

107

SALAR JUNG MUSEUM, HYDERABAD

**MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE
DEVELOPMENT
(DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE)**

HUNDRED AND SEVENTH REPORT



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

HUNDRED AND SEVENTH REPORT
PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE
(1995-96)

(TENTH LOK SABHA)

SALAR JUNG MUSEUM, HYDERABAD

MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE
DEVELOPMENT
(DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE)



Presented to Lok Sabha on 25.8.1995
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LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

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CORRIGENDA TO 107TH REPORT OF PUBLIC
ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE (10TH LOK SABHA)

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PAGE	PARA	LINE	FOR	READ	

13	50	3	Process	Process	
15	57	5	In spite	In spite	
17	68	5	of	of	
23	80	2	notices	notice	
23	81	11	administered	administered	
25	87	9	for the	for their	
26	90	4	of	on	
-do-	-do-	5th	from	Cabinet	
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29	95	8th	from	adequate	
		bottom			
30	97	3	through	thorough	
-do-	-do-	2nd	from	failure	
		bottom			
-do-	98	11	635	636	
31	100	14	verification	verification	
67	94	1	from	period from	
70	97	16	disirability	desirability	
83	117	7	acton	action	

CONTENTS

	PAGE
COMPOSITION OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE.....	(iii)
INTRODUCTION.....	(v)
REPORT	1
APPENDIX I Para 11 of the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for the year ended 31 March, 1992, No. 11 of 1993, Union Government (Other Autonomous Bodies)	42
APPENDIX II Conclusions and Recommendations	66

PART II*

Minutes of the sittings of Public Accounts Committee held on 4.7.1995 and 22.8.1995.

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**COMPOSITION OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE
(1995-96)**

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INTRODUCTION

1. I, the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee as authorised by the Committee do present on their behalf this 107th Report of the Committee on Paragraph 11 of the Report of the C&AG of India for the year ended 31 March, 1992, No. 11 of 1993, Union Government (Other Autonomous Bodies) relating to Salar Jung Museum, Hyderabad.

2. The Report of the C&AG of India for the year ended 31 March, 1992, No. 11 of 1993, Union Government, (Other Autonomous Bodies) was laid on the Table of the House on 14 May, 1993.

3. This Report of the Committee reveals several irregularities/shortcomings in the functioning of the Salar Jung Museum, Hyderabad. Briefly, these included financial and administrative irregularities, lapses in the upkeep of accounts, discrepancies in the number of art objects actually in possession of the Museum, failure to account for the art objects, loss of art objects, failure to conduct physical verification as per the prescribed procedure, lapses/inadequacies in purchase, documentation, conservation and display of art objects, maintenance of the library, irregularities in the execution of civil works and above all, lack of effective control over the Museum. The Committee are of the strong view that while there was an atmosphere of non-accountability prevalent at large in the Salar Jung Museum, the Department of Culture were equally remiss in the discharge of responsibility cast upon them by the Salar Jung Museum Act, 1961. The Committee have considered it unfortunate that though the irregularities in the Museum were within the knowledge of the Ministry atleast since 1991, no single person has effectively been punished for the same till now. Deploring this sorry state of affairs in the Museum which was declared as an institution of national importance by Parliament way back in 1961, the Committee have recommended that the facts contained in the Report should be thoroughly looked into and appropriate corrective/remedial measures taken with a view to ensuring that the Salar Jung Museum plays the role assigned to it in the Salar Jung Museum Act, 1961 effectively in the promotion of Education and Culture and that the irregularities of the nature commented upon in this Report do not recur.

4. The Audit Para was examined by the Public Accounts Committee at their sitting held on 4 July, 1995. The Committee considered and finalised the Report at their sitting held on 22 August, 1995. Minutes of the sitting form Part II* of the Report.

5. For facility of reference and convenience the observations and recommendations of the Committee have been printed in thick type in the

*Not printed (one cyclostyled copy laid on that table of the House and five copies placed in Parliament Library).

(vi)

body of the Report and have also been reproduced in a consolidated form in Appendix II to the Report.

6. The Committee express their thanks to the officers of the Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of Culture) for the cooperation extended by them in furnishing information and tendering evidence before the Committee.

7. The Committee also place on record their appreciation of the assistance rendered to them in the matter by the office of the Comptroller & Auditor General of India.

NEW DELHI;
23 August, 1995
1 Bhadra, 1917 (Saka)

RAM NAIK,
Chairman,
Public Accounts Committee.

REPORT

I. *Introductory*

The Salar Jung Museum (Museum) at Hyderabad is a repository of the artistic achievements of diverse European, Asian and Far Eastern countries of the World. A major portion of these collections was acquired by late Shri Mir Yousuf Ali Khan, popularly known as 'Salar Jung III'. The Salar Jung Museum was opened to public in December, 1951 in the Old Palace known as Dewan Devadi of Salar Jung-III. The administration of the Museum continued to be with Salar Jung Estate Committee till 1958 when through a compromise deed based on a High Court decree in December 1958 the Museum came under the control of the then Ministry of Scientific Research and Cultural Affairs, Government of India. With the enactment of the Salar Jung Museum Act, 1961 (No. 26 of 1961) by Parliament and declaring the Museum and its Library as an institution of national importance, the administration of the Museum was entrusted to the Salar Jung Museum Board (Board). The Governor of Andhra Pradesh is the ex-officio Chairman of the Board assisted by the Members of whom four are ex-officio, four are nominated by the Government of India and the remaining two by the State Government. The main functions of the Board as envisaged in Section 15 of the Act are:

- to manage the Museum efficiently and to plan, promote, organise and implement programmes for the development of the Museum;
- to provide for instruction and research in matters relating to Museum and Libraries and for the advancement of learning and dissemination of knowledge in such matters; and
- to perform such other functions as the Central Government may, from time to time, assign to the Board.

2. This Report is based on paragraph 11 of the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for the year ended 31 March, 1992, No. 11 of 1993, Union Government (Other Autonomous Bodies) which is reproduced as Appendix-I. The Audit review covered the working of the Museum from 1985-86 to 1991-92.

II. *Finance & Accounts*

(i) *Non-utilisation of Grants*

3. The Museum is financed by grants-in-aid from the Government both for development and upkeep. The Museum had received a total grant of Rs. 8.60 crores during the period 1985-86 to 1991-92 from the Government of India. In addition, the Museum receives revenue from other miscellane-

ous receipts, such as sale of tickets, souvenirs, picture post cards, interest from lease of building for cafeteria, offering specialised services to the public etc.

4. The Audit have stated that the Museum prepared Budget Estimates at the time of sending proposals for grants-in-aid and that the Government released lump sum grants without item-wise details, even in cases where less amount of grant was released than that sought for. In the absence of item-wise details in such cases, there was no means to verify whether the Board had spent the grant on the items for which they were intended by the Government to be spent.

5. In this connection the Committee desired to know the specific purposes for which the grants were released to Museum and the basis of allocation of the grants for the intended purposes. In a written note furnished to the Committee, the Ministry of Human Resource Development stated that normally the Museum proposes its requirements under various major headings and sub-heads. Depending upon the availability of finance and taking into account the relative priority vis-a-vis other institutions requiring finance, the Government allocates a lumpsum amount leaving it to the Museum to defray this amount under the various heads according to the local priority as decided by the Salar Jung Museum Board.

6. The Audit have pointed out that amounts were drawn by the Museum in March to show grants as utilised during the financial year. It has been stated that Rs. 2.31 lakhs, Rs. 8.95 lakhs, Rs. 11.11 lakhs, and Rs. 11.53 lakhs were drawn in March of 1987, 1988, 1989 and 1990 respectively. Of these Rs. 2.31 lakhs, Rs. 1.26 lakhs, Rs. 6.31 lakhs and Rs. 10.01 lakhs were drawn on 31 March of these years.

7. When enquired about the purposes for which funds had been drawn and the actual dates of their utilisation, the Ministry in their note stated that the Salar Jung Museum Board drew an amount of Rs. 2.31 lakhs on 31st March, 1987 for purchase of fire fighting equipments and for production of a documentary film on Salar Jung Museum. An amount of Rs. 1.26 lakhs was drawn for purchase of office furniture. The amount of Rs. 6.31 lakhs was drawn for reorganisation of galleries and setting up an auditorium on 31st March, 1990 for reorganisation of galleries Nos. 34 and 35, printing of publications, and printing of picture of post cards. However, according to the Ministry, the Salar Jung Museum authorities expended this amount varying from six months to over one and a half years. This irregularity has also been sent to Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) for appropriate action against the erring officer.

8. In their updated note that Ministry further stated that CVC has already appointed a Commissioner for Departmental inquiries to conduct the inquiry against the erring officer.

(ii) Irregularities in drawing cheques for payments

9. The Audit Paragraph has further revealed that out of three cheques for Rs. 13.38 lakhs drawn for payment to contractors for fire fighting equipment on 30 March, 1991, two cheques for Rs. 8.67 lakhs were not handed over to the party by the Museum till August, 1992 even after a lapse of 17 months as the works were not completed. And the third cheque was cancelled and a fresh cheque issued in October 1991 after a lapse of over six months.

10. Asked the reasons for not handing over the two cheques drawn on 30 March, 1991 to the concerned authorities for such a long period, the Ministry, in their note stated:—

“It is true that the Museum authorities were remiss in this respect. The Fact Finding Committee also noted that cheques were drawn towards the end of the financial year presumably to avoid showing the amount as unspent balance and later on released to the contractors as and when the work was completed. Out of the three cheques, two cheques for the amount of Rs. 8.67 lakhs were released on 3rd December, 1992 after the completion of the work and on the basis of the recommendation of the Central Building Research Institute. The third cheque was however cancelled.”

11. During evidence when attention was drawn to this serious financial irregularity in the instant case, the representative of the Ministry stated:—

“They drew the cheque to ensure and to show in the accounts that they have spent the amount but the work itself was not completed. They handed it over but not on the date on which the cheque was drawn. We have verified it. I think it is because of lack of knowledge of the administrative procedure.”

12. Asked further about the corrective steps taken to obviate its recurrence in future, the Secretary, Department of Culture deposed:—

“The matter was discussed in the Board meeting; we have appointed a sub committee in the Finance Wing of the Ministry. An officer specifically went to the Salar Jung Museum to guide the officers there and advised them on funds. It is a fact that this Museum has not been properly administered over the years. Each wing is being strengthened by us now.”

13. In this connection, the Ministry in their post-evidence note *inter-alia* stated:—

“After the submission of the Report of the Fact Finding Committee the Board appointed a regular Accounts Officer. A committee from the Department consisting of representatives of Finance and the representatives of the Department visited the Salar Jung Museum Board on 27.9.94 and advised the Museum to send a

proposal for regularisation of the various such acts and now it has been reported by the Museum that no such irregularities is being committed."

