

INDO-NEPAL BORDER ROAD PROJECT

**[Action Taken by the Government on the
Observations/Recommendations of the Committee
contained in their 89th Report (17th Lok Sabha)]**

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS**PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE
(2025-26)****THIRTY FIRST REPORT**

EIGHTEENTH LOK SABHA

**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

THIRTY FIRST REPORT

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE
(2025-26)

(EIGHTEENTH LOK SABHA)

**INDO-NEPAL BORDER ROAD
PROJECT**

[Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee contained in their 89th Report (17th Lok Sabha)]

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS



Presented to Lok Sabha on: **5 August, 2025**

Laid in Rajya Sabha on: **5 August, 2025**

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

August, 2025/ Shravana, 1947 (Saka)

CONTENTS

	PAGE
COMPOSITION OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE (2025-26)	
INTRODUCTION
CHAPTER I	Report.....
CHAPTER II	Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government.....
CHAPTER III	Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the replies received from the Government.....
CHAPTER IV	Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration.....
CHAPTER V	Observations/Recommendations in respect of which the Government have furnished interim replies.....

APPENDICES

I*	Minutes of the Sitting of the Public Accounts Committee (2025- 26) held on 25 July, 2025
II	Analysis of the Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee contained in their Eighty-ninth Report (Seventeenth Lok Sabha)

COMPOSITION OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE
(2025-26)

Shri K. C. Venugopal - **Chairperson**

MEMBERS

LOK SABHA

2. Shri T. R. Baalu
3. Dr. Nishikant Dubey
4. Shri Jagdambika Pal
5. Shri Jai Parkash
6. Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad
7. Shri C. M. Ramesh
8. Shri Magunta Sreenivasulu Reddy
9. Prof. Sougata Ray
10. Smt. Aparajita Sarangi
11. Dr. Amar Singh
12. Shri Tejasvi Surya
13. Shri Anurag Singh Thakur
14. Shri Balashowry Vallabhaneni
15. Shri Dharmendra Yadav

RAJYA SABHA

16. Shri Ashokrao Shankarrao Chavan
17. Shri Shaktisinh Gohil
18. Dr. K. Laxman
19. Shri Praful Patel
20. Shri Sukhendu Sekhar Ray
21. Shri Tiruchi Siva
22. Shri Sudhanshu Trivedi

Secretariat

- | | | | |
|----|--------------------------|---|-------------------|
| 1. | Shri H. Ram Prakash | - | Joint Secretary |
| 2. | Smt. Archana Pathania | - | Director |
| 3. | Shri Pankaj Kumar Sharma | - | Deputy Secretary |
| 4. | Smt. Rinku Awasthi | - | Executive Officer |

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson, Public Accounts Committee (2025-26) having been authorised by the Committee, do present this Thirty-first Report (Eighteenth Lok Sabha) on Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee contained in their 89th Report (Seventeenth Lok Sabha) on “Indo-Nepal Border Road Project”.

2. The 89th Report was presented to Lok Sabha/laid in Rajya Sabha on 7 February, 2024. Replies of the Government to all the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Report were received. The Public Accounts Committee considered and adopted the draft Report at their Sitting held on 25 July, 2025. Minutes of the Sitting are given at Appendix I.

3. For facility of reference and convenience, the Observations and Recommendations of the Committee have been printed in **bold** in the body of the Report.

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

5. An analysis of the action taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations contained in the 89th Report (Seventeenth Lok Sabha) is given at Appendix-II

NEW DELHI:

25 July, 2025
03 Shravana, 1947 (Saka)

K.C. VENUGOPAL

Chairperson,
Public Accounts Committee

CHAPTER - I

REPORT

This Report of the Public Accounts Committee deals with the Action Taken by the Government on the Observations and Recommendations of the Committee contained in their Eighty-Ninth Report (17th Lok Sabha) on "Indo-Nepal Border Road Project".

2. The Eighty-Ninth Report was presented to Lok Sabha/laid in Rajya Sabha on 7 February, 2024. It contained thirteen Observations/Recommendations. The Action Taken Notes on all the Observations/Recommendations have been received from the Ministry of Home Affairs, and are categorized as under:

- (i) Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government:

Para Nos. 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,10,13

Total: 9
Chapter - II

- (ii) Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the replies received from the Government:

Para No. NIL

Total: 0
Chapter - III

- (iii) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration:

Para No. 11, 12

Total: 2
Chapter - IV

- (iv) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which Government have furnished interim replies/no replies:

Para No. 8, 9

Total: 2
Chapter - V

3. The detailed examination of the subject by the Committee had revealed certain shortcomings/deficiencies on the part of the Ministry of Home Affairs. The Committee had accordingly given their observations/recommendations in their Eighty-ninth Report.

4. The Action Taken Notes furnished by the Ministry of Home Affairs, on each of the Observations/Recommendations of the Committee contained in their Eighty-Ninth Report have been reproduced in the relevant Chapters of this Report. The Committee will now deal with the action taken by the Government, on some of their Observations/Recommendations which either need reiteration and/or merit comments.

5. **The Committee desire the Ministry of Home Affairs to furnish Action Taken Notes in respect of Observations/ Recommendations contained in Chapter I of the Report, positively within three months of the presentation of the Report to the Parliament.**

RECOMMENDATION NO. 2

Status and Physical Progress of INBRP

6. The Committee in their Original Report had recommended as under-

“The Committee note from the reply of the Ministry that out of the estimated length of 1299.80 km , Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) for encumbrance free length of 844.65 km had been approved by High Level Empowered Committee and DPRs for length with encumbrance for a total of 455.15 km , which included 377.15km in Uttar Pradesh and 118 Km in Uttarakhand, were still awaited. The Committee also note that work had been completed for only 431.34 Km and was under progress (Formation completed) for 244.81 km under the Project. While noting that for around 50 percent of encumbrance free length, either the work was in progress or was not taken up even after more than 10 years of the inception of the project, the Committee while expressing disappointment at the slow pace of the project recommend the Ministry to take proactive measures to expedite the

completion of works on these encumbrance free segments on priority basis with a view to achieving faster mobility of troops to dominate the sensitive border more effectively.”

Action taken reply of Ministry

7. The Ministry of Home Affairs in their action taken reply stated as under:-

“The recommendation of the committee has been considered by the MHA and timely review of the remaining stretches in Indo border road project are being done to expedite its completion at the earliest.

The executing agencies and the BGF are also directed to project the hindrances, if any, in achieving the targeted progress, so that, early solution for the same may be initiated by the MHA.

Further, in MHA the border infrastructure projects are monitored through HLEC, headed by the Home Secretary and Border wise quarterly meeting of Steering Committee headed by the Secretary (Department of Border Management) besides monthly reviews at the level of Joint Secretary (BM-I). Hon’ble Home Minister also reviews the border-wise projects from time to time. The projects are also monitored through Fortnightly/Weekly progress reports received from the concerned stakeholders. The concerned Border Guarding Forces (User Department) are also be responsible for constantly monitoring and facilitating the projects through respective field formations. They also provide feedbacks on monthly basis and attend monitoring meetings.”

Vetting comments of Audit

8. Vetting Comments of Audit are as under: -

“PAC may be intimated about the following :

- (i) Status of Detailed Project Reports for length with encumbrance in Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand

- (ii) Status of work on encumbrance free segments; and
- (iii) Proactive measures taken by the Ministry to expedite the completion of works”

Ministry’s Final Reply

9. Updated Action Taken reply of the Ministry is as under: -

“With regard to the DPRs for the length with encumbrance in UP which is falling in the forest & wildlife areas, the preliminary estimates for the 325.09 km road length have been received from PWD Uttar Pradesh in MHA. Further, in the various meetings held with all stakeholders, it has been decided to construct a total of 07 bridges in areas falling under forest and wildlife, out of which the cost of 02 bridges would be borne by the State Govt. of UP and the cost of 05 bridges would be borne by the Govt. of India. The preliminary estimates of these 05 bridges have also been received from PWD, Uttar Pradesh.

These preliminary estimates were forwarded to BFR cell, CPWD for its technical scrutiny. After their scrutiny, the matter will be placed before the competent authority for consideration and approval.

With regard to the DPRs for the length with encumbrance in Uttarakhand, the stretches with encumbrance in Uttarakhand are falling in the submergence area of Pancheshwar Dam which is yet to be finalized. Regular meetings are being conducted in MHA with all stakeholders to finalize these stretches. In the meeting held in MHA on 30.04.2024, SSB was directed to submit a comprehensive proposal exploring different possibilities of the area. After the proposal containing the DPRs with multiple options was received, a meeting was held on 14.08.2024 in MHA under the Chairmanship of Joint Secretary (BM-I), MHA to deliberate on the said DPRs. In the meeting, it was decided that PWD Uttarakhand would assess the options in DPRs and provide their views from financial and

technical feasibility view to MHA and thereafter, an inspection of these stretches led by MHA with SSB and PWD Uttarakhand will be planned.

The status of work in encumbrance free segments in Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar is as under :

State	Total nos. of approved encumbrance free stretches	No. of completed encumbrance free stretches	No. of Ongoing encumbrance free stretches
Bihar	06 Nos.	04 Nos	02 Nos.
Uttar Pradesh	12 Nos	09 Nos.	03 Nos.
Uttarakhand	02 Nos.	02 Nos	--

MHA holds various meetings with stakeholders to resolve the hindrances in completing the INBR project. The progress of ongoing stretches is regularly monitored in MHA through meetings and inspections at times. On the other hand, continuous attempts are being made in MHA for finalizing the length with encumbrance too in the states of Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand.”

Comments of the Committee

10. The Committee in their Original Report had noted that out of the estimated length of 1299.80 km , Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) for encumbrance free length of 844.65 km had been approved by High Level Empowered Committee and DPRs for length with encumbrance for a total of 455.15 km , which included 377.15 km in Uttar Pradesh and 118 Km in Uttarakhand, were still awaited. It was also apparent to the Committee that work had been completed for only 431.34 Km and was under progress (Formation completed) for 244.81 km under the Project. The Committee while expressing disappointment at the slow pace of the project had recommended the Ministry to take proactive measures to expedite the

completion of works on these encumbrance free segments on priority basis with a view to achieving faster mobility of troops to dominate the sensitive border more effectively.

The Ministry in their Action Taken Notes had replied that the border infrastructure projects are monitored through HLEC (High Level Empowered Committee), headed by the Home Secretary and Border wise quarterly meeting of Steering Committee headed by the Secretary (Department of Border Management) besides monthly reviews at the level of Joint Secretary (BM-I). The Ministry also submitted that Hon'ble Home Minister also reviews the border-wise projects from time to time. The projects are also monitored through Fortnightly/Weekly progress reports received from the concerned stakeholders. The concerned Border Guarding Forces (User Department) are also responsible for constantly monitoring and facilitating the projects through respective field formations and provide feedbacks on monthly basis and attend monitoring meetings.

