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ASSAM LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

PAC - 97

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

NINETY-SEVENTH REPORT
(ELEVENTH ASSEMBLY)

(2003-2005)



Report of the Committee on Public Accounts on the Reports of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for the years 1996-97, 1997-98, 1998-99, 1999-2000 & 2000-2001 (Civil) relating to Education and Public Health Engineering Departments, Government of Assam.

3 · MAR 2004

Presented to the House on.....

ASSAM LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY SECRETARIAT
DISPUR, GUWAHATI-6.

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COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE
(2003-2005)

CHAIRPERSON :

1. Smti. Pramila Rani Brahma

MEMBERS:

2. Shri Gautam Bora
3. Shri Ajit Singh
4. Shri Bidya Singh Engleng
5. Shri Dilder Rezza
6. Shri Gopi Nath Das
7. Shri Dharamsing Teron
8. Shri Dilip Kumar Saikia
9. Dr. Zoi Nath Sarma
10. Shri Biswajit Daimary
11. Shri Bimolangshu Roy
12. Shri Chandan Sarkar
13. Shri Sarat Saikia

SECRETARIAT :

1. Shri B.C. Das, Secretary.
2. Shri P. D. Bharali, Additional Secretary.
3. Shri Subimal Kumar Das, Under Secretary.
4. Shri B. Basumatary, Under Secretary.
5. Shri Khalilur Rahman, Committee Officer.

PREFATORY REMARKS

I, Smti. Pramila Rani Brahma, Chairperson of the Committee on Public Accounts having been authorised to submit the Report on their behalf, present this Ninety-Seventh 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 1996-97, 1997-98, 1998-99, 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 pertaining to Education and Public Health Engineering Departments, Government of Assam.

2. The Reports of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (Civil) for the years 1996-97, 1997-98, 1998-99, 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 were presented to the House on 16th March, 1998, 22nd March, 1999, 14th March, 2000, 30th May, 2001 and 14th March, 2002, respectively.

3. The Reports as mentioned above relating to the Education and Public Health Engineering Departments were considered by the outgoing Committee as in Annexure-I in their sittings held on 8th August, 2002, 11th September, 2002, 29th October, 2002 and 27th November, 2002 and considered this Draft Report on 18 November, 2003 but could not be presented the same before the House owing to expiry of its term.

4. The 97th Report of the Committee on Public Accounts as finalised and approved by the outgoing Committee, the present Committee has approved the same in its meeting held on 22-1-2004 for presentation before the House.

5. The Committee wishes thanks to the out-going Committee for their strenuous works. The Committee has also appreciated the valuable assistance rendered by the Principal Accountant General (Audit), Assam and his Junior Officers and Staff during the examination of the Departments.

6. The Committee thanks to the Departmental witnesses as well as Finance Department for their kind co-operation and offers appreciation to the officers and staff dealing with the Committee on Public Accounts, Assam Legislative Assembly Secretariat for their strenuous and sincere service rendered to the Committee.

7. The Committee earnestly hopes that Government would promptly implement the recommendations made in this Report.

Dispur :
The 22-1-2004.

SMTI. PRAMILA RANI BRAHMA
Chairperson
Committee on Public Accounts.

CHAPTER - I

Education Department **Inadequate financial progress** **[Audit Sub-para 3.6.5.1/CAG(Civil) 1996-97]**

1.1 The Audit has pointed out that against the Central share of Rs.26.05 crore and State share of Rs.13.01 crore for the projects during VIII plan period (1992-97) the State Government released only Rs.1.87 crore (14.37 per cent) while the Government of India released Rs.13.26 crore (50.90 per cent) during the period. The balance Central share was not released due to non-utilisation of released funds and because of the State share was not being released in full. Out of the total of Rs.15.13 crore released in 18 districts both by GOI and State Government, Rs. 9.96 crore (62 per cent) was utilised, as of March 1997. In 4 districts (Nalbari, Dhubri, Kamrup and Goalpara) less than 25 per cent of the provision for TLC in VIII Plan has been utilised. The respective ZSS attributed the savings to consecutive floods, general elections, law and order problems etc.

Further points which emerged as a result of test check were as follows :-

(a) In 6 ZSS (including Post Literacy Campaign (PLC), Jorhat test checked Rs. 3.79 crore (58 per cent including interest) against the release of Rs. 6.59 crore (Centre : Rs. 5.73 crore plus State : Rs. 86 crore) between 1992-93 and 1996-97 remained unutilised. Of this Rs.1.64 crore was kept in term deposit accounts with the Banks while the balance Rs.2.15 crore had been kept in saving bank accounts for period ranging from 3 to 5 years as of March, 1997. (b) A sum of Rs.37.91 lakh given by the Secretaries of ZSS (Kamrup, Dhubri, Kokrajhar and Jorhat) between September, 1992 and October, 1996 as advances to the Block Development Officers/Anchalik Panchayats (Kamrup : Rs. 4.16 lakh, Dhubri : Rs.0.50 lakh, Kokrajhar : Rs.15.16 lakh and Jorhat : Rs.18.09 lakh) for implementation of the Programme was not adjusted till March, 1997 and was accounted for as final expenditure. (c) As per NLM's norms the TLC is assumed to be for one year at the cost of Rs.65.00 per learner. The ZSS, Jorhat however incurred expenditure of Rs.89.05 lakh for coverage of 1.15 lakh illiterates at Rs. 77.80 per learner which resulted in excess expenditure of Rs.14.72 lakh. Excess expenditure was attributed to high cost of living, communication bottlenecks and remote locality. The ZSS was not authorised to incur expenditure in excess of the norms prescribed

for this purpose without prior approval of the Government. The ZSS had not approached GOI for regularisation of the excess expenditure.

1.2 The Department by their written reply has stated that : The TLC is implemented by the Zilla Sakharata Samittee (ZSS), a Registered Society constituted in the District under the Presidentship of Deputy Commissioner of the District. The ZSS is solely responsible for utilisation of funds and successful completion of the Programme in the district. As per guideline the ZSS opened a Bank Account and operated jointly by the President & Member-Secretary. The expenditure is incurred as per need with the approval of the EC of the ZSS. The law and order problem in the State, floods havoces and other natural calamities caused delay in completion of the programme. However, 6 districts Viz. Jorhat, Sivasagar, Tinsukia, Dibrugarh, Sonitpur & Karimganj have completed the TLC programme and implementing PLC Programme. The other districts have also been asked to complete the programme by 31.03.2002 and submit the PLC project proposal. The saving attributed during the period have been reduced and any savings after 31-03-2002 will be utilised by the ZSS in mopping up programme along with PLC.

(a) These are directly related to the ZSS. The concerned ZSS have been advised to submit replies and will be placed to the Hon'ble Public Accounts Committee in the next meeting.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

1.3 Since no district-wise utilization report submitted to the Committee at the time of examination of the Audit objection, the Committee was very much unhappy on the submission of the Government representatives. The Committee has curiously noticed the irregularities pointed out in the audit report. The official witnesses were therefore asked by the Committee in its meeting held on 8.8.2002 to submit within a month a detailed report on district-wise expenditure incurred. But the Government in the Education Department has failed to comply with the direction of the Committee in the stipulated time. The inaction of the Government appears to the Committee detrimental to the Public interest. Hence, the Committee urges upon the Government to be up and doing in implementing the TLC according to the guidelines prescribed.

Achievement

[Audit Sub-para 3.6.6/CAG (Civil)/1996-97]

1.4 The audit has pointed out that : (a) Total Literacy Campaign (TLC) : A test check of relevant record indicated the following : (i) Against the VIII plan target of 40.56 lakh estimated beneficiaries in 18 districts only 0.92 lakh beneficiaries (2.26 per cent) had completed the TLC course by March 1997 which comprise beneficiaries from only one district viz. Jorhat district. In four districts (Kamrup, Nalbari, Sibsagar and Kokrajhar) against 8.10 lakh illiterates targeted to be covered during 1994-95 only 5.77 lakh could be enrolled. No data regarding dropouts had been maintained in respect of illiterates in these districts. (ii) Of the enrolment of 2.09 lakh in Kokrajhar district, SC and ST community was not separately identified. (iii) Against enrolment of 1.15 lakh illiterates in Jorhat T.L.C, 0.23 lakh (20 per cent) had dropped out due to reluctance on the part of volunteers as well as learners in the general area and particularly among the tea garden community.

(b) Post Literacy Campaign (PLC) : PLC as a follow up of TLC was approved (December 1994) by NLM Authority for implementation in Jorhat district only within time span of 1995-97 ZSS Jorhat, however, took up the programme in 1996-97 for coverage of 1.67 lakh people (0.67 lakh neo-literates and 1 lakh learners). Against this target, only 0.02 lakh was enrolled till March 1997 which was negligible. Achievement fell far short of targets fixed for the year 1996-97 by 99 per cent for delayed commencement of the programme.

1.5 The Department by their written reply has stated that (a) (1) : The 8th Plan target was to cover 35.85 lakh of illiterates in 18 districts of Assam as proposal submitted to Govt. of India. The onus of covered the target was with the ZSS. The ZSS could not enrolled all the target at a time. However, subsequently the target as covered as per instruction issued by the Govt. of India. The ZSS concerned are asked to complete the ongoing TLC by 31.03.2002. The External Evaluation of TLC districts are yet to be completed. The matter of external evaluation is directly concerned with ZSS and not with Directorate. The actual number of made later to, dropped out and partly later to etc. will be known only after the completion of External Evaluation. The same will be submitted to the Hon'ble Committee, if required, after collection from the districts when External Evaluation completed. Till such time, data on drop outs can not be ensured. (ii) Out of the target of 2.09 lakh in Kokrajhar district subsequently the SC & ST community have been identified by the ZSS as below :-

ST = 60,493

SC = 8,324

(b) PLC in Jorhat district was sanctioned in June, 1995. The programme could not be implemented by the ZSS in time due to law and order situation in the district and some other extraneous factors. However, the teaching learning process was started in Feb, 1997 as per instruction of the Govt. of India, the ZSS, Jorhat was asked to complete PLC prog. by 31.03.2002. The actual achievement will be known after the external evaluation of the project, which has not yet been carried on. Non-availability of fund is another reason that has halted the progress of PLC in Jorhat district.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

1.6 The Committee has noticed that the implementing authority of the PLC was not at all serious in executing the schemes well in time. This has resulted to start late the scheme. There is no timely evaluation of the scheme. The Committee is of the view that there would be positive result on those schemes provided there had been required monitoring well in time. Urgent and effective steps on time on those PLC programmes are therefore necessary according to the Committee.

Duration of programme
[Audit sub para 3.6.7/CAG(Civil)/1996-97]

1.7 The audit has pointed out that (a) TLC : The total duration for TLC prescribed by GOI is normally 12 months. In case of delay in completion of the project approval for extension has to be obtained from TLC authority in table below indicates that none of the projects under 6 test-checked districts was commenced/completed within the stipulated time despite the availability of required funds for the purpose. The delay ranged from one month to 24 months.