(iii) Non-investment of surplus grants

14. According to the Audit Paragraph, non-investment of surplus grants as required in terms of instructions issued by Government and also under Board resolution dated 26 February, 1991 had resulted in loss of interest amounting to Rs. 1.99 lakhs. The Committee desired to know the reasons for non-investment of surplus balances in short term deposits in pursuance of the Board's decision. In a note furnished to the Committee the Ministry stated:—

"The surplus balances was not deposited by the Museum which was anticipating that the demand of the NBCC was due in a short period. However, since there were critical comments on the contract awarded to the NBCC by the Fact Finding committee, there has been protracted discussion in the Board which has reviewed the estimates as well as the contract to the NBCC."

15. The Ministry in their updated note stated that a fresh contract with National Building Construction Corporation (NBCC) has been signed including therein certain penal provision for non-utilisation for the funds and slowing down of the work.

(iv) Non-reconciliation of Cash Book with Bank Pass Book

16. To ensure that all receipts remitted to the bank are correctly posted in the bank account, and all payments duly discharged are only debited into bank account, a periodical bank reconciliation has to be carried out. But according to Audit no such reconciliation was done in the case of the museum. On being asked about the reasons for not carrying out the required reconciliation the Ministry attributed these to the absence of the services of a regular Accounts-cum-Administrative Officer resulting in backlog of the work.

(v) Non-maintenance of Asset Register in the prescribed form

17. According to financial rules, institutions receiving grants from the Government should maintain an asset register in the prescribed form and furnish a copy thereof to Government annually. According to Audit, the Museum had not maintained the asset register in the prescribed form showing the particulars of assets category-wise and their values so as to facilitate correlation of the assets as per the asset register with the assets capitalised in the accounts during the period 1991-92.

18. To a query from the Committee as to why the asset register was not maintained in the prescribed form, the Ministry in a note stated that the non-maintenance of asset register was certainly an act of omission. According to the Ministry, the Museum has been instructed to maintain the asset register in the prescribed format.

III. *Discrepancies in the take over of art objects from the Salar Jung Estate*

19. According to the Audit Para, based on a compromise deed filed with the high Court of Andhra Pradesh 38,371 art objects listed in 85 registers (High Court Registers) were taken over in 1961 by Government from the Salar Jung Estate Committee. On this basis, inventory registers were prepared in 1964 according to which the number of art objects was 46,081. This figure was arrived at after deleting 1,971 items on grounds of double entries in the High Court Registers and addition of 9,681 items which were reportedly not shown in the High Court Registers. After the museum was shifted to new buildings in 1968, fresh registers called master registers were prepared in 1976. According to these registers, the number of art objects available in the Museum was 44,797. The decrease in the number of art objects from the inventory registers to the master registers was stated to be mainly due to double entries (961 items) and cancellations (231 items). Thus, there were discrepancies/defects in the actual number of art objects taken over from the Salar Jung Estate and as shown in the subsequent registers.

20. In this connection, the Committee enquired about the reasons for such discrepancies and the action taken by the Ministry to reconcile the discrepancies between the High Court Registers and the registers prepared subsequently. The Ministry stated that after the Audit Report of 1991, the Fact Finding committee independently tried to work out the total number of the art objects. In fact, the Fact Finding committee has agreed with the Audit findings that the art objects received from the Estate were not fully and completely accounted for at any point of time *viz.*, (i) at the time of take over of the administration by the Board in 1961 or (ii) at the time of preparation of inventory registers in 1964 or (iii) at the time of preparation of master registers in 1976.

21. Based on the findings of the Fact Finding committee, the Government of India constituted in March, 1993 a committee of six experts to physically verify all the objects in the original registers and other records so as to determine whether there are any missing objects and to fix the responsibility therefore and suggest a system for future. The Expert committee submitted the Report to the Government on 29 September, 1994. The Report has established that a large number of articles were missing from the collection of the Board and that a large number of acquisitions have not been correctly accounted for.

22. As per the findings of the physical verification of the Expert committee, the extent of loss of art objects works out to 636. It consists of cancelled/missing objects (263), substituted-objects (one) and art objects not produced before the committee and declared untraceable (372).

23. In this context, the Committee desired to know the follow up action taken after the Report of the Expert committee pin-pointed the loss/pilferage of the articles. In their notes furnished to the Committee, the

Ministry stated that subsequent to the submission of the report of the Expert committee, another sub-committee of three experts went into the matter. Based on their recommendation, the matter was referred to Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in June 1995 to investigate as to the persons who have connived in the loss/pilferage of the articles and also take the help of other linked agencies to go into the roots of such thefts. The outcome of the investigation of the CBI is stated to be awaited.

24. The Ministry stated that, besides this the Director of the Salar Jung Museum has also been asked to call for the explanation of all the concerned officers as to why the physical verification has not been done according to the prescribed procedures and the Director has been authorised to take steps to strengthen the Conservation Laboratory and also to undertake immediately the work of preservation and conservation of antiquities, manuscripts, books and other art objects. According to the Ministry, besides these the Salar Jung Museum has also been advised to take immediate action for acquiring a computer for archival filing of the objects through the computer archival method. With these recommendations, the Ministry also stated that it was hoped that the working of the Salar Jung Museum would be so streamlined that neither pilferage could be attempted nor the items inadequately verified and recorded.

IV. Failure in Physical verification

25. The Audit have pointed out that the Randhawa Committee which was appointed by the Government of India in August 1968 for formulating a national policy on Museums and whose Report was adopted by the Government in 1969 had prescribed that in case of Salar Jung Museum the physical verification of art objects should be conducted once in three years. However, the Museum did not have any record to indicate the mode of physical verification undertaken prior to 1975. From 1980-81 even though the physical verification was taken up to one third of the art objects per annum, cross referencing with the master registers was not done. The last physical verification of all objects together with cross verification with the master registers was conducted during September 1985 to May 1989. When enquired about the same, the Department of Culture in a note stated:—

“The Physical Verification carried out by the Salar Jung Museum Board in the previous period has not been done according to prescribed procedure for museums.”

26. To a query by the Committee as to why the physical verification of the art objects was not conducted regularly by the Museum authorities, the Ministry in another note stated:—

“Even though the Salar Jung Museum Board officials have been reporting to the Board periodically regarding physical verification carried out at the rate of one-third of the objects every years, making a 100 per cent in three years, in reality the Museum authorities did not follow the prescribed procedure. The Fact

Finding committee made adverse remarks regarding this aspect and accordingly the Board had appointed a committee of Experts to carry out the 100 per cent verification and to work out proper accession registers and also to suggest methodology to ensure that in future the physical verification is carried out in the manner obtaining in other such museums."

27. During the course of their examination, the Committee came across certain documents which indicated that a former Director of Salar Jung Museum also suggested on 25 September, 1967 the necessity of physical verification. On being asked the reasons for not acting upon the suggestion of the then Director, the Secretary (Deptt. of Culture) deposed in evidence:—

"Verification is supposed to be done, of one third of the objects every year. In fact, this verification with reference to the High Court Register was the real authentic thing. It is not as if the previous Directors of the Salar Jung Museum had not conducted any verification. They did. But it resulted in perfunctory verification, firstly because it was not of all the physical count of the art objects in the Museum and it did not cover all the rooms. It actually was a room register and it has got a number of rooms and as per the rooms they verified the objects. This was the inspection and verification over the years, but it has not been up to the mark, not satisfactory. Therefore, to that extent, it is certainly a failure because this verification should have been completed every three years."

28. When asked about the action taken by the Director against the officers responsible for their failure in conducting physical verification according to the prescribed procedure in the light of the decision of the Ministry on the recommendation of the Expert committee, the Ministry in their post-evidence note stated that the Director of the Salar Jung Museum has called for the explanation of all the officers responsible for their failure in conducting physical verification and their replies were being placed before the Museum Board for further action against them.

29. The Audit para reveals that the system did not provide for verification at periodical intervals by experts in the field to guard against disappearance of genuine objects and their replacement by duplicates. There were no records with the Museum to indicate that periodic inspection was carried out since the beginning till 1991. The Committee desired to know the system adopted during physical verification to ensure that the articles present are genuine and not fake. In a note furnished to the Committee, the Ministry *inter-alia* stated that by and large the security system of the Museum is such that it is very

difficult for objects to be replaced by fakes. However, odd chances of such a replacement are not ruled out. This could happen only if the Museum officials, internal and external security agencies, all, connive to do so.

30. When asked whether the Expert committee had looked into this aspect and the methodology adopted to ensure that the articles made available for physical verification were genuine in a post-evidence note the Ministry stated:—

“The committee on Physical Verification did not have as one of its term of references, to go into the genuineness of the objects presented for physical verification. However, the committee verified each object as per the old photo albums of the Museum which have been preserved. To the extent possible and within the available means, the committee could verify the genuineness of the objects and that is how they could find out one substitution. The Museum Authorities have sent a proposal for acquiring the computer for computerised Archival Storage System. Once this System is established, which is proposed to be done before the current financial year, aspects of verification of genuineness of the objects could also be attended to by this Computerised method.”

31. The Report of the Expert committee revealed that various inventories had occasional entries as ‘written off’, ‘cancelled’ etc. against the lost art objects. The Expert committee had opined that a reference to the Ministry of Law was to be made in this respect as some of the written off art objects by the Board required the concurrence. On being enquired about the follow up action taken in this regard the Ministry in their post-evidence note stated:—

“As per the present scheme of the Salar Jung Museum, the Board is fully empowered to take any action in consonance with the objects of the Act. The Department has appointed a Review committee who will be asked to go into this question and suggest recommendations in this regard. After the report of the Review committee containing recommendations including amendment of the Salar Jung Museum Act, if necessary, issue will be referred to Ministry of Law for their final opinion.”

V. Collection of Exhibits

32. According to the Audit Para the Salar Jung Museum Board constituted an art purchase committee consisting of seven members for purchasing art objects. The Museum purchased 3,795 art objects during the period 1961-62 to 1991-92. Of these, 657 objects valued at Rs. 16.99 lakhs were purchased during the period 1985-86 to 1991-92. In this connection, the Committee desired to know the standard procedure followed by the art purchase committee for purchasing the art objects. The Ministry in their note stated that the art purchase committee generally consists of experts in various fields like paintings, numismatics, calligraphy, art, history etc.

The Museum generally advertises in leading newspapers in the country to present before the committee any art object that any collector is willing to sell to the museum. These experts not only see the quality and genuineness of the art objects but also decide which of these art objects should be purchased to go with the collections of the Museum. Generally the dealers who sell these art objects are also expected to produce necessary certificate from the Archaeological Survey of India regarding the ownership registration as also the details of the art objects.

33. The Audit have pointed out that art objects were proposed to be acquired by the Board to fill the gaps in the collection of the late Nawab Salar Jung. However, the gaps to be filled in were not identified by the Museum. According to the antiquities and Art Treasurers Act, 1972, Antiquities' include paintings, sculptures objects of art, crafts, things of historical interest, etc., which have been in existence for not less than 100 years. It has been pointed out by Audit that 95 out of 657 art objects purchased during 1985-86 to 1991-92 related to the 20th century and this was justified by the Museum that they can purchase objects of aesthetic value of modern art. In this connection the Committee desired to know as to who was competent to assess the aesthetic value of the objects. The Ministry, stated that the art purchase committee was competent in determining this aspect and the recommendations of the committee were generally accepted by the Salar Jung Museum Board. Further there was no bar to purchase non-antiquities.

