

CONFIDENTIAL

**COMMITTEE ON PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE
(2005-2006)**

FOURTEENTH LOK SABHA

SIXTH REPORT

(Presented on 6.12.2005)

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**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

December, 2005/Agrahayana, 1927(Saka)

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COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE ON PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE
(2005-2006)

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Shri J.V.G. Reddy	-	Under Secretary

(iii)

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman of the Committee on Papers Laid on the Table of the House, having been authorised by the Committee to present this report on their behalf, present this Sixth Report.

2. As a result of examination of certain papers laid on the Table of Lok Sabha, the Committee have come to certain conclusions in regard to delay in laying of the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the (i) National Capital Region Planning Board, New Delhi; (ii) National Academy of Medical Sciences (India), New Delhi; (iii) Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi; and (iv) Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi.

3. The Committee took oral evidence of the representatives of the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (Department of Health), Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of Secondary & Higher Education); and Ministry of Culture in connection with delay in laying Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of National Academy of Medical Sciences (India), New Delhi; Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi, and Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi on 18.7.2005, 15.9.2005, and 13.10.2005 respectively.

4. The Committee wish to express their thanks to the representatives of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (Department of Health); Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of Secondary & Higher Education) and Ministry of Culture for appearing before the Committee and furnishing the information as required by the Committee.

5. The Committee considered and adopted this Report at their sitting held on 1.12.2005.

6. A statement showing summary of recommendations/observations made by the Committee is appended to the Report (Appendix).

NEW DELHI
December, 2005
Agrahayana, 1927 (Saka)

HANNAN MOLLAH,
Chairman,
Committee on Papers Laid on the Table

REPORT

CHAPTER-I

Delay in laying Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of National Capital Region Planning Board.

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The National Capital Region Planning Board (NCRPB) was established in 1985 under an Act of Parliament called the 'National Capital Region Planning Board Act, 1985' with the concurrence of the Legislatures of the States of Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. The Ministry of Urban Development releases grants to enable the Board to carry out its functions. During the year 2002-2003, the Board received a grant of Rs.56.60 crore from the Government of India.

1.2 The Annual Report and Audited Accounts of the Board are required to be laid together within 9 months of the close of the accounting year. Though the Annual Report and Audited Accounts of the Board for the year 2000-01 have been laid together, the corresponding documents for the years 2001-02 to 2002-03 have been laid separately. The extent of delay in laying the documents of the Board for the years 2001-2002 and 2002-03 is as under:-

<u>Year</u>	<u>Annual Report</u>		<u>Audited Accounts</u>	
	<u>Date of laying</u>	<u>Extent of Delay</u>	<u>Date of laying</u>	<u>Extent of Delay</u>
2000-2001	26.2.2002	02 months	26.02.2002	02 months
2001-2002	20.7.2004	19 months	13.07.2004	18 months
2002-2003	20.7.2004	07 months	02.03.2005	14 months

The Annual Report and Audited Account of the Board for the year 2003-2004 which were due for laying by 31.12.2004 have not been laid so far. In this regard the Ministry of Urban Development have stated (O.M. dated 20.6.2005) as under:-

“The Principal Director of Audit (PDA), Economic & Service Ministries was requested on 16.7.2004 to take up audit of accounts for the year 2003-04 along with audit of 2002-2003. The Annual Accounts of the Board for the Year 2003-

2004 were audited by the Auditors from 18.10.2004 to 17.12.2004. Draft separate Audit Report was received from PDA on 22.2.2005 for furnishing the replies. The replies were sent to PDA on 29.3.2005 with the request to issue Audit Certificate so that the same could be laid on the Table of each House of the Parliament. The PDA has been requested to expedite issue of audit certificate for the year 2003-2004. As soon as this certificate is received by NCRPB from the PDA, the audited accounts along-with the auditors report will be sent to the Ministry of Urban Development for laying the same on the Table of each House of the Parliament. The Annual Report is however ready and was approved by the Board in the 27th meeting held on 28.10.2004. As the Annual Report and Annual Accounts were requested to be laid together, the laying of Annual Report is also being delayed due to non-receipt of Audit Certificate from PDA.”

1.3 Explaining the reasons for laying separately the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the Board for the year 2002-2003, the Ministry have stated (O.M.20.6.2005) as under:-

“The annual report was approved by circulation among the members of NCRPB and sent by the Board to the Ministry of Urban Development on 14.1.2004. However, due to dissolution of Lok Sabha the annual report could not be laid on the Table of Lok Sabha till June, 2004. The annual report for 2002-03 was therefore laid on the Table of Lok Sabha on 20.7.2004. As far as audited accounts for 2002-2003 were concerned, accounts were sent to the office of Principal Director of Audit by NCRPB on 1.9.2003. However, PDA had required certain amendments to the NCRPB rules before the audit could be carried out. After such amendment was made the audit was carried out from 1.7.04 to 4.8.04 and the annual audited accounts were approved by the Board in its meeting on 28.10.2004. Thereafter the auditor certificate was received on 14.1.2005 and the annual accounts and auditors report were furnished to the Lok Sabha Secretariat by the Ministry of Urban Development on 23.3.2005. The accounts were laid on the Table of Lok Sabha on 2.3.2005.”

1.4 The delay statements laid alongwith the documents for the years 2001-02 and 2002-03 did not contain the details of finalisation of the documents in chronological order. On being asked the Ministry of Urban Development have furnished the details as under :-

<u>Sl.No.</u>	<u>Events</u>	<u>2001-2002</u>	<u>2002-2003</u>
1.	The date of appointment of auditors for auditing the Annual Accounts	12.12.2002	1.9.2003
2.	The date of compilation of the Annual Accounts	9.7.2002	29.8.2003

3.	<i>Submission of Annual Accounts to Audit</i>	-	1.9.2003
4.	<i>Time taken by auditors for auditing the Annual Accounts</i>	30.12.2002 to 17.01.2003	1.7.2004 to 4.8.2004
5.	<i>Receipt of Final Audit Report</i>	27.5.2003	14.1.2005
6.	<i>Approval of the documents from the competent authority</i>	1.12.2003 (A/cs)	28.10.2004(A/cs)
7.	<i>Date of translation of documents and sending for printing</i>	4.6.2003 (completed in the same month)	23.11.2004 to 31.12.2004
8.	<i>Date of Sending the documents to the Ministry for laying</i>	8.12.2003	3.2.2005

1.5. Explaining further the reasons for delay in laying the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the Board, the Ministry have stated in their written reply (dated 20.6.2005) as under:-

“Principal Director of Audit (PDA), Economic and Service Ministries vide its letter dated 12.7.2002 requested the NCR Planning Board that accounts should be approved by the Managing Committee of the Board before the same can be taken up for audit. Alternatively, vide their letter dated 28.11.2002 PDA, informed that the audit of the accounts for the year 2001-2002 was being taken up with the understanding that the next audit (for 2002-2003) would be carried out only after Para 33 of the NCRPB Rules is amended.

