



# PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

( 1999—2001 )

SEVENTY NINTH REPORT

( TENTH ASSEMBLY )

Report of the Public Accounts Committee on the  
Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General  
of India for the year 1994-95 and 1997-98  
(Civil) pertaining to the Flood Control  
Department to the Government  
of Assam

Presented to the House on..... 7 APR 2000

ASSAM LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY SECRETARIAT  
DISPUR, GUWAHATI--781006

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
1. Composition of the Committee	I
2. Prefatory Remarks	II
3. CHAPTER - I	1-2
4. CHAPTER - II	3-4
5. CHAPTER - III	5-6
6. CHAPTER - IV	7-8
7. CHAPTER - V	9-10

1. Shri Hemanta Kalita
2. Shri Anjan Das
3. Shri Abanindranath Sarker
4. Shri Nizamuddin Khan
5. Shri Abdul Muqadder Ghoudhury
6. Shri Sumanta Shahidul Islam
7. Shri Govind Roy
8. Shri Kallu Manjan Deb
9. Shri Kumpoma Rajkhowa
10. Shri Harana Datta

**Secretaries**

1. Shri D. Yashodhar, Secretary
2. Shri A. R. Chritia, Deputy Secretary
3. Shri B. Banerjee, Committee Officer

Consent to be the Member of the Committee on the appointment as Deputy Speaker.

Equal

## COMPOSITION OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE-1999-2001

**Chairman :**

1. Shri Derhagra Mochahary

**Members :**

2. Shri Pulakesh Barua
3. Shri Kesharam Bora
4. Shri Hemanta Kalita
5. Shri Mohan Das
6. Shri Alauddin Sarkar
7. Shri Nizamuddin Khan
8. Shri Abdul Muqtadir Choudhury
9. Shri Mustafa Shahidul Islam
10. Shri Gautam Roy
11. Shri Kali Ranjan Deb
- \* 12. Smti. Renupoma Rajkhowa
- \*\* 13. Shri Karuna Dutta

**Secretariat :**

1. Shri D. Talukdar, Secretary
2. Shri A. R. Chetia, Deputy Secretary
3. Shri B. Basumatary, Committee Officer.

\* Ceased to be the Member of the Committee on her appointment as Deputy Speaker.

\*\* Expired

## II

### PREPATORY REMARKS

1. I, Shri Derhagra Mochahary, Chairman of the Committee on public Accounts having been authorised to submit the Report on their behalf, present this Seventy-Ninth Report of the Committee on Public Accounts on the Audit paras contained in the Reports of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (Civil) for the years 1994-95 and 1997-98 pertaining to Flood Control Department, Government of Assam.

2. The Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (Civil) for the years 1994-95 and 1997-98 were presented to the House on 15th June 1996 and 22nd March 1999 respectively.

3. The Reports as mentioned above relating to Flood Control Department were considered by the present Committee in their sittings held on 7th and 13th March 2000.

4. The Committee has considered the draft 79th Report and finalised in their sitting held on 10th March, 2000 for presentation before the House.

5. The Committee thanks to the Departmental witness for their kind co-operation. The Committee also places on records their appreciation for the valuable assistance rendered by Accountant General (Audit), Assam, Finance Department and Secretary, Assam Legislative Assembly along with officers and staff attached to Public Accounts Committee Branch.

Dispur  
the 10th March, 2000.

