

29

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

FOURTEENTH LOK SABHA

MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT

DIRECTORATE OF ESTATES

[Action Taken by the Government on the Recommendations contained in the
Twenty Third Report of the Standing Committee on Urban Development
(Fourteenth Lok Sabha)]

TWENTY NINTH REPORT



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

TWENTY NINTH REPORT

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON
URBAN DEVELOPMENT
(2007-08)**

(FOURTEENTH LOK SABHA)

**MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT
DIRECTORATE OF ESTATES**

[Action Taken by the Government on the Recommendations contained in the Twenty Third
Report of the Standing Committee on Urban Development]
(Fourteenth Lok Sabha)

Presented to Lok Sabha on 20.03.2008
Laid in Rajya Sabha on 20.03.2008



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

March, 2008/Phalguna, 1929 (Saka)

C.U.D. No.: 32

Price : Rs.

C) 2008 By Lok Sabha Secretariat

*Publish under Rule 382 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha
(Eleventh Edition) and Printed by*

CONTENTS

	Page
COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE	(iii)
INTRODUCTION	(v)
CHAPTER I Report	1
@CHAPTER II Recommendations that have been accepted by the Government ...	
@CHAPTER III Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's replies	
@CHAPTER IV Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee	
@CHAPTER V Recommendations in respect of which final replies of the Government are still awaited.....	

APPENDICES

1. Minutes of the Ninth sitting of the Committee held on 11.3.2008
 2. Analysis of the Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in Twenty Third Report of the Committee (14th Lok Sabha)
- @ Not appended with the cyclostyled draft Report

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

Mohd. Salim - Chairman

MEMBERS

LOK SABHA

2. Shri Avtar Singh Bhadana
3. Smt. Botcha Jhansi Lakshmi
4. Shri Sharanjit Singh Dhillon
5. Shri Surendra Prakash Goyal
6. Shri Anant Gudhe
7. Shri Pushp Jain
8. Shri Kailash Joshi
9. Shri Sajjan Kumar
10. Prof. Vijay Kumar Malhotra
11. Shri Babu Lal Marandi
12. Shri A.K. Moorthy
13. Shri Shripad Yesso Naik
14. Shri L. Rajagopal
15. Shri Rajesh Ranjan alias Papu Yadav
16. Shri D. Vittal Rao
17. Shri Sudhangshu Seal
18. Kunwar Sarv Raj Singh
19. Shri Jagdish Tytler
20. Kunwar Devendra Singh Yadav
21. Shri Suresh Ganpatrao Wagmare

RAJYA SABHA

22. Shri Nandi Yellaiah
23. Smt. Syeda Anwara Taimur
24. Shri B.K. Hariprasad
25. Shri Surendra Moti Lal Patel
26. Shri Krishan Lal Balmiki
27. Shri Brij Bhushan Tiwari
28. Shri Penumalli Madhu
29. Shri Mukul Roy
30. Shri Varinder Singh Bajwa
31. Shri Manohar Joshi

SECRETARIAT

1. **Shri S.K. Sharma** - **Additional Secretary**
2. **Shri. S. Balshekar** - **Joint Secretary**
3. **Shri R. K. Saxena** - **Director**
4. **Smt. Anita B. Panda** - **Deputy Secretary**
5. **Shri Manish Kumar Thakur** - **Committee Assistant**

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Urban Development (2007-08) having been authorized by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present the Twenty-Ninth Report on the Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Twenty Third Report (14th Lok Sabha) of the Standing Committee on Urban Development on the subject “Directorate of Estates”.

2. The Twenty Third Report was presented to Lok Sabha on 6th September, 2007. The replies of the Government to 8 out of total 9 recommendations contained in the Report were received on 6th December, 2007. The Reply to the remaining 1 recommendation (recommendation number 6) was received on 21st February, 2008.

3. The Replies of the Government were examined and the Report was considered and adopted by the Committee at their sitting held on 11th March, 2008.

4. An analysis of the action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Twenty Third Report (Fourteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee (2007-08) is given in Appendix II.

New Delhi;
March, 2008
Phalguna, 1929 (Saka)

MOHD. SALIM,
Chairman,
Standing Committee on Urban
Development.

CHAPTER I

REPORT

This Report of the Standing Committee on Urban Development (2007-08) deals with the action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the 23rd Report on "Directorate of Estates," pertaining to the Ministry of Urban Development, which was presented to the Lok Sabha on 6th September, 2007.

2. The Report contained 9 recommendations in total. Action taken notes in respect of all the recommendations were received from the Government, which have been categorized as follows:-

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

Para Nos. 1.19, 2.35 and 3.10

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

Para No. Nil

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

Para Nos. 2.32, 2.33, 3.9 and 3.11

(iv) Recommendations in respect of which final replies of the Government are still awaited.

