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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
RURAL DEVELOPMENT  
(2007-2008)**

**FOURTEENTH LOK SABHA**

**MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT  
(DEPARTMENT OF LAND RESOURCES)**

**DEMANDS FOR GRANTS  
(2007-2008)**

*[Action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in  
the Twenty-seventh Report of the Standing Committee on  
Rural Development (Fourteenth Lok Sabha)]*

**THIRTY-FIRST REPORT**



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT  
NEW DELHI**

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(2007-2008)

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(2007-2008)

*[Action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in  
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Rural Development (Fourteenth Lok Sabha)]*

*Presented to Lok Sabha on .....*

*Laid in Rajya Sabha on .....*



सत्यमेव जयते

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT  
NEW DELHI

*February, 2008/Phalguna, 1929 (Saka)*

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## CONTENTS

	PAGE
COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE (2007-08) .....	(iii)
INTRODUCTION .....	(v)
CHAPTER I Report .....	1
CHAPTER II Recommendations that have been accepted by the Government .....	25
CHAPTER III Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's replies.....	48
CHAPTER IV Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee .....	50
CHAPTER V Recommendations in respect of which final replies of the Government are still awaited .....	67
APPENDICES	
I. Extracts of Minutes of the sitting of the Committee held on 18 February, 2008.....	69
II. Analysis of action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Twenty-Seventh Report of the Committee (14th Lok Sabha).....	71

COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
RURAL DEVELOPMENT (2007-2008)

Shri Kalyan Singh — *Chairman*

MEMBERS

*Lok Sabha*

2. Shri Mani Charenamei
3. Shri V. Kishore Chandra S. Deo
4. Shri Sandeep Dikshit
5. Shri George Fernandes
6. Shrimati Kiran Maheshwari\*
7. Shri Zora Singh Mann
8. Shri Hannan Mollah
9. Shri D. Narbula
10. Shri A. F. G. Osmani
11. Shri T. Madhusudan Reddy
12. Adv. Renge Patil Tukaram Ganpatrao
13. Shrimati Tejaswini Gowda
14. Shrimati Jyotirmoyee Sikdar
15. Shri Sita Ram Singh
16. Shri D.C. Srikantappa
17. Shri Bagun Sumbrui
18. Shri Tarit Baran Topdar<sup>#</sup>
19. Shri Chandramani Tripathi
20. Shri Beni Prasad Verma
21. Shri Dharmendra Yadav

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\*Hon'ble Speaker has changed the nomination of Shrimati Kiran Maheshwari, MP (LS) from Standing Committee on Water Resources to Standing Committee on Rural Development *w.e.f.* 30 August, 2007, *vide* Lok Sabha Bulletin Part II, Para No. 4022 dated August 30, 2007.

<sup>#</sup>Hon'ble Speaker has changed the nomination of. Shri Tarit Baran Topdar, MP (LS) from Standing Committee on Energy to Standing Committee on Rural Development *w.e.f.* 12 December, 2007 as intimated *vide* Lok Sabha Bulletin Part II, Para No. 4366 dated 12 December, 2007.

*Rajya Sabha*

22. Shri Balihari Babu
23. Shri Jayantilal Barot
24. Kumari Nirmala Deshpande
25. Shri Pyarelal Khandelwal
26. Dr. Chandan Mitra
27. Dr. Ram Prakash
28. Shri P.R. Rajan
29. Shri Bhagwati Singh
30. Ms. Sushila Tiriya
31. Shrimati Kanimozhi<sup>@</sup>

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri S.K. Sharma — *Additional Secretary*
2. Shri P.K. Grover — *Joint Secretary*
3. Shrimati Sudesh Luthra — *Director*
4. Shri A.K. Shah — *Deputy Secretary Grade-II*

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<sup>@</sup>Hon'ble Chairman, Rajya Sabha nominated Shrimati Kanimozhi, MP (RS) to Standing Committee on Rural Development *w.e.f.* 15 September, 2007 *vide* Lok Sabha Bulletin Part-II, Para No. 4096, dated 19 September, 2007.

## INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Rural Development (2007-2008) having been authorised by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present the Thirty-first Report on the action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Twenty-Seventh Report of the Standing Committee on Rural Development (2006-07) on Demands for Grants (2007-2008) of the Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development).

2. The Twenty-Seventh Report was presented to Lok Sabha on 14 May, 2007. The replies of the Government to all the recommendations contained in the Report were received on 27 August, 2007.

3. The replies of the Government were examined and the Report was considered and adopted by the Committee at their sitting held on 18 February, 2008.

4. An analysis of the action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Twenty-Seventh Report of the Committee is given in Appendix-II.

NEW DELHI;  
26 February, 2008  
07 Phalgun, 1929 (Saka)

KALYAN SINGH,  
*Chairman,*  
*Standing Committee on*  
*Rural Development.*

## CHAPTER I

### REPORT

This Report of the Committee on Rural Development (2007-08) deals with the action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in their Twenty-seventh Report on Demands for Grants (2007-08) of the Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development) which was presented to Lok Sabha on 14 May, 2007.

2. Action taken replies have been received from the Government in respect of all the 34 recommendations which have been categorised as follows:—

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

Para Nos.: 3.15, 3.16, 3.29, 3.31, 3.32, 4.13, 4.21, 4.25, 4.30, 4.41, 4.42, 4.76, 4.77, 4.80, 4.83, 5.24, 5.25, 5.26, 5.28, 5.29, 6.3

(ii) Recommendation which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of Government's replies :

Para No.: 4.12

(iii) Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee :

Para Nos.: 3.17, 3.18, 3.30, 4.22, 4.23, 4.24, 4.59, 4.63, 4.78, 4.79, 5.27

(iv) Recommendation in respect of which final replies of the Government is still awaited :

Para No. : 3.19.

**3. The Committee would like the Department to expedite the proposed action and final replies in respect of Recommendation No. 3.19 on the issue of finalisation of new Land Use Policy, categorised under interim category within three months of the presentation of the Report.**

4. The Committee will now deal with action taken by the Government on some of these recommendations in the succeeding paragraphs.



**A. Inadequate attention paid to the recommendations of the Committee made in the respective reports**

**Recommendation Serial Nos. 3 and 4  
(Para Nos. 3.17 and 3.18)**

5. The Committee had recommended as under:

“On the issue of bringing two legislations, one for the purpose of land acquisition and the other for rehabilitation, the Department has informed that the Law Ministry and Attorney General have strongly advised to have two separate legislations in this regard because the rehabilitation policy is going beyond land acquisition. The Committee feel that the issues of land acquisition and rehabilitation are inter-linked and as such need to be addressed in a single legislation. The Committee would like the Department to furnish the details of the interactions and deliberations held with the Law Ministry and Attorney General in this regard so as to understand the matter in detail and recommend further in this respect.”

*(Recommendation Serial No. 3 (Para No. 3.17)*

“The erstwhile standing Committee on Urban and Rural Development during Tenth Lok Sabha had examined various provisions made under Land Acquisition Act, 1894 and presented Eighth Report on ‘ Land Acquisition Act, 1894’ to Lok Sabha on 15 December, 1994. Thereafter, the Standing Committee on Rural Development pursued various issues related to land acquisition and rehabilitation of the persons whose land is being acquired, in their various Reports presented to Parliament. The Committee would like that their various observations/recommendations made in the respective reports should be taken into consideration while making amendments to Land Acquisition Act and bringing in a new law related to the issue of rehabilitation.”

*(Recommendation Serial No. 4 (Para No. 3.18)*

6. The Department in the action taken replies has stated as under:-

“\* \* \* The draft National Rehabilitation and Resettlement Policy-2007, Resettlement and Rehabilitation Bill, 2007 and the Land Acquisition (Amendment) Bill, 2007 prepared by this Department in consultation with the Ministry of Law & Justice are being considered by the Government.”

*(Reply to Recommendations Serial No. 3 (Para No. 3.17)*

“Wide consultations have been held for revising the R&R policy. A draft Cabinet Note on revision of the NPRR-2003 and formulation of the National Rehabilitation Policy-2006 (NRP-2006) was circulated to concerned Ministries/Departments for their comments. The draft NRP-2006 was also placed in the public domain on the websites of the Department of Land Resources and Ministry of Rural Development and at the Facilitation Counter of the Ministry of Rural Development, Krishi Bhavan for public comments, and, for which, a Public Notice was also published in the prominent National and Regional newspapers. Comments received from States/UTs and Ministries/Departments of GoI as well as a number of public comments have been suitably incorporated in the revised R&R policy, 2007. The various observations/recommendations of the Standing Committee would also be taken into consideration in this regard before finalizing the drafts.”

*(Reply to Recommendations Serial No. 4 (Para No. 3.18)*

**7. While examining the Demands for Grants 2007-08, the Committee had expressed serious reservations on bringing two legislations, one for the purpose of land acquisition and the other for rehabilitation of the persons whose property is acquired. The Committee were of the strong opinion that both the issues viz. land acquisition and rehabilitation should be addressed in a single legislation since these are inter-related issues. At that stage, the Department had informed that the Law Ministry and Attorney General had strongly advised to have two legislations. On this, the Committee had desired to furnish the details of the interactions held with the Ministry of Law and Attorney General so as to understand the matter and comment further.**

The Committee are perturbed to note that the Department has chosen not to pay attention to the serious observations of the Committee. No need has been felt to apprise the Committee about the detailed observations of the Law Ministry and Attorney General. In a casual and evasive way, the Department has stated that two legislations are being considered by the Government.

Further, the erstwhile Standing Committee had examined the various provisions made in the old and outdated legislation ‘The Land Acquisition Act, 1894’ and after detailed deliberations and wider consultations made a series of recommendations in the eighth report of the year 1994. Since then the Committee have been highlighting

various issues relating to Land Acquisition and Rehabilitation in almost every report on Demands for Grants of the Department of Land Resources and insisting on bringing amendments to the outdated legislation. The Committee are unhappy to find from the action taken reply that whereas due consideration was given to the feedback received from various quarters while formulating and amending the National Rehabilitation Policy and bringing two legislations, the recommendations of the Committee are just felt fit to be considered at the finalization stage only when it may be difficult to deliberate upon and agree to the main issues raised by the Committee.

A lot of efforts are being made by the Standing Committee while examining the various issues through different mechanism *viz.* Demands for Grants, subjects and different legislations. Wider consultations and detailed deliberations are held by the Committee before arriving at meaningful conclusions. A lot of such valuable input goes waste due to the indifferent attitude of the Government.

The Committee disapprove the way the Department has sidetracked the recommendations of the Committee on such a serious matter. Since the Government has brought two legislations *viz* Land Acquisition (Amendment) Bill, 2007 and the Rehabilitation and Resettlement Bill, 2007 to Parliament and these legislations have been referred to the Committee for examination and report, the aforesaid issues would be dealt with in detail while examining the two legislations. Here, the Committee would like the Department to pay due attention to the recommendations of the Committee and the reasons for not agreeing to the recommendations of the Committee should be categorically mentioned in the action taken reply. Besides, all the details as desired should be made available to the Committee so as to understand the issue and arrive at the right conclusions.

#### **B. Formulating National Land Use Policy**

##### **Recommendation (Serial No. 5, Para 3.19)**

8. The Committee had recommended as under:

“XXXXXXX There is an urgent need to ensure that there is no reduction in total agricultural land in the country. In this regard, the Committee note the stand of the Department according to which industries, Special Economic Zones should be established preferably on wastelands. Degraded forestland could also be considered but with higher than the usual norms for compensatory afforestation or reforestation. To the extent agricultural land is used for industries etc., there should be

compensatory development of wastelands for the sake of food security of the country. The Committee also note that the data with regard to the land acquired for Special Economic Zones as far is being collected by the Department from the concerned Ministry of Commerce and Industry. The Committee also note that legislative provisions restricting use of agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes exist in most of the States. Further the Committee note that land is a non-renewable resource and is finite. It cannot be further extended. In view of this, there is an urgent need to ensure a balanced use of land for different purposes *viz.* agriculture, industries, forestation, housing etc. While noting the stand of the Department that industries, SEZs should preferably be set up on wasteland/degraded forest land, the Committee recommend that the Government should permit acquisition of land cautiously keeping in view the limited land resources of the country. In this scenario, perhaps there is an urgent need to have a National Land Use Policy which can guide the various State Governments in having laws with regard to the use of land for different purposes with the objective of balanced and harmonious use of land for different purposes. In this regard, the Committee also note that the Department has requested the Ministry of Agriculture to convene the meeting of the National Land Use and Conversion Board to discuss the issues related to acquisition of agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes. The aforesaid concerns of the Committee should specifically be brought before all concerned. Besides, the concern of Committee to have a National Land Use Policy should also be brought to the knowledge of the concerned Ministries/Departments. The Committee should also be kept apprised about the follow up of the aforesaid recommendation of the Committee.”

9. The Department in the action taken reply has stated as under:—

“The matter has been taken up with the Ministry of Agriculture. Other Ministries/Departments will also be involved as and when necessary. The Committee will be kept apprised of the progress in this regard.”

**10. The Committee note that the Department has taken up the issue of bringing out a National Land Use Policy with the Ministry of Agriculture and other concerned Ministries/Departments would also be involved as and when necessary. The Committee would like the Department to pursue further in this regard and expedite formulation of National Land Use Policy, which can guide the various State Governments in having laws with regard to use of land for different purposes with the objective of balanced and harmonious use of land.**

### C. Distribution of ceiling surplus land by State Governments

#### Recommendation (Serial No. 7, Para 3.30)

11. The Committee had recommended as under:

“The Committee would like to point out an interesting situation whereby on the one hand land is being acquired for setting up industries, Special Economic Zones and urbanization, on the other hand, the emphasis is being given to distribute the land to landless persons. The Committee also feel that the agenda of distribution of land to the landless persons would have got a backseat due to the current priorities of acquisition of land for setting up industries etc. The Committee would like the Department to furnish the data with regard to distribution of land/wastelands year-wise so as to understand the aforesaid change of priorities and comment further in this regard.”

12. The Department in the action taken reply has stated as under:—

“As indicated above, land and its management falls within the administrative jurisdiction of the State Governments as provided under the Constitution of India. Accordingly, land is distributed to the eligible poor by the State Governments/UT Administrations under their various programmes. This Department is monitoring only distribution of ceiling surplus land by the States/UTs, which becomes available as a result of implementation of ceiling laws, by preparation of Quarterly Progress Reports. Ceiling laws are not in all the States/UTs. Further, in spite of requests, QPRs are not being received regularly from all States/UTs having ceiling legislations. As per information received from the State/UT Governments, the cumulative figures of distribution of ceiling surplus land at the end of last five years was as under:

As on	Area distributed (in lakh acres)
31.3.2007	50.34
31.3.2006	49.40
30.6.2005**	49.18*
31.3.2004	54.03
31.3.2003	52.94

\*The difference in area distributed was due to the fact that during May, 2005 Govt. of J&K informed that their figure of area distributed viz. 4.50 lakh acres being shown in the QPRs is incorrect. It was informed by the State Government that an area of 8836 acres has been declared surplus in the State, possession of the same has not been taken and it remains with ex-owners.

\*\*QPR as on 31.3.2005 not available.”

