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STANDING COMMITTEE ON URBAN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (2003)

THIRTEENTH LOK SABHA

MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT
(DEPARTMENT OF LAND RESOURCES)

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS
(2002-2003)

[Action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Thirty-third Report of the Standing Committee on Urban and Rural Development (Thirteenth Lok Sabha)]

FORTY-SECOND REPORT

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

FORTY SECOND REPORT

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Presented to Lok Sabha on 26.2.2003

Laid in Rajya Sabha on 26.2.2003

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

February, 2003/*Phalguna,* 1924 *(Saka)*

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2. Shri K.V. Rao	—	*Joint Secretary*
3. Shri K. Chakraborty	—	*Deputy Secretary*
4. Smt. Sudesh Luthra	—	*Under Secretary*
5. Shri N.S. Hooda	—	*Under Secretary*

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Urban and Rural Development (2003) having been authorised by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present the Forty-Second Report on the Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Thirty-Third Report of the Standing Committee on Urban and Rural Development (2002) on Demands for Grants (2002-2003) of the Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources).

2. The Thirty-third Report was presented to Lok Sabha on 24th April, 2002. The replies of the Government to all the recommendations contained in the Report were received on 16th September, 2002.

3. The replies of the Government were examined and the Report was considered and adopted by the Committee at their sitting held on 20th February, 2003.

4. An analysis of the action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Thirty-third Report of the Committee (2002) is given in *Appendix-IV*.

NEW DELHI;
25 *February*, 2003
6 *Phalguna*, 1924 *(Saka)*

CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE,
Chairman,
Standing Committee on
Urban and Rural Development.

CHAPTER I

REPORT

This Report of the Committee on Urban and Rural Development (2003) deals with the action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in their Thirty-third Report on Demands for Grants (2002-2003) of the Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources) which was presented to Lok Sabha on 24th April, 2002.

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

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

Para Nos. : 2.17, 2.19, 2.20, 2.43, 2.47, 2.48, 2.49, 2.54, 2.56, 3.19, 3.21, 3.22, 3.37, 3.38, 3.39, 3.40, 3.41, 3.50, 3.58, 3.59, 3.75, 3.77, 3.78 and 3.94.

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

Nil

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

Para Nos. : 2.16, 2.18, 2.26, 2.32, 2.33, 2.42, 3.20 and 3.76.

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

Para Nos. : 2.35 and 3.95.

3. The Committee desire that final replies in respect of the recommendations for which only interim replies have been given by the Government should be furnished to the Committee within three months of the presentation of the Report.

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

A. Enhancement of targets to achieve the huge task of development of wasteland in the country

Recommendation (Para No. 2.16)

5. The Committee had noted as below:

"The Committee find that so far 2.4 million hectares area of wasteland could be covered by the Department's efforts as against overall targets of covering 50 million hectares of wasteland in the country by the end of 11th Plan. Besides, during 10th Plan 1.80 million hectares of wasteland is proposed to be developed. They find that only a small portion of the total wasteland in the country is being taken care of by the Department. Besides, as acknowledged by the Secretary, 100 million hectares of rain fed land watershed programmes are to be implemented. The Committee find that gigantic task lies ahead before the Ministry and they have to gear up their resources and manpower to realise the target. Keeping in view the huge task of development of wasteland in the country, the Committee feel that the targets set under the different schemes of the wasteland development are not sufficient. In view of this, they would like that the Department should think over expanding their area of activity under the major schemes and the targets should be enhanced. Besides, the 10th Plan allocation commensurating with the increased targets should also be provided."

6. The Government have replied as below:

"It is submitted that plan allocations are made by the Planning Commission as per availability of financial resources with the Central Government. During the Ninth Plan Period, a sum of Rs. 2,477.38 crore was released for different schemes of Department of Land Resources. However, there has been an increase of more than two and a half times in the allocation for the Tenth Plan as compared to the releases for the Ninth Plan due to the efforts made by the Department. A total amount of Rs. 6,526 crore has been allocated for the Tenth Plan, by the Planning Commission. The Department would continue to plead for higher allocations by the Planning Commission at the time of finalisation of yearly plans in future as advised by the Committee."

7. Inspite of persistently recommending for higher allocation for the different schemes of wastelands development in their respective Reports, the Committee find that the Department seems to be contended with whatever allocation has been made by the Planning Commission. While reiterating their earlier recommendation, the Committee would further like to emphasise that sufficient allocation to enable the Department to achieve the said targets of 50 million hectares of wasteland by the end of the 11th Plan should be made. The Department should pursue the matter with the Planning Commission vigorously.

B. Underspending of the allocated funds

Recommendation (Para No. 2.18)

8. The Committee had noted as below:

"While analysing the position of expenditure reported during 8th and 9th Plan, the Committee find that under plan head, there is underspending of Rs. 107.84 and 301.59 crore during 8th and 9th Plan respectively. They are concerned to note the reply furnished by the Government that the underspending during 9th Plan is basically due to North-East. The Committee note that since 2000-2001, when the concept of allocating ten per cent of the outlay exclusively to North-East was started, in the first two years, Rs. 180 crore has so far been allocated to North-East. Even the total amount, if treated as not spent in the North-East, the overall underspending of the Department as a whole during the 9th Plan, is more *i.e.* Rs. 301.59 crore. The Committee, therefore, are not convinced that the onus for underspending lay with North-East only. There is some deep rooted malaise and a very serious indepth hair splitting analysis is necessary to pinpoint the cause. The approach of the Ministry in this regard so far appears to be casual. The Committee hope that the Ministry will do some spadework and diagnose the reasons behind underspending. Keeping in view the importance of the task of development of wasteland in the country, the Committee stress to ensure 100 per cent utilisation of the scarce resources. The cent per cent physical achievement is necessary to get the adequate allocation from the Planning Commission/Ministry of Finance during the coming years of the 10th Plan."

9. The Government have replied as below:

"In almost all the years of the Ninth Plan period, Finance Ministry had made cuts in the allocations due to financial constraints. Hence, the underspending is mainly on account of the cuts imposed during the years. The savings in the earmarked allocation of North East States goes to the non-lapsable pool for these States. However, the Department has been making very serious efforts to increase the coverage of IWDP in these States. It may be noted that as against 17 projects sanctioned under IWDP for North-East States from 1995-96 to 1998-99, 67 new projects have been sanctioned for that region under the programme during the last three years. Projects have been sanctioned in all the States of the region. It is hoped that full utilisation of funds earmarked for North-East States will be made now."

10. The Committee are unhappy to note the vague reply furnished by the Department. They in their earlier recommendation had raised the matter regarding underspending of Rs. 107.84 and Rs. 301.59 crore during the 8th and 9th Plan respectively. The Department while examining the Demands for Grants had furnished reason for the underspending as due to North Eastern States allocation. While furnishing the action taken reply, the Department has stated that the underspending is due to huge cuts imposed by Finance Ministry in the allocation. This is creating confusion. Besides, it has been substantiated that enhanced allocation to North Eastern States goes to the non-lapsable pool of the States. While going through the two different versions furnished by the Department, the Committee conclude that the Department has not been able to pinpoint the root causes for underspending. They take a serious note of it and would like the Department to go deeply into the matter and identify the specific reasons for underspending after a thorough analysis.

C. Bringing all the programmes relating to wasteland under one umbrella

Recommendation (Para No. 2.26)

11. The Committee had noted as below:

"The Committee have repeatedly been recommending in their respective reports to bring all the schemes/programmes for the development of wasteland run by different Ministries/Departments

under one umbrella. While noting the efforts made by the Department to achieve the said objective, the Committee also note that the Secretary of the Department has assured that the final decision in this regard will be taken in the next two months. They hope that the decision in this regard is taken within the stipulated time period and they would like to be apprised about the same."

12. The Government have replied as below:

"The matter of bringing watershed development and soil conservation related activities including watershed development under one umbrella was discussed twice earlier by the Committee of Secretaries. However, due to divergence of views among the Ministries and Departments concerned, no decision could be taken in the matter. Subsequently, a Cabinet note on the subject was formulated and circulated to the Ministries of Agriculture, Environment and Forests, Finance and the Planning Commission for their comments. The comments from all concerned have been received. A Cabinet Note on the subject is under finalisation for submission to Cabinet Secretariat. In this Cabinet note, all activities relating to soil conservation and watershed development (currently being handled by different Central Ministries/Departments) are being proposed to be transferred to Department of Land Resources alongwith the budgeted funds, infrastructure and staff."

13. The Committee for the last four or five years have repeatedly been recommending to bring all the schemes/programmes for the development of wasteland run by different Ministries/Departments under one umbrella. While the Department has in principle agreed to the recommendation, the final decision in this regard has not been taken. Inspite of the fact that the Secretary during the course of oral evidence, while examining the Demands for Grants (2002-2003), had assured the Committee that the final decision would be taken within the following two months, no decision could be taken even after a lapse of almost one year. The Committee are unhappy with the way the decision on such a serious issue is being unnecessarily delayed by the Department. While recommending to the Government to take the decision in this regard positively within three months of the presentation of the Report, the Committee would like an explanation indicating the reasons for delay in taking decision in this regard.

D. Role of private sector to develop wastelands

Recommendation (Para No. 2.32)

14. The Committee had noted as below:

"Keeping in view the gigantic task of development of wasteland in the country, the Committee find that the Government's funding in this regard would not be sufficient. They have repeatedly been recommending to take initiatives to involve the private sector in this task. They in their 12th Report [13th Lok Sabha (para 3.24 refers)] had given detailed analysis as to how the private sector could be attracted towards this field. The recommendation was reiterated in 22nd Report [13th Lok Sabha (para 2.24 refers)]. They find that the Government have recently constituted a task force in this regard. The Committee feel that inspite of their repeatedly recommending, nothing concrete could be done. They, while reiterating their earlier recommendations, would like the Government to take the necessary steps within a stipulated time period and apprise the Committee accordingly."

15. The Government have replied as below:

"A continued dialogue is being maintained with CII and ASSOCHAM to have long-term cooperation for development of wasteland. For this purpose, a Consultation Session was held in January 2002 with representative of RBI, NABARD, ASSOCHAM on 28th January, 2002. In order to raise awareness about the Investment Promotional scheme of the Department amongst various stakeholders, Regional Workshops have been organized in collaboration with NABARD at Ahmedabad (for Western Region) and Chandigarh (for Northern Region). In these workshops, the representatives of the State Governments. lead Banks, Financial Institutions, Corporate Sector and Progressive Farmers of the region participated. Two more Regional level Workshops are proposed to be organized for Eastern Region and Southern Region."