Sl. No.	District	Duration in month	Stipulated month of commencement	Actual month of commencement	Actual month of completion	Extent of delay in commencement as of March, 1997 (in months)	Amount blocked (Rs. in crore)
1.	Dhubri	13th December, 1995	Not yet commenced		-	15	1.39
2.	Kokrajhar	12th November, 1994	November, 1996		In progress	24	0.23
3.	Kamrup	12th April, 1995	September, 1995		"	05	0.91
4.	Sibsagar	12th July, 1994	August, 1994		"	01	0.30
5.	Jorhat	13th May, 1992	September, 1992		August, 1994	04	-
6.	Nalbari	PROPOSAL NOT YET APPROVED BY NLMA					0.24
Total							3.07

The delay in commencement of the project in 5 districts ranged between 1 to 24 months. The delay was attributed by the respective ZSS to consecutive floods, elections, communication, bottleneck and ethnic violence etc. However 3 of the 6 ZSS, (Dhubri, Kokrajhar and Sibsaagar) had not applied for extension of time to the Government of India as of March, 1997. As result of non-completion of programmes within the stipulated time span, Rs. 3.07 crore provided for the programme was locked up with the Bank for 12 to 31 months as of March, 1997.

(b) PLC : PLC for learners is to be started immediately after completion of TLC. Though the TLC in Jorhat district was completed in August, 1994, PLC was started in September, 1996 after lapse of more than 2 years. The delay was stated to be due to release of required fund (Rs.62.33 lakh) by GOI only at the fag end of the year 1995-96 and

because State share (Rs.49.00 lakh) had not been released even in May, 1997. Due to delay in starting the PLC only 1 percent of the people could be enrolled out of the targeted 1.67 lakh people till March, 1997. Besides delay in starting of PLC was fraught with the risk of learners relapsing into illiteracy.

1.8 The Department by their written reply has stated that the responsibility for implementation of the programme lies with the concerned ZSS. The reason for delay in implementation of the programme and subsequently the more time taken by ZSS has been called for from the ZSS concerned and will be submitted to the Hon'ble PAC in due course. Meanwhile as per instruction of the Government of India, all the ZSS were asked to complete the prog. by 31.03.2002 and action have been taken by the ZSS.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

1.9 The Committee has viewed the transition and after action therefor as submitted by the Government. The time gap in implementing the schemes appears to the Committee inevitable. The Committee has been satisfied with the action taken by the Government. Hence, the objection raised in the Audit Report in this para has been dropped by the Committee.

Implementation

[Audit Sub Para 3.6.8/CAG (Civil)/1996-97]

1.10 The audit has pointed out that the ZSS of 6 district test-check furnished details of the manpower resources required, identified and these actually rendering services. These were as follows :

Category of manpower resources	Required	Identified	Rendering services	Percentage (Rendering services to required.)
Volunteer	1,20,094	85,495	15,096	12.57
Master Trainer	5,133	4,387	4,321	84.18
Resource Person	468	450	360	76.92

Training of volunteers, master trainers and resource persons was critical to the realisation of the campaign objectives. An amount of Rs. 1.70 crore was accordingly provided to 5 ZSS test-checked in audit for conducting 4 courses of training to three categories of persons so far identified. Audit scrutiny revealed that except ZSS, Jorhat, the full quota of 4 training courses was not organised by any of the ZSS resulting in saving of Rs. 1.24 crore (72.94 per cent). This delayed the commencement of the teaching and learning process. The position given above in the table indicates that only 12.57 per cent of the required number of volunteers (whose role is crucial in teaching and learning process) were actually rendering services. Besides, out of 60,170 volunteers trained at a cost of Rs. 28.47 lakh for rendering services, only 15096(25.09 per cent) were available. Thus, proportionate expenditure of Rs. 21.32 lakh incurred for training of the remaining 45,074 volunteers remained largely unproductive. Failure of the ZSS to involve adequate number of trained volunteers in the programme seriously hampered implementation of the programme.

1.11 The Department by their written reply has stated that the responsibility of implementation of TLC lies with the ZSS. The concerned ZSS have been requested to submit report on the Audit para and same will be submitted to the Hon'ble Committee in due time.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

1.12 Considering submission of the official witnesses the Committee has observed the lapses on the part of the implementing agencies/authorities of the schemes meant for the masses. So, the Committee holds that exemplary penal action against ineffective officials/personnel involved with those schemes be initiated by the disciplinary authority.

Teaching and learning materials
[Audit sub para 3.6.8.2/CAG (Civil)/1996-97]

1.13 The audit has pointed out that a total expenditure of Rs.99.11 lakh was incurred by the SDAE for printing of primers part-1(836470 copies) and guide books part-1 (97000 copies) up to March 1997. The SDAE printed the primers at the approved rate of Directorate of Printing and Stationery, Assam. The rates for both the books were Rs. 11.34 and Rs. 4.39 each as against the approved (November 1996) rates of Rs. 6.30 and 1.90 each respectively at which printing of primer-I and guide book-I was done by the ZSS kamrup. But according to scheme guidelines the materials were to be printed at district level, printing of these books at rates higher than the prevalent rates as obtained by ZSS Kamrup resulted in extra expenditure of Rs.44.57 lakh.

1.14 The department by their written reply has stated that the State Directorate of Adult Education has developed IPCL (Improved Pace of Content of Learning) primers for the use in TLC in the State. The NLM, Govt. of India has approved the primers. As per decision of the State Government the primers were printed at the Government approved presses in the State. The printing bills submitted by the printing presses were sent to the Directorate of Printing & Stationery, Government of Assam for scrutiny and approval of the rate. On receipt of the approved bills from the Printing & Stationery Department payment were made against the bills. The Government has no information if the ZSS, Kamrup has printed primer at lower rate.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

1.15 Considering the submission of the official representatives the Committee holds that steps be taken against those dishonest officials for fault of which excess payment was made for printing books over the approved prescribed rate of the P & S, Government of Assam.

Short supply/Non-utilisation of teaching material
[Audit sub para 3.6.8.2.2./CAG(Civil)/1996-97]

1.16. The audit has pointed out that according to the GOIs guidelines, distribution of a complete set of learning materials comprising 3 graded primers (Vol-I, II and III), a slate and lead pencils to each learner, master trainer, resource person and volunteer with volunteers guide was time bound.

(a) Against the requirement of 10.08 lakh of Improved Pace and Content of Learning (IPCL) primers in ZSS, Dhubri, 2.42 lakh primers and volunteers guide costing Rs. 21.61 lakh were supplied during January-February 1997 by the SDAE. Guide books for the Volunteers were not supplied. Only 4345 primers were issued by ZSS, Dhubri for training purposes. The balance 2.38 lakh primers valued at Rs. 21.22 lakh were lying idle in stock as the teaching process could not state due to non-completion of training for 0.25 lakh instructors. The Karimganj ZSS intimated (March 1995) the State Government its requirement of 5.58 lakh primers I, II and II. But the SDAE supplied only 0.2 lakh (November 1995) and 0.5 lakh (January 1996) copies of primer-I after repeated requests. Considering the problems of non-receipt of Primers from the SDAE, ZSS Karimganj decided to discontinue the reading and writing classes from February, 1996. Due to discontinuance of classes the learning environment and the sense of involvement created during the environment building campaign is likely to be lost. Thus while 2.38 primers were lying unutilised in ZSS, Dhubri, there was shortage of primers in ZSS, Karimganj for which classes had to be discontinued. This indicated lack of co-ordination between ZSS and absence of proper monitoring.

(b) Between December, 1995 and November, 1996, the SDAE issued 2.65 lakh 3 graded primers and 0.32 lakh volunteers guide book to ZSS, Sibsagar for teaching and learning process. However, out of the primers and volunteers' guide book issued 1.62 lakh primers and 0.12 lakh volunteers' guide (value : Rs.16.25 lakh) remained unutilised as these could not be issued due to non-procurement of other teaching and learning materials (slate, pencil & chalk etc.). The other teaching and learning materials worth Rs.14.58 lakh were procured between December, 1996 and April, 1997. Reasons for delay in procurement of other teaching and learning materials was neither on record nor stated though sufficient fund was available with the ZSS as was evident from a correspondence between the District Adult Education Officer, Sibsagar to the Chairman, ZSS Sibsagar. Moreover, the other teaching and learning materials procured also remained to be distributed. Thus the objective of teaching and learning could not be achieved.

1.17 The department by their written reply has stated that (a) the

required numbers of IPCL primers & guide books were supplied to the ZSS, Dhubri. The Implementation and Training etc. are the responsibility of ZSS. As regard supply of IPCL primer to ZSS, Karimganj the primers were supplied in two phases due to shortage of Government fund. Moreover, the ZSS, Karimganj were asked to lift excess primers from ZSS, Cachar as the Assamese primers used in ZSS, Dhubri does not served the purpose in Karimganj, because of the fact that the Karimganj, ZSS used Bengali primers. The ZSS, Karimganj lifted 20000 IPCL primers from Cachar district on 18.11.98. Subsequently, ZSS, Karimganj were supplied with the required Nos. of primers which costs of Rs.46.26 lakh and the TLC in Karimganj completed successfully and TLC was also sanctioned later on by Government of India.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

1.18 The Committee has carefully observed that there had been certain delay in performing the envisaged works. However, the Committee has decided to drop the objection as raised by the Audit in this para.

Under utilisation of training capacity in primary teachers
[Audit para 3.7/CAG (Civil)/1996,97]

1.19 The audit has pointed out that a Primary Teachers Training Centre, (PTTC) was set up (April, 1975) in Dibrugarh with intake capacity of 40 teachers per year with a view to imparting training to primary teachers. Test check (March, 1996) of records of Principal, PTTC and information collected (March, 1997) by audit disclosed that only 11 teachers sponsored by the Director of Elementary Education, Assam, Guwahati were trained during the period from 1989-90 to 1994-95. Infact, not a single teacher was trained in the centre during 1989-90 and 1994-95 while 3 teachers on an average were trained annually during 1990-91 to 1993-94. The number of trainees, however increased to 35 in 1995-96. There was, therefore, heavy shortfall in utilisation of capacity available in the training centre during 1989-90 to 1994-95. Reasons for failure to sponsor the requisite number of teachers during the above period by the Directorate were not intimated to audit. The number of instructors engaged for imparting such training remained constant (9) during all the years from 1989-90 to 1994-95. There was, however, also no record to show that the services of those instructors were utilised productively for other purposes. Thus, the expenditure of Rs.18.19 lakh incurred by the centre towards pay and allowances of the instructors during the period 1989-90 to 1994-95 remained largely unproductive.

1.20 The department by their written reply has submitted that the Training Centre situated at Dibrugarh was originally set up for Training of Femals Pre-primary Teachers. The name of the institute is Pre-Primary Teachers Training Centre (PPTTC). Initially when the Government opened pre-primary section in some schools there was great demand for pre-primary Training. Subsequently, with the adoption of "New-Education policy" in 1996 the minimum age for entry in formal Schools has been fixed at 6 (six) years and consequently further opening of pre-primary section had been stopped. As a result the Director of Elementary Education could not depute untrained femal pre-primary Teachers as per in-take capacity of the Centre at Dibrugarh for training during the year 1989-90 to 1994-95. However, the primary Teachers had been deputed to the institute since 1995-96 in order to utilise the services of the instructors and in the existing facilities.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

1.21 After threadbare discussion, the Committee has satisfied with the departmental submission and decided to drop the objection as raised in this para of the Audit Report.