Further, Audit had directed the Ministry to update the Committee about the status of length with encumbrances and encumbrance free segments and about the measures taken to expedite the completion of works.

Accordingly, the Ministry further submitted that with regard to the DPRs for the length with encumbrance in UP which is falling in the forest & wildlife areas, the preliminary estimates for the 325.09 km road length have been received from PWD Uttar Pradesh in MHA. Further, in the various meetings held with all stakeholders, it has been decided to construct a total of 07 bridges in areas falling under forest and wildlife, out of which the cost of 02 bridges would be borne by the State Govt. of UP and the cost of 05 bridges would be borne by the Govt. of India. The preliminary estimates of these 05 bridges have also been received from PWD, Uttar Pradesh. These preliminary estimates were forwarded to BFR cell, CPWD for its technical scrutiny. After their scrutiny, the matter will be placed before the competent authority for consideration and approval. With regard to the DPRs for the length with encumbrance in Uttarakhand, the stretches with encumbrance in

Uttarakhand are falling in the submergence area of Pancheshwar Dam which is yet to be finalized. Regular meetings are being conducted in MHA with all stakeholders to finalize these stretches. In the meeting held in MHA on 30.04.2024, SSB was directed to submit a comprehensive proposal exploring different possibilities of the area. After the proposal containing the DPRs with multiple options was received, a meeting was held on 14.08.2024 in MHA under the Chairmanship of Joint Secretary (BM-I), MHA to deliberate on the said DPRs. In the meeting, it was decided that PWD Uttarakhand would assess the options in DPRs and provide their views from financial and technical feasibility view to MHA and thereafter, an inspection of these stretches led by MHA with SSB and PWD Uttarakhand will be planned.

The Committee are satisfied with the reply provided by the Ministry and appreciate the fact that the Ministry had decided to construct bridges in forest areas. Further, the DPR for stretches of roads in the submergence area of the Pancheshwar Dam in Uttarakhand are also being looked into by PWD Uttarakhand. The Committee would like to be apprised of the progress in this regard and expect the Ministry would set definite timelines for the completion of the project in these areas.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 8

Special mechanism for strategic projects

11. The Committee in their Original Report had recommended as under-

“The Committee note that under the Indo-Nepal Border Road Project, Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) were awaited for lengths with encumbrance for a total of 455.15 km , which includes 377.15km in Uttar Pradesh and 118 Km in Uttarakhand. In Uttar Pradesh, road alignment is affected by Forest & Wildlife areas while in case of Uttarakhand, it is affected by Pancheshwar Dam on river Kali, which involves interest of both India and Nepal. Recognizing the strategic importance of projects ensuring national security with the development of border areas, the Committee strongly believe that a specialized approach is obligatory to ensure swift coordination and resolution of challenges, particularly in States, where road

alignments are intricately tied to Forest & Wildlife areas. With a view to streamline the decision-making process and accelerate the progress of these projects of vital nature, aligning with the broader objectives of national security and border development, the Committee opine and recommend that the Ministry may pursue the State Governments to use the single window clearance system invariably so that the statutory clearances and road alignments affected by Forest & Wildlife areas for the strategic projects such as the Indo-Nepal Border Road Project are not hindered and related issues are effectively addressed.”

Action taken reply of Ministry

12. The Ministry of Home Affairs in their action taken reply stated as under:-

“MHA has a system of monthly meetings at the level of Joint Secretary (BM-I) and Border wise quarterly Steering Committee meetings headed by Secretary (Department of Border Management) to discuss all pending issues including Land Acquisition, Forest Clearances (FC), Wildlife Clearances (WLC) etc. The Status of FC/WLC on Parivesh Portal of Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change is regularly monitored.

This Ministry has also recently taken up a few cases with Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change after their notification dated 29.11.2023 regarding exemption as strategic linear project of national importance.”

Vetting comments of Audit

13. Vetting Comments of Audit are as under: -

“Although, this Ministry has informed about the existing system/procedure followed for the supervision of projects, however, the recommendation of the PAC to pursue the State Governments to use the single window clearance system invariably to address the related issues has not been addressed. The same may be furnished to the PAC.”

Ministry's Final Reply

14. Updated Action Taken reply of the Ministry is as under: -

“This Ministry is following the existing procedures as stipulated for land acquisition, forest & wildlife clearances. However, the recommendation of the committee has been noted for compliance.”

Comments of the Committee

15. The Committee, in their Original Report , while recognizing the strategic importance of projects ensuring national security with the development of border areas, recommended that the Ministry may pursue the State Governments to invariably use the single window clearance system so that the the statutory clearances and road alignments affected by Forest & Wildlife areas for the strategic projects such as the Indo-Nepal Border Road Project are not hindered.

The Ministry of Home Affairs in their Action Taken Reply said that MHA has a system of monthly meetings at the level of Joint Secretary (BM-I) and Border wise quarterly Steering Committee meetings headed by Secretary (Department of Border Management) to discuss all pending issues including Land Acquisition, Forest Clearances (FC), Wildlife Clearances (WLC) etc. The Status of FC/WLC on Parivesh Portal of Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change is regularly monitored. They also informed the Committee that they had taken up a few cases with Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change after their notification dated 29.11.2023 regarding exemption as strategic linear project of national importance. The Audit, in their vetting comments, asked the Ministry to furnish the status of the implementation of the single window clearance system.

The Ministry, in their updated Action Taken Reply said that they are following the existing procedures as stipulated for land acquisition, forest &

wildlife clearances and the recommendation of the Committee has been noted for compliance.

The Committee are disappointed with the reply of the Ministry as it does not mention anything about the implementation of the single window clearance system. Despite being pointed out by Audit, the Ministry have not made any effort towards the streamlining of the system which may contribute to delays in the decision making process of the Indo-Nepal Border Road Project. The Committee desire that the Ministry may impress upon the State Government of UP and Uttarakhand to develop a single window clearance system. The Committee, therefore, emphasise and reiterate their earlier recommendation that the single window clearance system may be implemented for statutory clearances like Land Acquisition, Forest Clearances, Wildlife Clearances etc. so that the strategic projects such as the Indo-Nepal Border Road Project are not hindered.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 9

Non-connectivity to Border Out Posts (BOPs) from the main alignment of proposed roads

16. The Committee in their Original Report had recommended as under-

“The Committee note that out of 471 Border Out Posts (BOPs) established by SSB, 355 are connected by roads and on completion of Indo Nepal Border Project, 81 more BOPs will be connected. Out of 355 BOPs, 247 BOPs are on the alignment of the main border road and the remaining 108 BOPs are connected with the main Indo Nepal Border Road through other roads constructed under various schemes by Rural Engineering Organisation (REO) such as Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), Border Area Development Programme (BADP) etc. According to the Ministry, the original plan was not per se to connect the BOPs but to have a road close to the border. The Ministry added that the intent was to have a road close to BOPs where link roads and feeder roads can be planned later

on. Further, a separate scheme was under process to provide link roads, foot tracks to remaining SSB BOPs and important patrolling routes. Taking note of the fact that SSB is performing its operational needs through BOPs on INB road and through connectivity of other roads for these BOPs, the Committee in no uncertain words recommend that the Ministry may undertake immediate action to finalize and execute the Scheme for providing link roads and foot tracks to remaining SSB Border Out Posts (BOPs), and important patrolling routes in a time-bound manner under intimation to the Committee.”

Action taken reply of Ministry

17. The Ministry of Home Affairs in their action taken reply stated as under:-

“At present, out of the total 734 BOPs of SSB on Indo-Nepal and Indo-Bhutan Border, road connectivity exists in 426 BOPs. A fresh proposal containing link roads, foot tracks and staging camps along Indo-Nepal and Indo-Bhutan border is under consideration which aims at providing road connectivity to the remaining non-connected BOPs of SSB.”

Vetting comments of Audit

18. Vetting Comments of Audit are as under: -

“PAC may be apprised with the tentative timelines for finalization of the scheme for providing link roads and foot tracks to remaining 308 BOPs.”

Ministry’s Final Reply

19. Updated Action Taken reply of the Ministry is as under: -

“A consolidated proposal containing lateral & axial roads, foot tracks and staging camps along Indo-Nepal and Indo-Bhutan Borders is under consideration in Ministry. As the proposal contains various components along both borders and projects large financial implications, thus it may take

reasonable time for its technical scrutiny and final approval by the competent authority.”

Comments of the Committee

20. The Committee, in their original Report, noted that out of 471 Border Out Posts (BOPs) established by SSB, 355 are connected by roads and on completion of Indo Nepal Border Project, 81 more BOPs will be connected. Out of 355 BOPs, 247 BOPs are on the alignment of the main border road and the remaining 108 BOPs are connected with the main Indo Nepal Border Road through other roads constructed under various schemes by Rural Engineering Organisation (REO) such as Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), Border Area Development Programme (BADP) etc. The Committee, while taking note of the fact that SSB is performing its operational needs through BOPs on INB road and through connectivity of other roads for these BOPs, had recommended that the Ministry may undertake immediate action to finalize and execute the Scheme for providing link roads and foot tracks to remaining SSB Border Out Posts (BOPs) and important patrolling routes in a time-bound manner under intimation to the Committee.

The Ministry, in their Action Taken Notes, informed that out of the total 734 BOPs of SSB on Indo-Nepal and Indo-Bhutan Border, road connectivity exists in 426 BOPs. A fresh proposal containing link roads, foot tracks and staging camps along Indo-Nepal and Indo-Bhutan border is under consideration which aims at providing road connectivity to the remaining non-connected BOPs of SSB. The Audit had observed that the tentative timelines for finalization of the Scheme for providing link roads and foot tracks to remaining 308 BOPs may be apprised to the Committee on Public Accounts.

Subsequently, the Ministry, in their updated Action Taken Notes, had submitted that, a consolidated proposal containing lateral & axial roads, foot tracks and staging camps along Indo-Nepal and Indo-Bhutan Borders is under consideration in Ministry. As the proposal contains various

components along both borders and projects large financial implications, thus it may take reasonable time for its technical scrutiny and final approval by the competent authority.

