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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE
(2018-19)**

(SIXTEENTH LOK SABHA)

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

**Provision of all weather road connectivity under Border Roads Organisation (BRO)
and other agencies up to International borders as well as the strategic areas including
approach roads- An appraisal.**

FIFTIETH REPORT



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

NEW DELHI

February, 2019/Magha, 1940(Saka)

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Presented to Lok Sabha on 12.02.2019

Laid in Rajya Sabha on 12.02.2019



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

NEW DELHI

February, 2019/Magha, 1940 (Saka)

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COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE (2018-19)

SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA

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CHAIRPERSON

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Deepak Adhikari (Dev)
3. Shri Suresh Chanabasappa Angadi
4. Shri Shrirang Appa Barne
5. Col Sona Ram Chaudhary VSM (Retd)
6. Shri H D Devegowda
7. Shri Jayadev Galla
8. Shri Sher Singh Ghubaya
9. Shri Gaurav Gogoi
10. Dr Murli Manohar Joshi
11. Km Shobha Karandlaje
12. Dr Mriganka Mahato
13. Shri Rodmal Nagar
14. Shri Partha Pratim Ray
15. Shri A P Jithender Reddy
16. Shri B Senguttuvan
17. Smt Mala Rajya Laxmi Shah
18. Shri Dharambir Singh
19. Smt Pratyusha Rajeshwari Singh
20. Shri Rakesh Singh

Rajya Sabha

21. Shri K R Arjunan
22. Dr Ashok Bajpai
23. Shri Joginipally Santosh Kumar
24. Shri Madhusudan Mistry
25. Shri Soumya R Patnaik
26. Shri G V L Narasimha Rao
27. Shri Sanjay Raut
28. Smt Ambika Soni
29. Shri Ram Nath Thakur
30. Lt. Gen. Dr D P Vats

* Shri Thupstan Chhewang resigned w.e.f. 13.12.2018

SECRETARIAT

1. Smt. Kalpana Sharma - Joint Secretary
2. Shri Srinivasulu Gunda - Director
3. Smt. Jyochnamayi Sinha - Additional Director
4. Shri Rahul Singh - Deputy Secretary

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Defence (2018-19), having been authorised by the Committee, present this Fiftieth Report on 'Provision of all weather road connectivity under Border Roads Organisation (BRO) and other agencies up to International borders as well as the strategic areas including approach roads- An appraisal'.

2. The subject 'Provision of all weather road connectivity under Border Roads Organisation (BRO) and other agencies up to International borders as well as the strategic areas including approach roads- An appraisal' was selected for examination during the year 2017-18 and 2018-19. The Committee took evidence of the representatives of the Ministry of Defence on 27 October, 2017 and 14 November, 2018. The draft Report was considered and adopted by the Committee at their Sitting held on 11 February, 2019.

3. The Committee wish to express their thanks to the officials of the Ministry of Defence for appearing before the Committee and furnishing the material and information which the Committee desired in connection with examination of the subject.

4. For facility of reference and convenience, Observations/Recommendations of the Committee have been printed in bold letters in Part II of the Report.

New Delhi;
11 February, 2019
22 Magha, 1939(Saka)

Kalraj Mishra
Chairperson
Standing Committee on Defence

REPORT
PART-I
CHAPTER-I

Introductory

India is strategically located vis-a-vis both Continental Asia and the Indian Ocean Region. It has a landmass of 3.3 million square Kms. India has 14,880 Kms. long land border running through 92 districts in 17 States and share with seven neighbouring countries viz. Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, China, Bhutan and Nepal. This unique strategic location poses unique challenges to our Armed Forces, paramilitary forces and State Governments for the effective management of borders. Strengthening of Border Roads is needed to provide effective logistical facility to India's defence forces specially in the North Eastern part of the Country. During 1960s, the socio economic development of border areas was greatly handicapped by meager and inadequate road infrastructure. Further, the Defence of these areas also required reliable and dependable road network. Accordingly, a plan for road construction in border areas was envisioned and a number of schemes/road development plans were conceived by the Government. In order to create infrastructure, an urgent need to augment all these road development plans was felt to meet the security needs as well as to develop these under developed remote areas leading to our borders.

1.2 With regard the necessity for connectivity, MoD in their background note submitted *inter-alia* as follows:

'Activities of China and Pakistan: Both China and Pakistan have moved towards a focused and long term infrastructure development plan in the Northern areas. These plans will enable these countries to concentrate and move sizeable forces, all along the Indian border and will pose a significant threat in the event of any conflict.

Resident Population: Presence of population in the border areas strengthens the border security and it is desirable in the long term that such areas, which are largely under populated, be populated with sympathetic indigenous population. This policy requires a good road network, firstly for motivating migrated population to return to their areas and secondly, for their logistic support/sustenance.'

1.3 It is in this context that Border Roads Development Board (BRDB) was set up in 1960, with the Prime Minister as its Chairman to ensure coordination and expeditious execution of road construction projects in the north and north eastern states for enhancing Defence preparedness and economic development of the border areas. The Board was re-constituted

in 1985 with Hon'ble Raksha Mantri as the Chairman. Presently, Hon'ble Rajya Raksha Mantri is the Chairman of the Board. Border Roads Organisation (BRO) is the executive arm of BRDB with Director General of Border Roads (DGBR) as its head.

1.4 A Group of Ministers was set up by the Prime Minister primarily to consider the recommendation of the Kargil Review Committee. Chapter V of the Report of the Group of Ministers on 'Reforming the National Security System' also made *inter alia* the following observations / recommendations on border management:

"India-Nepal border has changed over a period of time with the increasing activities of Pakistan's Inter-services Intelligence in Nepal. These security concerns need to be addressed urgently.

The offensive agenda of Pakistan's ISI to promote international terrorism and subvert India is expected to intensify. The J&K cauldron is expected to continue, vigorous efforts are on to revive militancy in Punjab. Insurgent groups in different parts of the country are receiving support and encouragement, Illegal infiltration and smuggling of arms and explosives. Narcotics and counterfeit currency are pressing problems. The porosity of our borders, in many parts, makes the task of anti-national forces that much easier. All this underscores the need for utmost vigilance on the borders and strengthening the border guarding forces.

Since many of our borders are man-made artificial boundaries and not based on natural features such as rivers, watersheds etc, they are extremely porous and easy to cross.

Free movement across the Indo-Myanmar border has been the practice from times immemorial due to the ethnic and cultural similarity in the areas adjoining the border. Illegal trade activities in a variety of contraband items flourish at Moreh on the Indo-Myanmar border.

The border areas on both sides of the Indo-Bhutan border do not have basic infrastructure such as communication, roads, health, education, drinking water facilities etc. These areas are often used as sanctuaries by the insurgent groups of the North East particularly the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) and the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB)."

1.5 During examination of the subject 'Construction of roads in border areas of the country' on slow pace of construction of border roads, a representative of BRO submitted as under:—

"It would not be incorrect to say that two years back the philosophy of our nation was that we should not make roads as near to the border as possible. That philosophy is telling today very clearly as to why we do not have roads. It is only two or three years

back that we suddenly decided a change of philosophy and said no, we must go as far forward as possible. It is going to take time. Unfortunately, the time cannot be compressed. Whatever we can do, it will take time. Probably the time that we are taking may be one of the least that could be taken by any other agency like PWD.”

1.6 The various concerns expressed by the Group of Ministers with regard to border management are being addressed by the Government at various levels. Construction of border roads is one of the important areas for the effective border management as adequate roads are essential for effective patrolling along the border. The Committee during the course of examination of Demands for Grants every year have noted that a lot of efforts are being made by the Government for augmentation of the Defence structure of India's border. However, certain hurdles in construction of border roads like lack of adequate funds, capability constraints, Inadequate airlifting facility, pending forest/wildlife clearance and overall increase in the quantum of work being entrusted to Border Road Organisation (BRO) etc. In the aforesaid background, the Committee have selected the subject 'Provision of all weather road connectivity under Border Roads Organisation (BRO) and other agencies up to International borders as well as the strategic areas including approach roads- An appraisal.' for detailed examination and report to the House.

Mission / Objectives of BRO

1.7 The Mission of BRO has the following constituents:

- (i) To support the armed forces to meet their strategic needs by committed, dedicated, cost effective development and sustenance of the infrastructure.
- (ii) To achieve international levels of quality excellence and time consciousness in a diversified sphere of construction activity in a cost effective manner.
- (iii) Optimise potential and expertise through increased involvement in agency, transnational and national development projects.
- (iv) To attain leadership in development, adoption, assimilation and use of state of the art technology.
- (v) To create the environment for accurate, real time and effective decision making through optimising use of information technology.
- (vi) Through a focus on core competencies; ensure highest level of skill and proficiency in construction activity.

- (vii) To sustain a sense of values in the Organisation that will ensure a high level of self esteem in each individual and immeasurable synergy in the Organisation
- (viii) To help enrich the quality of life of the community and ensure all round growth.

Role of BRO:

- (a) **During Peace:** Develop and maintain the operational road infrastructure General Staff in the border areas. Contribute to the socio-economic development of the border.
- (b) **During War:** To develop and maintain roads to keep the Line of Control (LOC) through original sectors and re-deployed sectors. To execute additional tasks as laid down by the Government contributing to the war effort.

Maintenance of roads

1.8 On the mechanism for maintenance of border roads, MoD, stated that :

“In addition to the 530 roads of length 22803 km identified for construction/improvement, BRO also maintains 322 roads of length 7315 km to provide connectivity in the border areas. Construction of roads involves substantial investment and therefore, proper maintenance of these assets is of paramount importance. The road user cost, comfort and safety are influenced to a large extent by the state of maintenance of the roads. The following type of road maintenance in BRO is undertaken:-

- (a) Regular/routine maintenance
- (b) Special repairs
- (c) Emergent repairs
- (d) Renewal of surfacing

The maintenance of roads is carried out under three different scale of maintenance i.e. Scale-I, Scale-II and Rajasthan. For each maintenance scale the rates are different and are fixed by DGBR. Apart from the above, BRO also undertakes winter/summer snow clearance of various roads in High Altitude Areas and periodic renewal/resurfacing at a life cycle of 5/6 years to improve the riding quality of the road.”

Works of other Ministries entrusted to BRO

1.9 In addition to the road infrastructure development in the border areas as identified by the Army, BRO is also entrusted road works by the following Ministries/Departments:-

- (a) Ministry of Road Transport & Highways
- (b) Ministry of Home Affairs
- (c) Ministry of External Affairs
- (d) Department of North Eastern Region'

Creation of physical infrastructure along the borders (Roads, bridges, tunnels) Data on border roads

1.10 The data on the total length of (i) border areas (State wise), (ii) borders accessible by roads , (iii) total number of posts of Army in all the border areas (state wise), and, (iv) total number of posts accessible by border roads, as furnished by MoD is as under :

“(i) BRO is a work charged organization and is executing road infrastructure works in the border areas as per the strategic requirement of the Army. At present, 519 roads of length 22225.17 km (excluding roads in Bhutan) are identified for construction/improvement in the border areas. The State wise details are given below:-

S/No	State	Nos of roads	Length (in km)
i	Andaman & Nicobar	1	23.94
ii	Arunachal Pradesh	100	5267.51
iii	Assam	4	100.61
iv	Himachal Pradesh	11	924.52
v	Jammu & Kashmir	229	7122.47
vi	Manipur	21	1838.00
vii	Mizoram	11	888.44
viii	Nagaland	10	841.18
ix	Punjab	10	276.68
x	Rajasthan	54	2621.02
xi	Sikkim	37	910.17
xii	Tripura	2	201.04
xiii	Uttrakhand	27	1117.01
xiv	West Bengal	2	92.60
	Total	519	22225.17

(ii) to (iv) India China border spans extremely in rugged and snow bound terrain. The communication links run along and across river valleys in most of the areas. The higher reaches have very limited/no population. Roads are difficult to construct and

maintain in high altitude border areas. A figure indicating the total length of border accessible by roads may not provide the actual status of our infrastructure along the Northern borders. Sector wise status of road connectivity along with inaccessible areas would provide a good insight into this aspect....”

Data on Target vs completion of physical infrastructure roads, bridges, etc.

1.11 Furnishing the data on the year wise targets and achievements in creating border infrastructure such as roads, Permanent works , bridges, etc. for the last 10 years, MoD submitted as follows:

Year	Formation (Eq CI 9)		Surfacing (Eq CI 9)		Permanent works (In CRS)		Bridges (in M)	
	Target	Achievement	Target	Achievement	Target	Achievement	Target	Achievement
2007-08	1187	1127	2693	2245	789	735	3399	3203
2008-09	1775	1589	3071	3054	1026	770	3914	4017
2009-10	1854	1693	4124	3303	1453	1248	4016	3017
2010-11	2358	1917	4426	2573	2157	1737	4788	3002
2011-12	2287	1960	3255	2389	1523	1151	3819	3149
2012-13	2374	1669	3705	2421	1772	959	3862	2462
2013-14	2120	1548	3532	2194	1822	1115	3430	2312
2014-15	2191	1316	3087	2072	1973	940	5574	1613
2015-16	2441	1248	3870	2114	2200	1266	4245	1811
2016-17	2101	1138	3312	2108	2261	1147	4189	2665
2017-18	1443	883	2756	1930	1789	1104	3545	2547

1.12 With regard to the need for concentration strategic works, MoD submitted as follows:

Need to Concentrate on Strategic Works: BRO and BRDB were set up, to ensure coordination and expeditious execution of road projects in the North and North Eastern States to enhance the defence preparedness and economic development of the region. There is a need for BRO to concentrate on strategic works, along the border and hand over certain roads to other agencies. The table below summaries the expenditure pattern of BRO on strategic vs agency works:-

Ser No	Financial Year	Percentage Works of GS: Agency
(a)	2016-2017	89:11
(b)	2017-2018	90:10
(c)	2018-2019	90:10

Work in Hinterland: Presently, approximately 56% of the works being executed by BRO are in hard area/High altitude areas and remaining works are in lower regions. In order to complete strategic works on priority, there is a need to deploy more

resources, with a focus to complete the work in forward areas. A number of roads are also being handed over to Ministry of Road Transport & Highways (MoRT&H).”

1.13 Elaborating further on the issue, MoD submitted *inter alia* as follows:

“...There were not many players in the road construction sector, who could undertake works in the border areas. In the present scenario, agencies such as NHAI/NHIDCL are also available to supplement BRO in undertaking the development of road infrastructure in the border areas.

With a large number of roads included in BRDB programme, over the years, BRO spread its resources for the development of roads in the lower regions and as a result the development of road infrastructure in the forward areas suffered.

Now based on the operational requirements of the Army and consequent upon the decision taken in the National Security Council meeting, it was decided that BRO may focus on core strategic functions on the borders and MoD along with MoRT&H will work out the modalities of separating BRO’s strategic road building functions from infrastructure development in left Wing Extremism-affected areas and other internal roads. Accordingly, certain roads in the hinterland, which were earlier constructed by BRO and are now further required to be improved, are identified to be handed over to other agencies so that BRO is able to utilize its resources optimally for construction of roads, which are of strategic importance in the border areas and will meet the operational requirements of the Army.

The decisions to hand over the roads to civil agencies are also taken in accordance with the National Highway Development Plan called “Bharatmala”. Once a road is included therein, MoD has little choice, particularly in locations away from the Indo-China Border. Tezpur is a good example.”

1.14 Furnishing a brief about the target envisaged in the long term plan & target and achievement in the annual plan since last five years with regard to construction of border roads, maintenance, and induction of infrastructure as well as up-gradation, MoD submitted *inter - alia* as follows:

“Long Term Roll on Works Plan (LTROWP): BRO has been entrusted with the construction/improvement of roads of strategic importance based on the requirement of the Army. Besides this, BRO has been entrusted works by Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), Ministry of Road Transport and Highways and Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). In order to utilize the capacity of BRO in a judicious manner and to complete the priority roads in a time-bound manner for the Army there was a need to draw a Long Term Roll on Works Plan for BRO, so that the estimates for such works may be prepared by BRO without waiting for the specific approval from the Government. Accordingly, for the holistic development of road infrastructure in the border area, a Long Term Roll on Works Plan (LTRoWP) has been drawn up for 530 roads of length measuring 22803 km including the ICBRs at an approximate

cost of Rs 41059 Cr. These works are planned over for a period of 5 years as mentioned below:-

Item	No of Roads	Works Planned (Rs Cr)					Total (Rs in Crs)
		2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	
GS/Strategic	473	4870	6204	7314	7480	7203	33071
Agency	57	1308	1225	1432	1668	2355	7988
Total	530	6178	7429	8746	9148	9558	41059

1.15 With regard to the type of works undertaken under GS works , MoD submitted inter alia as follows:

“Based on operational requirement of the Army, a Border Roads Development Board (BRDB) Programme has been approved for 852 roads of length 30118 km. Further, a Long Term Roll on Works Plan (LTRoWP) 2015-2020 of 530 roads of length 22803 km has been approved for construction/ improvement in the border areas. Out of these 530 roads, presently 472 roads of length 18926 km are to be constructed/improved under GS works. The various types of works undertaken in GS Works by BRO are as under:

- (i) Construction/improvement of single lane roads
- (ii) Construction of double lane roads
- (iii) Construction of bridges
- (iv) Construction of tunnels
- (v) Maintenance of roads, airfields and tunnels”

ICBRs – Border infrastructure

1.16 In order to facilitate effective border management, security and development of infrastructure in inaccessible areas adjoining the China Border, a total of 73 strategically important roads were identified by the Government as Indo China Border Roads (ICBRs). Out of these 73 ICBRs, execution of 61 roads having a total length of 3409.27 km with estimated costs of Rs. 4644 crore were entrusted to Border Roads Organisation (BRO) with their targeted completion by 2012. The balance 12 roads were entrusted to other agencies such as CPWD, NBCC and State PWDs for execution.