16. The Committee have repeatedly been recommending to the Department to take initiative to involve the private sector in the task of development of wastelands in the country. They however note that for the last so many years, whenever this issue was raised, a routine stereotyped reply has been furnished. The Committee take serious note of the way the Department has tried to sidetrack such an important issue. Inspite of the fact that the Committee had pointed out that the private sector could not be attracted merely by holding workshops and seminars and had given a detailed analysis as to how the private sector could be attracted (*vide* Appendix-I), still it

appears that the steps taken are not adequate. The Committee while reiterating their earlier recommendation would like that the Government should consider this matter expeditiously pursuant to their earlier recommendations, and take necessary steps within a stipulated time frame.

E. Externally aided Projects

Recommendation (Para No. 2.33)

17. The Committee had noted as below:

"The Committee note that two externally aided projects are working in Orissa and Andhra Pradesh. Besides, the initiatives have been taken by the Department to have discussions with the representatives of World Bank. They are happy to note that the World Bank is receptive to the idea of organizing a wider forum of discussion with a view to carrying the dialougue further. They urge the Department to take further action earnestly in this regard, to get foreign investments in the task of development of wasteland. They would also like to know the reaction of donor agencies about their participation in the watershed development with whom the Ministry had held meetings in the past."

18. The Government have replied as below:

"As indicated earlier, a National Land Resource Management Policy is being finalised and after its finalisation, the donor agencies would be approached for seeking their assistance. In addition to the two ongoing Rural livelihood projects in Andhra Pradesh and Orissa, assisted by Department for International Development (DFID), another project proposal from Government of Madhya Pradesh seeking assistance from DFID is being considered in consultation with Department of Economic Affairs."

19. The Committee find that inspite of the fact that the World Bank has shown interest to participate in the watershed development projects in India, serious efforts are not being made by the Department in this direction. While analysing the Demands for Grants, the Department had stated that the donor agencies would be approached for seeking their assistance after the finalisation of National Land Resource Management Policy. After that, almost a year has passed and the Department has again furnished the same routine reply. It seems that in a year that has passed, no further development has taken place. The Committee are unhappy with the way the Department is tackling such an important issue. They, while reiterating their earlier recommendation, would like that earnest efforts should be made to get assistance from the external agencies.

The Committee in their earlier recommendation had also desired to know the reaction of donor agencies with regard to their participation in the watershed development, with whom the Ministry had held meetings. This part of the recommendation has not been addressed in the reply. The Committee would like the Department to respond to this urgently.

F. Amendment of Land Acquisition Act, 1894 and the draft National Policy on Resettlement and Rehabilitation of project affected persons/families

Recommendation (Para No. 2.35)

20. The Committee had noted as below:

"While noting that amendment of Land Acquisition Act, 1894 and the draft National Policy on resettlement and rehabilitation of project affected persons/families are being processed in the Government of India, the Committee would like that the proposals of the Department are finalised within a stipulated time period and the Committee informed accordingly."

21. The Government have replied as below:

"Proposal for amendment of Land Acquisition Act, 1894 have been finalised. However, in the meanwhile Law Commission in its 182nd Report recommended amendment of one Section of the said act and the Supreme Court also gave a judgment relating to acquisition of the properties of the educational institutions of minorities-linguistic or religious, necessitating further amendments of the Act. The proposals have been processed further in the light of the above directions and the revised draft has been sent to the Ministry of Law for vetting. Project affected persons (Resettlement and Rehabilitation) Bill, 2002 is being considered in consultation with the Ministries/Departments concerned of the Central Government. In view of this, it is not possible to lay down any time frame for amendment of Land Acquisition Act, 1894 or for enactment of a legislation for Resettlement and Rehabilitation of the Project Affected persons/families."

22. The Committee note the reply of the Government that the revised draft of the amendment of Land Acquisition Act 1894 has been sent to the Ministry of Law for vetting and legislation for Resettlement and Rehabilitation of the Project Affected Persons/ Families is being considered in consultation with the Ministries/ Departments concerned of the Central Government. They hope that the decision in this regard would be taken at the earliest and the Committee apprised accordingly.

G. Implementation of Programme of Wastelands by Panchayati Raj Institutions

Recommendation (Para No. 2.42)

23. The Committee had noted as below:

"The Committee have repeatedly been recommending to make the programmes of development of wastelands of the Department, Panchayat based programmes. They find that as per the revised guidelines, the programmes will be implemented mainly through the Zilla Parishad/DRDA. To analyse the actual involvement of PRIs in the implementation of the various watershed programmes of the Departments, the Committee would like to be apprised about the details of the implementing agencies in the various States/ UTs. Besides, they would also like that the Government should ensure that proper training is provided to the PRIs involved in implementation of these programmes for their effective implementation. More and more NGOs specifically local based need to be involved in the programme to make the development of wasteland as a people's programme."

24. The Government have replied as below:

"As per Guidelines for watershed development projects, the decision for selection of PIAs is to be made by the Zilla Parishad/ DRDA. Revised Guidelines provide that PIAs should preferably be selected from PRIs failing which State Government Departments or reputed NGOs be selected. Wherever feasible, the project could be implemented through a combination of Government Organisations and NGO PIAs. At present, the projects are being implemented by a mix of PRIs, different Government Departments and also by the reputed NGOs."

25. The Committee are constrained to note the way the Department has chosen to ignore their recommendation. They in their earlier recommendation had desired to be apprised about the details of Implementing Agencies in the various States/Union Territories. Instead of getting the factual information in this regard from various States/Union Territories and submitting it before the Committee, they have reproduced the already known guidelines. The Committee reiterate their earlier recommendation and would like to know about the factual information in this regard expeditiously. They also find that the later part of the recommendation relating to training to be provided to PRIs functionaries has not been addressed. They would like to have the reply of the Government in this regard.

H. Proper utilisation of the Funds earmarked for North-Eastern States

Recommendation (Para No. 2.54)

26. The Committee had noted as below:

"The Committee are distressed to note the huge underspending of the outlay earmarked to North-Eastern States since 2000-2001, when the concept of allocating 10% of the allocation exclusively to North-Eastern States was started. During 2000-2001 and 2001-2002, Rs. 90 crore in each of the year was allocated exclusively to North-Eastern States. Out of that, Rs. 26.38 and 42.63 crore respectively could be utilised in the two years. They also note that out of the three major schemes of the Department that is IWDP, DPAP and DDP for wasteland development, only one scheme that is IWDP, is applicable to North-Eastern States. While the Committee have no objection in allocating 10% of the outlay exclusively for IWDP to North Eastern States, they feel that the scope of IWDP in North-Eastern States has to be enhanced to ensure the meaningful utilisation of the resources. The Committee would like the Government to think over this aspect specifically and to come forward with suitable proposals in consultation with the States concerned. They also stress on the Government to get the action plan from each of the North-Eastern States and find out ways and means to ensure the proper utilisation of the scarce resources."

27. The Government have replied as below:

"All out efforts are being made for widening the scope of IWDP in North-Eastern States. The Government of Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya and Tripura are also being pursued to take up more IWDP projects. The scope of IWDP in North Eastern States is enhanced by identifying more districts on priority for sanctioning of IWDP projects and fixing higher targets for treatment of wasteland. The first IWDP project in North East Region was sanctioned in Nagaland in 1995-96. Only 17 projects were sanctioned to cover 1.48 lakh hectares in the States of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Nagaland and Sikkim from 1995-96 to 1998-99. However, 67 projects to cover 5.59 lakh hectares have been sanctioned under IWDP during 1999-2000 to 2001-2002 and all the eight States in North-Eastern Region have been covered. The release of funds for North Eastern Region has been increasing steeply during last 3 years. So far, a total amount of Rs. 106.79 crore have been released for implementing these projects upto 31st March,

2002. For the current year the Department has kept a target of sanctioning additional projects to cover 3 lakh. hectares for the North-eastern States out of a total of 10 lakh hectares for the entire country. It is expected to utilize the funds earmarked for North-East Region fully during the current year."

28. The Committee appreciate the efforts made by the Department for widening the scope of IWDP in the North-Eastern States. They would like that the Department should get suitable proposals from the concerned States and prepare a detailed Action Plan to ensure proper utilisation of resources exclusively earmarked for North-Eastern States.

I. Analysis of watershed component of the Employment Assurance Schemes (EAS)

Recommendation (Para No. 3.20)

29. The Committee had noted as below:

"As regards the progress of EAS component transferred to the Department of Land Resources, the Committee find that the Government are not serious about this programme. The said outlay of Rs. 1500 crore to fulfil the committed liability under EAS projects has not been provided to the Department as planned. Further, every year there is a decrease in the allocation under EAS component. They find that EAS, which was one of the top most priority programme of the Department of Rural Development, has got the back seat, when transferred to the Department of Land Resources. They strongly recommend that the committed liabilities in respect of the watershed projects transferred to this Department under EAS, should be given priority. The said projects should be completed within the target year. Besides, the Department should monitor the allocation, utilisation of outlay and physical achievement separately for the EAS component, and it should be reflected in all the Budget papers submitted to the Committee."

30. The Government have replied as below:

"The first installment of completion of ongoing watershed projects under EAS was released in September, 1999. Thereafter, the criteria prescribed for the releases of next instalment of central share was the utilisation of more than 50% of the funds last released and the submission of the required documents like Utilisation Certificate,

Audited Statement of Accounts, checklist, various certificates like non-diversion of funds, non-embezzlement of funds etc. Keeping in view the progress of implementation of these projects in various States, the instalments of central share were released during 1999-2000, 2000-01 and 2001-2002. Consequently, Rs. 301.55 crore, Rs. 257.11 crore and Rs. 190.15 crore were released in the three years. It was noticed subsequently that certain States were not availing the funds as anticipated in August/September, 1999 due to slow pace of work. Accordingly, it was thought pertinent to have a fresh look at the requirement of funds for completion of these projects. Accordingly the States were requested to furnish the details regarding the requirement during April, 2001. Consequently, the total requirement of funds has come down to Rs. 1473.60 crore.

As per the statement of releases of central share of funds, attached total amount of Rs. 748.82 lakhs has already been released as central share till 2001-2002 which forms 75% of the project cost. The corresponding State share for which comes out to Rs. 249.606 lakhs (25% of the total project cost). Therefore, as against the revised assessment of Rs. 1473.60 crore, Rs. 998.426 crore has been provided for the EAS-watershed projects upto 31st March, 2002. As the projects in some of the States could not be completed by March, 2002, the States requested the Ministry to extend the period for completion of the projects by one year. The proposal has been agreed upon keeping in view the fact that the watershed projects are generally completed over a period of five years.