The Committee note that the proposal has various components having large financial implications due to which its scrutiny and final approval will take time. The Committee regard this project as significant for the Seema Suraksha Bal and emphasise upon its timebound implementation. The Committee further impress upon the Ministry to make all out efforts for the prompt implementation of the project along the Indo-Nepal and Indo-Bhutan borders. Therefore, the Committee would like to be apprised of the progress done in the matter on a regular basis and would like to see the culmination of the project with road connectivity for all Border Out Posts which are crucial for national security.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 11

Irregular Release of Rs. 2.34 crores by MHA

21. The Committee in their Original Report had recommended as under-

“The Committee note from the audit findings that as per the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), the expenditure on shifting of utility services and forestation charges were to be borne by the State Governments. Scrutiny of records in MHA revealed that HLEC in its 45th meeting approved the revised estimates of three DPRs aggregating Rs. 195.81 crore and two DPRs aggregating Rs. 147.23 crore respectively, which included the charges of Utility Shifting and forestation aggregating Rs. 2.34 crore sent by UP Government. The approval of utilities shifting charges aggregating Rs. 2.34 crore by MHA was thus, irregular. In this regard, the Ministry stated that the matter was deliberated in the Steering Committee meeting and PWD, UP requested that the extra sanction of Rs. 2.34 Crore be adjusted in the grant for next financial year. The Committee, in this regard, desire that an enquiry be instituted by the Ministry to ascertain the reasons for irregular release of Rs. 2.34 Crore. The Committee also desire that the Ministry issue necessary

instructions to strengthen the internal checks in the Ministry to avoid recurrence of such lapses in future.”

Action Taken reply of the Ministry

22. The Ministry in their Action Taken Notes have stated as under:-

“PWD UP has informed that there is a practice of making provision of utility shifting, land acquisition, afforestation etc. in DPRs of construction of road work in UP. The utility shifting was carried out on new construction/upgradation of old existing roads. The expenditure under utility shifting was incurred on the following departments:

- (i) UPPCL (Electric Pole shifting)
- (ii) UP Jal Nigam (Shifting of Handpumps)
- (iii) Forest Department (Afforestation)

However, as per the MoU signed between Govt. of UP and MHA (Govt. of India), “PWD UP being the owner of the roads constructed under the project, will acquire the land, if necessary, required for the construction/upgradation/widening of roads and bear the cost thereof. PWD UP will also obtain the necessary clearances including forest/wildlife clearances on behalf of SSB/MHA, Gol, wherever required and make payment for the charges on account of Net Present Value (NPV) of land, compensatory afforestation etc. This also includes obtaining clearances, if any, from utility authorities related to telephone, water supply, electricity etc. PWD UP will also bear the cost of any regarding shifting of such utilities.”

MHA vide its letter dated 11.01.2023 has already drawn attention of the then Chief Secretary, Govt. of Uttar Pradesh about the specific observation of the C & AG as contained in its Report no. 23 of 2021 on Performance Audit of Indo-Nepal Border Road Project concerning State of UP, to look into the matter personally and take appropriate corrective measures as suggested in the audit report as well as if required, disciplinary/administrative action against the officials/contractors responsible for the time and cost overrun of the project be taken.

It is mentioned here that PWD, UP vide letter no. 41INB/21INB/2013 dated 20.05.2022 had informed that Rs. 22.13 Cr. was pending for payment for construction of Indo-Nepal Border Road project in District Maharajganj (UP). Accordingly, the said amount was adjusted in FY 2022-23 by deducting Rs. 2.34 Cr and finally after the adjustment, Rs. 19.79 Cr. was released to PWD

UP vide this Ministry's sanction order no. 11012/30/2022-BM-V dated 06.09.2023."

Vetting comments of Audit

23. While vetting the above ATNs, the Audit made the following comments:-

"Ministry's reply is silent on the following recommendations of the committee

—

- (i) That an enquiry be instituted by the Ministry to ascertain the reasons for irregular release of Rs. 2.34 Crores
- (ii) To issue necessary instructions to strengthen the internal checks in the Ministry to avoid recurrence of such lapses in future"

Ministry's Final Reply

24. Updated Action Taken reply of the Ministry is as under: -

"The revised DPRs of the concerned stretches having the provision of Utility shifting were received in this Ministry in 2018 and technically scrutinized by BFR Cell, CPWD thereafter. The RDPRs were appraised by Technical Committee and 45th High Level Empowered Committee in 2018 itself. The Administrative approval & Expenditure Sanction (AA&ES) of the said stretches was also issued in 2018 with the provision of utility shifting contained in them.

Notably, after issuance of AA&ES of said stretches with revised estimates, the MoU between MHA and PWD, Govt. of Uttar Pradesh was finalized. The MoU was signed in the year 2021 which contained that charges for utility shifting would be borne by the State Govt. MHA had also drawn attention of the then Chief Secretary, Uttar Pradesh with the request to take appropriate corrective measures and if required, disciplinary/administrative action against the officials responsible for cost overrun and delay in project. It may also be noted that the irregularity of Rs. 2.34 Cr. has also been resolved and adjusted by this Ministry in the following manner :

“PWD, UP vide letter no. 41INB/21INB/2013 dated 20.05.2022 had informed that Rs. 22.13 Cr. was pending for payment for construction of Indo-Nepal Border Road project in District Maharajganj (UP). The irregularity amounting to Rs. 2.34 was adjusted in FY 2022-23 by deducting Rs. 2.34 Cr and finally after the adjustment, Rs. 19.79 Cr. was released to PWD UP vide this Ministry’s sanction order no. 11012/30/2022-BM-V dated 06.09.2023”.

Comments of the Committee

25. The Committee in their original Report had pointed out the irregular release of Rs. 2.34 crores by Ministry of Home Affairs. It was revealed that High Level Empowered Committee had approved the revised estimates of three Detailed Project Reports aggregating Rs. 195.81 crore and two DPRs aggregating Rs. 147.23 crore respectively which included the charges of Utility shifting and afforestation. The Committee observed that a separate sanction of Rs. 2.34 crore was therefore irregular. The Committee had, therefore, recommended that an enquiry be instituted by the Ministry to ascertain the reasons for irregular sanction of Rs. 2.34 crore and also to initiate measures to strengthen the internal control mechanism to avoid recurrence of such lapses in future.

The Ministry in their ATN has explained that according to the MoU signed between Govt. of Uttar Pradesh and Ministry of Home Affairs (Govt. of India) , PWD UP would obtain clearances from utility authorities related to telephone, water supply, electricity etc. and will bear the cost of shifting of such utilities. Attention of the then Chief Secretary, Govt. of UP has already been drawn to the observation of the C & AG as contained in its Report No. 23 of 2021 on Performance Audit of Indo- Nepal Border Road Project. PWD, UP clarified that an amount of Rs. 22.13 crore was pending for payment for construction of Indo- Nepal Border Road Project in Maharajganj (UP) and Rs. 2.34 crore got adjusted in that. Consequently, Rs. 19.79 crore was released to them.

The Committee find that the reply of the Ministry is evasive and does not justify wrongful release of public funds. The mere fact that the funds have been deducted/adjusted from the payment due to the UP PWD does not absolve them of their responsibilities. The Committee recommended for institution of an enquiry to find out the reason behind irregular release of funds. Therefore, Committee would reiterate their earlier recommendation to institute an enquiry into the matter and issue necessary instructions to strengthen the internal checks in the Ministry to avoid recurrence of such lapses in future.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 12

Works pertaining to construction of road and bridges under the Indo-Nepal Border Road Project

26. The Committee in their Original Report had recommended as under-

“The Committee learn from the replies furnished by the Ministry that after the selection of this subject for detailed examination by the Committee, several pending works pertaining to construction of road and bridges under the Indo-Nepal Border Road Project have since been completed or taken off in Uttar Pradesh. The works completed inter-alia include road in the district of Siddharthnagar from Aligarhwa to Ganwaria and Khunwa-Banganga-Bhusaula, construction from Latahawa Ghat to Pakarhiwa via Karamaini, Ramnagar, Kakarahwa and Bajha, and pending work relating to the bridge on the Banganga river. Besides the work of channelization to bring the stream of the river, which has shifted, under the bridge is in progress. The Committee, while appreciating the initiatives taken by the Ministry pursuant to the constant push of the Committee, recommend that channelization work in areas where river streams have shifted may be completed in a time bound manner so as to expedite the overall completion of the Indo-Nepal Border Road Project.”

Action taken reply of Ministry

27. The Ministry of Home Affairs in their action taken reply stated as under:-

“The matter was taken up with PWD, UP and they have informed that the construction work of Banganga river bridge has already been completed. Due to meandering of river, it has been shifted westward 40-50 m from its normal course of flow. Approach road on east side of bridge has been completed upon surfacing (Black top). Approach road construction on west side is under progress. It is informed that remaining approach work will be completed in coming months.”

Vetting comments of Audit

28. Vetting Comments of Audit are as under: -

“PAC may be apprised with the current status along with the timelines for completion of the work.”

Ministry's Final Reply

29. Updated Action Taken reply of the Ministry is as under: -

“PWD UP was requested to furnish the current status in this matter and they have informed that the inspection of the Banganga river bridge was done in April 2024 by UP PWD and Project Manager of Bridge Corporation and it was decided that the span of bridge in westward side needs to be extended. The bridge corporation has framed and submitted the estimates of extended span of bridge to UP PWD which is under check by Bridge Wing of UP PWD.”

Comments of the Committee

30. The Committee in their Original Report had pointed out that several pending works pertaining to construction of road and bridges under the Indo- Nepal Border Road Project had been completed in Uttar Pradesh. The works completed include the bridge on the Banganga river. The work of channelization to bring the stream of river, which has shifted, under the bridge was under progress. The Committee, while appreciating the initiatives taken by the Ministry pursuant to the constant push of the Committee, had recommended that channelization work in areas where river streams have shifted may be completed in a time bound manner so as to expedite the overall completion of the Indo-Nepal Border Road Project.

The Ministry had submitted in their Action Taken Reply that the construction work of Banganga river bridge had already been completed. Due to meandering of river, it has been shifted westward 40-50 m from its normal course of flow. They also informed the Committee that the approach road on east side of bridge has been completed and approach road construction on west side is under progress. They also updated the Committee that the remaining approach work will be completed in coming months. The Audit have observed that the Committee on Public Accounts may be apprised with the current status along with the timelines for completion of the work.

The Ministry of Home Affairs, in the updated Action Taken Notes have submitted that Public Works Department, Uttar Pradesh have informed that the inspection of the Banganga river bridge was done in April, 2024 by UP PWD and Project Manager of Bridge Corporation and it was decided that the span of bridge in westward side needs to be extended. The Bridge Corporation has framed and submitted the estimates of extended span of bridge to UP PWD which is under check by Bridge Wing of UP PWD.

The Committee are dissatisfied with the reply submitted by the Ministry as it does not provide specific answer to the Observations of the

Committee. The Ministry have not replied about the progress in channelization of the river stream and have not provided any timeline about the completion of the same. Further, the estimates of the extended span of the bridge has been submitted by Bridge Corporation which is being checked by the Bridge Wing of UP PWD. The Committee reiterate their recommendation and would like to be apprised of the current status of the channelisation as well as the construction of the extended span of the bridge. The Committee also press upon the Ministry to speed up the work and complete it in a time bound manner so as to expedite the overall completion of the Indo-Nepal Border Road Project.