On 1.9.2003 NCRPB forwarded the Annual Accounts of the Board for Year 2002-03 to PDA with a request to depute auditors for audit. It was informed by C&AG that they had carried out the Audit of Accounts for the years 2001-02 on the understanding that NCR Planning Board would get amendment of the Rules to the effect that the Accounts are to be approved and authenticated by the Chief Executive Officers of the NCRPB. The PDA had also informed that Audit for the year 2002-03 would be carried out only after the said Rules of the Board are amended. Accordingly the matter was taken up by the Ministry of Urban Development with Ministry of Law and Justice and finally the necessary amendment to the Rules of the NCRPB were made on 18.3.2004 vide Gazette Notification No.GSR-205 dated 18.3.2004. After the above Notification, the PDA was requested to take up the audit of accounts for the financial year 2002-03 and also for 2003-04 vide letter dated 16.7.2004.”

1.6. Asked to state the nature of amendments carried out in the NCRPB Rules, the Ministry have stated (O.M. dt. 20.6.05) as under :-

The original Rule 33 reads as follows:

Accounts & Audit: (1) The Board shall maintain the accounts of the Board separately with regard to the grants and loans received under sub-section (1) of the section 1, sums received under sub-section (2) of section 21 and sums received under clauses (b) and (c) sub-section (1) of section 22 of the Act. The forms of accounts will be specified by the Government in consultation with Comptroller and Auditor General of India.

The annual statement of accounts of the Board shall be in such terms as may be specified by the Government in consultation with the Comptroller and Auditor General.

The accounts shall be audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India. However, Comptroller and Auditor General of India may suggest the appointment of a primary Auditor to conduct audit on his behalf and there upon such Primary Auditor shall audit the accounts in accordance with the directions and guidelines issued by the Comptroller and Auditor General.”

The following change in rule 33 of the National Capital Regional Planning Board Rules, 1985 was required to be carried out :-

*After sub-rule (2) the following sub-rule shall be inserted namely:-
'(2) The accounts of the Board, before audited by the Comptroller of Auditor General of India, shall be approved and authenticated by the Member-Secretary on behalf of the Board.'*

(ii) in sub-rule (3), for the words 'The accounts shall', the words, brackets, figure and letter 'The accounts, approved and authenticated by the Member-Secretary under sub-rule (2A) shall be substituted.”

1.7. To a query how these amendments delayed timely completion of auditing by auditors, the reply (O.M.dt.20.6.2005) of the Ministry is as under :-

“The Principal Director of Audit did not take up the Audit until the NCRPB Rules were amended. Accordingly the Ministry of Urban Development took up amendment to Rules with Ministry of Law and Justice. Simultaneously the Board also requested Principal Director of Audit for taking up audit of the Accounts of the Board. As the Rules were finally modified on 18.3.2004 and the audit was taken up thereafter, this resulted in delay in audit of Accounts of the Board for the year 2002-2003.”

1.8. Detailing the mechanism to monitor the progress of the finalisation of documents and to ensure its timely placing before Parliament, the Ministry have stated in their written reply (O.M. dt. 20.6.2005) as under:-

“Ministry of Urban Development issues instructions from time to time to all the organisations under it to ensure timely laying of papers on the Table of both the Houses.”

1.9. As regards time schedule giving target dates for completion of each stage of finalisation and laying of the documents the Ministry have stated, “the organization under their control are informed that the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts are required to be laid on the Table of both Houses of Parliament within 9 months of the close of the financial year to which the Reports/Accounts relate.”

1.10. As regards the remedial measures proposed to be taken both by the Ministry/Board to ensure timely laying of the documents in future, the Ministry in their written reply (dated 20.6.2005) have stated as follows:-

“ Efforts have been made to ensure timely laying of the Annual Report as well as the Audited Accounts within the prescribed period of nine months from the date of closing of the accounting year 2004-2005.

The attention of the PDA was drawn by NCRPB on 9.3.2005, 15.4.2005 and 4.5.2005 to the instructions issued by the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs vide O.M.No.28(1)/2005-LEG.I, dated 27.1.2005 for timely laying of the Annual Accounts on the Table of Lok Sabha. However, the Audit Certificate for the year 2003-2004 is still awaited.

Similarly efforts have been made by NCRPB to hold the meeting of the Board as early as possible. As the Members of the Board include inter-alia, the Hon'ble Chief Ministers of Haryana, Delhi, U.P. and Rajasthan besides the Union Minister for Urban Development as the Chairman of the Board, it becomes difficult at times to obtain a consensus date for holding the meeting of the Board. For example meeting of the Board during the year 2005 was scheduled to be held on 14.5.2005. However, this could not be held due to last minute change of programme of the participants.

Efforts are, therefore, made by the NCRPB to get the accounts audited in time and to hold Board meetings regularly, the delay occurs in laying of the Annual Reports/Accounts on the Table of the Sabha due to unavoidable circumstance.”

1.11. The Committee considered the matter at their sitting held on 17 August, 2005.

1.12. One of the oft-repeated recommendations of the Committee has been that the Annual Report and Audited Accounts of an organisation should always be laid simultaneously to enable members of Parliament to have a complete picture of the performance and activities of the organisation. The Committee note that though the Annual Report and Audited Accounts of the National Capital Region Planning Board (NCRPB) for the year 2000-01 have been laid together with a delay of 2 months, the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the Board in respect of the years 2001-02 and 2002-03 were laid separately with delays ranging from 7 to 19 months. Further, these documents for the year 2003-04 which were due for laying before Parliament by 31.12.04 have not been laid till this report was considered by the Committee.

1.13. The Committee regret to note that after close of the respective accounting year, the Board has taken 9 months for the year 2001-02 and 5 months for the year 2002-03 in getting appointment of auditors and thereafter handing over the accounts to auditors for auditing as against 3 months recommended by the Committee for this purpose. The Committee feel that such delays are well within the control of the management of the Board and, therefore, avoidable. The Committee expect the Ministry to strictly adhere to the recommendation of the Committee in this regard and ensure that the accounts of the Board are compiled and handed over to the auditors within 3 months of close of accounting year in future.

