the obstacles are too many to achieve any physical or financial targets in this project. The Committee would like to have a factual note giving details such as the date of sanction of the projects, the sequence of events thereafter till date, the cost escalation factor, the reasons of selecting the present location as premises of IIMC etc.

Action Taken by Government

Administrative approval for the Building and Housing Project, consisting of a 14-from (triple sharing) hostel building, Director Residence, 6 Sr. Faculty and 6 Officers/faculty flats, 18 staff quarters and installations of projection and sound reinforcement system in the auditorium was conveyed by the Ministry of I&B vide its letter No. 23/17/2002-IP&MC dated 31.3.2003.

During the year 2002-03 the working of installing Projection & Sound Reinforcement System in the Auditorium was done and preliminary work of construction of staff quarters was intimated. However, certain institutional parameters of Institute's agreement with JNU raised some ecological concerns and these had to be addressed. The structural drawings of the project required modifications/revisions within the approved plan outlay of Rs. 386.30 lakh. The JNU has given its clearance for construction of Director's Residence and hostel building during 2004. Further clearance for construction of staff quarters is yet to be received. The request of the institute is being examined by a committee constituted by JNU. Meanwhile, the Institute has requested the Ministry to intervene in the matter.

So far the Projection and sound reinforcement system in the Auditorium have been installed during 2002-03. Soil investigation, presentation, drawings, development of land, construction of culvert have been completed during 2003-04 and the construction work of Directors residence and hostel building has also been started.

The Cost escalation factor in comparison to the cost index-year 2001 is enhanced to 21% approximately as on date. Accordingly the estimates need revision to the extent of 21%. However, in case of the Housing Project, for which clearance from JNU is waited, the cost escalation factor will be determined on receipt of NOC from them. However, the escalation at this rate may be estimated for the Housing Project.

The present location of IIMC was selected because of its suitability for institutional and academic environment, surrounded greenery and spacious piece of land and keeping in view its future expansion plans.

It may however be mentioned there that the construction work for the building project of IIMC is being done by CCW, AIR which is a Government controlled organization. For carrying out the construction work sufficient amount is required to be advanced to them under the "Deposit Work" scheme and any sum not utilised during a particular year remains under the deposit work A/c for utilisation during subsequent years.

Due to delay in starting the construction works, the CCW could not fully utilise the funds advanced by the Institute to them during 2002-03 and 2003-04. It is therefore, considered necessary that further funds may be advanced to them only after the funds already advanced by the Institute during previous years are fully utilised. Hence against the sanctioned Annual Plan 2004-05 allocation of Rs. 135 lakh, the Institute will require only a provision of Rs. 15 lakh for renovation works (as projected in its Revised Estimates 2004-05 submitted to the Ministry). The JNU have issued sanction for construction of Hostel & Director's residence only. Their approval for Housing I yet to be received. The Master Plan approved by the JNU contained provision for staff housing. The Concerns raised by the JNU regarding Housing Project are being addressed by IIMC and the matter is being pursued with them further.

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Paragraph No. 29 of Chapter I)

National Film Archives of India (NFAI)

Recommendation (No. 15)

The Committee express serious concern over the delay in construction of Phase II Building complex of the National Film Archives of India at Pune. The Committee understand that the administrative approval was granted belatedly by the Ministry to National Film Archives of India (NFAI) and that is the reason National Film Archives of India (NFAI) could not spend Rs. 50 lakhs earmarked for 2003-2004 for the project.

Now that the spade work is over, the Committee hope that the Ministry will take up the project on a priority basis and take steps for the expeditious completion of the project to overcome the cost and time overrun. The Committee also hope that budgetary allocations of Rs. 250 lakhs provided for the year 2004-2005 would be utilised fully for construction of Phase II Building complex of the National Film Archives of India at Pune. The Committee may be kept informed about the initiatives taken in this regard.

Action Taken by Government

The administrative approval for the 10th Plan Scheme "Construction of Phase-II NFAI Building" was issued on 13-04-2004. The project is to be executed by the Civil Construction Wing (CCW) of All India Radio. The CCW authorities have assured that action is being taken in order to execute the work in time. It has also been ascertained from CCW that the tendering process is already over and the work is likely to be awarded shortly. As such, it is expected that the amount of Rs. 250 lakhs provided for the year 2004-05 would be utilised fully.

