

**NEW DELHI-AMBALA  
COAXIAL EXPANSION  
SCHEME**

**MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS  
(Department of Telecommunications)**

**PUBLIC ACCOUNTS  
COMMITTEE**

**HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-FOURTH  
REPORT**

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**



**LOK SIBHA SECRETARIAT  
NEW DELHI**

# HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-FOURTH REPORT

## PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE ( 1989-90 )

(EIGHTH LOK SABHA)

NEW DELHI-AMBALA  
COAXIAL EXPANSION SCHEME

MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS  
(DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS)

[Action taken on 87th Report (8th Lok Sabha)]



*Presented to Lok Sabha on 11-8-1989*

*Laid in Rajya Sabha on 11-8-1989*

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT  
NEW DELHI

*August, 1989/Sravana, 1911 (Saka)*

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**PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE**  
**(1989-90)**

**CHAIRMAN**

Shri P. Kolandaivelu.

**MEMBERS**

*Lok Sabha*

2. Shri Abdul Hannan Ansari
3. Shri Chhitubhai Gamit
4. Shri M. Y. Ghorpade
5. Shri Mohd. Ayub Khan
6. Shri Y. S. Mahajan
7. Shri Pratap Bhanu Sharma
8. Maj. Gen. R. S. Sparrow
9. Shrimati Usha Rani Tomar
10. Dr. Chandra Shekhar Tripathi
11. Shri Vir Sen
12. Shri Yogeshwar Prasad Yogesh
- \*13. Shri M. Mahalingam
- \*14. Shri Vijay N. Patil
- \*15. Dr. G. S. Rajhans

*Rajya Sabha*

16. Shri Rameshwar Thakur
17. Shri Jagesh Desai
18. Shri Surender Singh
19. Shri P. N. Sukul
20. Vacant\*\*
21. Vacant£
22. Vacant£

**SECRETARIAT**

1. Shri G. L. Batra—*Joint Secretary.*
2. Shri K. K. Sharma—*Director.*
3. Shri A. Subramanian—*Senior Financial Committee Officer.*

- 
- Elected w.e.f. 3-8-1989 vice Sarvashri Bh. Vijaykumar Raju, S. Jaipal Reddy and Saifuddin Chowdhary resigned from the Committee w.e.f. 10-5-89, 12-5-89 and 3-6-1989 respectively.
  - Due to resignation by Shri Parvathaveni Upendra from membership of the Committee w.e.f. 12-5-1989.
  - £ Due to resignation by Sarvashri Jaswant Singh and Virendra Verma from membership of the Committee w.e.f. 15-5-1989.

## INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman of Public Accounts Committee as authorised by the Committee, do present on their behalf this Hundred and Eighty-Fourth Report on action taken by Government on the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee contained in their Eighty-Seventh Report (Eighth Lok Sabha) on New Delhi-Ambala Coaxial Expansion Scheme.

2. The Committee have noted that by March 1986 Rs. 11.86 crore had been spent on the project by which time only 65% of the work had been completed. The Committee have expressed its dissatisfaction with the general observation of the Ministry that closer monitoring of large project had been introduced. The Committee have desired to know the present position of this project both in physical and financial terms alongwith reasons, if any, on cost and time over-run of the project. The Committee have also desired to be enlightened on the specific measures taken for closer monitoring of large projects.

3. The Committee have also noted that the Ministry have not given information on the efforts actually taken to improve the traffic in the present case and the present position of earnings vis-a-vis the targeted revenue. The Committee have desired to be informed on the present trend of traffic and steps taken to improve the traffic.

4. The Committee considered and adopted this Report at their sitting held on 9 August 1989. Minutes of the sitting form Part II of the Report.

5. For facility of reference and convenience, the recommendations and observations of the Committee have been printed in thick type in the body of the Report, and have also been reproduced in a consolidated form in the Appendix to the Report.

