

**FORTY-SIXTH REPORT
PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE
(1992-93)**

(TENTH LOK SABHA)

**NON-MATERIALISATION OF THE SCHEME
FOR CONSTRUCTION OF STAFF QUARTERS**

**MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS
(DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS)**

[Action Taken on 3rd Report of Public Accounts Committee
(Tenth Lok Sabha)]



सत्यमेव जयते

*Presented to Lok Sabha on 27.4.1993
Laid in Rajya Sabha on 27.4.1993*

**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

April, 1993 / Vaisakha, 1915(S)

PAC No. 1364

Price : Rs. 11.00

© 1993 BY LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

PUBLISHED UNDER RULE 382 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE AND CONDUCT OF BUSINESS IN LOK SABHA (SEVENTH EDITION) AND PRINTED BY THE MANAGER, PHOTO LITHO UNIT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESS, MINTO ROAD, NEW DELHI.

CONTENTS

| | | PAGE |
|--|---|-------------|
| COMPOSITION OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE (1992-93) | | (iii) |
| INTRODUCTION | | (v) |
| CHAPTER I | Report | 1 |
| CHAPTER II | Recommendations/observations which have been accepted by Government | 5 |
| CHAPTER III | Recommendations/observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in the light of the replies received from Government | 14 |
| CHAPTER IV | Recommendations/observations replies to which have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration..... | 16 |
| CHAPTER V | Recommendations/observations in respect of which Government have furnished interim replies | 19 |
| PART II | Minutes of the sitting of Public Accounts Committee (1992-93) held on 29.3.1993 | 20 |
| APPENDIX | Conclusions and Recommendations..... | 22 |

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE
(1992-93)

CHAIRMAN

Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Girdhari Lal Bhargava
3. Shri Nirmal Kanti Chatterjee
4. Shri Z.M. Kahandole
5. Shri Vilas Muttemwar
6. Shri D.K. Naikar
- £7. Shri Arvind Netam
8. Shri Kashiram Rana
9. Shri R. Surender Reddy
10. Shri Pratap Singh
11. Shri Ramashray Prasad Singh
12. Shri N. Sundararaj
- *\$13. Shri K.V. Thangka Balu
14. Kumari Uma Bharati
15. Prof. (Dr.) Sripal Singh Yadav

Rajya Sabha

- £16. Dr. Abrar Ahmed
17. Shri R.K. Dhawan
18. Shri J.P. Javali
19. Shri Murasoli Maran
20. Shri Viren J. Shah
21. Shri Ish Dutt Yadav
22. Shri Ram Narresh Yadav

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri G.L. Batra — *Additional Secretary*
2. Smt. Ganga Murthy — *Deputy Secretary*
3. Shri K.C. Shekhar — *Under Secretary*

* Elected *w.e.f.* 23 July, 1992 *vice* Shrimati Krishna Sahi ceased to be a member of the Committee on her appointment as a Minister.

£ Ceased to be members of the Committee consequent upon their appointment as Ministers *w.e.f.* 18 January, 1993.

\$ Ceased to be member of the Committee consequent upon his appointment as Minister *w.e.f.* 19 January, 1993.

INTRODUCTION

1. the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee as authorised by the Committee, do present on their behalf this Forty-Sixth Report on action taken by Government on the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee contained in their 3rd Report (Tenth Lok Sabha) on Non-materialisation of the scheme for Construction of Staff Quarters.

2. In their earlier Report, the Committee while expressing their unhappiness over the inordinate delay and gross negligence in the construction of 220 staff quarters, had stressed that the Department should speed up the progress without further delay. In this Report, the Committee have expressed their serious concern over the fact that construction work has so far been started only for 40 quarters and in respect of the remaining 180 quarters, even the tenders have not been finalized so far. The Committee have, therefore, strongly emphasised that the Department should speed up the construction activities so as to achieve the completion of all the 220 quarters expeditiously.

3. In their earlier Report, the Committee had taken a serious view of the inept handling and gross negligence on the part of the departmental officials in dealing with the staff welfare scheme which had resulted in delayed construction of staff quarters, avoidable escalation of construction cost and encroachment on acquired land and had recommended for disciplinary action against the officers concerned. The Committee have expressed their strong displeasure that more than 15 months have already elapsed since the presentation of their original Report but no progress on this recommendation has been made so far. The Committee have strongly emphasized that the question of fixation of responsibility for the unconscionable delay which has occurred in the implementation of the project for the construction of 220 quarters should be finalised expeditiously.

4. The Report was considered and adopted by the Public Accounts Committee at their sitting held on 29 March, 1993. Minutes of the sitting from Part II of the Report.

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

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

NEW DELHI;
April 7, 1993

Chaitra 17, 1915 (Saka)

ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE,
Chairman,
Public Accounts Committee.