1.17 With regard to the efforts made to increase the infrastructure, particularly accessibility by road on the border with neighboring countries and also in the context of road construction activities being undertaken by these countries in the border areas, MoD stated as follows:

“Government has identified 73 roads of length 3812 km, for the construction/development along Indo–China border by 2012. Out of this, 61 roads of length 3417.50 km have been entrusted to BRO. BRO has completed 22 road of length 707.24 km. Work on the balance road stretches are under progress and are in different stages of completion. The status of connectivity is as under:-

Agency	Total		Completed		Balance			
	Nos	km	Nos	km	Nos	km	Connected	Unconnected
GS	33	1898.71	11	427.51	22	1471.20	15	7
CSG	13	1092.42	06	214.35	07	878.07	1	6
ITBP	15	426.37	05	65.38	10	360.99	5	5
Total	61	3417.50	22	707.24	39	2710.26	21	18

Out of the 39 roads which are not completed, connectivity (formation works completed) has been achieved in respect of 21 roads. Of the remaining 18 roads, works are under progress on 17 roads while work on Road Timbu-Mago-Chuna in Arunachal Pradesh not yet started due to non-finalisation of the alignment by MHA.”

1.18 State wise distribution of ICBRs as provided by MoD is as under:-

Type of ICBRs	J&K	Himachal Pradesh	Uttarakhand	Arunachal Pradesh	Sikkim	Total
GS	9	2	10	11	3	35
CSG	1		1	11	-	13
ITBP	2	3	5	5	-	13
Total Roads with BRO	12	5	14	27	3	61
Roads with CPWD	2	2	5	-	3	12
Total	14	7	19	27	6	73

1.19 C&AG in its report (No.5 of 2017 on Union Government Defence Performance Audit), on non completion of Indo China Border Roads (ICBRs) commented inter-alia as follows:-

“Out of 61 Indo China Border Roads (ICBRs) planned to be completed by 2012, only 15 roads had been completed by 2012. Out of the balance 46 roads, only 07 roads were completed by March, 2016 extending the Probable Date of Completion (PDC) of balance roads upto the year 2021. Thus 22 roads (36%) had only been completed upto March 2016, despite incurring an expenditure of Rs.4536 Crore (98 percent) against the estimated cost of Rs.4644 Crores for 61 ICBRs.

Further out of 24 selected for audit, four roads were completed by March, 2012 and two were completed by March, 2016. Thus only 06 roads (25 per cent) costing Rs.164 Crore were completed upto March, 2016 despite incurring an expenditure of Rs.2,713.76 Crore for 24 selected ICBRs”.

1.20 In view of above C&AG comment, MoD was asked to clarify as to why 98 per cent of the allocated amounts for all the 61 ICBRs was spent on completing 22 ICBRs only and whether this is due to lack of proper assessment of the fund requirement or any unforeseen factors beyond the control of BRO, MoD submitted as follows:

“The main reason for cost escalation was time overrun, which has occurred due to delay in forest/Wild Life Clearance, restricted working season, inadequate air logistic support, terrain and technical constraints, limited attack points, extreme remoteness of the area resulting in non-availability of skilled and experienced labour, inadequate availability of construction material. Further due to physical inaccessibility of site, and available survey technology with department at the time of planning of these ICBRs (ie 1997-99), the accuracy/efficiency of RSTC and estimate prepared was not upto the mark due to which the estimation was certainly quite inferior as compared to modern day technique.

At present, BRO has completed 28 ICBRs and connectivity has been established for 26 roads and 07 roads are yet to be connected.”

Progress of ICBR projects in 2016-17

1.21 MoD has stated that during the FY 2016-17, the following five ICBRs were completed:-

- (i) Orang- Kalaktang –Shergaon- Roopa- Tenga of length 158 km
- (ii) Jang-Ramasapper of length 64 km
- (iii) Shughatsar –Kharsangla of length 16 km
- (iv) Ghastoli- Rattakona of length 18 km

(v) Naga- Jadhong of length 5.5 km

During the next three months connectivity on the following ICBRs is planned to be achieved up to Mar 2018:-

- (i) LGG-Mukto-Teli of length 53 km
- (ii) TCC-Taksing of length 54 km.
- (iii) TCC-Maza of length 47.38 km
- (iv) Yarlung-Lamang of length 18.58 km”

1.22 In a written reply to a query as to whether there is any road map for completing these 39 ICBRs and if so, the details of such road map, MOD submitted the latest information as under:

Out of the 61 ICBRs entrusted to BRO, 28 roads of length of 981.17 km are completed and works on the balance roads are under progress in different stages of completion. The status of connectivity is as under:-

S/ No	Agency	Nos of road s	Length (Km)	Work completed		Work is in progress			
				Nos of roads	Length (Km)	Connected		Unconnected	
						Nos of roads	Length (Km)	Nos of roads	Length (Km)
(i)	GS	35	1930.66	14	667.71	18	1121.0	3	141.9
(ii)	CSG	13	1092.42	06	214.35	6	802.0	1	76.07
(iii)	ITBP	13	394.42	08	99.11	2	192.00	3	103.31
Total		61	3417.50	28	981.17	26	2115.0	7	321.33

The revised completion schedule of 33 ICBRs is as under:-

- (i) Upto 2018 :11
- (ii) Upto 2019 : 09
- (iii)Upto 2020 : 06
- (iv) Upto 2021 : 04
- (v) Upto 2022 : 03”

1.23 In view of the above, MoD furnishing the updated information stated that out of the 61 ICBRs entrusted to BRO, 28 roads of length of 981 km are completed and works on the balance roads are under progress in different stages of completion. The status of connectivity is as under:-

S/ No	Agency	Nos of roads	Length (Km)	Work completed		Work is in progress			
				Nos of roads	Length (Km)	Connected		Unconnected	
						Nos roads	of Length (Km)	Nos roads	of Length (Km)
(i)	GS	35	1930.66	14	667.71	18	1121.05	3	141.90
(ii)	CSG	13	1092.42	06	214.35	6	802.53	1	75.54
(iii)	ITBP	13	394.42	08	99.11	3	200.30	2	95.01
Total		61	3417.50	28	981.17	27	2123.88	6	312.45

Connectivity (formation works completed) has been achieved in respect of 27 roads. Of the remaining 6 roads, works are under progress. The physical progress of works upto 20 Sept 2018 is as under:-

Agency	length (km)	Formation completed (km)	Surfacing completed (km)
GS	1930.66	1670.99	1403.13
CSG	1092.42	973.76	727.28
ITBP	394.42	295.79	154.09
Total	3417.50	2940.54	2284.50
% Completion		86%	67%

The present status of 11 ICBRs scheduled to be completed by the end of FY 2018-19 is as under:-

S No	Name of Road	Length in Km	Progress
i	Nelong-Naga	8.10	Completed
ii	Naga-Sonam	11.65	
iii	Sumna-Rimkhim	14.00	

iv	Tr Jn-Bheem Base-Dokala	19.72	96%
v	Tato-Manigong-Tadagade	89.70	84%
vi	Joshimath-Malari	62.67	81%
vii	Musapani-Ghastoli	9.52	76%
viii	Nacho-TCC	78.45	68%
ix	LGG-Mukto-Teli	53.00	67%
x	Leh-Upsi-Sarchu	249.62	67%
xi	Tawaghat-Ghatiabagarh	19.51	64%

Quality of ICBRs

1.24 With regard to the quality of the ICBRs constructed and the consequent users dissatisfaction, C&AG in the said report (No.5 of 2016) commented as under:-

“Numerous instances of defective construction of roads were noticed which resulted in delay in completion of strategic roads and also in fructuous expenditure of Rs.63.20 Crores on account of corrective action/realignment of roads. This non completion/faulty specifications of works have a serious bearing on the operational capability of armed forces in strategically sensitive areas. Road works executed by the BRO did not adequately meet the users requirement. Even six roads which had been completed at a cost of Rs.164 Crore, were not fit for running of specialized vehicles/equipment due to limitations in execution of works.”

1.25 Replying to a query as to whether the Ministry / BRO are in agreement with the above comments of C&AG on the quality or lack of it in the construction of strategic roads in border areas and also the concrete steps taken or proposed to be taken to rectify the sorry state of affairs MoD stated as follows:

“Due to extremely hostile and challenging terrains, where these ICBRs were being constructed, the first priority was to provide end to end connectivity. At times and at some locations the work was partially completed in order to achieve end to end connectivity. The improvement work at such locations is ongoing process. BRO also maintains these roads and therefore if on construction, user feels certain improvement or addition is required and if it is feasible, the improvement works are undertaken. Presently no ICBR constructed by BRO has any unresolved issue with user.”

1.26 In response to a query as to whether the users i.e Army or Para Military Force of these 28 completed ICBRs have expressed satisfaction about the quality of these roads and the feedback thereon, MoD stated as under:

“All the ICBRs where user had any observation, either improvement has been done or is under progress. Some of the roads where improvement has been done by BRO is mentioned below: -

- (i) The Bona Gelling road has been completed up to Gelling village & BRO had got the road jointly inspected/verified with user (i.e. ITBP unit).
- (ii) The observation of user on Harong - Chushul road has been resolved and necessary road furniture constructed.
- (iii) In regard to Sasoma - Saserla road, due to peculiarity of fmn and shifting of moraines, the road suffers continuous shifting resulting in various gradients CRR I has been approached for providing solution and proposal based on CRR I recommendation is being prepared.
- (iv) In regard to D-S-DBO road, the road being highly sensitive and critical for Army Fmn in the area, the work was taken in mission mode and presently local Army Fmn is satisfied with the work on this road.
- (v) Acknowledging the shortcomings on Koyal – Photile – Chusmule - Zurasar road, BRO took immediate corrective action and barring very few locations where improvement work is in progress, most locations, have been attended too. The road being in high altitude with very limited availability of local resources, corrective action is taking little time.”

Status of Shivalik Projects

1.27 In response to a query as to the present status of Project ‘Shivalik’ near Sino-India border and whether the project is being delayed due to fund constraints, MoD submitted as follows:

The present status of ICBRs under Project Shivalik is given as under:-

S No.	Name of Road	Length (Km)	Existing Class	Proposed Class	Remarks
i	Joshimath-Malari	62.67	CI-9	NHDL	Connectivity achieved for all Indo China Border Roads.
ii	Malari-Girthidobla	19.00			
iii	Girthidobla-Sumna	6.55	Mule	CI-9	

iv	Sumna-Rimkhim	14.00	track	NHDL
v	Musapani-Ghastoli	9.53		
vi	Nelong-Naga	8.10	CI-9	
vii	Naga-Sonam	11.65		
viii	Naga-Jadhang	5.50	Mule track	
Total		137.00		

There is no fund constraint for the construction of Indo China Border Roads.”

Delay in completion of road projects:

1.28 In written reply to queries on (i) Total number of roads under construction, their proposed date of completion at the time of starting of the Project, present status and reasons for delay, if any and (ii) Other projects started by BRO during the last 5 years and have been delayed. Please also give reasons for such delays MoD submitted the following data:

“(i) At present, BRO is entrusted with the construction/improvement of 530 roads of length 22803 km. The completion of these roads as per the planning of works in the LTRoWP is as under:-

- (i) Up to 2016 - 55 roads of length 1729 km
- (ii) Up to 2017 - 72 roads of length 2081 km
- (iii) Up to 2018 - 99 roads of length 3408 km
- (iv) Up to 2019 - 78 roads of length 3786 km
- (v) Up to 2020 - 97 roads of length 4184 km
- (vi) Beyond 2020 - 129 roads of length 7615 km”

1.29 MoD has informed that there are certain delays in the execution of road projects mainly due to the following reasons:-

- (a) Delay in obtaining forest/wildlife clearances
- (b) Delay in land acquisition matters
- (c) Difficulties in availability of construction material
- (d) Due to natural disaster such as flash flood of Leh during 2010, earthquake in Sikkim during 2011 and flood in J&K during 2014, resources are diverted.
- (e) Most of the remote regions of the country allow a limited working period of five to six months only.

- (f) Work in snow bound/High Altitude Areas reduces the efficiency of man and machine.
- (g) Work in insurgency affected areas restricts freedom of action and reduces working day available due to bandhs.
- (h) There is a shortage of construction material like stone aggregate in the forward areas.
- (i) Good contractors are not willing to work in remote areas and the organization is compelled to depend on local contractors who may not have the requisite expertise.
- (j) BRO has not started any Project during the last five years. However, the Rohtang Tunnel project, Indo-Bangladesh Border Fencing and Indo-Myanmar fencing were started before five years.”

1.30 Referring to the long delays occurred in execution of works by BRO, C&AG in the report (No.5 of 2016) stated that:

“As against 24 selected roads, a total of 329 jobs were sanctioned till March, 2015. Out of them, only 123 job works were completed March, 2015 and the balance 206 jobs including 66 jobs sanctioned during the period 2012-15 were still in progress. One job, sanctioned in 1991, was yet to be completed even after a lapse of 25 years”.

1.31 Responding to the request for furnishing the specific reasons for long delays witnessed in completion of the works and also the cost escalation, if any, in completing the delayed works, MoD stated as under:

“The main reason for delay in completion of works is due to delay in Forest/Wild Life Clearance, restricted working season, inadequate air logistic support, terrain and technical constraints, limited attack points, extreme remoteness of the area resulting in non-availability of skilled and experienced labour, inadequate availability of construction material.”

Expediting the construction of ICBRs

1.32 The Government has taken inter alia the following steps to expedite the construction of ICBRs:-

- (a) “Enhanced delegated powers to the BRO executive have been accorded.
- (b) DGBR has been delegated powers to revise the Standard Schedule of Rates (SSR), which will ensure realistic cost assessment of projects and avoid frequent revision of estimates.

- (c) With a view to improve the quality of maintenance of roads, DGBR has been delegated powers to revise/fix rates of maintenance and snow clearance grant whenever required.
- (d) Guidelines for technology initiative in BRO have been approved. In order to identify and select the most appropriate technology in a fair and transparent manner for introduction in BRO, DGBR shall constitute a Multi Disciplinary Expert Group (MDEG) consisting of technical/domain experts, representatives of the scientific institutions, users, finance and administrative authorities etc. for continuous evaluation of proposals and making detailed recommendations, in a time bound manner.
- (e) Guidelines for creation of advance stock pile of construction material in BRO have been approved with an aim to establish an effective mechanism to ensure timely availability of construction material for the road construction works, undertaken by BRO.
- (f) Provision of Ground Establishment for salary of Work Charged Task Forces (TFs), Common Service Units (CSUs) and other Functional Units in BRO has been approved.
- (g) Special dispensation for delegation of administrative and financial powers in BRO has been accorded for expediting the completion of 15 ICBRs and operationally critical GS roads.
- (h) Chief Secretaries of State Governments of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, J&K, Himachal Pradesh, Manipur, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura and Utrakhnad have been requested to constitute an Empowered Committee under their Chairmanship with Principal Secretaries of Revenue, Forest, Mining, Public works Department and Power Departments along with the Principal Chief Conservator of Forest and Chief Engineers of BRO as members to resolve various issues pertaining to BRO. States Governments of Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, J&K, Himachal Pradesh and Tripura have constituted the Empowered Committee.
- (i) A Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) with simplified procedure has been issued on 18th December 2014 to ensure expeditious payment after getting Stage-I clearance of net present value/ compensatory afforestation/cost of trees to the Forest Authorities for obtaining forest clearance.”

1.33 Furnishing the impact of delegation of administrative and financial powers to BRO executives , MOD submitted as follows:

“ **(i)Impact of delegation of powers:** In the short period since the delegation of enhanced powers, 90 estimates amounting to Rs 258 Crores have been sanctioned and 103 vintage vehicle/equipment/plants have been downgraded and 25 premature failure cases have been disposed off, which will facilitate BRO to induct new construction equipments. However, four months period is too short a period to assess the impact of delegation of powers, since capacity is also required to be built up/enhanced at the level of Chief Engineers to be able to exercise the delegated powers efficiently.

(ii)Progress on adoption of EPC mode of execution: BRO has identified 21 roads of length 1620 Km amounting to Rs 11845 Crores for EPC mode of execution. DPR has been received for one road (35 Km), bids for DPR have been received for three roads (155 Km), and NIT uploaded for two roads (132 Km) and issue of RFP for 15 roads (1298 Km) is targeted by December 2017.

The important roads on which sanctioned has been accorded is as under :-

- (i) Musapani- Ghasoli road
- (ii) Naga-Sonam road
- (iii) KGG-NGG –Km 22 LGG road
- (iv) Mandala- Debrabu-Naga GG road
- (v) Balipara- Charduar- Twang road”

Key projects – Construction of Tunnels

1.34 Furnishing the details of the tunnels being constructed by BRO such as their number, technical competence, tech help from abroad and the money spent on them, MoD submitted the following :

“(i) At present, BRO is constructing two tunnels as mentioned below:-

- (a) **Rohtang Tunnel:**In Himachal Pradesh on road Manali-Sarchu of length 8.8 km.
- (b) **Theng Tunnel** :In Sikkim on road Gangtok- Chungthang of length 0.578 km.

(ii) The works for pre feasibility and preparation of detailed project Report (DPR) are out sourced to consultants , who have the expertise in the field of tunnel engineering. At present, the various consultants engaged/appointed for the construction of Rohtang Tunnel are mentioned below:

- (a) Design consultant
- (b) Proof consultant
- (c) Supervision consultant

(iii) Further to obtain advice / tech help collaborative measures have been taken to establish a Multi Discipline Expert group (MDEG) with experts from Ministry of Science and Technology (CRRI, CSIR , GSI, etc) to assist BRO in technical matters . In order to get acquaintance with the latest art of technology being used by the various developed countries, officers of BRO are being sent on training to various foreign countries. Twelve officers are being trained in New Austrian Tunneling Method at the university of Graz, Austria.”