Para No. 1.21 and 2.34

3. The Committee desire that action taken notes on the recommendations contained in Chapter-I and final action taken notes in respect of the recommendations contained in Chapter-V of the Report may be furnished to them within three months of the presentation of this Report.

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

A. Functioning of the Directorate of Estates – Scope of improvement

Recommendation (Para No. 1.19)

5. The Committee had noted as under:-

“The Directorate of Estates, an attached office of Ministry of Urban Development has been entrusted, among other functions, with the overall responsibility for the administration and Management of Government Estates which includes General Pool Office Accommodation (GPOA) as well as the General Pool Residential Accommodation (GPRA). At present, the Directorate of Estates provides office building and residential accommodation in four metropolitan cities of Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai and Chennai as well as 5 other cities in different parts of the country. The GPRA is also available in 24 other cities. In addition, the Directorate of Estates is responsible for administration of the Requisitioning and Acquisition of Immovable Property Act, 1952 and Public Premises Eviction Act, 1971. The Committee note that the Directorate is responsible only for managing the Estates of the Government and has no role to play in the actual construction activity, which is normally done through the Central Public Works Department (CPWD). As regard the unsatisfactory performance of CPWD in handling maintenance of residential as well as office accommodation in Delhi and at the Regional stations, the Committee have been made to understand that since the CPWD is responsible for reporting vacation of houses to the Directorate for further allotment to the eligible employees, it is expected that the CPWD would intimate the conditions of vacant houses/office accommodation also to them while reporting the vacancies, on which further action is taken by the Directorate as to whether to allot or defer the allotment.

6. Further, the Committee had observed as under:-

“On the issue of the inspection done by the Directorate to carry out checks to ensure proper up-keeping and maintenance by the CPWD, the Committee note that the Directorate inspects only for checking up subletting or misuse of premises and that the maintenance part is to be done by the CPWD, which has a system of regular inspection by their field Engineers. In this scenario, the Committee are of the opinion

that since the Directorate has been given the overall responsibility of providing accommodation to various Government organizations, dignitaries as well as the Central Government employees, the maintenance of the same cannot be construed as an altogether separate activity, with which the Directorate has nothing to do. They feel that there is a need to expand the scope of its activities further in order to ensure better maintenance and up-keep of the buildings/ office premises. Although the Ministry has sought to convince the Committee that the CPWD is the only Agency responsible for construction and maintenance of the Government assets, the Committee consider it to be yet another instance of shirking of responsibility. They are of the view that in the wake of rather substandard maintenance of the official and residential buildings by concerned agency, it is time that the present scheme of things is reviewed and the Directorate develops a mechanism to ensure that the Agency responsible for maintenance of the Government assets is performing its duties satisfactorily. Besides, the Committee feel that there exists a serious lack of coordination at present between the CPWD and the Directorate in the matter of construction of residential/office accommodation and its maintenance, a fact which even the Directorate has acknowledged, that requires urgent attention. Therefore, they desire that the CPWD Wing dealing with the repair and maintenance of the Government residential Complexes/offices Buildings, should be made directly accountable to the Directorate of Estates. This will not only prevent the duplicity of agencies to look after the upkeep of the Government buildings but will also enable CPWD to devote more time towards its other activities. In case such an arrangement is not considered feasible, the Committee urge the Ministry to urgently devise a mechanism which ensures better coordination between CPWD and the Directorate. They are of the opinion that with advance computer technology, ensuring a synchronization of operations between the Directorate and the CPWD is definitely possible. The Committee therefore recommend that the Government should initiate appropriate steps in the matter urgently so as to fill the existing communication gap between the two Departments.”

7. In their Action Taken Reply, the Government have submitted as under:

(i) "The work of the Directorate of Estates and the CPWD are under the coordination of the Additional Secretary, Ministry of Urban Development. The repair and maintenance wing of the CPWD being made directly accountable to the Directorate of Estates is not advised. Directorate of Estates and CPWD having separate and distinct mandates of their own, the supervision of one over the other may result in functional difficulties. However, as has been suggested by the Committee, coordination between the Directorate of Estates and the CPWD being essential and inevitable coordination and cooperation between the Directorate of Estates and the CPWD under the overall supervision of Additional Secretary, Ministry of Urban Development would be the ideal way to achieve the aim of the Committee.

(ii). Action has also been initiated for evolving an effective mechanism for the users of the Govt. premises to make direct complaints even to the Directorate of Estates pertaining to their grievances relating to repairs/maintenance of the public premises. These would, in turn, be passed on to the Director(Works)/CPWD for immediate redressal and would be monitored on regular basis at the level of Addl. Secretary for ensuring effective and expeditious solutions.