CHAPTER I

REPORT

This Report of the Committee deals with the action taken by Government on the recommendations/observations of the Committee contained in their Third Report (Tenth Lok Sabha) on paragraph 42 of the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for the year ended 31 March, 1988 No. 4 of 1989, Union Government (P & T) on Non-materialisation of the scheme for construction of staff quarters.

2. The Third Report which was presented to Lok Sabha on 13 December, 1991 contained 9 recommendations. The Action taken notes have been received in respect of all the recommendations and these have been categorised as follows:

(i) Recommendations and observations which have been accepted by Government:

Sl. Nos. 2 to 7

(ii) Recommendations and observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in the light of the replies received from the Government:

Sl. No. 9

(iii) Recommendations and observations replies to which have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration:

Sl. No. 1 and 8

(iv) Recommendations and observations in respect of which Government have furnished interim replies:

—NIL—

3. In the succeeding paragraphs the Committee will deal with action taken on some of their recommendations.

*Delay in construction of staff quarters and fixation of responsibility
(Sl. Nos 1 and 8—Para 8.1 and 8.8)*

4. Commenting upon the delay in completing the construction of staff quarters the Committee in Paragraph 8.1 of their 3rd Report had observed as follows:—

“The Department of Posts and Telecommunications purchased 6.5 acres of land in Jhilmil Colony, Shahdara at a cost of Rs. 9.73 lakhs for construction of staff quarters. The Department took

possession of the land in July, 1970. The layout plan was approved by the Department in October, 1972. The Committee are, however, distressed to find that no serious and systematic efforts were made to monitor and expedite the process of construction. The Ministry of Urban Development revised the plinth area of different types of quarters in August, 1975 necessitating a revision in the approved layout plans. It was only in July, 1977 that the Regional Architect was asked by the Superintending Surveyor of works to revise the layout plans. The Architect prepared the revised layout plans only in May, 1981 and these were approved in June, 1981. However, they were rejected in August, 1988 by the Delhi Urban Arts Commission (DUAC) as they were not conceived functionally and aesthetically. The drawings were revised and the master plan approved by the DUAC in October, 1990. The construction of quarters has not yet been started."

5. In their action taken note dated 5 June, 1992 the Ministry of Communications have stated as under:

"Revised Preliminary Estimate for construction of 220 Staff Quarters, at Jhilmil Colony, has been sanctioned on 10.12.1991. Work for 40 Nos. Type-III Quarters has already been awarded in Dec. 91 and the tenders are being invited shortly for the remaining 180 staff Qrs. (68 Type-I + 112 Type-II). Construction of these 220 Qrs. is likely to be completed within 24 months i.e. by Dec. 1993".

6. The updated note dated 22 January, 1993 furnished by the Ministry at the instance of the Committee reads as follows:

"The work for construction of 40 nos. Type-III staff Qrs. is in progress and about 55% of the work has since been completed. These quarters are likely to be ready by end of 1993-94.

The tenders for remaining 68 numbers Type-I and 112 Nos. Type-II quarters, have already been received and are under scrutiny. These tenders are likely to be finalised by 31.3.1993."

7. Expressing their serious concern for inordinate delay in implementing the staff welfare scheme and emphasizing the need for fixation of responsibility for the lapses the Committee in paragraph 8.8 of their 3rd Report had recommended as follows:

"The whole sequence of events is indicative of unconscionable delay as is evident from the following :

- (i) Inordinate delay in obtaining the approval of the layout plan which was prepared by the senior architect in October, 1972 and approval by Delhi Telephones in 1981 even though the ban on construction of quarters imposed by Government of India in August, 1973 was lifted in January, 1976.
- (ii) An inexplicable delay of nearly 2 years between the approval of the layout plan by Delhi Telephones Department and submission to DDA for their approval.

- (iii) Failure in furnishing of clarifications sought for by the DUAC in August, 1988 which were to be furnished by April, 1984 resulting in the closure of the case by the DUAC on 28.4.1988.
- (iv) Revised plans were sent to MTNL for approval in August, 1987 and to the DUAC only in October, 1989 finally cleared by them in October, 1990.

The Committee take a serious view of the inept handling and gross negligence on the part of the departmental officials in dealing with the staff welfare scheme which has resulted in delayed construction of staff quarters, avoidable escalation of construction cost and encroachment on acquired land. They are of the firm view that the matter calls for disciplinary action against the officers concerned and desire that a report of the action taken by the Government in this case should be submitted to them within a period of six months."

8. In their action taken note dated 5 June, 1992 the Ministry of Communications have stated as follows:

"Chief General Manager, Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd., and the Chief General Manager (Maintenance) New Delhi, have already been addressed to initiate disciplinary proceedings against the Officers concerned."