1.14. From the information furnished by the Ministry, the Committee also observe that another major factor which has substantially contributed towards delay has been the long time taken by auditors in completing their audit and furnishing the final audit report to the Board. The time taken was 5 months for the year 2001-02 and 15 months for the year 2002-03. The delay at the stage of auditing of accounts for the year 2002-03 was stated to be on account of the amendment made in para 33 of NCRPB Rules to the effect that accounts are to be approved and authenticated by the CEO of the Board before they could be taken up for auditing by the auditors. The auditors had earlier informed the Board that audit of accounts for the year 2001-02 was being taken up by them with the understanding that Rules would be got amended by the Board/Ministry before sending them the accounts for the subsequent years. However, the Board had sent the accounts pertaining to the year 2002-03 without amending the required rules to the Principal Director of Audit and hence he did not take up the audit. The auditors took up the audit task only after the amendments were carried out in the rules. As a result delay took place in finalisation of the documents for the year 2002-03. The Committee feel that had the Ministry/Board taken prompt action in regard to amendment of the rules, as advised by the Principal Director of Audit, much of the delay in taking up the audit by auditors could have been avoided. The Committee hope that now with the necessary provision/amendment made in the rules, the Board would send duly approved accounts to the auditors in time for auditing in future.

1.15 The Committee further note that after receipt of final audit report from the auditors, the Board has taken 6 months for the year 2001-02 and 10 months for the year 2002-03 in getting approval of the audited accounts from the competent authority of the Board which among others include the Chief Ministers of Haryana, Delhi, U.P. and Rajasthan besides the Union Minister for Urban Development. From the information furnished by the Ministry, the Committee find that the Annual Report pertaining to the year 2002-03 was got approved by circulation among the members of the Board. Therefore, the Committee feel that Ministry's plea that the delay in convening the meeting of the Board for getting approval of the accounts was beyond the control of the management of the Board is unacceptable. The Committee urge the Ministry of Urban Development/Board to get the approval of the audited accounts, through circulation of the accounts among the members of the Board, to avoid delay on this score in future. The Committee would also like to be apprised of the steps taken in this regard.

1.16 The Committee note that no schedule indicating time limit for completion of tasks involved at each stage of finalisation of the documents by the Board has been laid down by the Ministry due to which the Board/Ministry presumably fail to keep track of the progress made at each stage. The Committee urge that this should be done forthwith and the Ministry of Urban Development should closely monitor the progress of completion of each stage involved in the preparation/finalisation of the documents to prevent recurrence of such delays in future. The Committee would like to be apprised of the action taken in this regard at the earliest.

CHAPTER-II

Delay in laying Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of National Academy of Medical Sciences (India), New Delhi.

The National Academy of Medical Sciences (India), New Delhi was established in the year 1961 as a non-official body of bio-medical scientists with the object of promotion and encouragement of merit in medical sciences. During the year 2003-2004, the Academy received grants-in-aid of Rs. 45.43 lakh from the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (Department of Health).

2.2 The Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the organizations receiving grants in aid from the Government of India are required to be laid on the Table of the House within 9 months of the close of the accounting year vide para 1.12 of 2nd Report (6th LS) of the Committee on Papers Laid on the Table. However, there has been persistent delays in laying the documents of the National Academy of Medical Sciences, New Delhi. The date of laying and the extent of delay in laying the documents of the Academy since 1994-95 is as under :-

<u>Year</u>	<u>Laid on</u>	<u>Extent of delay</u>
1994-95	13.09.1996	09 months
1995-96	28.07.1998	19 months
1996-97	28.07.1998	07 months
1997-98	09.05.2000	16 months
1998-99	25.07.2001	19 months
1999-2000	25.07.2001	07 months
2000-2001	15.05.2002	04 months
2001-2002	04.02.2004	13 months
2002-2003	21.07.2004	07 months
2003-2004	04.05.2005	04 months

2.3. The Committee at their sitting held on 23 June, 2005 considered the matter and decided that in view of recurring delays in laying the requisite documents of the academy, the evidence of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (Department of Health) be taken on the subject.

2.4. Accordingly the Committee took oral evidence of the representatives of the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (Department of Health) and National Academy of Medical Sciences (India), New Delhi at their sitting held on 18 July, 2005.

2.5. Apologizing for delay, the Secretary (Health) stated during evidence that “it is a matter of regret and I humbly submit that this delay in submission of reports by this institution has come to our notice. We have several such autonomous institutions. Many more delays by such institutions have come to our notice.”

2.6. Explaining the reasons for delay in finalisation and laying of the documents of the Academy on the Table of the House, the Department of Health & Family Welfare furnished a written reply stating year-wise reasons for delay as follows :-

1994-95	The Annual General Body Meeting of NAMS was held in March 1996 and it took sometime in the Ministry before the papers could be laid.
1995-96	The Annual General Body meeting was held on 8 March, 1997. The NAMS informed the Ministry on 30 April, 1997 about approval of the General Body meeting. The authentication could not be obtained from the then MOS and the authenticated documents could be placed in Lok Sabha only in November, 1997. However, due to continuous interruption and prorogation of Rajya Sabha, the papers were returned by Rajya Sabha Secretariat as also by Lok Sabha Secretariat for re-authentication. The papers could be finally laid on the Table of the House on 28 July, 1998.
1996-97	The Annual General Body meeting of NAMS was held on March 1998 and it took sometime in the Ministry before the papers could be laid.

1997-98	The Annual General Body meeting of NAMS was held in March 1999. The complete papers were authenticated and sent on 8 May 2000 and thereafter the papers were laid in Lok Sabha.
1998-99	The copies of annual reports were received only on 4 April, 2001 from the Academy and thereafter, these documents were processed and laid on the Table of the House.
1999-2000	The Annual General Body meeting of NAMS was held on 7.4.2001 and it took sometime in the Ministry before the papers could be laid.
2000-2001	The Annual General Body meeting of NAMS was held in March 2002 and it took sometime before the papers could be laid.
2001-2002	The Annual General Body meeting of NAMS scheduled for March 2003 was postponed due to unavoidable reasons. The General Body finally met on 6 September, 2003. During the Winter Session in December, 2003 the documents were authenticated by the then MOS, Shri A. Raja on 17.12.2003. Subsequently letters were also prepared to dispatch the papers to Lok Sabha Secretariat. However since Shri A. Raja demitted office, the papers could not be laid on the Table of the House. The papers were re-authenticated by the next MOS and laid on the Table of the House in February 2004.
2002-2003	The Annual General Body meeting of NAMS was held on 10 April, 2004 and thereafter it took sometime in the Ministry before the papers could be laid.
2003-2004	The documents were received from NAMS on 24.3.2005 and were laid on the Table of the House on 4.5.2005.