Non-realisation of refund from an overseas scholar
[Audit para - 3.8/CAG (Civil)/1996-97]

1.22 The audit has pointed out that after scrutiny of records also showed that in respect of 4 other scholars namely, S/Shri Gautam Thakuria, Anupam Anand Bharali, Maitroyi B. Roy and Kamal Ch. Sharma, no obligation to return to India certificates were issued by the Government only after the entire expenditure incurred on their studies in the USA had been refunded. As such the concession given to Mr. Baishya was violative of the Rules and arbitrary. The Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, advised the Consulate to use this as a precedent to take up the cases of other scholars. Information in respect of other cases were not available.

1.23 The department by their written reply has stated that the Overseas Scholarship is not under the control of Director of Technical Education Department.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

1.24 The Committee has reviewed the whole matter. It has been observed that as per prescribed bond signed by the out going scholar, he would render service for teaching students of the State after completion of his higher education failing to which the entire amount of study expenses with interest thereof had to be refunded to the Government. The amount then accrued to Rs.28 lakh appx. altogether. The Committee holds that since the other scholars had refunded the study expenses, necessary action should be taken to realise the entire outstanding amount from Mr. Mantu Baishya without any further delay. The Committee is of the opinion that there should be no concession which would be amounted to be violative of the Rules and arbitrary.

The Government should submit immediately a report thereof to the Committee after review the matter.

**Fraudulent drawal by Headmasters, Block Elementary
Education Officers and District Inspector of Schools
[Audit para 3.2 / CAG (Civil)/1997-98]**

1.25 The audit has pointed out that a scrutiny (July-September 1997) of Treasury vouchers, payment schedules, token registers the Bank scrolls of Hailakandi Treasury disclosed that 22 Headmasters, 3 BEEOs and 1 Deputy Inspector of Schools (DIS) had drawn Rs. 43.39 lakh between April 1991 and March 1995 in 89 bills. The amounts were neither accounted for by the BEEOs/DIS in their bill Registers and cash books nor shown by Headmasters, in their drawal and disbursement statements in violation of codal provisions. The Headmasters and BEEOs/DIS denied (February 1998) the drawal of the above amounts by them, although, Treasury Officer of Hailakandi Treasury confirmed (February 1998) with reference to subsidiary register that the Headmasters and BEEOs/DIS had actually drawn the amounts. The District Elementary Education Officer (DEEO), Hailakandi placed 24 Headmasters under suspension (including 22 Headmasters involved in fraudulent drawal) for the period from February 1994 to September 1996 on the basis of police report for their alleged involvement in such fraudulent drawals and unauthorisedly recruited 24 teachers in their place (without obtaining approval from the competent authority) and paid Rs. 15.12 lakh to those teachers as pay and allowances for 634 months at the minimum of pay scale. It could not be verified in audit whether the sanctioned strength of teachers exceeded at any point of time owing to non-availability of information. Departmental proceedings were not drawn by the DEEO and the Director against the delinquent Headmasters and the BEEOs/DIS even after 4 years as of March 1998 on the other hand 20 Headmasters out of 24 places under suspension were reinstated (between December 1995 to September 1996). Non-observance of prescribed procedure such as maintenance of Treasury Transit Registers, Cross-checking of bill extracts with figures noted in Cash Books by drawing officers and bill countersigning officers and also non-verification of bank daily payment sheets by the Treasury Officer with all appertaining vouchers submitted by the Bank facilitated fraudulent drawal Rs. 43.39 lakh. Unauthorised recruitment of fresh teachers in place of suspended Headmasters also entailed extra expenditure of Rs. 15.12 lakh.

1.26 The department by their written reply has stated that in this connection Director of Elementary Education, Assam alongwith Sr. F.A.O. and A.O. of this Directorate visited the Office of the D.E.E.O. and Deputy Inspector of Schools, HAILAKANDI to enquire into drawal of money as mentioned in the audit para. But D.I. of Schools and D.E.E.O. could not furnish any documents for verification. Deputy Inspector of Schools, Hailakandi stated that records relating to audit alongwith other records had been destroyed in fire. However Sr. F. &

A.O. of this Directorate discussed the matter with Treasury Officials at Hailakandi regarding the drawal of money. The Treasury Officials stated that Audit party of A.G.'s Office have throughly checked and verified the records relating to drawal of money and payment made for an amount of Rs. 15.12 lakhs to illegally recruited teachers against the suspension vacancy of Headmaster. But it is a fact that when a Headmaster of a school were placed under suspension the senior most Asstt. Teacher should act as I/C Headmaster for drawal of monthly salaries of staff. But it is not known how, why and where the District Officer appointed 24 teachers and drawn Rs. 15.12 lakhs in violation of the rules and procedure. Hence responsibility may be fixed upon concerned officers for fraudulent drawal.

OBSERVATIONS / RECOMMENDATIONS

1.27 The Committee has carefully considered the submission of the official representatives. But the Committee was not satisfied with the explanation made for the fraudulent drawal of salary of 24 teachers.

So, the Committee has directed the Government to make a through enquiry into drawal of money and according to the findings thereon action taken by the Government be submitted immediately to the Committee.

Pay and allowances for idle staff under Adult Education
[Audit para 3.3/CAG(Civil)/1997-98]

1.28 The audit has pointed out that a test-check (November 1997) of records of District Adult Education Officer, Kamrup revealed that the Cinema projector meant for audio visual programme on adult education was lying out of order since November 1988. Steps were however, not taken to transfer the services of the 4 idle cinema projector operators to other offices. Instead one more operator was appointed from October 1993 against the same projector. The District Adult Education Officer stated in April 1998 that the services of the operators were being utilised in supervising activities of Adult Literacy Programme. The reply is not tenable as no documents in support of allotment of such work or its actual execution was produced to audit. The pay and allowances of Rs.14.09 lakh paid to the five operators from November 1988 to March 1998 was thus infructuous. This includes expenditure of Rs. 1.19 lakh incurred on the operator irregularly appointed in 1993.

1.29 The department in their written reply has stated that the posts of Cinema Operators were created at C.D. block level and these are all permanent posts. These posts were created for dissemination on information and wide publicity of literacy campaign. The Cinema projector in Kamrup district office is lying unused in absence of repairing fund due to financial crunch in the State. So these Cinema Operators are engaged in the district for the publicity campaign. At present the services of four Cinema Operators including the one appointed in 1993 are being utilised in the field of on-going total literacy campaign. One Cinema Operator is engaged in other official duty in the district office.

OBSERVATIONS / RECOMMENDATIONS

1.30 The Committee has considered the official submission and satisfied with the departmental replies and decided to drop this audit objection as raised in the report of the CAG of India.

Excess payment**[Audit para 3.93-386/CAG(Civil)/2000-2001**

1.31 The audit has pointed out that after scrutiny (March 2000) of records of the Director, Secondary Education, Assam revealed that Rs.2.22 crore* were paid (during August 1995 to December 1999) to 3 agencies for three years under CLASS programme (January 1995 to December 1997) and Rs. 1.60 lakh was kept in hand. Records, however, revealed that though 16 out of 93 schools, covered under the project, were not provided with any computer, the agencies were paid @Rs. 80,000 per school for the three years. In the absence of computer, no practical training in computer was conducted. The Director stated (March 2000) that the matter of providing/supply of the requisite number of computers to each selected school was taken up with the agencies but they failed to supply and payments were made accordingly as per agreement. The reply of the department is not tenable as they did not fulfill the conditions of the agreement for payment including the condition of payment of third installment of payment after satisfactory evaluation report from the Deputy Director (Secondary Education). Evidently, due to non-supply of computers to 16 selected HSS, the department had incurred an excess payment of Rs. 36.80 lakh.#

1.32 The department by their written reply has stated that the Government of Assam, Education Department entered in to agreement with 3 agencies namely (1) I.C.S. (2) S.M.C.C. (3) C.S.S. for implementation of the centrally sponsored scheme "Computer Literacy and Studies in School (CLASS). As per agreement the state Government was to provide sufficient number of computer hardware in working conditions to conduct the CLASS programme. Though required number of computer could not be provided practical classes were conducted by adjustment of computer from other schools. In this connection an U/O-letter No. PWR. 44/94, dt.-9/1/2001 was submitted to Government which may kindly be referred to.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

1.33 After threadbare discussion with the departmental witnesses, the Committee has satisfied with the submission and decided to drop this para as Audit raised objection in the report of the CAG,India.

Unproductive expenditure
[Audit para 3.87 & 3.88/CAG(Civil)/2000-2001]

1.34 The audit has pointed out that after scrutiny (August 2000) of records of the Principal, Bongaigaon Polytechnic, Bongaigaon revealed that one girls hostel building with a capacity of 60 students including Matron's quarter, Warden's quarter and boundary wall were constructed at a total cost of Rs. 92.74 lakh under the "World Bank Project" by the Executive Engineer, PWD, Building Division, Goalpara in July 1999 based on the proposal of Director of Technical Education, Assam. The said building and quarters were handed over to the Principal in September 1999. The Hostel building and quarters could not, however, be put to use for want of sufficient number of girl students and non-appointment of hostel staff, as stated by the Principal of the Institute. Records also revealed that enrollment of girl students in the Institute during the period from 1990-91 to 2000-2001 was only seven. The injudicious decision of department thus, led to unproductive expenditure of Rs. 92.74 lakh, with the cost of capital being Rs. 20.48 lakh, calculated at the average rate of 11 per cent of market borrowing by the State Government over the last two years.

1.35 The department in their written reply has stated that the Girls' hostel at Bongaigaon Polytechnic, Bongaigaon was proposed to be constructed under "World Bank Project". On the approval of the empowered Committee in its second meeting held on 24-9-92. The approval was granted with a view to fulfill the actual requirement of the A.I.C.T.E. for recognition of the Bongaigaon Polytechnic, Bongaigaon. However stress had been given for the upliftment of women's Education under the World Bank Project. However the nos. of girl students were not upto the expectation and hence for a few students, the appointment of hostel staff had been deferred.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

1.36 On consideration of the submission made by the official witnesses, the Committee holds that certain feasible arrangement should be made to run the hostels smoothly.

Infructuous expenditure on pay and allowances for idle staff in District Adult Education Office, Dhubri

[Audit para 3.89-3.91/CAG(Civil)/2000-2001]

1.37 The audit has pointed out that a test-check (August-September 2000) of records of the District Adult Education Officer, Dhubri revealed that Director of Education, Assam procured a cinema project and power generator sets for use by the District Adult Education Officer, Dhubri. These were meant for audio visual programme aimed at motivating people an adult education. It was noticed that those have been lying out of order since 31 January 1994. Steps were neither taken to gainfully utilise the services of the 5 idle cinema operators in some other activities nor the matter was brought to the notice of the controlling authority for transferring their services to needy offices. The District Adult Education Officer stated (September 2000) that the Cinema Projector and Power Generator sets could not be repaired for want of funds. Records pertaining to preparation of estimates for repair and obtaining funds could not be produced to audit. The pay and allowances of Rs.18.53 lakhs paid to 5 operating staff from February 1994 to March 2001 thus proved infructuous.