9. In their updated note dated 22 January, 1993 furnished at the instance of the Committee the Ministry have further stated as follows:

"The case for disciplinary action is in correspondence with MTNL, New Delhi and office of the CGM, Northern Telecom Region, New Delhi. The delay is spread over a long span of about 15 years and it is attributed to a large number of Depttl. Units and outside Agencies, such as DUAC, DDA and MCD etc. Revision of the Plinth areas of quarters, caused total upsetting of the building preliminaries and resulted in delay significantly. Under these circumstances, fixation of responsibility is cumbersome in nature and its finalisation is likely to take quite some time."

10. In their earlier Report the Committee had observed that right from the acquisition of the plot by the Department in March, 1970 upto the submission of the revised plans for construction of staff quarters to Delhi Urban Arts Commission in October, 1989, the scheme had been woefully delayed for one reason or the other. The Committee had expressed their unhappiness over the inordinate delay and gross negligence that had taken place. The Committee had stressed that even at this late stage the Department should speed up the progress without further delay and draw up a time bound programme for construction of the staff quarters. The Committee had also emphasized that the Department should monitor the progress regularly and follow the schedule scrupulously. The Committee are

constrained to observe that even after the presentation of their earlier Report on 13.12.1991, tangible progress has not so far been made in achieving the construction of the 220 quarters. It is a matter of serious concern that construction work has so far been started only for 40 quarters and in respect of the remaining 180 quarters, even the tenders have not been finalized so far. The lack of serious approach on the part of the Department is corroborated by the fact that according to their note furnished to the Committee on 5 June, 1992, the completion of all the 220 quarters in question was likely to be achieved by end of December, 1993 whereas according to the note furnished on 22 January, 1993 the completion of even the 40 quarters under construction was likely to be achieved by end of 1993-94. Such a casual approach on the part of the Department, even when the Committee had expressed their deep concern over the inordinate delay in their earlier Report, is highly deplorable. The Committee, therefore, strongly emphasize that the Department should speed up the construction activities so as to achieve the completion of all the 220 quarters expeditiously. Although the scheme has already been inordinately delayed, the Committee believe that elimination of any further delay in completing the construction of 220 quarters will not only provide much needed additional housing units for the staff but also save any further escalation in construction cost. The Committee may be apprised of the progress achieved in the construction of these quarters within a period of six months.

11. The Committee had also taken a serious view of the inept handling and gross negligence on the part of the departmental officials in dealing with the staff welfare scheme which had resulted in delayed construction of staff quarters, avoidable escalation of construction cost and encroachment on acquired land. The Committee had been of the firm view that the matter called for disciplinary action against the officers concerned. The Committee are not convinced with the reply of the Department that the delay is spread over a long span of about 15 years and it is attributed to a large number of departmental units and outside agencies and the finalization is likely to take quite some time. The Committee express their strong displeasure that more than 15 months have already elapsed since the presentation of their original Report and no progress on this recommendation has been made so far. Obviously, such delays vitiate the administration of timely justice and has a demoralising effect on administration. The Committee strongly emphasize that the question of fixation of responsibility for the unconscionable delay which has occurred in the implementation of the project for the construction of 220 quarters should be finalised expeditiously and the outcome thereof intimated to them within a period of six months.

CHAPTER II

RECOMMENDATIONS AND OBSERVATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY GOVERNMENT

Recommendation

Persuing the material placed before the Committee especially the sequence of events from the acquisition of the plot by the Department in March 1988 upto the submission of the revised plans for construction of staff quarters to the DUAC in October, 1989, the Committee find that for one reason or other the scheme has been woefully delayed. Neither targets were fixed nor any system of monitoring devised to review the progress of construction work. The time taken at each stage was highly abnormal and could have been avoided, had the Department monitored the progress of the scheme and taken suitable remedial measures. The Secretary of the Ministry conceded during evidence that some delay had occurred from the time of acquisition of land. The Committee feel that inspite of the reasons tendered by the Department to the effect that there were other priority works like plans for telephone exchange buildings, apathy, indecisiveness and unplanned approach in the formulation and execution of the scheme on the part of the Department is very evident. The plea advanced by the Department that land was acquired in advance for next 20 years in pursuance of a policy was also not very convincing. Committee urge the Department to undertake a review of the whole system and ensure that similar type of delays are avoided in future by drawing up a phased programme for construction of staff quarters.

[Sl. No. 2, Para 8.2 of 3rd Report of PAC (Tenth Lok Sabha)]

Action Taken

To speed up construction of Staff Quarters, to curtail delays and also to enforce an effective monitoring for construction of Staff Quarters, detailed information has been called from all the Circles vide Deptt. of Telecom. No. 482-10/91-BG dated 8.10.1991. This information pertaining to the 8th Five Year Plan (Period "1992-1997") shall be used as a base for monitoring the progress for Construction of Staff Quarters. The monitoring mechanism is further detailed in ATN relating to Sl. No. 8.3 which follows.