1.35 In written reply to a query as to whether there is any complaint regarding the sub standard material being used in the construction of the tunnel MoD submitted as under :

“Out of a planned length of 8.80 km of the Rohtang tunnel on Manali–Leh road, 7687 mtr of heading has been completed covering 4021 mtr from Manali side and 3666 mtr from Leh side as on 22 January 2017. The revised time for completion of the tunnel is August 2019.

No sub-standard material has been used in the construction of Rohtang Tunnel and no complaint has been received.”

1.36 BRO is constructing **two tunnels** through 4170 metre **high Sela Pass** in Arunachal Pradesh which cuts down the distance to China Borer through Tawang by 10 km, reduces travel time between the Army’s 4 Corps headquarters at Tezpur and Tawang by an hour and ensures accessibility of NH 13 especially the 171 km stretch between Bomdila and Tawang, remains accessible in all weather conditions.

1.37 Responding to an update on the project incorporating inter *alia* the progress of the project, the likely date of completion, delays if any, expected, etc., MoD submitted as follows:

“BRO has got the DPR prepared through Consultant for the construction of two tunnel of length 0.475 Km and 1.79 Km at Sela Pass along with approach road of length 9.775 km on Balipara-Charduar-Tawang (BCT) road to NHDL specifications through EPC mode in West Kameng and Tawang Districts of Arunachal Pradesh under Project Vartak. The detail of year wise physical and financial planning as per the DPR is as under:-

Year	Physical Phasing (%)	Financial Phasing (Rs. in Crore)
2018-2019	20	120.95
2019-2020	50	302.37
2020-2021	30	181.43

Key Projects – Provision of connectivity between Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh

1.38 The Standing Committee on Defence in their report (Report No.19, DFG of 2016-17) while observing that **connectivity between Himachal Pradesh and the Ladakh** region is “very crucial” for the expeditious movement of troops and equipment, recommended

the construction of the **Nemo-Padum-Darcha Road** to connect the two. In response to a query as to whether BRO has taken any initiative to construct the above mentioned road to connect Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh and if so the details thereof , MOD submitted as follows:

“The road Nimmu-Padam-Darcha is 297 Km long road which takes off at Km 400 on Srinagar-Kargil-Leh road (34 Km short of Leh in J&K state) and terminates at Darcha (Km 145 on Manali-Leh road in H.P). The connectivity for length 220.60 Km has been achieved. Details are as under:-

S/No	Stretches	Status	Length (Km)
(a)	Km 0.00 to 45.31	Connected	45.310
(b)	Km 45.31 to 79.25	Unconnected	33.94
(c)	Km 79.25 to 80.25	Connected	1.00
(d)	Km 80.25 to 89.944	Unconnected	9.694
(e)	Km 89.944 to 203.00	Connected	113.056
(f)	Km 203.00 to 206.067	Unconnected	3.067
(g)	Km 206.067 to 216.15	Connected	10.083
(h)	Km 216.15 to 217.200	Unconnected	1.050
(j)	Km 217.200 to 229.00	Connected	11.80
(k)	Km 229.00 to 257.625	Unconnected	28.625
(l)	Km 257.625 to 297.00	Connected	39.375

The preparation of DPR for stretch of road between Km 45 to 124 and Km 176.70 to Km 259.00 measuring length 162 Km is in progress. The feasibility study for Shinku La tunnel at Km 259 and altitude of is being assigned to MoRT&H. “

Key Projects – Provision of road link to last Indian post of Lipulekh

1.39 Furnishing the status of another project for **construction of road link to the last Indian post of Lipulekh** pass which is located at an altitude of 17,000 feet in Chaudans valley or Darchula sub district in Pithoragarh in Uttarakhand on the Chinese border, MoD submitted as under:

“Ghatiabagarh-Lipulekh road of length of 75.54 Km is a strategic road under construction in Pithoragarh district of Uttarakhand. The road is to be developed to Class 9 specifications. Ghatiabagarh is connected by road from Dharchula of length 36 Km. Connectivity on Ghatiabagarh-Lipulekh road has been established upto 3.60 Km from Ghatiabagarh. Presently all effort are being made with five different attack points locations between Km 3.60 to Km 10.00 (3.70 Km connectivity yet to be achieved) and three attack points between Km 10.00 to Km 20.00 (9.50 Km connectivity yet to be achieved). The connectivity from Km 20.00 to Km 71.00 has

been established and widening works are under progress through air maintained Dett Gunji.

Annual Kailash Mansarovar Yatra follows the same alignment from Km 0.00 to Km 20.00 which hampers the works nearly on daily basis from June to Sep every year. Yatries are being air lifted from Pithoragarh to Gunji in order to facilitate work on this alignment. State Govt and District administration have been approached by BRO for monitoring the movements of locals and traders in such a way so that working window is available with BRO for undertaking blasting and cutting operations daily at specified time intervals. Proposed date of completion of this road is 2022.”

1.40 Apprising the committee on the project , Defence Secretary , appearing before the Committee on 27 10.18 submitted as follows:

'Sir, this is an innovation which we are trying. Earlier BRO was doing both the formation cutting as well as the surfacing work. This year, with the kind suggestion from DGBR and all concerned, we said that you do formation cutting and give rest of the work on contract. So I am reasonably sure in the coming year we will be able to provide good quality road right up to the border.'

Mis reporting the progress of the projects

1.41 Emphasizing the need for progress reports on the projects should be prepared in such a manner that they reflect the true state of affairs, C&AG in the said report (No.5 of 2016) stated that the consolidated progress of the work shown as achieved by the executive upto the year 2014-15 was at variance in respect of nine roads. Further, over reporting of physical progress of the work continued in respect of strategically significant ICBRs during the year 2014-15 as well. Agreeing with the over reporting of the progress, Secretary, Border Roads Development Board (BRDB) was stated to fix responsibility for the same.

1.42 With regard to fixing responsibility for such acts of mis reporting and the action taken, etc., MoD stated that :

“No responsibility has been fixed by BRO as it was due to human and typographical errors, but not intentional. However, the following measures have been taken by BRO:-

- (a) Standardization of formats.
- (b) Establishment of two ADG offices at Guwahati and Chandigarh i.e. one each for Eastern and Western projects
- (c) Monthly monitoring by ADG/DGBR level.
- (d) Monitoring of all parameters of works through ERP module.
- (e) Frequent ground visit to sector by officials from HQs”

1.43 Responding to a query as to whether such over reporting of the progress of the projects on the sensitive border areas have serious security implications and hence, requires stern action against those responsible for such mis reporting MoD submitted that-

“MIs is being developed to ensure real time reporting of progress and monitoring.”

Construction of bridges

1.44 Pointing out the delay in completing the bridges on ICBRs, C&AG in its report no.5 of 2016 stated that 20 permanent bridges were sanctioned on five out of 24 selected ICBRs between January 1994 and October 2014 at a cost of Rs.76.53 crore. Out of them, 19 bridges with original Probable Date of Completion (PDC) lying between March 1997 and March 2016 were yet to be completed (March, 2016). The PDC of the remaining one was March 2017.

1.45 Furnishing the latest status on the construction of the bridges on the selected ICBRs and also the cost escalation due to delay in their completion, MoD stated as under:

SL	Name of Road	Loc in (Km)	Name of Bridge	Span	Date of sanction	PDC	overall % Achvmt
1	BJG-LGG	17.580	Tawangchu-II	40.00	20.03.2007	31-03-2010	19.75%
2	BJG-LGG	28.150	Tawangchu-III	45.00	25.09.2010	31-03-2013	50.87%
3	Balipara-Charduar-Tawang	47.750	Adit	35.00	01-03-2013	01-03-2015	100.00%
4		287.000	Tawangchu	50.00	28.01.1994	31-03-2013	68.60%
5	Orang-Kalaktang-Shergaon-Rupa-Tenga	98.400	Kalaktang	60.00	01-01-2011	31-03-2014	100.00%
6		35.800	Gajni	35.00	14-08-2013	31-03-2016	100.00%
7		37.645	Shikari	40.00	26-03-2013	31-03-2015	100.00%
8		38.500	Sher	35.00	01-03-2013	31-03-2015	100.00%
9		48.510	Balemu	60.00	01-12-2013	31-03-2015	100.00%
10		49.810	Bomnag	50.00	14-10-2014	01-03-2017	52.30%
11	79.350	Haflong	35.00	06-08-2014	31-03-2017	57.83%	

12	Joshimath-Malari	12.700	Dhak	85.00	01-12-2012	31-03-2015	14.41%
13		41.050	Tamak	35.00	01-03-2012	31-03-2014	100.00%
14	Joshimath-Malari	31.65	Surraithota	75.00	01-11-1998	31-03-2004	50.00%
15		20.500	Subaigadhera	104.50	01-12-2012	31-03-2014	44.50%
16		53.400	Bhapkund	70.00	01-03-2012	31-03-2014	37.00%
17	DS-DBO	6.900	Shyok Gang-I	40.00	01-11-2012	01-10-2013	63.00%
18		9.800	Shyok Gang-II	40.00	01-01-2012	31-03-2016	35.00%
19		21.700	Shyok Gang-III	60.00	01-09-2010	30-10-2013	98.77%
20		23.120	Shyok-II	120.00	01-03-2011	31-03-2013	54.91%

Measures taken to expedite progress of works

1.46 MoD has stated that the following steps, by way of policy simplification and empowerment of BRO, to expedite construction of strategic roads in the border areas have been taken:

- (a) **"Guidelines for preparation of AWP and APP** : In order to prioritize the Annual Works Plan and to make it more realistic with reference to the budget availability, new policy guidelines for preparation of AWP and APP have been issued.
- (b) **Delegation of Administrative and Financial Powers** : Revised delegation of administrative & financial powers in BRO was issued on 11th August, 2017 with the objective to enhance powers right upto the level of Chief Engineer and Task Force Commander. This will bring transformational changes in the organization and improve the pace of execution of works to meet the requirement of the Armed Forces. This will also reduce delays on account of references between the Chief Engineer and HQ DGBR and MoD.
- (c) **Engineering Procurement Contract (EPC) Mode of execution** : In order to enhance the capacity of BRO and to ensure the completion of various roads projects in the border areas as per the requirement of the Army, guidelines for adoption of EPC mode of execution have been issued by the Ministry, so that BRO is able to outsource road projects to big companies.

- (d) Empowered Committees have been constituted under the Chairmanship of Chief Secretaries in the States of Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Tripura, Himachal Pradesh and J&K to look into the various issues related to BRO.
- (e) Chief Secretaries of Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand & Arunachal Pradesh have been included as members of the BRDB, so as to expedite the progress on issues relating to land acquisition and forest clearances.

Need for involvement of private companies

1.47 A view has been expressed by the senior retired Army generals that the private companies adhere to timelines in completion of border roads projects and also the quality of the border roads constructed by private companies is far better than that of the works executed by BRO itself.

1.48 Responding to a query as to whether MoD agrees with the view, MoD stated as under:

“To bridge the gap between the strategic requirements of the Army and BRO’s own capacity constraints of departmental execution, BRO has also started outsourcing of projects. Guidelines have been issued by the Ministry to adopt EPC mode of execution for all projects for which the value as per the DPR is above Rs 100 Crores so that these projects can further be offered for outsourcing to big construction companies’ as viable projects through competitive bidding and improve the pace of execution of infrastructure projects in the border areas. Accordingly, at present BRO has identified 27 roads of length 2144.17 km including one Sela Tunnel for construction through outsourcing. Request for Proposal (RFP) has been uploaded for tendering of Detailed Project Report (DPR) preparation of 22 roads of length 1877.383 Km and for Sela Tunnel of length 2.265 Km. Bids have been received and opened for 19 road projects & Sela Tunnel. Contract for DPR preparation has been awarded in 10 cases. DPR has been submitted for 1 road and Sela Tunnel which are under examination.”

1.49 Admitting that there are delays in execution of works, BRO in a reply stated that a need was felt for BRO to change its old construction philosophy and move towards outsourcing the projects to not only improve the pace of execution of the projects but also enhance its absorption capacity to take up more projects than what BRO is capable of.

1.50 Responding to a request to furnish (i) the data on the number of ICBRs and (ii) other border roads constructed by private companies, and whether the projects undertaken by them are completed as per the time schedules and within the cost estimates, (iii) Please also

furnish the user feedback on the quality of ICBRs constructed by the private companies MoD submitted as under :

“Earlier, BRO being a Departmental construction agency, did not outsource road projects and did only selective outsourcing of small stretches of works, mostly for supply of material for surfacing works. As a result, only small local contractors participated in the works of BRO, who may not be able to bring the requisite modernization/efficiency in the construction works executed by BRO. To improve the pace of execution of infrastructure projects in the border areas Guidelines have been issued by the Ministry to adopt EPC mode of execution for all projects for which the value as per the DPR is above Rs 100 Crores so that these projects can further be offered for outsourcing to big construction companies’ as viable projects through competitive bidding.”

CHAPTER - II

Allocation and utilization of budgetary provisions

Government of India (Allocation of Business rules 1961) has been amended *vide* notification dated 9th January 2015 to include 'all matters relating to Border Roads Development Board and Border Roads Organisation (BRO)' in the list of business allocated to Ministry of Defence (MoD). Accordingly, the budget allocation from BE 2015-16 onwards for BRO has been done under MoD. In addition, BRO is also executing works for other agencies such as Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, Ministry of external Affairs (MEA), Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), etc. for which separate budget allocation is done by the respective agencies. The details of projections made by Border Roads Organisation (BRO) and allocation of budget for the last five years are given below:-

(Rs in Crores)					
YEAR	AGENCY	BE DEMAND	BE ALLOTMENT	FINAL ALLOTMENT	EXPENDITURE
2011-12	General Staff (GS)	3000	3000	2800	2635
	Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRT&H)	1537	1239	1080	974
	Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)	99	85	85	84
	Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)	186	85	85	84
	Ministry of Defence (MoD)	414	450	215	205
	A & N Island	50	50	50	52
	Other and Deposit	141	157	157	59
	Total		5427	5066	4472

2012-13	General Staff(GS)	3500	3300	2900	2773
	Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRT&H)	1445	1242	983	937
	Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)	91	78	36	36
	Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)	125	53	73	76
	Ministry of Defence(MoD)	433	492	232	208
	A & N Island	16	13	14	14
	Ministry of DoNER	0	5	5	5
	Deposit	0	98	76	38
	Total	5610	5281	4319	4087
2013-14	General Staff(GS)	3500	3300	2762	2819
	Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRT&H)	1545	1340	1006	903
	Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)	91	32	35	35
	Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)	125	40	58	60
	Ministry of Defence (MoD)	433	336	251	247
	Ministry of DoNER	5	5	5	4
	Deposit	61	61	61	34
	Total	5760	5114	4178	4102
2014-15	General Staff(GS)	4000	3223	2819	2897
	Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRT&H)	1145	1091	756	712
	Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)	59	57	54	54
	Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)	100	65	56	53
	Ministry of Defence (MoD)	317	310	282	277
	Ministry of DoNER	7	7	7	7
	Deposit	33	60	65	30
	Total	5661	4813	4039	4030
2015-16	Ministry of Defence	4506	3481	3316	3277

	Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRT&H)	534	540	434	432
	Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)	129	76	56	56
	Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)	150	60	60	59
	Ministry of Defence (MoD)	430	442	447	440
	Others and Deposit	35	69	47	47
	Total	5784	4668	4360	4311
2016-17	Ministry of Defence	5498	3526	3807	2771
	Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRT&H)	416	400	Not yet allocated	221
	Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)	119	57		24
	Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)	100	74		53
	Ministry of Defence (MoD)	1265	841		370
	Others and Deposit	62	62		36
Total	7460	4960			4969

2.2 Furnishing the data on surrendering of allocated amounts and the reasons there for, from 2011-12 to 2015-16, MoD submitted as under:

Year	Fund surrendered (Rs in Cr)	Reasons for surrender of fund
2011-12	280.68	Due to diversion of resources for restoration of damage due to natural calamity - earth quake in Sikkim (2011), flood in Uttrakhand (2013), cloud burst in Leh (2010) and flood in J&K (2014) etc, progress of ongoing works has been less, thus, resulting in surrender of some funds. However, PDC has not been affected much due to meager surrender of funds.
2012-13	194.30	
2013-14	49.85	
2014-15	-	-
2015-16	49.28	Fund surrendered under MH 4552 and MH 2552 since no such heads are operative in BRO.

2.3 In written reply to a query on the status of financial health of BRO, MoD submitted that unlike previous years subsequent to the transfer of BRO from Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (M/o RT&H) to MoD, from 09 January ,2015 there has been no significant reduction in the allocation of budget (non plan) to BRO at the RE stage as shown below:

Year	BE allocation (Rs in Crores)	Final Allocation (Rs in Crores)
2013-14	3300.00	2762.00
2014-15	3223.49	2819.00
2015-16	3030.57	3028.42
2016-17	3075.73	3556.50

2.4 BRO, as a part of developing road infrastructure in the border area, has drawn up a Long Term Roll on Works Plan (LTRoWP) for laying 530 roads of length measuring 22803 km including the ICBRs at an approximate cost of Rs 41059 Cr. These works are planned over for a period of 5 years (from 2015-16 to 2019-20). The amounts allocated which are already given at para 1.14 of Chapter I are mentioned once again :

Item	No of Roads	Works Planned (Rs Cr)					Total (Rs in Crs)
		2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	
GS/Strategic	473	4870	6204	7314	7480	7203	33071
Agency	57	1308	1225	1432	1668	2355	7988
Total	530	6178	7429	8746	9148	9558	41059

Pace of Expenditure - Exemption from Ministry of Finance

2.5 Ministry of Finance is stated to have been requested to exempt BRO from its guidelines mandating the pace of expenditure and not to curtail the allocation at RE stage based on the percentage of expenditure at half yearly stage as BRO is unable to adhere to the half yearly expenditure limits stipulated by MoF due to difficult working conditions.