1.38 The department by their written reply has stated that the Cinema Projector and power generation sets in Dhubri District Office is lying out of order due to paucity of fund in the budget for the purpose and hence no fund could be released for repairing of it. But the services of 5 Cinema Operators in the district are engaged by the DAEO, Dhubri in the on-going TLC alongwith some of the office staff. Salary of 5 Cinema Operator and repairing costs of the projectors' etc are incurred out of the salary Head and continuing fund respectively. The posts of Cinema Operators are permanent and are found confirmed. As such stoppage of salary will invite litigation and providing fund for repairing Projectors etc. could not be possible due to financial crunch in the State, as it requires ceiling for contingency purposes.

OBSREVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

1.39 The Committee has considered the official submission of the witnesses and decided to drop the objection as raised by the CAG,India.

**Avoidable expenditure on project offices under
Adult education programme**

[Audit para 3.92-3.94/CAG(Civil)/2000-2001]

1.40 The audit has pointed out that after scrutiny (September 2000) of records of the Director, Non-Formal and Adult Education (NFAE), Assam revealed that although the project offices under Adult Education Programme had become redundant these were allowed to continue to occupy offices in rented houses even after introduction of TLC. The department also continued to pay rent to the owners of the buildings. The Director (NFAE) had issued (August 1999) order to all District Adult Education Officers to shift the project officer from the rented houses to their respective offices within 15 August 1999 to avoid payment of house rent. Records revealed that against 60 project offices, 29 project offices had been shifted to the respective District Adult Education Offices during August 1999 to November 1999 but 26 project offices continued in the rented houses till the date of audit (September 2000) for which the liability on rent amounted to Rs. 26.10 lakh. The Director had already paid Rs. 8.74 lakh as house rent to clear part of the liability and Rs. 17.36 lakh remained unpaid (September 2000). Information regarding remaining 6 project offices was not made available to audit.

1.41 The department in their written reply has stated that there are 65 Nos. (Hills & Plains) of project offices throughout the State for better supervision of State Adult Education Programme (SAEP) and other literacy activities for adult illiterates of the age group of 15-35 years. The decentralisation of management and supervision was considered necessary for successful implementation of the scheme. After introduction of TLC since 1992 in phased manner in 21 districts (TLC-15 Districts, PLC-6 districts) out of 23 districts, the working of Project Offices in the grass root level were found necessary. So expenditure incurred for rented house occupied by the Project Offices was inevitable at that period of time. In the year 1990-2000 with the coverage of almost 90% of total are under TLC, it was felt that the project offices be shifted to the District Head Quarters to avoid payment of house rent. But practically it was difficult to shift all the project offices immediately to the District Head Quarters. Because with 30 to 35 number of office staff alongwith a large number of office establishment including table, chair, Almirah etc. some the district offices could not provide required space for their accommodation. Further the shifting cost could not be provided to the District Officers in time, due to financial crunch in the State. Therefore, though abit late finally all the project offices were shifted to the District Head Quarters.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIOS

1.42 After threadbare discussion, the Committee has satisfied with the submission of the Government representatives and decided to drop the objection as raised by CAG, India.

CHAPTER-II

Public Health Engineering Department

Financial outlay and expenditure

[Audit sub para 4.3.5/CAG(Civil)/1996-97]

2.1 The audit has pointed out that the year-wise position of expenditure vis-a-vis budget on Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission during the period 1992-93 to 1996-97 is detailed below :-

Year	Budget	Released	percentage of the amount released	Expenditure	percentage of expenditure incurred against release
(Rupees in crore)					
1992-93	20.00	13.70	68.5	9.10	66.42
1993-94	20.00	13.70	68.5	18.12	132.26
1994-95	20.00	19.49	97.45	20.00	102.62
1995-96	25.00	22.45	89.80	18.45	82.18
1996-97	18.30	23.54	128.63	14.46	61.43
TOTAL	103.30	92.88	89.91	80.13	86.27

MINIMUM NEEDS PROGRAMME (State Share)

Year	Budget	Released	percentage of the amount released	Expenditure	percentage of expenditure incurred	
(Rs. in crore)				(Rs. in crore)		
1992-93	41.84	37.22	88.96	37.22	100	
1993-94	43.84	38.33	87.43	38.33	100	
1994-95	43.34	43.34	100.00	43.34	100	
1995-96	60.52	52.00	85.92	52.00	100	
1996-97	69.67	60.70	87.13	60.70	100	
TOTAL	259.21	231.59	89.34	231.59	100	

TOTAL

Year	Budget	Released	percentage of the amount released	Expenditure	percentage of expenditure against release	
(Rs. in crore)				(Rs. in crore)		
1992-93	61.84	50.92	82.34	46.33	90.97	
1993-94	63.84	52.03	81.50	56.45	108.50	
1994-95	63.34	62.83	99.00	63.34	100.81	
1995-96	85.52	74.45	87.06	70.45	94.63	
1996-97	87.97	84.24	95.76	75.16	89.22	
TOTAL	362.51	324.47	89.51	311.72	96.07	

During the period 1992-93 to 1996-97 against budget provision of Rs. 362.51 crore amount released was Rs. 324.47 crore (89.51 per cent) and expenditure incurred was Rs. 311.72 crore (96.07 per cent). Thus there was shortage in the release of fund amounting to Rs. 38.04 crore (10.49 per cent) and savings were Rs 12.75 crore (3.93 per cent). The department could not furnish the reasons for short release of funds against budget provisions and savings of Rs. 12.75 crores.

(ii) Operation and Maintenance (O & M)-Non plan : Budget provision and expenditure under operation and maintenance (Non plan) for the period from 1992-93 to 1996-97 are presented below :

Year	Budget	Release of funds expenditure	Excess (+) Savings(-)	Percentage of variation
(Rs. in crore)				
1992-93	11.84	21.28	(+) 9.44	79.72
1993-94	12.09	15.05	(+) 2.96	24.48
1994-95	13.51	18.64	(+) 5.13	37.97
1995-96	14.86	16.53	(+) 1.67	11.23
1996-97	24.73	19.66	(-) 5.07	20.50

Against a budget provision of Rs. 52.30 crore an expenditure of Rs. 71.50 crore under O & M during the period from 1992-93 to 1995-96 was incurred resulting in excess expenditure of Rs. 19.20 crore. The excess expenditure was attributed by the Department (November-1997) to clearance of committed liabilities towards salary/wages of work charged staff for which no funds were provided by the Government. The excess expenditure over budget allotment ranged from 11.23 per cent in 1995-96 to 79.72 per cent in 1992-93. There were savings of Rs. 5.07 crore in the year 1996-97 due to non-release of fund by the State Government. Thus the excess expenditure over budget provisions were attributable to absence of control over expenditure by the department.

(iii) Amount kept in Public Works Deposit : An amount of Rs. 157.89 lakh (Rs. 127.81 lakh during the period from 1978-79 to 1991-92 and Rs. 30.08 lakh during 1992-93) drawn and deposited in Public Works Deposit between 1978-79 and 1992-93 remained utilised till March 1997. The division wise breakup is Dibrugarh (Rs.26.10 lakh), Tezpur : (Rs.34.99 lakh) and Silchar : (Rs.96.80 lakh). The intention behind this was to avoid lapse of fund allotted for the schemes for those years.

(iv) Amount transferred to Revenue Deposit : Out of Rs.205.29 crore drawn, an amount of Rs.26.66 crore (Central share : Rs.13.44

crore; State share : Rs.12.95 crore; non-plan share ; Rs.0.27 crore) was kept under Revenue deposit (12.99 per cent) between 1993-94 and 1995-96 of which an amount of Rs.6.03 crore was withdrawn and spent (25.61 per cent. Such transfer and retention of funds was highly irregular and inconsistent with the plea of paucity of funds to which slow progress had been attributed by the department.

2.2 The department by their written reply has stated that : (i) Plan : The released of fund shown in the statement by admit under ARWSP is the actual amount released by Government of India to the state during 1992-93 to 1996-97 which is Rs.10.42 crores less than the actual provision made in the budget during these period. However the actual released of fund to the Department by State Finance Department during these years is Rs.80.19 crores as shown in the table resulting shortfall than the budget provision as well as total released by Government of India.

Rs. in crore

Year	Budget provision	Released by Govt. of India	Released to Deptt. by state Finance Deptt.	Expenditure	Remark
1992-93	20.00	13.70	9.10	9.10	
1993-94	20.00	13.70	18.17	18.12	
1994-95	20.00	19.49	20.01	20.00	
1995-96	25.00	22.45	18.45	18.45	
1996-97	18.30	23.54	14.46	14.46	
TOTAL	103.30	92.88	80.19	80.13	

In case of State Plan less released of fund by the Finance Department is due to revision of plan allocation during these period. The excess expenditure over the budget provision towards operation and maintenance of rural water supply schemes was mainly due to the payment of salaries to the work charged and Muster Roll Workers engaging for maintenance of the different water supply schemes. Even though the entire amount required for the salaries and wages was made in the budget proposal where as the Government could not provide the same as per demand. Being the payment of salary and wages had to be made and hence the excess expenditure was incurred. The Urban and institutional water supply schemes maintained by by the P.H.E. Department had to run these schemes at the cost of the Department budget as these urban and institutional bodies were supposed to-pay the maintenance cost to the P.H.E. department but actually failed to-pay. As suspension of water supply facilities for non payment of dues is not practically possible the same had to continued. Thus the expenditure incurred not re-imbursed by the institution and Urban bodies also contributed to excess expenditure. Non plan expenditure salary during

the year, 1996-97 as shown as Rs.76.11 lakhs differed with the expenditure as part verification with Accountant General on 24th September, 1997. The actual position will be known only after full verification with A.G. For realisation of the O & M cost of Institutional and public bodies a Cabinet Memorandum is adopted on 10.7.97 wherein it was agreed by the State Government to retain the O & M cost at source of the respective institution/public bodies and to transfer the fund to the P.H.E. Department by the way of adjustment. The Department is in touch with the State Government for its full implementation.

(iii) An amount of Rs.157.89 lakhs was kept in the public works Deposits A/C as per provision made by the Government of Assam against the works of sanctioned schemes to avoid the rush expenditure, subsequently all the works against which amount was deposited have been completed, and accordingly proposal for release of the same was submitted to State Finance Department. Till now an amount of Rs.5.34 lakhs only withdrawn from the said A/C as released by State Finance Department. However the proposal for early release of the balance amount has been taken up with the State Finance Department.

(iv) As per guideline and direction of the State Finance Department an amount was kept under Revenue Deposit meant for different are programmes to avoid the rush expenditure at the fag end of the year. However the amount of Rs.1894.09 lakhs as on 31.1.98 has come down to Rs.1668.95 lakhs after withdrawing and amount of Rs.255.14 lakhs as released by State Finance Department from the Revenue Deposit A/C as on 31.7.98. Proposals have already been initiated and moved to State Finance Department for early release of the rest amount kept under Revenue Deposit.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

2.3 The Committee reviewed the entire irregular and inconsistent transfer and retention of fund undisbursed during period under reference. The departmental witnesses during the course of examination have totally failed to produce necessary explanations therefor. Therefore, the Committee is anguished on the failure of the official representatives. Theseupon the Committee recommends to the Government to make immediately an enquiry into the matter and action taken on the findings by the Government may be intimated to the Committee accordingly.