34. It has been pointed out by Audit that the Museum had neither maintained a list of reputed dealers in antiquities nor reputed suppliers of other museums contacted for the purchase. Of the 657 art objects purchased during 1985-92, 619 objects *i.e.* 94 per cent were from Hyderabad based local dealers only. The Committee desired to know whether these aspects were also looked into by the Expert committee and measures taken subsequently, if any, to streamline the acquisition procedures. In their post-evidence note the Ministry stated that it was not one of the terms of reference of the Expert committee for physical verification. However, guidelines issued in January 1994 will take care of the aspects of streamlining the procedure acquisition of art objects.

35. According to Audit, with a view to avoiding competition among the three national museums which are financed by the Government of India and also as a measure of economy, Government desired in February, 1963 that there should be a combined art purchase committee for the three museums, *viz.* Indian museum, Calcutta, National museum, New Delhi and Salar Jung Museum, Hyderabad. However, the Board continued with the existing acquisition committee to buy objects of special interest to the Museum. When his attention was drawn to the same, Secretary, Deptt. of Culture stated that the guidelines issued in January, 1994 for buying art objects would take care of the inadequacies observed earlier.

36. In this connection, the Committee specifically desired to know as to why despite the guidelines issued by Government, purchases were not made through the combined art purchase committee and at what level the decision was taken to continue with the existing acquisition committee. The Ministry in their post-evidence note stated:—

“The Board of the various museums being different and that their specific needs are also different, the combined art purchase committee could not function. While no specific orders to supercede the guidelines were issued, the combined art purchase committee became non-functional as none of the Museum evinced any interest in this regard.”

The Ministry in another note added:—

“While Government of India guidelines should have been followed as a general rule,.... it was found to be expedient to appoint independent art purchase committee for each of the museums.”

37. Asked further as to how the guidelines issued in January, 1994 would help improving the functioning of existing acquisition committees, the Ministry in the same note further elaborated the point as follows:—

“These guidelines have suggested a workable method of combined art purchase. Instead of a single committee as envisaged earlier, it has now been proposed that the Director of each museum will be a member of the art purchase committee of the other museums. These Directors have also been suggested to obtain necessary authority for purchase of objects while being in other committee. Moreover, these guidelines have brought in the ambit of collecting the art objects languishing in various Police Stations and also to obtain the objects in the Archaeological Survey of India. These guidelines will, however, be further reviewed after a period of two years so that a systematic review of purchase of art objects is made inbuilt.”

VI. Documentation

38. The Audit have further pointed out that according to the Randhawa committee report, negatives of objects photographed were to be arranged in a systematic manner serially numbered and preserved. However, negatives were not serially numbered in the Museum and the information on the negatives prior to April, 1985 was not available. To a query from the Committee regarding the reasons for not keeping the negatives of objects photographed in a systematic manner, the Ministry in a note stated:—

“It was also one of the allegations against the former Director which was investigated by the Fact Finding Committee. While the allegation that the negatives were damaged, were found to be untrue, the Fact Finding committee discerned that the work of keeping the negatives was entrusted to an unskilled class IV

employee resulting in such disarray. The Board had clearly instructed that these negatives should be under the personal custody of the Director of the Museum and that usage should be very sparing."

39. Asked further about the steps since taken to make the documentation systematic, the Ministry in their notes stated that the Board entrusted the work to the Expert committee to ensure that these should be brought in order so that the verification of the art objects could be done in a systematic manner. The work for systematic serial numbering of the photo negatives were expected to be completed by the end of August 1995.

VII. Preservation of Museum Exhibits

40. According to the Audit Para, the art objects requiring conservation and preservation treatment were not identified and a plan of action carrying out restoration work in a phased manner was not drawn up. Of the 657 art objects purchased for Rs. 16.99 lakhs during 1985-86 to 1991-92, 503 were in a damaged condition as recorded by art purchase committee at the time of acquisition. Test check by Audit of the concerned acquisition registers relating to the period prior to 1985-86 also disclosed that out of 10,843 objects recorded in 57 registers, 4,654 i.e. 43 per cent were in a damaged condition. A chemical conservation laboratory was established in 1962-63 for attending to the work of preservation and conservation of cultural property. According to Audit there were abnormal delays in completion of chemical treatment upto seven years.

41. In this connection the Committee desired to know the action taken against the concerned officials for the damage of the art objects. The Ministry in their note stated that damage to art objects took place due to various reasons arising out of age of the object, environmental conditions, handling etc. However, the Ministry failed to furnish details of those objects damaged due to the negligence of the staff.

42. When asked about the reasons for long delay in effecting the chemical treatment to the damaged objects and remedial steps taken subsequently to correct the situation, the Ministry in their post-evidence note *inter-alia* stated:—

"The laboratory of the Salar Jung Museum was not properly equipped to take in the work of restoring and repairing art objects. The Board now initiated steps to strengthen the conservation laboratory and have also appointed personnel in this regard. It has also been suggested to the Board to approach the National Research Laboratory for Conservation of Cultural Property, Lucknow so as to speed up the process of repairing the objects and also to keep expert guidelines in the preservation and conservation of these objects."

43. During evidence, the Secretary (Department of Culture) informed the Committee that the Expert Committee entrusted with the work of hundred per cent physical verification have identified 200 art objects which warranted conservation with a measure of urgency. They are also stated to have identified about 1400 books which required proper preservation including 347 manuscripts. Apart from these, there are about 6200 art objects, 3000 manuscripts and about 1400 books in the conservation laboratory which need proper attention. It was found that these things required very systematic conservation because some of these books were more than 200 years old.

44. As a follow-up to the above findings the Ministry are stated to have appointed a Review Committee consisting of seven members for Salar Jung Museum Board with a view to systematising conservation and preservation of the art objects. According to the Ministry the Review Committee is expected to submit its Report before the end of the financial year 1995.

VIII. Display of Museum objects

45. The Audit have also pointed out that more than 60% of art objects were not displayed even for more than seven years. Even among new purchases acquired at a cost of Rs. 16.99 lakhs during 1985-86 to 1991-92, 75 per cent of the objects were not displayed. According to Audit, the Museum had no plan for display of various art objects lying in stores. In this connection the Committee desired to know whether any long term display policy or time schedule has been formulated to display the articles. In their note the Ministry *inter-alia* stated that no museum in the world display more than 30 per cent of its objects at any time. In the Salar Jung Museum with the completion of two new wings, few more galleries will be added resulting in more objects being displayed.

46. Responding to a specific query from the Committee in this regard, the representative of the Ministry during evidence stated:

"This is the practice the world over... The reason is threefold, The first is that all the items in the Museum are not necessarily for viewing by visitors. They are meant for research purposes and various levels of conservation. The second is the paucity of space. And third is the change in display."

47. When the attention of the Ministry was drawn to the fact that 60 per cent of the items purchased by the Museum were not displayed at all for seven years, the Secretary (Department of Culture) deposed in evidence:

"...the pace of the mobility of items has not been adequate and we can intensify that. But the real effective solution is the additional space required in the Museum."

48. Elaborating further on this point the Ministry in their post-evidence note stated:

"The Museum is in the process of constructing two new wings, one of which will be fully ready by 31st March, 1996. To a large extent

these new wings will accommodate some more objects. The Museum Authorities also will be advised to work out a time-table for changing at least some of the galleries once in three years or so, so as to ensure rotational display of art objects."

IX. Delay in Establishment of Tribal Art Gallery

49. According to the Audit Para Government advised the Museum to open a gallery during the Seventh Five Year Plan for tribal art to promote tribal culture. A provision of Rs. 6 lakhs was made in the budget estimates for purchase of art objects during the period 1985-86 to 1991-92. However, the gallery was not established and the entire grant remained unutilised. When enquired about the reasons for the same, the Department of Culture in a note stated that the gallery could not be set up for want of space. The Secretary of the Ministry during evidence stated that the highest priority was being attached to open a new gallery for tribal art.

50. Apprising the Committee of the status position the Ministry in a note furnished after evidence stated that the Museum Authorities were in the process of constructing two new wings for the Salar Jung Museum. After a number of review meetings held by Secretary, Culture with the Chairman and other senior officers of the National Building Construction Corporation, it has been assured that at least one wing would be fully constructed and handed over by 31st March, 1996. The gallery of Tribal Art will be opened in this new wing within two months after the completion and handing over the new wing to the Museum Authorities.

X. Mass Education Programme

51. Under the mass education programme, the Museum was stated to have taken up various activities like temporary exhibition, mobile exhibition, special exhibition, popular lectures, training courses, seminars, symposiums, workshops and preparation of models.

52. A museum is essentially a link between a research scholar and a common man. It has an acknowledged role to play in the area of informal and continuing education. In this connection, the Committee desired to know as to how the Museum proposed to play this role effectively particularly for reaching the common man or an under privileged school child. In their note furnished after evidence the Ministry stated that the Museum has qualified keepers in Education and the Museum is expected to have its out-reach programme through the mobile exhibition so as to reach out to the common man. The Museum has special group rates and even free entry to school children and they were given a guided tour by the Guide Lecturer of the Museum so that the child

understands the cultural heritage of the country as well as it effectively understands the role of Museum.

XI. Mobile Exhibitions

53. According to the Audit para the object of mobile exhibition was to reach the people living in slum areas and outlying districts and various schools who cannot normally afford to come to the Museum. An exhibition van for the above purpose was purchased at a cost of Rs. 2.35 lakhs. But it was revealed that the percentage of non-utilisation of the van compared to the actual number of working days ranged from 78.60 per cent to 91.93 percent during the period from 1985-86 to 1991-92. Further the object of the mobile exhibition reaching the people/students of the outlying districts was not fulfilled since the visits by the van were limited to Hyderabad city only. Thus the purpose of mobile exhibition was defeated.

54. The Committee enquired about the specific reasons for large scale non-utilisation of the van purchased for the mobile exhibition and steps taken for its optimal utilisation. Furnishing the reasons in this regard, the Ministry in a note stated that many times disturbed conditions, heavy rains, vacations for school children, their examination time etc., resulted in the mobile van not being used to the extent it should have been. According to the Ministry, the Museum have decided to send the mobile van to important tourists places for its optimal utilisation.

55. The Committee further desired to know the specific programme drawn up as a part of mobile exhibition to cover rural population. In their post-evidence note the Ministry stated that the Museum authorities have already worked out plans for sending mobile exhibition. The Board authorities were also planning to periodically change the exhibition and send them to various villages and schools as part of their out-reach programme.