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

NEW DELHI;  
August 11, 1989  
Sravana 20, 1911 (Saka)

P. KOLANDAIVELU  
Chairman,  
Public Accounts Committee.

## CHAPTER I

### REPORT

1.1 This Report of the Committee deals with the action taken by Government on the Committee's observations and recommendations contained in their 87th Report on New Delhi-Ambala Coaxial Expansion Scheme.

1.2 The Committee's Report contained 6 recommendations and observations. Action Taken notes have been received from the Government in respect of all the observations and recommendations. These have been broadly divided into 4 categories as shown in Appendix I.

1.3 The Committee will now deal with action taken by Government on some of the recommendations and observations.

#### *Cost overrun of the project* (No. 4—Paragraph 55)

1.4 In 1978 the entire expansion project was estimated to cost Rs. 7.82 crores but the delay in execution had increased the estimated cost to Rs. 14.47 crores. Upto 31 March 1986 Rs. 11.86 crores had been incurred by which time only 65% of the work had been completed. The Committee have observed in this connection that the foremost reason for going haywire in financial estimation was nothing else but inadequate project formulation, inadequate monitoring and non-adherence of delivery schedules apart from piece-meal placement of orders. The Committee brought to notice in this connection that the scope, efficiency, effectiveness and impact of a project, is to a large extent, determined by project studies, benefit cost analysis and feasibility and fiscal studies which were not done properly in this case.

1.5 In their Action Taken notes the Ministry have noted the observations and have stated that closer monitoring of large projects has been introduced.

1.6 The Committee note that by March 1986 Rs. 11.86 crores had been spent on the project by which time only 65% of the work had been completed. No information has been given by the Ministry on the present position relating to the total estimated cost of the project, expenditure incurred thereagainst, action taken to regularise excess etc. In the circumstances the Committee are not satisfied with the general observation of the Ministry that closer monitoring of large project had been introduced. The Committee would desire to know the present position of this project both in physical and financial terms along with reasons, if any, on cost and time over-run of the project. The Committee would also like to be enlightened on the specific measures taken for closer monitoring of large projects.

#### *Inadequate revenue in the earnings of the project* (No. 6—Paragraphs 57 and 58)

1.7 It was anticipated in 1979-80 that this project on completion would fetch an annual revenue of Rs. 16.52 crores from 1983-84, whereas the revenue actually accrued was only Rs. 3.13 crores. The

shortfall in revenue was attributed by the Ministry to the non-commissioning of the pending spur route and restricted general growth in the number of local telephone exchanges. The Ministry have also stated that the annual traffic had not increased as anticipated. The Committee observed in this connection that based on an annual traffic of 1983-84 there was loss of revenue of Rs. 8.61 crores due to delay by 2½ years in the commissioning of the project. Further after taking note of the statement by the Secretary, Telecommunications during the evidence that the Ministry were trying to evolve a formula to find out a more accurate forecasting method, the Committee observed that they expected the Ministry to continue their efforts for devising a more realistic formula for estimating the revenue potential.

1.8 In their Action Taken notes Government have stated that efforts were being made to improve the traffic in this case and revenue forecast on a more realistic basis. The Ministry have also stated that plans were in hand for building automatic traffic machinery equipment in the various trunk automatic exchanges to measure and analyse the traffic between different stations and that to some extent more reliable data would start becoming available in another 3 years. The Ministry have also observed that some uncertainties in regard to forecasting will remain because of the large number of variable factors.

1.9 The Committee note from the Action Taken note that the Ministry have not given information on the efforts actually taken to improve the traffic in the present case and the present position of earnings vis-a-vis the targetted revenue. The Committee may be informed on the present trend of traffic and steps taken to improve the traffic. The Committee may also be intimated on the modified plans in operation to measure and analyse the traffic for a better forecasting of the traffic potential and revenue earnings apart from results of the new procedure in due course.