Annual targets lower than those of the Action plan

[Audit sub para 4.3.6.1/CAG (Civil)/1996-97]

2.4 The audit has pointed out that after audit scrutiny revealed that against the 8300 habitations were targeted to be covered under the action plan prepared by the State Government. The Department stated (May, 1997) that the annual targets were fixed on the lower side as the funds provided were less than the requirement. Against 8300 N.C. habitations (populations :16.26 lakh) targeted to be covered by 1996-97 the achievement was only 4214 habitations covering a population of 10.71 lakh. Percentage coverage of habitations was 50.77 per cent and that of population was 65.87 per cent. It was however noticed in audit that Rs.19.83 crore had been transferred to Revenue Deposit in addition to the overall saving of Rs.27.88 crore during 1995-96 and 1996-97 as of March, 1997. Hence the Department's reply is not tenable. Had the amount of savings during 1995-96 and 1996-97 and the funds transferred to Revenue Deposit been utilised at least 1037 or more habitations or 2.53 lakh souls could have been provided drinking water under the scheme (calculated on pro-rata basis).

2.5 The department by their written reply has stated that it was proposed to cover all the habitation by the end of year 2000. But the same could not be achieved as proposed due to paucity of fund and most of the habitations are in difficult areas. The yearly target is fixed to cover both N.C. and P.C. habitations after considering the budget provision for the respective years under different programme which was much below than our proposal. Till 97-98, 5037 N.C. and 977 P.C. habitations were covered out of 13660 N.C. & 25360 P.C. habitations as on 1.4.94. Details shown in the table below :

Year	Target		Achievement		Remarks
	N.C. Habitation	P.C. Habitation	N.C. Habitation	P.C. Habitation	
1994-95	200	-	867	669	Targets were fixed by Govt. of India.
1995-96	1500	-	1233	-	
1996-97	1500	-	1445	48	
1997-98	1550	125	1492	268	
TOTAL	5754	125	5037	977	

as on 1-4-98.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

2.6 Having considered the submission made by the official representatives, the Committee was not satisfied at all. Hence, the Committee has directed the Government to make through enquiry into the entire implementation of water supply schemes and action taken by the Government on the findings thereon be submitted immediately to the Committee accordingly.

Time overrun and cost overrun**[Audit sub para 4.3.6.2 /CAG (Civil)/1996-97]**

2.7 The audit has pointed out that a test check of records of Provision revealed that total number of piped water supply scheme (PWSS) taken up for execution upto March, 1997, number of schemes completed and number of schemes that remained incomplete and expenditure incurred on incomplete schemes was as follows.

No. of Schemes taken up for execution	No. of Schemes completed	No. of Schemes in-completed	Amount sanctioned for in-complete schemes	Actual expenditure incurred and further funds required for completion of schemes.
(Rupees in crores)				
		Commissioned	Non-commissioned	
737	390	278	69	37.01 49.51/23.05

An amount of Rs.49.51 crore (commissioned : Rs.40.50 crore : non commissioned and : Rs.9.01 crore) had been spent on these incomplete schemes against the sanction of Rs.37.01 crore (commissioned : Rs.29.28 crore : non-commissioned : Rs.7.73 crore) i.e. an excess of Rs.12.50 crore. Besides, the Divisions had projected an additional requirement of Rs.23.05 crore to complete the schemes. Therefore, the total funds of Rs.72.56 crore (196 per cent of the sanctioned amount) would be spent for completing these schemes with cost over run of Rs. 35.55 crore of the 69 non-commissioned schemes 2 schemes had been delayed by more than 10 years while 58 schemes had been delayed by 5 to 10 years. The division stated that due to nonavailability of fund and materials and failure of DTWs, the completion of these schemes had been delayed.

2.8 The department by their written reply has stated that out of 73700 of pipe water supply schemes under 9 (nine) selected division on 69 Nos. are in on going stage after the stipulated completion period of 3 years, expired this is due to the same unavoidable reasons beyond control which involve financial constraint as well as difficult zones. As a result of this delay the cost of the schemes have over run. However steps for revised administrative approval for the schemes which had been completed being taken on priority basis.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

2.9 The Committee has considered the submission of the official witnesses and decided to drop this audit objection as raised by the CAG, India.

**Schemes executed without Technical sanction
[Audit sub para 4.3.6.3/CAG(Civil)/1996-97]**

2.10 The audit has pointed out that under rules, no work can commence without detailed estimate and administrative approval of the competent authority. Moreover, when expenditure on a work in progress is likely to exceed the original sanctioned amount by more than 10 per cent, revised administrative approval is to be obtained. During test check of records of 9 divisions it was seen that 625 out of 737 piped water supply schemes were executed without obtaining any technical sanction. As a result in respect of 430 schemes, the expenditure had exceeded the sanctioned amount by 111 to 523 per cent. No revised estimates had been approved/obtained.

2.11 The department by their written reply has stated that steps have already been initiated so that no works are taken up obtaining F.S. However steps has also been taken up for revised administrative approval of the different pipe water supply for revised estimates where A.A. amount has already been exceeded schemes. Further similar action have also been taken to the other Divisions also for submission of revised estimate by other Divisions.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

2.12 The Committee has considered the submission of the official witnesses and decided to drop this objection as raised by the CAG, India.

Supply of water without treatment plant
[Audit sub para 4.3.6.4/CAG (Civil)/1996-97]

2.13 The audit has pointed out that drinking water was to be supplied to villages/habitations after adequate chemical and bacteriological treatment. Out of 737 PWSS test checked in divisions it was seen that in 117 schemes raw water was being supplied to 284 villages/habitation under five divisions (Guwahati, Dibrugarh, Tezpur, Diphu, Mangaldoi) without making arrangement for treatment plants. The division stated that due to paucity of fund this could not be constructed. The reply is not tenable as Rs.19.83 crore were lying in Revenue Deposit which could have been utilised.

2.14 The department by their written reply has stated that due to the scarcity of water, the habitations covered by the pipe water supply scheme by supplying the water directly from the Deep Tube Well different pipe water supply was made to give relief to the rural people of their needs. As the source of the scheme is generally Deep Tube Well the water is free from any other contamination except iron content. Up to 2002 since 1998 nos have been completed. However to remove the iron content where necessary, steps have been initiated to construct the suitable treatment plant and the work is in progress.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

2.15 The Committee has, after threadbare discussion directed the Government to take immediate action for implementing the proposed schemes and intimate the Committee action taken thereon by the Government.

Inoperative piped water supply schemes
[Audit sub para 4.3.6.5/CAG (Civil)/1996-97]

2.16 The audit has pointed out that 34 piped water supply schemes in divisions remained inoperative for more than 5 years during June 1991 to March 1997 due to failure or damage of DTW, low discharge of water and non-availability of power supply etc. as stated by the department. Total expenditure of Rs. 5.07 crore incurred on these schemes had remained unproductive for the above period as the objective had not been achieved. In reply, the divisions state (March 1997 to May 1997) that the schemes could not be made functional due to paucity of funds.

2.17 The department by their written reply has stated that for Revival of the inoperative PWSS, action as already been taken up at different levels to overcome the problems faced due to the shortage/non availability of power and other identified reasons. The words to bring back the non functional D/T/W into functional is in progress. Regarding non supply of power connection, the Hon'ble Minister, PHED has already taken up the matter with Assam State Electricity Board (ASER) on different occasions and expected power connection to be improved. However, for defunct D.T.Ws to receive these D.T.Ws some schemes are taken under submission and Government of India is also moved for implements to improve the position.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

2.18 On reviewed the action taken by the Government, the Committee has urged the Government to take immediate reformative action for well function of the in-operative schemes throughout the State.

Defunct water supply system due to non-repair**[Audit sub para 4.3.6.6/CAG(Civil)/1996-97]**

2.19 The audit has pointed out that out of the 3340 PWSS and 1,45,000 Spot Sources in operation as on April 1996, 297 PWSS and 19,894 spot sources (approximate estimated cost : Rs.26.73 crore and Rs.18.53 crore) had become unserviceable. Total estimated annual maintenance cost on these schemes was Rs.40.00 crore. In reply the CPHE state (February 1997) that funds allocated under maintenance were insufficient to meet the requirements. Thus despite incurring expenditure on maintenance these water supply schemes remained defunct.

2.20 The department by their written reply has stated that the no. of P.W.S.S. and spot sources identified as unserviceable could not fully made serviceable due to less allocation of fund towards the operation and maintenance cost. However with the available resources the department is maintaining the sources as per as practicable. Moreover to reduce the burden on the state budget towards D & M, the necessary action have already been taken up through the State H.R.D. and I.E.C. Cell to create awareness and educate the beneficiaries at the village level for effective and proper D & M of the existing sources by themselves as already done in some of the Rural pipe water Supply Scheme special drive had been taken during 2001-2002 to revive 147 nos. P.W.S.S.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

2.21 Having heard the submission of the departmental witnesses, the Committee has urged the Government to take necessary action to become immediately effective the defunct water supply schemes wherein quite a large amounts had already been spent.

**Delay in payment of Electricity Bills leading to
disconnection of power supply**

[Audit sub para 4.3.6.7/CAG(Civil)/1996-97]

2.22 The audit has pointed out that the PHE Divisions had not paid the electricity consumption charges amounting to Rs.19.89 crore due to the Assam State Electricity Board up to December 1996. Scrutiny of records revealed that as on February 1997 supply line of electricity for 8 schemes executed at a cost of Rs.1.03 crore remained disconnected due to non payment of Rs.7.18 lakh (February 1997) by 2 Divisions (Tezpur I & II). Thus the population of 0.21 lakh in 27 habitations had been denied the intended benefits for the period from January 1997 onwards.

2.23 The department by their written reply has stated that all arrear A.S.E.B. bills have already been cleared and regular payment has been made to the A.S.E.B. such cases of disconnection are no longer these.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

2.24 On perusal to the reply of the official submission, the Committee has been satisfied and decided to drop this objection as raised by the CAG, India.

**Defunct water supply system due to non-repair
[Audit sub para 4.3.6.6/CAG(Civil)/1996-97]**

2.19 The audit has pointed out that out of the 3340 PWSS and 1,45,000 Spot Sources in operation as on April 1996, 297 PWSS and 19,894 spot sources (approximate estimated cost : Rs.26.73 crore and Rs.18.53 crore) had become unserviceable. Total estimated annual maintenance cost on these schemes was Rs.40.00 crore. In reply the CPHE state (February 1997) that funds allocated under maintenance were insufficient to meet the requirements. Thus despite incurring expenditure on maintenance these water supply schemes remained defunct.

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OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

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**Delay in payment of Electricity Bills leading to
disconnection of power supply**

[Audit sub para 4.3.6.7/CAG(Civil)/1996-97]

2.22 The audit has pointed out that the PHE Divisions had not paid the electricity consumption charges amounting to Rs.19.89 crore due to the Assam State Electricity Board up to December 1996. Scrutiny of records revealed that as on February 1997 supply line of electricity for 8 schemes executed at a cost of Rs.1.03 crore remained disconnected due to non payment of Rs.7.18 lakh (February 1997) by 2 Divisions (Tezpur I & II). Thus the population of 0.21 lakh in 27 habitations had been denied the intended benefits for the period from January 1997 onwards.

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OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

2.24 On perusal to the reply of the official submission, the Committee has been satisfied and decided to drop this objection as raised by the CAG, India.