13. The Committee find that one of the important matter under the jurisdiction of the Department of Land Resources is monitoring of distribution of ceiling surplus land by the States/UTs. The Committee are concerned to note that in spite of request made by the Department, Quarterly Progress Reports (QPRs) are not being received regularly from all States/UTs. Further, the Committee are surprised to note the data of area distributed in different years since 2003. The Committee fail to understand how the area of 52.94 lakh acres distributed as on 31st March 2003 could decline to 49.40 lakh acres as on 31st March, 2006. The Committee would like an explanation from the Department in this regard. The Committee would like to be apprised about the names of the States/UTs, which are not regular in sending Quarterly Progress Reports. The Department should also indicate the efforts being made to procure Quarterly Progress Reports from the States/Union territory Administrations so as to understand the reasons for not sending the reports by various State Governments.

D. Need for separate district-wise data base for rainfed/degraded land and wastelands

**Recommendation (Serial No. 13, Para 4.22)**

14. The Committee had recommended as under:

“As regards the projections for treating the wastelands, it is imperative to have the exact information about the task ahead so as to have proper planning. In this regard different data of wastelands are given in different documents. Whereas, the Approach Paper to Eleventh Plan has estimated requirement of Rs. 80,000 crore for treatment of 80 million hectares of wastelands, as per the Parthasarthy Committee Report the projections have been made based on the data of 125 million hectares of wastelands. Further, the updated Atlas indicates the area of wastelands as 55.27 million hectares. Further clarifying the position the Secretary informed the Committee that estimates of 125 million hectares include area of DDP and DPAP land. As regards the estimates of Approach Paper, the Department at one place has indicated that they are not aware of this data whereas at another place it has been stated that when the draft of Approach Paper came to the Department for comments, it has clarified that there may be an estimated 125 million hectare degraded land in rainfed area including 80 million hectares of land under dryland farming. The Committee conclude from what

has been stated above that perhaps there is no clarity of the exact area which is rainfed area under DDP and DPAP blocks as well as dryland farming in the country. As regards wastelands since the district-wise data is available as per the scientifically obtained data in updated Atlas, perhaps the data can be relied upon. However, there is too much confusion when the data of wastelands is combined with data of other degraded/rainfed land which need treatment. In this scenario the Committee would like the Department to clarify whether the separate district based data of rainfed/degraded land other than the wastelands data of Atlas is available with the Government and whether the outlays required for degraded/rainfed area are different from those for the wastelands."

15. The Department in the action taken reply has stated as under:—

"In the Draft Approach Paper to the Eleventh Five Year Plan, the Planning Commission have stated as under:

"With an estimated 80 million hectares needing treatment, and average expenditure of Rs.10,000 per hectare, the total requirement of funds is about Rs.80,000 crore. For this magnitude of funding to be feasible during the 11th Plan, it is absolutely essential that these programmes be converged with or at least supplemented by the Employment Guarantee programme funding local level schemes which conserve moisture and recharge ground water".

The Planning Commission had sent the Approach Paper at the draft stage to the Ministry of Rural Development for its comments. In response to the para mentioned above, the Department of Land Resources had made the following specific comment:

"There may be an estimated 125 million hectares of degraded land in rainfed areas including 80 million hectares of land under dryland farming which may actually need to be developed. Ministry of Rural Development had set up a Technical Committee on Watershed Programmes under the Chairmanship of Shri S. Parthasarthy which in its report has recommended an investment of Rs.1,50,000 crores over a period of next 15 years to completely develop this 125 million hectares of rainfed areas in convergence with National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme."

Thus, it will be seen that the Department of Land Resources had categorically mentioned a figure of 125 million hectares as indicated in the Parthasarthy Committee Report.

In the Wastelands Atlas of India – 2005, details of the wasteland available in each district have been given. The outlay of Rs.1,50,000 crore has been estimated for development of 125 million hectares of degraded land in rainfed areas including 80 million hectares of land under dryland farming which also needs development.”

**16. While noting the confusion with regard to exact data of wastelands/dryland to be developed in the country, the Committee in their earlier recommendation had asked the Department to clarify whether the separate district-based data of rainfed/degraded land other than the wasteland data of Atlas is available with the Government and whether the outlays required for degraded rainfed area are different from those of the wastelands. The Department has not clarified the position clearly in the action taken reply. In a vague manner, it has been stated that the outlay of Rs.1,50,000 crore estimated for development of 125 million hectares of degraded land in rainfed area include 80 million hectares of land under dryland farming which also need development. The aforesaid clarification does not address to the issue raised by the Committee. The Committee would, therefore, like to be apprised of the clear-cut position on the query raised in the earlier recommendation so as to have a clear picture of the district-wise position of rainfed/degraded land as well as wastelands in the country based on the different Survey Reports of various Agencies including National Remote Sensing Agency (NRSA), Forest Survey of India, etc.**

**E. Need to expedite finalisation of Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP)**

**Recommendation (Serial Nos. 14, 24 & 25,  
Para Nos. 4.23, 4.78 and 4.79)**

17. The Committee had recommended as under:

“The Committee note that whereas wastelands is spread all over the country, DDP/DPAP blocks are area specific and identified in various States. DDP blocks have been identified in seven States/UTs and DPAP blocks have been identified in sixteen States/UTs whereas wastelands are there in almost every State. However, the extent of wastelands may vary from State-to-State. Besides, the DDP, DPAP blocks may vary with the passage of time. Such frequent change may not be there in wastelands. In this scenario perhaps, there is a need to set targets separately for wastelands/other degraded areas. Otherwise there will be utter



confusion. The Committee would like the clarification from the Department on the aforesaid observation so as to analyse the position further.”

*(Recommendation Para No. 4.23)*

“The Committee note that although the new programme IWMP has been proposed to be implemented from the year 2007-08, the modalities of revised programme has so far not been finalized. The Committee have repeatedly been recommending to the Ministry of Rural Development to have the detailed homework done before launching a new scheme or restructuring a programme. It is difficult to understand how the subsumed programme would be implemented in the absence of the detailed guidelines and pending the finalization of the detailed modalities. The year 2007-08 has already commenced *w.e.f.* 1st April, 2007 and the Committee fail to understand how the revised programme would be implemented in this year in the absence of the detailed modalities. In view of the aforesaid scenario the Committee strongly recommend expeditious finalization of the guidelines and the detailed modalities.”

*(Recommendation Para No. 4.78)*

“The Committee note that DDP and DPAP are being implemented in the specified identified DDP and DPAP blocks in various States of the country. Although the Department has informed that the operational identity of different programmes would be maintained in the revised programme, the Committee would strongly recommend to provide adequate priority to the DDP and DPAP block in the revised programme.”

*(Recommendation Para No. 4.79)*

18. The Department in the action taken replies has stated as under:

“The DPAP and DDP are implemented in specified Blocks and the programmes are meant for drought proofing and to combat desertification to tackle the special problem faced by fragile ecosystems in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid regions constantly affected by severe drought conditions and desertification. Since the proposed new single programme aims at holistic development of watershed areas by merging all related area development programmes, the requirements of individual programmes would also be taken into account during implementation of the integrated programme.”

*(Reply to Recommendation Para No. 4.23)*

“Action has already been initiated to get the IWMP approved from the Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC). Approval of the competent authority has also been obtained to release funds for the ongoing projects of IWDP, DPAP and DDP on the existing pattern. Accordingly, funds are being released for implementation of ongoing projects of IWDP, DPAP and DDP out of the allocation made for IWMP for 2007-08.

The task of preparing of the common guidelines has been undertaken and it is proposed to submit the common guidelines to the National Rainfed Area Authority for approval shortly.”

*(Reply to Recommendation Para No. 4.78)*

“In the new programme (IWMP), the consolidation will be for the purpose of co-ordination between the three programmes for the sake of integrated planning and optimum use of resources. The requirements/priorities of individual programmes would also be taken into account during implementation of the integrated programme.”

*(Reply to Recommendation Para No. 4.79)*

**19. The Committee while examining Demands for Grants had been informed by the Department that the new programme ‘Integrated Wastelands Management Programme (IWMP)’ was proposed to be implemented by the year 2007-08. The Committee in the earlier recommendation while deploring the way the new programmes are being launched without detailed homework had recommended the Department to expedite the finalisation of the guidelines and the detailed modalities of the new programme. However, the Department is yet not ready with the guidelines and the detailed modalities of the programme even when the financial year 2007-08 is going to end. The Committee cannot but conclude from the aforesaid scenario that IWMP would not be implemented during the year 2007-08 as proposed. The Committee deplore the casual way in which the new programmes are proposed by the Department and again reiterate their earlier recommendation to do the homework before proposing some new programme. The guidelines and modalities of the programme should be finalised before the start of the next financial year so that the programme can be implemented and meaningful utilization of the resources is achieved.**

**F. Clarification regarding matching the claim of Government on wastelands development at ground level**

**Recommendation (Serial No. 15, Para 4.24)**

20. The Committee had recommended as under:

“As regards the claim of the Department that 8.6 million hectares of wastelands was covered as reported in the updated Atlas, the Committee would like to be informed of the States where the extent of wastelands has considerably come down. Besides, as per the data indicated by the Department in Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Kerala, Mizoram, Nagaland, considerable part of the wastelands have been covered. The Committee would also like to be informed whether the achievements reflected in these States match with the position of wastelands coming down in the updated Atlas which contained district-wise data obtained through Satellite imagery so as to draw the meaningful conclusion about the progress of work with regard to development of wastelands in the country and to chalk out further strategy in this regard.”

21. The Department in the action taken reply has stated as under:

“In the Wasteland Atlas of India-2000, an area of about 63.85 million hectare was estimated as wasteland. According to Wasteland Atlas of India-2005, the wasteland is 55.27 million hectare. Thus, a reduction of 8.58 million hectare (63.85 – 55.27) of wasteland has been noticed.

The information made available by this Department was relating to the area in various States covered under IWDP since 1995. No data relating to the achievements made by various States was furnished. Besides, in the Wasteland Atlas, the area developed under various watershed programmes has not been given.”

**22. The Committee during the course of examination of Demands for Grants had been informed that in Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Kerala, Mizoram and Nagaland, considerable part of the wastelands could be covered. While noting the aforesaid position, the Committee had desired to be informed whether the achievements reflected by the States match with the district-wise position of wastelands coming down as reported in the updated Atlas. In response to the aforesaid concern expressed by the Committee, the Department has very casually stated that the information made available by the Department related to the area in various States covered under IWDP**

since 1995 and no data relating to the achievements made by various States was furnished.

The Committee conclude from the aforesaid statement that the stress of the Department is only on making allocations under different schemes. The Department do not have the data of physical achievement indicating the development of wastelands in the areas covered under different schemes to find the ground reality of the implementation of various projects being undertaken under different schemes. The Committee have repeatedly been deploring the way monitoring of different programmes is being undertaken by the Department and had made various recommendations to monitor the programmes at various levels and also at various stages. The aforesaid reply of the Department speaks volumes of the sorry state of affairs with regard to implementation of the programme. In the absence of the crucial data with regard to district-wise achievement in the States where the programmes are being implemented, it is difficult to verify the achievements claimed by the Atlas. The Committee strongly recommend to the Department to monitor the data with regard to physical achievements made with regard to wastelands developed in various States where different schemes are being implemented and inform the Committee accordingly.

**G. Furnishing information with regard to foreclosure of projects and data of unspent balances in various Budget Documents**

**Recommendation ((Serial No. 20, Para 4.59)**

23. The Committee had recommended as under:

“The Committee have reviewed the physical and financial achievement during each year of the Tenth Plan in the preceding chapter of the report whereby it has been noted that Department have achieved almost 100 per cent physical and financial targets. While examining the Demands for Grants of the previous years, the Committee have noted that the position is not so favourable if the ground situation in this regard is analyzed. The various Budget documents of the Department indicate that the releases to the State Governments/implementing agencies are considered as spending. Besides, the area covered by different projects is considered to be developed without analyzing the ground situation. There is no mechanism to analyze the performance of projects being undertaken under different schemes due to long gestation period. The data indicated with regard to unspent balances to the tune of Rs. 969.15 crore under the three major

schemes Desert Development Programme (DDP), Drought Prone Areas Programme (DPAP) and Integrated Wastelands Development Programme (IWDP) further substantiates the aforesaid observation of the Committee. As many as 1764 projects under DPAP, 300 projects under DDP and 7 projects under IWDP have been foreclosed by now. The Committee have repeatedly been recommending to the Department to indicate the position of unspent balances as well as foreclosure of projects in the various Budget documents so as to know the position with regard to real achievement at the ground level. The Committee express strong exception as the information is not being furnished in the Outcome Budget of the Department inspite of the insistence by the Committee in the respective Reports.

The Standing Committee on Rural Development while examining the Demands for Grants 2005-2006 of the Department [(refer Para 2.16 of Tenth Report (14th Lok Sabha)] had suggested a mechanism to evaluate the performance of different projects under the aforesaid three major schemes at various stages of implementation. The recommendation of the Committee in this regard is reproduced below:

“The Committee feel that there is an urgent need to evolve some sort of mechanism for evaluating the performance of different projects. Some sort of grading indicating poor, satisfactory or very good may be indicated against the number of projects being undertaken in various States. Besides, another mechanism can be to have some system indicating the projects at First stage, Second stage, Third stage etc. Such type of analysis would enable a critical evaluation of the projects. The Committee would like the Department to consider the said aspect and apprise the Committee accordingly.”

The Committee note with satisfaction from the written replies that the Department has agreed to adopt the monitoring system suggested by the Committee. To conclude, the Committee again emphasize the strict monitoring of the projects being undertaken under the major schemes related to wastelands through various systems of monitoring *viz.* monitoring of projects at various stages, grading of projects, monitoring through area officers schemes. Besides, another mechanism to evaluate the performance of the project is through Vigilance Committees. The Committee strongly recommend to strengthen the monitoring mechanism as suggested above. Besides, the Committee reiterate their earlier

recommendation to indicate the data with regard to unspent balances and foreclosure of projects in the various Budget documents. The aforesaid data may also be made available on the website of Department to bring transparency as well as to put pressure on the implementing agencies to perform better in this regard. Besides, the data and outcome of the meetings of Vigilance Committees as well as the area officers' schemes should also be given in the Budget documents. Besides the Department should categorically inform the Committee the reasons for huge under-spending under the three major schemes DDP, DPAP and IWDP and take corrective action to ensure that the allocation made under different programmes is meaningfully utilized. The Committee may also be kept apprised about this."

24. The Department in the action taken reply has stated as under:-

"While noting the concern of Hon'ble Standing Committee on unspent balances, it is submitted that all schemes presently implemented by the Department are demand driven. The annual allocation made for different schemes in the Budget of the Department are not released to States or to the Programmes Implementing Agencies on allocation basis, but on the basis of demand for further instalment in case of ongoing projects or for sanction of new projects. In IWDP, DPAP and DDP, the releases are made to ZPs/DRDAs in 5 instalments over a period of five years as per the prescribed procedure. Successive instalments are released only after 50 per cent of the funds released in the previous instalments have been utilized.