In order to expedite the completion of projects works, timely reviews have been undertaken in the Department of Land Resources. In addition the officers of the Department of Land Resources also visit various States for follow up as also to facilitate the implementation of projects. As advised by the Committee, the Department would be taking necessary steps for the completion of the ongoing projects."

31. The Committee find that the Government have not responded to the specific issues as raised in their earlier recommendation which are as below:—

(i) watershed projects transferred to this Department under EAS should be given priority;

(ii) these projects should be completed within the target year; and

(iii) the Department should monitor the allocation utilisation of outlay and physical achievement separately for the EAS component and it should be reflected in all the Budget papers.

The Committee reiterate their earlier recommendation and desire detailed point-wise reply of the Government to the above mentioned issues expeditiously.

J. Requirement of adequate allocation under the scheme of Computerisation of Land Records

Recommendation (Para No. 3.76)

32. The Committee had noted as below:

"The Committee find that whereas the outlay of Rs. 500 crore has been proposed during 10th Plan, the outlay given during first year of 10th Plan *i.e.* 2002-2003 is merely 55 crore, which in no way commensurate with the proposed outlay during 10th Plan. They, therefore, express their doubts about the achievement of the set targets during 10th Plan. They would like the Department to impress upon the Ministry of Finance/Planning Commission about the urgency of allocation of adequate outlay for the scheme so as to achieve the set objectives."

33. The Government have replied as below:

"The Department of Land Resources had proposed allocation of Rs. 500 crore under the scheme of Computerisation of Land Records for the 10th Plan Period. However, an outlay of Rs. 400 crore has been allocated during the 10th Plan under this scheme. Thus the allocation during the year is quite satisfactory. However, the Department would continue to impress upon the Planning Commission the need for higher allocation for the scheme."

34. The Committee are unable to appreciate the reply furnished by the Department. On the one hand, it has been stated that the earmarked outlay *i.e.* Rs. 400 crore under the scheme of Computerisation of Land Records against the proposed allocation of Rs. 500 crore is sufficient, on the other hand, it is submitted that they would impress upon the Planning Commission about the need

for higher allocation. The Committee are unhappy to note the casual way their recommendation has been taken by the Department. Besides they fail to understand how the proposals for getting the outlay from the Planning Commission are submitted by the Department. They feel that there is absolutely no indepth analysis while submitting the proposals. The Committee hope that the Department would be serious enough while preparing proposals to get the outlay from the Planning Commission, in future.

K. Position of Land Records in North-Eastern States

Recommendation (Para No. 3.95)

35. The Committee had noted as below:

"The Committee have also been requesting repeatedly to the Department in their respective reports to take earnest action to improve the position of land records in most of the North-Eastern States. However, whenever enquired about the position of land records in North-Eastern States, the same response as given in the preceding para is repeated. The Committee are unhappy about the way the Department is implementing the scheme. They strongly recommend that complete survey, re-survey and settlement in North-Eastern States should be done within a stipulated time frame and year-wise performance of the scheme in case of each of the districts including North-Eastern States should be furnished categorically in the Performance Budget of the Department."

36. The Government have replied as below:

"North-Eastern States including Sikkim State have been requested to prepare an Action Plan for completion of survey, re-survey and settlement in each district of the States if already not done within a stipulated time frame and the same may be submitted to this Department."

37. The Committee note the reply of the Government that they have requested North-Eastern States including Sikkim to prepare an Action Plan for completion of survey, re-survey and settlement in each District of the State, and hope that the details in this regard will be finalised without further delay. They also hope that year-wise performance of the scheme in each of the districts including North Eastern States would be furnished in the Performance Budget of the Department as desired by them in their earlier recommendation.

CHAPTER II

RECOMMENDATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

Recommendation (Para No. 2.17)

The Committee are happy to note that BE 2002-2003 *i.e.* Rs. 1003.81 crore is commensurate with the overall proposed outlay of 10th Plan *i.e.* Rs. 5600 crore. Keeping in view of this, they would urge the Department to rise to the occasion and try to expand the area under the different schemes of wastelands development of the Department.

Reply of the Government

As against a provision of Rs. 850 crore for 2001-2002 (RE), an amount of Rs. 1000 crore has been provided for BE 2002-2003 for the Plan Schemes of the Department of Land Resources. In addition, Rs. 3.81 crore has been provided to the Department on the non-plan side. Every effort is being made to expand the area under watershed development programmes. In the first quarter of the current financial year (2002-03), 4080 new projects were sanctioned to cover an area of 20.40 lac ha. under DPAP and DDP. It is proposed to sanction new projects to cover 10 lac ha. under IWDP during the year.

[Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources) O.M. No. H-11014/2/2002-M&C dated the 16th September, 2002]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.19)

The Committee note the BE 2002-2003 has been enhanced by 102.82 crore as compared to BE of previous year. They find that the cost norms of developing one hectare of land have been revised from Rs. 4,000 to Rs. 6,000 per hectare. In view of this, they feel that the enhancement of outlay is not sufficient even to cover the enhanced cost and the increase due to inflation. In view of this, the Committee are of the view that the allocation during 2002-2003 is not sufficient and should be realistic enough and necessary steps should be taken so that development of land does not suffer due to inadequate financial resources.

Reply of the Government

It is submitted that the revised cost norms for watershed projects are applicable to the projects sanctioned on or after 1.4.2000. The projects sanctioned upto 31.3.2000, will continue to be implemented @ Rs. 4000 per ha. During 2001-02, under DPAP and DDP, 3411 projects were sanctioned but 4080 projects have already been sanctioned under these two programmes during the year 2002-2003 to cover additional area of 20.40 lac ha. It is targeted to cover additional area of 10 lac ha. under IWDP by the end of the year against the sanction of new projects covering 7.98 lac hectares during 2001-2002. The allocations are adequate to meet requirements of ongoing and new projects under the three watershed programmes.

[Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources) O.M. No. H-11014/2/2002-M&C dated the 16th September, 2002]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.20)

It is a matter of great concern that treated land turns into wasteland in the era of modern science and technology. It appears that considered thought had been given to such serious problem in the past. Much will depend upon planning and forestalling of factors which could have adverse impact on the treated land. The Committee note that the Government have recently assigned impact assessment studies of watershed development projects. They also note that the studies have been undertaken in 16 States and some of the States have already given their report. The Committee would like to be apprised of the findings of the said studies. Besides, they note that as reported in document 10th Five Year Plan and Annual 2002-2003, substantial part of cultivated land is loosing productivity due to inappropriate land use and over exploitation. The committee feel that this is an area of grave concern and stress that the Government will find out ways and means to protect the land from inappropriate land use and over exploitation. Besides, they also find that Agriculture Finance Corporation have been assigned the task of formulating a document of Land Resource Policy. The Committee would like to be apprised of the details of the areas being covered by the said policy.

Reply of the Government

An Impact Assessment of the Watershed Projects was undertaken in 15 States by 20 Professional Agencies in respect of the projects sanctioned under DPAP, DDP and IWDP during 1.4.1991 to 31.3.1998

on sample basis to find out how the projects under these programmes have contributed to Improvement of the socio-economic conditions of the resource poor and the disadvantaged sections inhabiting the programme areas. These Studies have revealed that with the implementation of the watershed projects, the overall productivity of land has improved and water table increased. There has also been a positive and significant impact on the overall economic condition of the project areas. The studies also revealed that the green vegetative cover has improved in the project areas, which would have a positive impact in checking soil erosion. It has also been reported that areas where watershed projects have been taken up are in a better position in therms of availability of water for drinking/other purposes and improved natural resource base as compared to non-project areas. It may be noted that no instance of treated land again being turned into wastelands, has come to the notice of the Department of Land Resources.

The Agricultural Finance Corporation have since submitted draft of the Policy Document on Land Resources Management. The draft is proposed to be deliberated upon at length by the concerned authorities from the States as well as the Central Ministries/Departments at a workshop proposed to be organised in last quarter of 2002. The Policy Document is expected to cover a comprehensive database on the resources relating to soil, their characteristics, land use, land degradation, land holding pattern and tenure system etc. so as to protect and manage the land resources. It would help to identify and assess the dynamics of emerging problems arising out of continuing population growth—fast expanding urban sector, competing demands for land resources by different users, emerging socio-economic demands, fragmentation of land holdings etc.

[Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources) O.M. No. H-11014/2/2002-M&C dated the 16th September, 2002]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.43)

The Committee appreciate the resolution made by the State Ministers Incharge of Pachayats at the recent Conference and hope that States really follow this in practice.

Reply of the Government

The proceedings of the conference of State Ministers Incharge of Panchayats held in July, 2001 which, *inter alia*, resolved that the State should constitute sub-committees instead of parallel bodies, on different subjects, to facilitate more participation of people have been circulated to the State Governments. The recommendations of the conference are being followed up by the Panchyati Raj Division of the Ministry with the State Governments.

[Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources) O.M. No. H-11014/2/2002-M&C dated the 16th September, 2002]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.47)

The Committee find that as per the revised norms for the development of wastelands under different schemes of the Department, although it has been mentioned that the norms are uniform, yet the old projects still continue to be developed on the basis of old norms *i.e.* at the rate of Rs. 4,000 per hectare. Besides, the State's involvement in sharing the cost of IWDP, DDP and DPAP is different. Whereas under the IWDP, the cost is shared in the ratio of 11:1 that is Rs. 5500-500 per hectare, in the case of DPAP and DDP, the Centre-State share is 75:25 that is 4500:1500. On the one hand, it has been stated that in the case of the old projects for which previous norms of Rs. 4000 would be applicable, the major portion of the work of these projects has been completed and hence the cost was restricted to Rs. 4000 per hectare, on the other hand it has been submitted that the outstanding liability for the ongoing projects is high. The Committee would like to be informed categorically about the liability in the case of the old projects and the rationale for continuing these projects at the rate of Rs. 4000 per hectare. The reasons advanced by the Ministry in this regard are not convincing. Besides, IWDP which was 100 per cent Centrally sponsored programme has been made a State contributory programme where the State contribution is 11:1. They hope that State Governments have been consulted in this regard and would have no problem in contributing their share.

Reply of the Government

The cost norms for the Watershed Development Projects under the Integrated Wastelands Development Programme (IWDP), Drought Prone Areas Development Programme (DPAP) & Desert Development Programme (DDP) had been enhanced to Rs. 6000/- per ha. from the prevailing cost norms ranging from Rs. 3000/- to Rs. 5000/- per ha. Now the cost norms are applicable in the three schemes uniformly. This had been effected to the watershed development projects sanctioned on or after 1.4.2000.