**Non-installation of power-line connections by ASEB
resulted in locking up of Government money
[Audit sub para 4.3.6.8/CAG(Civil)/1996-97]**

2.25 The audit has pointed out that a test check of the records of 9 PHE Divisions revealed that power line connections were not given by the ASEB to 16 schemes (cost Rs. 275.46 lakh) under 5 Divisions (Guwahati, Dibrugarh, Tezpur I, Mangaldoi and Silchar II) for which Rs. 9.92 lakh were deposited between March 1986 and 1993. Thus the amount of Rs. 9.92 lakhs paid to the ASEB remained locked up for periods ranging between 4 and 11 years. In the absence of powerline connections, 13 schemes had to be energized with diesel pump sets. The remaining 3 schemes executed at a cost of Rs. 79.00 lakh could not be energised due to non construction of pump house.

2.26 The Department by their written reply has stated that to install the power line connection in 16 pipe water supply schemes necessary payment has already made to A.S.E.B. but the scheme have not been provided. Assurance has been given by the A.S.E.B. authority to install the power line connection at schemes in phase manner on improvement of power position only. However drinking water is supplied by installing diesel driven pumping set as a temporary arrangement till the installation of power connection.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

2.27 On perusal to the submission of the official representatives, the Committee has directed the Government to energised the schemes by taking all necessary action as deem fit and proper.

Purchase of hand pumps in excess of requirement
[Audit sub para 4.3.7.1/CAG(Civil)/1996-97]

2.28 The audit has pointed out that 2400 Mark III Hand Pumps (HPs) including accessories were purchased by the CPHE at a cost of Rs. 1.28 crore during the year 1994-95 against the approved provision of Rs. 11 lakh for only 201 pumps. The purchase of 2199 Hand Pumps in excess of the requirement resulted in unauthorised expenditure of Rs. 1.17 crore. Test check of records of 6 Divisions (Tezpur I & II, Guwahati, Silchar I & II and Hailakandi) revealed that out of 561 mark III HPs supplied to these divisions by the CPHE only 118 were installed. The remaining 443 pumps procured at a cost of Rs. 0.24 crore were lying idle since the date of purchase. Non utilisation of 443 pumps resulted in locking up of funds to the tune of Rs. 0.24 crore.

2.29 The Department in their written reply has stated that considering the priority to achieve the target fixed by the Government of India for the year 1994-95 an advanced planning was worked out to ascertain the quantities of materials require meant for installation of spot sources. And accordingly in anticipation to the approval of concerned authority the Mark-III hand pumps were procured to attain the full coverage of target. Subsequently due to late receipt of approval, the same could not be utilised during the year and carried over to the next years for utilisation and the said quantities were utilised.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

2.30 On perusal to the submission by the official representatives, the Committee reviewed the receipt of late approval of the CPHE which led to carry over the schemes for the coming year. However, the Committee after careful consideration of the action taken by the Government has decided to drop the audit objection as raised by the CAG, India.

Non-commissioning of II schemes due to non-availability of certain materials.

[Audit sub para 4.3.7.2/CAG(Civil)/1996-97]

2.31 The audit has pointed out that in Mongaldoi PHE Division, II schemes sanctioned between March 1985 to March 1988 could not be commissioned till March 1997 due to non-availability of essential materials like G.I. pipes, PVC pipes, MS rods etc. for want of fund. The stipulated time for completion of these schemes was 3 years from the date of sanction. Thus, II schemes on which expenditure of Rs. 1.34 crore had been incurred could not be commissioned even after a lapse of over 6 to 9 years of scheduled period of completion.

2.32 The department by their written reply has stated that with the available fund, the materials like G.I. Pipe, P.V.C. pipe cement, MS rod, pumping set etc. as required for the schemes have since been arranged to complete the works even though the schedule period is over.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

2.33 The Committee has considered the submission of the official representatives and decided to drop the audit objection as raised by the CAG, India.

Pilferage of material**[Audit sub para 4.3.7.3/CAG(Civil)/1996-97]**

2.34 The audit has pointed out that at the time of change in incumbency (May 1994) between two Section Officers in charge stores under Dibrugarh PHE Division shortage of materials such as polyvinyl Chloride pipes (PVC) including specials, Galvanised Iron pipes including specials, Mild Steel rod, Tor Steel rod etc. worth Rs. 55.01 lakh came to notice. Physical verification by the Executive Engineer as per codal provision had not been done after December 1991. This coupled with procurement of material in excess of requirement facilitated pilferage. While departmental proceedings had been initiated (August 1994) losses had not been reported by the Department to Audit/Governments of March 1997, and recovery of cost of material had not been made.

2.35 The department by their written reply has stated that Government of Assam have ordered a fresh enquiry into the defalcation of Store materials against the Store-in-Charge of Dibrugarh (PHE) Division. The final enquiry report has recently been received. Action against the erring officer is being taken shortly.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

2.36 Having considered the submission of the official representatives, the Committee has directed the Government to intimate immediately the action taken against erring person by the Government according to the findings of the enquiry report made there on.

Material untraced**[Audit sub para 4.3.7.4/CAG(Civil)/1996-97]**

2.37 The audit has pointed out that the charge of store material worth Rs. one crore lying at 16 sites under the Hajo PHE subdivision which was transferred to Guwahati Sub Division No.1 in April 1992 was not handed over by the JE to the new incumbent (August 1994). The JE was absconding and could not be traced out by the police till March 1997. List of materials had been prepared and their charge also not taken over after verification with site accounts by the Divisional/Sub Divisional authorities. As such the materials worth Rupees one crore remained to be verified and certified by the department and responsibility for the loss if any to be fixed by the department.

2.38 The department by their written reply has stated that the case could not be finalised since the out going Junior Engineer (PHE), is still absconding and the matter has been reported to Government. Action for draft charges has already been initiated against Sri Pulin Mikir, Junior Engineer (PHE) vide letter No.PHE-135/Estt/91/27900, dated 13-10-98.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

2.39 Having considered the submission of the official representatives, the Committee is very much constrained to note that why Shri Pulin Mikir, J.E. (PHE) could not be traced out by the Government till submission of reply from 1994. The Committee, therefore directs the Government to book the fraudulent official taking coercive action by the Government and realise the misappropriated amounts from him without any further delay and action taken by the Government thereon should be intimated to the Committee accordingly.

Shortfall in water testing facilities
[Audit sub para 4.3.8.1/CAG(Civil)/1996-97]

2.40 audit has pointed out that after scrutiny of purchase files revealed that the CPHE purchased (November 1994) laboratory equipment worth Rs.1.32 lakh for remaining 17 laboratories which are yet to be established. This resulted in locking up of funds for more than two years as of September 1997.

2.41 The department by their written reply has stated that the infrastructures available during that period, the District level laboratories have not to that level of achieving the target had been proposed by R.G.N.D.W. Mission. However, efforts have been made to accelerate the activities in order to achieve the early target which is now encouraging and 23 Nos. of laboratories are in operation.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

2.42 The Committee has considered the departmental submission and decided to drop the audit objection as raised by the CAG, India.

Shortfall in Iron Removal Plants

[Audit sub para 4.3.8.2./CAG(Civil)/1996-97]

2.43 The audit has pointed out that a test check of 9 Divisions revealed that up to 1996-97, 2143 IRPS were sanctioned against which only 1997 IRPS (65.19 per cent) were actually installed shortfall of 746 IRPS was attributed by the Divisions to non-acceptance of IRPS by the people and paucity of funds.

2.44 The department by their written reply has stated that to eliminate the excess iron content having in the water collected from sources specially under ground, Iron Removal Plan (I.R.P.) was introduced and constructed attached to the existing sources with the Technology which would need more skill for proper and effective operation & maintenance (O & M). But due to lack of users awareness and education on the aspects of quality of drinking water as well as the technology involved in the O & M of I.R.P the users often were reluctant to avail the service of I.R.P. by making short circuit the system and taped the water directly from Hand Pump. This resulted to rethink the whole approach for which further construction of I.R.P. had been slowed down till the users were made aware and develop skill through different activities like training the persons specially the women Group at Grass Root Level, dissemination of information on water quality etc. through the H.R.D.Cell.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

2.45 The Committee has viewed the technical grounds adduced by the official representatives and decided to drop the audit objection as raised by the Audit.

**Non-operation of Human Resource Development
(HRD) Cell.**

[Audit sub para 4.3.9./CAG(Civil)/1996-97]

2.46 The audit has pointed out that out of Rs. 34.34 lakh sanctioned by the GOI under HRD activities, Rs.17.17 lakh were released, of which Rs. 9.89 Lakh had been utilised (July 1995) for purchase of Slide projectors, overhead projectors and Colour Television sets even though approval for setting up of the HRD cell was yet to be accorded by the State Government. The balance amount had not been released by the State Government. The above materials are lying idle since the date of their procurement resulting in locking up of fund of Rs. 9.89 lakh.

2.47 The department by their written reply has stated that administrative approval for procurement of the slide projector, Coloured T.V.etc. has already been accorded vide Government letter No. PHED. 343/94/pt/62, dated 15-3-97 amounting Rs. 11.60 lakhs and No. PHED. 343/94/pt/94, dated 24-6-97 for an amount of Rs. 2.745 lakhs. The H.R.D. cell has already been set up and started its functioning by utilising the materials.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

2.48 Having carefully considered the reply furnished by the Government the Committee has decided to drop this Audit objection as raised by the CAG, India.

**Grant-in-aid given to voluntary organisation by CAPART
without certification of prior experience**

[Audit sub para 4.3.10/CAG(Civil)/1996-97]

2.49 The audit has pointed out that the Government of India released funds to the Council for Advancement of Peoples Action and Rural Technology (CAPART) for carrying out activities relating to ARWSP. The CAPART in turn was to release funds to the selected Non Government Organisations (NGOs) having past experience of installing water supply schemes and imparting training to the rural people for use and maintenance of hand pump installed under the scheme. Test check of records revealed that an amount of Rs.15.23 lakh was released upto January 1997 as grants-in-aid to 8 NGOs by CAPART for implementing ARWSP scheme in 66 habitations though none of them had furnished certificate of past experience on the installation of water supply scheme in rural areas. Further on detailed checking of installation of hand pumps by 3 NGOs (Gram Vikash Bahumukhi Krishi Aru Samaj Kalyan Samity, Nagaon, All India Centre for Urban and Rural Development, Golaghat) it was seen that out of 23 habitations proposed to be covered by them, 10 habitations had already been covered by the PHED. This indicated that there was lack of co-ordination between the two executing agencies.

2.50 The department by their written reply has stated that as Public Health Engineering Department is the mother and obligatory to explore and render drinking water service to all habitations in the State of Assam, under the guidance and active support of Government, so other organisations or agencies should maintain the Co-ordination with P.H.E. Department before taking up any project or scheme related to drinking water supply sector. The overlapping is mainly attributed due to the lack of Co-ordination from their sides.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

2.51 The Committee has viewed the submission of the departmental officials and decided to drop this Audit objection as raised by the CAG, India.

Management Information System**[Audit Sub Para 4.3.11/CAG(Civil)/1996-97]**

2.52 The audit has pointed out that Government of India approved Rs.94.82 lakh as the project cost for computerisation in PHED under RGNDWM for monitoring the progress of scheme. Out of the above approved cost Rs.75.86 lakh (80 per cent) was to be funded by the Government of India and balance Rs.18.96 lakh (20 per cent) by the State Government. Government of India released Rs.56.89 lakh to the State Government in March, 1996, which was kept by the State Government under head of account 1601 Grants-in-aid. Government of Assam accorded administrative approval for Rs.94.82 lakh for the above project in December 1996 with the condition that financial sanction and release of fund by the State Government will depend on fund released by centre and also the Ways and Means position of the State Government. 17 computers were to be installed under the project. But no computers had been procured as of March, 1997 adversely affecting the monitoring of the scheme.