2.6 In a written response to query as to whether MoF has agreed to the above request of BRO, MoD replied as under:-

'The proposal has not been agreed by MoF. However, since last two years due to increase in pace of expenditure pattern, budget cut at RE stage was avoided. Details in respect of GS fund are as under:-

(Rs in Crore)

Year	BE	RE
2016-17	3525.73	3790.87
2017-18	4168.20	4180.68

2.7. Elaborating further on the impact of resource allocation policy of MoF on the pace of completion of works by BRO, MoD in a written reply, submitted as under :

“Ministry of Finance (MoF) imposes ceiling on the allocation of budget at the stage of Revised Estimate (RE) and Budget Estimate (BE), based on the actual expenditure incurred during the last financial year and current financial year. Due to the restricted allocation of budget to BRO, the following works are affected:-

- (i) Original works planned on roads.
- (ii) Resurfacing works, maintenance and snow clearance of roads.
- (iii) BRO is a work charged organization due to which the pay and allowances of BRO Personnel is kept as liability for the next financial year and full utilization of resources could not be done.
- (iv) Payment of firms for procurement of vehicles/equipment/plants is kept as liability for the next financial year.

In order to increase the pace of expenditure by BRO up to the third quarter as stipulated by MoF, a number of measures have been taken, such as enhanced delegation of powers to ground executives, outsourcing of maintenance of roads and DPR preparation. DGBR has also been delegated powers to revise Standard Schedule of Rates (SSR).”

Utilization of budgetary allocations

2.8 As mentioned at para 1.19 of chapter I , out of 61 Indo China Border Roads (ICBRs) planned to be completed by 2012, only 15 roads had been completed by 2012. Out of the balance 46 roads, only 07 roads were completed by March, 2016 extending the probable

Date of Completion (PDC) of balance roads upto the year 2021. Thus 22 roads (36%) had only been completed upto March 2016, despite incurring an expenditure of Rs.4536 crore (98 percent) against the estimated cost of Rs.4644 crores for 61 ICBRs. Further out of 24 selected for audit, four roads were completed by March, 2012 and two were completed by March, 2016. Thus only 06 roads (25 per cent) costing Rs.164 crore were completed upto March, 2016 despite incurring an expenditure of Rs.2, 713.76 crore for 24 selected ICBRs

At present, BRO has completed 28 ICBRs and connectivity has been established for 26 roads and 07 roads are yet to be connected.

2.9 With regard to the additional funds required for completing the remaining 39 ICBRs. MoD submitted inter -alia as under:

“The ICBRs entrusted to BRO are funded under three packages and the status of additional funds is given below:-

- (i) **ITBP ICBRs:** CCS Note for additional funds for the construction of ITBP ICBRs funded by MHA has been approved and yearly allocation of fund is being made to BRO by MHA.
- (ii) **GS ICBRs:** The cost effect of balance GS ICBRs amounting to Rs 4772.29 Cr has been incorporated in revised LTRoWP.
- (iii) **CSG ICBRs:** CCS Note for additional funds amounting to Rs 3129.80 Cr for completion of construction of CSG ICBRs is under examination.

'An expenditure of Rs 2713 Cr was incurred on the construction of all ICBRs which are under construction during that time. However, 6 roads were completed and balance were under construction.

2.10 The year wise data on the expenditure booked on some of ICBRs as contained in C&AG Report (No. 5 of 2017 on Union Government Defence Performance Audit)) are as follows:-

S.No	Name of the road	year	Physical targets vis-à-vis achievement									Financial provisions			
			Formation in Km			Surfacing in Km			Pmt works (Rs in crores)			Expenditure (Rs in crores)			
			BE	RE	Ach	BE	RE	Ach	BE	RE	Ach	BE	RE	Ach	
1	S-W-A	2013-14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.33	1.81	1.55
2	BJG-LGG	2014-15	0.01	0	0	0.06	0	0	0.05	0	0	0.81	0.53	0.53	
3	N-TCC	2014-15	0	0	0.019	0	0	0	0.10	0	0.21	0.10	0	0.05	
4	G-K-J	2013-14	7.52	0	0	5	-	-	3.00	0	0	16.28	5.69	4.42	
5	G-R	2013-14	0	0.01	0	0	0	0	0	0.50	0	8.56	1.71	0.08	
6	Total (excluding the amount at sl No.3 above)														
7	S-W-A	2013-14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.33	1.81	1.55	
8	BJG-LGG	2012-13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.26	0.41	1.15	1.15	
9	BJG-LGG	2013-14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.29	1.40	0.74	0.74	
10	Total													3.44	

NB- S-W-A Shakti-Warila-Agham: BJJ-LGG-BangaJanga Gompa-Naga GG: G-R Ghastoli-Rattakona; G-K-J Gunji-Kuthi-Jolingkong: N-TCC – Nacho-Tama-Chung-Chung.

2.11. C&AG in its report stated that an amount of Rs.6.93 (sl no.6 above) crore was booked on four roads without any achievement in physical targets viz. formation, surfacing and permanent works. Similarly, an amount of Rs.1.89 crore (sl No.8&9) was booked against BJJ-LGG road during the year 2012-13 and 2013-14 against execution of works worth Rs.0.55 crore. The C&G has also pointed out the reply given by the BRO to the issue of booking expenditure without any execution of any work in some cases.

2.12. The MoD was asked to furnish the reasons for such payment and the action taken against those responsible for such payments, it replied as under:

'Booking of expenditure without physical progress could occur due to many reasons, few of which are as under:-

- (a) Clearing bill against CVs of cement, BB, POL etc procured in previous year and receipt or submission of bills by the firm next year.
- (b) P&A of GREF/Army Pers.
- (c) Payment released against contract materials/ SOs which could not be paid in that year due to non-availability of fund etc.
- (d) All construction materials procured during the year not fully utilized during the same year, which leads to mismatch in financial progress.'

2.13 During the examination of the Demands for Grants (2018-19) Defence Secretary submitted that additional funds will be required for making big impact on completing the ICBRs including Sela Pass Project. In response to a query as to whether the Ministry/BRO got additional funds for the same, MoD replied that :

“The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) has approved the revision in cost and completion of time up to 2022 for the construction of 13 China Study Group roads (CSG) Indo China Border Roads (ICBRs) amounting to Rs 2651 Crores.”

Allocation for Rohtang tunnel project

2.14 At present a separate budget is allocated for the construction of Rohtang tunnel and the details of the allocation *vis* utilization for the last five years are given below:

Year	Allocation (rs in cr)	Utilization (Rs in cr)
2013-14	147.22	147.22
2014-15	168.78	168.78
2015-16	300.06	300.06
2016-17	181.00	180.92
2017-18	374.00	265.31

The latest technology has been adopted by BRO in the two tunnels presently under construction . Further, in order to adopt the latest technology in the construction of tunnels , the feasibility and DPR preparation is outsourced by BRO. Once the DPR is approved, the construction of tunnels is also through global tendering ”

Delegation of administrative and financial powers

2.15 The MoD in a reply to the Committee’s query on the delegation of powers stated that revised delegation of administrative and financial powers was issued in Aug 2017 with the objective to enhance powers right up the level of Chief Engineer and Task Force Commander. The Ministry was asked to state how many times such powers were used by the officers concerned and its impact on the fast pace of work in BRO, it replied as under:

'Some of the important enhanced delegation of powers to expedite the pace of works are mentioned below:

- (a) **Sanction of works:** As per earlier delegation of powers for departmental works, a Chief Engineer could accord administrative approval of works only upto Rs 10

crore, whereas the ADGBR had powers upto Rs 20 crore. For contractual works, all administrative approvals were given by DGBR, who had powers only upto Rs 50 crore. Enhancing the powers at all levels in the BRO, for both departmental and contractual mode of execution, a Chief Engineer can now accord administrative approval upto Rs 50 crore, ADGBR upto Rs 75 crore and DGBR upto Rs 100 crore.

- (b) **Award of contracts:** With the intent to speed up the tendering process, so that the acceptance of bids be completed at the level of Chief Engineer/ADGBR for a majority of the contracts, the enhanced powers for award of contract to the Chief Engineer are upto Rs 100 crore, for ADGBR upto Rs 300 crore and DGBR beyond Rs 300 to Rs 500 Crore.
- (c) **Consultancy Services:** For adopting the DPR mode of execution, the enhanced delegation of powers for Chief Engineer are upto Rs 2 crore, ADGBR upto Rs 5 crore and full powers beyond Rs 5 crore to DGBR.

2.16 MoD, furnishing the impact of the above mentioned delegation of administrative and financial powers on sanctions, awards of contracts, financial closure of the projects, etc, submitted the following data :

“(i) Sanction of estimates/DPRs by Chief Engineers (90% sanctions accorded by CE (P) and ADGBR level)	= 322 Nos
(ii) Award of contracts by Chief Engineers	= 36 Nos
(iii) Downgradation of Veh/Eqpt/Plant	= 36 Nos
(iv) Financial closure of old jobs by Chief Engineers	= 270 Nos

Further, to enhance its own capacity, BRO has identified 28 roads for construction through outsourcing. Tenders for Detailed Project Report (DPR) preparation of 15 roads have been awarded by BRO. For the remaining 11 roads, tender action is under process. Administrative Approval has been accorded for 02 projects for construction through EPC, for which RFP has been uploaded by BRO.”

2.17 A representative of MoD appearing before the Committee on 27 October, 2017, on the issue of delegation of financial powers for more freedom to BRO to do its work quickly, submitted as follows:

"Sir, to elaborate on the delegation of powers, in the last couple of years this has been a major feedback. It is coming that BRO is not in a position to perform in the field because there is lesser delegation of power and all cases keep coming to the Ministry.

In this regard, what we have done recently is an enormous delegation. Earlier the Chief Engineer at the field level had absolutely no powers for execution contracts. The only powers he had was up to Rs.10 crore, that too, only for Departmental

execution. Now as per the new dispensation, Chief Engineer's powers have been enhanced from Rs.10 crore to Rs.50 crore for both Departmental as well as for EPC mode of execution.

Then there are two ADGs – one in the East and one in the North. Their powers are there from Rs.50 crore to Rs.100 crore. Beyond Rs.100 crore, the DG has been given powers. All acceptances of tender's takes place at Chief Engineer level itself. So not only from the Ministry to BRO, even within BRO, the powers have been delegated from DGBR up to ADGBR and Chief Engineer level and even up to task force Commander level so that lesser time is wasted in unnecessary communication."

2.18 With regard to the impact of delegation of administrative and financial powers on procurement of equipment , the representative stated as under: :

"As procurement of equipment, earlier BRO had powers of only Rs.7.5 crore for a particular case of indigenous equipment. For imported equipment, the powers were only Rs.3.75 crore. Now from Rs.7.5 crore, the powers have been enhanced directly to Rs.100 crore. So, up to a case of Rs.100 crore, the DG does not have to go to anywhere for procurement of equipment. There is hardly any case which would have come in the last 7-8 years which could be more than Rs.100 crore. So practically speaking, any kind of procurement of equipment can take place within BRO without seeking any necessary approval from the Ministry.

For DPR preparation, we are now adopting the DPR mode of execution."

2.19 A representative of BRO further informed the Committee as under:

"Sir, as was said, we had powers up to Rs.2 crore for DPR preparation. Now our powers have been enhanced to Rs.10 crore. The Chief Engineer level has also gone up and DG level has also gone up. The Chief Engineer level is now up to Rs.5 crore. We have already accordingly accepted the tender for Akhnoor-Poonch road. Similarly, the powers have been given for DSDBO road.

2.20 Defence Secretary also added:

"Sir, the power was delegated on 11th August this year. After that, the General has managed to do the DPR.

About the deadline, we will go road-wise and we will try and show you what is the kind of progress we are making."

Expenditure on procurement of equipment

2.21 MOD in its reply has also stated that based on the requirement/holding of Equipment/Vehicles/Plants (E/V/P) the following amounts of the funds have been allocated under Annual Procurement Plan (APP) for the purpose since 2009-10 to 2016-17:

Sl no	Year	Amount allocated	Amount spent	Amount of under spending	Under spending in percentage terms vis-a-vis allocated amount
	1	2	3	4	% of col.no.2
1	2009-10	250.76	205.70	45.06	17.97
2	2010-11	380.80	194.14	186.66	49.02
3	2011-12	429.80	241.41	188.39	43.84
4	2012-13	469.77	241.69	228.08	48.56
5	2013-14	403.13	96.65	306.48	76.03
6	2014-15	459.37	158.35	301.02	65.53
7	2015-16	814.10	211.12	602.98	74.07
8	2016-17	1256.09	185.23	1070.86	85.26

Financial outlay of General Staff-Works

2.22 Various types of works undertaken in GS Works by BRO as submitted by MoD is as follows:

- (i) Construction/improvement of single lane roads
- (ii) Construction of double lane roads
- (iii) Construction of bridges
- (iv) Construction of tunnels
- (v) Maintenance of roads, airfields and tunnels

2.23 The amounts allocated and spent for laying GS works by BRO since 2011-12 is as under:

(Rs in Crores)						
Year	Major Head	BE Demand	BE Allotment	Final Allotment	Expenditure	Shortfall / excess spend
2011-12	3451, 2052,5054 & 3601, 2552, 4552	3000	3000	2800	2635	165.00
2012-13		3500	3300	2900	2773	127.00
2013-14		3500	3300	2762	2820	(-)58.00
2014-15		4000	3223	2819	2897	(-)78.00
2015-16		4506	3481	3316	3277	39.00
2016-17		5498	3526	3807	2771 (as on Dec) 2016)	NA

CHAPTER-III

Challenges faced by BRO

3.1 The data on planning and achievement of targets in completing physical infrastructure including roads, bridges , etc, by BRO during the last five years (year wise) as furnished by BRO is as follows:

S/ No	Item	2012-13		2013-14		2014-15		2015-16		2016-17 @	
		Planning	Achievement	Planning	Achievement	Planning	Achievement	Planning	Achievement	Planning	Achievement
i	Formation (Equivalent Class -9)	2374	1669	2120	1548	2191	1316	2441	1248	2101	883
ii	Surfacing (Equivalent Class -9)	3705	2421	3532	2194	3087	2072	3870	2114	3312	1698
iii	Resurfacing (Equivalent Class -9)	2837	1738	3042	1969	3098	2339	2829	2296	3199	1210
iv	Permanent works (Rs in Crores)	1772	959	1822	1115	1973	940	2200	1266	3274	879
v	Major Bridges (in metre)	3862	2462	3430	2312	5574	1613	4245	2296	4189	1657

@Progress is up to 20 Dec 2016.

3.2 MOD have stated that some of the reasons for not completing the projects as per the stipulated schedules include delay in obtaining statutory approvals such as environments, forest and wild life clearances from the government agencies, lack of availability of construction material, difficult terrain which reduces the efficiency of the man and machines, limited working period, etc.

Delay in implementation of the projects due to delay in obtaining land clearances:

3.3 Giving details of the ongoing Projects which have been delayed due to acquisition of land for construction of roads in border areas as furnished by MoD are as follows:

“Delay in Joint survey for land acquisition: There is an abnormal delay more than one and half year to carry out the joint survey for land acquisition by the civil administration. As a result, construction of following roads are delayed :

- (a) Daporijo-Taliha : Km 20.00 - 39.44
- (b) Taliha-Nacho : Km 0.00-47.31

(ii) Non Disbursement of Land Acquisition Payment: After making the payment for Land Acquisition in respect of Dirang Bypass on road Balipara-Charduar-Tawang, the amount has not being disbursed to the land owners, due to which the people are not allowing BRO to construct the Bye pass.

(iii) Non Transfer of Land in the name of BRO for which Land Acquisition already Paid: There are 96 cases for which land acquisition amount has already been paid to the land owners by the civil administration but the transfer of land/mutation of the land is still pending with the civil administration.

(iv) Dual Payment to Forest Department and Civil Administration for Land Acquisition: Due to the non-availability of land record in the state of Arunachal Pradesh, dual payment is required to be paid for land acquisition to both the forest department as well the revenue authorities. A notification needs to be issued by the State Government of Arunachal Pradesh for the following:-

Road Kimin-Potin

Road Daporijo-Taliha

Road Taliha- Nacho

Road Taliha-Tato

(v) Demand for Additional Compensation for which Joint Survey Completed and Land Acquisition Paid: Despite completion of joint survey of land for 6 cases in various States, recurring demand for fresh joint survey/demand for additional compensation is being received by BRO.

(vi) Non demolition of Structures for which Land Acquisition already Paid: Demolition of the structures within right of way (RoW) for which the compensation amount has already paid, is yet to be done."

3.4 In a written reply to a query as to who provides the rehabilitation in case of acquisition of land for the construction of border roads by BRO, MoD submitted as follows:

"In case, land acquisition is required for the construction of roads by BRO, the compensation amount based on the assessment done by the revenue authorities is paid to the concerned State authorities for rehabilitation and compensation. As such, BRO is not directly involved in the rehabilitation process which is undertaken by the concerned State Government."

3.5 Furnishing the data on the number of cases the affected party has approached the courts in the context of acquisition of land for BRO roads MoD submitted as under :

“Presently, there are 593 land compensation cases pending at Supreme Court, various High Courts and District Courts.”