CHAPTER – II

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

Observation/Recommendation No. 1

Indo-Nepal Border Road Project

The Committee note that Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) approved in November, 2010, the proposal of Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) for construction / upgradation of 1377 km of strategic border roads along Indo-Nepal Border (INB), to enable the SSB to dominate the sensitive border effectively, in the States of Bihar (564km), Uttar Pradesh (640 km) and Uttarakhand (173 km) at a total estimated cost of Rs. 3853 Crore with a timeframe of five years i.e., by March 2016. Public Works Department (PWD) /Road Construction Department (RCD) of State Govts of Bihar, UP and Uttarakhand were the executing agencies. While the cost of construction was to be borne by Central Government, State Governments had to bear the cost of land, ensure wildlife and forest clearances, other statutory clearances and look after maintenance of roads. The Committee also note from the Audit observation that the project could not be completed by March 2016 due to delays in acquisition of land and obtaining of environment, forest and wildlife clearances by the three States. Therefore, extension of time was given by the CCS in February, 2018 up to 31.12.2019 for completion of those ongoing works which were free from encumbrance and up to 31.12.2022 for completion of balance work involving land with encumbrance. High Level Empowered Committee (HLEC) of MHA which is headed by Union Home Secretary empowered by CCS to consider any change in the projects in the time and cost estimates within overall ceilings sanctioned by CCS in December, 2019, further extended the timeline up to 31.12.2022 for the whole project i.e., encumbrance free stretches and stretches with encumbrance.

The Committee, while noting from the submission of the Ministry that based on the recommendation of Technical Committee, the timelines, as approved by HLEC in December, 2019/ January, 2021, have been further extended for encumbrance free and encumbered stretches separately are constrained to observe that a strategically important project has been delayed due to lack of proper survey and planning at the initial stages. In light of strategic significance of the project, aimed at enhancing troop mobility, controlling anti-national activities, and facilitating border area development, the Committee are of the considered opinion that swift resolution of issues involved and timely completion of this project is imperative for bolstering national security and ensuring effective border management. The Committee while hoping that the work on the encumbrance free stretches would have been completed within the timelines desire to be apprised of the details of the completed and the ongoing projects and therefore, recommend that earnest efforts should be taken to ensure completion of the other stretches within the revised timelines. The Committee would like to be apprised of the concrete steps taken in this regard mentioning *inter alia* the details of strategic initiatives taken till now to avert any potential impact on law and order in border areas due to delays in the execution of the Indo Nepal Border Road Project.

(Sl. No. 01; Para 01 of the 89th Report of the Public Accounts Committee)
(17th Lok Sabha)

Action taken by Ministry

The Indo-Nepal Border Road project was conceptualized in the year 2006 and in-principle approval of Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) was obtained in the year 2010. Powers were given to High Level Empowered Committee (HLEC), under the chairmanship of Union Home Secretary to consider and approve the variation in length, cost estimates, alignment, inter-se change in time schedule.

The stretch-wise DPRs were approved by various HLECs. However, in the meantime, the New Land Acquisition Act, 2013 came in force w.e.f. 01.01.2014,

which hampered the project to a large extent and also necessitated to approach CCS and accordingly, CCS in 2018 empowered HLEC to consider any change in the projects in the time and cost estimates within overall ceiling sanction by CCS. The state-wise status of completed & undergoing projects is as under :

State	Total approved stretches	Completed stretches	Ongoing stretches
Bihar	17 Nos	07 Nos	10 Nos.
Uttar Pradesh	12 Nos	09 Nos.	03 Nos.
Uttarakhand	02 Nos.	02 Nos	--

Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) is the dedicated Border Guarding Force deployed along Indo-Nepal Border. It safeguards the security of the border area and promote sense of security among the people living in border area. SSB on an average conducts 1100 nakas& 1150 patrolling on daily basis. Through Integrated check posts, Border Interaction teams, Anti-Human Trafficking Units, Rescue & Relief Team, Small Action Teams and with the help of technical surveillance through CCTVs, Face Recognition system (FRS), Automatic number plate reader (ANPR), X-Ray Baggage Inspection System (X-BIS), the SSB ensures effective domination at Indo-Nepal Border. To keep a check on trans-border crimes, smuggling and other illegal activities on those areas where border roads are in progress / yet to be completed, SSB conducts patrolling on foot.

Vetting comments of Audit

Audit vide their UO No. R.R./15-7/2024-25/ 165 dated 8.8.2024 have vetted the Action Taken Note with the following remarks:

PAC may be intimated about the following :

- (i) Revised timelines set for completion of the ongoing stretches;
- (ii) Expected timeline of completion of the ongoing stretches; and

- (iii) Efforts taken by Ministry to complete the stretches within the revised timeline

Ministry's Final Reply

As per the inputs provided by the concerned executing agencies on the expected timelines and the revised timelines as approved by HLECs from time to time, the timelines as on date are as under:

Uttarakhand		
<i>Timelines</i>	<i>Encumbrance free stretches (Only a bridge of length 690 meters)</i>	<i>Stretches with encumbrance</i>
Revised timelines approved	30.06.2024	NA
Expected timelines	31.10.2025	NA
Uttar Pradesh		
<i>Timelines</i>	<i>Encumbrance free stretches (03 nos. of stretches ongoing)</i>	<i>Stretches with encumbrance</i>
Revised timelines approved	31.03.2024	NA
Expected timelines	31.10.2024	NA
Bihar		
<i>Timelines</i>	<i>Encumbrance free stretches (02nos. of stretches ongoing)</i>	<i>Stretches with encumbrance (10nos. of stretches ongoing)</i>
Revised timelines approved	30.06.2024	31.12.2024
Expected timelines	31.01.2025	30.06.2025

The timely review of the ongoing stretches under the Indo-Nepal Border Road project is being done at the level of Joint Secretary (BM-I), MHA in monthly review meetings and at the level of Secretary (BM), MHA in Border-wise quarterly meetings of Steering Committee. The status of necessary clearances to be obtained and the progress report of each ongoing stretch provided by the executing agencies are assessed during the review meetings. The executing agencies are also requested to project their hindrance, if any, in completing the project within the approved timelines by HLEC.

The inspections of the stretches are also being undertaken by Project monitoring unit of MHA as well as senior officials of MHA & CPWD on time to time basis.

**(MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS/ DEPARTMENT OF BORDER MANAGEMENT
O.M. NO. 11014/1/2024-BM-V, DATED 9 OCTOBER 2024)**

Observation/Recommendation No. 2

Status and Physical progress of INBRP :

The Committee note from the reply of the Ministry that out of the estimated length of 1299.80 km , Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) for encumbrance free length of 844.65 km had been approved by High Level Empowered Committee and DPRs for length with encumbrance for a total of 455.15 km , which included 377.15km in Uttar Pradesh and 118 Km in Uttarakhand, were still awaited. The Committee also note that work had been completed for only 431.34 Km and was under progress (Formation completed) for 244.81 km under the Project. While noting that for around 50 percent of encumbrance free length, either the work was in progress or was not taken up even after more than 10 years of the inception of the project, the Committee while expressing disappointment at the slow pace of the project recommend the Ministry to take proactive measures to expedite the completion of works on these encumbrance free segments on

priority basis with a view to achieving faster mobility of troops to dominate the sensitive border more effectively.

(Sl. No. 02; Para 02 of the 89th Report of the
Public Accounts Committee)
(17th Lok Sabha)

Action taken by Ministry

The recommendation of the committee has been considered by the MHA and timely review of the remaining stretches in Indo border road project are being done to expedite its completion at the earliest.

The executing agencies and the BGF are also directed to project the hindrances, if any, in achieving the targeted progress, so that, early solution for the same may be initiated by the MHA.

Further, in MHA the border infrastructure projects are monitored through HLEC, headed by the Home Secretary and Border wise quarterly meeting of Steering Committee headed by the Secretary (Department of Border Management) besides monthly reviews at the level of Joint Secretary (BM-I). Hon'ble Home Minister also reviews the border-wise projects from time to time. The projects are also monitored through Fortnightly/Weekly progress reports received from the concerned stakeholders. The concerned Border Guarding Forces (User Department) are also be responsible for constantly monitoring and facilitating the projects through respective field formations. They also provide feedbacks on monthly basis and attend monitoring meetings.

Vetting comments of Audit

Audit vide their UO No. R.R./15-7/2024-25/ 165 dated 8.8.2024 have vetted the Action Taken Note with the following remarks:

PAC may be intimated about the following :

- (i) Status of detailed project report for length with encumbrance in Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand
- (ii) Status of work on encumbrance free segments; and
- (iii) Proactive measures taken by the Ministry to expedite the completion of works

Ministry's Final Reply

With regard to the DPRs for the length with encumbrance in UP which is falling in the forest & wildlife areas, the preliminary estimates for the 325.09 km road length have been received from PWD Uttar Pradesh in MHA. Further, in the various meetings held with all stakeholders, it has been decided to construct a total of 07 bridges in areas falling under forest and wildlife, out of which the cost of 02 bridges would be borne by the State Govt. of UP and the cost of 05 bridges would be borne by the Govt. of India. The preliminary estimates of these 05 bridges have also been received from PWD, Uttar Pradesh.

These preliminary estimates were forwarded to BFR cell, CPWD for its technical scrutiny. After their scrutiny, the matter will be placed before the competent authority for consideration and approval.

With regard to the DPRs for the length with encumbrance in Uttarakhand, the stretches with encumbrance in Uttarakhand are falling in the submergence area of Pancheshwar Dam which is yet to be finalized. Regular meetings are being conducted in MHA with all stakeholders to finalize these stretches. In the meeting held in MHA on 30.04.2024, SSB was directed to submit a comprehensive proposal exploring different possibilities of the area. After the proposal containing the DPRs with multiple options was received, a meeting was held on 14.08.2024 in MHA under the Chairmanship of Joint Secretary (BM-I), MHA to deliberate on the said DPRs. In the meeting, it was decided that PWD Uttarakhand would assess the options in DPRs and provide their views from financial and technical feasibility

view to MHA and thereafter, an inspection of these stretches led by MHA with SSB and PWD Uttarakhand will be planned.

The status of work in encumbrance free segments in Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar is as under :

State	Total nos. of approved encumbrancefree stretches	No. of completed encumbrance free stretches	No. of Ongoing encumbrance free stretches
Bihar	06 Nos.	04 Nos	02 Nos.
Uttar Pradesh	12 Nos	09 Nos.	03 Nos.
Uttarakhand	02 Nos.	02 Nos	--

MHA holds various meetings with stakeholders to resolve the hindrances in completing the INBR project. The progress of ongoing stretches is regularly monitored in MHA through meetings and inspections at times. On the other hand, continuous attempts are being made in MHA for finalizing the length with encumbrance too in the states of Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

**(MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS/ DEPARTMENT OF BORDER MANAGEMENT
O.M. NO. 11014/1/2024-BM-V, DATED 9 OCTOBER 2024)**

**Comments of the Committee
Please see Para No. 10 of Chapter I.**

Observation/Recommendation No. 3

Approval of Detailed Project Reports (DPRs)

The Committee also note from the audit observation that the approval of 26 DPRs costing Rs. 2634.91 crore by High Level Empowered Committee (HLEC) without ensuring availability of land and requisite clearances resulted in time and cost overruns. In view of the inordinate delay in the completion of the INB Project

due to various factors like land acquisition and other statutory clearances, the Committee are constrained to observe that these delays could have been avoided had the HLEC taken into consideration the land acquisition and clearances issues that might crop up in the execution process, prior to giving approval to this Project. The Committee, therefore, hope that learning from the past, necessary approvals shall be obtained in advance before approving the DPRs.