(iii). With a view to facilitate the Allottees to see the quality of the house with necessary inventories available therein, one house in each category of Types I to V (Type I to IV in Sadiq Nagar and Type V in Kidwai Nagar) have been placed at the disposal of the CPWD to make as model houses. One Type VI house at Mahadev Road which houses the 'H' Division of CPWD is also proposed to be made a model house.

(iv). In order to completely do away with paper Vacancy and Occupation Reports being generated by CPWD Service Centres, a link between EAWAS website and CPWDSEWA website has also been created to facilitate online transfer of Vacation and Occupation Reports in real time into the Government Accommodation

Management (GAMS). This work is expected to be operational by November, 2007. The provision to communicate the time required to make the house habitable depending upon the physical condition of the vacant house has also been in-built into this facility so that the allotment can be made only after necessary repairs/renovations.”

8. The Committee had desired that the Directorate of Estates should develop a mechanism to ensure that the agency responsible for the maintenance of the Government assets performs its duties satisfactorily. The Committee had also urged the Ministry to urgently devise a mechanism ensuring better coordination between the CPWD and the Directorate of Estates by taking the advantage of information technology. Towards this end, the Committee have been made to understand that the Government has initiated action for evolving an effective mechanism for users of Government premises to make direct complaints even to the Directorate of Estates, which would, in turn be passed on to Director (Work) / CPWD. The Committee also appreciate the creation of a link between EAWAS website and CPWDSEWA website to facilitate online transfer of Vacation and Occupation reports in real time into Government Accommodation Management System (GAMS). As per the Ministry, this link was to be operational by November, 2007. The Committee would like to be apprised whether the same has been made operational. Nonetheless, the Committee find it a positive step to enable allottees file civil / electrical complaints online. Further, they are of the opinion that the allottees would feel more assured of a prompt action from the agencies involved if time slabs are given to attend a complaint, for instance, 24 hours to fix minor problems, etc. Once monitored and followed up, this would add credibility to the functioning of the Directorate. Regarding better coordination, the Committee have been informed that both the Directorate of Estates and CPWD work under one Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Urban Development. The Committee are surprised at this and feel that if two Departments under a single head have problems in coordination, it implies that there is a serious

gap which requires attention. Hence, the Committee desire that sincere efforts should be made from the top most level to ensure that instead of shirking of responsibility by the CPWD and the Directorate of Estates, both the agencies work in tandem so that the management of GPOA and GPRA remains free from severe criticism.

B. Provision of residential accommodation by the Directorate- problems of shortage

Recommendation (Para No. 2.32)

9. The Committee had noted as under:-

“The shortage of residential accommodation for Government employees has engaged the attention of the Committee for quite some time. The Committee note that at present there is a shortage of 32,000 (approximately) residential units in various types in Delhi alone in the General Pool. The availability of housing stock with the Directorate is 63216 units in Delhi and 34534 units in 32 other regional stations, which is insufficient keeping in view the huge demand. The Ministry have also admitted during the examination of the subject that in view of the gross inadequacy of the available units several Govt. officers/ employees are waiting for allotment of entitled type of accommodation in Delhi and at regional stations and that there definitely exists a need to add more houses. In addition, the examination by the Committee had further revealed that in Delhi, the overall satisfaction level is 67 per cent with 31188 applicants waiting for allotment from Type-I to Type-VIII including that for hostel accommodation. From this, the Committee are inclined to conclude that the situation in regional stations could be no better. During the evidence, the Secretary of the Ministry sought to assure the Committee that given the total resources, the Directorate would definitely try to achieve Hundred per cent satisfaction level. As part of the Ministry’s efforts to fulfill the shortage of GPRAs in Delhi, the Committee have been made to understand that it is proposed to construct 2036 more units, which has already been sanctioned ; and 1588 more units, which is awaiting sanction in Delhi, which according to rough estimates may take about 2 to 3 years. The Committee have also been apprised of the Ministry’s proposal to add 1030 dwelling units upto 31.3.2007 and also to construct 2289 houses, during 11th

Plan, at other regional stations. The Committee further note that with effect from the year 2006-07, a Plan Head has been allocated to the Directorate thus making available funds to meet shortage of housing stock. Besides, during the current Financial Year, a sum of Rs.685.53 lakhs has been received by the Directorate as Budgetary allocation for the construction of the requisite dwelling units. In addition, the regulations for discretionary allotments have been notified in November, 1997 which has fixed an overall ceiling of 5 per cent of vacancies occurring in a particular type in a particular calendar year. The Committee feel that although the proposal of the Directorate to construct more units in Delhi as well as regulate the discretionary allotments is in the right direction, they are not sure as to whether the Ministry have carried out a similar exercise to fulfill the financial requirements of the proposed houses to be constructed in the 11th Plan, in the regional stations too and whether appropriate budgetary support is available for constructing the same.”