2.7. As per recommendation of the Committee on Papers Laid on the Table vide para 1.20 of 10th Report (6th LS), the delay statement laid along with documents ought to include chronological order of the dates of finalisation of reports and accounts, their submission to audit, issue of inspection reports, replies given on points raised in the report and the receipt of audit report from the audit authorities and the reasons for delay, if any, at each stage. However, the Committee observe that the delay statements laid along with the

documents of the Academy did not contain these details for any of the years since 1994-95. However, subsequently the Ministry of Health & Family (Department of Health) furnished the chronological details in finalisation of the documents of the Academy since 1994-95 as given in Appendix.

2.8. It may be seen from the Appendix that there has been no delay at the stage of appointment of auditors, compilation of accounts and auditing of accounts by auditors. However, there has been abnormal delay in getting approval of the documents from the Council and from the General Body of the Academy.

2.9. To a query whether any time schedule has been laid down either by the National Academy of Medical Sciences (India), New Delhi or by the Ministry indicating normative time for completion of the task at each stage involved in finalisation of the documents, the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (Department of Health) stated in a written reply (dt. 30.4.2005) that the General Body meeting of the Academy is normally held during the last week of March/first week of April each year. The Annual Report of the Academy of each year is approved by the General Body in its meeting for that year but the Audited Accounts as closed on 31 March and compiled by the end of April/middle of May each year and audited/approved by Council afterwards could be got approved by General Body in its next year's meeting.

2.10. Asked to state whether the Ministry or Academy has ever examined the question of rescheduling the Annual General Meeting of the Academy in such a way as to facilitate consideration of the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts without delay, the Ministry in their written reply furnished to the Committee stated as under :-

“The General Body of the NAMS generally meets in March/April once a year. Therefore, the NAMS has been advised to reschedule the General Body of the Academy in such a way that the Annual Report and Audited Accounts are approved without delay within 9 months period of closing of financial year. The Academy had placed the issue before its Council’s meeting on 30.3.2005 to prepone the General Body to the month of December of the concerned year, and this was agreed to.”

2.11. Elaborating the remedial steps taken in this regard the President of the Academy during evidence apprised the Committee:-

“The conference was always held in March/April. This was happening much earlier than my taking over. In January, I got a directive from the Ministry that we have to hold our conference in such a way that the Council and the General Body approves it and we have to submit it by December. So, actually I have cut short the time from March/April and we will be holding it before December so that the account are submitted to the Ministry for onward transmission to Parliament. This has been our aim.”

2.12. Asked to state whether any time schedule has been drawn relating to finalisation of the documents, the Ministry in their written reply have furnished the following time schedule:-

Sl.No.	Activity	Date
1.	<i>Submission of Accounts to Director of Audit</i>	<i>30 June</i>
2.	<i>Commencement of Audit by Director of Audit</i>	<i>01 August</i>
3.	<i>Receipt of Audit Certificate</i>	<i>Mid November</i>
4.	<i>Approval of Governing Body</i>	<i>End of November</i>
5.	<i>Translation of Annual Report and Audited Accounts</i>	<i>5 December</i>
6.	<i>Printing of copies</i>	<i>20 December</i>
7.	<i>Submission of annual report and audited accounts</i>	<i>26 December</i>

2.13. It may be seen from the above time schedule that the Academy has been asked to submit their Annual Report and Audited Accounts by 26 December the date by which the Winter Session normally concludes. When this lacuna was pointed out, the Secretary,

Health, during evidence stated that “we have also noticed the error in our assumption in setting the calendar of events. We will change it”

2.14. Asked to state whether there is any mechanism in the Ministry to monitor the progress of work relating to finalization of the documents, the Ministry in their written reply (O.M. dated 30.4.2004) have stated that “ the Ministry periodically reminds the organization to send annual report and audited statement of accounts in time”.

2.15. On being asked to state the remedial measures proposed to be taken both by the Ministry and the Academy to ensure timely laying of the documents in future, the Ministry in their written reply have stated as follows:-

“The procedure for laying of papers is being streamlined. The efforts of the Ministry would be to ensure that the Annual Report and Audited Accounts of NAMS are laid within the prescribed period of 9 months. In the cases where the papers are not laid within the prescribed period of 9 months, this Ministry has been laying delay statement giving reasons for delay.

The Ministry of Health & Family Welfare has recently drawn a time schedule to ensure timely laying of papers and has written to all autonomous bodies under the Ministry that the Heads of these institutions as well as the Joint Secretary concerned dealing with the autonomous body in the Ministry would be jointly responsible for non-compliance with the instructions.”

In this regards the Health Secretary during evidence before the Committee also stated as under :-

“I have discussed the issue with my colleagues and we will be monitoring it very vigorously. I can very solemnly assure you that it will not happen in future.”

2.16. The Committee are concerned to note that there has been delay ranging from 4 months to 19 months in laying the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of

National Academy of Medical Sciences (India), New Delhi in respect of every year from 1994-95 to 2003-04.

2.17. From the information furnished by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (Department of Health), the Committee find that the main reason for delay in finalization and laying of the document has been the undue time taken by the Academy in getting approval of the documents from the Council and the General Body of the Academy. The Annual Report of the Academy for every year is reportedly approved by the General Body which is normally scheduled to meet only by the end of March or first week of April every year. However, the Audited Accounts relating to a year are being placed before the General Body only in the succeeding year. Thus, there had been an in-built delay in the system because of the fixed schedule of the General Body meeting. The Committee feel that had the Department of Health/Academy paid attention to the reasons for recurring delay and rescheduled the meeting of the Governing Body to seek timely approval of the audited accounts, the delay in laying the documents of the Academy could have easily been avoided. It is only on insistence of the Committee that the Academy has now agreed to prepone the meetings of the Council/General Body for getting timely approval of the documents. The Committee hope and trust that the Department of Health/NAMS would abide by the assurance given by them to the Committee and the meetings of the Council/General Body of the Academy will be convened in time so that the documents of the Academy are laid on the Table of the House within the stipulated period of nine months after close of the accounting year in future.

2.18. The Committee note that in the time schedule suggested by the Department of Health to the Academy and other autonomous organisations under their administrative control, the date of submission of the annual reports and audited accounts has been shown as 26 December. In this regard, the Committee would like to point out that after receipt of the requisite documents in the Ministry, they also require about 10-15 days to get the same authenticated and forward them to Lok Sabha Secretariat for being laid on the Table of the House. Further the Winter Session of Parliament normally concludes by the end of third week of December every year. Therefore, the documents received around 26 December can not be laid on the Table within 9 months as prescribed by the Committee. The Committee, therefore, urge the Department of Health to prepare the time schedule afresh to facilitate receipt of all the requisite documents in the Ministry by the last week of November every year positively so that they could be processed for being laid on the House during December every year. The revised schedule so prepared may be communicated to all the autonomous organizations including NAMS under the administrative control of the Ministry which may also ensure its strict compliance. The Committee would also like to be apprised of the action taken in this regard.