## CHAPTER II

### RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY GOVERNMENT

#### Recommendations

It is disquieting to note that although most of the equipment had been received by June 1981, the commissioning of the Project was further delayed by more than one year. The project planning and implementation machinery remains weak. The whole project has not been handled carefully from the stage of preparation upto the stage of execution and placing of orders. Lamentably in this case the project failed on all counts and even now the detailed estimates for installation of equipment and laying of cables are not sanctioned. The estimates for the main route from Delhi to Ambala for 12 MHz system and for 2.6 MHz system on the Muzaffarnagar-Dehradun route were clubbed together and as conceded by the Government this was a mistake. This clearly indicates that the entire planning was done in a casual manner without taking into account the various implications. The committee deprecate this approach.

[Sl. No. 1 (Para 48) of Appendix II 87th Report of PAC (8th Lok Sabha)].

#### Action taken

The detailed estimate for installation of equipment and laying of cables were sanctioned before the oral evidence of Secretary. The details are as below :

| Estimate No. | Particulars  | Sanction                          |
|--------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| 5226 D(b)    | Equipment installation New Delhi-Ambala 12 MHz with Muzaffarnagar-Dehradun.<br>(Amt. Rs. 68240300) | DCCP/ESE/023/5<br>dated 9-10-86   |
| 5203 D(a)    | Cable laying in Hapur-Ambala section<br>(Amt. Rs. 38374300)  | DCCP/ESC/036/2<br>dated 9-10-86   |
| 5204 D(a)    | Cable laying between MZN-RRK-DDN<br>(Rs. 8066003)  | DCCP/ESC/008/15<br>dated 31-8-84. |

[Ministry of Communication (Deptt. of Telecommunications) letter No. 39-9/84-TPL(CX) pt. dt. 14-12-87 dt. 14-12-87].

#### Recommendations

The Committee deprecate that due to delay in finalising the orders for procurement of the Digital equipment the Eighth IDA loan of the World

Bank could not be utilised for this purpose and is being processed against free foreign exchange. The Committee also note that there has been unusual delay of nearly one year for the issue of import clearance for digital coaxial equipment by the Department of Electronics and this was one of the reasons due to which the Department could not get loan of the World Bank for this purpose. The Committee deplore this casual approach and lack of coordination between two Ministries of the Government of India.

#### **Action Taken**

A more frequent coordination meetings are now being held between DOE' & DOT at the top level besides normal inter action so as to avoid the delay in having import clearance.

The World Bank loans are obtained with great difficulty after long persuasions and pretracted negotiations with the sole objective of speeding up the progress of the developmental effort. There is abundant need for caution and alertness in projects involving foreign exchange in view of unsatisfactory foreign exchange reserve position in the country. The Committee feel that if the Ministry had closely monitored the implementation of the project and scrupulously followed the World Bank guidelines this desirable situation could have been avoided resulting in loss of precious foreign exchange at favourable terms.

[Sl. No. 3 Para 53 to 54—of Appendix II to 87th Report of PAC (8th Lok Sabha)].

#### **Action taken**

The procedures and formalities to be observed in connection with the import of equipments are being examined in detail with a view to rationalise them in following areas :

- Time for tendering and its evaluation,
- Time in following procedures before issue of LOI.
- Time in following procedures and formalities before release of orders for import.

[Ministry of Communications (Department of Tele-Communications)  
lctter No. 39-9/84-TPL (CX) pt. dt. 14-12-87]

#### **Recommendations**

The Committee feel that this scheme may be only a pointer to the poor and tardy planning of the Department of Telecommunications in executing their various other projects also. Since the Department is involved in massive expansion and restructuring plans further delays in projects implementations have grave financial and economic implications. The procedure, practices and organisation involved in project construction and implementation, therefore, require critical analysis, monitoring and review. The

Committee, therefore, recommend that an apex body may be created by the Department of Telecommunications to evaluate and monitor the progress made by them in executing all their expansion projects and to reassess and rearrange their priorities wherever necessary so that the mistakes of the past, as in the present are not repeated.

[Sl. No. 5 (Para 56) of Appendix II to 87th Report of PAC (8th Lok Sabha)].