10. Further, they observed as under:-

“The Committee are also of the view that due to lack of Govt. accommodation in certain North-Eastern cities like Gangtok, Guwahati, Shillong, Agartala etc., many Govt. employees feel constrained to join their duty in these stations. Therefore, the Committee desire that the Ministry should speed up their efforts to work out the exact requirement in terms of the General Pool Residential Accommodation in other regional stations, including the North East and initiate efforts to fulfill the requirement suitably. In this context, the Committee feel that the Ministry may think in terms of devising a separate component plan for creating GPRAs in the selected North-East cities so that adequate Budgetary allocations could be ensured for the same. They desire to be apprised about the same in due course.”

11. In their Action Taken Reply, the Government have stated as under:

“For the regional stations, the Prioritisation Committee had laid down a targeted satisfaction level of 50% of the demand. At present, the General Pool

accommodation is available in 34 cities (other than Delhi). Of these, in 32 cities, the target of 50% satisfaction has already been achieved. In fact, in 15 of these cities, the Estate Managers are grappling with the situation of surplus residential accommodation.

It has been observed that in cities where land costs are not so high, the Govt. employees prefer to construct their own residential accommodation. In many cities (e.g., Jodhpur, Bareilly, Ghaziabad etc.) it was observed that by the time, the General Pool residential projects are completed, the demand for houses disappears because during the gestation period of the Housing Project (which is generally 8-10 years), the employees make their private arrangements. Therefore, it has been decided that the residential accommodation shall be constructed on priority basis first in metropolitan cities (where the Central Govt. has to shell out HRA @ 30% and which have marked density of Central Govt employees) where the target of 50% satisfaction level has not been achieved. In cities (like Jodhpur, Kanpur, etc) where the density of Central Govt employees is around 1,000, the construction of General Pool residential shall not be a priority. Such cities will be taken up after achieving the target levels in metropolitan cities.”

12. While appreciating the proposal of the Directorate to construct more dwelling units and houses in Delhi and regulate the discretionary allotments, the Committee had wondered as to whether the Ministry had carried out a similar exercise in the regional stations too. They had also desired the Ministry to initiate efforts to fulfill the requirement of GPRAs in certain North-Eastern cities and had advised them to devise a separate component plan for the same. The Committee have now been apprised about the availability of GPRAs in 34 cities (other than Delhi) out of which 32 cities show 50% satisfaction level. Nevertheless, the Committee feel that the satisfaction level of 50% of the demand is a case of moderate success only. Besides, satisfaction level in different types of flats is bound to be different for different categories of flats. Hence, the Committee recommend the Ministry to aspire for achieving a better satisfaction level. Further, it has been brought to the

notice of the Committee that in cities where land costs are not so high, the Government employees prefer to construct their own residential accommodation, thus making the demand for houses disappear by the time the General Pool Residential Projects are completed. However, the Committee are of the opinion that this cannot be taken as a general trend because such cases mostly happen where the employee is either a native belonging to that particular State or when he wishes to settle in a metropolitan/big city. Besides, a person in a transferable job is in no position to construct a house in every city of his posting. The Committee are further dismayed at the failure of the Ministry to clarify on the Committee's recommendation regarding fulfillment of requirement of GPRAs in North-Eastern cities. Hence, the Committee cannot but reiterate their earlier recommendation on this matter and desire the Ministry to assess the actual requirements of GPRAs in those areas, which may, perhaps, make such areas attractive for the Government employees for postings and transfers. The Committee would also like to be apprised about the financial requirements of the proposed houses to be constructed during the 11th Plan period in Delhi and other regional cities and efforts being made by the Ministry for appropriate budgetary support for constructing the same.

C. Unauthorised Subletting of Government Residential Accommodation

Recommendation (Para No. 2.33)

13. The Committee had noted as under:

“The Committee observe that one rampant malpractice, which has aggravated the already acute shortage of Government accommodation, has been the unauthorized sub-letting of quarters, resorted to by certain unscrupulous allottees. They note that during the period of April to December, 2005, sub-letting was suspected in 378 cases by the Directorate of Estates. Between January to November, 2006, around 461 similar cases were suspected. Regarding identification of cases of sub-letting, the Committee have been made to understand that sub-letting is reported mainly by way of a complaint and not as a result of the inspections

conducted by the Directorate on their own to detect the unauthorized sub-letting. The Committee are of the definite opinion that if inspections are carried out regularly, it would be a continuous threat to those who resort to unauthorized sub-letting of the Government accommodation. Though the Committee appreciate the steps already taken by the Government to detect such cases and levy penalty on the persons responsible for it, they would further advise the Ministry to carry out effective inspections regularly and extensively to detect the maximum possible number of cases of unauthorized sub-letting. Besides, strong action needs to be initiated against such unscrupulous employees, both serving and retired who misuse the Government facilities for monetary gains, as a deterrent measure, which would not only discourage such aberrations but also mitigate the hardships faced by the genuinely needy employees, by making available to them the Government accommodation without unnecessary delay.”