The increase of Rs. 2000 per ha. for IWDP projects is to be shared between the Central and State Governments in the ratio of 75:25. But, the existing cost norm of Rs. 4000 for these projects will continue to be borne by the Central Govt. Thus, the cost sharing of the project under IWDP between the Central and State Governments shall be in the ratio of Rs. 5500: Rs. 500 per ha. This has been done after consultation with State Governments.

The watershed development projects are to be implemented by the local people of the watershed through the Watershed Associations and Watershed Committees (elected by Watershed Associations) under the technical guidance of a Watershed Development Team of the PIA. The watershed Committee has to formulate a plan of action for taking up various activities during the project period. Thus, all the projects auctioned before 1.4.2000 would have finalised and part implemented their action plans at the rate of Rs. 4,000 per ha. by September, 2001 when the decision was taken to revise the cost. Thus these projects would be completed as per these plans by the Watershed Committees.

[Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources) O.M. No. H-11014/2/2002-M&C dated the 16th September, 2002]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.48)

While noting the different norms for different projects for different schemes, the Committee fail to understand how the norms are stated to be uniform by the Ministry. They would like that the revised norms of developing wastelands should be applicable to all the schemes and projects uniformly.

Reply of the Government

Earlier different cost norms were being adopted for projects under DPAP, DDP and IWDP. The cost norm for IWDP was Rs. 4000 per hectare whereas in the case of DDP and DPAP, it was ranging from Rs. 3000 to Rs. 5000 which has now been brought at uniform cost norm of Rs. 6000 per hectare for all the new projects sanctioned under the three schemes after 1.4.2000.

[Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources) O.M. No. H-11014/2/2002-M&C dated the 16th September, 2002]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.49)

The Committee find that the rate of development of wasteland under different schemes lie IWDP, DDP and DPAP has been enhaned from Rs. 4000 to Rs. 6000 per hectare by the Gvoernment. They note that in hilly and backward regions, even the revised cost in not sufficient. In view of this, they urge the Government to consider to enhance the cost of developing per hectare as Rs. 8000 per hectare in hilly and backward regions like K.B.K. (Koraput, Bolangiri and Kalahandi) areas in Orissa, keeping in view the high cost of developing land in such areas.

Reply of the Government

The increase from Rs. 4000 to Rs. 6000 per ha. has been effected only recently and that too after a considerable period of processing and consultations. The earlier rate of Rs. 4000 was also applicable to all projects under IWDP uniformly in plains or hilly or backward regions. Any departure from the uniform rate for hilly or backward regions is expected to lead to demands for such increases. Moreover, increase in cost norm is likely to reduce the availability of funds for new projects under the Programmes.

[Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources) O.M. No. H-11014/2/2002-M&C dated the 16th September, 2002]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.54)

The Committee are distressed to note the huge under-spending of the outlay earmarked to North-Eastern States since 2000-2001, when the concept of allocating 10% of the allocation exclusively to North-

Eastern States was started. During 2000-2001 and 2002-2003, Rs. 90 crore in each of the year was allocated exclusively to North-Eastern States. Out of that, Rs. 26.38 crore and Rs. 42.63 crore respectively could be utilised in the two years. They also note that out of the three major schemes of the Department that is IWDP, DPAP and DDP for wastelands development, only one scheme that is IWDP, is applicable to North-Eastern States. while the Committee have no objection in allocating 10% of the outlay exclusively for IWDP in North-Eastern States, they feel that the scope of IWDP in North Eastern States has to be enhanced to ensure the meaningful utilisation of the resources. The Committee would like the Government to think over this aspect specifically and to come forward with suitable proposals in consultation with the States concerned. They also stress on the Government to get the action plan from each of the North-Eastern States and find out ways and means to ensure the proper utilisation of the scarce resources.

Reply of the Government

All out efforts are being made for widening the scope of IWDP in North-Eastern States. The Government of Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya and Tripura are also being pursued to take up more IWDP projects. The scope of IWDP in NE States is enhanced by identifying more districts on priority for sanctioning of IWDP projects and fixing higher targets for treatment of wastelands. The first IWDP projects in North-East Region was sanctioned in Nagaland in 1995-96. Only 17 projects were sanctioned to cover 1.48 lac ha. in the States of Arunachal, Assam, Manipur, Nagaland and Sikkim from 1995-96 to 1998-99. However, 67 projects to cover 5.59 lac ha. have been sanctioned under IWDP during 1999-2000 to 2001-2002 and all the eight States in the North-Eastern Region have been covered. The release of funds for NE Region has been increasing steeply during last 3 years. So far, a total amount of Rs. 106.79 core has been released for implementing these projects upto 31st March, 2002. For the current year the Department has kept a target of sanctioning additional projects to cover 3 lac ha. for the North-East States out of a total of 10 lac ha. for the entire country. It is expected to utilize the funds earmarked for North-East Region fully during the current year.

[Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources) O.M. No. H-11014/2/2002-M&C dated the 16th September, 2002]

Comments of the Committee

(Please *see* Paragraph No. 28 of Chapter I of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 2.56)

While appreciating the initiative taken by the Government to start a new programme regarding desiltation of village ponds and tanks, the Committee hope that the final decision in this regard is taken by the Government expeditiously and adequate resources are provided for the purpose. They would like to be apprised of the detailed guidelines as and when finalised by the Government in respect of the new scheme. Besides, they would also like that the Government should in consultation with the States/UTs do proper planning in this regard, before launching the programme, so that it could be implemented effectively in the different States/UTs.

Reply of the Government

A one-time programme for restoration of traditional sources of water harvesting by desiltation of ponds, tanks at village level during 2002-03 has since been launched and at least one existing village pond/ tank or any other village level water harvesting structure is expected to be restored under this initiative. Since, this activity is already permissible under various existing schemes of the Central Government, no separate funds have been provided. The funds are to be pooled by the States/Districts Authorities from the existing funds released for Watershed Development Programmes namely DPAP, DDP, IWDP (including EAS component). ARWSP and PMGY (Drinking Water Supply Component) and similar State Schemes.

[Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources) O.M. No. H-11014/2/2002-M&C dated the 16th September, 2002]

Recommendation (Para No. 3.19)

The committee note that notwithstanding the fact that IWDP is one of the biggest and oldest programme of the Department meant for the development of wastelands in the country, the seriousness of the Government towards its implementation is lacking. The targets fixed are being spilled over. Adequate allocation is not being provided under the programme. Besides, whatever allocation is made reduced at RE stage. Although during 2002-2003 Rs. 27 crore has been provided

more as compared to the previous year, it hardly covers the increase in per hectare cost of development of wastelands and increase due to inflation. Besides, the Government have never bothered to examine the impact of the programme in view of the set objectives of employment generation and poverty alleviation etc. In view of this, the Committee would like that the allocation under the programme should be suitably enhanced to enable the Department to achieve the set targets. Further, whatever amount is provided at BE stage, should not be reduced at RE stage at any cost. To get the same amount at RE stage, the Department has to assure the Ministry of Finance/Planning Commission about the cent percent utilisation of resources. Besides, the Department should make a study regarding the impact of the programme in terms of employment generation and poverty alleviation. Further, it should also be verified whether the said programme has achieved the objectives of development of land, whether water table has gone up due to the watershed programme and new plantation has been developed. There should be some in built mechanism to analyse the impact in view of the factors as given above in the scheme and should be analysed after a fixed period of time, say five years, irrespective of the cost involved in such a survey.

Reply of the Government

There is no doubt that the IWDP is one of the biggest and oldest programmes of the Department. Accordingly, the Department attaches considerable importance to its effective implementation in the country. Under this programme most of the field activities are either earth works or plantation works and most of these works are executed in post monsoon season. As such a large number of release proposals along with relevant progress reports from the ZPs/DRADs are received towards the end of the calendar year which are then processed and funds released during the months of January to March. Since the RE are decided on the basis of the release of funds made up to January in each year, the Ministry of Finance usually impose cuts at RE stage, though off-take of funds by the States picks up considerably later. in view of these facts, the Department has been impressing upon the Ministry of Finance not to impose cuts at RE stage, as a matter of routine. As advised by the Committee the Department would assure the Ministry of Finance and Planning Commission in the full utilisation of funds allocated to them at BE stage. It would impress upon the Ministry of Finance not to impose any cut in the BE at the time of finalisation of Revised Estimates.

2. As regards the impact of the programme, it may be stated that the Ministry have launched an ambitious exercise to conduct impact assessment studies of watershed projects that have been completed or near completion in all programme States/Districts. For this purpose, reputed local research/training organisations/institutions/NGOs have been engaged.

3. Final Reports of the impact evaluation studies conducted by independent evaluators and submitted thus for indicate that the objectives of the programme are being achieved in terms of development of land, increase in water table, increase in green cover, particularly in desert areas. It has been observed that the socio-economic condition of the watershed communities in the project areas has generally improved and employment potential has improved resulting in checking the out-migration. It has further been reported that the project areas have become better off in terms of improvements in the natural resource base as compared to those areas where such projects have not yet been taken up.

4. Besides the post-project evaluation studies, it is pertinent to mention here that there is an in built provision under the programme to conduct midterm evaluation of watershed projects also after release of 45% project cost for necessary mid-course correction.

[Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources) O.M. No. H-11014/2/2002-M&C dated the 16th September, 2002]

Recommendation (Para No. 3.21)

The Committee find that there is a need to further gear up monitoring mechanism to evaluate the implementation of the IWDP. There may be various irregularities at the field level and as such the representatives of the Central Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources) should make surprise visits to the different project sites to find out the ground reality. Further in each of the project being implemented under IWDP, there should be sign board indicating the date of starting of the project, cost involved, implementing agency, likely date of completion of the project, etc. to make the people of that area aware of the said scheme. Further, stress should also be given to bring more transparency in the implementation of the IWDP projects.

Reply of the Government

The IWDP projects are monitored by the ZPs/DRDAs on a regular basis. In addition, the senior officers of the Government of India, Area Officers and State level officers do also visit the watershed projects from time to time. Further special visits are made to projects about which adverse reports are received in order to assess the ground situation and take suitable remedial measures.

2. There is an in built provision of conducting a mid-term evaluation of each IWDP watershed project by an independent evaluator after the project had received 45% project cost. This enables the Department to initiate suitable mid course corrections, wherever necessary. In addition to these formal monitoring methods, the Department have now launched a Supplementary Observation Mechanism wherein State level and District level institutions are identified in all programme States who will be continuously observing the progress of Watershed projects and act as the eyes and ears to the Central Government in administering there projects.