#### **Action taken**

*Setting up of an Apex Body to evaluate and monitor the progress of planning and execution of programme :*

- (a) It has been decided to monitor all the projects costing more than Rs. 10 crores by Telecom. Board.
- (b) A critical study of typical projects will be taken up each year to ensure that any general bottlenecks are removed and mistakes of the past are not repeated.

[Ministry of Communications (Deptt. of Tele-Communications) letter No. 39-9/84-TPL (CX) pt. dt. 14-12-87.]

### CHAPTER III

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

### Recommendations

There was an abnormal delay in executing the spur route 2.6 MHz system on the Muzaffarnagar-Dehradun section. Although, it was to be commissioned by the second half of 1979-80 alongwith the main route, the spur route is yet to be commissioned. It is likely to be ready after further delay of two years in 1988-89 only.

### Action taken

(a) Delhi-Ambala main coaxial route was commissioned Section by section progressively. Delhi-Hapur section was completed in July 81 and Hapur-Ambala was completed in January '83.

(b) The spur route of Muzaffarnagar-Dehradun could not be commissioned so far because of non-availability of digital equipments due to procurement procedural difficulties. Steps are being taken to commissioned this route very early.

### Recommendations

The major reason advanced for delay in the execution of the scheme is the mid-term change in the type of technology from Analogue to the Digital system. When equipment like underground repeater huts, steel termination cabinets, multi-plexing equipment, etc. worth Rs. 36.70 lakhs, had already been purchased and sunk for the originally proposed analogue system, it was decided to change the technology from Analogue system to Digital system. Besides, an amount of Rs. 69 lakhs has already been invested in installing coaxial cable.

### Action taken

The equipment for analogue system costing Rs. 36.70 lakhs had been diverted to the stations indicated against each and used.

|                          |                                 |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. 4 W Access Bay        | Ludhiana                        |
| 2. SGTE Bay              | New Delhi                       |
| 3. TGF Bay with Panels   | Meerut, Ambala, New Delhi       |
| 4. GDF                   | Etah                            |
| 5. 2 W Access Bay        | Ludhiana, Ambala, New Delhi.    |
| 6. SGCS Bay              | New Delhi                       |
| 7. 968 Channel Bay       | Etah                            |
| 8. BSG Units             | Meerut, Ambala, New Delhi       |
| 9. Channelling Equipment | Ludhiana, Jaipur, Aligarh, Etah |
| 10. TSGF                 | New Delhi                       |

The change of technology from Analogue to Digital before actual execution of any route was made because of the advantages of greater reliability and cost effectiveness. Keeping these advantages in view the Department has decided on digitalisation of the network at the earliest. Wherever cable and equipment have already been received their optional use will be kept in view.

#### **Recommendations**

The Committee have no doubt that the project was ill conceived and the Department did not take into account the latest technological advancement while formulating the above project which resulted in available expenditure besides delaying the project considerably. In fact the Digital system was already established in many countries when the project estimate was sanctioned by the Department in March '78. The explanation of the Department that the commercial system were yet to be fully proven is facile.

#### **Action taken**

Noted

#### **Recommendations**

The Committee, therefore, urge that the Department should carefully scrutinise their projects and while formulating feasibility reports every care should be taken to see that these are realistic and conform to latest technology. If there is time gap between the investment decision and the execution of the project, a quick review of the project, to ensure that technological development in the meanwhile has not rendered it obsolete, should invariably be undertaken.

[S. No. 2 Para 49 to 52, to Appendix II to 87th Report of PAC (8th Lok Sabha)]

#### **Action taken**

Noted. This is being kept in view.