14. The Government have replied as under:

“Subletting section is receiving on an average of 200 complaints per month from various sources and the same are investigated by four inspecting teams consisting of one Gazetted officer(Section Officer level) in the pay scale of Rs 8000-12000 and a non Gazetted officer (Assistant/UDC) in the pay scale of Rs. 6500-10500 or Rs. 4000- 6000 as the case may be for conducting on the spot inspection of each and every residential accommodation. The Section Officer of inspecting team is the overall in-charge dealing with Public and spot inspections. Given the acute staff constraints for carrying out inspection of subletting in addition to his regular full time job, there is always a backlog. With the result, only a handful of inspection reports from four inspecting teams deployed for inspection purpose during the two month prescribed period are being received.”

15. The reply further stated as under:-

“Deployment of adequate additional manpower to the extent of at least Two Inspection teams is, therefore, of utmost necessity for inspections of not only the

complaints received but also for undertaking suo motu door to door inspections of each and every locality at regular intervals.

Accordingly, to cope with the enhanced work-load, the Subletting Section needs to be enhanced as under :

- 1 Two Asstt. Directors
- 2 Four Assistants
- 3 Eight UDC's
- 4 Four LDC's
- 5 2 Daftries
- 6 2 Peons

The work of subletting section is supposed to be done in a prescribed and time bound procedure. As such, at least 15 days' time is given in a show cause notice and 15 days time for personnel hearing followed by 30 days time for Appeal etc. Besides, many of the complainants are seeking status of their complaint under RTI Act-2005 for which requisite information is required to be given within the stipulated period of 30 days for which also an effective mechanism with additional manpower is of utmost requirement.”

16. The Committee had expressed their concern over the rampant malpractice of subletting of Government accommodation. In this connection, they had advised the Ministry to carry out effective inspections regularly and extensively to detect the maximum possible number of cases of unauthorized subletting. Besides, they had recommended that strong action must be initiated against such unscrupulous employees. In this regard, the Committee have been informed by the Government that they fall short of desired thorough inspection owing to acute staff constraints for carrying out

inspection. The Ministry have specified requirement of 22 additional officers/ staff, which obviously would need creation of more posts. Though the Committee feel that the Ministry of Urban Development should pursue with the Ministry of Finance for additional posts for the purpose, the solution to such problems could be found in better human resource management. Besides, the Committee find it unnecessary for the inspection team to visit every household to detect sub-letting. Generally, the place under subletting is an open secret and adopting an intelligent approach, while interacting with the residents, residential associations, etc., can detect such cases. Therefore, the Committee would like to urge the Ministry to continue with their inspection work and manage it properly so as to check subletting of Government accommodation, and penalize the errant employees. Besides, they hope that the Ministry would take strict and effective measures to identify and weed out malpractices in the system leading to subletting of Government accommodation. This will go a long way in meeting the goal of judicious allocation of Government accommodation to the genuinely needy employees.

D. Availability of Office Accommodation – Problems of shortage and shifting of Offices from Delhi

Recommendation (Para No. 3.9)

17. The Committee had noted as under:-

“The Committee note that in so far as the available space for office accommodation is concerned, there is a net shortage of 25.90 lakhs sq.feet in Delhi alone and 20.12 lakh sq.feet in other regional stations as on 31st December, 2005. They also note that at present, there is leased office space of 59.96 lakh sq.feet, which needs to be released by the Directorate of Estates to minimize the rental