CHAPTER-III

Delay in laying Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), New Delhi

The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) was established by an Act of Parliament in 1985 for the promotion of Open University and Distance Education System in the country and for the coordination and determination of standards in the system. The University is financed mainly by grants received from the Central Government. During the year 2002-03 the University received grants-in-aid of Rs.3199 lakh from the Central Government.

3.2. The dates of laying of Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of IGNOU and the extent of delay in laying these documents for the years 1998-99 to 2003-04 is as under :-

<i>Year</i>	<i>Annual Report</i>		<i>Audited Accounts</i>	
	<u>Date of laying</u>	<u>Extent of delay</u>	<u>Date of laying</u>	<u>Extent of delay</u>
1998-1999	29.2.2000	2 months	14.05.2002	28 ½ months
1999-2000	13.3.2001	2 ½ months	03.12.2002	23 months
2000-2001	16.4.2002	3 ½ months	04.3.2003	14 months
2001-2002	04.3.2003	2 months	21.12.2004	24 months
2002-2003	Not laid	--	16. 8.2005	19 ½ months
2003-2004	10.5.2005	4 ½ months	Not laid	--

3.3. As regards latest position on finalisation of Audited Accounts for the year 2003-04, the Ministry in a written reply stated that “the accounts for the year 2003-04 after approval by the Finance Committee and the Board of Management were submitted for audit on 11.11.2004. Audited was conducted from 13.12.2004 to 22.2.2005. Draft SAR was received by the University on 29.05.2005. Replies to audit were sent on 8.7.2005. The final SAR with audit certificate is awaited from the audit. After receipt of the audited accounts and the audit certificate, approval of the competent authority will be

obtained. After translation in Hindi and getting the final report, the reports will be laid in both the Houses of Parliament.”

3.4. One of the oft-repeated recommendations of the Committee is that the Annual Report and Audited Accounts of autonomous organisation should be presented to Parliament together to enable the House to have a complete picture of the working of that body. Taking a serious view of laying separately the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of IGNOU, the Committee recommended in their 7th Report [(10 LS) (presented on 27.4.97)] that Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of IGNOU should be laid together. However, the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of IGNOU during the last six years have been laid separately with inordinate delay. Clarifying the reasons for laying separately the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of IGNOU pertaining to the years 1998-99 to 2003-04, the Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of Secondary & Higher Education) in a written reply stated that “Annual Reports of the University have been laid in the House without waiting for the Audited Accounts as delays were anticipated.”

3.5 On being asked the Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of Secondary & Higher Education) have furnished (O.M. dt. 25.4.05) the following main reasons for delay in laying the documents of IGNOU:-

- (a) Delay in submission of Statutory Audit Report by the Auditor
- (b) Delay in seeking replies by Auditors from IGNOU
- (c) Delay in getting the approval by the competent authorities
- (d) Delay in finally laying the documents to the Ministry by the University

3.6. Elaborating further the reasons for delay in laying, the Ministry in a written reply stated as under :-

“The University prepares the Annual Accounts in three-tier system. Study Centres (1000 nos. approx) are scattered all nooks and corner of the country, after close of financial year the Study Centres prepares their accounts after consolidating the receipts/expenditures of the partner institutions and special study centres. At second stage annual receipts/payment of each study centre comes to regional centres. Then the Regional Centres prepare accounts by incorporating the accounts submitted by Study Centres. Then Regional Centres forward their Annual Accounts to Headquarters for final compilation of Annual Accounts. The time taken in the collection of information, receipt of the Annual Audited Accounts by the University from the DGACR and approval of the same by the Board of Management/Finance Committee of the University are some of the major factors responsible for delay.”

3.7. In the delay statements laid alongwith Audited Accounts, the chronology of the dates of finalisation of the audited accounts of the University for the years 2000-01 to 2002-03 has been mentioned as under:-

<u>Sl No</u>	<u>Stages</u>	<u>2000-2001</u>	<u>2001-02</u>	<u>2002-03</u>
1.	<i>Date of compilation of accounts</i>	-	26.6.2002	14.10.2003
2.	<i>Approval of Annual Accounts by the Finance Committee</i>	-	-	19..1.2003
3.	<i>Approval of Annual Accounts by the Board of Management</i>	-	-	29.12.2004
4.	<i>Submission of Annual Accounts to audit</i>	14.12.2001	3.9.2002	23.1.2004
5.	<i>Time taken by auditors in auditing of accounts</i>	-	4.9.2002 to 9.10.2002	22.3.2004 to 25.5.2004
6.	<i>Audit objections sent by Auditors</i>	7.3.2002	8.1.2003	--
7.	<i>Reply to Draft Statutory Audit Report furnished by the University</i>	5.4.2002	20.6.2003	10.8.2004
8.	<i>Receipt of Final Audit Report</i>	29.7.2002 (English) 25.11.2002(Hindi)	10.9.2003	23.2.2005
9.	<i>Approval of Audited Accounts by the Finance Committee</i>	23.10.2002	19.11.2003	19.3.2005
10.	<i>Approval of Audited Accounts by Board of Management</i>	25.10.2002	29.12.2003	24.3.2005
11.	<i>Date of sending the documents for printing</i>	14.11.2002	24.12.2003	--
12.	<i>Receipt of printed copies</i>	-	27.01.2004	6.6.2005

13. Date of authentication of the documents	-	15.07.2004	--
14. Date of laying	04.03.2003	21.12.2004	16.08.2005

3.8. Considering the recurring delays in laying the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts, the Committee decided (on 23.06.05) to take evidence of the representatives of the Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of Secondary & Higher Education) on the subject. Accordingly, the representatives of the Ministry concerned appeared before the Committee on 15.09.05.

3.9. Regretting delay in laying Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of IGNOU, the Secretary, Department of Secondary & Higher Education, stated as follows:-

“There is an attempt but there are slippages and also there are failures and in some places we could have done better. There is no way we can defend.”

3.10. It may be seen from the information furnished in the delay statements laid along with Annual Reports and Audited Accounts for the years 1998-99 to 2003-04 that the University has taken about 9 months, 6 months and 10 months at the stage of compilation of accounts of IGNOU for the years 2000-01, 2001-02 and 2002-03 respectively. Asked to explain the inordinately long time taken at the stage of compilation of accounts and their submission to the auditors for auditing by the University, the Ministry in a written reply (dt.13.09.05) stated as under:-

“.....delay in compilation of accounts is due to the procedural factors. Firstly, the receipt/expenditure of the study centres (1200 approx) spread all over India is tabulated and then it reaches Regional Centres. The Regional Centres have to reconcile the receipt/expenditure statement from their own records and then compile the annual accounts of Regional Centre. The same is then sent to Headquarters. The Headquarters again prepares three sets of receipt & payment statements for headquarters, regional centres and EMPC. Then these three receipt & payment statements are merged and compiled up to the balance sheet. The annual accounts, after approval of the Finance Committee and the Board of Management are submitted to DGACR for audit.”