Films Division

Recommendation (No. 16)

The Committee note that the Ministry could not fully utilise the funds earmarked for the schemes "Modernisation and Replacement of Obsolete Equipments of Films" and "Museum of Moving Images" (MOMI) under the Films Division. Reasons for non-utilisation of funds are stated to be "delay in getting administrative approval and the project of "Museum of Moving Images" being in conceptual stage. The Committee deplore this sorry state of affairs of seeking the funds originally and then surrendering the funds at RE stage without spending money at all. This tantamounts to negation of planning. The Committee feel that Ministry must chalk out a comprehensive and realistic strategy before embarking upon the projects/schemes so that the funds of Rs. 100 lakhs provided for the year 2004-2005 could be effectively utilised. The Ministry must also undertake periodic review of the progress of the projects taken up for execution lest they might lose their viability in the long run. The Committee desire that the steps may be taken expeditiously for finalising the schemes of "Museum of Moving Images" and executed without further delay. The Committee would like to be kept informed about the progress made in this regard.

Action Taken by Government

“A provision of Rs. 375.00 lakhs is available in the Sanctioned Budget Grant 2004-05 for the Scheme ‘Modernisation & Replacement of Obsolete Equipments of Films Division’. This provision is expected to be fully utilised during 2004-05.

In regard to the Scheme ‘Setting up of Museum of Moving Images’ (MOMI), it may be mentioned that Mumbai, being the birth place of cinema in India, the proposal is now to set-up the museum in the Films Division Complex at 24-Gopalrao Deshmukh Marg, Mumbai-26, spread over 4.5 acres of land, the nucleus of which is a heritage building “Gulshan Mahal”. Today there is no single point where film enthusiasts and the film industry in general can converge. Gulshan Mahal would be ideal in providing such a focus. If it is found necessary, a building in the Third Phase having features of the Museum can be constructed in future in the Films Division Complex. The purpose and objectives of the Scheme are as under:

- To provide a focal point in Mumbai for film industry, film enthusiasts and visitors alike;
- To acquaint the contemporary generation with the evolution and journey of Indian cinema;
- To establish a permanent Museum of artifacts, many of which are valuable heritage items connected with film making as well as exhibiting the work of noted directors, producers, Institutions etc. for the benefit of visitors/film enthusiasts;
- To arrange seminars, screening of archival films, workshops for film makers & film students, and thereby make it a ‘living’ entity;
- To generate interest in the future generation in the field of film movement.

Cinema has an enduring appeal, and many countries which have less developed film industries, have created such spaces. The proposed museum will also contribute to perpetuate the memory of the great artists of yesteryear, and also expose our new generation to the great veterans who had contributed immensely in the building of the Indian film industry.

The aim and objective of the project being a unique one, the conceptualization of the project has taken time. The renewed effort is to create an ace institution that is both unique and self-sustaining. There are diverse views in regard to the long-term status of the proposed Museum *viz.* Whether it should be an institution run directly by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting or whether it could usefully be a joint venture with either the film industry or in conjunction with a well recognized and reputed Trust, which could run its day to day operations with the help of professional Curator, while Government would remain the owner of the land, building and external infrastructure. The involvement of an apex body from the film industry is being explored.

To translate the present conceptualization if the project into a reality and to answer the related issues, there is a proposal under consideration to hire the services of Broadcasting Engineering Consultant India Limited (BECIL) to prepare an Integrated Project Report with the assistance of a suitable Consultant or Consulting Firm.

For the current financial year 2004-05, the Government proposes to fully utilize the Sanctioned Budget Grant of Rs. 100.00 lakhs.

A quarterly performance review report in respect of all the Plan Scheme is being obtained from Films Division and the progress of each Scheme, both physical and financial, is being monitored by the Ministry”.

CHAPTER III

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DO NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF THE REPLY OF THE GOVERNMENT

Training for Human Resource Development

Recommendation (No. 14)

The Committee note that for the year 2004-2005, Rs. 200 lakhs have been provided for "Training for HRD in Institutions located abroad". The Committee note that in the year 2003-2004, Rs. 200 lakhs had been provided for but the utilisation was only a meager amount of Rs. 6,57,760.

That the scheme is a new one with no precedence in this regard is the main reason for non-utilisation of funds is a matter of little consolation. The Committee feel that Ministry should have done adequate exercise well in advance before embarking upon this scheme. Once the scheme has been conceptualised and objectives set forth, coming up with specious reasons for not utilising the funds is untenable. It speaks of lack of commitment on the part of Ministry.

The Committee, therefore, urge the Ministry to depute its officers including IIS officers, professionals in the relevant field for training in institutes of repute abroad, which will be a permanent asset for the Ministry in terms of harnessing better HRD practices in this Ministry and also in terms of fruitful utilisation of funds allocated for the year 2004-2005. The Committee would like to be kept informed about the progress made in this regard.