3. All issues like signboards indicating starting of project, cost involved, implementing agencies and date of completion, maintenance of accounts, formation of Watershed Associations/Watershed Committees, Self Help Groups/User Groups and transparency for utilization of funds/maintenance of records etc. are taken care of as per norms of the Guidelines for Watershed Development.

[Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources) O.M. No. H-11014/2/2002-M&C dated the 16th September, 2002]

Recommendation (Para No, 3.22)

The Committee note that during their on the spot visit to Madhya Pradesh, some grievances of the State Governments regarding sanctioning of IWDP projects were brought to their notice as have been indicated above. The Committee recommend that the Department should interact with the representatives of the State Government of Madhya Pradesh to find out their problems and take the corrective steps accordingly.

Reply of the Government

For sanctioning of IWDP projects, priority list indicating the names of the districts from where the projects are to be considered for sanction

are finalised in consultation with all the State Governments on year to year basis. The projects are sanctioned subject to their conformity with the Guidelines for Watershed Development as well as availability of funds. These projects are considered for sanction by the Project Sanctioning Committee in which all the State Secretaries in charge of IWDP in their respective States are also Members. The project sanctioning procedure, thus, ensures active involvement of the representatives of the State Governments. The advice of the Parliamentary Committee has been noted and any issue regarding sanction of new projects that comes to the notice of this Department would be duly considered on merits.

[Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources) O.M. No. H-11014/2/2002-M&C dated the 16th September, 2002]

Recommendation (Para No. 3.37)

The Committee find that the proposed outlay during 10th Plan under DPAP and DDP is more than double, but the allocation during the first year of Tenth Plan 2002-2003. *i.e.* Rs. 250 and 185 crore, respectively does not commensurate with the total allocation. They urge the Government to approach the Ministry of Finance/Planning Commission for adequate outlay under the said programme so that the targets fixed under 10th Plan could be achieved.

Reply of the Government

The outlay during 10th Plan as approved by the Planning Commission for DPAP and DDP is Rs. 1500 and 1100 crore respectively. The average annual outlay *i.e.* one-fifth of the said outlay works out to Rs. 300.00 and Rs. 220.00 crore respectively. The allocation of Rs. 250.00 to DPAP and Rs. 185.00 crore to DDP for the first year of 10th Plan is marginally lower by 15-17%. It is normal practice to allot lower allocation in the first year of a Plan Period, gradually increasing the same thereafter. The allocation of funds during the Ninth Plan period corroborates this fact.

Year	Allocation during 9th Plan Period (Rs. In Crore)	
	DPAP	DDP
1999-2000	95.00	85.00
2000-2001	190.00	135.00
2001-2002	210.00	160.00

It may also be mentioned that against the target of 2400 Projects under DPAP and 1600 Projects under DDP during the current financial year, 2478 project under DPAP and 1602 Projects under DDP have already been sanctioned. Nevertheless, this Department will continue to highlight the need for increased allocations under DPAP and DDP to the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Finance as advised by the Committee.

[Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources) O.M. No. H-11014/2/2002-M&C dated the 16th September, 2002]

Recommendation (Para No. 3.38)

The Committee are concerned to note that the Department has not maintained the data for unspent balances. While appreciating the fact that the guidelines do not permit unspent balance of more than 50% of the last release, the Committee would like the Department to find out the details of unspent balances to find out the ground reality.

Reply of the Government

It is admitted that the Department has not been maintaining the data on unspent balances under the Drought Prone Areas Programme and the Desert Development Programme. However, as rightly observed by the Committee, an adequate mechanism is in position to ensure proper utilization of funds released before a district comes up for release of the next instalment. Nevertheless, to take action on the advice of the Committee to find out the details of unspent balances under these programmes, all State Governments have been requested to submit district wise details on project expenditures and unspent balances separately for the last three years. Further, the concerned Programme Divisions have been instructed to compile the relevant information periodically and build up the system of maintaining this information from year to year.

[Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources) O.M. No. H-11014/2/2002-M&C dated the 16th September, 2002]

Recommendation (Para No. 3.39)

While appreciating the initiatives taken by the Government to state the system of mid-term evaluation of DPAP Projects, the Committee would like to be apprised of the time when the first such evaluation would be started. besides, they would like the similar evaluation of DDP Projects also.

Reply of the Government

The system of mid-term evaluation has been introduced both in DPAP as well as DDP Projects. From the current financial year (2002-03), necessary instructions in this regard have already been issued to all the State Governments and the State Governments have also initiated commissioning these evaluation studies. The first set of these evaluation reports are required in the current financial year itself in order to enable the Department to release funds to all the projects/ districts which had already claimed 3 installments.

[Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources) O.M. No. H-11014/2/2002-M&C dated the 16th September, 2002]

Recommendation (Para No. 3.40)

The Committee find that the onus of routine monitoring of DPAP and DDP Projects has been shifted more to the State Governments. While the Committee are not against the State Governments having their own monitoring mechanism, the Central Government cannot escape the responsibility of monitoring, specifically when the major outlay is being provided by them. In view of it, the committee would like the Centre to gear up their monitoring mechanism further.

Reply of the Government

As far as monitoring of DPAP and DDP is concerned, it is submitted that the following formal mechanism are in place at the Central level:—

(a) Periodical Reports and Returns—Information as the performance of the programmes at the field level is obtained through the Monthly Progress Reports (MPRs) and the Quarterly Progress Reports (QPRs). While the MPRs provide information on the financial progress under the programme on monthly basis, the QPRs give detailed information on the financial as well as physical progress on a quarterly basis.

(b) Review at different levels—At the Centre, the Programmes are reviewed by Secretary (RD) with all the State Secretaries concerned from time to time. Additional Secretary (LR) also reviews these programmes periodically with the State Secretaries.

(c) Field Inspection—Field visits are carried out at regular intervals both by the Officers of this Department as well as by the Area Officers to obtain first hand information on the status of implementation of these programmes.

(d) Review through medium of Workshops and Seminars—The programme is also reviewed in the Workshops of Projects Directors (DRDA) conducted by the Ministry and other such fora organized by the Ministry both at the National level and regional/State level.

In addition to the above formal arrangements for monitoring of DPAP and DDP, the Department have launched a supplementary observation Mechanism from the current financial year (2002-03). Under this arrangement, State level and District level research/training organizations are being identified to continuously keep an eye on the progress and pace of implementation of these programmes in the field and provide valuable feed back to the Department. In this, way, these organisations set as eyes and ears of the Department and through their continuous feed back enable the Department to take necessary corrective steps for more effective implementation of the programmes.

[Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources) O.M. No. H-11014/2/2002-M&C dated the 16th September, 2002]

Recommendation (Para No. 3.41)

The Committee are informed that under the guidelines, there is a provision of Watershed Development Fund to ensure proper maintenance of the watershed area after completion of the projects. The Committee would like to know about the impact of these guidelines on the maintenance of completed projects, during the last three years and till date and how this had helped the area treated under DPAP and DDP from relapsing into earlier position.

Reply of the Government

Quick impact evaluation studies commissioned by the Ministry with respect to Watershed Projects sanctioned between 1991-98, indicate significant positive results in terms of improved land, water and vegetative resources in the project areas. Since these projects have been completed recently it is yet to be ascertained as to how the watershed association/Committee are managing now. In order to bring about an inbuilt mechanism for proper maintenance of the completed projects,

the Guidelines for Watershed Development have recently been revised to include an explicit Exit Protocol which should form part of the watershed development plan. This Exit Protocol would clearly spell out the role of the village panchayat, watershed Association/Committee during the past projects period and would elaborate a locally acceptable proper mechanism for utilisation of "watershed development fund" for post project maintenance and its regular augmentation.

The finding of the evaluation studies of the completed projects point out that good impact has been created in the project areas. There has been no indication to the effect that some areas treated under the Programmes had replaced with the earlier degraded position.

[Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources) O.M. No. H-11014/2/2002-M&C dated the 16th September, 2002]

Recommendation (Para No. 3.50)

The Committee note that the objective of the scheme is to develop data base on wasteland and to demonstrate cost effective and proven technologies for the development of various categories of wasteland for sustained production of food, fuel wood on pilot basis. while noting the claim of the Ministry that the physical target and financial outlay/ revised estimate have been fully achieved except a shortfall, the Committee would like to be apprised in detail about the work done by the Department in the field of technology development for the development of wastelands. Besides, they would also like to be apprised of the details of the demonstration models exhibited to the farmers since the inception of the scheme. The Committee appreciate that the Ministry would lay emphasis on the development of special problem lands like waterlogged and salt affected areas, coastal sandy areas, cold desert areas, mine spoiled and industrial wastelands, etc. The Committee hope that the Ministry would implement their programme meticulously and inform them about the outcome from time to time. The Committee also feel that much work has to be done in the field of R &D to find out the cost effective technologies and they urge that in this regard, benefit of the latest technologies used by the different countries should also be taken. The Department should make a research in this regard, and apprise the Committee accordingly.

Reply of the Government

Development of wastelands/degraded lands requires up-to-date information on their geographical location and extent besides Technological support. Proper area specific strategy has to be developed

keeping in view the agro-climatic conditions and capability of the lands. Research Institution of Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) and State Agricultural Universities (SAUs) have developed technologies to develop/realize the various kinds of problem lands but the gap in taking the technology to the field level and operationalising the same persists for want of location specific and implementable approach; besides in many cases ex-house assessment of the technology has to be tested at site conditions. Keeping these in view, TDET Scheme was launched to disseminate and demonstrate the cost effective and proven technologies for development of various categories of wastelands. Since inception (1993-94) and upto March 2002 total 115 projects were sanctioned covering various categories of caulturable wastelands, besides few projects on development of data-base on wastelands using remote sensing and GIS technology. The Technology Models covered under the scheme includes agro-forestry/plantation models, watershed development medals, fertility re-generation model using bio-fertilizer, reclamation model for salt affected lands, surface drainage, sub surface drainage and bio-drainage model for development of Waterlogged areas, alternates land use model for Shifting Cultivation Areas biological reclamation model for mine spoil wasteland etc. The details of number of projects sanctioned under each technology model are given Appendix-II

[Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources) O.M. No. H-11014/2/2002-M&C dated the 16th September, 2002]

Recommendation (Para No. 3.58)

The Committee are informed that IPS has been restructured to make it more popular and broad based and the proposal has been circulated to all States in August, 1998. The Committee would like to know the reaction of the States in this regard and the steps taken by the Government in pursuance thereof.

Reply of the Government

The Guidelines of the Investment Promotional Scheme (IPS) was circulated to all the State Governments for its wider circulation among all the stakeholders. The response has not been very encouraging. In fact, funds were also provided to some of the States to popularize the Scheme by organizing State level/District level workshops/seminars.