(Sl. No. 03; Para 03 of the 89th Report of the
Public Accounts Committee)
(17th Lok Sabha)

Action taken by Ministry

The observation of the Committee has been taken care of while approving further DPRs and for remaining length in CCS approved Indo Nepal Border Road Project in Uttar Pradesh, the land acquisition work is in progress and obtaining NOC for stretches falling in forest & Wildlife areas is also under progress.

MHA has formulated the guidelines on creating infrastructure under “Border Infrastructure and Management” (BIM) scheme in October 2022, under which, it has directed executing agencies to take up the construction work, preferably in EPC mode as far as possible and award construction contracts after 90% of the land acquisition/possession as per GFR, 2017 and instructions as updated from time to time.

Vetting comments of Audit

Audit vide their UO No. R.R./15-7/2024-25/ 165 dated 8.8.2024 have vetted the Action Taken Note with the following remarks:

The status of land acquisition and obtaining NOC for stretches falling in forest & wildlife areas may be furnished to the Committee.

Ministry's Final Reply

The land acquisition in all the approved stretches has been achieved except for 03 km in Uttar Pradesh and 2.5 Km in Bihar. Further, none of the approved stretches were falling in the forest and wildlife areas and thus, there was no requirement to obtain NOC for construction in forest & wildlife areas.

**(MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS/ DEPARTMENT OF BORDER MANAGEMENT
O.M. NO. 11014/1/2024-BM-V, DATED 9 OCTOBER 2024)**

Observation/Recommendation No. 4

Delay in Acquisition of land

The Committee learnt during the course of their examination that under the Indo Nepal Border Road Project, the State Governments were responsible for acquisition of land. Audit highlighted that the process of acquisition of land was very slow and the delays in acquiring land led to cost and time over run and litigation with contractors. Audit pointed out that while the project was conceived in 2006 in the Ministry, the change in Land Acquisition Act was under consideration in Parliament since 2007. After the conceptualization of the project in the year 2006, in- principle approval of Cabinet was obtained for the same in the year 2010 only and no mitigation measures were taken up by the Ministry in anticipation of passing of New Land Act. In this regard, the Ministry submitted that although the Act was under consideration in the Parliament since the year 2007, it came in force w.e.f. 01.01.2014 only and without final shaping, passing and publication of any Act, its impact could not be assessed and therefore, while taking the approval of Cabinet in year 2010, no mitigation measures were taken up by the Ministry in anticipation of passing of New Land Act. The Committee do not find the reply of the Ministry plausible as before conceptualisation of any project, a detailed feasibility study and due diligence must be undertaken encompassing all prevailing and foreseeable scenarios, with a view to bringing forth an action plan for the project.

The Committee, therefore, desire that a detailed note on the feasibility study conducted before mooted the proposal for INBR project be furnished to the Committee at the earliest.

(Sl. No. 04; Para 04 of the 89th Report of the
Public Accounts Committee)
(17th Lok Sabha)

Action taken by Ministry

The Department of Border Management of MHA called for a comprehensive proposal regarding the development of roads, which are of operational and strategic significance to the SSB in the Indo-Nepal and Indo-Bhutan borders in the year 2006.

The proposal of SSB was deliberated at in several meetings at various levels with all stakeholders. After deliberation, the proposal was modified at different stages. The modifications in alignments were discussed & finalized in consultations with all stakeholders. Finally, it was decided to obtain in-principle approval of CCS for preparation of DPR in the year 2010. It was also submitted before CCS that the physical components and the financial projections are preliminary & indicative in nature and are likely to change after finalization of DPR.

After in-principal approval of CCS in the year 2010, DPRs based on the actual site verification, alignment etc. were finalized and submitted by the concerned executing agencies i.e., PWD / Road Construction Department of the concerned State Govts for Border Roads falling in the respective State. The DPRs submitted were technically examined and placed before the empowered HLEC for consideration / approval.

Vetting comments of Audit

Audit vide their UO No. R.R./15-7/2024-25/ 165 dated 8.8.2024 have vetted the Action Taken Note with the following remarks:

Ministry's reply is silent on the detailed note on the feasibility study conducted before mooted the proposal on Indo-Nepal Border Road Project. The same may be furnished to the PAC.

Ministry's Final Reply

After the conceptualization of project in 2006, various meetings were held to refine and make modifications in the proposal as per the requirements projected by all stakeholders. Finalization of alignment of the stretches in all concerned states was also done in consultation with all stakeholders.

After the grant of in-principal approval by CCS in 2010, the DPRs were submitted by executing agencies and were technically examined by the Technical Committee (TC) headed by DG, CPWD. Thereafter, the DPRs were placed before High Level Empowered Committee (HLEC) for consideration.

**(MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS/ DEPARTMENT OF BORDER MANAGEMENT
O.M. NO. 11014/1/2024-BM-V, DATED 9 OCTOBER 2024)**

Observation/Recommendation No. 5

Delay in Acquisition of land

As regards the action being taken for land acquisition by State Governments, the Committee have been informed that while UP Government was to complete the acquisition of remaining 05 Km upto March 2023, the Bihar Government was holding meetings to acquire the remaining stretch of 11.5 Km s. The Committee while hoping that State Government of Uttar Pradesh has completed the land acquisition expect to be apprised of the details thereof. The Committee also desire to be apprised of the progress made by the Bihar Government in acquiring the remaining stretches. The Committee wish to point out that substantial time has already lapsed in the matter and therefore further delays should be avoided to obviate fresh litigations by the stakeholders. The Committee also desire that all pending issues with the stakeholders may be

resolved amicably and expeditiously to ensure completion of the Project as per schedule and they be informed of the outcome of the concrete measures taken in the regard.

(Sl. No. 05; Para 05 of the 89th Report of the
Public Accounts Committee)
(17th Lok Sabha)

Action taken by Ministry

The pending land acquisition case and progress of the INBR project are regularly monitored in the monthly review meeting in MHA for its expeditious and amicable disposal.

The matter was taken up with the PWD, UP and they have informed that under the Indo Nepal Border Road Project in district Siddharthnagar, land acquisition of 02 Km out of total remaining 05 Km has been done with mutual consent and the rest 3.0 Km land is being acquired through Land Acquisition Act, 2013 by special land acquisition officers, Siddharthnagar.

It is also informed by PWD UP that the Notification-II have been published for Naugarh Tahsil (0.70 km) for the package of Malghaiya Harbanspur Road of length 28.90 Km and for Shohratgarh tahsil (2.30 Km) for the package of construction of Malghaiya Harbanspur Road of length 31.35 Km , the Notification II will be published soon. After completion of the land acquisition work which is expected to be completed by July 2024, the remaining work will be expedited at the earliest possible.

In the case of Bihar, it is informed by the RCD, Bihar that the Indo-Nepal Border Road project passes through seven districts in the state of Bihar, i.e., West Champaran, East Champaran, Sitamarhi, Madhubani, Supaul, Araria & Kishanganj. Out of seven districts, land acquisition (LA) is completed in 06 districts except in East Champaran where LA for 2.5 Km length is under progress.

Vetting comments of Audit

Audit vide their UO No. R.R./15-7/2024-25/ 165 dated 8.8.2024 have vetted the Action Taken Note with the following remarks:

PAC may be apprised with the current status of acquisition of land of 03 km in Uttar Pradesh and 2.5 Km in Bihar.

Ministry's Final Reply

As informed by PWD UP, the work on acquiring 03 km of land is under progress in district Siddharthanagar which is expected to be completed soon.

Further, the RCD, Bihar has informed that the work of land acquisition (LA) on 2.5 km land in District East Champaran has been held up due to public protest. The work of LA has been taken up with the district administration which is in the process of resolution.

**(MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS/ DEPARTMENT OF BORDER MANAGEMENT
O.M. NO. 11014/1/2024-BM-V, DATED 9 OCTOBER 2024)**

Observation/Recommendation No. 6

Issues related to Forest Clearance

The Committee note that as of March 2021, forest/wildlife clearances were still awaited in respect of Uttar Pradesh. Uttar Pradesh Public Works Department (PWD) submitted several proposals for forest and wildlife clearance to the Forest Department during the period from October 2013 to April 2018. The deficiencies in these proposals submitted by UP PWD led to further delay in forest/wild life clearance. Delays in obtaining forest/wildlife clearance also impacted the preparation of DPRs and the eventual construction of roads in a timely manner. While apprising the Committee about awaited Forest/Wildlife clearances, the

Ministry informed that on account of non-finalisation of proposed Pancheshwar Dam, Uttar Pradesh has 299 km while Uttarakhand has 118 kilometres of Forest/Wildlife clearances pending. Regarding forest clearances in Uttar Pradesh, it has been informed that the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has taken up the issue and a team comprising of SSB officials, Forest officials (UP), PWD (UP), BFR Cell (CPWD) and MHA had visited the stretches and based on the findings, a Secretary level meeting was held with Wildlife Institute of India (WII) & other stake holders. However, there has been a divergence of views as Wildlife Institute of India has proposed for Flyover on 08 places and change in alignment at 05 places while MHA has sought minimal requirement of passageway for SSB personnel acceptable to both SSB and Wildlife Authorities with required mitigation measures. In this regard, while recognizing the paramount significance of Indo-Nepal Border Road Project, the Committee are of the considered view and in no unequivocal terms recommend that the matter be taken up afresh in wake of the urgency of the requirement of patrolling along the border and the importance of Forest/ wildlife preservation concerns for bringing out an effective and acceptable solution. The Committee are also of the view that the existing fire lines near border roads in the wildlife areas, wherever roads cannot be built due to Forest/ wildlife concerns, may be used to ensure seamless connectivity. In view of the fact that statutory clearances will be obtained by the Uttarakhand Government only after finalization of proposed Pancheshwar Dam between India and Nepal, the Committee would like to be apprised of the updates of action being taken by the two Governments in this matter. The Committee would, here, insist that efforts should be expedited to prevent undue delay in the completion of the strategic Project.