[Ministry of Communications O.M. No. 27-9/91-B dated 5-6-92]

Recommendation

The Committee further observe that though financial constraints were cited as one of the factors resulting in delay, adequate data or details to

justify the same have not been furnished. Judicious financial planning presupposes allocation of available limited resources among competing ends on the basis of assigned priorities. In the context of the above, the Committee note that the financial approval for the construction of quarters had been accorded in 1981 and provisional estimates for Rs. 1,60,24,054 were also sanctioned on 10.6.1982. Keeping the land unutilised for a long period even thereafter lacked justification. The Committee express their unhappiness about the inordinate delay and gross negligence that has taken place.

{Sl. No. 3, Para 8.3 of the Third Report of PAC (Tenth Lok Sabha)}

Action Taken

To avoid cases of keeping the land unutilised for a long period, instructions have already been issued vide enclosed ltr. No. 530-6/91-TPS(BT) dated 24.9.91 (Para 8 refers). This will help in putting a check on inordinate delays.

[Ministry of Communications O.M. No. 27-9/91-B dated 5-6-92]

530-6/91TPS(BT)

**Government of India
Ministry of Communications
Department of Telecommunications**

**Sanchar Bhawan,
New Delhi-110001.**

Dated 24 Sept. 91

To

- 1. All Heads of Telecom Circles/Projects/Telecom Factories/Mtce Regions/NE Task Force Guwahati/Satellite Projects**
- 2. Chief General Manager Telecom Districts, Madras/Calcutta.**

Sub: Protection of Land from unauthorised encroachments.

As per instructions contained in Rule 461 of P&T Manual Vol. II all sites purchased or acquired should be carefully watched by the local departmental officers to prevent encroachment and Divisional Engineers in whose jurisdiction the site lies should report to the Head of circle concerned in case of any encroachment.

Certain instructions were issued vide this office letter No. P. 6-33/55-TPS(BG) dt. 15/16-3-78 about proper fencing of departmental land to protect the same from squatters and trespassers. Further detailed instructions were issued vide this office letter No. 460-5/89-BG dated 10.7.89 to protect departmental land from squatters and encroachers. But inspite of these instructions it has been observed that land is encroached by squatters. The circles usually come to know of such encroachments very late. No FIR is either lodged with local Police or Police is informed very late. Due to such late information Police also show their inability to remove encroachments, lackness on part of officers concerned in reporting matters to Head of Division/Circle and to local Police in case of encroachment, results in hampering of not only Telecom Development but also cause an avoidable extra expenditure. Therefore, it has been decided that following protective measures should be taken by all Divisional Officers/Head of Circle to safeguard departmental land from this menace.

- 1. Whenever land is acquired/purchased it should be ensured that it is free from any encroachment.**

2. The land on acquisition should be immediately fenced, as a Primary Protection measure. This shall be followed by building of boundary walls of adequate height.

3. Bill Boards displaying that "land belongs to Department of Telecommunication; land purchased/acquired for construction of Telephone exchange/Quarters/DTO etc. and trespassers/encroachers shall be prosecuted" should be displayed at prominent positions of land.

4. T.D.E/T.D.M. should maintain a clear record of all such sites acquired and proper watch on departmental land must be ensured. In case land happens to be in the Headquarters of Divisional Engineer Telegraph, he himself will be incharge of land and in other places specific A.E./SDO(T) should be nominated as officer in-charge of site. These officers will be responsible for any encroachment, trespassing, removal of earth or any other unauthorised use of departmental lands.

5. These officers should inspect sites regularly and send a quarterly report to TDE/TDM in prescribed proforma. TDE/TDM will check up these reports and ensure that all sites, as per their records, have been reported. They will further send a report of their district/division to circle office where it will be further checked with reference to C.O. records.

6. In case any encroachment is detected, officer concerned should report to Local Police immediately and report the matter to TDE/TDM and Head of Circle along with a copy of FIR.

7. It has come to notice that vacant lands are utilised for keeping cable drums, and other materials which results in frequent entry of staff and local mazdoors etc. Even it is seen that at these places these mazdoors make their temporary dwellings. All of these result in encroachments. Therefore at these sites, where stores/cable drums are kept one L.M/SIT should be nominated to inspect the site fortnightly and be made responsible for lapse.

8. Keeping the land unutilised for a longer period also causes encroachment of land. Instances have come to notice where scheme for construction of staff quarters have not materialised for 16 years, resulting in encroachment. Therefore, after acquisition of land a comprehensive plan be drawn up by circles. The comprehensive plan should include milestones such as forwarding of SOA to architect, preparation of drawing and approval, sanction of D/E, issue of NIT etc. and progress of Building planning activities should be closely watched.

9. Circles will submit a half yearly status report to this office with respect to all the sites within their jurisdiction in proforma enclosed as Annexure to this letter.

These instructions may be brought to the notice of all concerned. Please acknowledge.