[Ministry of Communications (Deptt. of Tele-Communications) letter No. 39-9/84-TPL (CX) pt. dt. 14-12-87]

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS REPLIES TO WHICH HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE AND WOULD REQUIRE REITERATION**

#### **Recommendations**

In 1978 the entire expansion project was estimated to cost Rs. 7.82 crores. However, due to delay in executing the project it is expected to cost Rs. 14.47 crores, which means an increase of 47% as per the revised estimates sanctioned recently. Presently only 65% of the work has been completed. "The actual expenditure incurred on the project upto 31-3-86 is Rs. 1186 lakhs. This represents an increase of Rs. 665 lakhs." The Committee have no doubt that the foremost reason for going haywire was nothing else but inadequate project formulation, inadequate monitoring and non-adherence of delivery schedules and piecemeal placement of orders. The scope, efficiency, effectiveness and impact of a project is, to a large extent, determined by project studies, benefit cost analysis and feasibility and fiscal studies which was not done properly in this case.

[Sl. No. 4 (Para 55)—of Appendix II to 87th Report of PAC (8th Lok Sabha)].

#### **Action taken**

Noted. Closer monitoring of large projects has been introduced.

[Ministry of Communications (Deptt. of Tele-Communications) letter No. 39-9/84-TPL(CX) pt. dt. 14-12-87]

## **CHAPTER V**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH GOVERNMENT HAVE FURNISHED INTERIM REPLIES**

#### **Recommendations**

The Committee note that in 1979-80, it was anticipated that on completion of the project, the annual revenue in 1983-84 would be about Rs. 16.32 crores. However, the revenue which actually accrued was only Rs. 3.13 crores. The traffic for subsequent years also has not shown any appreciable improvement. The Department of Telecommunications have sought to explain this shortfall "due to non-commissioning of the pending spur route and restricted general growth in the number of local Telephone exchanges. The actual traffic has not increased as anticipated". Even based on actual traffic of 1983-84, there was loss of revenue of Rs. 8.61 crores due to delay of 2-3/4 years in the commissioning of the project (from end of 1979-80 to January 1983).

Efforts are being made to improve the traffic and revenue forecasts on a more realistic basis.

#### **Recommendations**

Considering the wide amplitude of the variations highlighted above, the Committee feel that the method or formula for forecasting the traffic does not seem to be realistic. This needs to be rationalised. In this connection, the Committee have noted the statement of the Secretary, Telecommunications that they "are trying to evolve this (formula) and see whether we can find out a more accurate forecasting method". The Committee expect that continuous efforts should be made to devise a more realistic formula for estimating the revenue potential.

[Sl. No. 6 (Para 57 to 58) of Appendix II to 87th Report of PAC  
(8th Lok Sabha)]

#### **Action taken**

With the manual methods that were so far available it was extremely difficult to measure the actual traffic and to build up a model for forecasting. Plan are in hand for building-in automatic traffic measuring equipment in the various Trunk Automatic Exchanges to measure and analyse the traffic between different stations. Thus to some extent more reliable data will start becoming available in another 3 years. Some uncertainties

in regard to forecasting will remain because of the large number of variable factors.

[Ministry of Communications (Department of Tele-Communications)  
letter No. 39-9/84-TPZ(CX) pt. dated 14-12-87.]

NEW DELHI;  
August 11, 1989  
Sravana 20, 1911 (S)

P. KOLANDAIVELU  
*Chairman,*  
*Public Accounts Committee*



## PART II

### MINUTES OF THE 8TH SITTING OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE HELD ON 9-8-1989

The Committee sat from 1500 hrs. to 1545 hrs.

#### PRESENT

1. Maj. Gen. R. S. Sparrow—*In the Chair*
2. Shri M. Y. Ghorpade
3. Shri Mohd. Ayub Khan
4. Shri Y. S. Mahajan
5. Shrimati Usha Rani Tomar
6. Dr. Chandra Shèkhar Tripathi
7. Shri Rameshwar Thakur

#### SECRETARIAT

1. Shri G. L. Batra—*Joint Secretary*
2. Shri K. K. Sharma—*Director*
3. Shri A. Subramanian—*Senior Financial Committee Officer*

#### REPRESENTATIVES OF AUDIT

1. Shri R. Parmeshwar—*ADAI-CAG*
2. Shri D. S. Iyer—*Director of Audit, CW & M-I*
3. Shri V. Srikantan—*Director of Audit (P & T)*
4. Shri Ved Prakash—*Dy. Director (P & T)*