Owing to the requirement of promoter contribution (25% of the project cost) and Bank Loan (50% of project cost), the State Governments have a limited role in the implementation of the Scheme. However, the Departments concerned for Wasteland Development in the States are being involved closely in the awareness campaign. Regional Workshops have been organized in collaboration with NABARD at Ahmedabad (for Western Region) and Chandigarh (for Northern Region). In these workshops, the representative of the State Governments, lead Banks, Financial institutions, Corporate Sector and Progressive Farmers of the region participated. Two more Regional level Workshops are proposed to be organized for Eastern Region and Southern Region.

[Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources) O.M. No. H-11014/2/2002-M&C dated the 16th September, 2002]

Recommendation (Para No. 3.59)

The Committee find that the scope of the Investment Promotional Scheme is very limited. The issue of attracting private sector in the task of development of wastelands has been addressed in the recommendations made in para No. 2.32 of this report. The Committee feel that there is a need to give a new look to this scheme in view of what has been stated in this regard in the said para of the report.

Reply of the Government

The Planning Commission has allocated Rs. 1,000 Crore to the DoLR during 10th Five Year Plan for greening of Wastelands/Degraded lands through Peoples' Participation by raising biomass in the form of grasses, medicinal plants, plantation of fodder, timber, fuel wood and fruit trees, generating employment and improving the socio-economic conditions of the rural poor. The Scheme is proposed to be implemented with projected approach on wastelands/degraded lands. The Committee's observations would be taken into account while working out the details of the Scheme.

[Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources) O.M. No. H-11014/2/2002-M&C dated the 16th September, 2002]

Recommendation (Para No. 3.75)

The Committee note that the financial achievement under the programme of Computerisation of Land Records so far as the release

to state Governments is concerned is satisfactory. However, the position of expenditure in different States/UTs, is not very good. Whereas, the overall utilisation is 56%. Moreover, 7 States/UTs have reported nil utilisation. The Committee would like the Department to find out the reasons for such a dismal performance in certain States/UTs and to take the corrective steps in this regard.

Reply of the Government

States/UTs are being requested from time to time to take appropriate action for utilisation of funds under the scheme of Computerisation of Land Records. The States where the position of expenditure is not satisfactory have again been requested to take up the corrective steps so as to speed up the implementation of the scheme and utilisation of funds expeditiously. Some of the States like Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Delhi where the position of utilisation is nil, funds have been sanctioned during the years of 2000-01 and 2001-02. These States are having problem of development of suitable software & lack of infrastructure facilities. However, problems have now been sorted out and they have been requested to take speedy steps for start of the scheme and utilisation of funds.

[Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources) O.M. No. H-11014/2/2002-M&C dated the 16th September, 2002]

Recommendation (Para No. 3.77)

While appreciating the initiatives taken by the Central Government to have the land records computerised in various States/UTs, the Committee express their apprehension about the maintenance of computers installed in various districts. Besides, they also feel that proper training has to be imparted to the persons who will be operating the computers. As such, they urge the Government to take care of these aspects so that the whole exercise of computerising the land records does not go futile after some time.

Reply of the Government

States have been requested to charge a reasonable fee for issuing computerised copies of Record-of-Rights from the land owners. The amount so collected may be used for meeting out the expenditure for recurring cost and maintenance of the computer Centre which would be helpful in sustaining the scheme on long term basis.

Training is an important component of the scheme. This Department has emphasized on intensive and innovative training on computer fundamentals to Revenue officials at different level which will help in operating online updation & mutation and also generation of computerised Record-of-Rights.

[Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources) O.M. No. H-11014/2/2002-M&C dated the 16th September, 2002]

Recommendation (Para No. 3.78)

The Committee are informed that Computerisation of Land Record (CLR) is a demand driven scheme and as such no physical targets are fixed. The Committee are of the view that without fixing of any target, there cannot be any fruitful achievement. The Government should not wait exclusively for the proposals from States, the act upon. Proper survey of overall requirement in the States should be made in advance and the States should be motivated to take steps in this direction. Proper evaluation, motivation and training will bring the desired result and help in giving the required momentum to the scheme which is otherwise slow due to lack of appropriate information regarding the advantages to be reaped.

Reply of the Government

States/UTs have been requested to chalk out an Action Plan for completion of data entry work including verification and validation in a time bound manner, installation of Computers at tehsil/taluk/block level, distribution of Computerised copies of Record-of-Rights (R-o-R) to land owners, organisation of training programme for Revenue Officials and final completion of the programme of Computerisation of Land Records in their respective State.

[Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources) O.M. No. H-11014/2/2002-M&C dated the 16th September, 2002]

Recommendation (Para No. 3.94)

The Committee have repeatedly been recommending for getting the district wise information regarding the coverage of the scheme. In spite of that, the Department is yet to procure the information in this regard. When asked about the position of land records in the country, the Department has furnished a very routine reply. The Committee

fail to understand how the Centrally sponsored scheme of land records is being implemented without knowing the ground realities in different States. In this regard, they feel that merely keeping the data of outlay earmarked and released to the State Government is not sufficient. It should be ensured that every paisa earmarked for a scheme is used for the particular purpose. In view of this scenario, the Committee reiterates their earlier recommendation made in their respective Reports to procure the latest district-wise information regarding updation of land records from different States/UTs.

Reply of the Government

Under the scheme of Strengthening of Revenue Administration and Updating of Land Records (SRA & ULR), financial assistance are given to States on 50.50 sharing basis, however, UTs are provided 100% central assistance for purchase of modern survey equipments like Global Positioning System (GPS), EDM, Total Stations and Theodolite, carrying out aerial survey, construction of record rooms and patwarkhanas, construction/renovation of training institutes and purchase of office equipments like photocopies, laminating machines and binding machines etc. These activities are undertaken by Survey and Settlement Department of the States/UTs which are not spread over to every districts but are being implemented in specific areas as per their requirement. Therefore, it is submitted that the scheme of SRA & ULR is not being implemented on district-wise basis. However, States/UTs have once again been requested to furnish district wise details in this regard.

This Department has impressed upon States/UTs to develop a Comprehensive System under the programme of Computerisation of Land Records for online updation & Mutations. Wherever data entry have been entered in computers and verification as well as validation work is in progress, they have been requested to update the Record of Rights simultaneously so that there should not be any backlog of updation.

[Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources) O.M. No. H-11014/2/2002-M&C dated the 16th September, 2002]

CHAPTER III

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

—NIL—

CHAPTER IV

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

Recommendation (Para No. 2.16)

The Committee find that so far 2.4 million hectares area of wastelands could be covered by the Department's efforts as against overall targets of covering 50 million hectares of wastelands in the country by the end of 11th Plan. Besides, during 10th Plan 1.80 million hectares of wasteland is proposed to be developed. They find that only a small portion of the total wasteland in the country is being taken care of by the Department. Besides, as acknowledges by the Secretary, 100 million hectares of rainfed land watershed programmes are to be implemented. The Committee finds that gigantic task lies ahead before the Ministry and they have to gear up their resources and manpower to realize the target. Keeping in view the huge task of development of wastelands in the country, the Committee feel that the targets set under the different schemes of the wasteland development are not sufficient. In view of this, they would like that the Department should think over expanding their area of activity under the major schemes and the targets should be enhanced. Besides, the 10th Plan allocation commensurating with the increased targets should also be provided.

Reply of the Government

It is submitted that Plan allocations are made by the Planning Commission as per availability of financial resources with the Central Government. During the Ninth Plan Period, a sum of Rs. 2477.38 Crores was released for different Schemes of the Department of Land Resources. However, there has been an increase of more than two and a half times in the allocation for the Tenth Plan as compared to the releases for the Ninth Plan due to the efforts made by the Department. A total amount of Rs. 6,526 crores have been allocated for the Tenth Plan, by the Planning Commission. The Department would continue to plead for higher allocations by the Planning Commission at the time of finalisation of Yearly Plans in future as advised by the Committee.

[Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources) O.M. No. H-11014/2/2002-M&C dated the 16th September, 2002]

Comments of the Committee

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

Recommendation (Para No. 2.18)

While analysing the position of expenditure reported during 8th and 9th Plan, the Committee find that under plan head, there is Underspending of Rs. 107.84 and 301.59 crore respectively during 8th and 9th Plan. They are concerned to note the reply furnished by the Government that the underspending during 9th Plan is basically due to North-East. The Committee note that since 2000-2001, when the concept of allocating ten per cent of the outlay exclusively to North-East was started, in the first two years, Rs. 180 crore has so far been allocated to North-East. Even the total amount, if treated as not spent in the North-East, the overall Underspending of the Department as a whole during the 9th Plan, is more *i.e.* Rs. 301.,59 crore. The Committee, therefore, are not convinced that the onus for underspending lay with North-East only. There is some deep rooted malaise and a very serious indepth hair splitting analysis is necessary to pinpoint the cause. The approach of the Ministry in this regard so far appears to be casual. The Committee hope that the Ministry will do some spadework and diagnose the reasons behind underspending. Keeping in view the importance of the task of development of wasteland in the country, the Committee stress to ensure 100 per cent utilisation of the scarce resources. The cent per cent physical achievement is necessary to get the adequate allocation from the Planning Commission/Ministry of Finance during the coming years of the 10th Plan.

Reply of the Government

In almost all the years of the Ninth Plan Period, Finance Ministry had made cuts in the allocations due to financial constraints. Hence, the underspending is mainly on account of the cuts imposed during the years. The savings in the earmarked allocation of North East States goes to the non-lapsable pool for these States. However, the Department has been making very serious efforts to increase the coverage of IWDP in these States. It may noted that as against 17 projects sanctioned under IWDP for North-East States from 1995-96 to 1998-99, 67 new projects have been sanctioned for that region under the programme during the last three years. projects have been sanctioned in all the States of the region. It is hoped that full utilisation of funds earmarked for North-East States will be made now.

[Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources) O.M. No. H-11014/2/2002-M&C dated the 16th September, 2002]

Comments of the Committee

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

Recommendation (Para No. 2.26)

The Committee have repeatedly been recommending in their respective reports to bring all the schemes/programmes for the development of wastelands run by different Ministries/Departments under one umbrella. While noting the efforts made by the Department to achieve the said objective, the Committee also note that the Secretary of the Department has assured that the final decision in this regard will be taken in the next two months. They hope that the decision in this regard is taken within the stipulated time period and they would like to be apprised about the same.