Action Taken by Government

The training programme under the Plan sub-scheme "Training for HRD in institutions located abroad" for 2004-05 has been finalised. This includes training programmes *viz.* Columbia Publishing Course in Columbia University, International Reporting Workshop, International Broadcast Journalism and International Print Journalism courses in Thomson Foundation, U.K., International Course on Broadcast

Journalism by Radio Netherland, 'Senior Managers in Government' in Harvard University and conducting a course in 'editing, writing, interviewing' by inviting a trainer from Thomson Foundation at Indian Institute of Mass Communication, N. Delhi.

The training courses have been circulated among eligible officers and applications received for different courses are being scrutinized.

CHAPTER IV

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE AND WHICH REQUIRE REITERATION

All India Radio

Recommendation (No. 2)

The Committee note that for the Annual Plan 2003-2004, the Ministry had projected an outlay of Rs. 250 crores for All India Radio. However, the Planning Commission allocated Rs. 201 crores. But this has been reduced to Rs. 163.36 crores by the Ministry at RE stage. The Ministry could utilize only Rs. 120.27 crores during 2003-04. During 2004-2005, the AIR has been allocated Rs. 252.00 crores.

The Committee note with serious concern that the underutilisation of funds during 2003-2004 has been in respect of Continuing Schemes including J&K Special Package and Upgradation/Expansion schemes, primarily, due to non-procurement of equipments, problem in tendering, early closure of roads in Kargil and non-commissioning of technically ready projects for want of operational and maintenance staff as a result of which the AIR could meet a physical target of 28 Nos. against the desired target of 36 Nos. The Committee feel that due to the non-execution of projects envisaged during 2003-04, the benefits intended to be derived from the projects could not reach the people especially with reference to projects in Jammu & Kashmir and North-Eastern Region.

The Committee have been informed that the Physical target for 2004-2005 is 38. Looking at the achievement for the year 2003-2004, the Committee are concerned for the fulfillment of targets for the year 2004-2005. The Committee, therefore, opine that for prudent and realistic utilization of budgetary allocations, the Ministry must go in for correct tendering, timely placement of orders and take prudent decisions apart from primarily redeploying existing staff wherever possible recruiting operational & maintenance staff only if unavoidable to put into use the existing assets. The Committee trust that AIR will put in all efforts to utilise the higher budgetary allocations provided for in 2004-2005

judiciously and timely for execution of schemes envisaged by the Ministry. The Committee would like to be apprised of the matter in this regard.

Action Taken by Government

“While taking note of the observation of the Committee, it may be mentioned that during 2003-04, shortfall of physical targets under J&K Special package was in respect of only one project namely the 200 KW MW project at Kargil which would also be achieved during the current financial year. However, technically ready projects of J&K package are awaiting commissioning as approval of the competent authority for continuation Posts is awaited. As regards staff redeployment, Prasar Bharati has stated that this exercise has already been carried out and even after redeployment it is not possible to commission many stations. Moreover there is a ban on recruitment of staff. As a special case, permission for recruitment has been sought to fill up the vacancies in respect of J&K and North-East projects. The issue of filling up vacancies in relaxation of the ban on direct recruitment was discussed in the recently held J&K Empowered Committee Meeting. Decision of the competent authority is likely to be conveyed to All India Radio and Doordarshan shortly.

As regards utilisation of budgetary allocations and fulfillment of targets for the year 2004-05, all efforts are being made and trend of expenditure and execution of schemes is being closely monitored.”

Comments of the Committee

(Please *see* Paragraph No. 8 of Chapter I)

Prasar Bharati

Recommendation (No. 7)

The Committee note that at present there are 4 vacancies on Prasar Bharati Board. The Committee in its earlier Reports on Demands for Grants 2002-03 and 2003-04 had recommended to fill up the vacancies in Prasar Bharati. The Committee desired that the Ministry should take concerted steps for filling up the vacancies in the Prasar Bharati Board including those of representatives of the employees without further delay.

Action Taken by Government

“Presently Four positions in the Prasar Bharati Board are lying vacant. Out of these, Ministry has already requested for the recommendations of the Selection Committee headed by the Vice President of India in respect of two Part-time Members, reply for which is yet to be received. Besides, there are two vacancies pertaining to the representatives of the employees. Since all the employees of erstwhile AIR & DD continue to the Government Servants, the election of the representatives cannot be held, till their services are transferred to Prasar Bharati, in accordance with the provisions of Prasar Bharati Act.”