(Sl. No. 06; Para 06 of the 89th Report of the
Public Accounts Committee)
(17th Lok Sabha)

Action taken by Ministry

(A) Action taken by MHA for forest and wildlife clearances in UP (299 Km):

It is submitted that in UP, WII had suggested 13 mitigation measures for these stretches, however, the same were found to be cost prohibitive. Therefore, a team consisting of members from MHA and other stakeholders conducted a field inspection on these stretches in January 2023 and it was also decided to use existing fire lines/forest road in the wildlife areas, wherever roads cannot be built due to Forest/ wildlife concerns and accordingly, PWD UP was requested to prepare a modified alignment plan, which after approval of SSB, was to be placed before State Forest & Wildlife board.

To expedite this matter, Secretary, M/o EF&CC was requested to convene a meeting with WII (Dehradun), Forest Department (UP) and other stakeholders. In the meeting convened on 22.05.2023 in M/o EF&CC, a consensus on the 13 mitigation measures (MMs) proposed by the WII was arrived, according to which, 08 MMs of WII were accepted and in 04 MMs, the alternatives proposed by MHA were accepted and the remaining 01 MM was decided to be dropped.

Further, during the meeting under the Secretary (BM), MHA, representative of WII expressed reservation regarding requirement of 02 flyovers of length 0.5 Km and 0.7 Km at Basanta Corridor-II at Sohna and Raghunagar BOP respectively citing the protection of Elephant & Rhino Corridors. The said request of WII was considered and accepted by MHA and State govt. of UP was requested to bear the cost of construction of these two flyovers, to which Govt. of UP later agreed.

It is informed by PWD UP that the proposals for forest/wildlife clearances have been uploaded on Parivesh Portal -II of forest department. The joint survey work for counting of trees, marking of trees, marking of alignment etc. of road alignment under forest/wildlife by team of UP PWD, SSB & Forest Officials has been completed in 05 districts. Rest in 01 district i.e., Balrampur, the survey work is in progress. After receipt of survey report of Balrampur District, the details of these stretches will be uploaded on Parivesh Portal for FC/WL Clearances.

(B) Action taken by MHA for finalizing stretches falling in the submergence area of Pancheshwar Dam (118 Km):

It is informed by Ministry of Jal Shakti that Pancheshwar Multipurpose project is a bilateral project between India and Nepal which is still under discussion between both the countries however the Full Reservoir Level (FRL) of Pancheshwar Dam has been agreed upon as 680 m.

The matter was reviewed in review meetings held regularly in MHA with concerned stakeholders. As per the decision taken in the review meetings held in MHA on 14.11.2023 and 09.01.2024, a team constituting members from SSB, Uttarakhand PWD and Central Water Commission (CWC) was directed to visit & prepare a tentative alignment of road stretches along INB above/beyond the submergence region of the Pancheshwar Dam region in Uttarakhand.

Accordingly, a report containing the said tentative alignment was provided to this Ministry by SSB, which was reviewed in the meeting held in MHA on 30.4.2024 and SSB has been directed to submit a comprehensive proposal exploring different possibilities of the area. After receipt of details / cost estimates further steps will be taken to expedite this strategic stretch of Pancheshwar dam.

Vetting comments of Audit

Audit vide their UO No. R.R./15-7/2024-25/ 165 dated 8.8.2024 have vetted the Action Taken Note with the following remarks:

The latest status of the project may be furnished to the Committee.

Ministry's Final Reply

(i) Updated Action taken by MHA for forest and wildlife clearances in UP (299 Km):

In addition to the above information contained in the point (A) of MHA's Action taken on this observation, as per inputs provided by PWD, UP, the joint survey for counting of trees, marking of trees and marking of alignment, etc. of the proposed roads have been completed in all districts. The data of survey has been uploaded on Parivesh-II portal for obtaining NOC from the forest/wildlife department.

(ii) Updated Action taken by MHA for finalizing stretches falling in the submergence area of Pancheshwar Dam (118 Km):

In addition to the above information contained in the point (B) of MHA's Action taken on this observation, it is informed that SSB submitted a proposal containing 04 DPRs for the three stretches namely Rupaligarh to Pancheshwar (35 Km), Pancheshwar to Jauljibi (with two options- 92 Km & 80 Km) and Pancheshwar to Baltari (30 Km). A meeting was held on 14.08.2024 in MHA under the Chairmanship of Joint Secretary (BM-I), MHA to deliberate on the said DPRs. In the meeting, it was decided that PWD Uttarakhand would assess the options in DPRs and provide their views from financial and technical feasibility view to MHA and thereafter, an inspection of these stretches led by MHA with SSB and PWD Uttarakhand will be planned.

**(MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS/ DEPARTMENT OF BORDER MANAGEMENT
O.M. NO. 11014/1/2024-BM-V, DATED 9 OCTOBER 2024)**

Observation/Recommendation No. 7

Extra Financial Liability

Regarding incurrence of extra financial liability over and above the sanctioned cost of the Project, the Committee learn from the submission of the Ministry that no cost overrun above the overall cost of the project as approved by CCS in the year 2010 was incurred. The Committee however, note that on the contrary, the State Government of Bihar has submitted in its written replies that

there has been a cost overrun of Rs 772.69 crore, State Government of Uttarakhand stated that there is cost overrun due to extra 18% GST. In view of the replies of the State Governments, the Committee would like to be apprised of the justification of the Ministry with regard to the matter of cost overrun incurred by the State Governments vis-à-vis the view taken by the Ministry.

(Sl. No. 07; Para 07 of the 89th Report of the
Public Accounts Committee)
(17th Lok Sabha)

Action taken by Ministry

The Indo-Nepal Border Road (INBR) project was accorded in-principle approval by CCS in 2010 for a total length of 1377 Km in the States of Bihar (564 Km), UP (640 Km) and Uttarakhand (173 Km) with the total cost of Rs. 3,853 Crores. In 2018, CCS revised the length of INBR project to 1299.80 Km (Bihar- 552.27 Km , UP- 574.53 Km and Uttarakhand- 173 Km).

However, the actual length of DPRS as approved by various HLECs under this INBR project is 844.42 Km (Bihar- 554.07 Km , UP- 235.35 Km and Uttarakhand- 55 Km) with the total cost of Rs. 3523.31 Crores.

Thereafter, due to new Land Acquisition Act, 2013, land acquisition got delayed and indexation of price got varied which resulted in increase in original cost approved by various HLECs. In between, the rate of GST was also increased from **12%** to **18%** which is another factor that contributed to the increment in the original cost approved by various HLECs. Further, in some states due to massive rain, heavier cross section / protection work etc. was required to be included.

In the State of Bihar also, due to delay in land acquisition (LA) after passing of New Land Acquisition Act, 2013, change in GST rates, price escalation as per contract clause and also due to massive floods, heavier components in the cross sections were needed to be included thereby increasing the cost. Moreover, due to delay in land acquisition, the contractors of Bettiah, Sitamarhi & Madhubani refused

to work on old rates and requested for foreclosure of the contract. Hence, prior to going for re-tender, the estimates were revised on current prevailing rates at that time. The revised cost proposals were submitted by RCD, Bihar, which were examined technically by BFR Cell, CPWD and wherever needed placed before the Revised Cost Committee (RCC) for its consideration as per rule. After considering the recommendations of these committees, placed before the empowered HLEC, which have considered each individual proposal on merit and approved the same from time to time to expedite the strategic INBR Project.

In the state of Uttarakhand, a total length of 55 Km has been approved in which, the delay occurred in construction of 690 m extension bridge on river Chalthi between Km 29.875 to Km 30.565 due to court cases. Apart from this, the change of rates of GST from 12% to 18% was also a factor that contributed to the increment in cost in stretches in Uttarakhand. As the entire cost of land acquisition has been borne by the State Government hence there was no cost overrun in the construction work and the additional cost in construction of bridge due to change in rates was being borne by the State Govt.

In the State of UP, no extra financial liability has occurred for completion of sanctioned works.

Further, as on date, the total cost approved by CCS in the year 2010 was Rs. 3,853 Cr. However, various HLECs have approved the DPRs & revised costs etc. costing Rs. 3523.31 Cr. Hence the cost overrun is well-within the ceiling of total cost as approved by CCS.

Vetting comments of Audit

Audit vide their UO No. R.R./15-7/2024-25/ 165 dated 8.8.2024 have vetted the Action Taken Note with the following remarks:

The in-principle approval of project by CCS in 2010 was for a total length of 1377 Km with a total cost of Rs. 3853 Crores which was revised in 2018 for a length of 1299.80 Km, however, the actual length of DPRs as approved by various

High Level Empowered Committees is 844.42 Km with the total cost of Rs. 3523.31 Crores.

PAC may take a suitable view of the fact that the actual length of approved DPRs is 844.42 Km which is much less than the revised approved length of 1299.80 Km .

Ministry's Final Reply

The Indo-Nepal border road project was in-principally approved by the CCS in 2010. It is submitted that the financial projections contained in the project were based on the preliminary estimates in terms of the technical specifications of the proposed roads and were indicative in nature. It was decided that after the proposal is approved by the CCS, the DPRs would be prepared by the executing agencies and will again be technically examined by the Technical Committee (TC) and considered by High Level Empowered Committee (HLEC) before implementation.

**(MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS/ DEPARTMENT OF BORDER MANAGEMENT
O.M. NO. 11014/1/2024-BM-V, DATED 9 OCTOBER 2024)**

Observation/Recommendation No. 10

Construction of bridges without connecting to the main alignment

The Committee note from the Audit Report that in the West Champaran District, 34 bridges were sanctioned for Rs. 395.75 crore (March, 2013) and majority of these bridges were completed before August, 2016. Further, after the bridges were constructed, RCD, Bihar changed the road alignment between the chainage 10.60 to 77.36 in Bettiah due to the existence of forest land along the old alignment finalized in April, 2011. Audit pointed out that there was no clarity on whether 15 bridges constructed in these chainages were linked to the new

alignment and whether the bridges would be utilized in the new alignment in future or not. In this context, however, RCD Bihar in its Action Taken Notes affirmed following a joint inspection of bridges of West Champaran district by SSB and RCD officials in March 2023 that all 34 bridges fall on the proposed alignment of Border Road. In this context, the Committee recommend that the Ministry should also conduct an inspection of the bridges in coordination with executing authorities concerned at the State level to ascertain that all bridges constructed under the Project are connected with the approach roads /main alignment of the roads and furnish the findings thereof to the Committee. The Committee would also like to be apprised of the details of the plan charted out for optimum utilisation of the bridges constructed under the Project.

(Sl. No. 10; Para 10 of the 89th Report of the
Public Accounts Committee)
(17th Lok Sabha)

Action taken by Ministry

The RCD Bihar has again affirmed that there is no change in the approved alignment and all constructed bridges fall in approved alignment.

Also, MHA carried out an inspection of the bridges between the Chainage 10.60 to 77.36 in West Champaran district of Bihar, along with the representatives of SSB (the user agency) and RCD Bihar (the executing agency) on 07.06.2024. A copy of inspection report is enclosed at ANNEXURE-‘A.