XII. Civil Works

(i) Construction of Building by CPWD

56. The Museum had deposited Rs. 166.63 lakhs with the Central Public Works Department (CPWD) at the end of March, 1992 for construction of second phase of Museum Building, Staff quarters, sales and display centre, laying of circular road, providing of street lights, air conditioning of galleries and stores. The Audit have pointed out several cases of delays in execution of these works. It is further seen from the audit Para that works have also not been capitalised in some cases.

57. The Committee asked about the authorities responsible for the delays in these cases and the action taken against them. They

also desired to know about the unutilised advances lying with the CPWD even after completion of the work. In this connection the Ministry in their post-evidence note stated:

“The Central Public Works Deptt. both of its Civil and Electrical Wings have been responsible for the various delays. In spite of repeated reminders, the concerned Superintending Engineers have not submitted even audited accounts for some of these works for the last almost a decade. The Museum Authorities have reminded them a number of times. The latest being on 30th June, 1995. The Chief Engineer, CPWD was also addressed to remit their unutilised advance with penal interest.”

(iii) *Construction of two new independent buildings by NBCC*

58. The Board in March, 1986 had approved construction of two new independent wings on either side of the existing building to house Western and Far Eastern art objects. The new construction was approved by the Board without obtaining specific permission from Government of India. The Audit have pointed out that there was an extra expenditure of Rs. 96.13 lakhs on account of awarding the contract to NBCC instead of CPWD whose Departmental charges were less. According to Audit there were several other irregularities in the contract like failure to obtain competitive tender, failure to specify the amount of contract in the Agreement etc. Further, the Museum had paid mobilisation advance of Rs. 210 lakhs as per the terms of the contract. However, there was no stipulation in the contract to recover the amount or charge penal interest for slowing down the work.

59. When asked as to why the work was not entrusted to CPWD in which case extra expenditure amounting to Rs. 96.13 lakhs could have been avoided, the Ministry in their note have *inter alia* stated:

“The awarding of contract to NBCC was also a subject matter of Fact Finding Committee’s terms of reference. Since it is a specialised work, the Board decided that the work is to be allotted to the NBCC, which is also a Government agency. However, the Board decided to work out the details of agreement in consultation with the senior architect who was a Member of the Museum Development Board. The then Director, Salar Jung Museum did not scrupulously follow the advice of the Board and entered into a preliminary agreement with the NBCC. However, the Board has decided to review the estimates as well as the percentage of work to be carried out by the NBCC which is at advanced stage of finalisation. Upon finalisation, there would be no extra expenditure except that the CPWD generally takes about 10 percent of deposit work plus 3 percent on contingencies while the NBCC have overall 11 percent that too only in respect of non-DSR and specialised items.”

60. In a subsequent note, the Ministry stated that a fresh contract with NBCC had been signed incorporating therein *inter alia* penal provisions for slowing down the work. It was also stated that the Museum had recovered an amount of Rs. 34.4 lakhs of the sums advanced earlier and collected penal interest amounting to Rs. 18.75 lakhs. The balance amount recoverable was stated as being pursued.

(iii) Non-allotment of Director's Quarters

61. The Audit para reveals that to provide residential accommodation to its Director, the Museum constructed Director's Quarters within the Museum premises in May 1985 at a cost of Rs. 4.40 lakhs. The Director of the Museum had constructed his own house with the help of house building advance of Rs. 1.70 lakhs sanctioned by the Board and vacated the Quarters in February 1991. The Quarters were not allotted till August 1992 to any other officer of the Museum. Thus, the Quarter meant specifically for the Director was vacant from February 1991 to August 1992.

62. In this connection the Committee enquired as to why the Quarters were constructed at a considerable cost when the same was not used by the Director and lying vacant. The Ministry in their note stated that the shifting from the official house by the Director and drawal of house rent allowance by him from that day was also commented upon adversely by the Fact Finding Committee. Since the house had been constructed specifically for the Director to stay in the premises, it was felt that the Director vacating the premises without proper approval of the Salar Jung Museum Board was incorrect.

XIII. Inadequacies in the Library and Microfilming unit

63. The Audit para has revealed that there were certain inadequacies in the Museum Library and its utilisation and also the Microfilming unit which was purchased in 1983 at a cost of Rs. 2.17 lakhs with a view to taking microfilms of all rare manuscripts available in the Museum. The Report of the Expert Committee also brought out the inadequacies in the Library which reads as follows:

“The Manuscript Library of the Salar Jung Museum is a collection of Salar Jung III containing most valuable collection of manuscripts and can be claimed to be one of the premiers manuscript libraries of India. As a result of physical verification, it has come to light that in the manuscript library there are cases of loss of books, substitution of books, double entries and bifurcation of manuscripts.”

64. On being asked about the steps taken to enhance better utilisation of Library and Microfilming unit, the Ministry stated that the Museum services have since been geared up. Since November 1994 the Museum have taken effective steps to recover books from the defaulting staff. The

Microfilming unit has been conditioned and has been put to use now. It was also stated that action has been initiated as per the recommendations of the Expert Committee.

XIV. Publications

65. According to the Audit Para, Museum publications worth Rs. 12.74 lakhs were lying unsold due to unrealistic assessment of the demand. A five member publications sub-committee was constituted by the Board for the purpose also did not meet regularly. According to Dr. Motichandra Committee (which was appointed by Government of India in November 1969 in the context of improving the working of museum and whose Report was adopted by Government in 1970). Report, each museum should have a properly trained publication officer for careful planning and execution of publication work but there was no publication officer in the Salar Jung Museum. Further the Randhawa Committee had recommended that a review of all books published should be maintained in the Library of the Museum and photographs of such reviews should be pasted in the book itself. Though the Museum claimed that reviews were done by outside scholars no records of such reviews were produced to Audit.

66. When asked why realistic assessment of demand for books was not undertaken by the Museum, the Ministry stated that it will be made in regard to future publications.

67. Asked further the steps taken to liquidate the unsold publications and drawing up of publication programme, the Ministry in their post-evidence note *inter alia* stated that besides opening up a new sales counter for displaying these publications, the Museum authorities have also made arrangements to sell these backlog through book agencies and have worked out arrangements for exchange of these books with research institutions and museums in the country. It has also been decided to limit the total number of copies of each publications as only 250 as against the present 1000. By these methods it was hoped that the pending backlog publications remaining unsold will be quickly exhausted and new publications will be realistically assessed and published to the extent that can be sold or exchanged.

XV. Security system for the Museum

68. Audit pointed out certain inadequacies in the system of security. During evidence the attention of the Ministry was drawn to the security system in the Museum. The Committee were informed that the existing system did not work satisfactorily and the security suffered. A new security system was to be installed for effective protection of the Museum. In this

connection the Committee desired to know the security system which was earlier being operated and the new system as proposed to be installed. In their post-evidence note the Ministry stated:

“At present the Museum has a security system where outside security is looked after by guards drawn from an Ex-serviceman Society and a few Police Rapid Action Force Protection. The internal security is with the Gallery Attendants and few security attendants, namely Watch & Ward appointed by the Museum. This dual system has resulted in shifting of responsibility. Moreover in the present system there are no electronic equipments or gadgets for surveillance and for setting up alarm system in case of any attempt of theft or burglary.

The Museum Authorities have approached the Central Industrial Security Force to give full cover for both internal and external security and a survey had already been carried out by a technical team of the CISF. System envisaged will have only a single security agency both for internal and external security and also will provide complete electronic system of security including burglar alarms and close-circuit TV system.”

XVI. Evaluation

69. According to the Audit Paragraph, though the Randhawa Committee had recommended a review of the working of the Museum every five year no such review was conducted. When asked why the specific recommendations of that Committee was not implemented, the Ministry in their note stated:

“The recommendations of the Randhawa Committee report in this regard should have been brought to the knowledge of the Board or the Government for constituting the Review Committee. Unfortunately this was not done. In fact the Fact Finding Committee appointed by the Government stated that apart from the non-implementation of the Randhawa Committee Report, even the recommendation of the Sihare Committee Report, which was a later report has been left unimplemented by the Museum. However, the Museum has now proposed constitution of a Review Committee on which action is at hand.”

70. The Committee desired to know the other main recommendations of the Randhawa Committee. In their note, the Ministry cited the following main recommendations:

“Strengthening of security arrangements (External & Internal); Building of two wings to the existing museum; Inventory Registers of all objects; Index cards for each object; Physical verification of the content of the museum once in three years; Acquisition of art objects and powers be given to the Director on the lines of

Director, National Museum, New Delhi; Budgetary provision be made; Powers be given to Director for timely and speedy publication and purchase of useful journals for the library; Proper sale and distribution of publications be ensured; Improvement and display; MSS Section should provide reading facilities and sanction grant for acquisition of MSS; Purchase of books; The Staff Inspection Unit should include competent academic persons.”

71. Since the Report of the Randhawa Committee had been accepted by the Government as far back as 1969, the Committee enquired to know as to why the relevant recommendations were not implemented by the Ministry. The Ministry in their note stated that though this Report was made available in 1972 and placed before the Board for noting the action to be taken, their implementation was not brought before the Board or the Government by the then Director.

72. As regards implementation of the recommendation of the Committee, the Ministry have in their post-evidence note stated:

“Some of these recommendations have now been got implemented for example; a detailed Policy has been worked out for external and internal security arrangement is submitted by this Committee. Physical Verification of objects has been completed through the Expert Committee. Surprise checks are being carried out now by the present Director and the officers of the Museum. Admission fees has been increased from 1st October, 1994. Galleries like Ivory, Modern Paintings, Jad Room, and Western Paintings etc. have been reorganised and rearranged. European Marbles have been displayed. Security arrangement has been strengthened for Museum stores, library and microfilming equipment has been commissioned. Publication of the journal which was discontinued from 1986-87 has been revived, special exhibitions were arranged on four occasions during last year. However, the Museum Authorities have been instructed to intensify and ensure the implementation of the Committee Reports which have been accepted by the Government.

73. Asked about the main recommendations of the Sihare Committee, it was stated that the Sihare Committee, particularly, recommended creation of a Technical Wing who could pursue the implementation of the gallery re-organisation. The Fact Finding Committee specifically noted that the Museum Authorities did not follow the advice of this Committee but instead went for outside tenders and got this work done through the tenderers rather than departmentally. Now the Museum Authorities have strengthened their Technical Wing with the appointment of a Technical Adviser and qualified Engineers. According to the Ministry, it has been decided that the recommendations of the Sihare Committee will be fully implemented w.e.f. April 1996.

XVII. Report of the Fact Finding Committee and action taken thereon

74. In response to several questions of the Committee the Ministry referred to the findings of a Fact Finding Committee. The Committee, therefore desired to know the reasons for the constitution of that Committee. The Department of Culture in a note stated that a number of allegations, were received against the administration of the Salar Jung Museum Board and against the then Director, Dr. M.L. Nigam. References were also received from public dignitaries including MLAs and ex-MPs against the administration and the Director. Certain newspaper reports had also appeared commenting adversely against the Director. The Salar Jung Museum Board on 30 November, 1991 decided to request the Department of Culture to appoint an independent Fact Finding Committee with all experts and the Chief Vigilance Officer to go into the allegations and render the report. Subsequent to this decision, Secretary, Department of Culture, Ministry of Human Resource Development constituted the Fact Finding Committee consisting of three experts *viz.*, Shri J.P. Joshi, Retired Director-General, Archeological Survey of India, Miss. P. Vanaja, retired Keeper, National Museum and Shri G. Venkataramani, Deputy Secretary and Chief Vigilance Officer, Department of Culture.