3.6. Furnishing detailed data on the pendency land compensation cases in various courts MoD has submitted the following :

S/No	Name of Court	Number of pending cases
(a)	Supreme Court	01
(b)	Various High Courts	204
(c)	Other Lower Courts	388
Total		593

3.7 In written reply to a query as to whether in view of the above, any progress achieved in land acquisition cases and if so the details there of , MoD submitted as under:

“Land acquisition cases have been expedited after constitution of Empowered Committees in Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, J&K, Sikkim and Tripura. The details of pending LA cases are given below:-

S/No	Project	Nos of Cases
Jammu & Kashmir		
1	Himank	4
2	Vijayak	3
3	Sampark	278
4	Beacon	23
Himanchal Pradesh		
5	Deepak	4
Uttarakhand		
6	STF Hirak	7
7	Shivalik	25
Arunachal Pradesh		
8	Udayak	6
9	Vartak	66
10	Brahmank	34
11	Arunanak	11
Sikkim		
12	Swastik	6
Nagaland/Manipur		
13	Sewak	18
Mizoram		
14	Pushpak	16
Total		501

3.8 Updating the data on the pendency of LA cases, MoD submitted as under:

“The State wise details of pending LA cases are given below:-

S/No	State	Project	Nos of Cases
i	Arunachal Pradesh	Udayak	6
		Vartak	66
		Brahmank	34
		Arunanak	11
ii	Sikkim	Swastik	6
iii	Nagaland/Manipur	Sewak	18
iv	Mizoram	Pushpak	16
Total			157

Exemption from Land Acquisition Act

3.9 In view of the inordinate delays in land acquisition for border roads, it has been suggested to exclude 100 kms along the northern borders and 50 kms along the western borders from the extant land acquisition Act. MoD was requested to furnish its views on the issue. MoD in its reply merely stated that -

“Views of the relevant Ministry will have to be taken.”

Inadequate availability of quarries especially in Arunachal Pradesh

3.10 Apart from the land acquisition, BRO has also raised the following issue of non availability of quarries in the State of Arunachal Pradesh:

“There is an acute shortage of quarry extracted construction materials in the state of Arunachal Pradesh. Out of 71 quarries proposed by BRO, only 39 quarries have been notified by the State Government. Despite repeated request by BRO, rates for extracted quarry materials have not been fixed by the State Government since Sep 2015.”

Forest and Environmental clearances

3.11 Furnishing the data on the pending environmental and forest clearances with various government agencies, required for construction of roads by BRO, MoD submitted as follows:

“(i) At present there is no environment clearance case pending. However, the following forest clearance cases are under process:-

- (a) Indo-China Border Roads - 13 cases
- (b) Other than Indo-China border Roads - 237 cases

(ii) Out of the above, first stage approval in respect of following cases has been accorded and process for final approval is under progress:-

- (a) Indo-China Border Roads - 10 cases
- (b) Other than Indo-China border Road - 80 cases

(iii) Forest clearances cases pending with various State Governments are as under:-

- (a) Indo-China Border Roads - 03 cases
- (b) Other than Indo-China border Roads - 157 cases"

3.12 Updating the earlier information on the issue, MoD in a subsequent reply stated that :
“No case for forest clearance of ICBRs is pending as on date. However, in case of Non ICBRs, 51 cases for forest clearance are under progress.”

3.13 Responding to a query as to how much time is required for environment clearance from proposal stage to final clearance and the average time taken by the Ministry of Environment and Forests for giving clearance, MoD in a written reply stated as follows:

“BRO is exempted by Ministry of Environment and Forest from obtaining environment clearance. However, the time taken for forest clearance vary from case to case and State to State. The average time taken for obtaining and forest clearance is 2 to 5 years.”

3.14 Furnishing the Updated information, on the pendency of forest clearances, MoD supplied the following information :

“Out of the 50 forest clearance cases pending, for 27 cases, first stage approval has been accorded, which is considered as working permission and BRO is able to start the construction works. The summary of pending Forest Clearance Cases in North Eastern States is given below:-

State	AIP Accorded	Cases pending with State Govt	Total pending cases
Arunachal Pradesh	19	7	26
Manipur	2	2	4
Mizoram	2	3	5
Andaman & Nicobar	-	3	3
Sikkim	3	7	10
West Bengal	1	1	2
TOTAL	27	23	50

3.15 With regard to the forest clearances in respect of 51 non ICBR roads, MoD informed as under:

"Out of 51 forest clearance cases of Non ICBRs, 13 forest clearance cases are not required at present, as lower priority has been accorded for construction by the Army. In 9 cases, Approval/Approval in Principle has been received and remaining 29 cases are pending with various State Governments."

Wild Life Clearances.

3.16 With regard to pending wild life clearances, MoD submitted that-

"As on date, one case of wild life clearance is pending with National Board of Wild Life, MoEF & CC at New Delhi."

3.17 Updating the information on pending project for wild life clearances, MoD in a subsequent reply stated as follows:

"As on date only one case of wild life clearance of ICBR road Khab-Nangiya-Chuppan is pending, the case for which was initiated in 2010 and an additional detail such as digital map etc has been forwarded to Government of Himachal Pradesh. "

3.18 Responding to a query as to the reasons for such long delay in obtaining wild life clearance and also the efforts made by BRO to obtain approvals from the state Govt. of Himachal Pradesh, MoD submitted as follows:

“The case for wild life clearance for road Khab-Nanagia-Chuppan was initiated in 2010 by BRO which is still pending with the State Government. The road has been completed and additional detail as required by the Government of Himachal Pradesh such as digital map etc has been submitted by BRO.”

3.19 In response to another query , MoD stated that as on date no wild life clearance is pending for road projects in north eastern region.

3.20 Responding to a query as to how much time is required for wild life clearance from proposal stage to final clearance and the average time taken by the Ministry of Environment and Forests for giving wild life clearance, MoD in a written reply stated as follows:

“The average time taken for obtaining wild life clearance is 3 to 7 years”.

3.21 With respect to hurdles being faced in obtaining wildlife clearances and forest clearances, MoD furnished the following written reply:

“All formalities under the provisions of Wild Life Protection Act 1972 and Forest Conservation Act 1980 are required to be completed before taking up any construction activity within protected areas and reserve forest areas. The hurdles being faced in according wild life clearance are listed as under:-

- (a) Delay in submission and processing of the case by the State Government.
- b) Delay on part of State Wild Life Board as well as National Board of Wild Life.
- c) Filing of interlocutory application with Hon’ ble Supreme Court of India and its disposal.

Various measures have been adopted for quick and time bound disposal of forest clearance cases by Ministry of Environment & Forest (MOEF):-

- (i) Single window system established at District, State & MoEF levels to fast track processing of forest clearance cases on 28th Jan 2010.
- (ii) Simplified and unified Proforma adopted for processing both forest and wild life clearance simultaneously.
- (iii) Regular review meeting is held at the Ministry to review progress of pending cases with representatives of State Govt. MoEF & BRO.
- (iv) A Working Group has been constituted on 03.06.2013 by Ministry of Environment & Forest (MOEF) under the Chairmanship of Secretary MOEF to review the forest clearance cases.”

Availability of suitable machinery and equipment:

3.22 In a written reply to a query as to whether BRO is using world class state-of-art Technologies, MOD in a written response stated that :

“BRO is generally working in the far flung/remote locations in the border areas where deployment of very sophisticated equipments, is not feasible as the repair support, supply point of spare parts etc are at a considerable distance. Hence, the equipments being used are of medium and indigenous type.”

3.23 In a written response to a query as to whether BRO has latest machinery and equipment to cut through hills and clear snow for constructing the roads and if so, the details there of and if not, the reasons there for, MoD stated that “the equipments used for construction of hill roads and snow clearance, by BRO are as below:-

- (i) Dozer (D50/D80)
- (ii) Excavators of 7 Ton, 20 Ton, 30 Ton capacity.
- (iii) Snow Cutters (Supra, Schmidt) etc.

The details of latest machinery and equipment held in BRO to construct/maintain roads in hills areas are given below:-

AUTHORIZED AND EXISTING MAJOR VEHICLES AND OTHER SPECIAL EQPTS FOR CONSTRUCTION OF BORDER ROADS				
S/No	Type of Eqpt	FY 2016-17		Plan for procurement during FY 2016-17
		Auth wrt work load	Held	
i	Dozer Size -II eqvl	2036	1397	639
ii	Stone crusher all type	995	385	160
iii	Road Roller	1215	984	80
iv	Air compressor	1182	872	13
v	Hot Mix Plant	166	104	35
vi	Wet Mix Plant	66	36	5
vii	Paver finisher	230	155	15
viii	Tipper	9913	4178	1599
ix	Crawler Rock Drill	182	91	91

Note: * Deficiency of V/E/P with respect to authorization is under procurement plan.

Further, in order to overcome the deficiency of equipment, delegation of administrative and financial powers has been accorded to BRO executives to hire the construction equipments.”

3.24 In response to a similar query for the year 2017-18, MOD submitted that the equipments used for construction of hill roads and snow clearances, by BRO are as below:

- (i) Dozer (D 50/ D 80)
 - (ii) Excavators of 7 ton , 20,ton , 30 ton capacity
 - (iii) Snow cutters (supra , Schmidt),etc.,
- The details of latest machinery and equipment held in BRO to construct / maintain roads in hill areas are given below:

S no	Type of equipment	FY 2017-18	
		Auth respect to load	with work Held
i	Dozer size-II eqvl.	795	1261
ii	Crawler Rock drill	87	87
iii	All types of snow clearances equipment	154	41

Further, in order to overcome the deficiency of equipment, delegation of administrative and financial powers has been accorded to BRO executives to hire the construction equipment.”

3.25 Apprising the committee about the latest machinery and equipment held in BRO to construct / maintain roads in hill areas MoD submitted the following data :

S. No.	Type of Eqpt	FY 2017-18	
i	Dozer Size-II equi	795	1261
ii	Stone crusher all type	316	298
iii	Road Roller	543	737
iv	Air compressor	546	710
v	Hot Mix Plant	82	100
vi	Wet Mix Plant	28	38
vii	Paver finisher	108	102
viii	Tipper	4561	3978

The present holding of Extra Cold Climate (ECC) clothing is given below :-

S. No.	Item	Authorized (Nos)	Quantity Held (Nos)
i	Cap Balaclava	8502	8496
ii	Coat Parka		8497
iii	Trouser Parka		8495
iv	Cap W/P Snow		8499
v	Mattress Kapok		8499
vi	Socks Woolen Heavy		8502
vii	Vest String Heavy		8498
viii	Boot Combat RI		8502
ix	Gloves Leather		8500
x	Goggles Snow		8493
xi	Lip Salve		8502
xii	Bag Sleeping		8501

3.26 In a written reply to a query as to whether there is any shortage of equipments such as snow cutting machines and welding sets used in constructing roads in high altitude or difficult terrain and whether the available equipments are operational MoD furnished the following information:

“Yes, there is a shortage of snow cutting equipment in BRO, as the last procurement of snow cutter/blower was done in 2010-11. As of now BRO is holding 51 Nos of snow cutters (used for snow clearance on roads and passes), and 05 Nos of snow sweepers (used for clearance of Runways/Airfields). However, the proposal for procurement of 42 Nos snow cutter/blower and 08 Nos snow sweepers is under process.

Out of the total equipment held, approximately 86% of snow cutting equipment and 91% of gen sets are in functional condition. The remaining equipments due to minor defects are not operational and are regularly repaired by Field Workshops and Base Workshops of BRO.”

3.27 MoD has furnished the following data on the requirement of equipment in BRO and their actual availability for the last five years (year wise) is as follows :-

Type of Eqpt	2011-12		2012-13		2013-14		2014-15		2015-16	
	Require- ment	Held								
Dozer-II	1429	1083	1428	1144	1828	1426	1587	1452	1797	1458
Stone crusher- all types	573	223	708	141	507	176	583	156	721	177
Road Rollers	1039	749	1023	790	1079	799	991	791	908	777
Air compressor	1058	785	1075	853	1040	848	1227	1035	1412	1107
Hot mix plant	108	89	126	91	118	89	123	76	192	91
Wet mix plant	24	11	35	29	40	30	34	34	46	38
Paver Finisher	145	93	157	121	139	119	157	148	238	156
Tipplers	5060	2940	5837	2856	5299	3378	5400	3644	6263	3758

3.28 As the above data showed that the shortages of equipment range from 10% to 80% except in the year 2014-15 in respect of Wet Mix Plants, MoD was requested to state / furnish the specific reasons for actual number of equipment in possession falling short of requirement since 2011-12 and whether the shortage was due to lack of funds for purchasing them or are there any procedural/operational delays in finalizing the proposals for procurement of these equipment, MoD in its reply submitted as follows:

“Requirement of V/E/P s used to be calculated based on AWP and not related to the actual budget allocation. However, due to handing over of roads to State PWD/ NHAI/NHIDCL and shift in methodology of execution of work from departmental to execution contract, critical deficiency of V/E/Ps which arose till 2016-17, no longer exists. Further, all powers for procurement of V/E/Ps now stand delegated to DGBR.”

3.29 Responding to a query as to whether the shortage of critical construction equipment has delayed the completion of the border roads in general and ICBRs in particular and if so the details incorporating *inter alia* the extent of delay that can be attributed to shortage of the equipment, MoD in a written submission stated as under:

“Out of the 61 No Indo China Border Roads (ICBRs) only 28 No could be completed so far. The V/E/Ps spared from the roads which were handed over has been deployed on remaining ICBRs to expedite the progress.”

3.30 The availability/holding of hot mix plants has witnessed continuous decline vis-à-vis the requirement since 2011-12 except in 2012-13. Responding to a query as to whether there are any specific problems in procuring the same, MoD has merely stated that there was no specific problem in procurement of HMP.

3.31 The MoD/BRO in a reply furnished to the Committee stated that in order to reduce the gap between requirement and holding, a Long Term Equipment Plan (LTEP) 2014-15 to 2018-19 has been approved with an outlay of Rs.4116.70 Crores. Furnishing the details of the equipment bought (**year wise**) since the formulation of LTEP, MoD submitted the following data:

S No	V/E/Ps	Yearwise details of V/E/Ps procured			
		2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
1	Dozers Size-II	30	12	93	-
2	Stone Crusher all type (Nos)	40	135	2	
3	Road Rollers (Nos)	37	69	31	-
4	Air Comp Med eqvlt	114	18	27	-
5	Hot Mix Plant (20/30 TPH eqvlt)	13	5	27	
6	wet Mix Plant 60 TPH eqvlt	6	3	-	
7	Paver Finisher (Nos)	8	-	-	
8	Tippers (4.5 cum eqvlt)	428	326	882	-

Human Resource Issues

3.32 The data on the authorized and the existing strength of officers, engineers and subordinate staff is as follows:

S/No	Category	Authorized	Held
Group A – Officers			
i	Civil Engineers	879	661
ii	Mechanical Engineers	231	128
iii	Administrative Cadre	184	97
iv	Medical Cadre	145	75
v	Misc cadre	79	15
Total		1488	976
Group B & C Personnel			
i	Technical	23890	19158
ii	Non- Technical	16222	14759
Total		40112	33917
G/Total		41600	34893

3.33 The following is the data on shortage of personnel from Armed Forces as well civilian employees both in technical & non-technical side in BRO as furnished by MoD:

S/No	Category	Army		GREF		Army + GREF	
		Authorized	Held	Authorized	Held	Authorized	Held
Group A - Officers							
i	Civil Engrs	290	243	589	418	879	661
ii	Mechanical Engrs	84	43	147	85	231	128
iii	Administrative Cadre	54	27	130	70	184	97
iv	Medical Cadre	79	59	66	16	145	75
v	Misc Cadre	49	15	0	0	49	15
Total		556	387	932	589	1488	976
Group B & C Personnel							
i	Technical	1957	1843	21933	17315	23890	19158
ii	Non- Technical	1020	973	15202	13786	16222	14759
Total		2977	2816	37135	31101	40112	33917
G/Total		3533	3203	38067	31690	41600	34893

3.34 Certain posts of Group A - Officers and Group B & C Personnel in Border Roads Organisation (BRO) are stated to be lying vacant as per details mentioned below:

S/No	Category	No of posts vacant	Remarks
Group A - Officers			
i	Civil Engrs	218	Predominantly due to poor intake i.e. Direct Recruitment
ii	Mechanical Engrs	103	
iii	Administrative Cadre	87	
iv	Medical Cadre	70	
v	Misc Cadre	34	
Group B & C Personnel			
i	Technical	4732	
ii	Non- Technical	1463	

3.35 In written reply to a query as to when the study with respect to sanctioning of manpower strength was conducted in BRO and the revision, if any, was done, MoD submitted as under:

“Earlier, the restructuring was approved for BRO in 2006. Further, the last restructuring in case of Group ‘A’ BRES Officers was carried out in May 2015 and that for Group ‘B’ and ‘C’ Personnel restructuring has been done in Nov 2016. The revised manpower strength in BRO is given below:-

S/No	Category	Authorized	Held
i	Group ‘A’ Officers	1488	976
ii	Group ‘B’ & ‘C’ Personnel	40112	33917
G/Total		41600	34893

3.36 With regard to the (i) method of recruitment of engineers and commanding officers, (ii) their promotional avenues & prospects and (iii) special remuneration, if any, for working in difficult areas, MoD submitted as follows:

“(i) Engineers with degree in Civil Engineering or equivalent are appointed in BRO by UPSC as AEE and on completion of five years regular service are promoted to Executive Engineers subject to availability of vacancies. Generally on promotion to Executive Engineer, the officer is given the appointment of Officer Commanding in

Road Construction Company (RCC). Further, an Executive Engineer (Civil) with 5 yrs regular service is promoted to SE subject to availability of vacancies and again is given the appointment of Commanding Officer in a Task Force (TF).

(ii) An officer appointed in the Organisation as AEE (Direct Recruitment) through UPSC has the opportunity to get promotion up to Chief Engineer/ADG (BR) level, subject to availability of vacancy during the year and fulfillment of promotional criteria.