liability of the Government. The Committee also note that in most of the major cities, the actual availability of Office Accommodation with the Directorate of Estates is almost 50% of the overall demand of Office Accommodation for Government Departments / Ministries etc. To cite two instances, in Kolkata, the demand for Office Accommodation is 20,74,653 sq.ft. but the availability is only 13,79,402 sq.ft. Similarly, at Bangalore the demand for Office Accommodation is 5,31,802 sq.ft but the availability is 1,71,697 sq.ft. Apart from these cities, there is also shortage of Office Accommodation at Mumbai, Chennai, Shimla, Chandigarh, Nagpur, Thiruvananthapuram, Hyderabad, Lucknow, Bhopal and Indore. As per the Ministry, the allocation of funds in the Budget for the purpose of payment of rent is around Rs.15.5 crore during the current Financial Year. Although the Committee have been made to understand that no new buildings have been acquired or hired during the current Financial Year in order to encourage direct tenancy, the Committee feel that the problem of shortage of office space is as serious as that of Residential Accommodation. With regard to steps taken by the Government to overcome this shortage, the Committee note that there are four new GPOA Projects currently under Planning/construction stage totalling approximately 9.28 lakh sq. ft. which may be available within three years from now on in Delhi. However, the Ministry have already admitted that even after completion of the same, the shortage of office space in Delhi will continue to exist to some extent. As regards the construction of new GPOA in various regional areas, the Committee note that additional GPOA has been proposed and sanctioned in three cities and in 25 other cities, further GPOA has been proposed to be constructed. While the Committee feel that the Ministry is making efforts to meet the demands for Office Accommodation in Delhi and other areas, at the same time they are also of the view that the location of new offices in Delhi requires a policy shift, in the sense that Government offices having their Headquarters outside Delhi should not be given office space in Delhi. The Committee agree with the Ministry that it indeed is an uphill task to convince a Department about not having their offices in Delhi. Nonetheless, they feel that the Ministry must think twice before agreeing to provide office space to such departments in future. Besides, the Committee are also aware that although some offices were identified for shifting out of Delhi, yet those have not shifted so far.

Moreover, the Committee note that although the Ministries have also been asked by the Government to assess their requirements of space, the response in some cases is either too slow or not forthcoming at all. The Committee recommend that all such cases must be followed up vigorously so as to bring them to a logical and without further delay. Further, the Committee are of the opinion that in order to ease the pressure on Delhi for office space, the Government should make prudent use of the already available land by demolishing old and dilapidated structures and construct vertical structures. In addition, the Government may also explore the possibility of establishing a `Satellite Office City' in the NCR region which may either be integrated with the existing metro transport link of the Central Secretariat office Complex in Delhi or may have separate corridors for rapid transport system to ensure a safe, smooth and efficient travel for the potential office-goers coming from Delhi.”

18. The Government have replied as under:

“With a view to combat the existing shortage of GPOA in Delhi, the following steps/suggestions are offered:-

(i) As per existing policy no new office of Central Govt./ Public Sector Undertakings Statutory or Corporate Body owned or controlled by Central Govt. is to be set up in Delhi without prior approval of Cabinet Committee on Accommodation (CCA). The Govt. has noted the valuable suggestions of the Committee that the offices having their headquarters outside Delhi should not be given office space in Delhi. This policy should be reiterated and emphasized while commenting upon the proposals of all ministries seeking location of new offices in Delhi. It should be clearly specified in the proposals that even if it is decided by the CCA to locate the office in Delhi, such office should be given space either in the satellite towns of Delhi, viz., Ghaziabad, Faridabad, Gurgaon etc. or they should make their own arrangement for GPOA.

(ii) In spite of efforts made from time to time, the Ministries/Deptt. have not furnished their consolidated up-to-date requirement of GPOA. All Secretaries are

requested to arrange for submission of this information immediately in a time bound manner.

(iii) A number of offices have been identified for shifting outside Delhi with a view to de-congest the Capital which is one of the objectives of National Capital Region Plan. The respective ministries, it has been observed, approach the Cabinet Committee on Accommodation seeking its permission to continue to remain in Delhi. Similarly Commissions and Tribunals may be re-located in the NCR Region.

(iv) The existing space in the hutments/barracks, which is presently being used as GPOA, have been identified for re-development as full-fledged modernized GPOA complexes.”

19. Concerned about the net shortage of available space for office accommodation, the Committee in their original recommendation had suggested that Government offices having their headquarters outside Delhi should not be given office space in Delhi. They had also urged the Government to vigorously follow the shifting of already identified offices outside Delhi and convince the Ministries to assess their requirements for space early. Further, the Committee had desired the Ministry to get the old and dilapidated structures demolished and construct vertical structures. They were also advised to explore the possibility of establishing a satellite office city in the NCR region to ease the pressure on Delhi. The Committee appreciate the Government’s willingness to follow their suggestions for discouraging the use of office space in Delhi by such Government Offices, which have their headquarters outside Delhi. However, they still await information regarding any concrete initiative from the Ministry on this matter.

The Committee feel that the Government should be very strict on these aspects, when negotiating with the new proposals regarding office space in Delhi as well as in other Metropolitan cities, where the land use has reached the saturation point. In this regard, the Committee are very dissatisfied with the failure of the Ministries / Departments in furnishing their consolidated up to date requirement of GPOA. They desire that their concern should also be conveyed to the Cabinet Committee On Accommodation to which the affected parties approach for relief. With regard to their recommendation on exploring the possibility of establishing a satellite office city with appropriate transport links, the Ministry have not submitted a reply. The Committee would like to know the Government's response on the matter.