Reply of the Government

The matter of bringing watershed Development and Soil Conservation related activities including watershed development under one umbrella was discussed twice earlier by the Committee of Secretaries. However, due to divergence of views among the Ministries and Department concerned, no decision could be taken in the matter. Subsequently, a cabinet note on the subject was formulated and circulated to the Ministries of Agriculture, Environment and Forests, Finance and the Planning Commission for their comments. The comments from all concerned have been received. A Cabinet Note on the subject is under finalisation for submission to Cabinet Secretariat. In this Cabinet Note, all activities relating to soil conservation and watershed development (currently being handled by different Central Ministries/Departments) are being proposed to be transferred to department of Land Resources alongwith the budgeted funds, infrastructure and staff.

[Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources) O.M. No. H-11014/2/2002-M&C dated the 16th September, 2002]

Comments of the Committee

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

Recommendation (Para No. 2.32)

Keeping in view the gigantic task of development of wastelands in the country, the Committee find that the Government's funding in this regard would not be sufficient. They have repeatedly been recommending to take initiatives to involve the private sector in this task. They in their 12th Report (13th Lok Sabha) (para 3.24 refers) had given detailed analysis as to how the private sector could be attracted towards this field. The recommendation was reiterated in 22nd Report (13th Lok Sabha) (para 2.24 refers). They find that the Government have recently constituted a task force in this regard. The Committee feel that inspite of their repeatedly recommending, nothing concrete could be done. They, while reiterating their earlier recommendations, would like to the Government to take the necessary steps within a stipulated time period and apprise the Committee accordingly.

Reply of the Government

A continued dialogue is being maintained with CII and ASSOCHAM to have long-term cooperation for development of wastelands. For this purpose, a Consultation Session was held in January 2002 with representatives of RBI, NABARD, ASSOCHAM on 28th January, 2002. In order to raise awareness about the Investment Promotional scheme of the Department amongst various stakeholders, Regional Workshops have been organized in collaboration with NABARD at Ahmedabad (for Western Region) and Chandigarh (for Northern Region). In these workshops, the representatives of the State Governments, lead Banks, Financial Institutions, Corporate Sector and Progressive Farmers of the region participated. Two more Regional level Workshops are proposed to be organized for Eastern Region and Southern Region.

[Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources) O.M. No. H-11014/2/2002-M&C dated the 16th September, 2002]

Comments of the Committee

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

Recommendation (Para No. 2.33)

The Committee note that two externally aided projects are working in Orissa and Andhra Pradesh. Besides, the initiatives have been taken

by the Department to have discussions with the representatives of World Bank. They are happy to note that the World Bank is receptive to the idea of organizing a wider forum of discussion with a view to carrying the dialogue further. They urge the Department to take further action earnestly in this regard, to get foreign investments in the task of development of wastelands. They would also like to know the reaction of donor agencies about their participation in the watershed development with whom the Ministry had held meetings in the past.

Reply of the Government

As indicated earlier, a National Land Resource Management Policy is being finalised and after its finalisation, the donor agencies would be approached for seeking their assistance. In addition to the two ongoing Rural livelihood projects in Andhra Pradesh and Orissa, assisted by Department for International development (DFID), another project proposal from Government of Madhya Pradesh seeking assistance from DFID is being considered in consultation with Department of Economic Affairs.

[Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources) O.M. No. H-11014/2/2002-M&C dated the 16th September, 2002]

Comments of the Committee

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

Recommendation (Para No. 2.42)

The Committee have repeatedly been recommending to make the programmes of development of wastelands of the Departments, Panchayat based programmes. They find that as per the revised guidelines, the programmes will be implemented mainly through the Zilla Parishad/DRDA. To analyse the actual involvement of PRIs in the implementation of the various watershed programmes of the Departments, the Committee would like to be apprised about the details of the implementing agencies in the various States/UTs. Besides, they would also like that the Government should ensure that proper training is provided to the PRIs involved in implementation of these programmes for their effective implementation. More and more NGOs specifically local based need to be involved in the programme to make the development of wastelands as a people's programme.

Reply of the Government

As per Guidelines for watershed development projects, the decision for selection of PIAs is to be made by the Zilla Parishad/DRDA. Revised Guidelines provide that PIAs should preferably be selected from PRIs failing which State Government Departments or reputed NGOs be selected. Wherever feasible, the project could be implemented through a combination of Government Organisations and NGO PIAs. At present, the projects are being implemented by a mix of PRIs, different Government Departments as also by the reputed NGOs.

[Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources) O.M. No. H-11014/2/2002-M&C dated the 16th September, 2002]

Comments of the Committee

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

Recommendation (Para No. 3.20)

As regards the progress of EAS component transferred to the Department of Land Resources, the Committee find that the Government are not serious about this programme. The said outlay of Rs. 1500 crore to fulfil the committed liability under EAS projects has not been provided to the Department as planned. Further, every year there is a decrease in the allocation under EAS component. They find that EAS, which was one of the top most priority programme of the Department of Rural Development, has got back seat, when transferred to the Department of Land Resources. They strongly recommend that the committed liabilities in respect of the watershed projects transferred to the Department Under EAS, should be given priority. The said projects should be completed within the target year. Besides, the Department should monitor the allocation, utilisation of outlay and physical achievement separately for the EAS component, and it should be reflected in all the Budget papers submitted to the Committee.

Reply of the Government

The first instalment of completion of ongoing watershed projects under EAS was released in September, 1999. Thereafter, the criteria prescribed for the releases of next instalment of central share was the utilisation of more than 50% of the funds last released and the submission of the required documents like Utilisation Certificate,

Audited Statement of Accounts, checklist, various certificates like non-diversion of funds, non-embezzlement of funds etc. Keeping in view the progress of implementation of these projects in various States, the instalments of central share were released during 1999-2000, 2000-01 and 2001-2002. Consequently, Rs. 301.55 crore, Rs. 257.11 crore and Rs. 190.15 crore were released in the three years. It was noticed subsequently that certain States were not availing the funds as anticipated in August/September, 1999 due to slow pace of work. Accordingly, it was thought pertinent to have a fresh look at the requirement of funds for completion of these projects. Accordingly the States were requested to furnish the details regarding the requirement during April, 2001. Consequently, the total requirement of funds has come down to Rs. 1473.60 crores.

As per the statement of releases of central share of funds, attached total amount of Rs. 748.82 lakhs has already been released as central share till 2001-2002 which forms 75% of the project cost. The corresponding State share for which comes out to Rs. 249.606 lakhs (25% of the total project cost). Therefore, as against the revised assessment of Rs. 1473.60 crore, Rs. 998.426 crore has been provided for the EAS-watershed projects upto 31st March, 2002. As the projects in some of the States could not be completed by March 2002, the States requested the Ministry to extend the period for completion of the projects by one year. The proposal has been agreed upon keeping in view the fact that the watershed projects are generally completed over a period of 5 years.

In order to expedite the completion of projects works, timely reviews have been undertaken in the Department of Land Resources. In addition the officers of the Department of Land Resources also visit various States for follow up as also to facilitate the implementation of projects. As advised by the Committee, the Department would be taking necessary steps for the completion of the ongoing projects.

[Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources) O.M. No. H-11014/2/2002-M&C dated the 16th September, 2002]

Comments of the Committee

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

Recommendation (Para No. 3.76)

The Committee find that whereas the outlay of Rs. 500 crore has been proposed during 10th Plan, the outlay given during first year of 10th Plan *i.e.* 2002-2003 is merely 55 crore, which in no way commensurate with the proposed outlay during 10th Plan. They, therefore, express their doubts about the achievement of the set targets during 10th Plan. They would like the Department to impress upon the Ministry of Finance/Planning Commission about the urgency of allocation of adequate outlay for the scheme so as to achieve the set objectives.

Reply of the Government

The Department of Land Resources had proposed allocation of Rs. 500 crore under the scheme of Computerisation of Land Records for the 10th Plan period. However, an outlay of Rs. 400 crore has been allocated during the 10th Plan under this scheme. Thus the allocation during the year is quite satisfactory. However, the Department would continue to impress upon the Planning Commission the need for higher allocation for the scheme.

[Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources) O.M. No. H-11014/2/2002-M&C dated the 16th September, 2002]

Comments of the Committee

(Please *see* Paragraph No. 34 of Chapter-I of the Report)

CHAPTER V

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

(Recommendation (Para No. 2.35)

While noting that amendment of Land Acquisition Act, 1894 and the draft National Policy on resettlement and rehabilitation of project Affected Persons/Families are being processed in the Government of India, the Committee would like that the proposals of the Department are finalised within a stipulated time period and the Committee informed accordingly.

Reply of the Government

Proposals for amendment of Land Acquisition Act, 1894 have been finalised. However, in the meanwhile Law Commission in its 182nd Report recommended amendment of one Section of the said act and the Supreme Court also gave a judgment relating to acquisition of the properties of the educational institutions of minorities—linguistic or religious, necessitating further amendment of the Act. The proposals have been processed further in the light of the above directions and the revised draft has been sent to the Ministry of Law for vetting. Project affected persons (Resettlement and Rehabilitation) Bill, 2002 is being considered in consultation with the Ministries/Departments concerned of the Central Government. In view of this, it is not possible to lay down any time frame for amendment of Land Acquisition Act, 1894 or for enactment of a legislation for Resettlement and Rehabilitation of the Project Affected persons/families.

[Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources) O.M. No. H-11014/2/2002-M&C dated the 16th September, 2002]

Comments of the Committee

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

Recommendation (Para No. 3.95)

The Committee have also been requesting repeatedly to the Department in their respective reports to take earnest action to improve the position of land records in most of the North-Eastern States. However, whenever enquired about the position of land records in North-Eastern States, the same response as given in the preceding para is repeated. The Committee are unhappy about the way the Department is implementing the scheme. They strongly recommend that complete survey, re-survey and settlement in North-Eastern States should be done within a stipulated time frame and year-wise performance of the scheme in case of each of the districts including North-Eastern States should be furnished categorically in the Performance Budget of the Department.

Reply of the Government

North-Eastern States including Sikkim State have been requested to prepare an Action Plan for completion of survey, re-survey and settlement in each district of the State if already not done within a stipulated time frame and the same may be submitted to this Department.

[Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources) O.M. No. H-11014/2/2002-M&C dated the 16th September, 2002]

Comments of the Committee

(Please *see* Paragraph No. 37 of Chapter-I of the Report)

NEW DELHI;
25 *February*, 2003
6 *Phalguna*, 1924 *(Saka)*

CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE,
Chairman,
Standing Committee on
Urban and Rural Development.