2. In the absence of Chairman, the Committee choose Maj. Gen. R. S. Sparrow to act as Chairman for the sitting.

3. The Committee considered and adopted the following draft Action Taken Reports subject to modifications indicated in Annexure II.

|       |    |    |    |    |
|-------|----|----|----|----|
| (i)   | xx | xx | xx | xx |
| (ii)  | xx | xx | xx | xx |
| (iii) | xx | xx | xx | xx |

4. The Committee also considered the draft Action Taken Report on the recommendations contained in 87th Report of PAC (Eighth Lok Sabha)

regarding New Delhi-Ambala Coaxial Expansion Scheme. The Committee's attention was drawn to the fact that as intimated by Audit, in respect of Recommendation No. 3 (Paragraphs 53 and 54) of the Original Report, final replies had been furnished by the Ministry on 4 May, 1988 and that this had remained to be taken note in preparing the draft Action Taken Report. After considering the reply, the Committee decided to drop paras 1.4 to 1.7 of the draft Action Taken Report renumber/subsequent paras and consider the recommendation No. 3 as accepted by Government. Appropriate modifications necessary to the Report are indicated in Annexure II.

5.           xx               xx               xx               xx               xx

6. The Committee authorised the Chairman to finalise the Draft Reports in the light of verbal and consequential changes arising out of factual verification by audit and present the same to the House.

*The Committee then adjourned.*

## ANNEXURE II

*Amendments/modifications made by Public Accounts Committee in their sitting held on 9-8-1989 in the Draft Report on action taken on 87th Report relating to New Delhi-Ambala coaxial expansion scheme*

*Page*

|                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 1 to 3 . . . . .                   | Delete paras 1.4 to 1.7                         |
| 4 to 8 . . . . .                   | Re-number paras 1.8 to 1.13 as paras 1.4 to 1.9 |
| 9 [Item (i) of Appendix] . . . . . | Insert Sl. No. 3 between "1" and "and"          |
| [Item (iii) of Appendix] . . . . . | Delete "3 and"                                  |

## **APPENDIX I**

*(Vide Para 1.2)*

*Statement showing classification of action taken notes received from  
Government*

- (i) Recommendations and observations that have been accepted by Government;  
*Sl. Nos. 1, 3 and 5*
- (ii) Recommendations and observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's replies;  
*Sl. No. 2*
- (iii) Recommendations and observations replies to which have not been accepted by the Committee and would require reiteration;  
*Sl. No. 4*
- (iv) Recommendations and observations in respect of which Government have furnished interim replies;  
*Sl. No. 6*

## APPENDIX II

### Statement of Conclusions/Recommendations

| Sl. No. | Para No. | Ministry/ Deptt.               | Recommendations and Conclusions  |
|---------|----------|--------------------------------|--|
| 1       | 2        | 3                              | 4  |
| 1       | 1.6      | Deptt. of Tele-Communica-tions | The Committee note that by March 1986 Rs. 11.88 crore had been spent on the project by which time only 65% of the work had been completed. No information has been given by the Ministry of the present position relating to the total estimated cost of the project, expenditure incurred there against, action taken to regularise excess etc. In the circumstances the Committee are not satisfied with the general observation of the Ministry that closer monitoring of large project had been introduced. The Committee would desire to know the present position of this project both in physical and financial terms alone with reasons, if any, on cost and time over-run of the project. The Committee would also like to be enlightened on the specific measures taken for closer monitoring of large projects. |
| 2       | 1.9      | -do-                           | The Committee note from the Action Taken note that the Ministry have not given information on the efforts actually taken to improve the traffic in the present case and the present position of earnings vis-a-vis the targetted revenue. The Committee may be informed on the present trend of traffic and steps taken to improve the traffic. The Committee may also be intimated on the modified plans in operation to measure and analyse the traffic for a better forecasting of the traffic potential and revenue earnings apart from results of the new procedure in due course.  |