(iii) BRO personnel are entitled to various remuneration such as Special Compensatory Allowances (SCA), Special Duty Allowances (SDA), High Altitude Allowances at par with other Central Government employees working in that area. No other special remunerations are entitled to BRO personnel working in difficult areas.

(iv) Engineers from the Army are provided by IHQ of MoD (Army) as per manning policy laid down by the Government to BRO.

(v) BRO promises both professional and personal growth at every stage of the career. There are numerous opportunities to upgrade the career progression through different courses. One can even avail a two year paid study leave to upgrade the civil qualification. BRO is one place where professional growth with practical knowledge takes place at every step.”

3.37 The following number of posts of group A – C levels are stated to be lying vacant predominantly due to poor intake through direct recruitment:

SI No.	Category	No. of posts vacant
Group – A Officers		
1	Civil Engineers	218
2	Mechanical Engineers	103
3	Administrative Cadre	87
4	Medical Cadre	70
5	Misc. Cadre	34
Group B & C personnel		
1	Technical	4732
2	Non-Technical	1463

3.38 In response to a query as to how long these positions have been kept vacant, MOD, furnishing the status of Group ‘A’ vacancies has submitted as under:

S/No	Category	No of posts vacant (as on 26 Jun 18)
(a)	Civil Engrs	155
(b)	Mech Engrs	65
(c)	Adm Cadre	63
(d)	Medical Cadre	50

(a) The posts of officers in various cadres are lying vacant due to poor intake through Engineering Services Exam held by UPSC every year ie Direct Recruitment.

(b) Demand for existing vacancy is being forwarded every year to Ministry for further processing the same to UPSC for recruitment in Gp 'A' officers cadre. The details for last five years are as under:-

S/ No	Year	Category	No of Vacancy demanded	Offer of Apptt issued by MoD	No of candidates joined
1	2013	AEE (C)	53	30	17
		AEE (E&M)	9	7	2
		MO II	20	8	1
2	2014	AEE (C)	80	60	19
		AEE (E&M)	15	8	4
3	2015	AEE (C)	-	-	-
		AEE (E&M)	-	-	-
		Adm Offr	-	-	-
4	2016	AEE (C)	66	44	18
		AEE (E&M)	24	16	6
5	2017	AEE (C)	82	41	23
		AEE (E&M)	16	7	2
		MO II	20	-	-
		Adm Offr	8	-	-

3.39 In written response to a query as to whether the BRO has taken up the delay in filling up the posts through direct recruitment with the MoD and the details there of and if not, the reasons there for, MoD submitted the status of vacancies of Group B and C personnel is mentioned below:

S/No	Category/Post	Deficiency (without considering UPP/SA)	Vacancies placed to SSC/ Departmentally Advertised
a	Technical Trades/Posts	3381	1522
b	Non-Technical Trades/Posts	1739	1133

In addition, 1848 vacancies for group 'B' (non gazetted) and group 'C' posts have been advertised through departmental recruitment.”

3.40 Furnishing a response to a query as to whether the shortfall of the human resources is affecting the performance of BRO in completing the ongoing projects on time and if so the details thereof , MoD merely stated that ‘deficiency in technical trades is being addressed on priority so as to avoid any adverse impact on ongoing works’.

3.41 In response to a query as to Whether BRO is providing adequate facilities to workers who are working in extreme weather conditions, MoD stated as follows:

“Yes, all adequate facilities as per Rules and Provisions of the Government are applicable to the GREF Personnel from time to time.”

3.42 **The** data on offer of appointments and their acceptance or otherwise for appointment as Engineers and Medical Officers shown that in many cases acceptance is less than 50 per cent of offers of employment. Apprising the Committee as to whether any study was conducted to ascertain the poor response to the job offers by BRO and the details thereof , MoD simply stated that

“No study has been conducted to ascertain poor response to the job offered by BRO.”

Measures to address the labour shortage

3.43 MoD has stated that extreme remoteness of the areas in which ICBRs are being laid is resulting in non-availability of skilled and experienced labour. In reply to a query as to whether any incentive mechanism was devised to attract and retain skilled and experienced labour, MoD apprised as under:

"The facilities provided to these CPLs by BRO are as under:-

- (i) Preference in recruitment in Group ‘C’ & ‘D’ posts.
- (ii) Shelter for accommodation.
- (iii) Warming facilities for CPLs working above 8000 feet height.
- (iv) Free conveyance from place of residence to work site.
- (v) Creches for children of CPLs.
- (vi) Issue of ration on Government rates.

In addition to the above, various benefits under the Government schemes provided to CPLs are as under:-

- (i) Ex-gratia benefits.
- (ii) Compensation under Employees Compensation Act 1923.
- (iii) Financial Assistance from Border Roads Special Relief Fund
- (iv) Non productivity Bonus."

Logistics support by IAF

3.44 Responding to a queries as to as to (i) whether any air lift facility is being provided to BRO by IAF to move the machine and material at construction sites and if so the details thereof ; and, (ii) Whether such request for assistance is denied by IAF at any and the details thereof , the MoD submitted as follows:

"In order to induct the construction equipment and material to the air maintained detachments of BRO, each year the air effort is provided by Indian Air Force (IAF). The status of air effort provided by IAF to BRO during the last three year is given below:-

Year	Rotary Wing (in MT)			Fixed Wing (in MT)		
	Demand by BRO	Allotment	Materialized	Demand by BRO	Allotment	Materialized
2014-15	1323	960	949	897	897	846
2015-16	2568	971	632	1365	1375	1731
2016-17	1028	820	764	1404	1365	973
2017-18	---	850	624	--	1224	744
Upto11Feb02 .1818						

Indian Air Force has not denied any air efforts assistance to BRO.

3.45 In written reply to a query as to whether any dedicated air service for the BRO has been envisaged by the Ministry to speed up the construction process and if so, the details thereof, MoD stated that 'No dedicated air service has been envisaged for BRO. However, air efforts are provided by IAF for induction of construction equipment to the air maintained detachment. Efforts are on to engage private operators to provide air support BRO are under progress for which BRO has issued RFP.'

3.46 Responding to a query as to whether help from private operators can be taken in this regard and the details there of, MoD stated as follows:

“Earlier, a Contract Agreement (CA) with Pawan Hans Helicopters Ltd (PHHL) was concluded on 19 Aug 2010 by BRO for shifting of essential stores/equipment to the air maintained detachments in the Eastern Sector. Approximately 213 MT load was airlifted under this CA. The Contract Agreement was terminated on the plea of PHHL due to a fatal accident in Arunachal Pradesh during May 2011.”

3.47 Updating the data on the status of air effort provided by IAF to BRO during the last three years is given below:-

Year	Rotary Wing (in MT)		Fixed Wing (in MT)	
	Allotment	Materialized	Allotment	Materialized
2016-17	820	764	1365	1442
2017-18	850	876	1224	990
2018-19 (as on 09 Dec 2018)	660	278	1160	544

CHAPTER -IV

Addressing the constraints -Support from State Governments

4.1 In written reply to a query as to whether there is any mechanism available for coordinating between the Ministry/BRO and State Governments to resolve the issues such as land acquisition, forest/ wild life clearances, lack of quarries, law & order problems, etc., which are impacting adversely the construction schedules of BRO leading to delays in the completing border roads MoD submitted as under:

“Chief Secretary to the Government of J&K, Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and Uttrakhand are made members of the Border Roads Development Board and Empowered Committee has also been constituted in the States of Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, J&K, Sikkim and Tripura to address various issues pertaining to BRO.”

4.2 With regard to the mechanism for interface between Army/BRO and the civilians living in border areas to ensure that the infrastructure created besides fulfilling the strategic needs also is according to their expectation and desires, MoD submitted as follows:

“.... Similarly, Civil-Military liaison conference is held frequently to redress issues concerning both Army as well as civilians in the area. Further, the development of border areas is also undertaken by the State Government and Ministry of Home affairs.”

4.3 With a view to resolve the issues affecting the progress of the works such as delay in obtaining forest /wild life clearances, non availability of local labour, difficulty in availability of construction material etc, Empowered Committees in various State Governments under the Chairmanship of respective Secretaries of the Departments concerned have been constituted by the State Governments of Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, J&K and Tripura as mentioned above.

4.4 In written response to a query as to how many times these Empowered Committees have met during the last three years (year wise) and the important decisions taken by them for resolving the issues faced by BRO, MoD submitted as follows:

“The empowered committee have been constituted in Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim and J&K. Details of meetings of Empowered Committee are under:-

State	Date of Meeting
Sikkim	07 Mar 2015, 22 Jan 2016, 31 Aug 2016 04 Feb 2017 & 11 Aug 2017.
Arunachal Pradesh	15 Jun 2015
J &K	07 May 2015

The state wise details of important decisions taken in Empowered Committee Meeting are as under:-

Sikkim:

- (a) Allotment of muck dumping site for realignment of Gangtok – Nathula Road.
- (b) Various LA cases pertaining to road construction has been expedited.

Arunachal Pradesh:

- (a) Compensating amount for per cum Stone has been Accepted mutually.

J &K State:

Pending forest clearance cases in the AoR of Project were discussed during the meeting and requested to review the decision of FAC/J&K Govt for not processing the fresh cases until outstanding of old payments. Forest clearance be granted to avoid delay in PDC and cost overrun of Various road projects. As on date no Wild life clearance cases is pending. Forest clearance cases have also been cleared except one case where civil case is yet to be disposed off in Arunachal Pradesh.

4.5 In response to a request as to the States which are yet to constitute the Empowered Committees, MoD stated that ‘Empowered Committee is yet to be constituted in Himachal Pradesh.’

4.6 Out of the 14 States which are required to constitute Empowered Committees, 5 states viz. Arunachal Pradesh, J&K, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim and Tripura only have constituted these Empowered Committees. Furnishing the progress on the constitution of Empowered Committees in the remaining 9 States MoD submitted that -

“Empowered Committee has been constituted in 5 States, where the construction of Indo China Border Roads (ICBRs) are in progress and the remaining State Governments were not requested to constitute Empowered Committee.”

4.7 With regard to the efforts made by BRO to expedite the completion of land acquisition of road projects, MoD stated sated *inter- alia* that the following measures have been taken:

“(a) A High level Monitoring Committee headed by the Chief Secretary of the State has been constituted and is reviewing all cases of land acquisition in quarterly meetings.”

PART-II

RECOMMENDATIONS

TARGET AND ACHIEVEMENT IN CREATING PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE ALONG THE BORDER

1. The Committee note from the data supplied by MoD that since 2007-08, the targets set for formation, surfacing , permanent works and bridges could not be achieved. Despite the failure to achieve the set targets in respect of the aforementioned works in previous years , higher targets were set in the subsequent years again only to underperform. The failure to adhere to targets was attributed to various problems being faced by BRO such as difficult terrain , limited working period, lack availability of construction raw material, lack of delegation of powers to the field level officers , etc. It may be worth noting that even in the year 2017-18, when the many administrative and financial powers have been delegated to the field level officers, the set targets could not be achieved in respect of these works. The Committee also note that based on the requirement of Army, five year Long Term Roll on Works Plan (LTROWP) has been approved consisting of 530 roads of length 22,803 km for improvement/construction in the border areas. As per the year-wise completion plan of these 530 roads, BRO has to complete 55 roads of length 1729 km up to 2016, 72 roads of length 2081 km during 2017, 99 roads of length 3047 km during 2018, 78 roads of length 3786 km during 2019, 97 roads of length 4184 km during 2020 and 129 roads of length 7616 km beyond 2020. The Committee hope that the delegation of administrative and financial powers to the field level officers affected

since August, 2017 will go a long way in enabling the BRO to quicken the completion of the projects on time and achieve the targets.

BRO- NEED TO CONCENTRATE IN STRATEGIC AREAS

2. BRO and BRDB were set up, the Committee note, to ensure coordination and expeditious execution of road projects in the North and North Eastern States to enhance the defence preparedness and economic development of the region. There is a need for BRO to concentrate on strategic works, along the border and hand over certain roads to other agencies. The Committee also note that with a large number of roads included in BRDB programme over the years, BRO spread its resources for the development of roads in the lower regions (other than higher /hilly regions) and as a result the development of road infrastructure in the forward areas suffered.

Based on the operational requirements of the Army and consequent upon the decision taken in the National Security Council meeting, it was decided that BRO may focus on core strategic functions on the borders and MoD along with MoRT&H will work out the modalities of separating BRO's strategic road building functions from infrastructure development in left Wing Extremism-affected areas and other internal roads. Accordingly, certain roads in the hinterland, which were earlier constructed by BRO and are now further required to be improved, are identified to be handed over to other agencies so that BRO is able to utilize its resources optimally for construction of roads, which are of strategic importance in the border areas and will meet the operational requirements of the Army. The Committee are in agreement with the decision especially in view of the fact that many border roads especially Indo -China

Border Roads (ICBRs) , which are important from the strategic perspective , are running much behind their completion schedules.

CONSTRUCTION OF INDO CHINA BORDER ROADS (ICBRs) – NEED TO EXPEDITE

3. The Committee note that Government has identified 73 roads of length 3812 Km, for development along the Indo–China Border. The initial target date for completion of these roads was 2012. Out of this, 61 roads of length 3417.50 km have been entrusted to BRO. Out of these, 28 roads of length of 981 km are completed and works on the balance roads are under progress and are in different stages of completion. Out of 35 General Staff roads, work has been completed in respect of 14 roads. Out of rest of 21 roads work has commenced but not yet completed. Out of 13 China Study Group roads, work relating to only 6 roads has been completed and rest of 7 roads are still under construction. The same is the case with Indo Tibet Border Police roads where out of 13 roads, only 8 has been completed and rest are still under construction. The Committee note that delay as mentioned by Border Road Organisation such as obtaining forest/wildlife clearances, difficult terrain conditions, hard rock stretches, limited working period, paucity of construction material, challenges posed by natural disasters such as flash flood of Leh in 2010, Earthquake in Sikkim in 2011, Uttarakhand Floods in 2013 and J&K Floods in 2014 etc is understandable. The revised completion schedule of 83 ICBR is 2022. The Committee also note that out of 11 ICBRs scheduled to be completed by the end of FY 2018-19 only three Nelong-Naga, Naga-Sonam and Sumna-Rimkhim have been completed. Work on only one road Tr Jn-Bheem Base-Dokala is near completion and has been completed 96 percent. Construction of all other roads i.e. Tato-Manigong-Tadagade, Joshimath-Malari,

Musapani-Ghastoli, Nacho-TCC, LGG-Mukto-Teli, Leh-Upsi-Sarchu and Tawaghat-Ghatiabagarh has not been completed yet leaving 16 to 36 work to be finished in the current financial year which seems not possible considering the winter season and hard working conditions.

The Committee hope that with the delegation of administrative and financial powers effected in August 2017 empowering the field level officers to approve and sanction projects will hasten the completion of the projects in time. Apart from the above measures, outsourcing of certain activities, execution of works through Engineering , Procurement and Construction (EPC) mode, might also shorten the project execution time. In view of the above, the Committee recommend BRO to explore the possibility of completing all ICBRs by 2020 instead of the present target of 2022 .

QUALITY OF ICBRS

4. C&AG in their report (No.5 of 2016) commented that numerous instances of defective construction of roads were noticed which resulted in delay in completion of strategic roads and also in fructuous expenditure of Rs.63.20 crore on account of corrective action/realignment of roads. This non completion/faulty specifications of works have a serious bearing on the operational capability of armed forces in strategically sensitive areas. Road works executed by the BRO did not adequately meet the users requirement. Even six roads which had been completed at a cost of Rs.164 crore, were not fit for running of specialized vehicles/equipment due to limitations in execution of works.

The Committee note from the reply submitted by the Ministry that due to extremely hostile and challenging terrains, where these ICBRs were being constructed, the first priority was to provide end to end connectivity and at times and at some locations the work was partially completed in order to achieve end to end connectivity. In the reply, the Ministry has not clarified as to whether the roads constructed by BRO are fit for running of specialized vehicles/equipment as pointed by C&AG. The Committee feel that border roads are essential for the movement of defence forces besides providing end to end connectivity and if they cannot withstand the movement of our fighting forces, in all weather conditions, it may not serve the purpose. The Committee, therefore desire that there should not be any compromise in the quality of the roads lest it may have adverse impact on the movement of troops.

CONSTRUCTION OF TUNNELS

5. The Committee note that BRO is constructing tunnels at Rohtang pass, Theng and sela pass to ensure all all weather accessibility to our strategic borders. The committee are glad to note that tunnel on Gangtok- Chunghang at Teng was dedicated to the nation on 7th June, 2018. The Committee note that Rohtang tunnel is expected to be completed by August, 2019 and the Sela pass by 2021. The Committee hope that these much needed tunnels will not miss their completion deadlines especially in view of liberalized delegation of powers, outsourcing of work s, execution of projects through EPC mode, etc.

CONSTRUCTION OF BRIDGES

6. The Committee note from the reply furnished by the Ministry that out of 20 bridges on ICBRs, only one out of two bridges on Balipara-Charduar-Tawang road, five bridges out of seven on Orang-Kalaktang-Shergaon-Rupa-Tenga road and one out of two bridges on Joshimath-Malari road have been completed leaving thirteen bridges in the non completed category. All the twenty bridges have Probable Date of Completion (PDC) between year 2010 to 2017. To the astonishment of the Committee, one of the bridges at Dhak on Joshimath-Malari road had PDC dated 31-03-2015, where, only 14.41 percent work has been completed. With such pace of work, one can easily guess the actual date of completion of the bridge. Besides this, one bridge Tawangchu-II on BJG-LGG road had PDC dated 31-03-2010 but only 19.75 percent of the work has been completed. The Committee find that besides the above all other bridges are still under construction, which would result in BRO missing PDC by a huge margin. The Committee, therefore, desire that as these bridges join the roads and are very crucial in movement of personnel, BRO should give preference for their early completion. Considering the fact that in Uttarakhand bridges were washed out every year due to natural calamities, the Committee desire that the Ministry should contemplate a plan of action to address such eventualities and designing of the bridges and site chosen for construction should be firm and not prone to vagaries of natural causes.