Secretary, Department of Secondary and Higher Education during evidence before the Committee also stated in this regard as follows:-

“Compilation of accounts by itself is a very cumbersome and complicated task. Subsequently, if at the audit stage there is any query, then once again we have to go back to that particular centre from where we got the reply. Such problems are inherent in an organisation like this.. In IGNOU compilation of accounts and dealing with this question takes a very long time and there is no way that we can shortcut this procedure. Of course by way of computerisation, when communication improves, probably things will improve.”

To overcome delay at the stage of compilation of accounts, the Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of Secondary & Higher Education) in a written reply have proposed as under:-

“For compilation of accounts, Tally Software has been put in use since January, 2005 on the recommendations of the National Institute of Financial Management. Computerisation of operations of other sections of the Finance and Accounts Division is yet to be done. A Committee has been appointed under the Chairmanship of Pro-vice-chancellor to give its recommendation and expedite computerisation”

Vice Chancellor (Prof. D.P.Dixit), IGNOU during evidence before the Committee also supplemented:-

“We are trying to use technology as much as possible even for accounting.... Our financing is already computed in the head office. We are being given support from the Department of Space in term of electronic connectivity.we will make all efforts to use this connectivity to get our accounts on time.”

He further added –

“This year, we even did teleconferencing wherever it was available.....We are looking forward to a situation where we can talk to them and persuade them in getting the accounts.”

3.11. From the information furnished in the delay statements laid alongwith Annual Reports and Audited accounts, it is further observed that after handing over the accounts, the auditors took 12 months each for the years 2000-01 and 2001-02 and 13 months for

the year 2002-03 for auditing of accounts and sending it to the University. Asked to state the efforts made by the Ministry/University to facilitate early completion of audit by the auditors, the Ministry in a written reply stated as follows:-

“the Ministry has already prescribed a time frame for completion of work relating to preparation and submission of audited accounts of all Central Universities under its purview. The Ministry has also issued instructions, from time to time, to the University authorities for timely submission of documents to the audit for scrutiny, the latest being one from the Education Secretary on 11.8.2005.....the Education Secretary has also taken up the matter with C&AG to consider suitable directive to the officers concerned with the audit of Central Universities to complete the audit process as per the prescribed time frame.”

In this regard, Vice-Chancellor, IGNOU during evidence said –

“We will try to impress on the DGACR that this may be expedited. We have given all our help and we will cooperate with them. This is an area where we can do better.”

3.12. It is further observed that after receipt of the audited accounts from the auditors, the University has taken 3 months for the year 2000-01, 15 months for the year 2001-02 and 6 months for the year 2002-03 for getting approval of the documents from the competent authority, printing and completing other formalities involved in the process of laying of the documents. Asked to state the steps taken to check such delays in future, the Ministry in a written reply stated as under :-

“The University has informed that it will make every effort to shorten the period of completion of all such activities like translation, printing. It will also arrange for special meetings of the Finance Committee and the Board of Management for seeking approval of the Annual Accounts for the year 2004-05.”

3.13. To a query regarding delay in translation of the documents, the Vice-Chancellor, IGNOU during evidence stated that –

“...CAG sends it to us in English and they tell us to prepare the translated version....They would like to vet it. So, we send it back and they vet and make changes, if any. Then they send it back to us.”

The Secretary, Department of Secondary & Higher Education during evidence also stated in this regard as under :-

“If we can reduced the time and get a simultaneous biligual Report in time, then we can reduce this delay by at least three months. This we had analised with the Vice-Chancellor that that can be done. What we have suggested is that the University could send its translators all this period to the auditors so that simultaneously as their English version is ready, they could get it. That could be under their control, and then they could give it to us simultaenously. Through that, we would save some time.”

3.14. As regards cutting the delay at the stage of approval of documents from the competent authority of the IGNOU, the Vice-Chancellor during evidence before the Committee submitted as under :-

“I will submit that we can certainly reduce the period of placing it before the Finance Committee and the Board of Management. That we have decided. As soon as we receive the Report, at the earliest we will convene a meeting of the Finance Committee and the Board. Normally it takes around four to six weeks. Certainly we can cut it down to four weeks and we will do that.”

3.15. To a query whether any time bound programme relating to finalisation and laying of the documents has been framed by the Ministry/IGNOU, Secretary, Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of Secondary & Higher Education) during evidence furnished the following time bound programme -

Closing of cash books by 31 March
Final adjustment by 31 May
Compilation of Final Account and preparation of Balance sheet by 30 June
Commence of audit by the DGACR by 15 September
Completion of audit of DGACR by 30 September
Submission of comments by the University by 15 October
Issue of SAR (English Version) by 31 October
Issue of SAR (Hindi version) by 15 November
Translation of accounts in Hindi, printing, binding etc. by 30 November
Submission of accounts and Audit Report to the Ministry by 1 December

He also added that “we have shared it with C&AG. I have requested them to instruct their officers, audit parties and others.”

3.16. Asked to state whether the Ministry have entrusted any senior officer with the job of monitoring the time schedule to facilitate timely finalisation and laying of the requisite documents, the Ministry in a written reply stated as under:-

“....the Ministry has been issuing reminders to the various authorities of the University, from time to time, for early submission of the documents and arrange laying of these documents immediately on receipt from the University. While the Deputy Secretary In-charge of the Central Universities is responsible for monitoring the time schedule and, wherever necessary, takes up the matter with the University authorities. Periodic review is also undertaken in the Ministry at the level of Joint Secretary. Further the statutory requirement of timely submission of audited accounts is also highlighted by the Ministry’s officials in the meetings of the Finance Committee of the Central Universities.”

In a written reply separately, the Ministry have also stated that -

“The University has constituted on 1.9.05 a Committee under the Chairmanship of Pro-Vice-Chancellor and three members from the University namely Registrar (Administration), Finance Officer and Director (Academic Coordination) to oversee the timely finalisation of Annual Report and Annual Accounts of the University.”