Sd/-
(D.N. Bhatia)
Director (BW)

Copy to:

1. All Chief Engineers Telecom (Civil)
2. Chief Architect Telecom.
They are requested to issue suitable instructions to their field officers to keep a watch on the site acquired and will inform the circle in case any encroachment is observed by them.
3. The D.D.G. (SW)/DDG(RDTF/DDG(TX) DOT ND for information please.
4. ADG (BG)/ADG (BT).

**Government of India
Ministry of Communications
Department of Telecommunications**

**Sanchar Bhawan,
New Delhi-110001.**

No. 460-5/89-BG

Dated 10 July, 89.

To

**All Heads of Telecom Circles/
Telecom Projects/Maintenance Region
Chief General Manager Telephone Districts
Madras/Calcutta.
Chief Architect (Telecom)
All Senior Architects (T)
All Chief Engineers (C) Civil, Telecom.**

Sub:—*Protection of Departmental land from unauthorised encroachments.*

2. Materialisation of housing schemes—Avoidance of undue delay in planning and preparation of drawings etc.

Certain instructions were issued vide this office letter No. P-6-33/55-TPS(BG) dated 15/16-3-78, regarding proper fencing of departmental land to protect the same from squatters & trespassers. Now a case has come to the notice of this office wherein the Telecom land was encroached upon by squatters for a sufficiently long time and the controlling circle came to know of the fact very late. The unauthorised encroachment of Telecom land not only hampers the development work, but also leads to avoidable complications in removal of the encroachment.

In the context of increasing menace of encroachment on Government land especially in big cities the following procedure may be followed to protect them from squatters.

1. Proper barbed wire fencing raised on brick wall/stone wall of 2 ft. height or simple barbed wire fencing depending upon the soil conditions of the land so that the wire fencing does not get decayed over the years, is provided soon after the acquisition of the land.
2. Bill boards warning the public against trespass on Departmental land are located at prominent positions of the land.
3. Periodical inspections at least six monthly of the land is carried out by

a responsible officer not below the rank of an AE/SDO and a report to the effect is sent to the concerned Head of the circle that the inspected land is free from encroachment and the fencing is intact.

4. As soon as squatting on the land is noticed case is taken up with the local police authorities for the removal of the squatters and the fact is brought to the notice of the Head of the circle.

Further a specific case of non-materialisation of the scheme of staff quarters for over 16 years has come to notice. The delay has resulted not only in escalation of the project cost, but at the same time denying housing facilities to the Telecom employees. Keeping land unutilised for such a long period also caused encroachment on the land.

After acquisition of land, a comprehensive programme of its utilisation is drawn up by the Planning circle. These should be clear instructions from the Planning circle to the concerned Senior Architect, regarding no. of staff quarters of various types to be constructed, scale of plinth area in each type to be followed etc. in preparation of drawings and suitable priority accorded for preparation of drawing, preliminary estimate.

Further it is observed that approval of drawings by local Municipal bodies takes a long time. The reason being deficiencies in the plans not conforming to bye laws. It is therefore desired that such deficiencies are avoided in the plans submitted to the local bodies after thorough study of local Municipal bye laws and discussions with local bodies.

These instructions may be brought to the notice of all concerned.

Receipt of this letter may please be acknowledged.

Sd/-

(S. N. ROY)

Sr. Deputy Director General (BW)

Copy to:

DDG(S) Director (BT)

Recommendation

Although the scheme has been considerably delayed, the Committee stresses that even at this late stage the Department should speed up the progress without further delay and draw up a time bound programme for construction of the staff quarters. They should monitor the progress regularly and follow the schedule scrupulously. It will not only provide much needed additional housing units for the staff in Delhi, but also save on further cost escalation in construction of quarters. The Committee may be informed of the action taken in this regard within a period of six months.

[Sl. No. 4, Para 8.4 of the Third Report of PAC (Tenth Lok Sabha)]

Action Taken

Construction of all the 220 staff quarters in Jhilmil Colony is targetted to be completed in 24 months time i.e., by Dec., 1993. Work has already been awarded for construction of 40 Nos. Type III Quarters and Tenders are being invited shortly for the remaining 180 staff quarters.

[Ministry of Communications, O.M. No. 27-9/91-B dated 5-6-92]

Recommendation

The Committee feel disturbed that although the land was acquired in 1970, the Department were not even aware till November 1986 that a part of their land had been encroached upon by some unauthorised occupants, even though the Department had spent about Rs. 10,000 in May 1971 to put up the fencing around the plot. This shows a totally casual and unconcerned approach of the Department towards their properties. Another plot of land in the DIZ area, New Delhi, belonging to the P&T Department, where staff quarters are to be constructed, has also been unauthorisedly occupied by some Jhuggi dwellers. Even though the department have not yet taken the physical possession of the land and it is stated to be under the control of the CPWD, basically the property belongs to the P&T Department who purchased the land to construct staff quarters.