Vetting comments of Audit

Audit vide their UO No. R.R./15-7/2024-25/ 165 dated 8.8.2024 have vetted the Action Taken Note with the following remarks:

Ministry replied that in the approved alignment of INBR project, a total number of 17 bridges have been constructed and three bridges are under construction.

PAC may be apprised with the expected timelines of the construction of three remaining bridges.

Ministry's Final Reply

RCD Bihar have informed that work on 01 bridge at Chainage 66.40 has been completed. Further, the work on rest 02 bridges has been awarded in March 2024. The work on these 02 bridges is expected to be completed by December 2025. The said 03 bridges are being funded by the State Govt. under NABARD Scheme and were not the part of approved DPRs by MHA.

**(MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS/ DEPARTMENT OF BORDER MANAGEMENT
O.M. NO. 11014/1/2024-BM-V, DATED 9 OCTOBER 2024)**

Observation/Recommendation No. 13

Monitoring of infrastructure projects on the national border

The Committee note that the Ministry has adopted the revised procedure for release of fund under Central Sector Scheme for flow of fund and monitoring / utilization of funds released as issued by Ministry of Finance. The Committee have been informed that it shall be mandatory to implement such schemes through the Treasury Single Account (TSA) model which will ensure that the funds of these schemes are released 'Just-In-Time' from the Consolidated Fund of India to the beneficiaries/vendors. Further, they learn that MHA has also issued detailed guidelines namely "Border Infrastructure & Management (BIM) Scheme" for compliance. The Committee have been further apprised that progress of work has been accounted for with release of fund after concurrence and vetting of Integrated Finance Division (Home) and Utilization certificate and work in progress in percentage was taken for each road project. Besides, the Ministry is in the process of developing Project Monitoring Portal (PMP) and Project Monitoring Unit for smooth and expeditious implementation of border infrastructure works. While noting the initiatives taken by the Ministry for monitoring the progress of the projects and fund release, the Committee

recommend that development of the Project Monitoring Portal (PMP) and Project Monitoring Unit should be completed in a time bound manner. The Committee also recommend that mechanism within a specific timeline be devised to ensure real time updation of the entries in the portal for effective monitoring of the projects and fund utilization by the State Governments in this regard. The Committee further desire that mechanism should also put in place to ensure strict adherence to the provisions of the "Border Infrastructure & Management (BIM) Scheme" for the successful implementation of the Indo-Nepal Border Road Project.

(Sl. No. 13; Para 13 of the 89th Report of the
Public Accounts Committee)
(17th Lok Sabha)

Action taken by Ministry

(A) Project Monitoring Portal :

Decision has been taken in MHA to create Project Monitoring Portal (PMP) as a single common integrated portal for all executing agencies / Border Guarding Forces for efficient monitoring of all border Infrastructure projects for which, a committee was formed under Chairmanship of Deputy Secretary (MC) including members from CPWD, NIC and respective BGFs. So far 11 meetings have been conducted to fine tune the PMP portal. Basic structure of the PMP has already been prepared by NIC.

(B) Project Monitoring Unit :

The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS), in its meeting held on 21.09.2020, approved the ICBR-II project which contained the constitution of Project Monitoring Unit (PMU). Later, IFD (Home) also concurred to the establishment of PMU with some observations which were duly incorporated. Thereafter, with the approval of Union Home Secretary, CPWD was directed to establish the PMU.

Initially, PMU was established only for monitoring of projects being carried out on Indo-China Border. Later on, it was decided that the services of PMU would be considered to be utilized for monitoring of construction activities on all borders, i.e., Indo-Pakistan, Indo-Bangladesh, Indo-Myanmar, Indo-China, Indo-Nepal and Indo-Bhutan borders.

As on date, the PMU has been put in place in MHA and it is headed by the Chief Consultant who works as the Chairman of PMU and reports to Joint Secretary (BM-I), MHA.

Vetting comments of Audit

Audit vide their UO No. R.R./15-7/2024-25/ 165 dated 8.8.2024 have vetted the Action Taken Note with the following remarks:

PAC may be apprised of the expected timelines for the completion of work related to Project Monitoring Portal.

Further, Ministry's reply is silent in respect of the specific timelines set to update the entries in portal and mechanism to be put in place to ensure adherence to the provisions of the "Border Infrastructure & Management (BIM) Scheme". The same may be intimated to the PAC.

Ministry's Final Reply

Efforts are being made for fine tuning of the Project Monitoring Portal (PMP). Various meetings have also been held in this regard with the stakeholders.

As soon as the Project Monitoring Portal comes into force, the work of updating the entries in the portal will commence.

The provisions of BIM scheme are already being adhered to by this Ministry in respect of the INBR Project.

**(MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS/ DEPARTMENT OF BORDER MANAGEMENT
O.M. NO. 11014/1/2024-BM-V, DATED 9 OCTOBER 2024)**

CHAPTER III

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

-NIL-

CHAPTER IV

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE AND WHICH REQUIRE REITERATION

Observation/Recommendation No. 11

Irregular release of Rs. 2.34 Crores by MHA

The Committee note from the audit findings that as per the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), the expenditure on shifting of utility services and forestation charges were to be borne by the State Governments. Scrutiny of records in MHA revealed that HLEC in its 45th meeting approved the revised estimates of three DPRs aggregating Rs. 195.81 crore and two DPRs aggregating Rs. 147.23 crore respectively, which included the charges of Utility Shifting and forestation aggregating Rs. 2.34 crore sent by UP Government. The approval of utilities shifting charges aggregating Rs. 2.34 crore by MHA was thus, irregular. In this regard, the Ministry stated that the matter was deliberated in the Steering Committee meeting and PWD, UP requested that the extra sanction of Rs. 2.34 Crore be adjusted in the grant for next financial year. The Committee, in this regard, desire that an enquiry be instituted by the Ministry to ascertain the reasons for irregular release of Rs. 2.34 Crore. The Committee also desire that the Ministry issue necessary instructions to strengthen the internal checks in the Ministry to avoid recurrence of such lapses in future.

(Sl. No. 11; Para 11 of the 89th Report of the
Public Accounts Committee)
(17th Lok Sabha)

Action taken by Ministry

PWD UP has informed that there is a practice of making provision of utility shifting, land acquisition, afforestation etc. in DPRs of construction of road work in UP. The utility shifting was carried out on new construction/upgradation of old

existing roads. The expenditure under utility shifting was incurred on the following departments:

- (i) UPPCL (Electric Pole shifting)
- (ii) UP Jal Nigam (Shifting of Handpumps)
- (iii) Forest Department (Afforestation)

However, as per the MoU signed between Govt. of UP and MHA (Govt. of India), *“PWD UP being the owner of the roads constructed under the project, will acquire the land, if necessary, required for the construction/upgradation/widening of roads and bear the cost thereof. PWD UP will also obtain the necessary clearances including forest/wildlife clearances on behalf of SSB/MHA, Gol, wherever required and make payment for the charges on account of Net Present Value (NPV) of land, compensatory afforestation etc. This also includes obtaining clearances, if any, from utility authorities related to telephone, water supply, electricity etc. PWD UP will also bear the cost of any regarding shifting of such utilities.”*

MHA vide its letter dated 11.01.2023 has already drawn attention of the then Chief Secretary, Govt. of Uttar Pradesh about the specific observation of the C & AG as contained in its report no. 23 of 2021 on performance audit of Indo-Nepal Border Road Project concerning State of UP, to look into the matter personally and take appropriate corrective measures as suggested in the audit report as well as if required, disciplinary/administrative action against the officials/contractors responsible for the time and cost overrun of the project be taken.

It is mentioned here that PWD, UP vide letter no. 41INB/21INB/2013 dated 20.05.2022 had informed that Rs. 22.13 Cr. was pending for payment for construction of Indo-Nepal Border Road project in District Maharajganj (UP). Accordingly, the said amount was adjusted in FY 2022-23 by deducting Rs. 2.34 Cr and finally after the adjustment, Rs. 19.79 Cr. was released to PWD UP vide this Ministry's sanction order no. 11012/30/2022-BM-V dated 06.09.2023.

Vetting comments of Audit

Audit vide their UO No. R.R./15-7/2024-25/ 165 dated 8.8.2024 have vetted the Action Taken Note with the following remarks:

Ministry's reply is silent on the following recommendations of the committee

—

- (i) That an enquiry be instituted by the Ministry to ascertain the reasons for irregular release of Rs. 2.34 Crores
- (ii) To issue necessary instructions to strengthen the internal checks in the Ministry to avoid recurrence of such lapses in future

Ministry's Final Reply

The revised DPRs of the concerned stretches having the provision of Utility shifting were received in this Ministry in 2018 and technically scrutinized by BFR Cell, CPWD thereafter. The RDPRs were appraised by Technical Committee and 45th High Level Empowered Committee in 2018 itself. The Administrative approval & Expenditure Sanction (AA&ES) of the said stretches was also issued in 2018 with the provision of utility shifting contained in them.

Notably, after issuance of AA&ES of said stretches with revised estimates, the MoU between MHA and PWD, Govt. of Uttar Pradesh was finalized. The MoU was signed in the **year 2021** which contained that charges for utility shifting would be borne by the State Govt.

MHA had also drawn attention of the then Chief Secretary, Uttar Pradesh with the request to take appropriate corrective measures and if required, disciplinary/administrative action against the officials responsible for cost overrun and delay in project.

It may also be noted that the irregularity of Rs. 2.34 Cr. has also been resolved and adjusted by this Ministry in the following manner :

“PWD, UP vide letter no. 41INB/21INB/2013 dated 20.05.2022 had informed that Rs. 22.13 Cr. was pending for payment for construction of Indo-Nepal Border Road project in District Maharajganj (UP). The irregularity amounting to Rs. 2.34

was adjusted in FY 2022-23 by deducting Rs. 2.34 Cr and finally after the adjustment, Rs. 19.79 Cr. was released to PWD UP vide this Ministry's sanction order no. 11012/30/2022-BM-V dated 06.09.2023".

**(MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS/ DEPARTMENT OF BORDER MANAGEMENT
O.M. NO. 11014/1/2024-BM-V, DATED 9 OCTOBER 2024)**

**Comments of the Committee
Please see Para No. 25 of Chapter I.**

Observation/Recommendation No. 12

**Works pertaining to construction of road and bridges under the Indo Nepal
Border Road Project**

The Committee learn from the replies furnished by the Ministry that after the selection of this subject for detailed examination by the Committee, several pending works pertaining to construction of road and bridges under the Indo-Nepal Border Road Project have since been completed or taken off in Uttar Pradesh. The works completed inter-alia include road in the district of Siddharthnagar from Aligarhwa to Ganwaria and Khunwa-Banganga-Bhusaula, construction from Latahawa Ghat to Pakarhiwa via Karamaini, Ramnagar, Kakarahwa and Bajha, and pending work relating to the bridge on the Banganga river. Besides the work of channelization to bring the stream of the river, which has shifted, under the bridge is in progress. The Committee, while appreciating the initiatives taken by the Ministry pursuant to the constant push of the Committee, recommend that channelization work in areas where river streams have shifted may be completed in a time bound manner so as to expedite the overall completion of the Indo-Nepal Border Road Project.