2.53 The Department by their written reply has stated that the computer project approved by Government of India under the Management Information System to install the Computers alongwith the accessories at 17 locations have been completed and the process of commissioning the computers are going on.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

2.54 Considering the official submission, the Committee is of the view that the execution of works pertaining to commissioning the computers should be completed in all respects to activate the schemes accordingly.

Information Education and Communication (IEC)**[Audit Sub para 4.3.12/CAG(Civil)/1996-97]**

2.55. The audit has pointed out that information, education and communication strategy was prepared by the Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment, Government of India for creation of public awareness on water and sanitary sector, Karimganj and Sonitpur Districts were targeted for intensive awareness campaign in the first phase approved cost of the IEC activities in Assam was Rs.92.21 lakh. The expenditure under this component was to be equally shared between centre and State. Awareness campaign had not been taken up till April 1997 due to non-release of fund by the GOI and State Government. This component of the programme remained to be implemented in the State.

2.56 The Department by their written reply has stated that a proposal has already been moved to Government of Assam for creation of a separate I.E.C Cell to implement the strategies for awareness and educate the rural masses towards the aspect of drinking water supply and sanitation. The Government of India has released 50% (Rs.23.02 lakhs) against their share Rs.46.10 lakhs to meet up the activities.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

2.57 Action taken as submitted by the Government representatives has been carefully observed by the Committee and has decided to urge the State Government to impress upon the Central Government to release the outstanding amounts to complete early the scheme in all respects.

Solar Photovoltaic pumping system (SPV)
(Audit sub para 4.3.13/CAG(Civil)/1996-97)

2.58 The audit has pointed out that in the State of Assam 4 photovoltaic pumping systems were installed in 4 villages (Devinagar, Palasbari, Angorkata NC and Sonitpur) for operating pump sets covering a population of 5240 by M/s Central Electronic Limited (CEL), engaged directly by the RGNDWM, Government of India during January 1991. Out of 4 SPV systems, 2 systems (at Palasbari and Angorkata NC) had stopped working since January 1992 and January 1994, respectively. As concrete steps, for revival of 2 SPV systems had not been taken, the population of Palasbari (1250) and Angorkata villages NC (1300) were deprived of safe drinking water for the last 5 and 3 years respectively.

2.59 The Department by their written reply has stated that as per instruction of Government of India these 4 (four) nos. of SPVS were installed in the district of Nalbari of Assam by M/s. C.E.L. New Delhi during the month of January' 1991. M/s C.E.L. New Delhi was engaged and fund released to the firm directly by Government of India except the installation charges which were routed through the Department before making payment by M/S.C.E.L. It was also reported to M/S.C.E.L. New Delhi that 2(two) nos. of SPVPS were not functioning and requested to rectify the defects but no response has come from the company.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

2.60 Having viewed the extent of inaction into the implemented schemes done by the New Delhi based firm wherefor the Committee holds that the State Government should pursue vigorously the Central Government to compel the firm to remove the defect on SPVPS for immediate functioning in the greater interest of the inhabitants.

Grass root level training programme
[Audit Sub para 4.3.14/CAG(Civil)/1996-97]

2.61 The audit has pointed out that this programme has not yet been introduced in the State of Assam. CPHE stated that the department has prepared a scheme with various items for importing training to different target groups which was duly approved by the Government of India during 1996-97 for Rs.23.05 lakh under HRD programme. For implementation of the programme creation of a HRD cell in the department was essential which was still awaited.

2.62 The Department by their written reply has stated that training is imported to different groups of professional and Grass Root Level beneficiaries involving all over 23 District of Assam through H.R.D. Cell Assam since its creation on December/1997 with planned manner by utilising the 100% Government of India's financial support.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

2.63 The Committee has considered the submission of official representatives and decided to drop this Audit objection as raised by the CAG, India.

Rig Management**[Audit sub para 4.3.15/CAG(Civil)/1996-97]**

2.64 The audit has pointed out that a test checked of 9 PHE divisions revealed that 41 bore holes were made by using 10 rigs during the period from April 1994 to March 1997 against 360 bore holes to be made as per norms by 6 PHE divisions (one bore hole per month). Percentage of shortfall being 88.61. Out of 41 borings, 30 were successful and 11 unsuccessful. Expenditure incurred on the entertainment of 10 drilling parties (1 party consisting of 4 persons) without drilling work during these idle periods proving Rs. 33.29 lakh on pay and allowances largely unproductive.

2.65 The Department by their written reply has stated that the condition of most of the rigs were very deplorable due to the fact that these rigs were old after giving the service to the level of its tolerability to install the nos. of Deep Tube Well in very remote areas during the period of 1975 to 1993. Besides this idleness of the rigs was due to lesser volume of work during the period 1994 to 1997 and also for the prevailing situation of the State for which the rigs could not be operative smoothly. However, the staff engaged originally in drilling new because sitting idle of serviceable rig, the staff has been engaged in some other works.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

2.66 The Committee has viewed the submission of the official representatives and satisfied therewith; hence dropped this audit objection.

Other points of interest

[Audit sub para 4.3.16/CAG(Civil)/1996-97]

2.67 The audit has pointed out that : (i) Irregular expenditure : The department purchased 6000 tonne of cement in July 1995 out of ARWSP funds at the rate of Rs. 1975.55 per tonne of this, 885.35 tonnes of cement was sent to the Executive Engineer, Tezpur PHE Division No. 1 for distribution to the PHE divisions under North Assam Zone. But 305 tonnes out of the 885.35 tonnes of cement was sold to three other agencies at a cost Rs. 9.33 lakh by the Tezpur PHE Division-I without any recorded reason. The entire amount realised from the sale was sent to the Guwahati Store and Workshop Division. Of the amount received Rs. 3.67 lakh was deposited into treasury in June 1996 while the balance amount of Rs. 5.66 lakh was irregularly paid (May 1996 and August 1996) by the Executive Engineer, Store and workshop Division, Guwahati to contractors for works executed by them without depositing the same to the proper head of account resulting in diversion of funds. This also indicated that 885.35 tonnes of cement was issued to Tezpur PHE Division No.1 without assessing the actual requirement.

(ii) Unfruitful expenditure : The work of execution of Oubari pipe water supply schemes (DTW) covering population of 1438 under Oubari village was administratively approved in January 1989 for Rs.7.19 lakh. The Tezpur Public Health Engineering Division II completed the execution of work in June 1991 at the cost of Rs.11.61 lakh. The scheme was designed to be operated by electrically driven pumping set for which a provision of Rs.0.30 lakh was made in the scheme. The ASEB however, submitted higher estimate for Rs.1.50 lakh for power connections. The scheme was therefore, commissioned with a diesel pump in June 1991. The scheme become non-functional since February 1992 due to excessive draw of DTW when run with diesel pump. No action had been taken to revive the scheme as of March 1997. The expenditure of Rs.11.61 lakh therefore become infructuous as the objective of providing safe drinking water to the villager on sustainable basis could not be achieved (March 1997).

2.68 The Department by their written reply has stated that 1. An amount of Rs.5.66 lakhs is paid to the contractor out of the sale proceeds of Cement is yet to be regularised. Steps have been taken to regularise the same.

(ii) Steps have already been initiated to install the suitable pumping set for immediate commissioning of the scheme and the scheme has already been completed.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

2.69 Irregularities of the Government as revealed by their submission have been considered by the Committee. The Committee therefore, urges the Government to complete the regularisation accordingly. On completion of the schemes, the Committee is satisfied. Hence, the Committee has decided to drop this Audit objection.

Wasteful/unproductive expenditure on a water supply scheme.

[Audit para 4.4/CAG(Civil)/1996-97]

2.70 The audit has pointed out that a test check (October 1996) of records of the above division revealed that instead of taking up work on flow source system, the division carried out boring of deep tube wells (which was not provided for in the estimate) at four different points between March 1986 and May 1986 at a cost of Rs.0.40 lakh. This was attributed by the Division to non-availability of water within the reasonable distance. But it was noticed even boring work was carried out without ground water survey. All the four bores proved unsuccessful due to encountering hard rock. Thereafter no further work under deep tube well or gravity source system was executed. Despite failure of the scheme in May 1986, the division intimated the matter to the Superintending Engineer (PHE), Hills Circle Diphu only in May 1996 and sought his advice, which was awaited (October 1996) and continued to incur expenditure on purchase of materials and work charged establishment etc. under the scheme (virtually abandoned) as of September 1996. The total expenditure incurred as of September 1996 was Rs.30.41 lakh. In reply, the division stated (November 1996) that materials costing Rs. 15.41 lakh out of Rs.17.61 lakh purchased against the scheme were subsequently transferred to other works. But the division could not furnish any documentary evidence in support of said transfer of material. The excess expenditure of Rs. 20.46 lakh over the sanctioned cost of Rs. 9.95 lakh had not been regularised through revised estimate as of October 1996. Thus, execution of works without conducting comprehensive feasibility studies and technical sanction had rendered the expenditure of Rs. 10.42 lakh wasteful and the balance expenditure of Rs. 19.99 lakh (i.e. Rs. 30.41 lakh - Rs. 10.42 lakh) unproductive. Besides the larger objective of providing pure drinking water to the villagers remained unfulfilled even after 14 years of sanction of the scheme.

2.71 The Department by their written reply has stated that it appears that the expenditure incurred in excess of Administrative Approval amount is not in proportion to the physical work done. It also appears that due to maintenance of work charged persons for such a long period has also contributed to the expenditure made. The Departmental enquiry has since been initiated to fix up the responsibilities for such unproductive expenditure Vide No. PHE-121/Estt/95/18078, dt. 28.10.2002. The enquiry to be conducted by the Addl. Chief Engineer (PHE), Karbi Along Autonomous Council, Diphu.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

2.72. While reviewed the long outstanding schematic works, the actual position of amounts spent and actual amount required to complete the schemes could not be clarified to the Committee by the official representatives in its meeting held on 29 October, 2002. Besides, the Committee has noticed that schematics works were performed without prior technical sanction which appeared to the Committee indispensable. Thereupon, the Committee holds that a detailed report should immediately be prepared and action taken thereon by the Government submitted to the Committee accordingly.

Wasteful expenditure on installation of deep tube wells.