The Department has taken various measures involving the State Rural Development Department to monitor the performance of the projects so that delay in implementation of the project is arrested, the funds are utilized fully within the stipulated period and unspent balance with the States/PIAs may be minimum. Some of the measures taken by the Department are elaborated below –

- (1) Hon'ble Minister of Rural Development takes monthly meeting in which the Nodal Officers from each State furnish monthly progress reports which are reviewed and ways and means are suggested to achieve the physical/financial targets.
- (2) A web-based online system has been launched for monitoring of the projects by direct on-line entry of the

watershed projects related data at three levels *i.e.* DoLR, State and DRDA/ZP. The quarterly physical and financial progress reports are to be entered by the DRDA/ZP and entry for release of Central share and State share is to be done by Department of Land Resources and State Government respectively. The on-line application aims at generating periodically performance linked updated data on project details and physical and financial achievements.

- (3) The Department has modified the proforma of Utilization Certificate, which has necessitated the implementing agency to furnish the details of outputs and outcomes as incorporated in the Outcome Budget along with the usual details of fund utilization. This will ensure that fund expenditure is commensurate with the physical achievements and indicate the performance of the project while releasing the next instalment.
- (4) Since the project funds are released to the DRDAs/ZPs, the role of Rural Development Departments of the States was hitherto limited. The Department has taken the initiative to involve the Rural Development Departments of the States in monitoring the performance at all the three stages of the projects through a State level Committee.
- (5) The Department monitors performance of the projects on the basis of quarterly progress reports. Mid Term evaluation of the projects by an independent evaluator is mandatory after release of 45 per cent of project cost. The Mid Term Evaluation Report reveals the physical outputs and outcomes of the project and only after analyzing and ascertaining the positive outputs commensurate with the project objectives, the next instalment of funds is released for the project."

**25. While taking note of the large number of projects being closed at various stages under different watershed schemes, Integrated Wastelands Development Programme (IWDP), Desert Development Programme (DDP) and Drought Prone Areas Programme (DPAP), the Committee have persistently been recommending to indicate the position of unspent balances as well as foreclosure of projects under different schemes in the various Budget documents. In the recommendation under consideration, even when the Committee had expressed strong exception for not addressing the aforesaid recommendation of the Committee, the Department has least bothered to indicate the reasons for not furnishing the desired information in the Budget documents.**

In addition to what has been stated above, the Committee has also desired that the aforesaid data with regard to unspent balances and foreclosure of projects should also be made available on the website of the Department. Further, the data and outcome of the meetings of Vigilance Committees as well as the area officers' schemes should also be given in the Budget documents. In a vague manner, the efforts made by the Department for better monitoring of the projects have been indicated in the action taken replies. The Committee disapprove the way the Department is addressing to their recommendations and would like that the desired information may be indicated in the Budget documents of the coming financial year *i.e.* 2008-09.

The Committee in the earlier recommendation had also desired to be informed about the reasons for huge underspending under the three major schemes of the Department, *viz.* Integrated Wastelands Development Programme (IWDP), Desert Development Programme (DDP) and Drought Prone Areas Programme (DPAP), which the Department has not indicated in the action taken reply. The Committee while reiterating their earlier recommendation would like the categorical response of the Department in this regard.

#### H. Giving priorities to development of wastelands in North Eastern States

##### Recommendation Serial No. 21 (Para 4.63)

26. The Committee had recommended as under:—

“The Committee find that out of total geographical area of 2,62,179 Sq. Kms. Of North-Eastern States including Sikkim, 62,106.64 Sq. Kms. *i.e.* 23.69 per cent of the total area in wastelands. In the North-Eastern States, out of the three schemes DDP, DPAP and IWDP related to watershed development, only one scheme *i.e.* IWDP is being implemented since these States have no DPAP and DDP blocks. As regards the achievement made with regard to the various projects being implemented in these areas, so far 558 projects were taken up during Eighth, Ninth and Tenth Plan under IWDP covering 2.76 million hectares of land. Out of this 2.76 million hectares only 1,19,324 hectares *i.e.* around 4 per cent of the total land could actually, be treated as per the information provided by the Department. Another noticeable fact is that the strategy for Eleventh Plan is being chalked out based on the data of coverage *i.e.* 2.76 million hectares



and as such the Department is very optimistic to cover the remaining 2.50 million hectares during the Eleventh Plan thus leaving only 0.95 million hectares in North-Eastern States. Further Rs. 20.85 crores is lying unspent with various North-Eastern States. The Committee have dealt with in detail the issue of releases being considered as spending as well as coverage being treated as really developed by the Department in the preceding chapter of the report. Similar trends are noticeable in the case of North Eastern States. The Committee disapprove the way the projections are being made without noting the ground situation. There is an urgent need to understand the ground situation with regard to the implementations of various projects so as to know the real impact of these programmes. The Committee strongly recommend to the Department to review the policy of monitoring as given in detail in earlier part of the report and give adequate emphasis on the development of wastelands in North Eastern States which have a sizeable area of wastelands."

27. The Department in the action taken reply has stated as under:—

"IWDP is a demand driven scheme. The annual allocation made for the scheme for NE Region in the budget of the Department is not released to the concerned States or to the Programmes Implementing Agencies on allocation basis, but on the basis of demand for further instalment in case of ongoing projects or for sanction of new projects. The funds are released to the DRDAs in 5 instalments over a period of five years as per the prescribed procedure. Successive instalments are released only after 50% of the funds released in the previous instalments have been utilized.

The Department has taken various measures to monitor the performance of the projects involving the State Rural Development Departments. Some of the measures taken are as under:—

- (1) Hon'ble Minister of Rural Development takes monthly meeting in which the Nodal Officers from each State furnish monthly progress reports which are reviewed and ways and means are suggested to achieve the physical/financial targets.
- (2) The Department has accorded priority status to all those projects which are near completion for the sake of monitoring their progress and processing for release of funds.

- (3) In order to give thrust to timely completion of the projects, Department has taken steps to periodically inform through notices to the States for assessment of the projects delayed in claiming the second installment to ensure timely completion of preparatory stage of the project and the projects delayed for Mid Term Evaluation to ensure timely completion of Execution stage.
- (4) A web-based on-line system has been launched for monitoring of the projects by direct on-line entry of the watershed projects related data at three levels *i.e.* DoLR, State and DRDA/ZP. The quarterly physical and financial progress reports are to be entered by the DRDA/ZP and entry for release of Central share and State share is to be done by DoLR and State Government respectively. The on-line application aims at generating periodically performance linked updated data on project details and physical and financial achievements.
- (5) The Department has modified the proforma of Utilization Certificate, which has necessitated the implementing agency to furnish the details of outputs and outcomes as incorporated in the Outcome Budget along with the usual details of fund utilization. This will ensure that fund expenditure is commensurate with the physical achievements and indicate the performance of the project while releasing the next instalment.
- (6) Since, the project funds are released to the DRDAs/ZPs, the role of Rural Development Departments of the States was hitherto limited. The Department has taken the initiative to involve the Rural Development Departments of the States in monitoring the performance at all the three stages of the projects through a State level Committee.
- (7) The Department monitors performance of the projects on the basis of quarterly progress reports. Mid Term evaluation of the projects by an independent evaluator is mandatory after release of 45 per cent of project cost. The Mid Term Evaluation Report reveals the physical outputs and outcomes of the project and only after analyzing and ascertain the positive outputs commensurate with the project objectives, the next instalment of funds is released for the project."

**28. The Committee in their earlier recommendation while noting the dismal scenario of implementation of IWDP, the only scheme**

related to wastelands development being implemented in North-eastern States, had recommended to give adequate emphasis on the development of wastelands in North-eastern States where sizeable area is wastelands. Instead of taking the initiatives in the right direction the Department has chosen to furnish a vague response. It has simply been stated that IWDP is a demand driven scheme and the annual allocation made for the scheme for North-eastern States in the Budget of the Department is not released to the concerned States or to the programme implementing agencies on allocation basis.

The Committee note that whereas ten per cent exclusive allocation is being earmarked in case of North-eastern States under different schemes, sincere efforts are not being made to properly utilize the exclusive allocation which can result in the overall development of these States. The Committee express serious concern over the way the Committee has been misled by the Department by giving vague response to the various recommendations. The Committee reiterate their earlier recommendation to give more emphasis to North-eastern States and would like to know about the concrete measures initiated by the Department for proper implementation of the scheme in these States.

**I. Expeditious finalisation of National Land Resources Management Programme (NLRMP)**

**Recommendation Serial Nos. 37 (Para No. 5.27)**

29. The Committee had recommended as under:—

“The Committee while supporting the Department on the issue of restructuring the programme find that another area of concern is having correct land records. The proposed restructured scheme of computerization of land records on the basis of the existing records would only serve the purpose of saving the decaying maps/land records but the real purpose of land records can be achieved only when the land records are correct and reflect the true ground position in this regard. In this regard, the State Governments’ efforts were being supplemented by the Centrally Sponsored Scheme for Strengthening of revenue Administration and Updating of Land Records. The Secretary has informed that under the restructured programme, there is no proposal for taking up any survey. He has also stated that preparation of land records is basically the task of State Governments and the original work has to be done by the States. The Secretary has also observed

that SRA & ULR has been reduced into a building programme *i.e.* strengthening of land revenue administration which is not the genuine priority of the programme. The Committee differ here from the observation of the Secretary and note that very good work has been done under the programme by some of the States as admitted by the Department in the various documents. Goa, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal have been stated to be the States which have completed RoR data entry work with the assistance provided under the programme. It has also been mentioned that Orissa and Andhra Pradesh have also done good work. In this scenario, the Committee express strong concern over discontinuing the programme meant for maintenance and updating of land record *i.e.* SRA & ULR. While agreeing that there may be some problems in the implementation of the programme in some of the States, the Committee feel that the same can be addressed through bringing reforms in the various modalities of the programme. Since some States could do very good work, other States can also be motivated to emulate the good performing States. Besides, the Committee observe that with the proposed restructured programme only the States who could do something to have very good land records can be benefited. Again the worst performing States would be at a disadvantageous situation since these States have land records in a form which will serve no purpose after computerization.

The Committee further observe that in North Eastern States, the position of land records is further worse. In this regard, it is pertinent to highlight the observation of the Committee while examining the Demands for Grants 2006-07 that the system of land records and land administration prevalent in the rest of the country does not exist in the hilly and tribal areas of North Eastern States. In most of the States even the cadastral survey has not been done and so no land records exist. The Committee had been informed at that stage that under the existing schemes some of the North Eastern States have done some work like Arunachal Pradesh has some land records and Manipur has land records for five valley districts and these States have started data entry work. The State Government of Meghalaya has no proper land records and has been requested to carry out survey and settlement. State Governments of Mizoram and Nagaland have already started survey and settlement with the financial support from Government of India under the scheme of SRA & ULR. The Committee find that the restructured scheme of

Computerization of Land Records would be of no help to North Eastern States because these States have no land records. Some initiatives were being undertaken by these States under the existing SRA & ULR Scheme and with the closure of that support, there is no hope of having proper land records in these States. In view of the aforesaid observation, the Committee strongly recommend to the Government to continue SRA & ULR. However, the shortcomings of the existing scheme can be addressed by restructuring some of its components.

Keeping in view the existing position of land records in North Eastern States, the Committee strongly recommend as under.

1. Detailed survey of the land resources including watershed areas, catchments areas, drainage, forest areas, arable land areas etc. of each village through satellite and remote sensing devices should be carried out;
2. Nodal authorities at the State and District level for coordinated functioning among the departments, engaged for the enlistment of rural economy through the use of land and its resources should be set up;
3. The Expert Committee on land management of the hill areas at the State and district level should be set up;
4. The recommendations of the Expert Committee should be mandatory followed by all the Departments.
5. The detailed survey of District and Sub-Divisional headquarter areas for maintaining land records of government office plots, individual plots, public land etc. should be carried out.

The Committee further observe that there is an urgent need to assure the people in North-East that the aforesaid Schemes are meant for the upkeep and maintenance of existing land records and in no way proposed to change the age old traditions and customs. Such an assurance is altogether required keeping in view the peculiar position of land records in North-East."

30. The Department in the action taken reply has stated as under:—

"It is stated that the RoR data entry work has been taken up/ completed by the State Governments/UT Administrations under the scheme of Computerisation of Land Records (CLR) under which 100 per cent Central assistance is provided to States/UTs

and not under the Scheme of Strengthening of Revenue Administration & Updating of Land Records (SRA & ULR) where the funding pattern is 50:50 between the Centre and the States. However, UTs are provided 100 per cent Central assistance. Central assistance on 100 per cent basis will be provided to the States/UTs where this work still remains to be done.

As far as sanction/implementation of NLRMP in the States and UTs is concerned, the States and UTs are at different levels of progress in respect of computerization of land records, adoption of modern survey technology, computerization of property registration, and modernization of the revenue administration. A detailed proforma for data collection has been developed and circulated among the States and UTs. Based on the responses, a sizing exercise is being carried out to have a clear understanding of the size of the problem. The Programme requirements would be worked out according to the state of preparedness of each State and UT and the activities customized. The necessary "hand holding" support will be provided under the programme to them. Outsourcing for critical gaps in technology and human resources will be allowed. Further, support will be provided to the States/UTs for outsourcing and procurement management.

Training activities will also be supported under the Programme for capacity building of the functionaries at the various levels. This will include training needs analysis (TNA), training of trainers/master trainers, strengthening of the State revenue training set up, induction of modern equipment and technology, consultancies, workshops, etc. Setting up National and State Resource Centres is also envisaged to support the activities under the Programme on an ongoing basis.

To begin with, the Programme will be piloted in a number of districts across the country. These districts will be selected carefully in consultation with the States and UTs. The experience of these pilots will help in refining the methodology and approach, following which the Programme will be scaled up to cover all the districts in the country.

The requirements of the North Eastern States would be taken into account under the NLRMP. Land management including survey, settlement, etc; being a State subject, the above mentioned recommendations of the Committee would be shared with the concerned States, so that concerted action could be taken from their end as well.

31. The Committee while taking note of the modalities of the new programme *i.e.* National Land Resources Management Programme (NLRMP) which is proposed to be started on a pilot basis had made a series of reservations:—

- (i) the restructured programme would help only the good performing States and the worse performing States again would be at a disadvantageous situation;
- (ii) there is a peculiar problem in North-eastern States where cadastral survey has not been done in some of the States and no land records exist. In view of this scenario, the Committee had strongly recommended the Government to continue SRA & ULR and address the shortcomings by restructuring some of its components.

The Department has not addressed to the concerns expressed by the Committee. Instead, the detailed modalities of the restructured programme already made available while examining Demands for Grants (2007-08) have again been indicated. While expressing displeasure over the way the recommendation of the Committee has been addressed by the Department, the Committee reiterate that the aforesaid concerns of the Committee should be looked into while restructuring the programmes related to land records.

## CHAPTER II

### RECOMMENDATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

#### **Recommendation (Serial No. 1, Paragraph No. 3.15)**

Land is one of the biggest resources for any country. With the enormous expansion of the State's role in promoting public welfare and economic development since Independence, acquisition of land for public purposes has become far more important than ever before. Further, with the changing scenario of industrialization, liberalization, urbanization and new economic policy there is an immense pressure on land. Now-a-days, land is being acquired for setting up Special Economic Zones (SEZs) so as to generate employment through industries and related activities. With the increased activity of land acquisition for public purposes as well as for setting up industries, the issues related to land acquisition and rehabilitation of the affected persons whose land is being acquired have been the matter of debate recently.