DERHAGRA MUCHAHARY  
Chairman,  
Public Accounts Committee

## CHAPTER-I

### Unfruitful expenditure on work due to delay in execution (Audit para 4.1/CAG/1994-95)

1.1. Audit has brought out that, the Chief Engineer, Flood Control Department, Assam directed the Executive Engineer, Mechanical Division (FC), Guwahati to take up as an emergent scheme, the work "Construction of short retirement (Length 560 metre) to the embankment on left bank of the river Gangadhar from Golakganj to Bisandoi at Charikhola" jointly with the Dhubri E & D Division and to ensure its completion before onset of monsoon 1992. The work was, neither administratively approved nor technically sanctioned till September, 1994. The execution of the work was taken up by both the divisions (chainage OM to 125M by Mechanical Division and from chainage 125M to 560M by Dhubri E & D Division) in June 1992, when the monsoon started. After executing about 20 per cent of the total work (the work includes preparation of site, cutting and removal of bamboo clamps etc. and earth work including remming of earth) at a cost of Rs. 5.34 lakh from 24th June 1992 by Mechanical Division Guwahati and from July 1992 by Dhubri E & D Division due to submergence of site of work on account of heavy monsoon rain/flood. A portion of the excavated earth dumped on the retirement under construction had also been washed away by flood water/rain. The work has not been completed as of September 1994. As a result the entire work was damaged by the flood of 1993. The delay in execution of the work and taking up of the work during monsoon led to an infructuous expenditure of Rs. 5.34 Lakhs.

1.2. The department in their written memorandum have stated that work for "construction of short retirement to the embkt. on left bank of the river Gangadhar from Golokganj to Bisondoria at Charoikhola" was taken up by the Division after receipt of Govt. permission issued by the Govt. vide No. FC (C) 146/92/1 dated 31-3-92. After that tenders were called for but no contractors submitted tenders for non clearance of their old liabilities, therefore the division tried in all possible means to execute in work through contractors, but failed

and in the process sufficient time had passed. The matter was then considered and a decision was taken to execute the work departmentally and on 25-5-92, the work was jointly taken up by the Guwahati Mechl Division and Dhubri E & D Division while the work was in progress, it had to be stopped with effect from 23-6-92 due to heavy rain. After receding of flood, the Govt. imposed ambargo on engagement of M. R. labours, and till then the attitude of the contractors remained uncharged. Therefore resumption of work could not be possible till March '94. In the meantime, the contractors had been paid a part of their old liabilities in 1994-95 and ultimately they agreed to take up works. Accordingly fresh tenders were called for to complete the balance earth work and the earth-work completed in May 95. Tender for taking up of bolder works were called on May '97, and work was started in Dec. the '97 and the work has since been physically completed. The schemes was technically sanctioned vide letter dated 31-12-97 for Rs. 84, 23, 800/- while A. A. was accorded for Rs. 80. 32 lakhs. The work has since been completed without any extra expenditure then the Technically sanctioned amount, as damages to incomplete works during the submergent floods for the year 1992 to 1994 was very nominal in form of raincuts etc. The work is standing well and rendering necessary benefits to the area as envisaged. Hence, the initial expenditure of Rs. 5.34 lakh cannot be termed as unfruitful expenditure.

### OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

1.3. The Committee could not appreciate non issue of Administrative approval and starting the work in rainy session. The Department should maintain official formality so that the works can be completed without any anomalies. In the instance case the work started in 1992 and it took time upto 1995. The technical sanction was issued much later. All the anomalies lead to an unfruitful expenditure of Rs. 5.34 lakhs.

1.4. The Committee therefore recommends that the works which protect the area from flood should be started during the winter season or before rainy season so as to rap its benefit in the monsoon season. The department should modify their working procedure simplify system of work within their departmental rules.

## CHAPTER - II

## Unproductive Expenditure

( Audit para 4.2/CAG 1994-95 )

2.1. The Audit has pointed out that the Construction of Building for divisional office of Mangaldoi Embankment and Drainage Division at Bhobarghat was administratively approved for Rs. 0.50 lakh in March 1987. This is a part of the scheme "Anti-erosion measure to protect Kurua Ring Bund and Upper Kurua village from erosion by the River Brahmaputra" which was administratively approved for Rs. 53.84 lakhs. The work was completed in August 1991 at a cost of Rs. 2.54 lakhs and the same had not been put to use as of March 1995. The Executive Engineer of the division had reported in (February 1993) to the Chief Engineer, Flood Control Department that it would not be proper to shift the office to the said building for the following reasons :—

- (i) It was within the flood affected area with likely-hood of submergence of the compound,
- (ii) the floor of the building would not withstand the load when occupied with all belongings,
- (iii) no suitable facilities for the staff to be accommodated, and
- (iv) the approach road work for which an estimate for Rs.11.89 lakhs submitted in February 1991 to the SE is yet to be sanctioned and the work taken up.