75. The following major allegations were taken up by the Fact Finding Committee.

- (i) Antiquities and art objects numbering nearing 10,000 missing from the collection of the Salar Jung Museum.

This allegation included *inter alia* double numbering, divided exhibits, exhibits destroyed but still on record and impossible numbering so as to inflate the total number of objects so that the over all total is maintained. It was also alleged in this context that all the negatives of the photographs of the objects were deliberately damaged or have been rendered useless so that the physical verification would not be possible.

- (ii) Contracts awarded to particular contractors in total dis-regard of the norms of such contracts. It was alleged in this connection that a particular contractor, Sree Rama Enterprises has been repeatedly favoured in the matter of contract.
- (iii) Contract awarded to National Building Construction Corporation without specifying the amount of contract and in dis-regard of advice tendered by a Senior Architect, namely, Shri K.A. Siddiqui, who is also a Member of the Museum Development Committee.

- (iv) Encroachments into the Museum premises and allowing private individuals to grab Museum land.

In this connection, it was alleged that no efforts were made by the Director, Salar Jung Museum to have the land demarcated as per the acquisition records and the details of land handed over by the Salar Jung Estates Committee.

- (v) Shifting of residence by the Salar Jung Museum Director from the official house within the Museum premises to his own house without obtaining the permission of competent authority and alleged drawal of house rent allowance from that date.
- (vi) Allegation of non-maintenance of service book of the Director, as also destruction of records including non-observance of Financial Rules regarding house building advance, T.A. bills etc.
- (vii) Improving in the appointments of employees of the Salar Jung Museum.
- (viii) Huge stock of teak wood and other costly equipments purchased for the Engineering section specially constituted after Sihare Committee report remained largely unutilised.
- (ix) Construction of 40 staff quarters which are lying vacant and unutilised.
- It was alleged that 40 staff quarters were constructed at a huge cost but the same were not allotted to the Museum staff on the plea that no drinking water supply was available.
- (x) Purchase of art object of dubious authenticity from selected dealers.
- (xi) Inept handling of important purchases like installation of fire fighting equipments, air-conditioning of galleries, close-circuit T.V. and security systems.
- (xii) Alleged purchase of land for his private house from an art dealer and also amassing of huge property by foul means by the Director.
- (xiii) Non-reply to audit-report for a number of years and suppressing of the review audit report from the Salar Jung Board.

It was alleged that the Director, Salar Jung Museum was in the habit of not replying to inconvenient audit reports and that the review audit report covering a period of over 25 years alleging missing antiquities, un-accounted antiquities, double numbering etc. have not been brought to the knowledge of the Salar Jung Board.

- (xiv) Alleged misuse of staff car and telephone facilities.
- (xv) Misuse of Museum employees for personal use of the Director.
- (xvi) Alleged misbehaviour with the staff and deliberate stoppage of lawful dues to them.

76. The Report of the Fact Finding Committee was submitted in November, 1992. The Fact Finding Committee held the then Director, Dr. M.L. Nigam largely responsible for the irregularities.

77. The Committee desired to know the further action taken on the findings of the Report of the Fact Finding Committee. The Ministry in a note furnished after evidence stated that this Report was placed before the Salar Jung Museum Board who appointed a sub-committee to go through the Report of the Fact Finding Committee and submitted its recommendations on actionable points. The sub-committee's Report was considered by the Board on 22 December, 1992 wherein it was decided that the entire Report be referred to the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) for their advice. The Central Vigilance Commission gave its Report recommending chargesheeting Dr. Nigam on 20 October, 1993. The actual chargesheet including 9 Articles from the 16 allegations referred to above was issued on 2 July, 1994. After receipt of the chargesheet Dr. M.L. Nigam filed a writ petition in the High Court of Andhra Pradesh *vide* Petition No. 13496 of 1994 and obtained a stay order against the proceedings in August, 1994.

78. In this connection, during evidence the representative of the Ministry informed the Committee that the terminal benefits of the former Director have been stopped. The inquiry proceedings against him have been stalled because of the stay order.

79. When asked about the precise efforts since made by the Museum authorities to get the stay vacated, the Ministry in a post-evidence note stated:

“Subsequently, at the instance of the Department of Culture the Director, Salar Jung Museum has been in touch with the Counsel of the Museum to get the stay vacated. This Department has also furnished from the Central Vigilance Commission's strong points to counter the stand of Dr. M.L. Nigam. The Counsel has been trying to mentioning in the Court to somehow get the case listed so as to be able to get the official position placed on record to enable the Hon'ble Court to vacate the Stay Order. However, so far the case has not yet been listed.”

80. Asked to explain the failure of authorities in initiating action promptly against the guilty despite the elapse of a period of more than five

years since the commission of these irregularities had been brought to the notices of the authorities, the Ministry in their post-evidence note stated that allegations against the functioning of the administration of the Museum was received only by mid 1991. Thereafter a Fact Finding Committee was appointed which took considerable time to record the evidence of various public and official witnesses as also to collect the documents. After the Report was submitted to the Board, the Board appointed a Sub-Committee to study the Report. The Central Vigilance Commission was also consulted. These actions took time at each stage until the chargesheet was actually served. Moreover, the Department was keen that only substantial allegations are proceeded so that the culprit does not escape either on technical deficiencies or due to the fact that evidence is not properly marshalled.

XVIII. Role of the Ministry

81. The Salar Jung Museum continued to be with the Salar Jung Estate committee till 1958 when by virtue of a compromise deed based on a High Court decree in December 1958, the Government of India formally took over the Salar Jung collection in the Museum and the Library. The title of the property thus transferred and vested in the Government of India. The Museum came to be administered under the Ministry of Scientific Research and Cultural Affairs, Government of India till 1961. With the enactment of the Salar Jung Museum Act, 1961 (No. 26 of 1961) in Parliament declaring the Museum and the Library as an institution of national importance, the Administration of the Museum was entrusted to the Salar Jung Museum Board. The entire functioning of the Salar Jung Museum is administered by this Central Act and Rules thereunder.

82. Thus the Salar Jung Museum had been under the control of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Culture for over 30 years. The facts contained in the Audit Paragraph and the findings of the subsequent inquiries would seem to make it abundantly clear that the Museum was grossly mismanaged over the years resulting in financial irregularities and continued loss/pilferage of valuable articles/art objects. The findings of Audit and Experts committee also indicated that the authorities were seized of the problem of missing objects since decades.

83. In view of the above, during evidence, the attention of the Ministry was drawn to their failure in exercising effective control over the Salar Jung Museum over the years. In response, the representative of the Ministry explained:

“The Act of the Salar Jung Board was made in such a way that it was to be autonomous and functional within its local ambit. That is why the Accountant General of the State has been made the Chairman of the Finance Committee and also a member of Board. The checks and balances were built within the framework of the Governing Board of the Salar Jung Museum as per the Act. The

Government of India is represented by a single Member in the whole Board.”

84. Section 8(1) of the Salar Jung Museum Act 1961 provides *inter-alia* that whenever requested by the Central Government, its representative shall furnish to it such information as that Government considers necessary for the performance by it of its duties. Further the powers of the Central Government as enshrined in the Section 23(1) reads:

“In the discharge of its functions under this Act, the Board shall be bound by such directions on questions of policy as the Central Government may give to it from time to time.”

85. In view of the above and also the fact that the Comptroller and Auditor General had reportedly been issuing inspection reports arising out of Audit of Salar Jung Museum from time to time in the past, during evidence, the Committee specifically desired to know about the precise role exercised by the Ministry in the matter. In response, the Secretary (Department of Culture) *inter-alia* stated:

“With reference to the C&AG Report and the lacunae that have been thrown up by the Reports, as representative of the Government, if it had been put across, had the Board been fully apprised of it, it would not have led the situation of 1993 when the Expert committee, Fact Finding committee of three members unearthed some of the deficiencies which went unnoticed for a long time. Surely, the representative of the Department should have brought this up as a special item for discussion to point out the defects of the organisation, the defects of the administration.”

He further added:

“That is why the representative of the Department of Culture has been there. The role of the individual officers who have represented the Department is not too clear. Certainly, it is clear to this extent that they have not made a special point that this should come up for discussion, that the defects noted in the C&AG's Report should be taken care of. The Department can not divest itself of its responsibility”.

86. To a query by the Committee whether the Ministry felt that the Salar Jung Act 1961 needed a review with a view to enabling them to exercise their control over the Museum more effectively, the Ministry in their post-evidence note stated:

“Since the Act was passed by Parliament in 1961 certain changes would appear to be warranted keeping in mind the historical development in the intervening period. A review committee for review of the Museum including its Act is being appointed to go into the entire question, whereafter if recommended by them appropriate proposals would be initiated for amendment of Act.”

XIX. Remedial/corrective action taken and Monitoring of the Museum

87. In the light of the serious shortcoming observed in the functioning of Salar Jung Museum, the Committee desired to know the specific steps taken by the Ministry with a view to improving the working of such Museums of national importance and enabling them to play their role effectively in promoting the cause of education. The Committee also enquired about the monitoring mechanism evolved for undertaking a periodic review and evaluation of the museums which are financed and are under the control of the Department of Culture and holding those organisations accountable for the failure. Elaborating the steps taken, the Ministry in a note stated:

“The Department of Culture has now decided to periodically appoint Review committee and also to scrutinise every half year the Annual Report and the Audited Statement and to send the teams to correct any particular systematic deficiencies within the financial year itself. As soon as the comprehensive Review committee recommendations are received detailed guidelines will be issued to all the Museum to follow a uniform pattern. It is also proposed to issue and to reiterate instructions fixing levels of responsibility so that no laxity in accountability is ever allowed to persist.”

XX. National Policy on Museums

88. The Committee desired to know the number of museums which were presently under the control of the Department of Culture. In a note furnished after evidence, the Department stated that alongwith the three National museums, viz. National Museum (Delhi), the Indian Museum (Calcutta), the Salar Jung Museum (Hyderabad), the Allahabad Museum (Allahabad) is also under the control of the Ministry (Department of Culture). Beside these four, a number of science centres controlled by the National Council of Science Museum are also under the control of the Department of Culture.

89. The Government of India had appointed the Randhawa Committee and Dr. Motichandra Committee during August, 1963 and November, 1969 respectively for formulating a national policy on Museums to improve their working and define their role in promoting the cause of education. The Government of India adopted the Reports of these committees in 1969 and 1970. In this connection, to a query from the committee in regard to formulation of a national policy on museums, it was stated during evidence that the Ministry are in the process of finalising the policy on museum which was a part of the policy of Culture.