3.17. The Committee regret to note that the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) which coordinates and determines the standards in the system of distance education in the country and ought to promote professionalism among different segments of the population through its various academic programmes has itself been a habitual defaulter in adhering to the time limit laid down by the statute for submission of its Annual Reports and Audited Accounts before Parliament. Further contrary to the recommendation of the Committee Annual Report and Audited Accounts of the University which should have been laid together, were actually laid separately year after year with inordinate delays on the plea that the Annual Reports of the University have been laid in the House without waiting for

the audited accounts as delays were anticipated. The delay in laying the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the University pertaining to the years 1998-99 to 2003-04 ranges from 2 months to 28 ½ months.

3.18. From scrutiny of reasons for delay in laying the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the University for the last six years (1998-99 to 2003-04), the Committee note *inter-alia* that undue time was taken in compilation of accounts reportedly due to delay in collection of data from study centres spread over various parts of the country, auditing of accounts by DGACR and furnishing their final audit report and getting approval of the documents from the Board of Management/Finance Committee of the University. The Committee also note that the University has taken 9 months, 6 months and 10 months at the stage of compilation of their accounts for the years 1998-99 to 2003-04 respectively. The Ministry's plea that compilation of accounts takes a very long time and there is no shortcut procedure is hardly convincing particularly in the era of strides made in the computerisation of accounts and fast modes available for electronic transfer of data. The Committee find that the University reportedly makes use of modern communication technology in the delivery of its various programmes to its study centres scattered in every nook and corner of the country but it appears to have failed to collect the data and other information, by making use of modern electronic means/computer technology, required in connection with finalisation of the documents for laying before Parliament. The Committee hope that as assured during evidence IGNOU will now make proper use of electronic connectivity to get

the accounts from its centres to enable them to compile these accounts at Headquarters within the prescribed time to avoid delay in future.

3.19. The Committee note that another factor, which has mainly caused delay in finaliation of the documents is the undue time taken at the stage of auditing of accounts and furnishing their final audit report by C&AG. The time taken by auditors for completing their task comes to 12 months each for the years 2000-01 and 2001-02 and 13 months for the year 2002-03. The Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of Secondary & Higher Education) have now proposed to impress upon DGACR to see that it is not repeated. The Committee hope that the question of delay at the stage of audit of accounts and furnishing their final audit report, both English and Hindi versions, not only of IGNOU but all the other organisations under the administrative control of the Department of Secondary & Higher Education would be taken up with DGACR at the Secretary level in the Ministry so that it could be brought within time limits. The Committee would also like to be apprised of the action taken in this regard.

3.20. Furthermore, the time taken by the University in getting approval of the documents from the Board of Management/Finance Committee, printing and completing other formalities involved in the process of laying of the documents ranged from 3 months to 15 months for the years 2001-02 to 2002-03. The Committee feel that the inordinate delay on the part of the University in this regard is within the control of the University and thus avoidable. In order to obviate delay in future in getting approval of the documents from the competent authority the University has proposed to hold special meetings of the Finance Committee and

Board of Management. The Committee hope that as assured the steps will be taken in right earnest to ensure that there is no avoidable delay on the part of the University at this stage of finalisation of the documents.

3.21 The Committee also find that a time schedule indicating target dates for completion of each stage of the finalisation of the documents has been drawn and a Committee under the chairmanship of Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the University has been constituted to oversee the progress made at each stage of finalisation of the documents. The Committee urge that the time schedule made in this regard should be adhered to and monitored regularly to prevent recurrence of delays in finalisation and laying of requisite documents on the Table of the House in future.

CHAPTER-IV

Delay in laying Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi.

...

The Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi, an autonomous body under the administrative control of the Ministry of Culture, was set up in 1954 by the Government of India for the development of Indian literature to achieve cultural unity of the country. The Akademi is fully financed by the Government of India. During the year 2002-2003, the Akademi received grants-in-aid of Rs. 6.69 crore from the Ministry of Culture.

4.2. The Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of autonomous bodies are required to be laid on the Table within nine months of the close of the accounting year. However, there has been delay in laying the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of Sahitya Akademi year after year. The extent of delay in laying the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the Akademi since 1998-99 is as under:-

<u>Year</u>	<u>Date of laying</u>	<u>Extent of delay</u>
1998-1999	25.08.2000	08 months
1999-2000	23.04.2002	16 months
2000-2001	13.03.2003	14 months
2001-2002	08.12.2003	12 months
2002-2003	09.03.2005	14 months

These documents for the year 2003-2004, which should have been laid on the Table by 31.12.2004, were not laid till this report was considered by the Committee.

4.3. Giving latest position about finalisation of Annual Accounts of the Akademi for the year 2003-04, the Ministry have stated (O.M. dt. 10.10.05) as under :-

“The English version of the Report had been received on 30.6.2005. However the Hindi version and the audit certificate is still awaited for which reminders are being sent to DGACR from time to time.”

4.4. The Committee on Papers Laid on the Table have stressed in the past that if for any reason the Annual Report and Audited Accounts cannot be laid within the stipulated time, the Ministry concerned should lay within 30 days of the expiry of the prescribed period or as soon as the House meets, whichever is later, a statement explaining the reasons why the report and accounts could not be laid. However, no such delay statement has been laid on the Table for the years 1998-99 to 2002-03 in respect of Sahitya Akademi. Regretting the lapse, the Ministry of Culture in a written reply (O.M. dt. 10.10.05) have stated as under:-

“.....the lapse is regretted. Since instructions have been issued to initiate action for laying the statement well in time henceforth in case any delay is anticipated in laying the Audit Report in time.”

4.5. Taking into account the inordinate delay in laying the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the Akademi, the Committee took oral evidence of the representatives of Ministry of Culture/Akademi at their sitting held on 13.10.05.

6. The chronology of dates of finalisation of the Annual Accounts of the Akademi for the years last three years *viz.* 2000-01 to 2002-03 is stated to be as under:-

<u>Sl. No</u>	<u>Events</u>	<u>2000-2001</u>	<u>2001-2002</u>	<u>2001-2003</u>
1.	<i>Date of compilation & submission of documents to audit</i>	28.6.2001	26.6.2002	30.6.2003
2.	<i>Time taken by the auditors to audit the Accounts</i>	6.9.2001 to 28.9.2001	8.8.2002 to 9.9.2002	15.9.2003 to 20.10.2003
3.	<i>Date of receipt of final audit report</i>	19.3.2002 (E) 9.2002 (H)	19.2.2003 (E) 12.9.2003 (H)	25.5.2004 (E) 30.8.2004(H)
4.	<i>Date of sending the documents to the</i>	July 2002 (E) Nov.2002 (H)	1.8.2003 26.9.2003	27.5.2004 10.9.2004

Ministry for laying

5. *Date of laying* 13.3.2003 8.12.2003 9.3.2005

4.7. It is observed from the above that though the Akademi have compiled and submitted their accounts to audit in time, the auditors have taken about 15 months each for the years 2000-01 to 2002-03 for completing the audit and furnishing their final audit report to the Akademi. Asked to state the reasons for delay in auditing of accounts by the Auditors, the Ministry of Culture in a written reply (dt. 1.7.05) stated as under :-

“The reasons for delay in laying the annual report in time can be attributed largely to the audit. The time to submit the documents to audit is middle of June every year. Documents in respect of 2000-2001 submitted to audit on 28.6.2001, 2001-02 on 26.6.02 and 2002-03 on 30.6.2003”

In this regard a representative of the Ministry of Culture during evidence also stated as under:-

“The audit party arrives or comes to the scene by around September-October. Actually, the rule is that we should start auditing by June, but sometimes it is being delayed. If the party comes in June and start auditing, the process of auditing will be over by September-October. Then, the party takes another two-three months to furnish the audit certificate.”