The Chief Engineer had not taken action in the matter and reasons for taking up the work on such unsuitable site was not intimated by the department to audit. The expenditure of Rs.2.54 lakhs on the building, therefore, proved unproductive.

2.2. The department have clarified that the office of the Executive Engineer, Mangaldoi E&D Division, was functioning in a rented house at a monthly rent of Rs. 2,422/- since 1986, when Govt. allotted a plot of land to construct the office buildings, it was decided to construct the same from the Savings of the on-going

schemes under Mangaldoi E&D Division. At first, an estimate amounting to Rs. 2.54 Lakhs was framed which covered only the civil works of the building. The work was started in July '90 and was completed in August '91. Out of Rs. 2.54 Lakhs only Rs. 1,99,800/- was paid so far and there is a liability of Rs. 57,698/-. Though the civil part of the building was completed in August '91, the other infrastructural parts, like electrification, water supply, approach road could not be taken up at that time due to paucity of fund. So, the office of the Executive Engineer, Mangaldoi E&D Division could not be shifted to that building without those works subsequently the works of electrification, water supply and construction of common approach road to the area (which was done through DRDA) were completed by March '98 and the building in question is occupied in June '98 for the office of the Mangaldoi E & D Division. Thus, there is a savings of Rs. 30,000/- annually which was paid towards house rent for the office of the Mangaldoi E&D Division, Mangaldoi. Hence, the building which was shown completed in August '91 was meant the office building only. All other minimum infrastructural facilities as required to house an office were actually completed in March '98 on the building was occupied and put to use from May '98 soon after its completion in all respect. Hence, the expenditure of Rs. 2.51/- lakhs cannot be termed as unproductive expenditure.

### OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATION

2.3. The Committee expresses its satisfaction that the office building completed occupied and put to use. However, the Committee desires to know whether the area of the office building is affected by flood after its use and whether the report of the Executive engineer is tenable.

2.4. The Committee therefore, recommends that the matter as reported by the Executive Engineer should be enquired into and submitted a report in detail to the Committee within two months from the date of presentation of this Report before the House.



## CHAPTER III

### Wasteful Expenditure (Audit para 4.3/CAG 1994-95)

3.1 The Audit has stated that the work "Construction of dyke (4.7 KM) along left bank of river Katakhal from Ratanpurghat to Mohanpur" under jurisdiction of Flood Control Division, Hailakandi was administratively approved for Rs. 33.52 lakhs in February 1990 by the Flood Control Department, Government of Assam and technically sanctioned in May 1992 by the Chief Engineer (Flood Control). Prior to formal acquisition of land in April 1995, the Division issued work orders (between February 1990 and May 1990) to contractors for execution of earth filling in different chainages within 4.7 KM of the dyke and sent the proposals for acquisition of land in June 1990. But, the contractors entrusted with execution of earth filling works could not start the work due to obstruction/objection by land owners. The Division, therefore, as a stop gap arrangement to prevent entry of flood water, constructed (June-July 1990) a dowel bund at a cost of Rs. 1.02 lakhs which was approved by the Superintending Engineer Flood Control Circle Hailakandi later in December 1991. Land owners ultimately agreed to part with their land and earth filling was completed during October 1991 to March 1992. Construction of dowel bund at a cost of Rs. 1.02 lakhs resulted in extra expenditure which could have been avoided had the construction of dyke been taken up after acquisition of land.

3.2. The department has stated that the scheme "construction of dyke along left bank of river Katakhal from Rotanpur to Mohanpur" was originally administratively approved for Rs. 33.32 lakhs on 5-2-90 and the technical sanction was also accorded for the same amount. Accordingly the local Civil Authority was moved for necessary land acquisition for the purpose by the Executive Engineer concerned on 6-3-90 and the land acquisition estimate was received from the District Collector on 17-7-91 for Rs. 19,98,170/- But, the land acquisition estimate was sanctioned on 26-4-94 and payment thereof for Rs. 9,992 lakhs was made during 1994 on receipt of L.O.C. However, due to heavy pressure from the local public for construction of the