90. Elaborating further on this point, the Ministry in their post-evidence note stated:

"The Department of Culture, for the first time, is formulating a detailed written down policy of Culture. In this regard, the Department of Culture held seminars spread over the country during the year 1990 and elicited from these seminars the views of various exponent of arts, artists, critics and administrators. Based on the suggestions emanating from various seminars the Paper was prepared and placed before the Committee of Secretaries and Ministers of various State Governments. Thereafter, an Approach Paper on the National Policy of Culture was prepared and circulated to various persons all over the country culminating into a National Colloquium in Delhi wherein leading personalities in the field of Art & Culture were invited. Besides this the Approach Paper was placed in both the Houses of Parliament. The Consultative committee attached to the Ministry of HRD also deliberated on the Approach Paper which was also referred to the Standing committee of Members of Parliament attached to Ministry of HRD who have given their valuable suggestions and recommendations on the inputs for the Cultural Policy. The Secretariat of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha have now advised the Department of Culture to go ahead and prepare the Policy on Culture for approval of Competent Authority. A committee has been appointed by the Ministry of HRD for this purpose and a time schedule has also been prescribed for finalising the various stages of preparation of the Cultural Policy. After the Policy Note is prepared the same will be placed before the Cabinet for its approval whereafter the policy will be placed before both the Houses of Parliament for programme of action in this regard and the policy on Museum will form part of the over all National Policy on culture."

91. When asked whether the Ministry ever reviewed the implementation of the recommendations of Randhawa Committee and Dr. Motichandra Committee it was further stated in the same note that the earlier committee had not taken into account all recommendations of the Randhawa Committee. With the appointment of the Review Committee on this Museum as well as the Report of the Review Committee on Indian Museum, which was concluded recently, the Department will formulate its detailed policy. When some of the recommendations have been implemented by the Museums they did not take over all view of these recommendations so as to review their implementation. However, this position has been rectified by the appointment of Review Committee by Indian Museum and Salar Jung Museum, based on whose recommendations other museum will also be given specified guidelines for this purpose.

XXI. Delay in appointment of heads of institutions involved in the propagation of Culture

92. The Committee's attention was drawn to the fact that some of the Museums/similar institutions of national importance were discharging their functions without a proper head for considerable period. When enquired about the same, the Department of Culture listed out the following such institutions:

1. Director General, Archaeological Survey of India
2. Director General, Museum
3. Director, Central Secretariat Library
4. Director General, National Archive of India
5. Director, National Gallery of Modern Art

93. When enquired about the procedure followed for selection/appointment of those persons, the reasons for these institutions being headless and the steps proposed to be taken by the Ministry to correct the situation and ensure that the functioning of the institutions did not suffer due to the absence of proper heads the Ministry in a note *inter alia* stated:

"The institutions referred to above are Government institutions who have long procedure to be followed....."

.....While the Deptt. had initiated action in almost all these cases well in advance in some cases like the Director General, Archaeological Survey of India and the Director General, National Museum, the UPSC raised certain issues - regarding the Recruitment Rules as well as the eligibility criteria. For example, for the post of DG (ASI) the UPSC conveyed their view after considerable long time that the Recruitment Rules should have been amended as far back as 1987 after the upgradation of the post. Eventhough, it was pointed out to the Commission that in spite of non-amendment of RRs in 1987, at least two Director Generals were selected under the same Rule, the Commission did not agree and insisted on the amendment of the Recruitment Rules and given for the proposal of mode of recruitment pending Notification of formal Recruitment Rules. This has resulted in a huge time gap.....

.....After the appointment of these individuals the Deptt. is proposing to have a comprehensive amendment to the Recruitment Rules for these posts in order to facilitate easy recruitment policy so as to ensure that an incumbent is appointed on the very date of relinquishment of the post."

94. The Salar Jung Museum at Hyderabad is a repository of the artistic achievements of diverse European, Asian and far Eastern countries of the World. A major portion of these collections were acquired by Late Shri Mir Yousuf Ali Khan, popularly known as 'Salar Jung III'. The administration of the Museum was with Salar Jung Estate Committee till 1958. Thereafter,

by virtue of a compromise deed based on a High Court decree in December 1958 the Museum came under the control of the then Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Government of India. Later, with the enactment of the Salar Jung Museum Act, 1961 by Parliament, the Museum and the Library was declared as an institution of national importance and the administration of the Museum was entrusted to the Salar Jung Museum Board with the Governor of Andhra Pradesh as its Chairman assisted by ten members. The main functions of the Board as envisaged in the Act are: efficient management of the Museum and to plan, promote, organise and implement programmes for its development, besides providing for instruction and research relating to museums and libraries, advancement of learning and dissemination of knowledge etc. The Audit paragraph based on a review of the working of the Museum covering the period from 1985-86 to 1991-92 and further examination of the subject by the Committee have revealed several irregularities in the functioning of the Museum which are dealt with in the succeeding paragraphs.

95. The Museum is financed by grants-in-aid from the Government both for development and upkeep. In addition, the Museum also receives revenue from other miscellaneous receipts. Based on the budget estimates prepared by the Museum, the Government of India release lump sum grants leaving it to the Museum to defray this amount under the various heads according to local priorities decided by the Salar Jung Museum Board. During examination, the Committee have come across several cases of financial irregularities of varied nature such as, non-utilisation of grants, irregularities in drawing cheques for payment, non-reconciliation of cash book with bank pass book, non-maintenance of asset register in the prescribed form etc. Some of such instances are briefly dealt with below:

Under the financial rules, only so much of grant shall be paid during any financial year as is likely to be expended during that year. In the case of Salar Jung Museum, the Committee find that amounts of Rs. 2.31 lakhs, Rs. 1.26 lakhs, Rs. 6.31 lakhs and Rs. 10.01 lakhs were drawn by the authorities of the Museum on 31 March of 1987, 1988, 1989 and 1990 respectively to show grants as utilised during these financial years. In fact, the authorities of the Museum expended this amount varying from six months to over one and a half years later. Another case of financial irregularity observed by the Committee was that out of three cheques for Rs. 13.83 lakhs drawn for payment to contractors on 30 March, 1991, two cheques for Rs. 8.67 lakhs were not handed over to the party till August 1992 even after a lapse of 17 months as the works were not completed. It was found that the Museum authorities drew the cheques towards the end of the financial year to ensure and to show in the accounts that they have spent the amount, but the work itself was not completed. The cheques were eventually released on 3 December, 1992 only after the completion of the work.

It is further disquieting to note that no action was taken by the authorities concerned to reconcile the balance amounts as per the Museum records with that of the bank. Further, although the financial rules prescribe that institutions receiving grants from the Government of India should maintain the asset register and furnish a copy thereof to Government annually, no such register was maintained by the Museum. Yet another irregularity related to non-investment of surplus grants in violation of the Government instructions and also the specific decision of the Board resulting in loss of interest. Surprisingly, the accounts wing of the Museum was run without any regular officer.

It is evident from the facts stated above that there was a total absence of administration and financial management in the Museum over the years. The Committee consider it amazing that such gross acts of irregularities, violations, improprieties etc. went undetected for a prolonged length of time. This is clearly indicative of the lack of accountability which persisted in the Museum over considerable period. The Committee strongly deprecate the callous attitude of the Museum authorities. The Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of Culture) admitted these irregularities and attributed them to the mal-administration of the Museum, lack of knowledge of procedures, absence of officers etc. They stated that some of these irregularities have also been included among other points in the chargesheet issued to the then Director and that adequate remedial steps have since been taken. The Committee cannot remain satisfied with this and they desire that all the cases of financial irregularities/violations/improprieties etc. mentioned above should be thoroughly looked into and action taken against all the officers found responsible for the various acts of omissions and commissions. The Ministry should also ensure the efficacy of the remedial steps taken with a view to obviating recurrence of such cases in future.

96. The Committee note that based on a compromise deed filed with the High Court of Andhra Pradesh, 38,371 art objects listed in 85 High Court registers were taken over in 1961 by the Government from the Salar Jung Estate Committee. On the basis of the High Court registers, inventory registers were prepared in 1964 according to which the number of art objects was 46,081. This figure was stated to have been arrived at after deleting 1,971 items on grounds of double entries in the High Court registers and addition of 9,681 items which were not shown in the High Court Registers. After the Museum was shifted to new buildings in 1968, Master registers were prepared in 1976 in which 44,797 art objects were listed. The decrease in the number of art objects from the inventory registers to the master registers was reportedly due to double entries and cancellation of certain items. Thus, there were discrepancies/defects in the actual number of art objects taken over from the Salar Jung Estate Committee and as shown in the subsequent registers prepared by the Government. The Committee are surprised to note that the art objects received from the Estate were not fully and completely accounted for at any

point of time, viz. (1) at the time of take over of the administration by the Board in 1961 or (2) at the time of preparation of inventory registers in 1964 or (3) at the time of preparation of master registers in 1976.

97. What has caused concern to the Committee is that despite the glaring discrepancies in the number of art objects, no serious efforts were made by the authorities to conduct a through physical verification. Pertinently, the Randhawa Committee which was appointed by Government of India in 1968 in the context of formulating a national policy on Museums and whose recommendations were stated to have been accepted by the Government in 1969 had prescribed that in case of Salar Jung Museum the physical verification of art objects should be conducted once in three years. The then Director of Salar Jung Museum also seems to have suggested on 25 September, 1967 the desirability of physical verification before the Museum was shifted to the new building. Distressingly, no such physical verification was done prior to 1975. Further though physical verification was taken up from 1980-81 simultaneous cross referencing to basic records was not done. The Ministry stated that even though the Salar Jung Museum Board officials had been reporting to the Board periodically that physical verifications had been carried out at the rate of one third of the objects every year, making a 100 per cent in three years, in reality, the Museum authorities had not followed the prescribed procedure. This clearly indicates that neither was any proper procedure for physical verification attempted by the Museum authorities nor did the Ministry bother to enquire about the exact nature of such verifications. The Secretary (Department of Culture) conceded during evidence "it is certainly a failure because this verification should have been completed every three years."

98. The Committee find that after the discrepancies in the art objects and the shortcomings in physical verifications were pointed out by Audit, the Department of Culture appointed a committee of Experts on 23 March, 1993 to physically verify all the objects in the original registers and other records so as to determine whether there were any missing objects and to fix the responsibility therefor and to suggest a system for future. The Report of the Expert committee which was submitted on 29 September, 1994 established that a large number of articles were missing from the collection of the Museum and that many articles had not been correctly accounted for. The findings of the Expert committee based on collated records has revealed that 635 art objects have been lost from the museum collections which consist of cancelled/missing objects (263), substituted objects (one) and art objects not produced before the Committee and declared untraceable (372). Although the Expert committee submitted their Report in September, 1994 the matter was referred to Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in June 1995 only (*i.e.* after this Committee selected the subject for oral examination) to investigate as to the persons who have connived in the loss/pilferage of articles and also take the help of other linked agencies to go into the roots of such thefts. The Committee are unhappy over the delay in the follow-up-

action on the report of the Expert committee. They desire that the CBI investigation and the action against the officers found guilty of having connived in the theft of articles should be got expedited. The Committee would like to be informed of the progress made in the matter within three months.