He further added –

“If we get the report from the Auditor General in time, then of course, we can submit the report. But there is a delay. The biggest delay in the whole process is the delay from the side of the Auditor General in furnishing the English & Hindi versions of Audit Reports alongwith the audit certificate.....Audit certificate & Hindi version of the Audit Report was delayed phenomenally despite the intervention from the Ministry and Akademi.”

To avoid such delay in future, in a written reply (dt. 1.7.05) the Ministry of Culture have stated that “the matter has been examined threadbare and the problems ironed out for future.”

The Ministry of Culture in a written reply (dt.10.10.05) have also proposed “a high level meeting with Audit Authorities in order to solve the problems of delay on the part of the Audit.”

4.8. Asked to state whether the Akademy/Ministry has ever taken up the matter of expeditious completion of audit and release of audit certificate with C&AG, the Ministry stated as under :-

“The matter was taken up with DGA by following the audit certificate personally. It is DGA who issues the audit certificate. The Akademi has never contacted C&AG for release of audit certificate in the past. Accordingly, the Akademi did not take it with C&AG.”

A representative of the Ministry of Culture during evidence also stated as under :-

“I am going to ask my Secretary to call a meeting or involve the Ministry of Finance also. I will bring it to the notice of my Secretary as well as to the Finance Ministry and convey the concern of this Committee.”

He further added –

“...with little bit of co-ordination with AG and bringing to his notice the concern of the Parliamentary Committee, I am sure, we will be able to improve the things as we have been demonstrating in 2004-05, which would be ready by December, 2005.”

4.9. As regards time schedule giving target dates for completion of each stage of finalisation of accounts and report, the Ministry have stated that they have already drawn up a time schedule the details of which are as under :-

- (i) *Accounts of the previous financial year will be finalized before 30th of April every year.*
- (ii) *Meeting of the Finance Committee will be held before 15th of May every year so that the FC/EB could approve the Annual Account before submitting to the DGACR*

- (iii) *The Akademi will submit its final accounts alongwith the recommendations of the FC/EB to the DACR before 15th of June every year.*
- (iv) *The Akademi will simultaneously prepare the Annual Report for the preceding year and get it approved by EB/FC & GC before 15th August every year.*
- (v) *The printing of bilingual Annual Report alongwith Accounts will be completed latest by 31st August every year.*
- (vi) *The Akademi will be constantly in touch with the DACR Audit Party so that the Accounts are audited well in time and the Audit Report (bilingual) is received by the Akademi by 15th of October.*
- (vii) *Akademi will submit sufficient copies of the Annual Report/Audited Accounts alongwith C&AG's Audit Certificate bilingually to the Ministry latest by 10th of November every year.*

A representative of the Ministry of Culture during evidence assured the Committee that “we will invite all the organisations and gear up the schedule and see that we are able to do it in nine months”

4.10. On being asked whether any mechanism has been instituted in the Ministry to monitor the progress of work relating to finalisation of the documents, the Ministry in a written reply (dt. 1.07.2005) stated that they regularly hold meetings with the Akademi officials to impress upon them the importance of submitting the documents in time to the Government so that the same could be placed before Parliament. The Ministry have further stated in a written reply (O.M. dt. 10.10.05) that Director dealing with Akademies in the Ministry also monitors the time schedule for timely submission of Audit Report.

4.11 The Committee regret to note that there were inordinate delays in laying the Annual Report and Audited Accounts of Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi year after year. The delay ranged from 8 months to 16 months in laying the documents

pertaining to the years 1998-99 to 2002-03. The Annual Report and Audited Accounts for the year 2003-04 which were due for laying by 31.12.2004 were not laid till this report was considered by the Committee.

4.12. The Committee are unhappy to note that the requirement of laying of 'delay statement' within 30 days of expiry of the prescribed period as recommended in para 3.5 of the First Report (5th LS) of the Committee on Papers Laid on the Table has not been adhered to in respect of any of the year from 1998-99 to 2002-03 and the Members of the Parliament have been deprived of timely information. This should be complied with in future, if a need so arises.

4.13. The Committee note that the main reason for delay in laying the documents was the unduly long time taken by auditors in auditing the accounts of the Akademi. From the information furnished by the Ministry of Culture, the Committee observe that after receipt of documents for the last three years viz. 2000-01 to 2002-03, the auditors have taken 15 months each in completing the audit and furnishing the audit report particularly, the Hindi version of the audit report to the Akademi. The Ministry of Culture have also stated that the biggest delay in the whole process is the delay from the side of the Auditor General in furnishing the English & Hindi versions of Audit Reports alongwith audit certificate. The Ministry of Culture have now assured to hold a high level meeting with Audit Authorities to address the issue. The Committee, therefore, urge that the Ministry of Culture expeditiously take up the delay at the stage of auditing of accounts, not only of Sahitya Akademi but also of all the other organisations under its administrative control with C&AG where such delays exist. The Committee also stress that the Ministry of Culture may also

involve Ministry of Finance, wherever needed, to sort out the delay in auditing and to ensure timely completion of audit task so that Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of all the organisations under the control of the Ministry are laid in time in future. The Committee would like to be apprised of the action taken in this regard.

4.14. The Committee note that a time schedule has been formulated indicating target dates for completion of each stage involved in preparation of Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the Sahitya Akademi which needs to be adhered to in letter and spirit. The Ministry of Culture also assured the Committee during evidence that they would impress on the organisation to gear up the schedule to ensure that the documents are laid within nine months after close of the accounting year in future. The Committee hope that remedial action would be taken by the Ministry and the Akademi as assured before the Committee.

NEW DELHI
December , 2005
Agrahayana, 1927 (Saka)

HANNAN MOLLAH,
Chairman,
Committee on Papers Laid on the Table