APPENDIX I

INVOLVEMENT OF PRIVATE SECTOR IN WASTELAND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME—RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE COMMITTEE PREVIOUSLY

12TH REPORT (13TH LOK SABHA)

3.24 The Committee find that the scope of implementation of IPS is very limited. They emphasise that keeping in view the resource constraints with the Government there is an urgent need to involve private sector to achieve the set goals. To attain the laudable objectives of developing 40 m. hectares by the end of 11th Plan, the Committee strongly recommend to the Government to take the following steps to involve and attract private sector in the task of development of wastelands in the country:—

(i) the Government should interact with the federations of industry and commerce, such as CII, FICCI, ASSOCHAM, who have not been involved in the National and Regional Workshops organised thus far;

(ii) the Government should widen the approach to industry which has thus far been restricted regionally to the PHD Chamber and industry-wise to the pulp and paper industry, besides being concentrated on plantations to the virtual exclusion of other methods of land reclamation;

(iii) the possibility of harnessing the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, at the highest level, to stimulate corporate sector involvement should be examined;

(iv) the Government should request the Ministry of Finance to examine the possibility of providing fiscal incentives which would exponentially raise the level of corporate sector participation in wastelands development; and

(v) a high-level review, in consultation with the Finance Ministry and the RBI, of the role of financial institutions and scheduled banks in the implementation of schemes of the Department should be made by the Government.

19th Report (13th Lok Sabha)

Involvement of private sector in the field of development of wastelands

Recommendation (Para No. 3.24)

20. The Committee had noted as below:

"The Committee find that the scope of implementation of IPS is very limited. They emphasized that keeping in view the resource constraints with the Government there is an urgent need to involve private sector to achieve the set goals. To attain the laudable objectives of developing 40 m. hectares by the end of 11th Plan, the Committee strongly recommend to the Government to take the following steps to involve and attract private sector in the task of development of wastelands in the country.

(i) the Government should interact with the federations of industry and commerce, such as CII, FICCI, ASSOCHAM, who have not been involved in the National and Regional Workshops organised thus far;

(ii) the Government should widen the approach to industry which has thus far been restricted regionally to the PHD Chamber and industry-wise to the pulp and paper industry, besides being concentrated on plantations to the virtual exclusion of other methods of land reclamation;

(iii) the possibility of harnessing the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, at the highest level, to stimulate corporate sector involvement should be examined;

(iv) the Government should request the Ministry of Finance to examine the possibility of providing fiscal incentives which would exponentially, raise the level of corporate sector participation in wastelands development; and

(v) a high-level review, in consultation with the Finance Ministry and the RBI, of the role of financial institutions and scheduled banks in the implementation of schemes of the Department should be made by the Government."

21. The Government have replied as below:

"To popularize the IPS, a series of State level and district level workshops have been organized in Mizoram, Himachal Pradesh & Uttar Pradesh, involving the farmers, Nationalised Bank, Regional Rural Banks and Cooperative Banks. Similar workshops are proposed to be organized by some more potential States during the current financial year. In order to attract private sector participation in the task of development of wastelands, the Department has initiated consultations with associations of Industry and Commerce, etc. as suggested by the Committee."

22. The Committee are not satisfied with the way the Government have dealt with their earlier recommendation to stimulate corporate sector in the task of development of wastelands in the country. The objective of involving private sector in this task can only be achieved by resorting to the measures as indicated in their earlier recommendations at para 3.24 (i) to (v). The Committee, therefore, reiterate their earlier recommendation and would like that the Government should consider their recommendation seriously and after taking the necessary initiative, point-wise reply may be furnished expeditiously.

22nd Report (13th Lok Sabha)

2.24 In view of the very poor physical and financial achievements under the Investment Promotional Scheme (IPS), the Committee find that adequate attention is not being paid to encourage private sector investment in the development of wastelands in the country. The initiatives taken by the Government in this regard are utterly inadequate. Since huge investments are required for developing wastelands in the country, Government funding alone will not suffice; as such, the involvement of private sector is essential. The private sector cannot be attracted merely by holding workshops and seminars. This require high level interaction between the Government and associations of private enterprises, in order to interact with interested private parties. The Committee in their earlier report had given detailed analysis as to how the private sector could be attracted towards this field and to achieve the said goals [12th report (para 3.24), 13th Lok Sabha]. The Committee reiterate their earlier recommendation and would like that the Government should seriously consider the matter and take necessary steps in this regard without any further delay.

APPENDIX II

DETAILS OF PROJECTS SANCTIONED ON VARIOUS CATEGORIES OF PROBLEM LANDS/WASTELANDS UNDER THE TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT, EXTENSION & TRAINING (TDET) SCHEME.

Category of Problem Land:	Land with or without scrub/sheet erosion area in rainfed condition.
Technology Model/Projects	No. of Projects
Agro-forestry/Plantation Models	53
Medicinal Plants Models in Wastelands	3
Watershed Development Models	6
Fertility Regeneration Model Using Bio-fertilizer (vermicompost, Mycorrhiza and Bio-pesticide Feed Stock)	5
Sub Total	67
Category of Problem Land:	Arid and Semi-arid Lands affected by wind and water erosion.
Technology Model/Projects	No. of Projects
Agro-forestry/Plantation/Watershed Models	10
Jojoba Plantation and Research Project with Israeli Collaboration	3
Standardization of Vegetative Propagation of Jojoba by CAZRI	1
Sub Total	14
Category of Problem Land:	Shifting Cultivation Areas
Technology Model/Projects	No. of Projects
Alternate to Shifting Cultivation Model	5
Sub Total	5

Category of Problem Land:	Waterlogged and Salt-affected Lands.
Technology Model/Projects	No. of Projects
Surface Drainage System	3
Sub-surface Drainage System	6
Bio-drainage System	2
Reclamation Model for Salt Affected Lands	2
Sub Total	13
Category of Problem Land:	Mine Spoil Wastelands.
Technology Model/Projects	No. of Projects
Biological Reclamation Model	3
Sub Total	3
R&D Database Projects:	
Technology Model/Projects	No. of Projects
Development of Database on Wastelands Using Remote Sensing & GIS Technique.	6
Preparation of Action Plan Land and Water Resources Development Using Remote Sensing & GIS Technique.	7
Sub Total	13
Grand Total	115

APPENDIX III

COMMITTEE ON URBAN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

EXTRACTS OF THE MINUTES OF THE THIRD SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY, THE 20TH FEBRUARY, 2003

The Committee sat from 1500 hrs. to 1615 hrs. in Committee Room 'C', Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Shri Chandrakant Khaire — *Chairman*

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Ranen Barman
3. Shri Padmanava Behera
4. Shri Haribhai Chaudhary
5. Shri Hassan Khan
6. Shri Basavanagoud Kolur
7. Shri Savshibhai Makwana
8. Shri Sadashivrao Dadoba Mandlik
9. Shri Chandresh Patel
10. Prof. (Shrimati) A.K. Premajam
11. Shri Chinmayanand Swami

Rajya Sabha

12. Shrimati Shabana Azmi
13. Shrimati Prema Cariappa
14. Shri N.R. Dasari
15. Shrimati Gurcharan Kaur
16. Shri Faqir Chand Mullana
17. Shri Harish Rawat
18. Shri Man Mohan Samal

SECRETARIAT

1.	Shri P.D.T. Achary	—	*Additional Secretary*
2.	Shri K. Chakraborty	—	*Deputy Secretary*
3.	Smt. Sudesh Luthra	—	*Under Secretary*
4.	Shri N.S. Hooda	—	*Under Secretary*

2. At the outset, the Chairman, welcomed the members to the sitting of the Committee. The Committee then took up for consideration of the following memoranda one by one:

(i) Memorandum No. 5 regarding action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the 33rd Report (13th Lok Sabha) on Demand for Grants (2002-2003) of the Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development).

(ii) *** *** ***

(iii) *** *** ***

3. The Committee after deliberating on various observations/ recommendations made in the said Report adopted the aforesaid action taken Report with slight modifications as given in *Annexure*.

4. *** *** ***

5. The Committee then authorised the Chairman to finalise the said draft action taken Report on the basis of factual verification from the concerned Ministries/Departments and to present the same to the Parliament.

6. The Committee while considering para 21 of the Memorandum No. 5, noted that this Committee had presented a Report on Land Acquisition Act, 1894 during the year 1994-95 (10th Lok Sabha). Besides action taken Report on the said subject was also presented to Parliament during the year 1995-96 (10th Lok Sabha). The members of the Committee desired that the copy each of the said Reports should be circulated to them for their information and use.

7. *** *** ***

The Committee then adjourned.

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

ANNEXURE

(*See* para 3 of the Minutes of the sitting of the Committee held on 20.02.2003)

Sl. No.	Page No.	Para No.	Line. No.	Modifications
1	2	3	4	5
1.	8	13	3 from below	*For* 'While expressing their serious concern for unnecessarily delaying the decision, the Committee would like the Department to take more initiatives to finalise the issue without any further delay.' *Substitute* 'The Committee are unhappy with the way the decision on such a serious issue is being unnecessarily delayed by the Department. While recommending to the Government to take the decision in this regard positively within three months of the presentation of the Report, the Committee would like an explanation indicating the reasons for delay in taking decision in this regard.'
2.	16	25	1	*For* 'The Committee find that the Department has not understood their earlier recommendation in a proper way. They had desired to be apprised about the details of Implementing Agencies in the various States/Union Territories.'

1	2	3	4	5
				Substitute 'The Committee are constrained to note the way the Department has chosen to ignore their recommendation. They in their earlier recommendation had desired to be apprised about the details of Implementing Agencies in the various States/Union Territories.'
3	24	34	5	*Insert* after the Committee 'are unhappy to note the casual way their recommendation has been taken by the Department Besides they'

APPENDIX IV

[Vide Para 4 of the Introduction]

ANALYSIS OF THE ACTION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE 3RD REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON URBAN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (13TH LOK SABHA)

I.	Total number of recommendations	34
II.	Recommendations that have been accepted by the Government Para Nos. 2.17, 2.19, 2.20, 2.43, 2.47, 2.48, 2.49, 2.54, 2.56, 3.19, 3.21, 3.22, 3.37, 3.38, 3.39, 3.40, 3.41, 3.50, 3.58, 3.59, 3.75, 3.77, 3.78 and 3.94.	24
	Percentage to the total recommendations	(70.59%)
III.	Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's replies	Nil
	Percentage to total recommendations	(0%)
IV.	Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee Para No.s 2.16, 2.18, 2.26, 2.32, 2.33, 2.42, 3.20 and 3.76.	8
	Percentage to total recommendations	(23.53%)
V.	Recommendations in respect of which final replies of the Government is still awaited Para Nos. 2.35 and 3.95.	2
	Percentage to total recommendations	(5.88%)