99. The Committee have been informed that after receipt of the report of the Expert committee, at the instance of the Ministry, the Director of the Salar Jung Museum is stated to have called for the explanation of all the officers responsible for their failure in conducting physical verification and that their replies were being placed before the Museum Board for further action against them. The Committee consider it relevant to point out that though the inadequacies in physical verification was brought to the notice of the Ministry as early as 1991, no concrete action has been initiated against the officials of the Museum who had not only failed in their duties but also misled the Board by submitting wrong certificates regarding physical verification. This is unfortunate to say the least. While taking a serious view of this dereliction of duty by the officials, the Committee recommend that the matter should be thoroughly inquired into and punishment meted out to the erring officials. The Committee may be apprised of the conclusive action taken in this regard.

100. The Committee are astonished to note that there was no system in the Museum providing for verification at periodical intervals by experts in the field to guard against disappearance of genuine objects and their replacement by duplicates. Unfortunately, it was also not considered necessary to include this issue among the terms of reference to the Expert committee which undertook the physical verification. Thus, there is no certification as on date on the authenticity/genuineness of the art objects in the possession of the Museum. The Committee are deeply concerned to note that no system was built up in the Museum for the last 30 years to have a scrutiny of the genuineness of the objects which are considered to be one of the rare collections and ranked as one of the foremost of its kind in India and abroad. The Department of Culture assured that with the proposed introduction of the Computerised Archival Storage System, aspects of verification of genuineness of the objects could be adequately attended to. The Committee cannot remain convinced with this. They recommend that at least now a system should be devised in the Museum for periodical verification by experts to guard against disappearance of genuine objects and their substitution by fakes. The Committee would also like to be informed of the progress made in the introduction of Computerised Archival Storage system.

101. The Committee further note that as per the Report of the Expert committee, various inventories have occasional remarks as 'written off', 'cancelled' against the relevant entries in the Register. The Expert committee had expressed their doubts over the competence of the Board to write off the antiquities and therefore, recommended that the matter should

be referred to the Ministry of Law. Surprisingly, the Ministry have not done it so far. The Ministry contended that they have appointed a Review committee who will be asked to go into this question and suggest recommendations in this regard. According to the Ministry, after the Report of the Review committee is received, the issue, if necessary, will be referred to the Ministry of Law for their final opinion. The Committee would like to be apprised of the further action taken in the matter.

102. The Committee would also like to be informed of the terms of references of the Review committee, their recommendations and the action taken thereon.

103. Another area in the functioning of the Salar Jung Museum which caused concern to the Committee related to the acquisition of art objects. The Salar Jung Museum Board constituted an art purchase committee consisting of seven members for purchasing art objects. The art objects were proposed to be acquired by the Board to fill the gaps in the collections of the Museum. The Committee, however, find certain irregularities in the purchase of art objects. According to the Antiquities and Art Treasurers Act, 1972, 'Antiquities' include paintings, sculptures, objects of art, crafts, things of historical importance, etc. which have been in existence for not less than 100 years. Curiously enough, 95 out of 657 art objects purchased during 1985-86 to 1991-92 related to the 20th Century. Surprisingly, this was justified by the Museum under the plea of "aesthetic value". Secondly, the Museum had neither maintained a list of reputed dealers in antiquities nor reputed suppliers of other Museums contracted for the purchases. Some of the local dealers of Hyderabad were favoured in purchasing 94 per cent of the objects during the period from 1985-86 to 1991-92. Obviously, no standard procedure was laid down for regulating the functioning of the art purchase committee and the reasonableness of the purchases made was left entirely to the discretion of the members of the art purchase committee. The Committee consider this as totally unsatisfactory and, therefore, desire that a review of the purchases made during 1985-86 to 1991-92 be made with a view to ascertaining the reasonableness of acquisitions made.

104. In this connection, the Committee find that with a view to avoiding competition among the three National museums viz., Indian museum, Calcutta, National museum, New Delhi and Salar Jung Museum, Hyderabad, and to effect economy, the Government desired in February 1963 that there should be a combined art purchase committee for three museums and issued guidelines that purchases may be made through the committee. Strangely enough, the Salar Jung Museum Board continued with the existing acquisition committee to buy objects. The Ministry pleaded that the Boards of the various museums being different and that their specific needs also being different, the combined art purchase committee could not function. While no specified orders to supercede the guidelines were issued, the combined art purchase committee became non-functional as none of the museums evinced any interest in this regard. The Committee cannot but

express their dissatisfaction over the manner in which the idea of combined art purchase committee was relegated to the background by the Ministry.

105. The Committee have been informed that an Expert committee appointed by the Department of Culture in January 1994 issued certain guidelines suggesting a workable method for combined purchase of art objects by different museums. According to these guidelines, the Directors of each museum will be a member of the art purchase committee of the other museums. The Ministry stated that these guidelines will be reviewed further after two years so that a systematic purchase of art objects is made in-built. The Committee desire that the Ministry should keep a strict vigil over the implementation of the guidelines, monitor the improvements effected and carry out the necessary review in order to streamline the process of acquisition of art objects and making the acquisition procedure more transparent.

106. The Committee are unhappy to note that no sincere effort was made by the Museum authorities to preserve the photo-negatives of the objects in a systematic manner despite the recommendations made by the Randhawa committee in this regard way back in 1969. It is incredible and yet true that the work of keeping the negatives in Salar Jung Museum was entrusted to an unskilled class IV employee resulting in total disarray. Significantly, this was in gross violation of the clear instructions from the Board stating that the negatives should be under the personal custody of the Director of the Museum and that usage should be made sparingly. This speaks volumes of the laxity and indifferent attitude of the authorities concerned towards an institution declared by Parliament as of national importance. The Department of Culture pleaded that the system was attempted to be brought back to order and the work of systematic serial numbering of the photonegatives is expected to be completed by the end of August 1995. Considering the crucial importance of the photo negatives in ensuring genuineness of the art objects, the Committee desire that the work should be expeditiously completed. They would like to be informed of the progress made in the matter.

107. During examination the Committee found that the preservation of museum exhibits left a lot to be desired. The Committee find that out of 10,843 objects relating to the period prior to 1985-86, recorded in 57 registers, 4,654 i.e. 43 per cent of the objects were in a damaged condition. And, of the 657 art objects purchased for Rs. 16.99 lakhs during 1985-86, to 1991-92, 503 objects were also in a damaged condition. Unfortunately, the Ministry failed to provide any satisfactory explanation for the damage caused to these objects and action taken on this count. What was further intriguing was that though a chemical conservation laboratory was established in 1962-63 for attending to the work of preservation and conservation of cultural property, there were abnormal delays in completion of chemical treatment of objects in several cases, the delay leading even upto seven years. Significantly, the Expert committee has identified 200 art

objects which warranted conservation with a measure of urgency preservation including 347 manuscripts. The Committee regret to conclude that no serious attempt was made by the Board to identify the art objects requiring conservation and preservation treatment and no plan of action carrying out restoration work in a phased manner was drawn up. The Committee cannot but express their deep concern over the damage caused to the art objects. The Ministry stated that the laboratory of the Museum was not properly equipped earlier and the Board has now initiated steps to strengthen it. The Committee desire that the process of conservation and preservation of art objects should be systematised and a review should be undertaken to find out the number of art objects requiring urgent attention and a plan of action drawn up to carry out the restoration work in a time-bound manner. They also desire that reasons for damaged objects should be looked into with a view to fixing responsibility. The Committee would like to be intimated about the precise progress made in this regard.

108. The Committee are astonished to note that 60 per cent of the items purchased by the Museum were not displayed at all for seven years. The main reason attributed by the Ministry in this regard was the paucity of space. They, however, assured that the Museum was in the process of constructing two new wings, with the completion of which more objects will be displayed. The Committee recommend that the Museum should devise a long term display policy with a view to ensuring efficient display of objects acquired by the Museum and enabling the public to have a view of these rare collections.

109. Yet another shortcoming observed by the Committee related to the inordinate delay in opening up a gallery for tribal art. Even though the Government advised the Museum to open the gallery during the Seventh Five Year Plan and a special provision of Rs. 6 lakhs was provided in the budget, the entire grant remained unutilised. The Ministry stated that one of the two new wings which are under the process of construction would be fully ready by 31 March 1996. The gallery of tribal art will be opened in this new building within two months of completion of construction. The Committee consider the inordinate delay in this case as unfortunate and desire that sustained efforts should be made by the Ministry/Museum to expedite opening of the gallery for tribal art with a view to launching a long-term programme for promoting tribal culture.

110. The mobile exhibition is one of the important activities taken up by the Museum under the aegis of mass education programme. The basic objective of the mobile exhibition was to reach the people living in slum areas and outlying districts and under-privileged school children who cannot normally afford to come to the Museum. Though an exhibition van for the above purpose was purchased at a cost of Rs. 2.35 lakhs, it remained largely under-utilised defeating the very purpose of mobile exhibition. In the opinion of the Committee, since the Museum has an acknowledged role to play in the field of informal and continuing education, this area deserves

much more serious attention of the Ministry. The Committee recommend that in addition to the programmes drawn up as a part of mobile exhibition to cover rural population, other activities like temporary exhibition, special exhibition, popular lectures, training courses, seminars and symposiums should also be taken up at regular intervals to promote mass education programme at a wider scale.

111. The Committee's examination also found certain glaring irregularities in the civil works undertaken by the Museum. The Museum deposited Rs. 166.63 lakhs with the Central Public Works Department (CPWD) for executing various construction works. While there were several cases of delays in execution of these works, in some cases the works have also not been capitalised. The Ministry have held CPWD responsible for the various delays. It was stated that inspite of repeated reminders, the concerned Superintending Engineers have not even submitted audited accounts for some of these works for the last one decade. The Chief Engineer, CPWD had been asked to remit their unutilised advance with penal interest. The Committee regret to note that except reminding the Department, the Museum authorities have not taken recourse to any other action against the Department for recovery of the unutilised advance even though ten years elapsed in between. This is clearly indicative of the casual and negligent attitude of the authorities concerned in regard to recovery of Museum funds. While expressing their strong displeasure over this state of affairs, the Committee desire that proper explanation be called from the officials of the Museum for their failure in initiating timely action for effecting recovery of unutilised funds from CPWD. The Committee also recommend that the matter regarding recovery of unutilised advance with penal interest should be vigorously pursued with the Department at the highest level and recourse to legal action may be taken, if necessary. The Committee would like to be apprised of the results in this regard.