Further, while reiterating their earlier recommendation urging the Government to get the old structures demolished and replace those with vertical structures, the Committee counsel the Ministry to take appropriate care to ensure that the environment and aesthetics of the area is not disturbed. Besides, it is also pertinent to keep the heritage factor in mind.

E. Need to provide GOPA in Regional Areas

Recommendation (Para No. 3.11)

20. The Committee had noted as under:

“From the information made available to the Committee, they note that additional GPOA has been proposed and sanctioned in three cities namely Calicut (now Kozhikode), Bareilly and Nasik. Also there are proposals for additional GPOA in 25 other cities including Chennai, Bangalore, Allahabad, Bhubaneswar, Port Blair, Varanasi and Guwahati etc. The Committee hope that the already sanctioned

construction projects have already commenced and that the Government is taking requisite action to ensure the completion of these projects within a specific timeframe. As regards the proposals in 25 other cities, the Committee would urge the Government to give priority to the construction proposals in those cities where huge amount is currently being spent on rent or lease of hired buildings. The Committee would like to be apprised about the progress regarding their sanction, timeframe for completion etc. within three months of the presentation of this report.”

21. The Government has replied as under:

“The demand for Office Accommodation in many regional stations, as observed by the Committee, is pressing because many Central Departments are incurring huge amounts on rentals or leased accommodations. However, the Directorate of Estates is not directly involved in the process of working out the demand of Office accommodation for such Central Departments in regional areas. The demand figures are compiled by the regional offices of the CPWD who have been authorized to furnish Fair Rent Certificate (FRC) to such Central Government departments, to enable them to hire private accommodation for official purposes. After compilation of data relating to demand by the Regional offices of the CPWD, the DG(W) submits the same to the Directorate of Estates for ratification of the demand on the basis of entitlements ,eligibility, etc. of the offices concerned. The other aspects regarding allocation of funds, availability of land, clearances from local bodies, sanctions, change in land-use, etc. are monitored and executed by the, CPWD under the supervision of respective Chief Engineers. The time frames for completion of construction of these projects are fixed, approved and monitored by the Ministry of Urban Development through CPWD Management Committee, created in the Ministry of UD for this purpose. After completion of the buildings, these are handed over to the Directorate of Estates for issue of formal allotment letters to the respective departments after vetting actual demand.

22. The reply further states as under:-

“However, it has been noticed on many occasions that Central Government departments who have been allotted office space by the Directorate of Estates, refuse to move to the newly constructed buildings, primarily because such buildings are generally located on the outskirts of the city, whereas the Government departments, having hired accommodation in primary central location, dislike to move to the far-away locations where the Central Government is able to acquire land for construction of office buildings.

For example, the office space measuring 1140 sq.ft allotted to the Directorate of Marketing and 744 sq.ft, allotted to National Service Scheme in Pune in April 2007 has not been occupied. Finally the Directorate was constrained to cancel this allotment as the office space created for them has not been utilized for the desired purpose. Similarly, after completion of GPOA Complex in Trivandrum, 5 out of the 18 Central Government offices, that had earlier conveyed their willingness to shift to GPOA, opted out on grounds like acquiring their own accommodation or remoteness of GPOA from the city. Office. This cause a loss of about 15.54 lakhs to the exchequer. In Jaipur also, this trend has been noticed. These experiences make it necessary for the Directorate to go for future construction of GPOA in regional cities very carefully so as to minimize the possibility of loss of revenue on account of refusal of these Central offices to shift to the new locations.

The large Central Government offices like Income Tax Department, Central Excise, Para-military forces, etc. invariably try to construct their own office buildings in regional areas. Therefore, the liability of the Directorate of Estates is restricted to provision of office space to only such small departments who are not in a position to construct office buildings of their own. Therefore, the necessity of construction of very large sized CGO complexes in Regional areas does not appear to be a necessity.”

23. The Committee had desired that the sanctioned additional GPOA in 3 cities of Calicut (now Kozhikode), Bareilly and Nasik must be completed within