The Committee note that land and its management falls under the State List. However, the Union Government has played a crucial role in the advisory capacity as well as a facilitator since Independence. In this scenario, the responsibility of the Department of Land Resources, being the nodal Union Department, to deal with the issues related to land is immense. On the one hand, there is a need to bring amendments to the old and outdated laws related to land acquisition to protect the interests of the persons whose land is being acquired, on the other hand, there is a need to ensure that there is no reduction in total agricultural land which may further aggravate the demand and supply mis-match of agricultural products. On both the accounts, the Department of Land Resources has the key responsibility. On the issue of bringing amendments to the old and outdated Land Acquisition Act, 1894 and rehabilitation policy, the Committee have persistently been recommending in the respective reports to expedite the same.

As regards the status of the amendments to Land Acquisition Act and rehabilitation policy, the Committee have been informed that the new rehabilitation policy has been addressed and is in the public domain at the websites of the Department of Land Resources and Ministry of Rural Development. The Ministry of Law and Justice has



been requested to draft the amendments to the Land Acquisition Act, 1894 on the lines of the new rehabilitation policy. The Committee also find that it is proposed to give the rehabilitation policy a statutory backing. As such, two separate legislations on the Land Acquisition and rehabilitation are proposed to be drafted and placed before the Parliament. As regards the major changes proposed in the revised Land Acquisition and Rehabilitation Legislations, the Secretary has informed that in the revised legislations, attempt is being made to protect the interests of the following three categories of persons:—

- (a) people whose land is being acquired directly;
- (b) people who are utilizing the land, they may not have title; and
- (c) labourers who derive livelihood from land though they may not have interest directly in the land either as owners or encroachers.

Further, the Secretary has also informed that the issue of giving land for land is being addressed in the aforesaid proposed legislations. As regards the deadline for bringing the aforesaid legislations, the Secretary has informed that the Department would like to do it as early as possible. While noting the aforesaid contents of the proposed legislations on Land Acquisition and Rehabilitation, the Committee strongly recommend to the Department to expedite finalisation of the aforesaid legislations and if possible, bring the same before Parliament during the second part of the current Session of Parliament.

### **Reply of the Government**

The draft National Rehabilitation and Resettlement Policy, 2007, Resettlement and Rehabilitation Bill, 2007 and suitable amendments to the Land Acquisition Act, 1894, prepared by this Department in consultation with the Ministry of Law & Justice, were discussed in the PMO. However, the Cabinet Secretariat has directed that these may first be considered by a Group of Ministers (GoM) constituted *vide* their notification dated 23.5.2007 to develop and finalize the drafts for consideration of the Cabinet regarding the Rehabilitation and Resettlement Policy, 2007 and associated measures in cases relating to land acquisition. So far, three meetings of the GoM have been taken place, on 20th June, 2007, 3rd July, 2007 and 19th July, 2007. Once, the GoM finalizes the drafts, the National Rehabilitation & Resettlement Policy, 2007, Resettlement and Rehabilitation Bill, 2007, and Acquisition

the Land (Amendment) Bill, 2007 will be taken to the Cabinet for consideration.

[Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development)  
O.M. No. Z-11014/2/2007-GC Dated 27 August, 2007]

#### **Recommendation (Serial No. 2, Paragraph No. 3.16)**

The Committee would also emphasize that there is an urgent need to balance the larger interests of the community for which the land is being acquired and the right of the individual whose land is being acquired thereby depriving him/her of means of livelihood. Besides, there is an urgent need to address the issue of acquisition of land for private enterprises. The acquisition of land for private enterprises cannot be at the same footing as the land acquired for various projects of public welfare. The Committee also note the stand of the Department according to which land should be acquired absolutely for the functional needs of a particular industry or a project and should not exceed the particular purpose so as to include quotas of builders etc. The Committee find that there are various issues in this regard which need to be addressed strongly in the legislations, the foremost of which is the policy of giving land for land. The Committee noted that land besides being the source of livelihood for a person is also a symbol of social status in the society where a person lives. Besides, with the land various emotional issues are also attached. In this scenario, it is of utmost importance to address all these concerns and compensate the persons whose land is acquired not only with land but with the land of the same quality.

Besides, another issue which needs to be addressed is that the projects for which land is being acquired should be constructed within a specified time period and extended unduly to get more profits with the rising prices of land. There is a need to ensure that only the specific project for which land is acquired is constructed on the land and not used for other commercial purposes. The Committee would like the Department to address to the aforesaid concerns of the Committee in the proposed legislation on Land Acquisition and Rehabilitation.

#### **Reply of the Government**

The suggestions of the Committee are being addressed in the proposed revised R&R policy and amendments to the Land Acquisition Act, 1894, the drafts of which are being finalized by Group of Ministers (GoM).

[Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development)  
O.M. No. Z-11014/2/2007-GC Dated 27 August, 2007]

### **Recommendation (Serial No. 6, Paragraph No. 3.29)**

The Committee note that the Department monitors the data with regard to distribution of surplus land to landless labourers. Besides, the Department persuades to State Governments from time to time to conduct special drives for distribution of surplus land over and above the ceiling to the eligible rural poor. The department has furnished various data indicating the progress in regard to – (a) distribution of surplus land, (b) distribution of Government wastelands, (c) number of tenants conferred ownership rights, and (d) information of alienation and restoration of tribal land. The analysis of the data indicates that out of area of 68,72,824 acres declared surplus 60,27,180 acres could be taken possession of and out of that 48,99,893 acres could be distributed to 54,01,232 beneficiaries, out of which 39 per cent of the beneficiaries are Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. As regards distribution of Government wastelands so far, 148.55 lakh acres could be distributed in various States. As regards number of tenants conferred ownership rights, 125.85 lakh could be given 167.157 lakh acres of lands. As regards alienation and restoration of tribal land, out of 2,02,901 cases decided in favour of tribals, in 1,80,703 cases, the land was restored to tribals. The analysis of the data indicates that there is much difference between the area taken possession of and area distributed to individual beneficiaries and between the cases decided in favour of tribals and cases in which land was restored to tribals. The Committee would like to Department to further pursue the matter with the various State Governments so that maximum number of beneficiaries could be helped in this regard.

As regards the distribution of Government's wastelands to individual beneficiaries, the Committee feel that besides distributing land to individuals, there is an urgent need to provide the facilities and technical know-how to the beneficiaries so that the wastelands can be developed and can become the means of livelihood for the individual beneficiaries.

### **Reply of the Government**

Land and its management falls within the administrative jurisdiction of the State Governments as provided under the Constitution of India. The role of the Central Government in this field is only advisory and coordinating.

However, implementation of Land Reforms programmes including distribution of ceiling surplus land and Govt. wasteland is reviewed from time to time at various fora including Conferences of Revenue

Ministers/Secretaries of States and UTs organized by this Ministry. State Governments have been requested from time to time for distribution of ceiling surplus land and Govt. wasteland to the eligible rural poor by preparation of action plans and complete the task by undertaking special drives.

The status of implementation of Land Reforms Schemes/ Programmes was last reviewed during the Conference of the Revenue Secretaries of the States and UTs held in New Delhi on 7th June, 2006 under the Chairmanship of Minister (RD). Minister (RD) stressed the need for effective implementation of various components/schemes of Land Reforms so that the benefits reach grass root level. He requested the participants of the Conference for coordination with Rural Development/Panchayati Raj Departments so as to ensure better implementation of land reforms and rural development programmes. Further, the State Govt. representatives were requested to develop degraded wastelands under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme, distribute them to the rural poor and take up Jatropha cultivation in wastelands. Thereafter, Minister (RD) had written to the Chief Ministers of the States for having a thorough review of implementation of Land Reforms programmes and Schemes which would help in planning and formulation of XI Five Year Plan. He has also separately written to the Chief Ministers for undertaking a special drive to get the court cases involving ceiling surplus land disposed of quickly, especially the cases pending in Revenue Courts on which State Govts. have control. They have also been requested to consider setting up of Land Tribunals under Article 323-B of the Constitution or constitution of Special Benches in High Courts for speedy disposal of the pending cases.

Implementation of Land Reforms Schemes/Programmes was also reviewed during the National Workshop on the proposed National Land Resource Management Programme (NLRMP) held on 14th & 15th June, 2007 in New Delhi under the Chairmanship of Secretary (RD) with participation from the State Governments, UT Administrations, domain experts and specialized agencies, such as the NRSA, Survey of India, NIC, etc. The Workshop was organized with a view to imparting a clear understanding of the components and activities to be taken up under the NLRMP, the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders, the technological options, availability of resources, the expected outcomes and deliverables, etc. The State Govt. representatives were requested for taking suitable steps to accelerate the pace of implementation of Land Reforms Schemes/ Programmes.

Thus Govt. of India are pursuing the States/UTs for accelerating implementation of land reforms programmes/schemes including distribution of ceiling surplus land and Govt. wasteland to the eligible rural poor.

[Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development)  
O.M. No. Z-11014/2/2007-GC Dated 27 August, 2007]

**Recommendation (Serial No. 8, Paragraph No. 3.31)**

The Committee note from the statement given with regard to number of tenants conferred ownership rights and area accrued to them in various States that in Arunachal Pradesh tenancy laws are not enacted. The Committee note that in the rural areas at present there may not be trend of renting the property but with the changing scenario of economic development there may be pressure on renting property for housing and other things. There is an urgent need to foresee the changing realities and bring tenancy reforms in rural areas too. The Committee would like to have the detailed information about the tenancy laws in various States so as to enable them to analyze the position.

**Reply of the Government**

Tenancy Reforms is an important component of land reform policy and, as indicated above, is reviewed from time to time at various fora including conferences of Revenue Ministers/Secretaries of States/UTs organized by this Ministry.

As regards tenancy reform measures, legislative provisions have been made in many States of the country providing for conferment of ownership rights on tenants or for allowing cultivating tenants to acquire ownership rights on payment of a reasonable compensation to the landlords. Some States have acquired ownership of land from the landlords and have transferred them to the tenants who have to pay a certain amount or premium to the State. Adequate provision to confer ownership rights on payment does not exist in some States, such as Andhra Pradesh (Andhra area), Haryana, Punjab, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal (in respect of Bargadar). In most of the remaining States, barring some of the North-Eastern tribal areas, ownership right has been given to the general body of the tenants through one measure or the other. The national policy however permits land owners who are members of Defence Services, widows, unmarried women, minors and persons suffering from physical and mental disability to lease out lands to tenants without loss of ownership. Even in States, which still do

not provide for conferment of ownership rights on tenants, sub-tenants and sharecroppers, provisions for security of tenure have been made.

Three important guidelines were laid down in the Five Year Plans for the reform of tenancy. These are:

1. Rent should not exceed the level of 1/5th to 1/4th of the gross produce;
2. The tenants should be accorded permanent rights in the land they cultivate subject to a limited right of resumption to be granted to the land owner; and
3. In respect of non-resumable land, the landlord-tenant relationship should be ended by conferring ownership rights on tenants.

Conferment of ownership rights upon tenants is the ultimate goal of tenancy reform. Accordingly, State Governments have been requested from time to time for effective implementation of tenancy laws and for preparation of action plans for conferment of ownership rights on the tenants.

[Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development)  
O.M. No. Z-11014/2/2007-GC Dated 27 August, 2007]

**Recommendation (Serial No. 9, Paragraph No. 3.32)**

The Committee further note that in various States, there is a peculiar problem of people occupying land and using it for several years but not having the proper title. As dealt in detail in the preceding part of the report, the Secretary has assured that the proposed amendments to the Land Acquisition Act and the proposed Rehabilitation Legislation would address to the issue of providing due compensation to these categories of land holders. The Committee note that land acquisition is not the only area where these people are at a disadvantageous position, but otherwise also they are debarred from various facilities like availing of loan under different Central/ State Schemes or for housing etc. There is an urgent need to address to this issue by bringing various reforms in land laws of various State Governments. The Union Government can play a role of facilitator by guiding these States through various guidelines to bring such reforms. The Committee recommend to the Department to take action in view of the aforesaid observation of the Committee.

## Reply of the Government

To make the land acquisition process time-bound and effective, proposal for amendment in the Land Acquisition Act, 1894 has been under consideration in consultation with the State Governments for some time past. However, a draft Land Acquisition (Amendment) Bill, 2007 has been prepared. This, along with the draft of the National Rehabilitation and Resettlement Policy, 2007, is under consideration of a Group of Ministers (GoM), which is in the process of finalizing the drafts.

With a view to assisting the States/UTs in the task of strengthening their revenue administration, updating of land records and computerization of land records, two Centrally sponsored schemes of Computerization of Land Records (CLR) and Strengthening of Revenue Administration and Updating of Land Records (SRA&ULR) are under implementation since 1988-89 and 1987-88 respectively. Since inception, funds to the tune of Rs. 545.36 crores and Rs. 373.88 crores have been released to the States/UTs under the Schemes of CLR and SRA&ULR respectively. While significant progress has been made under the two schemes of CLR and SRA&ULR, the desirable outcomes are yet to be achieved.

Under the scheme of SRA&ULR, the States and UTs have made progress towards adopting modern technology for survey and resurvey of land, training of survey and settlement staff, storage of land records, office-cum-residential accommodation for grass root level staff etc. However, the existing survey and settlement organizations have not completed their job of periodic resurveys for updating land records. Records are outdated or not in good shape in most States. In some North-Eastern States, even the original survey work has not taken place in many districts. A similar situation prevails in some UTs and also in some parts of other States. The earlier technology of *lattha* and chains for survey is cumbersome, painfully time-taking and costly, and there is need for adopting modern technology across the country on a large scale to accomplish the task in a timely and efficient manner.

Under the scheme of CLR, good progress has been made in some States, but not consistently across the country. Many States have digitized basic land records data and have started the process of effecting mutations and distribution of Records of Rights (RoRs) through computers. Some States have stopped manual issue of RoRs. A few States have also placed land records data on the Internet websites for easy access and dissemination of this information.

### **Some achievements under the scheme of CLR**

#### **(A) States which have completed RoR data entry:**

Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Gujarat, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal

#### **(B) States which have stopped manual issue of RoRs:**

Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal

#### **(C) States which have placed RoR data on websites:**

Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan and Uttarakhand

However, the emphasis of CLR so far, has been more on computerization and digitization of records, and less on having a system that maintains accurate and up-to-date records of rights and securely generates such records on demand. Also lacking, are the integration of textual and spatial data on RoRs, linkage of registration with mutation and updating of RoRs, backend reconciliation of village records, and a comprehensive and standard database of land records across the country that is necessary for understanding land and immovable property markets and for efficient administration and policy making in a modern economy.

Computerization of the property registration process is another area where some progress has been made in a number of States, largely on their own initiative, and not covered under the schemes of CLR or SRA&ULR. However, the prime focus of these initiatives has been on automation of the deed registration procedures, and there is hardly any linkage with the land records management system.