(Sl. No. 12; Para 12 of the 89th Report of the
Public Accounts Committee)
(17th Lok Sabha)

Action taken by Ministry

The matter was taken up with PWD, UP and they have informed that the construction work of Banganga river bridge has already been completed. Due to meandering of river, it has been shifted westward 40-50 m from its normal course of flow. Approach road on east side of bridge has been completed upon surfacing (Black top). Approach road construction on west side is under progress. It is informed that remaining approach work will be completed in coming months.

Vetting comments of Audit

Audit vide their UO No. R.R./15-7/2024-25/ 165 dated 8.8.2024 have vetted the Action Taken Note with the following remarks:

PAC may be apprised with the current status along with the timelines for completion of the work.

Ministry's Final Reply

PWD UP was requested to furnish the current status in this matter and they have informed that the inspection of the Banganga river bridge was done in April 2024 by UP PWD and Project Manager of Bridge Corporation and it was decided that the span of bridge in westward side needs to be extended. The bridge corporation has framed and submitted the estimates of extended span of bridge to UP PWD which is under check by Bridge Wing of UP PWD.

**(MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS/ DEPARTMENT OF BORDER MANAGEMENT
O.M. NO. 11014/1/2024-BM-V, DATED 9 OCTOBER 2024)**

**Comments of the Committee
Please see Para No. 30 of Chapter I.**

CHAPTER V

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH GOVERNMENT HAVE FURNISHED INTERIM REPLIES/NO REPLIES

Observation/Recommendation No. 8

Special mechanism for strategic projects

The Committee note that under the Indo-Nepal Border Road Project, Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) were awaited for lengths with encumbrance for a total of 455.15 km , which includes 377.15km in Uttar Pradesh and 118 Km in Uttarakhand. In Uttar Pradesh, road alignment is affected by Forest & Wildlife areas while in case of Uttarakhand, it is affected by Pancheshwar Dam on river Kali, which involves interest of both India and Nepal. Recognizing the strategic importance of projects ensuring national security with the development of border areas, the Committee strongly believe that a specialized approach is obligatory to ensure swift coordination and resolution of challenges, particularly in States, where road alignments are intricately tied to Forest & Wildlife areas. With a view to streamline the decision-making process and accelerate the progress of these projects of vital nature, aligning with the broader objectives of national security and border development, the Committee opine and recommend that the Ministry may pursue the State Governments to use the single window clearance system invariably so that the statutory clearances and road alignments affected by Forest & Wildlife areas for the strategic projects such as the Indo-Nepal Border Road Project are not hindered and related issues are effectively addressed.

(Sl. No. 08; Para 08 of the 89th Report of the
Public Accounts Committee)
(17th Lok Sabha)

Action taken by Ministry

MHA has a system of monthly meetings at the level of Joint Secretary (BM-I) and Border wise quarterly Steering Committee meetings headed by Secretary (Department of Border Management) to discuss all pending issues including Land Acquisition, Forest Clearances (FC), Wildlife Clearances (WLC) etc. The Status of

FC/WLC on Parivesh Portal of Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change is regularly monitored.

This Ministry has also recently taken up a few cases with Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change after their notification dated 29.11.2023 regarding exemption as strategic linear project of national importance.

Vetting comments of Audit

Audit vide their UO No. R.R./15-7/2024-25/ 165 dated 8.8.2024 have vetted the Action Taken Note with the following remarks:

Although, this Ministry has informed about the existing system/procedure followed for the supervision of projects, however, the recommendation of the PAC to pursue the State Governments to use the single window clearance system invariably to address the related issues has not been addressed. The same may be furnished to the PAC.

Ministry's Final Reply

This Ministry is following the existing procedures as stipulated for land acquisition, forest & wildlife clearances. However, the recommendation of the committee has been noted for compliance.

**(MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS/ DEPARTMENT OF BORDER MANAGEMENT
O.M. NO. 11014/1/2024-BM-V, DATED 9 OCTOBER 2024)**

**Comments of the Committee
Please see Para No. 15 of Chapter I.**

Observation/Recommendation No. 9

Non-connectivity to Border Out Posts (BOPs) from the main alignment of proposed roads

The Committee note that out of 471 Border Out Posts (BOPs) established by SSB, 355 are connected by roads and on completion of Indo Nepal Border Project, 81 more BOPs will be connected. Out of 355 BOPs, 247 BOPs are on

the alignment of the main border road and the remaining 108 BOPs are connected with the main Indo Nepal Border Road through other roads constructed under various schemes by Rural Engineering Organisation (REO) such as Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), Border Area Development Programme (BADP) etc. According to the Ministry, the original plan was not per se to connect the BOPs but to have a road close to the border. The Ministry added that the intent was to have a road close to BOPs where link roads and feeder roads can be planned later on. Further, a separate scheme is under process to provide link roads, foot tracks to remaining SSB BOPs and important patrolling routes. Taking note of the fact that SSB is performing its operational needs through BOPs on INB road and through connectivity of other roads for these BOPs, the Committee in no uncertain words recommend that the Ministry may undertake immediate action to finalize and execute the Scheme for providing link roads and foot tracks to remaining SSB Border Out Posts (BOPs), and important patrolling routes in a time-bound manner under intimation to the Committee.

(Sl. No. 09; Para 09 of the 89th Report of the
Public Accounts Committee)
(17th Lok Sabha)

Action taken by Ministry

At present, out of the total 734 BOPs of SSB on Indo-Nepal and Indo-Bhutan Border, road connectivity exists in 426 BOPs. A fresh proposal containing link roads, foot tracks and staging camps along Indo-Nepal and Indo-Bhutan border is under consideration which aims at providing road connectivity to the remaining non-connected BOPs of SSB.

Vetting comments of Audit

Audit vide their UO No. R.R./15-7/2024-25/ 165 dated 8.8.2024 have vetted the Action Taken Note with the following remarks:

PAC may be apprised with the tentative timelines for finalization of the scheme for providing link roads and foot tracks to remaining 308 BOPs.

Ministry's Final Reply

A consolidated proposal containing lateral & axial roads, foot tracks and staging camps along Indo-Nepal and Indo-Bhutan Borders is under consideration in Ministry. As the proposal contains various components along both borders and projects large financial implications, thus it may take reasonable time for its technical scrutiny and final approval by the competent authority.

**(MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS/ DEPARTMENT OF BORDER MANAGEMENT
O.M. NO. 11014/1/2024-BM-V, DATED 9 OCTOBER 2024)**

**Comments of the Committee
Please see Para No. 20 of Chapter I.**

NEW DELHI:

**25 July , 2025
03 Shravana, 1947 (saka)**

(K.C. VENUGOPAL)

**Chairperson,
Public Accounts Committee**

APPENDIX-I

MINUTES OF THE EIGHTH SITTING OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE (2025-26) HELD ON 25 JULY, 2025

The Public Accounts Committee sat on Friday, 25 July, 2025 from 1500 hrs to 1515 hrs in Committee Room No. 53, Samvidhan Sadan, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Dr. Nishikant Dubey-Acting Chairperson

LOK SABHA

2. Shri Jai Prakash
3. Shri C.M. Ramesh
4. Smt. Aparajita Sarangi
5. Dr. Amar Singh
6. Shri Jagdambika Pal
7. Shri Magunta Sreenivasulu Reddy

RAJYA SABHA

8. Shri Shaktisinh Gohil
9. Dr. K. Laxman
10. Shri Sudhanshu Trivedi

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

- | | | |
|----------------------------|---|------------------|
| 1. Shri H. Ram Prakash | - | Joint Secretary |
| 2. Smt. Archana Pathania | - | Director |
| 3. Shri Alok Mani Tripathi | - | Deputy Secretary |
| 4. Shri Pankaj Sharma | - | Deputy Secretary |
| 5. Smt. Malvika Mehta | - | Deputy Secretary |
| 6. Dr. Faiz Ahmad | - | Deputy Secretary |

**REPRESENTATIVES FROM OFFICE OF COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR
GENERAL OF INDIA**

Sl. No.	Name	Designation
1.	Ms. Smita S. Chaudhri	Dy. Comptroller & Auditor General
2.	Ms. Gurveen Sidhu	Director General
3.	Ms. Ritu Dhillon	Director General
4.	Shri Deen Dayal Verma	Principal Director of Audit (Navy)

The Hon'ble Chairperson could not attend the Sitting. As per Rule 258 (3), the Members present elected Dr. Nishikant Dubey as the Acting Chairperson. Thereafter, Hon'ble Chairperson welcomed the Members and the officials of the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (C&AG) to the Sitting of the Committee. Then, the following four draft Reports were taken up for consideration:-

- i. Action Taken Report on the 84th Report (17th Lok Sabha) on the subject "Misappropriation of Public Money in Department of Posts";
- ii. Action Taken Report on the 86th Report (17th Lok Sabha) on the subject "Establishment and Operationalisation of Sagar Prahari Bal";
- iii. Action Taken Report on the 89th Report (17th Lok Sabha) on the subject "Indo-Nepal Border Road Project"; and
- iv. Action Taken Report on the 140th Report (17th Lok Sabha) on the subject "Manpower and Logistics Management in Delhi Police".

3. After some deliberations, the Committee adopted all the aforesaid Draft Reports without any modifications and authorized the Chairperson to finalize the Reports and present the same to the House.

The Committee then adjourned.

A copy of the proceedings of the Sitting has been kept on record.

APPENDIX-II

(Vide Paragraph 5 of Introduction)

ANALYSIS OF THE ACTION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT ON THE OBSERVATIONS /RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE CONTAINED IN THEIR EIGHTY-NINTH REPORT (SEVENTEENTH LOK SABHA)

- | | | |
|-------|--|---------------------------------------|
| (i) | Total number of Observations/Recommendations | 13 |
|
 | | |
| (ii) | Observations/Recommendations of the Committee which have been accepted by the Government:
Para Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 , 7, 10, 13 | Total: 9
Percentage:69.2 % |
|
 | | |
| (iii) | Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the reply of the Government:
Para No. – NIL | Total: 0
Percentage: 0 |
|
 | | |
| (iv) | Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration:
Para No. – 11, 12 | Total: 2
Percentage:15.4 % |
|
 | | |
| (v) | Observations/Recommendations in respect of which the Government have furnished interim replies:
Para No. – 8, 9 | Total: 2
Percentage:15.4 % |