above dyke to save the paddy field and other public Utilities from the fury of ensuing flood, and on verbal negotiation with all the landowners to part with their land, the work was started during 1989-90, pending formal land acquisition. But, while the work was in progress, some of the land owners refused to part with their land in two gaps covering Ch. 275m to 413m and 500m to 600m. The Department fell in a very awkward position, as because, had the gapes of the dyke remained open, the flood water during ensuing monsoon would enter through these gaps and would damage the dyke heavily and submerges the vast paddy field and the neighbouring village and the very purpose of the dyke would have been frustrated. Considering all these factors, the Deptt. had no alternative but to construct dowels in these gaps to arrest the entry of flood water to save the dyke. The expenditure of Rs. 1.02 Lakhs made on the dowels was found very negligible in comparison to the loss of the dyke as well as the property of the neighbouring public. Hence the expenditure of Rs. 1.02 lakhs for the dowels does not appear to be wasteful.

### OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

3.3. The Committee observes that the explanation submitted by the department in course of oral deposition is more or less satisfactory. However there are every scope to be very careful in future in dealing with such cases.

3.4. The Committee, therefore recommends that in future, the Deptt. will take all necessary measures which can be foreseen before starting the works and avoid wasteful.

## CHAPTER IV

Irregular Payment of advance and locking up of fund.  
( Para 4.4/CAG 1994-95 )

4.1. The Audit has brought out that, construction of a hanger for the Hydraulic Research Division (F.C.) Guwahati for model experimentation under Hydraulic Model Laboratory at Basistha was awarded to a contractor in June, 1991, on a lump-sum amount of Rs. 8.50 lakhs to complete the work within 45 days from the date of issue of work order which was extended from time to time and was last extended upto October 1993. In June, 1991, the contractor was paid an advance of Rs. 1.94 lakhs for work done but not measured though he did not execute any work except bringing of some fragmented steel materials to site. Value of the materials remained to be assessed due to non-finalisation of its rate by higher authority. As a result, advance of Rs. 1.94 lakhs also remained unadjusted/unrealised (July, 1995). In the meantime, the contract was rescinded (November, 1993) at the risk and cost of the contractor as the contractor failed to complete the work despite granting of extension upto 23rd October 1993. Besides, the Division procured 10 tonnes of galvanised corrugated iron sheets valued at Rs. 2.06 lakhs between November and December, 1991 by charging the amount to this work, although the above work which included supplying, fitting and fixing of GCI sheets was allotted to the contractor and there was no provision in the agreement for issue of this material by the department. Out of this quantity of GCI sheets, 0.81 tonne was issued (November, 1991) to another work leaving a balance of 9.19 tonnes valued at Rs. 1.89 lakhs unutilised (July 1995). Thus the Division made irregular payment of advance for work done but not measured which ultimately remained to be recovered as the contract has been rescinded. Besides an amount of Rs. 1.89 lakhs was locked up due to non-utilisation of materials for over 3 years.

4.2. The department has stated that an amount of Rs. 1.94 lakhs was paid to the contractor against the work-construction of Hanger for the steel materials brought to site. The fabricated and unfabricated fragmented materials brought to site for final erection of Hanger were of imperishable nature. It is also certified by the Mech. Executive Engineer, F. C. Department on joint inspection dated

21st January 1994 that most of the materials can be utilised against the above works. As the contractor did not turn up to execute the balance work inspite of several notices, the work allotted to the party had ultimately to be cancelled/withdrawn from the contractor as per instruction of the Addl. Chief Engineer, (CAZ, F.C. Deptt). The materials brought to the site were assessed by actual weighing and were found that a total quantity of 13657.45 kg of iron materials were actually brought by the contractor to the site. The value of materials appears to be not less than Rs. 2.00 lakhs as per prices prevailing at the time of supply which was calculated from the analyses of rates based upon company's prices list. Thus the value of materials supplied by the contractor is higher than the amount paid in advance. The materials are kept intact in departmental store. As such it appears, there is no financial loss to the Govt. on account of the advance payment made to the contractor for the materials. Subsequently, a revised estimate is prepared for completion of the aforesaid hanger with full utilisation of the said materials. The revised estimate after passing through different departmental processes has since been administratively approved for Rs. 14.725 lakhs. so far the transfer of G. C. I. sheet of value Rs. 1.89 Lakhs from Guwahati East E&D Division is concerned, the materials will be utilised for the construction of the hanger, So there may not be any question of keeping it unutilised.

#### OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

4.3.1. The Committee observes that the Department leniently dealt with the contractor who was initially awarded with the contract initially by paying an advance in contravention of the provision of financial rules and extended the time of completion by more than two years when he did not start work without reasons on records. The Committee is also interested to know whether the construction of hanger has been completed and if so, when and at what cost and whether the cost has been realised from the contractor against whom the contract was rescinded at his risk and cost.

4.3.2. The Committee, therefore, recommends that the officer who allowed such irregular advance should be brought to book and dealt with properly. The action taken in this regard may also be intimated to the Committee within a period of 2 months from the date of presentation of this Report before the House.

## CHAPTER—V

## Expenditure on idle staff engaged on defective Road Rollers and Motor Launch

(Audit para 4.1/CAG 1997-98)

5.1. The Audit has brought out that the Executive Engineer, Guwahati Mechanical Division. Basistha, employed 8 persons (2 Road Roller driver with 2 handymen and 4 Motor Launch Crew including driver) whose salaries were being regularly drawn were not being utilised for any purpose since October 1986/June 1994. Their services could not be utilised as the two Road Rollers and one Motor Launch, to which they were attached, were lying out of order since then. There was nothing on record to show that any step was taken to utilise their services on alternate jobs. As a result, Rs. 15.38 lakh paid as pay and allowances to these 8 employees since October 1986/June 1994 till March 1998 was infructuous. The Government stated (September 1998) that the repair estimates of Road Rollers had been sanctioned (June 1998) while that of Motor Launch had been recommended (June 1998) by the Superintending Engineer for sanction. The repairing works of the machinery will be taken up as and when fund is received. The Government also stated that the staff meant for the machines were utilised for some other mechanical works and for safety and security of government property. The reply is not acceptable as it is not supported by any administrative order/posting orders of the competent authority.

5.2. The department has stated that the Road Rollers were taken over from the Asstt. Executive Engineer, Central E & D Sub-Division, and the Asstt. Executive Engineer, Mirza E & D Sub-Division, for repairing. But in the meantime the staffs were also transferred to Mechl. F. C. Division., Guwahati by the Executive Engineer, P. G. P. (F. C) No. 1, Bharalumukh, Guwahati-9. Although, the repairing estimates have got sanctioned, the repairing works could not be done in absence of necessary fund. Moreover, there was also no demand for work to be carried-out by Road Roller from any Civil Division's of the Department. However, the services of the incumbents concerned have been utilised in other Mechanical works in central work shop. The

Motor Launch M. L. Barak was received from the Executive Engineer, P. G. P. Division. initially for repairing. But in absence of necessary fund repairing works could not be carried out yet. In the meantime the crew members were transferred by the Executive Engineer, P. G.P. Division. to the Executive Engineer, Guwahati Mechl. F. C. Divn. to look after the vessel. Out of 4 crew members of the vessel which were considered to be idle, 2 members have been posted against the Russian Bulldozer/Bharat Bulldozers for maintenance of the same. Services of 2 remaining crew have however been utilised against the Motor Launch to look after the vessel for the safety and security like sinking in water due to storm etc. including proper anchoring of the vessel from time to time as per water level of the river and maintenance of dock side and engine side and any over specialized works as and when required. Hence, the crew members can't be turned as idle.

#### OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

5.3. The Committee expresses its dis-satisfaction over the reply and the deposition as the Department could not properly adduced whether and when the Road Rollers and Motor Launch have been repaired and put to use and the services of all the staff meant for the machines have been utilised for the purposes for which they were appointed. (b) whether the idle staff as pointed-out in audit were deployed against clear vacancies to justify their re-engagement. The above information will be furnished to the Committee within a period of 2 months from the date of presentation of this Report before the House. The Department may work out the total expenditure on the above staff person wise from the date of the machines gone out of order till repaired and furnish all the above information within a period of 2 months from the date of presentation of this Report before the House.