With this backdrop, a National Land Resource Management Programme (NLRMP) has been formulated to replace the two schemes of CLR and SRA&ULR from the year 2007-08. The programme will integrate and harmonize three layers of data: (a) spatial data from satellite imagery/aerial photography, (b) topographic maps and other data from the Survey of India and Forest Survey of India, and (c) revenue records – cadastral maps and records of rights (RoRs) details, on a geographic information system (GIS) platform to facilitate citizen services based on land data as well as a comprehensive tool for planning, developmental, regulatory and other activities where



location-specific information is needed, to benefit both public and private sector stakeholders.

The main focus of the Programme will be on delivering citizen services such as providing records of land titles with maps; other land-based certificates such as caste certificates, income certificates (particularly in rural areas), domicile certificates; information on eligibility for development programmes; land passbooks with the relevant land information; and facility for easy access to land-based credit for agriculture, rural development, livelihood and other programmes (by providing access to land records data to Cooperative and other financial institutions). The citizen services will also include points of service such as, touch screens, kiosks, common service centres, etc.

[Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development)  
O.M. No. Z-11014/2/2007-GC Dated 27 August, 2007]

**Recommendation (Serial No. 11, Paragraph No. 4.13)**

Besides the convergence of the activities related to watershed development at the Union Government level, the Committee have been recommending convergence of watershed activities at the State level as well as at the ground level. The Secretary during the course of the evidence has acknowledged the need for some Centralized agency at the State level. The Secretary has further emphasized on the need for Centralized agency at the State level by giving a typical example of the number of cases which have to be dealt with at the National level. He has stated that at present 500 hectare proposals are coming to the Ministry at the National level and as such 45,000 live files are there with the Department of Land Resources. Once the State level organization is established, the power to look into the various projects can be delegated. The Central level agency will development a small programme for a block or a mini watershed kind of programme and bring it at the State level where the representatives of the Department of Land Resources can go and the projects can be sanctioned. On the PMGSY model the funds can be released to State level agency and State level agency can do the day to day management with district level interaction. The Committee feel that the aforesaid mechanism is on the lines suggested by the Committee in their respective reports and therefore, emphasize for an early decision in this regard. The Committee feel that with the Centralized agency in every State the national level authority can concentrate more on the policy issues as well as evaluating the different programmes which may eventually

bring noticeable impact on the implementation of various schemes of watershed management. The Committee while endorsing the decision of the Department in this regard recommend for early constitution of State level agencies and some district level mechanism to coordinate the ground level activities.

### **Reply of the Government**

At the National level, National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA) has been constituted under the aegis of Ministry of Agriculture, to bring watershed programmes implemented by different Ministries under one umbrella. There will also be organizations at the State and District level to implement the programme. Further action in the matter will be taken as per recommendations of NRAA as and when their recommendations are received.

[Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development)  
O.M. No.Z-11014/2/2007-GC Dated 27 August, 2007]

### **Recommendation Serial No. 12 (Paragraph No. 4.21)**

The Committee find that even when the Atlas (2000) and updated Atlas (2005), is available with the Government which contains the Scientific data of wastelands in the country mapped in collaboration with National Remote Sensing Agency (NRSA), different data of wastelands/untreatable land are indicated in various documents of the Government. Untreatable land as per the Atlas is 12.65 million hectares, whereas the Department has indicated it as 12.12 million hectares at one place. The Committee fail to understand how the untreatable land can further increase or decrease. The Department may explain the position in this regard.

### **Reply of the Government**

According to the Wastelands Atlas of India – 2005, the extent of untreatable wastelands in the country is 1,21,172.65 sq. km., which is equal to 12.117 or 12.12 million hectares. The untreatable wastelands are comprised of barren rocky/stony waste area (57747.11 sq. km.), steep sloping area (9097.38 sq. km.) and snow covered and/or glacial area (54328.16 sq. km.).

[Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development)  
O.M. No.Z-11014/2/2007-GC Dated 27 August, 2007]

**Recommendation Serial No. 16 (Paragraph No. 4.25)**

The Committee further note that as per the planning made by the Department 5 million hectares was proposed to be covered during Ninth Plan, 15 million hectares during Tenth Plan and 20 million hectares during Eleventh Plan. Now the targets for Eleventh Plan have been revised to 25 million hectares. The Committee may like to be clarified whether the aforesaid targets include the targets fixed for rainfed/degraded land other than wastelands areas. The Committee further observe that the Department is drawing the conclusion/making strategy with regard to the achievement/development of the wastelands keeping in view the efforts being made by the Department of Land Resources. However, besides the Department of Land Resources, the other Departments viz. the Department of Rural Development under NREGA and SGRY, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Forest and Environment and the various State Governments are making substantial allocation and doing considerable work for the treatment of wastelands. With the setting up of the National Rainfed Area Authority, there is an urgent need to study the impact of the schemes at the ground level. Perhaps there is an urgent need to have district based planning. The achievements need to be reflected districts wise while noting the actual work done in each State. Such district-wise data should be merged to know the State plans which should ultimately lead to the National Plan. Such district based monitoring of the data should be an annual exercise so as to have the exact idea of the ground position. The Committee would like the Department to convey the concerns of the Committee in this regard to the National Rainfed Area Authority and do the national planning on the lines suggested by the Committee.

**Reply of the Government**

The concerns of the Hon'ble Standing Committee have been conveyed to the National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA).

[Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development)  
O.M. No.Z-11014/2/2007-GC Dated 27 August, 2007]

**Recommendation Serial No. 17 (Paragraph No. 4.30)**

The Committee note that the cost of development of wastelands at the rate of Rs. 6,000 per hectare was fixed way back during the year 2001. With the increase in costs, there is an urgent need to hike the existing cost of development and make projections accordingly. In this regard, the Committee find that the Department has made projections

for Eleventh Plan at the rate of Rs. 12,000 per hectare. However, the Approach Paper to Eleventh Plan has indicated the estimated requirement of outlay on the basis of Rs. 10,000 per hectare. Besides, another noticeable fact is that the projections, of the Department are based on the Parthasarthy Committee Report. While noting the contents of the Parthasarthy Committee Report, the Committee find that Rs. 12,000 per hectare cost is a maximal figure. The Department has further clarified that the figure of Rs. 12,000 per hectare has been used in order to prepare a credible projection. As far as, the question of actual costing is concerned, it will be done on project to project basis.

In this regard the Committee would like to be informed about the existing practice indicating clearly whether the allocation is being made on project to project basis or at the existing rate *i.e.* Rs. 6,000 per hectare. Besides, the Committee may also be informed whether there is any noticeable cost difference between the development of wastelands and the rainfed area. The Committee feel that the major portion of the cost of wastelands/rainfed area goes towards the wages of labourers, since these are labour intensive work. As such another fact which needs to be considered while fixing the cost of treatment of wastelands is the hike in the wages of labourers in different State.

The Committee would like all the aforesaid observations to be taken into consideration while arriving at the decision on revised per hectare cost norms.

### **Reply of the Government**

In the Area Development Programmes (IWDP, DPAP and DDP), the present cost norm is Rs.6000/- per hectare. This is applicable both for development of wastelands and the rainfed areas. The cost is divided among the following components in the following manner in each case—

1. Watershed Treatment/Development works/ Activities	85%
2. Community Mobilization & Training	5%
3. Administrative overheads	10%

The observations/suggestions made by the Standing Committee about fixation of cost of treatment of wastelands will be duly taken into account

[Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development)  
O.M. No.Z-11014/2/2007-GC Dated 27 August, 2007]

#### **Recommendation Serial No. 18 (Paragraph No. 4.41)**

The committee find that during each year of Tenth Plan, the Department has achieved almost 100 per cent physical as well as financial achievements as compared to the allocation made and the targets fixed under different schemes of wastelands development. Further during each year of the Tenth Plan, the Department has been allocated nearly the same amount as proposed to Planning Commission/Ministry of Finance. However, during the first year of Eleventh Plan, the Department has been provided a little over 50 per cent of the proposed outlay. Not only that, during each year of Tenth Plan, there has been some enhancement in outlay as compared to previous year, however, the outlay provided during first year of Eleventh Plan has been pegged at the outlay provided during the terminal year of Tenth Plan i.e. 2006-2007. The Committee strongly recommend the Government to enhance the allocation during the year 2007-2008 specifically when the Department has achieved 100 percent physical and financial targets and the year 2007-2008 is the first year of Eleventh Plan which will reflect the priorities of the Government during the Plan.

#### **Reply of the Government**

It has been decided to have a single Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) from 2007-2008 by merging IWDP, DPAP and DDP. For IWMP an allocation of Rs.1201.00 crore has been made. During 2006-07, the total allocation for the three programmes merged into IWMP was of Rs.1195.00 crore. Thus, the allocation for these programmes during 2007-08 is slightly higher. However, keeping in view the absorption capacity of the States, the Department will make proposals for allocation more funds in the Revised Estimates 2007-08.

[Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development)  
O.M. No.Z-11014/2/2007-GC Dated 27 August, 2007]

#### **Recommendation Serial No. 19 (Paragraph No. 4.42)**

As regards the strategy of the Department during Eleventh Plan, Rs. 11,700 crore has been proposed for Eleventh Plan. The proposed allocation during Eleventh Plan is more than double the projections made during Tenth Plan. Further the Parthasarthy Committee has projected the requirement of outlay of Rs. 1,50,000 crore to complete the target of wastelands development by the year 2020. The Parthasarthy Committee has projected the annual allocation of Rs. 10,000.00 crore.

To meet this Rs. 10,000 crore, it has been proposed that the current outlay should be doubled and another Rs. 5,000 crore would be dovetailed from NREGS. Against the proposed allocation of Rs. 1,50,000 crores, Approach Paper to Eleventh Plan has estimated the requirement of Rs. 80,000 crores. Perhaps the difference between the projections made in the Approach Paper and Parthasarthy Committee report is due to the difference in per hectare cost of wastelands development. While Approach Paper has estimated Rs. 10,000 as the projected per hectare cost of development, the Parthasarthy Committee has projected Rs. 12,000 as the per hectare cost of development. Besides, the projections made in regard to the total work ahead in the Approach Paper and Parthasarthy Committee Report also differ. The aforesaid issues have been dealt in the proceeding part of the report where the Committee has emphasized the need to resolve the aforesaid issues. Here the Committee would like to emphasize that the development of wastelands/degraded land is the top most priority area of the Government as indicated in the President's Address to Parliament and as indicated in the Approach Paper. However, from the allocation made during 2007-08, it seems that adequate priority has not been given to this sector. The Committee also note that in the present scenario of mismatch between the demand and availability of food grains, it is extremely necessary to increase the area of agriculture in the country. Beside, with the pressure on land for industries etc. there is pressure on the Government to develop the area of wastelands. The aforesaid issues have been adequately addressed in the third chapter of the report. Here the Committee strongly recommend the Government to provide adequate outlay under the different schemes after the detailed planning to be made at the national level by the Centralized agency viz. National Rainfed Area Authority.

### **Reply of the Government**

The financial requirement for the XI Plan has been projected for the enhanced and reformed watershed programme and also taking into account the committed liabilities and the physical targets to be covered. An amount of Rs.2000.00 crore was proposed for the first year of the plan, but it was not agreed to by the Planning Commission. The Department is, however, optimistic about getting more funds from the Planning Commission for the remaining plan period.

The recommendation of the Committee is noted for future compliance.

[Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development)  
O.M. No.Z-11014/2/2007-GC Dated 27 August, 2007]

### **Recommendation Serial No. 22 (Paragraph No. 4.76)**

The Committee note that the existing area development programmes *viz.* IWDP, DPAP and DDP have been converged into a comprehensive scheme Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) *w.e.f.* 2007-2008. The Committee hope that the revised scheme would look into the various aspects with regard to monitoring of programme at the ground level and the issue of convergence as raised by the Committee from time to time in the earlier reports and re-emphasized in the preceding chapters of the report.

### **Reply of the Government**

It has now been decided to have a single Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) from 2007-08 by merging IWDP, DPAP and DDP. The consolidation will be for the purpose of co-ordination between the three programmes for the sake of integrated planning and optimum use of resources. The programme will continue to be monitored as at present.

[Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development)  
O.M. No.Z-11014/2/2007-GC Dated 27 August, 2007]

### **Recommendation Serial No. 23 (Paragraph No. 4.77)**

The Committee note that under the ambitious programme 'National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, most of the permissible activities relate to land development. As indicated in the earlier part of the report, Parthasarthy Committee while projecting the annual allocation of the Department has suggested that out of the annual requirement of Rs. 10,000 crore, Rs. 5,000 crore would be dovetailed from NREGS. In this context, the Committee find that perhaps there is an urgent need to consider allowing development of wastelands as an activity under NREGS. This would further ensure sufficient works under the Guarantee Legislation to provide minimum 100 days of employment to each family who demand work as per the provision made under the Act. The Development of Land Resources in this regard should discuss this matter with the sister Department of Rural Development and the outcome arrived at should be indicated to the Committee.

### **Reply of the Government**

As per Schedule-I of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, the focus of the scheme shall be *inter-alia*, on water conservation and water harvesting, drought proofing, irrigation canals, renovation

of traditional water bodies and land development, which are the activities of wasteland development. However, Department of Rural Development has been requested to ask the concerned district authorities that the activities relating to wasteland development may also be taken up under the scheme.

[Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development)  
O.M. No.Z-11014/2/2007-GC Dated 27 August, 2007]

**Recommendation Serial No. 26 (Paragraph No. 4.80)**

The Committee further find that as many as 28,500 projects under IWDP, DDP and DPAP are continuing at present. The Committee strongly recommend to the Department to ensure that the issue of committed liabilities for these ongoing projects is handled carefully while switching on from the earlier programmes to the new programmes so as to have meaningful utilization of the outlays spent on these projects.

**Reply of the Government**

It is proposed to meet the committed liabilities for the ongoing projects under IWDP, DPAP and DDP from the funds allocated for IWMP. Approval of the competent authority has already been obtained to release funds for the ongoing projects of IWDP, DPAP and DDP on the existing pattern. Funds are being released for implementation of ongoing projects, out of the allocation made for IWMP for 2007-08.

[Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development)  
O.M. No.Z-11014/2/2007-GC Dated 27 August, 2007]

**Recommendation Serial No. 27 (Paragraph No. 4.83)**

The Committee note that a laudable initiative has been taken by the Department to strengthen the professional support for the successful implementation of various area development programmes. The Secretary has informed the Committee about the dedicated team of professionals so as to provide the technical support for these programmes. In some of the State like Andhra Pradesh, Orissa there is a dedicated team of professionals at the State level. Besides, at the district level also some professional support is there. The Secretary has assured that the experience of having dedicated team at State and district levels would be replicated in all the districts where the size of the programmes reasonable. While appreciating the idea given by the Secretary in this regard, the Committee would like that it should be implemented



expeditiously so as to ensure the successful implementation of various programmes.

### **Reply of the Government**

The observation/suggestion made by the Standing Committee will be duly taken into account for future compliance.

[Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development)  
O.M. No.Z-11014/2/2007-GC Dated 27 August, 2007]

### **Recommendation Serial No. 28 (Paragraph No. 5.24)**

The Committee observe that the existing Centrally Sponsored Schemes relating to Land records *viz.* (i) Strengthening of Revenue Administration and updating of Land Records (SRA & ULR) and (ii) Computerisation of Land Records (CLR) have been integrated into a comprehensive programme ' National Programme for Comprehensive Land Resources Management (NPCLRM)' w.e.f. 2007-08. The new feature of the restructured programme consists of emphasis on computerization of whatever land records are available with professional input at States as well as Central level and the time bound approach to complete the task on a mission mode within three years. The Committee appreciate the firm resolve of the Department to computerize the existing maps and land records with a time bound period of three years and hope that the various shortcomings of the existing programmes which include the matching share to be provided by the State Governments, training etc. would be properly addressed in the restructured programme. The Committee would like that the observation/recommendations made by the Committee in various reports, year after year should be considered while finalizing the modalities of the programme. Besides, the Committee would like to emphasise that the modalities of the programme which include the outsourcing of certain activities should be finalized expeditiously. The guidelines of the programme should be framed at the earliest. The Committee may be kept apprised of the same.

### **Reply of the Government**

The National Land Resource Management Program (NLRMP), conceptualized as a major system and reform initiative that is concerned not merely with computerization, updating and maintenance of land records and validation of titles, but also as a programme that will add value and facilitate and support delivery of citizen services based on land data as well as provide a comprehensive tool for development planning wherever location-specific information is required.

To begin with, the Programme is proposed to be piloted in several districts across the country. These districts will be selected carefully in consultation with the States and UTs. The experience of these pilots will help in refining the methodology and approach, following which the Programme will be scaled up to cover the entire country over a period of time.

Since the States and UTs are at different levels of development and preparedness, a detailed sizing exercise has been undertaken to assess the magnitude of the problem and to design State-specific strategies and approaches atomized to the local situations

With a view to imparting a clear understanding of the components and activities to be taken up under the Programme, the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders, the technological options, availability of resources, the expected outcomes and deliverables, etc., a National workshop was organized on 14th-15th June, 2007 at New Delhi with participation from the State Governments, UT Administrations, domain experts and specialized agencies, such as the NRSA, Survey of India, NIC, etc.

[Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development)  
O.M. No.Z-11014/2/2007-GC Dated 27 August, 2007]

#### **Recommendation Serial No. 29 (Paragraph No. 5.25)**

As regards the transition from the existing programme to the restructured programme, the Committee strongly recommends that the various issues related to the existing projects including committed liability and unspent balances should be taken care of very carefully by the Department and the Committee may be kept apprised of the modalities finalized in this regard.

#### **Reply of the Government**

The issues related to the existing projects including the unspent balances would be taken into account by the Department, and the Committee would be kept informed of the action taken/proposed to be taken in this regard.

[Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development)  
O.M. No.Z-11014/2/2007-GC Dated 27 August, 2007]

### **Recommendation Serial No. 30 (Paragraph No. 5.26)**

The Committee further observes that at present two schemes are being undertaken for land records *viz.* SRA&ULR to supplement the efforts made by the State Governments to monitor/update land records and the other for Computerisation of Land Records. Maintenance and updation of land records are inter-related issues and no purpose can be served by computerization unless the land records are properly maintained. Thus the core data is the essential input for the success of the computerization programme. The Committee also agree that it is of utmost importance to save in whatever way the information of maps/land records as available with the Revenue Departments so as to ensure that these maps do not decay further. The restructured programme would be addressing the aforesaid system. The Committee while supporting the Department in this regard strongly recommend to the Government to provide adequate outlay so as to enable the Department to complete the task in the country within the envisaged time frame of three years.

### **Reply of the Government**

As indicated above, to begin with, the National Land Resource Management Programme (NLRMP) is proposed to be piloted in several districts across the country. These districts will be selected carefully in consultation with the States and UTs. The experience of these pilots will help in refining the methodology and approach, following which the Programme will be scaled up to cover the entire country over a period of time. Implementation and completion of activities under the NLRMP across the country would take more than three years and accordingly adequate budget provisions would be sought for implementation of the Programme by their inclusion in Annual Plan proposals in respect of the Programme.

[Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development)  
O.M. No.Z-11014/2/2007-GC Dated 27 August, 2007]

### **Recommendation Serial No. 32 (Paragraph No. 5.28)**

The Committee while examining the Demands for Grants of the previous year had been informed that some of the States *viz* Goa, Gujarat, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal have amended the necessary revenue rules/regulations to stop issue of manual copies of Record of Rights (RoR) and to provide legal sanctity to computerized copies of RoR. The Committee had recommended persuading the remaining States through various seminars, conferences to amend the

revenue rules/regulations so that the computerized system of land records may be given legal sanctity. The Committee feel that the real purpose of the computerization of land records can be achieved only when the legal sanctity to computerized copies of RoR is provided by the various State Governments. While reiterating the earlier recommendation of the Committee, the Committee strongly recommend to the Government to pursue further with the remaining State Governments to amend the revenue rules/regulations to provide legal sanctity to computerized RoRs.

### **Reply of the Government**

States/UTs are being persuaded from time-to-time to provide legal sanctity to the computerized copies of Records-of-Rights (RoR) by amending necessary rules/regulations and stop manual distribution of RoR. The States of Goa, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal have provided legal sanctity to computerized copies of RoR. During the workshop organized by this Department on 14-15th June, 2007, the remaining States have again been requested to take necessary action in this regard.

[Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development)  
O.M. No.Z-11014/2/2007-GC Dated 27 August, 2007]

### **Recommendation Serial No. 33 (Paragraph No. 5.29)**

The Committee while examining the Demands for Grants of the previous year was also informed that some thinking was being given to link the data of land records with the computers of the lending bankers so that the bankers can access the land records directly without any charge. The Committee feel that such a move can not only reduce the transaction cost but also would be a great relief to the poor persons whose applications are rejected by the banks due to non-availability of proper copy of land records. Besides, the loan can easily be made available under various schemes of the Government as well as State Governments relating to housing agriculture self-help groups etc. The Committee strongly recommend to the department to evolve some modalities whereby the aforesaid proposed initiative can be transformed into reality.

### **Reply of the Government**

The scheme of NLRMP does envisage to cover providing facility for need-based access to land data to cooperative and other credit

institutions, so as to facilitate credit operations for agriculture, rural development and other livelihood activities.

[Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development)  
O.M. No.Z-11014/2/2007-GC Dated 27 August, 2007]

### **Recommendation Serial No. 34 (Paragraph No. 6.3)**

The Committee note that a new initiative *viz.* development of Bio-fuel has been undertaken by the Government with the ultimate objective of producing bio-diesel to be blended with diesel to the extent of 20 per cent. To achieve this objective under the first phase *i.e.* demonstration phase, it is proposed to take up over a period of five years plantation of *jatropha* and *pongamia* in five lakh hectares. The basic emphasis in the demonstration phase is on the development of quality seed material for wide scale plantation through convergence of R&D efforts. The Committee also note that different Ministries/ Departments/agencies are involved in the R&D efforts and the Department of Land Resources has been given the responsibility to coordinate these efforts in the demonstration phase. The Committee recommend that the efforts of the Department in this regard should be intensified with a view to achieve the desired objectives. The Committee further note that out of Rs. 50 crore allocated during the year 2005-06, Rs. 49 crore were actually utilized. The Committee note from the various documents and have been informed during the course of oral evidence that the aforesaid project has not been cleared by the Group of Ministers. The Committee would like to know the expenditure to the tune of Rs. 49 crore was done even when the programme has not been finalized so far. The Committee would like the Department to clarify the position in this regard.

### **Reply of the Government**

In July, 2002, the Planning Commission had set up a Committee on the development of Bio-fuels chaired by the then Member, Planning Commission, which in its report of April, 2003, recommended the launch of a National Mission on Bio-diesel with special focus on the plantation of *jatropha curacas* in two phases, as demonstration project in the first phase and as a self sustaining full-fledged programme in the second—the first phase to be implemented at a cost of Rs. 1496.16 crores. In the first phase, promotion of *jatropha curacas* cultivation in forest and non-forest areas, especially on wastelands was proposed over a period of five years.

The Planning Commission made a presentation to the Prime Minister on the report of the Committee on 11.7.2003 and it was decided that the Ministry of Rural Development would act as the nodal Ministry for processing its recommendations. A draft DPR for the National Mission on Bio-diesel and implementing the demonstration project was prepared and submitted to the Planning Commission for 'in principle' approval in March, 2005. The Planning Commission has accorded 'in principle' approval to the DPR for the bio-diesel project in December, 2005, subject to conditions relating to pricing policy for seed, land allocation by States for cultivating jatropha, bank financing for plantations, fiscal policy for bio-diesel, etc.

As it was not felt feasible to obtain approval of Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC) for launching the demonstration project in the remaining period of 2005-06, a contingency plan was proposed to take up jatropha nurseries so that requisite planting material would be available by the next planting season. Planning Commission was requested to permit utilization of Rs. 50 crore available in the B.E. 2005-06 under the bio-fuels head.

Planning Commission permitted utilization of Rs. 50 crore available in the B.E. 2005-06 for raising jatropha nurseries as proposed by the Department of Land Resources. The Departmental EFC Chaired by Secretary, Rural Development met on 25th January, 2006 and approved utilization of Rs. 49 crore in 9 States for raising 18 crore seedlings for planting on Government lands.

[Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development)  
O.M. No.Z-11014/2/2007-GC Dated 27 August, 2007]

### CHAPTER III

#### RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DO NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF THE GOVERNMENT'S REPLIES

##### **Recommendation Serial No. 10 (Paragraph No. 4.12)**

The Standing Committee have persistently been recommending in their respective reports since the year 1998-1999 to bring all the activities related to wastelands being undertaken by different Ministries of Union Government under one umbrella. Pursuant to the aforesaid recommendation of the Committee, the Ministry of Rural Development initially transferred DDP, DPAP and watershed component of erstwhile Employment Assurance Scheme from the Department of Rural Development to the Department of Land Resources to bring convergence of the activities related to watershed schemes in their own Ministry. The Committee continued pursuing the issue of bringing the watershed activities of the different Ministries under one umbrella and the Government have now finally agreed to the recommendation of the Committee and the National Rainfed Area Authority has been constituted under the Ministry of Agriculture with the initial allocation of Rs. 100 crore for the year 2007-2008. With regard to the composition of the aforesaid authority, the Committee note that the authority has a two-tier structure consisting of a Governing Board and an Executive Committee. The Minister of Agriculture is the Chairman of Governing Board and Minister of Rural Development, Water Resources and Environment & Forests are Members of the Board. Further the Secretaries of various Ministries are also members of the aforesaid Board. As regards the Executive Committee, on the top is Chief Executive Officer, National Rainfed Area Authority. Besides, five eminent experts in the field of Water Management, Agriculture/Horticulture, Animal Husbandry & Fisheries, Forestry and Watershed Development are also in the Executive Committee. One representative each from various concerned Ministries are also in the Executive Committee. Besides, Advisor, Agriculture, Planning Commission, Director (CAZRI), Director (CRIDA) and Subject matter Specialists are also in the Executive Committee. The Committee also note from the information furnished by the Department of Land Resources that with the implementation of National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme under which bulk of the works under watershed development would

be undertaken, the Ministry of Rural Development is the largest implementing agency of the watershed programme. The Committee appreciate the convergence of activities related to watershed development under one Central Authority *i.e.* National Rainfed Area Authority and hope that tangible results would be seen in the coming years. The Committee feels that the said Authority should best have been located under the Ministry of Rural Development being the largest implementing agency of the watershed activities. The Committee would like to know from the Department of Land Resources the initiatives taken in this regard so as to analyze the position and comment further.

#### **Reply of the Government**

As decided by the Union Cabinet in its meeting held on 10.8.2006, the National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA) has been set up under the Union Ministry of Agriculture. The Minister of Rural Development is the Co-Chairman of the Governing Board. The Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development is also one of the members of the Board. Representation has also been given to the Ministry of Rural Development in the Executive Committee of NRAA. The representation given to Ministry of Rural Development in the Governing Board and Executive Committee seems adequate and the Ministry may take up relevant matters effectively in these forums. No action has been initiated to modify the decision of the Union Cabinet.

[Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development)  
O.M. No.Z-11014/2/2007-GC Dated 27 August, 2007]



## CHAPTER IV

### RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

#### **Recommendation Serial No. 3 (Paragraph No. 3.17)**

On the issue of bringing two legislations, one for the purpose of land acquisition and the other for rehabilitation, the Department has informed that the Law Ministry and Attorney General have strongly advised to have two separate legislations in this regard because the rehabilitation policy is going beyond land acquisition. The Committee feel that the issues of land acquisition and rehabilitation are inter-linked and as such need to be addressed in a single legislation. The Committee would like the Department to furnish the details of the interactions and deliberations held with the Law Ministry and Attorney General in this regard so as to understand the matter in detail and recommend further in this respect.

#### **Reply of the Government**

As already stated in reply to Para 3.15 that the draft National Rehabilitation and Resettlement Policy-2007, Resettlement and Rehabilitation Bill, 2007 and the Land Acquisition (Amendment) Bill, 2007 prepared by this Department in consultation with the Ministry of Law & Justice are being considered by the GoM.

[Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development)  
O.M. No.Z-11014/2/2007-GC Dated 27 August, 2007]

#### **Comments of the Committee**

(Please see Paragraph No. 7 of Chapter I of the Report)

#### **Recommendation Serial No. 4 (Paragraph No. 3.18)**

The erstwhile standing Committee on Urban and Rural Development during Tenth Lok Sabha had examined various provisions made under Land Acquisition Act, 1894 and presented Eighth Report on 'Land Acquisition Act, 1894' to Lok Sabha on 15 December, 1994. Thereafter, the Standing Committee on Rural Development pursued various issues related to land acquisition and rehabilitation of the

persons whose land is being acquired, in their various Reports presented to Parliament. The Committee would like that their various observations/recommendations made in the respective reports should be taken into consideration while making amendments to Land Acquisition Act and bringing in a new law related to the issue of rehabilitation.

### **Reply of the Government**

Wide consultations have been held for revising the R&R policy. A draft Cabinet Note on revision of the NPRR-2003 and formulation of the National Rehabilitation Policy-2006 (NRP-2006) was circulated to concerned Ministries/Departments for their comments. The draft NRP-2006 was also placed in the public domain on the websites of the Department of Land Resources and Ministry of Rural Development and at the Facilitation Counter of the Ministry of Rural Development, Krishi Bhavan for public comments, and, for which, a Public Notice was also published in the prominent National and Regional newspapers. Comments received from States/UTs and Ministries/Departments of GoI as well as a number of public comments have been suitably incorporated in the revised R&R policy, 2007. The various observations/recommendations of the Standing Committee would also be taken into consideration in this regard before finalizing the drafts.

[Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development)  
O.M. No.Z-11014/2/2007-GC Dated 27 August, 2007]

### **Comments of the Committee**

(Please see Paragraph No. 7 of Chapter I of the Report)

#### **Recommendation Serial No. 7 (Paragraph No 3.30)**

The Committee would like to point out an interesting situation whereby on the one hand land is being acquired for setting up industries, Special Economic Zones and urbanization, on the other hand, the emphasis is being given to distribute the land to landless persons. The Committee also feel that the agenda of distribution of land to the landless persons would have got a backseat due to the current priorities of acquisition of land for setting up industries etc. The Committee would like the Department to furnish the data with regard to distribution of land/wastelands year-wise so as to understand the aforesaid change of priorities and comment further in this regard.