[Sl. No. 5, Para 8.5 of the Third Report of PAC (Tenth Lok Sabha)]

Action Taken

(i) Detailed instructions have already been issued by the Deptt. of Telecom. vide No. 530-6/91-TPS(BT) dated 24.9.91 for protection of the departmental lands from unauthorised encroachments. These instructions contain adequate guidelines for 'Periodical Inspection' of the sites acquired by the Deptt. to ensure quick detection of encroachments and also to initiate quick action for eviction of the encroachers.

(ii) In DIZ Area, 14 Nos. Type-I Quarters have already been constructed and made over whereas another 14 Nos. Type-V Quarters are under construction and these are likely to be completed during 1992-93. Thus only 28 quarters will be ready by end of 1992-93 against sanctioned 270 Nos. of Staff Quarters. The land for construction of these quarters was handed over by the Ministry of Urban Development to CPWD directly. The remaining area over which the balance 242 quarters are to be constructed, has been encroached by Jhuggi Dwellers. Since the land was under direct control of CPWD, we are in correspondence with the CPWD to sort out the issues, so that the construction could start.

[Ministry of Communications, O.M. No. 27-9/91-B dated 5-6-92]

Recommendation

The Committee are also surprised that until this paragraph had been taken up by the Committee, no guidelines or in-built check had been devised until recently for periodical inspection of the sites acquired by the Department so as to detect encroachments, if any, and initiate proper action for eviction of the encroachers. The earlier instructions, for fencing of the land apparently were not adequate. While the Department plead that they acquire land to plan ahead for the next 15—20 years, there should have been strict guidelines from Directorate to protect the land till it gets used. The Department should make it a point to keep the land purchased under strict vigil and instructions already issued as late as 1989 for periodical inspection should be strictly enforced.

[Sl. No. 6, Para 8.6 of the Third Report of PAC (Tenth Lok Sabha)]

Action Taken

While laying emphasis on the instructions already issued in July '89, we have issued fresh instructions once again in September '91. These also include periodical inspections of the sites.

[Ministry of Communications, O.M. No. 27-9/91-B dated 5-6-92]

Recommendation

The Committee note that although the objective of the Department is to achieve a satisfaction level of 20% for providing housing accommodation to the staff, the actual satisfaction on all India basis is just 8%. In Delhi it is just 7.5%. Incidentally the percentage of satisfaction in respect of general pool accommodation for Central Government employees in Delhi was assessed at 65% as on. 1.1.1991.

[Sl. No. 7, Para 8.7 of the Third Report of PAC (Tenth Lok Sabha)]

Action Taken

To achieve a satisfaction level of 20% for providing housing accommodation to the staff by end of the 8th Plan period (1992-97), the required information has already been called from all the Telecom. Circles vide D.O.T. No. 482-10/91-BG dated 8.10.91. The number of housing units required to achieve the desired level of satisfaction, subject to availability of funds, is being assessed.

[Ministry of Communications, O.M. No. 27-9/91-B dated 5-6-92]

CHAPTER III

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

Recommendation

The Committee in this connection also called for details of both unutilised and utilised lands with the Ministry. The list of unutilised lands for staff quarters furnished to the Committee gives a very gloomy picture of the entire management of land acquired by the Department for this purpose. In a large number of cases no perspective plan or target dates for utilisation of these lands were available. Lands acquired even more than three decades back are still lying unutilised. There are as many as 155 pieces of land totalling 281.78 acres which are lying unutilised. The Committee need hardly emphasise that the provision of government accommodation to staff is a welfare measure and depriving of these facilities particularly in cities where rents are very high causes great hardship to those who are on the waiting list for government accommodation. The Committee deprecate the laxity and callousness of the Department in utilising the lands acquired long back and desire that the matter be examined in detail and the responsibility fixed. They also recommend that the Department may review forthwith the unutilised lands available with them on all-India basis, assess the demand for the staff quarters and take adequate steps to provide additional housing units to improve the existing low satisfaction level which was stated to be only 8% on all-India basis. [Sl. No. 9, Para 8.9 of the Third Report of PAC (Tenth Lok Sabha)]

Action Taken

The various field units have been asked to supply particulars as per this office No. 482-10/91-BG dated 8.10.91 which will enable us to assess the number of housing units required to achieve 20% satisfaction.

[Ministry of Communications, O.M. No. 27-9/91-B dated 5-6-92]

Updated Action Taken Note

Information on requirement of staff quarters by the end of Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-97) has since been compiled.

A total number of 27540 quarters are already available with the Department of Telecom. for its 2,90,851 employees as on 31.3.1992, meeting satisfaction level of 9.47%. The present pace of construction of about 1500 quarters annually can be enhanced with added efforts to a

maximum of 2500 to 3000 quarters per annum. Thus we may be able to add a maximum of 15,000 quarters by the end of Eighth Five Year Plan (1992—97), thereby making available a total of 42500 quarters to achieve a satisfaction level of 14% against 20% target by the end of Eighth Plan and it will require a financial outlay of about Rs. 400 crores.