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Paragraph No. 17 of Chapter I)

Press Information Bureau

Recommendation (No. 12)

The Committee note that the project “Setting up of National Press Centre at New Delhi” was sanctioned as a plan scheme of 8th Five Year Plan and the actual possession of the whole land was handed over to PIB on 16th October, 2002. The Scheme has been pending completion for more than a decade. Since the time of sanctioning of the Scheme, the project could hardly make any progress and the construction of the centre has been inordinately delayed. The Committee note that for the year 2004-2005, Rs. 5 crores have been provided for appointing a Nodal Agency for implementing the project and appointing the Architect. An EFC Memo at the cost of Rs. 55.50 crores is under consideration with the Ministry. The project has an approved outlay of Rs. 6.48 crores for 2004-2005.

The Committee feel that the way of working of the Ministry evidently speaks of complete lack of planning and vision on its part. The entire exercise appears to be nothing but an attempt by those who are responsible for formulation and implementation of the project to somehow keep out from the ambit of accountability. The Committee, however, observe that the representative of the Ministry during evidence has expressed confidence that there would be no further delay and the project would be commissioned on time. Since the timely execution is *sine qua non* of planning and implementation process, the

Committee trust that the optimism shown by the representative will yield the desired results and the project will be completed expeditiously. The Committee also earnestly desire that funds earmarked for the year 2004-2005 would be utilised for the purpose for which these have been allocated. The Committee would like to be apprised about the matter in this regard.

Action Taken by Government

“The Ministry has taken note of the recommendation of the Committee and accordingly Prasar Bharati has initiated action against defaulters at a very high level involving active legal action or arbitration by retired Supreme Court & High Court judges”.

Comments of the Committee

(Please *see* Paragraph No. 23 of Chapter I)

CHAPTER V

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH
REPLIES ARE INTERIM IN NATURE

—Nil—

NEW DELHI;
1 March, 2005
10 Phalgunā, 1926 (Saka)

M.M. PALLAM RAJU,
Chairman,
Standing Committee on
Information Technology.

ANNEXURE I

MINUTES OF THE NINETEENTH SITTING OF THE STANDING
COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (2004-2005)

The Committee sat on Thursday, 20 January, 2005 from 1100 hours to 1325 hours in Committee Room 'B', Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Shri M.M. Pallam Raju—*Chairman*

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Nikhil Chaudhary
3. Shri Mani Cherennamei
4. Shri Sanjay Dhotre
5. Shri P. Karunakaran
6. Dr. P.P. Koya
7. Smt. Nivedita S. Mane
8. Col. G. Nizamuddin
9. Shri Ashok Kumar Rawat
10. Shri Chander Shekhar Sahu
11. Shri P.C. Thomas

Rajya Sabha

12. Shri Vijay J. Darda
13. Shri Ashwani Kumar
14. Shri Balbir K. Punj
15. Smt. Sarla Maheshwari
16. Shri N.R. Govindarajar
17. Shri K. Rama Mohana Rao
18. Shri Motiur Rahman
19. Shri Sanjay Nirupam

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri Raj Shekhar Sharma — *Deputy Secretary*
2. Shri K.L. Arora — *Under Secretary*
3. Shri D.R. Shekhar — *Assistant Director*

2. At the outset, the Chairman welcomed the Members to the sitting of the Committee. The Committee then took up the following Draft Reports for consideration:

- | | | | |
|-------|--|-----|-----|
| (i) | *** | *** | *** |
| (ii) | *** | *** | *** |
| (iii) | *** | *** | *** |
| (iv) | Draft Report on Action Taken by Government on the Recommendations/Observations of the Committee contained in its Fourth Report on "Demands for Grants" (2004-2005) relating to Ministry of Information & Broadcasting. | | |

3. The Committee adopted the above-mentioned Action Taken Reports with some amendments/modifications.

4. The Committee, then, authorised the Chairman to finalise and present the above-mentioned Reports to the House, on a date and time convenient to him.

The Committee, then, adjourned.

ANNEXURE II

[Vide Paragraph No. 5 of Introduction]

ANALYSIS OF ACTION TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT ON THE
FOURTH REPORT (FOURTEENTH LOK SABHA)

- (i) Recommendations/Observations which have been accepted by the Government:
Recommendation Nos.: 1, 3-6, 8-11, 13, 15-16
- Total: 12
Percentage: 75%
- (ii) Recommendations/Observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the replies of the Government:
Recommendation No.: 14
- Total: 1
Percentage: 6.25%
- (iii) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration:
Recommendation Nos.: 2, 7, 12
- Total: 3
Percentage: 18.75%
- (iv) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies are of interim nature:
Recommendation No.: Nil
- Total: Nil
Percentage: Nil