### Reply of the Government

As indicated above, land and its management falls within the administrative jurisdiction of the State Governments as provided under the Constitution of India. Accordingly, land is distributed to the eligible poor by the State Govts./UT Administrations under their various programmes. This Department is monitoring only distribution of ceiling surplus land by the States/UTs, which becomes available as a result of implementation of ceiling laws, by preparation of Quarterly Progress Reports. Ceiling laws are not in all the States/UTs. Further, in spite of requests, QPRs are not being received regularly from all States/UTs having ceiling legislations. As per information received from the State/UT Governments, the cumulative figures of distribution of ceiling surplus land at the end of last five years was as under:

As on	Area distributed (in lakh acres)
31.3.2007	50.34
31.3.2006	49.40
30.6.2005**	49.18*
31.3.2004	54.03
31.3.2003	52.94

\*The difference in area distributed was due to the fact that during May, 2005 Govt. of J&K informed that their figure of area distributed *viz.* 4.50 lakh acres being shown in the QPRs is incorrect. It was informed by the State Govt. that an area of 8836 acres has been declared surplus in the State, possession of the same has not been taken and it remains with ex-owners.

\*\*QPR as on 31.3.2005 not available.

[Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development)  
O.M. No.Z-11014/2/2007-GC Dated 27 August, 2007]

### Comments of the Committee

(Please *see* Paragraph No. 13 of Chapter I of the Report)

#### Recommendation Serial No. 13 (Paragraph No. 4.22)

As regards the projections for treating the wastelands, it is imperative to have the exact information about the task ahead so as to have proper planning. In this regard different data of wastelands are given in different documents. Whereas, the Approach Paper to

Eleventh Plan has estimated requirement of Rs. 80,000 crore for treatment of 80 million hectares of wastelands, as per the Parthasarthy Committee Report the projections have been made based on the data of 125 million hectares of wastelands. Further, the updated Atlas indicates the area of wastelands as 55.27 million hectares. Further clarifying the position the Secretary informed the Committee that estimates of 125 million hectares include area of DDP and DPAP land. As regards the estimates of Approach Paper, the Department at one place has indicated that they are not aware of this data whereas at another place it has been stated that when the draft of Approach Paper came to the Department for comments, it has clarified that there may be an estimated 125 million hectare degraded land in rainfed area including 80 million hectares of land under dryland farming. The Committee conclude from what has been stated above that perhaps there is no clarity of the exact area which is rainfed area under DDP and DPAP blocks as well as dryland farming in the country. As regards wastelands since the district-wise data is available as per the scientifically obtained data in updated Atlas, perhaps the data can be relied upon. However, there is too much confusion when the data of wastelands is combined with data of other degraded/rainfed land which need treatment. In this scenario the Committee would like the Department to clarify whether the separate district based data of rainfed/degraded land other than the wastelands data of Atlas is available with the Government and whether the outlays required for degraded/rainfed area are different from those for the wastelands.

#### **Reply of the Government**

In the Draft Approach Paper to the Eleventh Five Year Plan, the Planning Commission have stated as under:—

“With an estimated 80 million hectares needing treatment, and average expenditure of Rs. 10,000 per hectare, the total requirement of funds is about Rs. 80,000 crore. For this magnitude of funding to be feasible during the 11th Plan, it is absolutely essential that these programmes be converged with or at least supplemented by the Employment Guarantee Programme funding local level schemes which conserve moisture and recharge ground water”.

The Planning Commission had sent the Approach Paper at the Draft Stage to the Ministry of Rural Development for its comments. In response to the para mentioned above, the Department of Land Resources had made the following specific comment:

“There may be an estimated 125 million hectares of degraded land in rainfed areas including 80 million hectares of land under

dryland farming which may actually need to be developed. Ministry of Rural Development had set up a Technical Committee on Watershed Programmes under the Chairmanship of Shri S. Parthasarthy which in its report has recommended an investment of Rs. 1,50,000 crore over a period of next 15 years to completely develop this 125 million hectares of rainfed areas in convergence with National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme”

Thus, it will be seen that the Department of Land Resources had categorically mentioned a figure of 125 million hectares as indicated in the Parthasarthy Committee Report.

In the Wastelands Atlas of India–2005, details of the wasteland available in each district have been given. The outlay of Rs. 1,50,000 crore has been estimated for development of 125 million hectares of degraded land in rainfed areas including 80 million hectares of land under dryland farming which also needs development.

[Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development)  
O.M. No.Z-11014/2/2007-GC Dated 27 August, 2007]

#### **Comments of the Committee**

(Please *see* Paragraph No. 16 of Chapter I of the Report)

#### **Recommendation Serial No. 14 (Paragraph No. 4.23)**

The Committee further note that whereas wastelands is spread all over the country, DDP/DPAP blocks are area specific and identified in various States. DDP blocks have been identified in seven States/UTs and DPAP blocks have been identified in sixteen States/UTs whereas wastelands are there in almost every State. However, the extent of wastelands may vary from State to State. Besides, the DDP, DPAP blocks may vary with the passage of time. Such frequent change may not be there in wastelands. In this scenario perhaps, there is a need to set targets separately for wastelands/other degraded areas. Otherwise there will be utter confusion. The Committee would like the clarification from the Department on the aforesaid observation so as to analyse the position further.

#### **Reply of the Government**

The DPAP and DDP are implemented in specified Blocks and the programmes are meant for drought proofing and to combat desertification to tackle the special problem faced by fragile eco-systems

in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid regions constantly affected by severe drought conditions and desertification. Since the proposed new single programme aims at holistic development of watershed areas by merging all related area development programmes, the requirements of individual programmes would also be taken into account during implementation of the integrated programme.

[Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development)  
O.M. No.Z-11014/2/2007-GC Dated 27 August, 2007]

#### **Comments of the Committee**

(Please *see* Paragraph No.19 of Chapter I of the Report)

#### **Recommendation Serial No. 15 (Paragraph No. 4.24)**

As regards the claim of the Department that 8.6 million hectares of wastelands was covered as reported in the updated Atlas, the Committee would like to be informed of the States where the extent of wastelands has considerably come down. Besides, as per the data indicated by the Department in Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Kerala, Mizoram, Nagaland, considerable part of the wastelands have been covered. The Committee would also like to be informed whether the achievements reflected in these States match with the position of wastelands coming down in the updated Atlas which contained district-wise data obtained through Satellite imagery so as to draw the meaningful conclusion about the progress of work with regard to development of wastelands in the country and to chalk out further strategy in this regard.

#### **Reply of the Government**

In the Wasteland Atlas of India-2000, an area of about 63.85 million hectare was estimated as wasteland. According to Wasteland Atlas of India-2005, the wasteland is 55.27 million hectare. Thus, a reduction of 8.58 million hectare (63.85–55.27) of wasteland has been noticed.

The information made available by this Department was relating to the area in various States covered under IWDP since 1995. No data relating to the achievements made by various States was furnished. Besides, in the Wasteland Atlas, the area developed under various watershed programmes has not been given.

[Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development)  
O.M. No.Z-11014/2/2007-GC Dated 27 August, 2007]

### **Comments of the Committee**

(Please *see* paragraph No. 22 of Chapter I of the Report)

#### **Recommendation Serial No. 20 (Paragraph No. 4.59)**

The Committee have reviewed the physical and financial achievement during each year of the Tenth Plan in the preceding chapter of the report whereby it has been noted that Department have achieved almost 100 per cent physical and financial targets. While examining the Demands for Grants of the previous years, the Committee have noted that the position is not so favourable if the ground situation in this regard is analyzed. The various Budget documents of the Department indicate that the releases to the State Governments/implementing agencies are considered as spending. Besides, the area covered by different projects is considered to be developed without analyzing the ground situation. There is no mechanism to analyze the performance of projects being undertaken under different schemes due to long gestation period. The data indicated with regard to unspent balances to the tune of Rs. 969.15 crore under the three major schemes Desert Development Programme (DDP), Drought Prone Areas Programme (DPAP) and Integrated Wastelands Development Programme (IWDP) further substantiates the aforesaid observation of the Committee. As many as 1764 projects under DPAP, 300 projects under DDP and 7 projects under IWDP have been foreclosed by now. The Committee have repeatedly been recommending to the Department to indicate the position of unspent balances as well as foreclosure of projects in the various Budget documents so as to know the position with regard to real achievement at the ground level. The Committee express strong exception as the information is not being furnished in the Outcome Budget of the Department in spite of the insistence by the Committee in the respective Reports.

The Standing Committee on Rural Development while examining the Demands for Grants 2005-2006 of the Department [refer Para 2.16 of Tenth Report (14th Lok Sabha)] had suggested a mechanism to evaluate the performance of different projects under the aforesaid three major schemes at various stages of implementation. The recommendation of the Committee in this regard is reproduced below.

“The Committee feel that there is an urgent need to evolve some sort of mechanism for evaluating the performance of different projects. Some sort of grading indicating poor, satisfactory or very good may be indicated against the number of projects being

undertaken in various States. Besides, another mechanism can be to have some system indicating the projects at First stage, Second stage, Third stage etc. Such type of analysis would enable a critical evaluation of the projects. The Committee would like the Department to consider the said aspect and apprise the Committee accordingly.”

The Committee note with satisfaction from the written replies that the Department has agreed to adopt the monitoring system suggested by the Committee. To conclude, the Committee again emphasize the strict monitoring of the projects being undertaken under the major schemes related to wastelands through various systems of monitoring *viz.* monitoring of projects at various stages, grading of projects, monitoring through area officers schemes. Besides, another mechanism to evaluate the performance of the project is through Vigilance Committees. The Committee strongly recommend to strengthen the monitoring mechanism as suggested above. Besides, the Committee reiterate their earlier recommendation to indicate the data with regard to unspent balances and foreclosure of projects in the various Budget documents. The aforesaid data may also be made available on the website of Department to bring transparency as well as to put pressure on the implementing agencies to perform better in this regard. Besides, the data and outcome of the meetings of Vigilance Committees as well as the area officers’ schemes should also be given in the Budget documents. Besides the Department should categorically inform the Committee the reasons for huge under-spending under the three major schemes DDP, DPAP and IWDP and take corrective action to ensure that the allocation made under different programmes is meaningfully utilized. The Committee may also be kept apprised about this.

#### **Reply of the Government**

While noting the concern of Hon’ble Standing Committee on unspent balances, it is submitted that all schemes presently implemented by the Department are demand driven. The annual allocation made for different schemes in the budget of the Department are not released to States or to the Programmes Implementing Agencies on allocation basis, but on the basis of demand for further installment in case of ongoing projects or for sanction of new Projects. In IWDP, DPAP and DDP, the releases are made to ZPs/DRDAs in 5 installments over a period of five years as per the prescribed procedure. Successive installments are released only after 50% of the funds released in the previous installment have been utilized.



The Department has taken various measures involving the State Rural Development Department to monitor the performance of the projects so that delay in implementation of the project is arrested, the funds are utilized fully within the stipulated period and unspent balance with the States/PIAs may be minimum. Some of the measures taken by the Department are elaborated below–

- (1) Hon'ble Minister of Rural Development takes monthly meeting in which the Nodal Officers from each State furnish monthly progress reports which are reviewed and ways and means are suggested to achieve the physical/financial targets.
- (2) A web-based online system has been launched for monitoring of the projects by direct on line entry of the watershed projects related data at three levels *i.e.* DoLR, State and DRDA/ZP. The quarterly physical and financial progress reports are to be entered by the DRDA/ZP and entry for release of central share and state share is to be done by DoLR and State Government respectively. The on-line application aims at generating periodically performance linked updated data on project details and physical and financial achievements.
- (3) The Department has modified the proforma of Utilization Certificate, which has necessitated the implementing agency to furnish the details of outputs and outcomes as incorporated in the outcome budget along with the usual details of fund utilization. This will ensure that fund expenditure is commensurate with the physical achievements and indicate the performance of the project while releasing the next installment.
- (4) Since the project funds are released to the DRDAs/ZPs, the role of Rural Development Departments of the States was hitherto limited. The Department has taken the initiative to involve the Rural Development Departments of the States in monitoring the performance at all the three stages of the projects through a State level Committee.
- (5) The Department monitors performance of the projects on the basis of quarterly progress reports. Mid-term evaluation of the projects by an independent evaluator is mandatory after release of 45% of project cost. The Mid-term Evaluation

Report reveals the physical outputs and outcomes of the project and only after analyzing and ascertain the positive outputs commensurate with the project objectives, the next installment of funds is released for the project.

[Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development)  
O.M. No.Z-11014/2/2007-GC Dated 27 August, 2007]

#### **Comments of the Committee**

(Please *see* paragraph No. 25 of Chapter-I of the Report)

#### **Recommendation Serial No. 21 (Paragraph No. 4.63)**

The Committee find that out of total geographical area of 2,62,179 Sq. Kms. Of North-Eastern States including Sikkim, 62,106.64 Sq.Kms. *i.e.* 23.69 per cent of the total area in wastelands. In the North-Eastern States, out of the three schemes DDP, DPAP and IWDP related to watershed development, only one scheme *i.e.* IWDP is being implemented since these States have no DPAP and DDP blocks. As regards the achievement made with regard to the various projects being implemented in these areas, so far 558 projects were taken up during Eight, Ninth and Tenth Plan under IWDP covering 2.76 million hectares of land. Out of this 2.76 million hectares only 1,19, 324 hectares *i.e.* around 4 per cent of the total land could actually, be treated as per the information provided by the Department. Another noticeable fact is that the strategy for Eleventh Plan is being chalked out based on the data of coverage *i.e.* 2.76 million hectares and as such the Department is very optimistic to cover the remaining 2.50 million hectares during the Eleventh Plan thus leaving only 0.95 million hectares in North-Eastern States. Further Rs. 20.85 crores is lying unspent with various North-Eastern States. The Committee have dealt with in detail the issue of releases being considered as spending as well as coverage being treated as really developed by the Department in the preceding chapter of the report. Similar trends are noticeable in the case of North Eastern States. The Committee disapproved the way the projections are being made without noting the ground situation. There is an urgent need to understand the ground situation with regard to the implementations of various project so as to know the read impact of these programmes. The Committee strongly recommend to the Department to review the policy of monitoring as given in detail in earlier part of the report and give adequate emphasis on the development of wastelands in North Eastern States which have a sizable area of wastelands.

### Reply of the Government

IWDP is a demand driven scheme. The annual allocation made for the scheme for NE Region in the budget of the Department is not released to the concerned States or to the Programmes Implementing Agencies on allocation basis, but on the basis of demand for further instalment in case of ongoing projects or for sanction of new projects. The funds are released to the DRDAs in 5 instalments over a period of five years as per the prescribed procedure. Successive instalments are released only after 50% of the funds released in the previous instalment have been utilized.