Reasons for shortfall:—

- (a) Resource constraints
- (b) Difficulty in getting suitable land at reasonable prices at suitable locations
- (c) Litigation on Government lands and encroachments in certain cases
- (d) Scarcity of building materials e.g., cement/steel at controlled prices
- (e) Delay in approval in building plans—No. of local bodies. Corporation, urban authority, fire department, civil aviation etc., involved in formal clearance of plans in urban areas.
- (f) Delay in service connections, Electric/Water/Sewerage etc.

[Ministry of Communications, O.M. No. 27-9/91-B dated 22 January, 1993]

CHAPTER IV

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

Recommendation

The Department of Posts and Telecommunications purchased 6.5 acres of land in Jhilmil Colony, Shahdara at a cost of Rs. 9.73 lakhs for construction of staff quarters. The Department took possession of the land in July 1970. The layout plan was approved by the Department in October, 1972. The Committee are however distressed to find that no serious and systematic efforts were made to monitor and expedite the process of construction. The Ministry of Urban Development revised the plinth area of different types of quarters in August 1975 necessitating a revision in the approved layout plans. It was only in July 1977 that the Regional Architect was asked by the Superintending Surveyor of works to revise the layout plans. The Architect prepared the revised layout plans only in May 1981 and these were approved in June 1981. However they were rejected in August 1983 by the Delhi Urban Arts Commission (DUAC) as they were not conceived functionally and aesthetically. The drawings were revised and the master plan approved by the DUAC in October 1990. The construction of quarters has not yet been started.

[Sl. No. 1, Para 8.1 of the Third Report (Tenth Lok Sabha) of the PAC]

Action Taken

Revised Preliminary Estimate for Construction of 220 Staff Quarters, at Jhilmil Colony, has been sanctioned on 10.12.1991. Work for 40 Nos. Type-III Quarters has already been awarded in Dec. 91 and the tenders are being invited shortly for the remaining 180 Staff Quarters. (68 Type-I+112 Type-II). Construction of these 220 Qrs. is likely to be completed within 24 months i.e. by Dec. 1993.

[Ministry of Communications O.M. No. 27-9/91-B dated 5.6.92]

Updated Action Taken Notes

The work for construction of 40 Nos. Type-III Staff Qrs. is in progress and about 55% of the work has since been completed. These quarters are likely to be ready by end of 1993-94.

The tenders for remaining 68 numbers Type-I and 112 Nos. Type-II quarters, have already been received and are under scrutiny. These tenders are likely to be finalised by 31.3.1993.

[Ministry of Communications, O.M. No. 27-9/91-B dated 22 Jan. 93]

'Recommendation

The whole sequence of events is indicative of unconscionable delay as is evident from the following:—

- (i) Inordinate delay in obtaining the approval of the layout plan which was prepared by the senior architect in October, 1972 and approval by Delhi Telephones in 1981 even though the ban on construction of quarters imposed by Government of India in August 1973 was lifted in January, 1976.
- (ii) An inexplicable delay of nearly 2 years between the approval of the layout plan by Delhi Telephones Department and submission to DDA for their approval.
- (iii) Failure in furnishing of clarifications sought for by the DUAC in August, 1983 which were to be furnished by April 1984 resulting in the closure of the case by the DUAC on 28.4.1988.
- (iv) Revised plans were sent to MTNL for approval in August, 1987 and to the DUAC only in October, 1989, finally cleared by them in October 1990.

The Committee take a serious view of the inept handling and gross negligence on the part of the departmental officials in dealing with this staff welfare scheme which has resulted in delayed construction of staff quarters, avoidable escalation of construction cost and encroachment on acquired land. They are of the firm view that the matter calls for disciplinary action against the officers concerned and desire that a report of the action taken by the Government in this case should be submitted to them within a period of six months.

[Sl. No. 8, Para 8.8 of the Third Report (Tenth Lok Sabha) of the PAC]

Action Taken

Chief General Manager, Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd., and the Chief General Manager (Maintenance) New Delhi, have already been addressed to initiate disciplinary proceedings against the Officers concerned.

[Ministry of Communications O.M. No. 27-9/91-B dated 5.6.92]

Updated Action Taken

The case for disciplinary action is in correspondence with MTNL, New Delhi and Office of the CGM, Northern Telecom. Region, New Delhi. The delay is spread over a long span of about 15 years and it is attributed to a large number of Deptt., Units and outside Agencies such as DUAC.

DDA and MCD etc. Revision of the plinth areas of quarters, caused total upsetting of the building preliminaries and resulted in delay significantly. Under these circumstances, fixation of responsibility is cumbersome in nature and its Finalisation is likely to take quite some time.

[Ministry of Communications, O.M. No. 27-9/91-B dated 22 Jan., 93]

CHAPTER V

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

-NIL-

NEW DELHI;
April 7, 1993

Chaitra 17, 1915 (Saka)

ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE,
Chairman,
Public Accounts Committee.