KEY PROJECTS – PROVISION OF CONNECTIVITY BETWEEN HIMACHAL PRADESH AND LADAKH (NEMO-PADUM-DARCHA ROAD)

7. The Standing Committee on Defence in their Report (Report No.19 DFG of 2016-17) stated that connectivity between Himachal Pradesh and the Ladakh region is

“very crucial” for the expeditious movement of troops and equipment, and recommended the construction of the Nyemo-Padum-Darcha Road to connect the two. The Committee are glad to note that progress has been noticed in the construction of the said road. The Ministry apprised the Committee that the road Nimmu-Padam-Darcha is 297 Km long road which takes off at Km 400 on Srinagar-Kargil-Leh road (34 Km short of Leh in J&K state) and terminates at Darcha (Km 145 on Manali-Leh road in H.P). The connectivity for 220.60 km. length has already been achieved. Out of 11 stretches of work, connectivity has been achieved in 6 stretches. The preparation of DPR for stretch of road between Km 45 to 124 and Km 176.70 to Km 259 measuring length 162 Km is in progress. The Committee desire that the completion schedule of the project may be apprised on priority.

PROVISION ROAD LINK TO LAST INDIAN POST OF LIPULEKH

8. The Committee note that road link to the last Indian post of Lipulekh pass which is located at an altitude of 17,000 feet in Chaudans valley or Darchula sub district in Pithoragarh in Uttarakhand on the Chinese border has not yet been constructed. The Ministry apprised the Committee that Ghatiabagarh-Lipulekh road of length of 75.54 Km is a strategic road under construction in Pithoragarh district of Uttarakhand. The road is to be developed to Class 9 specifications. Ghatiabagarh is connected by road from Dharchula of length 36 Km. Connectivity on Ghatiabagarh-Lipulekh road has been established upto 3.60 Km from Ghatiabagarh. Presently all effort are being made with five different attack points locations between Km 3.60 to Km 10.00 (3.70 Km connectivity yet to be achieved) and three attack points between Km 10.00 to Km 20.00 (9.50 Km connectivity yet to be achieved). The connectivity from

Km 20.00 to Km 71.00 has been established and widening works are under progress through air maintained DettGunji.

The Committee also note that due to Annual Kailash Mansarovar Yatra, the same alignment from Km 0.00 to Km 20.00, the works got hampered nearly on daily basis from June to September every year. Yatries are being air lifted from Pithoragarh to Gunji in order to facilitate work on this alignment. State Government and District Administration have been approached by BRO for monitoring the movements of locals and traders in such a way that the working window is available with BRO for undertaking blasting and cutting operations daily at specified time intervals. Proposed date of completion of this road is 2022.

It is in view of the afore mentioned problems, the Committee, elsewhere in the report recommended that Empowered Committees be constituted which can discuss these kinds of problems and resolve them at the earliest ensuring completion of projects on time. The committee, therefore suggest, Uttarakhand Government may be requested to constitute empowered Committee without any delay.

DELAYS – NEED FOR INVOLVEMENT OF PRIVATE COMPANIES

9. The Committee note from the reply submitted by the Ministry that to bridge the gap between the strategic requirements of the Army and BRO's own capacity constraints of departmental execution, BRO has also started outsourcing of projects. Guidelines have been issued by the Ministry to adopt Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) mode of execution for all projects for which the value as per the DPR is above Rs 100 Crore so that these projects can further be offered for outsourcing to big construction companies' as viable projects through competitive bidding and improve the pace of execution of infrastructure projects in the border

areas. Accordingly, at present BRO has identified 27 roads of length 2144.17 km including one Sela Tunnel for construction through outsourcing. Request for Proposal (RFP) has been uploaded for tendering of Detailed Project Report (DPR) preparation of 22 roads of length 1877.383 Km and for Sela Tunnel of length 2.265 Km. Bids had been received and were opened for 19 road projects & Sela Tunnel. Contract for DPR preparation has been awarded in 10 cases. DPR has been submitted for 1 road and Sela Tunnel which are under examination. The Committee welcomes the steps and hope that these steps will facilitate to minimize the gaps between targets and achievements with regard to construction of border roads and other infrastructure works in border areas.

ALLOCATION AND UTILIZATION OF BUDGETARY RESOURCES

10. The Committee note from the data supplied by the Ministry that since 2011-12 BRO could not get the amount of funds requested for. However, it could not spend entire amount of resources allocated at RE stage for 5 years from 2011-12 to 2015-16. For instance, against final allocation of Rs. 4472, 4319, 4178, 4039 and 4360 crore for the years 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16 respectively, actual amount spent amounted to Rs. 4093, 4087, 4102, 4030 and 4311 respectively. Hence, it may be seen against allocation of Rs. 21368 crores for the last five years, actual expenditure amounted to Rs. 20,623 crore leading to surrendering of funds to the tune of Rs. 745 crore by BRO during the said period.

The Committee were informed that due to lesser delegation of powers at the field level resulted in all cases were coming to the Ministry for clearances. For instance, during the deliberations, the Committee were informed that earlier BRO had

powers to approve procurement of equipment worth of Rs.7.5 crore for a particular case of indigenous equipment and for imported equipment, the powers were Rs.3.75 crore. Similarly, earlier the Chief Engineer at the field level had absolutely no powers for execution of contracts. The only powers he/she had was up to Rs.10 crore, that too, only for Departmental execution. BRO in a way attributed the surrendering of the funds due to delay in obtaining approvals for procurement proposals. The Committee hope that the delegation of administrative and financial powers and outsourcing of certain works and execution of projects through EPC mode which are discussed in subsequent paras may obviate the need for such surrendering of the funds in future.

DELEGATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL POWERS

11. During deliberation, the Committee were informed that earlier BRO was not in a position to perform in the field because there was lesser delegation of power and all cases were keep coming to the Ministry which led to delays . Earlier the Chief Engineer at the field level had absolutely no powers for execution of contracts. The only powers he had was up to Rs.10 crore, that too, only for Departmental execution. Now there is enormous administrative and financial delegation of power. As per the new dispensation, Chief Engineer's powers have been enhanced from Rs.10 crore to Rs.50 crore for both Departmental as well as for EPC mode of execution. For two ADGs – one in the East and one in the North, have been increased from Rs.50 crore to Rs.100 crore. Beyond Rs.100 crore, the DG has been given powers. All acceptance of tenders takes place at Chief Engineer level itself. So not only from the Ministry to BRO, even within BRO, the powers have been delegated from DGBR up to ADGBR and Chief Engineer level and even up to task force Commander level so that lesser time is

wasted in unnecessary communication. The Committee also note that in the short period, since the delegation of enhanced powers, 90 estimates amounting to Rs 258 Crore have been sanctioned and 103 vintage vehicle/equipment/plants have been downgraded and 25 premature failure cases have been disposed off, which will facilitate BRO to induct new construction equipment. While appreciating the much needed move for putting in place the delegation of financial powers, the Committee hope and trust that management of BRO uses the powers judiciously and ensure that projects do not suffer for want of approvals and sanctions on time. The Committee hope that these powers may be utilized to complete the projects under Long Term Roll on Works Plan (LTRoWP) The Committee also want the MoD to furnish impact of such delegation of powers on the pace of execution of other projects.

PACE OF EXPENDITURE - EXEMPTION FROM MINISTRY OF FINANCE

12. The Committee note that Ministry of Finance (MoF) imposes ceiling on the allocation of budget at the stage of Revised Estimate (RE) and Budget Estimate (BE), based on the actual expenditure incurred during the last financial year and current financial year. The Ministry of Finance is stated to have been requested to exempt BRO from its guidelines mandating the pace of expenditure and not to curtail the allocation at RE stage based on the percentage of expenditure at half yearly stage as BRO is unable to adhere to the half yearly expenditure limits stipulated by MoF due to difficult working conditions. Due to the restricted allocation of budget to BRO, the Committee were informed that road laying works, resurfacing, maintenance, snow clearance of road got affected badly. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry of Defence should take up this matter at the highest level, especially in view

of the limited working period due to adverse climatic conditions in which BRO does the work, with the Ministry of Finance. The Committee hope to hear positive response from the Ministry of Finance in this regard.

IMPROPER UTILIZATION OF BUDGETARY ALLOCATIONS FOR ICBRS

13. The Committee while going through the observation made by C&AG in its report (No.5 of 2017 on Union Government Defence Performance Audit), on non-completion of Indo China Border Roads (ICBRs) who commented inter-alia that out of 61 Indo China Border Roads (ICBRs) planned to be completed by 2012, only 15 roads had been completed by 2012. Out of the balance 46 roads, only 07 roads were completed by March, 2016 extending the probable Date of Completion (PDC) of balance roads upto the year 2021. Thus 22 roads (36%) had only been completed upto March 2016, despite incurring an expenditure of Rs.4536 crore (98 percent) against the estimated cost of Rs.4644 crore for 61 ICBRs. Further out of 24 selected for audit, four roads were completed by March, 2012 and two were completed by March, 2016. Thus only 06 roads (25 per cent) costing Rs.164 crore were completed upto March, 2016 despite incurring an expenditure of Rs.2,713.76 crore for 24 selected ICBRs.

Further, C&AG has also pointed out certain serious malpractices for instance, an amount of Rs.6.93 (SI No.6 above) crore was booked on four roads without any achievement in physical targets viz. formation, surfacing and permanent works. Similarly, an amount of Rs.1.89 crore (SI No.8&9) was booked against BJG-LGG road during the year 2012-13 and 2013-14 against execution of works worth Rs.0.55 crore. The C&AG has also pointed out that there are cases of booking expenditure without

any execution of any work in some cases. The Committee hope that suitable steps will be taken to ensure non repetition of such acts of omission and commission.

EXPENDITURE ON ROHTANG TUNNEL PROJECT

14. It could be seen that out of allocated amount of Rs.374 crore for Rohtang tunnel project , Rs. 265 crore only was spent during the year 2017-18. Hence, Rs.109 crore was surrendered. The Committee would like to be apprised of the reasons for such surrendering of the funds and also the impact, if any , on its completion schedules.

EXPENDITURE ON PROCUREMENT OF EQUIPMENT , PLANTS AND VEHICLES

15. The Committee observe that surrendering of the allocated funds by BRO for the purpose is a norm rather than an exception since 2009-10. Against allocation of Rs. 4463.82 crore from 2009-10 to 2016-17 , utilisation was only Rs. 1534.29 crore . Hence, an amount of Rs.2929.53 crore was surrendered during the period, which is less than 50% of the allocaiton. Another feature of the expenditure pattern is despite surrendering of the funds since 2009-10 , higher allocations were made in subsequent years only to be under spent. For instance out of Rs. 250.76 crore , Rs. 205.70 crore was spent during 2009-10. However, in 2010-11 amount allocated was Rs.380.80 out of which Rs. 186.66 crore was surrendered. The scene is no way different in the rest of years since 2011-12 . The Committee would like to be apprised of the specific reasons for surrendering considerable amounts allocated for the purpose. The Committee would also want the MoD to furnish the justification for such allocation of resources.

DELAY IN COMPLETING INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS ROADS, BRIDGES, PERMANENT WORKS.

16. It could be seen that in none of the years since 2012-13, the achievement of the targets *vis-a-vis* planning in respect of formation, surfacing, resurfacing of roads , completion of permanent works and bridges is nowhere near the targets. In fact, in some cases the achievement is less than 40 % of the targets. The Committee are aware of the problems specific to the border areas especially rugged mountains, adverse climatic conditions, transportation problems, etc. and the consequent difficulties in implementing infrastructure projects and accordingly feel that the low achievement of the targets vs planning is due to non consideration of the ground realities. The Committee, therefore, desire that the planning of the projects may be done in such a way taking into consideration the ground realities especially, the approvals required from statutory agencies .

REASONS FOR DELAY IN CONSTRUCTION OF ROADS - LAND ACQUISITION ISSUES

17. The Committee note that there are many issues relating to acquisition of land which resulted in considerable delay in construction of roads, bridges and tunnels in the border areas. These issues include delay in joint survey for land acquisition, non disbursement of land acquisition payment, non transfer of land in the name of BRO for which land acquisition already paid, dual payment to forest department and civil administration for land acquisition, demand for additional compensation for which joint survey completed and land acquisition amount paid, non-demolition of structures for which price for land acquisition already paid etc. The Committee find that there is an abnormal delay of more than one and half years to carry out the joint survey for

land acquisition by the civil administration. As a result, construction of roads from Daporijo-Taliha and Taliha-Nacho got delayed. In other case after making the payment for land acquisition in respect of Dirang Bye pass on road Balipara-Charduar-Tawang, the amount has not been disbursed to the land owners, due to which the people are not allowing BRO to construct the Bye pass. In yet another instance, there are 96 cases for which land acquisition amount has already been paid to the land owners by the civil administration but the transfer of land/mutation of the land is still pending with the civil administration.

In a case specific to Arunachal Pradesh due to the non-availability of land records, dual payment is required to be paid for land acquisition to both the forest department as well the revenue authorities for which a notification needs to be issued by the State Government of Arunachal Pradesh for Kimin-Potin, Daporijo-Taliha, Taliha- Nacho and Taliha-Tato roads making construction of these roads delayed.

The Committee also note that despite completion of joint survey of land for 6 cases in various States, recurring demand for fresh joint survey/demand for additional compensation is being received by BRO and more so over demolition of the structures within Right of Way (RoW) for which the compensation amount has already paid, is yet to be done.

18. The Committee observed that there are 593 cases of land acquisition are pending in different courts, out of which 288 are pending at lower courts. The Committee also note from the information submitted by the Ministry that land acquisition cases have been expedited after constitution of Empowered Committees in Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, J&K, Sikkim and Tripura which may be seen in

the decline of pending land acquisition cases from 593 to 501. Though the Committee appreciate that the initiatives taken by the Empowered Committees resulting in decline of land acquisition cases to 501, they would like to be clarified as to whether the reduction in land cases is due to out of court settlement by the State Governments concerned or by settlement of these cases by the Courts concerned. The Committee also desire that as many strategic roads In Arunachal Pradesh are stuck up for want of land clearances, special attention of the Empowered Committee of Arunachal Pradesh may be drawn to resolve the issue at the earliest. They wish that after the meeting held under the Chairmanship of Raksha Rajya Mantri (RRM), wherein RRM directed the State Governments to expedite the cases and meeting with the representatives of State Government during Civil Military Liaison Conference (CMLC), pending cases would go down.

19. The Committee observe that out of 501 nos of land acquisition cases pending in J&K, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarkhand, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Nagaland Manipur and Mizoram, two states viz. J&K and Arunachal Pradesh only account for 425 cases. The Committee would like to be apprised of the specific reasons for large number of pending cases in J&K and Arunachal Pradesh *vis- a- vis* other states.

20. The Committee note that at present there are 593 land compensation cases pending at Supreme Court, various High Courts and District Courts, where the affected party has approached in the context of acquisition of land for BRO roads and providing rehabilitation thereof. The Committee also desire that the Ministry should look for out of court settlement of the cases for early resolution.

21. The Committee note that it has been suggested that in view of the inordinate delays in land acquisition for border roads, it has been suggested to exclude 100 kms along the northern borders and 50 kms along the western borders from the extant land acquisition Act. MoD was requested to furnish its views on the issue. However, MoD merely stated that views of the relevant Ministry will have to be taken. The Committee desire that the views of the relevant ministries may be obtained and they be informed of the same

SHORTAGE OF CONSTRUCTION MATERIAL

22. The Committee further note that there is an acute shortage of quarry extracted construction materials in the state of Arunachal Pradesh. Out of 71 quarries proposed by BRO, only 39 quarries have been notified by the State Government. Despite repeated request by BRO, rates for extracted quarry materials have not been fixed by the State Government since Sep 2015. The Committee find it surprising that despite having Empowered Committees and BRDB, the Ministry is not able to resolve such issues. It is obvious that if quarries are not available, the construction work can not progress. The Committee therefore, desire that the Ministry should take the issue at the highest level so that these bottlenecks can be cleared in a shorter span of time and roads are built as per the schedule.

DELAY IN WILD LIFE CLEARANCES

23. The Committee note that all formalities under the provisions of Wild Life Protection Act 1972 are required to be completed before taking up any construction activity within protected areas and reserve forest areas. The hurdles being faced in

according wild life clearance are - delay in submission and processing of the case by the State Government, delay on the part of State Wild Life Board as well as National Board of Wild Life and filing of interlocutory application with Hon' ble Supreme Court of India and its disposal. MoD in its latest reply about the pendency of wild life clearances stated that the case for wild life clearance for road Khab-Nanagia-Chuppan was initiated in 2010 by BRO which is still pending with the State Government. The road has been completed and additional detail as required by the Government of Himachal Pradesh such as digital map etc has been submitted by BRO. MoD, however, in response to another latest query stated that as on date no wild life clearance is pending for road projects in north eastern region . Hence, it is not clear as to whether the Khab-Nanagia-Chuppan road in Himachal Pradesh was laid without obtaining statutory wild life clearances. The Committee would like to have a clarification in this regard.

24. The Committee note that the average time taken for obtaining wild life clearance from proposal stage to final clearance is 3-7 years. This is despite the fast track process for forest and wild life clearances put in place by Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change (MoEF&CC). The Committee are of the view that said that 3-7 years period is on the higher side especially in strategic areas and the possibility of reducing that time period may be explored with MoEF&CC and the Committee may be informed of the outcome in this regard at the earliest.