The Department has taken various measures to monitor the performance of the projects involving the State Rural Development Departments. Some of the measures taken are as under—

- (1) Hon'ble Minister of Rural Development takes monthly meeting in which the Nodal Officers from each State furnish monthly progress reports which are reviewed and ways and means are suggested to achieve the physical/financial targets.
- (2) The Department has accorded priority status to all those projects which are near completion for the sake of monitoring their progress and processing for release of funds.
- (3) In order to give thrust to timely completion of the projects, Department has taken steps to periodically inform through notices to the States for assessment of the projects delayed in claiming the second installment to ensure timely completion of preparatory stage of the project and the projects delayed for Mid-Term Evaluation to ensure timely completion of Execution stage.
- (4) A web-based online system has been launched for monitoring of the projects by direct on line entry of the watershed projects related data at three levels *i.e.* DoLR, State and DRDA/ZP. The quarterly physical and financial progress reports are to be entered by the DRDA/ZP and entry for release of Central share and State share is to be done by DoLR and State Government respectively. The on line application aims at generating periodically performance linked updated data on project details and physical and financial achievements.

- (5) The Department has modified the proforma of Utilization Certificate, which has necessitated the implementing agency to furnish the details of outputs and outcomes as incorporated in the outcome budget along with the usual details of fund utilization. This will ensure that fund expenditure is commensurate with the physical achievements and indicate the performance of the project while releasing the next installment.
- (6) Since, the project funds are released to the DRDAs/ZPs, the role of Rural Development Departments of the States was hitherto limited. The Department has taken the initiative to involve the Rural Development Departments of the States in monitoring the performance at all the three stages of the projects through a State level Committee
- (7) The Department monitors performance of the projects on the basis of quarterly progress reports. Mid Term evaluation of the projects by an independent evaluator is mandatory after release of 45% of project cost. The Mid Term Evaluation Report reveals the physical outputs and outcomes of the project and only after analyzing and ascertain the positive outputs commensurate with the project objectives, the next installment of funds is released for the project.

[Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development)  
O.M. No. Z-11014/2/2007-GC Dated 27 August, 2007]

#### **Comments of the Committee**

(Please see paragraph No. 28 of Chapter-I of the Report)

#### **Recommendation Serial No. 24 (Paragraph No. 4.78)**

The committee note that although the new programme IWMP has been proposed to be implemented from the year 2007-08, the modalities of revised programme has so far not been finalized. The Committee have repeatedly been recommending to the Ministry of Rural Development to have the detailed homework done before launching a new scheme or restructuring a programme. It is difficult to understand how the subsumed programme would be implemented in the absence of the detailed guidelines and pending the finalization of the detailed modalities. The year 2007-08 has already commenced *w.e.f.* 1st April, 2007 and the Committee fail to understand how the revised programme would be implemented in this year in the absence of the detailed

modalities. In view of the aforesaid scenario the Committee strongly recommend expeditious finalization of the guidelines and the detailed modalities.

### **Reply of the Government**

Action has already been initiated to get the IWMP approved from the Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC). Approval of the competent authority has also been obtained to release funds for the ongoing projects of IWDP, DPAP and DDP on the existing pattern. Accordingly, funds are being released for implementation of ongoing projects of IWDP, DPAP and DDP out of the allocation made for IWMP for 2007-08.

The task of preparing of the common guidelines has been undertaken and it is proposed to submit the common guidelines to the National Rainfed Area Authority for approval shortly.

[Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development)  
O.M. No.Z-11014/2/2007-GC Dated 27 August, 2007]

### **Comments of the Committee**

(Please *see* paragraph No. 19 of Chapter-I of the Report)

#### **Recommendation Serial No. 25 (Paragraph No. 4.79)**

The Committee note that DDP and DPAP are being implemented in the specified identified DDP and DPAP blocks in various States of the country. Although the Department has informed that the operational identity of different programmes would be maintained in the revised programme, the Committee would strongly recommend to provide adequate priority to the DDP and DPAP block in the revised programme.

### **Reply of the Government**

In the new programme (IWMP), the consolidation will be for the purpose of co-ordination between the three programmes for the sake of integrated planning and optimum use of resources. The requirements/priorities of individual programmes would also be taken into account during implementation of the integrated programme.

[Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development)  
O.M. No. Z-11014/2/2007-GC Dated 27 August, 2007]

### **Comments of the Committee**

(Please see paragraph No.19 of Chapter-I of the Report)

#### **Recommendation Serial No. 31 (Paragraph No. 5.27)**

The Committee while supporting the Department on the issue of restructuring the programme find that another area of concern is having correct land records. The proposed restructured scheme of computerization of land records on the basis of the existing records would only serve the purpose of saving the decaying maps/land records but the real purpose of land records can be achieved only when the land records are correct and reflect the true ground position in this regard. In this regard, the State Governments' efforts were being supplemented by the Centrally Sponsored Scheme for Strengthening of revenue Administration and Updating of Land Records. The Secretary has informed that under the restructured programme, there is no proposal for taking up any survey. He has also stated that preparation of land records is basically the task of State Governments and the original work has to be done by the States. The Secretary has also observed that SRA & ULR has been reduced into a building programme *i.e.* strengthening of land revenue administration which is not the genuine priority of the programme. The Committee differ here from the observation of the Secretary and note that very good work has been done under the programme by some of the States as admitted by the Department in the various documents. Goa, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal have been stated to be the States which have completed RoR data entry work with the assistance provided under the programme. It has also been mentioned that Orissa and Andhra Pradesh have also done good work. In this scenario, the Committee express strong concern over discontinuing the programme meant for maintenance and updating of land record *i.e.* SRA & ULR. While agreeing that there may be some problems in the implementation of the programme in some of the States, the Committee feel that the same can be addressed through bringing reforms in the various modalities of the programme. Since some States could do very good work, other States can also be motivated to emulate the good performing States. Besides, the Committee observe that with the proposed restructured programme only the States who could do something to have very good land records can be benefited. Again the worst performing States would be at a disadvantageous situation since these States have land records in a form which will serve no purpose after computerization.

The Committee further observe that in North Eastern States, the position of land records is further worse. In this regard, it is pertinent to highlight the observation of the Committee while examining the Demands for Grants 2006-07 that the system of land records and land administration prevalent in the rest of the country does not exist in the hilly and tribal areas of North Eastern States. In most of the States even the cadastral survey has not been done and so no land records exist. The Committee had been informed at that stage that under the existing schemes some of the North Eastern States have done some work like Arunachal Pradesh has some land records and Manipur has land records for five valley districts and these States have started data entry work. The State Government of Meghalaya has no proper land records and has been requested to carry out survey and settlement. State Governments of Mizoram and Nagaland have already started survey and settlement with the financial support from Government of India under the scheme of SRA & ULR. The Committee find that the restructured scheme of Computerization of Land Records would be of no help to North Eastern States because these States have no land records. Some initiatives were being undertaken by these States under the existing SRA & ULR Scheme and with the closure of that support, there is no hope of having proper land records in these States. In view of the aforesaid observation, the Committee strongly recommend to the Government to continue SRA & ULR. However, the shortcomings of the existing scheme can be addressed by restructuring some of its components.

Keeping in view the existing position of land records in North Eastern States, the Committee strongly recommend as under :

1. Detailed survey of the land resources including watershed areas, catchments areas, drainage, forest areas, arable land areas etc. of each village through satellite and remote sensing devices should be carried out;
2. Nodal authorities at the State and District level for coordinated functioning among the departments, engaged for the enlistment of rural economy through the use of land and its resources should be set up;
3. The Expert Committee on land management of the hill areas at the State and district level should be set up;
4. The recommendations of the Expert Committee should be mandatory followed by all the Departments.

5. The detailed survey of District and Sub-Divisional headquarter areas for maintaining land records of government office plots, individual plots, public land etc. should be carried out.

The Committee further observe that there is an urgent need to assure the people in North-East that the aforesaid Schemes are meant for the upkeep and maintenance of existing land records and in no way proposed to change the age old traditions and customs. Such an assurance is altogether required keeping in view the peculiar position of land records in North-East.

#### **Reply of the Government**

It is stated that the RoR data entry work has been taken up/ completed by the State Governments/UT Administrations under the scheme of Computerisation of Land Records (CLR) under which 100% Central assistance is provided to States/UTs and not under the Scheme of Strengthening of Revenue Administration & Updating of Land Records (SRA & ULR) where the funding pattern is 50:50 between the Centre and the States. However, UTs are provided 100% Central assistance. Central assistance on 100% basis will be provided to the States/UTs where this work is still remains to be done.

As far as sanction/implementation of NLRMP in the States and UTs is concerned, the States and UTs are at different levels of progress in respect of computerization of land records, adoption of modern survey technology, computerization of property registration, and modernization of the revenue administration. A detailed proforma for data collection has been developed and circulated among the States and UTs. Based on the responses, a sizing exercise is being carried out to have a clear understanding of the size of the problem. The Programme requirements would be worked out according to the state of preparedness of each State and UT and the activities customized. The necessary "hand holding" support will be provided under the programme to them. Outsourcing for critical gaps in technology and human resources will be allowed. Further, support will be provided to the States/UTs for outsourcing and procurement management.

Training activities will also be supported under the Programme for capacity building of the functionaries at the various levels. This will include training needs analysis (TNA), training of trainers/master trainers, strengthening of the State revenue training set up, induction of modern equipment and technology, consultancies, workshops, etc. Setting up National and State Resource Centres is also envisaged to support the activities under the Programme on an ongoing basis.



To begin with, the Programme will be piloted in a number of districts across the country. These districts will be selected carefully in consultation with the States and UTs. The experience of these pilots will help in refining the methodology and approach, following which the Programme will be scaled up to cover all the districts in the country.

The requirements of the NE States would be taken into account under the NLRMP. Land management including survey, settlement, etc; being a State subject, the above mentioned recommendations of the Committee would be shared with the concerned States, so that concerted action could be taken from their end as well.

[Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development)  
O.M. No. Z-11014/2/2007-GC Dated 27 August, 2007]

**Comments of the Committee**

(Please *see* paragraph No. 31 of Chapter-I of the Report)

## CHAPTER V

### RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH FINAL REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT ARE STILL AWAITED

#### **Recommendation Serial No. 5 (Paragraph No. 3.19)**

As stated earlier, there is an urgent need to ensure that there is no reduction in total agricultural land in the country. In this regard, the Committee note the stand of the Department according to which industries, Special Economic Zones should be established preferably on wastelands. Degraded forestland could also be considered but with higher than the usual norms for compensatory afforestation or reforestation. To the extent agricultural land is used for industries etc., there should be compensatory development of wastelands for the sake of food security of the country. The Committee also note that the data with regard to the land acquired for special Economic Zones as far is being collected by the Department from the concerned Ministry of Commerce and Industry. The Committee also note that legislative provisions restricting use of agricultural lands for non-agricultural purposes exist in most of the States. Further the Committee note that land is a non-renewable resource and is finite. It cannot be further extended. In view of this, there is an urgent need to ensure a balanced use of land for different purposes *viz* agriculture, industries, forestation, housing etc. while noting the stand of the Department that industries, SEZs should preferably be set up on wasteland/degraded forest land, the Committee recommend that the Government should permit acquisition of land cautiously keeping in view the limited land resources of the country. In this scenario, perhaps there is an urgent need to have a National Land use Policy which can guide the various state Governments in having laws with regard to the use of land for different purposes with the objective of balanced and harmonious use of land for different purposes. In this regard, the Committee also note that the Department has requested the Ministry of Agriculture to convene the meeting of the National Land use and Conversion Board to discuss the issues related to acquisition of agricultural lands for non-agricultural purposes. The aforesaid concerns of the Committee should specifically be brought before all concerned. Besides, the concern of Committee to have a national Land use Policy should also be brought to the knowledge of the concerned Ministries/Departments. The Committee should also be kept apprised about the follow up of the aforesaid recommendation of the Committee.

### **Reply of the Government**

The matter has been taken up with the Ministry of Agriculture. Other Ministries/Departments will also be involved as and when necessary. The Committee will be kept apprised of the progress in this regard.

[Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development)  
O.M. No.Z-11014/2/2007-GC Dated 27 August, 2007]

### **Comments of the Committee**

(Please *see* paragraph No. 10 of Chapter-I of the Report)

NEW DELHI;  
26 February, 2008  

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07 Phalguna, 1929 (*Saka*)

KALYAN SINGH,  
*Chairman,*  
*Standing Committee on*  
*Rural Development.*

## APPENDIX I

### COMMITTEE ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT (2007-2008)

#### EXTRACTS OF MINUTES OF THE SEVENTH SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY, THE 18 FEBRUARY 2008

The Committee sat from 1100 hrs. to 1215 hrs. in Committee Room No. 'C', Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

#### PRESENT

Shri Kalyan Singh — *Chairman*

#### MEMBERS

#### *Lok Sabha*

2. Shri Mani Charenamei
3. Shri Sandeep Dikshit
4. Shrimati Kiran Maheshwari
5. Shri Hannan Mollah
6. Shri A. F. G. Osmani
7. Shrimati Jyotirmoyee Sikdar
8. Shri Bagun Sumbrui
9. Shri Tarit Baran Topdar

#### *Rajya Sabha*

10. Shri Balihari Babu
11. Shri Jayantilal Barot
12. Kumari Nirmala Deshpande
13. Shri Pyarelal Khandelwal
14. Dr. Chandan Mitra
15. Ms. Sushila Tiriya
16. Shrimati Kanimozhi

#### SECRETARIAT

1. Shrimati Sudesh Luthra — *Director*
2. Shri A.K. Shah — *Deputy Secretary-II*
3. Shri Hoti Lal — *Deputy Secretary-II*

2. At the outset, the Chairman welcomed the members to the sitting of the Committee. Thereafter, the Committee took up for consideration Memorandum No. 2 regarding draft action taken report on Twenty-seventh report of the Committee on Demands for Grants (2007-08) of the Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development). The Committee after deliberations adopted the draft report with a slight modification.

3. \*\*\*\* \*\*\*\* \*\*\*\*

4. The Committee then authorised the Chairman to finalise the aforesaid draft action taken report on the basis of factual verification from the concerned Department/Ministry and present the same to both the Houses of Parliament.

5. \*\*\*\* \*\*\*\* \*\*\*\*

6. The Committee then decided to hold next sitting on Monday, 25 February, 2008 at 1500 hrs onwards for consideration and adoption of remaining two draft action taken reports of Department of Rural Development (Ministry of Rural Development) and Ministry of Panchayati Raj on Demands for Grants (2007-08).

*The Committee then adjourned.*

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\*\*\*\*Relevant portions of the minutes not related to the subject have been kept separately.

## APPENDIX II

(Vide Para 4 of the Introduction)

### ANALYSIS OF THE ACTION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE TWENTY SEVENTH REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT (14TH LOK SABHA)

I.	Total number of recommendations	34
II.	Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government :	21
	Para Nos.: 3.15, 3.16, 3.29, 3.31, 3.32, 4.13, 4.21, 4.25, 4.30, 4.41, 4.42, 4.76, 4.77, 4.80, 4.83, 5.24, 5.25, 5.26, 5.28, 5.29 and 6.3	
	Percentage to the total recommendations	(61.77%)
III.	Recommendation which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of Government's reply :	1
	Para No.: 4.12	
	Percentage to the total recommendations	(2.94%)
IV.	Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee :	11
	Para Nos.: 3.17, 3.18, 3.30, 4.22, 4.23, 4.24, 4.59, 4.63, 4.78, 4.79 and 5.27.	
	Percentage to the total recommendations	(32.35%)
V.	Recommendation in respect of which final reply of the Government is still awaited :	1
	Para No. : 3.19.	
	Percentage to the total recommendations	(2.94%)