PART II

Minutes of the Twenty-fourth sitting of the Public Accounts Committee held on 29 March, 1993

The Committee sat from 1500 hrs. to 1600 hrs.

PRESENT

Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee — *Chairman*

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Girdhari Lal Bhargava
3. Shri Nirmal Kanti Chatterjee
4. Shri Kashiram Rana
5. Shri Pratap Singh
6. Prof. (Dr.) Sripal Singh Yadav

Rajya Sabha

7. Shri J. P. Javali
8. Shri Viren J. Shah
9. Shri Ish Dutt Yadav

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri G. L. Batra — *Additional Secretary*
2. Smt. Ganga Murthy — *Deputy Secretary*
3. Shri K.C. Shekhar — *Under Secretary*

REPRESENTATIVES OF AUDIT

1. Shri Ramesh Chandra — *Director General (P&T)*
2. Shri P.K. Bandopadhyay — *Pr. Director (Indirect Taxes)*
3. Shri A.K. Banerjee — *Pr. Director (Reports-Central)*
4. Shri P. Muthukumar — *Pr. Director (Economic & Service Ministries)*
5. Shri A. Prasad — *Director (Central Excise)*

The Committee considered the following draft Reports:—

- (i) ** ** **
- (ii) ** ** **

(iii) Action taken on the 3rd Report of PAC (10th Lok Sabha) regarding Non-materialisation of the scheme for construction of staff quarters.

with certain modifications as shown in Annexures* I and II respectively. The Committee adopted the draft Report at Serial No. (iii) above without any amendment.

4. The Committee authorised the Chairman to finalise the draft Reports in the light of the verbal and consequential changes arising out of factual verification by Audit and present the same to Parliament.

The Committee then adjourned.

.

APPENDIX

Statement of Conclusions/Recommendations

| Sl. No. | Para No. | Min./Deptt. Concerned | Recommendations/Conclusions |
|---------|----------|----------------------------|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 1 | 10 | Ministry of Communications | <p>In their earlier Report the Committee had observed that right from the acquisition of the plot by the Department in March 1970 upto the submission of the revised plans for construction of staff quarters to Delhi Urban Arts Commission in October, 1989, the scheme had been woefully delayed for one reason or the other. The Committee had expressed their unhappiness over the inordinate delay and gross negligence that had taken place. The Committee had stressed that even at this late stage the Department should speed up the progress without further delay and draw up a time bound programme for construction of the staff quarters. The Committee had also emphasized that the Department should monitor the progress regularly and follow the schedule scrupulously. The Committee are constrained to observe that even after the presentation of their earlier Report on 13.12.1991, tangible progress has not so far been made in achieving the construction of the 220 quarters. It is a matter of serious concern that construction work has so far been started only for 40 quarters and in respect of the remaining 180 quarters, even the tenders have not been finalized so far. The lack of serious approach on the part of the Department is corroborated by the fact that according to their note furnished to the Committee on 5 June, 1992, the completion of all the 220 quarters in question was likely to be achieved by end of</p> |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|---|----|----------------------------|---|
| 2 | 11 | Ministry of Communications | <p>December, 1993 whereas according to the note furnished on 22 January, 1993 the completion of even the 40 quarters under construction was likely to be achieved by end of 1993-94. Such a casual approach on the part of the Department, even when the Committee had expressed their deep concern over the inordinate delay in their earlier Report, is highly deplorable. The Committee, therefore, strongly emphasize that the Department should speed up the construction activities so as to achieve the completion of all the 220 quarters expeditiously. Although the scheme has already been inordinately delayed, the Committee believe that elimination of any further delay in completing the construction of 220 quarters will not only provide much needed additional housing units for the staff but also save any further escalation in construction cost. The Committee may be apprised of the progress achieved in the construction of these quarters within a period of six months.</p> <p>The Committee had also taken a serious view of the inept handling and gross negligence on the part of the departmental officials in dealing with the staff welfare scheme which had resulted in delayed construction of staff quarters, avoidable escalation of construction cost and encroachment on acquired land. The Committee had been of the firm view that the matter called for disciplinary action against the officers concerned. The Committee are not convinced with the reply of the Department that the delay is spread over a long span of about 15 years and it is attributed to a large number of departmental units and outside agencies and the finalization is likely to take quite some time. The Committee express their strong displeasure that more than 15 months have already elapsed since the</p> |

1 2

3

4

presentation of their original Report and no progress on this recommendation has been made so far. Obviously, such delays vitiate the administration of timely justice and has a demoralising effect on administration. The Committee strongly emphasize that the question of fixation of responsibility for the unconscionable delay which has occurred in the implementation of the project for the construction of 220 quarters should be finalised expeditiously and the outcome thereof intimated to them within a period of six months.