DELAY IN OBTAINING FOREST CLEARANCES

25. The Committee are glad to note that at present there are no pending cases of forest clearances in respect of ICBRs. However , the Committee note that at present

out of 51 forest clearance cases of Non ICBRs, 13 forest clearance cases are not required at present, as lower priority has been accorded for construction by the Army. In 9 cases, Approval/Approval in Principle has been received and remaining 29 cases are pending with various State Governments. The Committee further note various measures such as Single Window System (SWS) at District, State & MoEF&CC levels to fast track processing of forest clearance cases since 2010, simplified and unified proforma adopted for processing both forest and wild life clearance simultaneously, regular review of meetings with all the concerned. The Committee are concerned to note that despite the afore mentioned measures for fast tracking the forest clearances, 29 cases for forest approvals are still pending with various state Governments. They therefore, recommend that the respective Empowered Committees may be requested to expedite these cases at the earliest.

NEED FOR SOPHISTICATED EQUIPMENT

26. The Committee note that BRO is using medium and indigenous equipment as they are generally working in the far flung/remote locations in the border areas where deployment of very sophisticated equipments, is not feasible as the repair support, supply point of spare parts etc are at a considerable distance. The Committee are of the view that the cost of sophisticated equipment and their spares, though may be costing high, the output of these machines and the efficiency at which these work may outweigh their cost. Hence, possibility of deploying sophisticated construction equipment may be explored especially to ensure quicker completion of the projects in rugged terrains.

LACK OF AVAILABILITY OF EQUIPMENT

27. The Committee note that the availability of construction equipment is far lesser than that of authorized numbers with respect to the work load of BRO in 2016-17. The availability vis-a-vis authorized numbers in respect of stone crushers of all types, a basic equipment in construction industry, is less than 40% in 2016-17. Similarly, in case of tippers the available percentage is less than 50%. In respect of others such as dozers, road rollers, Hot mix plants, wet mix plants, etc., the availability is less than the authorized. However, in 2017-18, the Committee find some improvement in terms of equipment availability, though there is shortages in terms of availability of snow clearance equipment, in which case the authorized vs. held is 154:41.

The Committee are of the view that BRO is deprived of certain basic construction equipment and snow clearance equipment in required numbers which may be affecting their efficiency adversely and also resulting in project delays. The Committee, however, appreciate that to address the shortages, a Long Term Equipment Plan (LTEP) 2014-15 to 2018-19 has been approved with an outlay of Rs.4116.70 Crores and 1636 vehicles/ equipment / plants were bought under plan. The Committee would like the BRO to inform them of whether the entire amount allocated under the plan has been spent.

HUMAN RESOURCES ISSUES – SHORTAGE OF MANPOWER

28. The Committee note that there is huge difference between authorized and held strength of Group A as well as well group B & C personnel. In respect of civil Engineers including Army and General Engineering Reserve Force (GERF), there are 155 vacancies, in mechanical engineering discipline 65, 63 vacancies in administrative

cadre, 50 vacancies in medical cadre and 34 vacancies in miscellaneous category. In total there are 3381 vacancies in technical cadre and 1739 vacancies in non-technical cadre in group B & C.

The Committee have been apprised that demand for existing vacancies is being forwarded every year to Ministry for further processing the same to UPSC for recruitment in Group 'A' Officers cadre. However on the scrutiny of data furnished by the Ministry since 2013 the Committee find that despite offer of appointment issued by Ministry of Defence for 30, 60 44 and 41 posts for AEE(Civil) in the years 2013, 2014, 2016 and 2017 only 17, 19 18 & 23 respectively accepted the offers and joined. Hence, the percentage of acceptance is less than 50% and in some years it is less than 30%. Similarly, in respect of AEE (E&M), against offers of 7, 8, 16 & 7 in the years 2013, 2014, 2016 & 2017, only 2, 4, 6 & 2 candidates respectively only accepted the offers. Similarly, for medical officers (MOs) which recruitment was made in 2013 only one candidate against 8 offers made joined BRO. Similarly, In group 'B' and 'C' posts also thousands of posts (in excess of six thousand posts) hundreds are lying vacant and are in the process of being filled up through the agencies concerned such as SSC/ Departments concerned.

The Committee are of the view that due to inhospitable terrain, inclement weather, lack of proper facilities for the families of the employees such as schools, colleges, etc, many who were offered may be opting out. The Committee are of the view to attract and retain the best engineering talent, an incentive package specific to BRO postings in border areas may be devised. The possibility of relaxing some conditions may also be explored to recruit and retain the talent. Further, candidates from high altitude areas such as J&K and northeastern states may be encouraged to

apply for the positions and if possible, preference in the recruitment for the candidates from these states may be explored. The Committee may be apprised of the steps taken/proposed to be taken in this regard.

LABOUR SHORTAGE

29. MoD has stated that extreme remoteness of the areas in which ICBRs are being laid is resulting in non-availability of skilled and experienced labour. MoD, however, stated that to attract and retain skilled and experienced labour an incentive mechanism was devised which includes (i) Preference in recruitment in Group 'C' & 'D' posts , (ii) Shelter for accommodation., (iii) Warming facilities for CPLs working above 8000 feet height.,(iv)Free conveyance from place of residence to work site, (v) Creches for children of CPLs & (vi)Issue of ration on Government rates. In addition to the above, other benefits such as Ex-gratia benefits, compensation under Employees Compensation Act 1923, Financial Assistance from Border Roads Special Relief Fund and Non productivity Bonus are stated to have been offered. The Committee would like to be apprised of the impact of such measures on the addressing the shortages of skilled and experienced labour.

AIR LIFT FACILITY

30. The Committee note that in order to induct the construction equipment and material to the air maintained detachments of BRO, each year the air effort is provided by Indian Air Force (IAF) by both Rotary Wing and Fixed Wing aircraft. During the year 2014-15, the demand by BRO was 1323 MT but it was allotted only 960 MT; In the year 2015-16, the demand was 2568 MT but allocation was 971 MT. The same deficiency

existed in the year 2016-17 where against the demand of 1028 MT only 820 MT could be allocated. Although Indian Air Force has not denied any air efforts assistance to BRO and position was improved in later years, but demand has not been fully met particularly in case of Rotary Wing aircraft.

The Committee find that inadequate air logistic support is stated to be one of the reasons for time overruns and consequent cost escalation in completing the ICBR projects by BRO. Considering the above facts, the Committee desire if private operators, who have experience and specialization in airlifting the material required by BRO are not available, then IAF should be requested to provided dedicated service to BRO as IAF has the expertise in carrying out such operations.

CONSTITUTION OF EMPOWERED COMMITTEES

31. The Committee note that a mechanism was put in place for coordinating between the Ministry/BRO and State Governments to resolve the issues such as land acquisition, forest/ wild life clearances, lack of quarries, law & order problems, etc., which are impacting adversely the construction schedules of BRO leading to delays in the completing border roads. Such mechanism includes constitution of Empowered Committees in various state Governments under the chairmanship of respective secretaries of the Departments concerned. So far five states *viz.* Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, J&K, Sikkim and Tripura have constituted such committees.

The Committee note that of all the five states, Empowered Committee of Sikkim met five times since 2015 to discuss and resolve various issues affecting adversely the completion of border roads. The Empowered Committees of Arunachal Pradesh

and J&K where number of land acquisition cases are pending *i.e.* 117 & 308 respectively have not met since 15 June and 07 May 2015 respectively. In respect of Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh where 32 and 4 respectively of land acquisition cases are pending, these Empowered Committees seems to have not met for a long time.

The Committee appreciate that empowered Committee of Sikkim met five times since 2015 to discuss various border roads related issues. However, in many states where large number of land acquisition case are pending (J&K and Arunachal Pradesh) have met only once since 2015. The MoD has not furnished any information on the meetings of these empowered Committees in Himachal Pradesh where 4 cases of land acquisition are pending. The Committee therefore are of the view that the Empowered Committee mechanism is not working effectively as it should be and accordingly recommend that specific steps should be taken to rejuvenate this body to enable to play more active role in resolving various issues concerning border roads.

32. MoD has furnished different replies in respect of constitution of empowered Committee in Himachal Pradesh. In their initial replies MoD stated that five states viz. J&K, Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim and Tripura. However, in a subsequent reply MoD stated that 'Empowered Committee is yet to be constituted in Himachal Pradesh.' The committee therefore request MoD to furnish a clarification in this regard.

33. Out of the 14 States which are required to constitute Empowered Committees as mentioned above 5 states viz. Arunachal Pradesh, J&K, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim

and Tripura, where construction of ICBRs are in progress, were requested to constitute Empowered Committees. The Committee would like to be apprised of the reasons for not requesting other 09 states having strategic / border roads and where large number of land acquisition cases are pending.

New Delhi;
11 February, 2019
22 Magha, 1939(Saka)

Kalraj Mishra
Chairperson
Standing Committee on Defence

STANDING COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE (2017-18)

**MINUTES OF THE SECOND SITTING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON
DEFENCE (2017-18)**

The Committee sat on Tuesday, the 27 October, 2017 from 1130 to 1245 hrs. in Committee Room 'B', Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Maj Gen B C Khanduri, AVSM (Retd) - **Chairperson**

MEMBERS

LOK SABHA

2. Shri Dipak Adhikari (Dev)
3. Col Sonaram Choudhary(Retd)
4. Shri Thupstan Chhewang
5. Shri H D Devegowda
6. Shri Jayadev Galla
7. Shri Sher Singh Ghubaya
8. Shri Kalraj Mishra
9. Shri Rodmal Nagar
10. Smt Pratyusha Rajeshwari Singh

RAJYA SABHA

11. Shri K R Arjunan
12. Shri A U Singh Deo
13. Shri Madhusudan Mistry
14. Shri Basawaraj Patil
15. Shri Sanjay Raut
16. Smt Ambika Soni
17. Shri Vivek K Tankha

SECRETARIAT

1. Smt Kalpana Sharma - Joint Secretary
2. Shri TG Chandrasekhar - Director
3. Shri Rahul Singh - Under Secretary

LIST OF WITNESSES
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

S.NO	NAME OF OFFICER	DESIGNATION
1	Shri Sanjay Mitra	Defence Secretary
2	Lt Gen S K Shrivastava	DGBR
3	Shri Bharat Khera	JS(Air/BR)
4	Brig A K Das	DDG(TP)

At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members and representatives of the Ministry of Defence to the Second Sitting of the Standing Committee on Defence. Hon'ble Chairperson highlighted the importance of good and accessible roads in border areas as condition of roads in border areas is not up to the mark due to various issues and the need for Ministry of Defence to pay due attention to it.

2. The representatives of the Ministry of Defence and Border Roads Organisation (BRO) apprised the Committee on the following points:

- (i) Enhancement of financial powers in respect of different officers of BRO, which includes raising the powers of Chief Engineer from Rs. 10 crore to Rs. 50 crore, ADGs from Rs. 50 crore to Rs. 100 crores, beyond which the DG has been given the power.
- (ii) Special dispensation of powers and progress of work undertaken during last one year.
- (iii) Contracting out some work to outside agencies which include surfacing while keeping the work on formation cutting with BRO.
- (iv) Provision of adequate budget and time-bound replacement of equipments.

- (v) Construction of Orang-Kalaktang-Shergaon-Rupa-Tenga (OKSRT) Road which provides a direct connectivity to Tenga in Arunachal Pradesh.
- (vi) Proposal for building a tunnel through Sela, Arunachal Pradesh and studying feasibility report in this regard.
- (vii) Involvement of local people and State Governments so that the work progresses smoothly.
- (viii) Issues in Arunachal Pradesh where land records are not in very good shape due to which ownership and compensation matters arise.
- (ix) Mechanism for speedy environment and forest clearance.
- (x) Good progress of work in Arunachal Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir although land acquisition remains an issue of concern.

3. Hon'ble Chairperson and Members of the Committee raised several issues/points to which the representatives of the Ministry of Defence and BRO responded. The Chairperson directed the representatives of the Ministry to furnish written replies/information on the points raised by the Members.

The Committee then adjourned.

4. A copy of verbatim record of the proceedings has been kept.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE

MINUTES OF THE SECOND SITTING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE (2018-19)

The Committee sat on Wednesday, the 14th November, 2018 from 1500 hrs. to 1640 hrs.in Committee Room No. 139, Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Shri Kalraj Mishra - Chairperson

MEMBERS LOK SABHA

11. Col. Sonaram Choudhary, VSM (Retd)
12. Shri Thupstan Chhewang
13. Shri H.D. Devegowda
14. Shri Sher Singh Ghubaya
15. Km. Shobha Karandlaje
16. Shri Dharambir Singh

RAJYA SABHA

8. Dr. Ashok Bajpai
9. Shri Madhusudan Mistry
10. Shri G.V.L. Narasimha Rao
11. Shri Sanjay Raut
12. Smt. Ambika Soni
13. Shri Ram Nath Thakur
14. Lt. Gen. Dr. D.P. Vats

SECRETARIAT

- | | | |
|---------------------------|---|---------------------|
| 1. Smt. Kalpana Sharma | - | Joint Secretary |
| 2. Shri Srinivasulu Gunda | - | Director |
| 3. Smt. Jyochnamayi Sinha | - | Additional Director |
| 4. Shri Rahul Singh | - | Under Secretary |

LIST OF WITNESSES

S.No	Name of Officer	Designation
1	Shri Jiwesh Nandan	Addl. Secy.
2	Lt. Gen. Harpal Singh	Director General Border Roads (DGBR)
3	Shri Bharat Khera	JS(BR)
4	Shri A N Das	Addl. FA(AN)
5	Shri S.K. Tripathi	Addl. DGBR
6	Maj Gen SS Mahal	ADG Military Operations (B)
7	Brig AK Das	DDG (TP)
8	Brig Dhiraj Mohan	DDG (MO4)
9	Shri A.K. Mishra	SE
10	Shri A.K. Jain	SE

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members of the Committee. The Committee then paid homage to late Shri Ananth Kumar, Union Minister for Chemicals & Fertilizers and Parliamentary Affairs. The Committee then took up the following draft Reports for consideration and adoption:

- (i) Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/ Recommendations contained in the Thirty-second Report (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) on 'Creation of Non-Lapsable Capital Fund Account, instead of the present system'; and

(ii) Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/ Recommendations contained in the Thirty-third Report (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) on 'Resettlement of Ex-Servicemen'.

3. After deliberation, the Committee adopted the above Reports and authorized the Chairperson to finalize the Reports.

4. Thereafter, the Chairperson invited the representatives of the Ministry of Defence to the Sitting convened to render oral evidence on the subject 'Provision of all weather road connectivity under Border Roads Organisation (BRO) and other agencies up to International borders as well as the strategic areas including approach roads - An appraisal' and drew their attention to the Direction 55(1) of Directions by the Speaker, Lok Sabha regarding maintenance of confidentiality of proceedings.

5. The representatives of the Ministry of Defence through Power Point Presentation briefed the Committee on the subject. The Chairperson and the Members then raised several issues/points as mentioned below and sought clarifications/information from the representatives:

- i. Prioritisation of roads to be taken up for construction by BRO;
- ii. Status of construction of roads in Ladakh region;
- iii. Lack of participation by good contractors due to low rates of Standard Schedule of Rates (SSR);
- iv. Percentage of border roads completed by BRO out of the total border roads in India;
- v. C&AG's observations regarding delay in execution of Indo China Border Roads (ICBRs);
- vi. Challenges faced by BRO i.e. budgetary constraints, land acquisition, environmental clearances, obsolete equipments and shortage of equipment, difficult terrains, shortage of manpower etc.;
- vii. Problems encountered in construction of border roads in Arunachal Pradesh;
- viii. Private investment in certain border roads which have the potential to attract tourism and can collect certain kind of toll fees in the long run;
- ix. Need for permanent solution for maintaining the roads in geological terrains prone to natural calamities;

- x. Delegation of financial powers up to Rs. 100 crores to the Chief Engineer and Task Force Commander;
- xi. Possibility of assigning some work under Bharatmala Scheme in Rajasthan to Border Roads Organisation;
- xii. Progress of work in Rupa Axis in Arunachal Pradesh; and
- xiii. Construction of tunnel to connect two places where roads are under constant threat from rains and other vagaries of nature.

6. The representatives of the Ministry of Defence then responded to the issues raised by the Members. As regards the points on which they could not readily respond, the Committee desired the Ministry to furnish written information at the earliest.

The Committee then adjourned.

7. A copy of verbatim record of the proceedings has been kept.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE

MINUTES OF THE FOURTH SITTING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE **(2018-19)**

The Committee sat on Monday, the 11 February, 2019 from 1500 hrs. to 1545 hrs. in Main Committee Room, Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Shri Kalraj Mishra - Chairperson

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Col Sona Ram Chaudhary VSM (Retd)
3. Km Shobha Karandlaje
4. Shri A P Jithender Reddy
5. Smt Mala Rajya Laxmi Shah
6. Shri Dharambir Singh
7. Smt Pratyusha Rajeshwari Singh

Rajya Sabha

8. Shri K R Arjunan
9. Dr Ashok Bajpai
10. Shri Soumya R Patnaik
11. Shri G V L Narasimha Rao
12. Shri Sanjay Raut
13. Shri Ram Nath Thakur
14. Lt. Gen. Dr D P Vats

SECRETARIAT

1. Smt. Kalpana Sharma - Joint Secretary
2. Shri Srinivasulu Gunda - Director
3. Smt. Jyochnamayi Sinha - Additional Director
4. Shri Rahul Singh - Deputy Secretary

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members of the Committee and informed them about the agenda for the Sitting. The Committee then took up the draft Report on the subject 'Provision of all weather road connectivity under Border Roads Organisation (BRO) and other agencies up to International borders as well as the strategic areas including approach roads- An appraisal' for consideration. After deliberations, the Committee unanimously adopted the report.

3. The Committee authorized the Chairperson to finalise the above draft Report and present the same to the House on a date convenient to him.

The Committee then adjourned.