a specific timeframe. As regards the proposed additional GPOAs in 25 other cities, the Committee had urged the Government to give priority to the construction proposals in those cities where huge amount was being spent on rent or lease of hired buildings. The Committee have now been given to understand that the Directorate of Estates is not directly involved in the process of working out the demand of office accommodation for central departments in regional areas, for which CPWD is the designated body as it's regional offices are authorized to furnish the Fair Rent Certificate to enable such offices hire private accommodation. All other related aspects are monitored by the CPWD Management Committee and only when the buildings are completed, those are handed over to the Directorate of Estates. The Committee agree that both the CPWD and the Directorate have separate mandates, still they feel that the problem is not as acute as it is made out to be, because both the said offices function under the single administrative control of an Additional Secretary in the Ministry and thus, cooperation between the two under his overall supervision would be the ideal way to achieve the aim of the Committee. Further, the Committee have been made to understand that due to several reasons, on many occasions, the Central Government Departments refuse to move to newly constructed buildings. To cite two examples, the office space measuring 1140 sq.ft allotted to the Directorate of Marketing and 744 sq.ft, allotted to National Service Scheme in Pune in April 2007 have not been occupied. Similarly, after completion of GPOA complex in Trivandrum, 5 out of the 18 Central Government offices, that had earlier conveyed their willingness to shift to GPOA, opted out on grounds

like acquiring their own accommodation or remoteness of GPOA from the city. The Committee are at loss to comprehend as to why it so happened which has led to a huge loss to the Government exchequer. The Committee feel that the Ministry must take a lesson from such instances and find out a way to avoid such occurrences in future. They would like to know as to how these buildings are being used at present. The Committee further feel that the Directorate of Estates must be prudent and cautious while going for future constructions of GPOA in regional cities to minimize the possibility of loss of revenue on account of refusal of these Central Offices to shift to new locations. They opine that if the refusal has no valid grounds, the case can also be thoroughly assessed to take penal action against such offices. It should be made mandatory for the offices to shift before deciding on the location and such offices, once they agree to the proposal, should be informed well in advance that in case of non-compliance, penal action can be taken against them in the shape of recovery costs, etc. The Committee would like the Ministry to take action on these lines and apprise them of the steps taken on this front. The Committee also find that the Government have not furnished details of the progress regarding the sanction, time frame for completion, etc. of additional regional GPOAs, both big and small, in 25 cities, despite their recommendation to this effect. The Committee deplore the casual response of the Ministry and urge them to send complete information while furnishing their Action Taken replies.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON URBAN DEVELOPMENT (2007-2008)

**MINUTES OF THE NINTH SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON
TUESDAY, 18TH MARCH, 2008**

The Committee sat from 1500 hrs. to 1600 hrs. in the Hon'ble Chairman's Chamber (Room No. 119), 1st Floor, Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Mohd. Salim - Chairman

MEMBERS
LOK SABHA

2. Smt. Botcha Jhansi Lakshmi
3. Shri Surendra Prakash Goyal
4. Shri Anant M. Gudhe
5. Shri Shripad Yesso Naik
6. Shri Sudhangshu Seal
7. Kunwar Devendra Singh Yadav
8. Shri Suresh Ganpatrao Wagmare
9. Shri Sajjan Kumar

RAJYA SABHA

10. Shri Surendra Moti Lal Patel
11. Shri Brij Bhushan Tiwari
12. Shri Varinder Singh Bajwa

SECRETARIAT

- | | | |
|------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| 1. Shri S. Bal Shekar | - | Joint Secretary (SB) |
| 2. Shri R.K. Saxena | - | Director (S&U) |
| 3. Smt. Anita B. Panda | - | Deputy Secretary (UD) |
| 4. Shri Harchain | - | Deputy Secretary-II (UD) |

2. At the outset, the Hon'ble Chairman welcomed the Members to the sitting of the Committee. The Committee first took up for consideration the draft report on Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Twenty Third Report (14th Lok Sabha) of the Committee on the subject "Directorate of

Estates" of the Ministry of Urban Development. After some deliberations, the Committee adopted the draft action taken report with slight modifications.

3. The Committee then took up for consideration another draft Report on action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Twenty Fifth Report (14th Lok Sabha) of the Committee on the subject "Integrated Low Cost Sanitation Scheme (ILCS)" of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation. The Committee adopted the draft action taken report without any modifications.

4. The Committee then authorized the Chairman to finalise the Reports and present the same to Parliament.

The Committee then adjourned.

APPENDIX II

[Vide Para 4 of the Introduction]

ANALYSIS OF THE ACTION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE TWENTY THIRD REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON URBAN DEVELOPMENT (FOURTEENTH LOK SABHA)

I.	Total number of recommendations	09
II.	Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government	03
	Para Nos. 1.19, 2.35 and 3.10	
	Percentage of total recommendations	(33.33%)
III.	Recommendations which the Committee do not Desire to pursue in view of the Government's Replies	
	Nil	Nil
	Percentage to total recommendations	(0%)
IV	Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee:	
	Para No. 2.32, 2.33, 3.9 and 3.11	4
	Percentage to total recommendations	(44.4%)
V	Recommendations in respect of which final Replies of the Government are still awaited:	
	Para No. 1.21 and 2.34	2
	Percentage to total recommendations	(22.2%)