[Audit para 4.5/CAG(Civil)/1996-97]

2.73 The audit has pointed out that a test check (July 1996) of records of the Guwahati Public Health Engineering Division No. 1 revealed that on 20 April 1995 the Public Health Engineering Deptt. took a decision at the behest of the then Chief Minister, to install 300 Deep Tube Wells (DTW) with hand pumps in Guwahati city area at an estimated cost of Rs. 130.00 lakh even though poll notification for elections to the Guwahati Municipal Corporation had already been issued on 17 April 1995 fixing the date of poll on 16 May 1995. Accordingly, Guwahati Public Health Engineering Division No. 1 took up the work of boring and installation of DTW fitted with hand pumps on 28 April 1995 through different contractors. While the boring and installation of DTWs at 86 points was in progress, the State Election Commissioner directed (3 May 1995) the department to stop all these works till completion of the Election as it constituted breach of the model code of conduct. Accordingly the department suspended the work on 4 May 1995 and all the materials were got extracted from the bore holes. While extracting materials, 73 out of 86 bore holes were completely damaged rendering them unfit for further use. An amount of Rs. 7.38 lakh was paid (between July 1995 and February 1996) to the contractors as labour charges for boring and installation of these 73 DTWs points and withdrawal of materials therefrom. After completion of election work of 73 DTWs was carried out afresh (between May 1995 and July 1995) through the contractors at an additional cost of Rs. 14.37 lakh (labour charges only). Thus due to taking up of developmental work in violation of model code of conduct of Municipal Corporation Election the entire expenditure of Rs. 7.38 lakh incurred in connection with initial boring and installation of 73 DTW points proved wasteful.

2.74 The department in their written reply has stated that the work for installation of deep tube well fitted with India Mark -II hand pump in Guwahati City was taken up as per detailed instruction laid down in the Govt. letter No.S/PHED/2/24, dated 20-4-95 for fulfilment of the essential need of Public. In this regard, it may be mentioned here that the works were suspended based on the report breed cast by Government media. Which was subsequently confirmed by the State Election Commissioner, Dispur vide the letter No. Sec.29/95/25 dated 3-5-95 directing the Secretary to the Govt. of Assam, PHED to stop the installation of tube wells till completion of the election to safe guard violation of model code of conduct.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

2.75 After threadbare discussion with the official representatives, the Committee could not be satisfied with the departmental submission. However, this objection has been dropped by the Committee owing to unavoidable circumstances.

**Delay in achievement of objective in respect of
water supply schemes.**

[Audit para 4.4/CAG (Civil)/1997-98]

2.76 The audit has pointed out that a test-check (in September 1997) of records of Jorhat PHE division No. 1 revealed that although the work of 10 schemes (MNP) started in 1987 and one T.S.P. scheme in 1982, the schemes remained in complete even after incurring expenditure of Rs. 1.34 crore upto July 1997 due to shortage of funds, materials and power of the 12 schemes only one scheme is nearing completion as 70 per cent of the work has been done and in respect of the remaining schemes the work of under ground reservoir/pump house had not been taken up. Thus, the expenditure incurred so far proved unproductive as the objective had not been achieved.

2.77 The Department by their written reply has stated that 12 Nos of Piped Scheme under Jorhat PHE Division could not be completed within the scheduled period of 3 (three) years. This is mainly due to want of sufficient fund for all MNP schemes in the State as required to complete the schemes within the scheduled time. Works of the scheme have been geared up without receipt of sufficient fund and 80% works of the ongoing schemes have been completed and 7(seven) Nos of schemes have already been made functioning and the rest schemes are expected to be completed at the earliest and necessary provision for fund is being arranged to complete the schemes for which budget provision for Rs. 50.00 (Fifty) lakhs have been made.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

2.78 The submission made by the official representatives have satisfied the Committee, hence this audit objection has been dropped by the Committee.

**Unauthorised expenditure on water supply
scheme at Govindanagar.**

[Audit para 4.5/CAG(Civil) 1997-98]

2.79 The audit has pointed out, that a test-check (September 1997) of the accounts of the Executive Engineer, Silchar PHE Division No.II revealed that the work was not awarded to any contractor due to dispute in selection of site. However the register of works maintained by the Division indicated that Rs.14.07 lakh had been spent on the scheme as of June 1997, which included Rs.10.48 lakh (107 per cent of the estimated cost) being expenditure on contingencies and work charged establishment of sub divisional office against admissible 5 per cent (Rs.0.46 lakh) as per estimate. The balance Rs.3.59 lakh was shown as spent on purchase of materials (Rs.2.74 lakh) for accommodation of staff stores of other schemes (Rs.0.53 lakh) and miscellaneous (Rs.0.32 lakh). The work charged establishment consisted of 19 persons for the period between June 1990 and September 1998 against the sanctioned strength of 8 posts. The service of staff were stated (EE) to have been utilised for smooth maintenance of official works of Sub-Division. Thus, against estimated cost of Rs.9.73 lakh, an amount of Rs.14.07 lakh had been spent without registering any physical progress.

2.80 The department by their written reply has stated that it is a fact that the upto date expenditure is not in proportion to the physical work done. It is also observed that the division has maintained excess work charged personal whose pay and salaries also contributed expenditure. The site dispute led to legal problem for which the department was served with pleaders notice with 80 CPC. The department has ordered enquiry vide letter No.PHE-121/Estt/95/18080, dated 28.10.2002. However steps have been taken to provide water supply to the public as the site dispute is now resolved. And works now are on progress.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

2.81 After threadbare discussion with the official witnesses the Committee has observed that certain hurdles had to be faced by the department during execution of those impending works. Whatsoever, by pursuance, those have been overcome by them. Hence, the Committee has decided to drop this Audit objection.

Unfruitful expenditure on piped water supply scheme.

[Audit para 4.6/CAG(Civil)/1997-98]

2.82 The audit has pointed out that after scrutiny (September 1997) of records of the Executive Engineer, PHE Division, North Lakhimpur revealed that the six schemes remained incomplete as of June 1997 after incurring expenditure of Rs. 71.77 lakh, as arrangement for water treatment plants could not be made. The schemes were as below :-

(Rupees in lakhs)			
Sl. No.	Name of the schemes	Amount	Expenditure upto June 1997
1.	Sankuchi DTW ARP	9.26	10.77
2.	Dhemagarh DTW TSP	7.42	12.70
3.	Merbil Harmuty ARP	9.87	15.42
4.	Kolakhanala Konwaspur ARP	7.65	11.52
5.	Gorsinga Kenwarpur TSP	7.95	13.19
6.	Amtola Knowarpur MNP	12.43	8.17
Total		54.57	71.77

Non-completion of the schemes was attributed by the division to non-availability of cement, mild steel rod etc. Raw water without treatment supplied under the scheme was not accepted by the beneficiaries and as a result expenditure of Rs. 71.77 lakh incurred on the schemes had proved unfruitful so far. Besides there was a cost overrun of Rs. 17.20 lakh due to delay in completion of the work.

2.83. The Department by their written reply has stated that out of 6 (six) Nos of schemes 5 (five) Nos of schemes are completed in all respect including treatment plant and now functioning satisfactorily and water supply has already been provided to the beneficiaries and the rest 1(one) No. of scheme i.e., Dhemagarh scheme was commissioned during 2/91. But due to drow down the D.T.W. did not work satisfactorily. Steps have already been taken for revival of the schemes.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

2.84 Having considered the submission of the official representatives, the Committee has observed the lapses thereon. But considering the initiative taken for revival of those defunct schemes, the Committee has however dropped this Audit objection.

**Unproductive expenditure a water supply schemes
[Audit para 4.2/CAG(Civil)/1998-99]**

2.85 The audit has pointed out that a test-check (August 1997) of records and information collected subsequently revealed that none of the water supply schemes had yet been commissioned/completed after incurring an expenditure of Rs.84.24 lakh as of March 1999. The non-commissioning/non-completion of schemes were attributed (September 1998) by the Executive Engineer to low water bearing strata, paucity of fund, remoteness of site and unwillingness of the contractors. The contention of the Executive Engineer was not tenable as all these conditions existed before commencement of the schemes and could have been taken care of while framing proposals and estimates. In the meantime, the execution cost of the schemes had gone up and it was estimated (September 1998) by the Executive Engineer of the Division that the revised cost will go up to Rs.1.56 crore. Thus due to laxity of the Department there was not only time overrun of 9 to 12 years from the date of administrative approval with resultant cost overrun of at least Rs.66.65 lakh, but also the expenditure of Rs.84.24 lakh incurred so far on the schemes was rendered unproductive besides depriving the beneficiaries of the intended benefit.

2.86 The Department by their written reply has stated that the scheme under the reference to the Audit were sanctioned in between 1986 to 1989. Although the schemes should have been completed within 3(three) years of sanction but it could not have been materialized in time due to multifarious reasons. During that period sufficient nos of schemes were approved leading to stringency of fund. Even then in the meantime, substantial physical progress have been achieved against these schemes creating liabilities. Out of the 9 (nine) Nos. of pipe W/S/S/, 5 (five) Nos. of schemes have already been commissioned and two nos. namely, Mojongpatia and Rajabarigrant pipe W/S/S/ have been completed. The rest schemes are expected to be completed at the earliest possible time. It is worth mentioning here that for last couple of years MNP fund has ceased to come at the rate as required to make progress the schemes. However, steps are taken to provide water supply to the public from these schemes.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

2.87 The Committee has been satisfied with the departmental submission. Hence, the Committee has decided to drop this Audit objection after careful consideration of the initiative taken by the Government for completion of those incomplete schemes.

Expenditure on water supply schemes exceeded estimated amount before execution.

[Audit para 4.2/CAG(Civil)/1999-2000]

2.88 The audit has pointed out that the Government in March 1988 sanctioned two water supply schemes under Accelerated Rural Water Supply programme to be executed by the Karimganj Public Health Engineering (PHE) Division. The estimated cost was Rs. 21.38 lakh (Kajirgram WSS: Rs. 10.08 ; Manusangan WSS: Rs. 11.30 lakh) which included a provision of Rs. 0.41 lakh for work charged staff and the period of completion was within three years from the date of sanction. No technical sanction was accorded for the works to be executed. In course of test-check (December 1999) of records of the Executive Engineer, Karimganj PHE Division, it was found that works on the schemes remained to be started even after twelve years from the date of sanction for which no reasons were stated. The financial progress report of different works as of September 1999 prepared by the Division, however, indicated that Rs. 32.90 lakh had already been spent on the schemes till September 1999. The Executive Engineer stated in February 2000 that the amount was spent for making payment of salary for work charged staff appointed against the schemes. The register of works was not maintained and the material at site account did not show any receipt of material under the schemes. The Division stated that the staff was doing the site preparation work and watch and ward duty. Thus, The expenditure on work charged staff far exceed the provisions before taking up actual execution of the schemes which was irregular, as its authenticity could not be verified in Audit.

2.89 The Department in their written reply has stated that the expenditure incurred is not in proportion to the amount of Administrative approval and physical progress made. It also appears that maintaining of W/C staff for such a long period is irregular. The departmental enquiry is initiated vide letter No. PHE-121/Estt/95/18076, dated 28-10-2002.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

2.90 The Committee has learnt that a departmental enquiry had been initiated. Thereupon, the Committee recommends to the Government that action taken on the findings of the enquiry be immediately intimated to the Committee accordingly.

ANNEXURE - I

COMPOSITION OF THE OUT GOING COMMITTEE
(2001-2003)

CHAIRMAN :

1. Shri Premodhar Bora

MEMBERS :

2. Shri Hitendra Nath Goswami.
 3. Shri Mission Ranjan Das
 4. Shri Dilip Kumar Saikia
 5. Shri Biswajit Daimary
 6. Shri Ajit Singh
 7. Smti. Pramila Rani Brahma
 8. Shri Dilder Rezza
 9. Shri Gopinath Das
 10. Shri Bidyasing Engleng
 11. Dr. Haren Das
 12. Shri Gautam Bora
 13. Shri Pani Ram Rabha.
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