112. During the course of their examination, the Committee also came across certain reported irregularities in the contract awarded to National Building Construction Corporation (NBCC) in 1986 for construction of two new independent wings of the Museum building. Surprisingly, before entering into contract, the authorities had not obtained any competitive offer. Several irregularities were found in the contract. Amazingly, even the amount contracted was not specified in the agreement document. Further, an amount of more than Rs. 2 crores was paid as mobilisation advance to the contractor with no stipulations in the contract for recovery or penal interest. The Ministry while admitting the shortcomings/irregularities held the then Director responsible for not following the advice of the Board scrupulously and entering into preliminary agreement with NBCC. They stated that a fresh contract has been entered into with NBCC incorporating therein *inter alia* penal provisions for slowing down the work. It was also stated that the Museum had since recovered an amount of Rs. 34.4 lakhs of the sums advanced and collected penal interest amounting to

Rs. 18.75 lakhs and the remaining dues were stated to be under the process of recovery. While expressing their severe unhappiness over the manner in which the whole matter was dealt with, the Committee desire that all steps should be taken to ensure that there was no financial loss to the Museum. The Committee would like to be apprised of the further developments.

113. The Committee also found certain inadequacies in the Museum Library and its utilisation and also the microfilming unit which was purchased in 1983 at a cost of Rs. 2.17 lakhs with a view to taking microfilms of all rare manuscripts available in the Museum. The physical verification by the Expert committee has also established that in the manuscript library there were cases of loss of books, substitution of books, double entries and bifurcation of manuscripts. Recounting the corrective steps taken, the Ministry stated that the museum services have since been geared up, effective steps have been taken to recover books from the defaulting staff and the microfilming unit has been conditioned and put to use. The recommendations of the Expert Committee in this regard are stated to have been in the process of implementation. Since the Library and the Museum has been declared as an institution of national importance and it is one of the premier manuscript libraries of India, its maintenance and preservation needs serious attention from the Board/Ministry.

114. The Committee note with concern that Museum publications worth Rs. 12.74 lakhs were lying unsold due to unrealistic assessment of the demand. In this connection Dr. Motichandra Committee which was appointed by Government of India in 1969 had in their Report which was stated to have been adopted by Government in 1970 recommended that the Museum should have a properly trained publication officer for careful planning and execution of publication work, but there was no publication officer in the Museum. Further, the Randhawa committee recommended that a review of all books published should be maintained in the library of the Museum, but no such review seems to have been done by the Museum. Above all, the publications sub-committee constituted by the Board for this purpose also did not function properly. Evidently, this wing of the Museum was left unattended to and neither the recommendations of the Motichandra committee nor those of Randhawa committee were implemented. The Committee deprecate the casual and negligent attitude of the authorities in this regard. They recommend that besides implementation of the recommendations of these two committees, a realistic assessment of demand for books be undertaken and a definite publication programme drawn for efficient utilisation of the resources of the Museum.

115. During the course of examination the Committee's attention was drawn to the inadequate security system which prevailed in the Museum. The Committee have been informed that the existing system of security where internal and outside security were looked after by different officials resulted in shifting of responsibility and as a consequence, the entire security suffered. According to the Ministry, the new system now proposed

to be envisaged will have only a single security agency both for internal and external security and also will provide complete electronic system. The Museum authorities are stated to have approached the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) for this purpose and a survey had reportedly been carried out by a technical team of the CISF. The Committee desire that besides the introduction of the measures enumerated above, the Museum should also keep track with the developments taking place in the security systems of other museums of the world with a view to upgrading and strengthening the security system for effective protection of the museum.

116. It is distressing to note that though the Randhawa committee recommended a review of the working of the Museum every five years and the Government accepted the recommendation as far back as 1969, no such review was either conducted by the Museum or got enforced by the Department of Culture. Explaining the reasons for the same, the Ministry stated that though the recommendations of the Randhawa committee report in this regard should have been brought to the knowledge of the Board or the Government for constituting the Review committee, unfortunately this was not done. In regard to the implementation of other recommendations of the committee, it was stated that though this Report was placed before the Board for noting the action to be taken, their implementations were not brought before the Board or the Government by the then Director. The Committee were further informed that apart from the non-implementation of the recommendations of Randhawa committee report, even the recommendations of the Sihare committee report, which was a later report on Museum have been left unimplemented by the Museum. This is clearly indicative of the irresponsible and casual attitude of the authorities concerned in implementing the Government policies. The Committee are of the firm view that had the Government implemented these recommendations, the irregularities/lapses committed could have been noticed earlier and timely steps could have been taken to correct the system of administration of the Museum.

117. As regards the present status of implementation of the recommendations of the Randhawa committee, the Ministry stated that some of these recommendations have now been got implemented, and the Museum has now proposed constitution of a Review committee on which action is at hand. The recommendations of the Sihare committee are expected to be fully implemented with effect from April 1996. The Committee would like to stress the need for faithful implementation of the recommendations of the various committees appointed from time to time by Government. The Ministry should ensure that in future the reviews are undertaken in the prescribed time so as to improve the functioning of the Museum. The Committee would like to know the progress made in this direction.

118. The Committee observe that based on a number of allegations received from different corners against the administration of the Salar Jung Museum and against the then Director, Dr. M.L. Nigam, an independent Fact Finding Committee was constituted in 1991 to go into the allegations and render the report. The Fact Finding Committee took up 16 major allegations against the Director for examination. Briefly, the main allegations related to missing of antiquities, irregular awarding of contracts, failure to prevent encroachment into the museum premises, irregular shifting of residence and drawal of house rent allowance, non-maintenance of personal service book and destruction of records, impropriety in the appointment of employees, non-utilisation of huge stock of teak wood and costly equipments, non-utilisation of 40 staff quarters, purchasing art objects of dubious authenticity, inept handling of important purchases, purchase of land for private house, non-reply to audit report, alleged misuse of staff car and telephone facilities, misuse of museum employees, misbehaviour with the staff, etc. The Report of the Fact Finding Committee submitted in November 1992 largely sustained the allegations against the former Director. Subsequent to the submission of the Report, the Salar Jung Museum Board appointed a sub-committee to go through the Report of the Fact Finding Committee and submit its recommendations on actionable points. The sub-committee report was considered by the Board on 22 December 1992 wherein it was decided that the entire report be referred to the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) for their advice. The Central Vigilance Commission gave its report recommending chargesheet on 20 October, 1993. However, the actual chargesheet including 9 Articles from the 16 allegations was issued to Dr. M.L. Nigam on 2 July, 1994 only. Dr. Nigam filed a writ petition in the Hight Court of Andhra Pradesh and obtained a stay on 4 August, 1994. Since then the matter is pending. The Committee are deeply concerned to note that despite the grave nature of offences perpetuated against this prime institution, no single person has effectively been punished as yet. Undoubtedly, there had been inordinate delays in processing the charges, issuing the chargesheet and getting the stay vacated. The Committee cannot but express their strong displeasure over the same and recommend that immediate and urgent steps should be taken to get the stay order vacated and enlist the case for facilitating the future course of action. The precise progress made in this direction may be intimated to the Committee within a period of three months.

119. It is a matter of concern to the Committee that though the administration of the Museum was entrusted to the Salar Jung Museum Board by virtue of Salar Jung Museum Act, 1961 and the entire functioning of Salar Jung Museum is administered by this Central Act and Rules thereunder, the former Director of the Museum is stated to have completely carried on the administration in disregard of the laid down rules/procedures which reportedly resulted in gross mismanagement and earned a bad repute to this institution of national importance. In the light of the above, the Committee are of the firm view that the role of the Director in

the overall administration of the museum needs a critical review and an in-built system of checks and balances needs to be evolved to ensure enforcement of accountability on the part of the Director to guard against any such misuse of authority in future.

120. The Salar Jung Museum had been under the control of the Department of Culture for over 30 years. The facts stated in the foregoing paragraphs make it abundantly clear that the Museum was grossly mismanaged over the years resulting in financial irregularities, continued loss/pilferage of valuable articles and art objects and several other shortcomings. Significantly, even though the Salar Jung Museum Board is autonomous in nature, the representatives of the Ministry in the Board are required and expected to discharge their functions in terms of the provisions of the Salar Jung Museum Act, 1961. The Act also provides ample powers to the Government to issue directions to the Board in the functioning of the Museum. Thus, the Ministry had sufficient powers for administering control over the Museum. The Committee further understand that the Office of the C&AG have also been issuing Inspection reports to the Ministry on the functioning of the Museum. Unfortunately, as would be evident from the facts narrated above, the Department of Culture had woefully failed in exercising effective control over the Museum over the years which is deplorable. During evidence, the Secretary, Department of Culture admitted, "The Department cannot divest itself of its responsibility". the Committee need hardly comment further on this self-admitted dereliction of duty on the part of the Ministry. The Committee hope that the Ministry would at least now take effective steps and keep a close vigil on the working of the Museum with a view to ensuring that the Museum is run in consonance with the functions envisaged in the Act and also obviating recurrence of such irregularities in future.

121. To sum up, the facts stated in the foregoing paragraphs have revealed several irregularities/shortcomings in the functioning of the Salar Jung Museum. Briefly, these include, financial and administrative irregularities, lapses in the upkeep of accounts, discrepancies in the number of art objects actually in possession of the Museum, failure to account for the art objects, loss of art objects, failure to conduct physical verification as per the prescribed procedure, lapses/inadequacies in purchase, documentation, conservation and display of art objects maintenance of the library, irregularities in the execution of civil works and above all lack of effective control over the Museum. The Ministry of Human Resource Development have admitted these irregularities/inadequacies. The Committee are of the strong view that while there was an atmosphere of non-accountability prevalent at large in the Salar Jung Museum, the Department of Culture were equally remiss in the discharge of

the responsibility cast upon them by the Salar Jung Museum Act, 1961. The Committee consider it unfortunate that though the irregularities in the Museum were within the knowledge of the Ministry atleast since 1991, no single person has effectively been punished for the same till now. The Committee cannot but strongly deplore this sorry state of affairs in the Museum which was declared as an institution of national importance by Parliament way back in 1961. It is, therefore, highly imperative that this unsatisfactory situation is remedied forthwith. The Committee therefore recommend that the facts contained in the Report should be thoroughly looked into and Government take appropriate corrective/remedial measures with a view to ensuring that the Salar Jung Museum plays the role assigned to it in the Salar Jung Museum Act, 1961 effectively in the promotion of education and propagation of culture and that irregularities of the nature commented upon in this Report do not recur.

122. The Committee observe that the Government of India had appointed the Randhawa Committee and Dr. Motichandra Committee during August 1968 and November 1969 respectively for formulating a national policy on museums to improve their working and define their role in promoting the cause of education. Though the Reports of these committees were stated to have been adopted by the Government as far back as in 1969 and 1970 respectively, their recommendations were not implemented in letter and spirit. According to the Ministry, the Department of Culture, for the first time, is formulating a detailed written down policy on Culture. Based on the suggestions emanating from various seminars held all over the country during 1990, the paper was prepared and placed before the committee of Secretaries and Ministers of various state Governments. Then an Approach paper on the National policy of Culture was prepared and was placed in both the Houses of Parliament. A Committee has been appointed by the Ministry for finalising the various stages of preparation of the Cultural policy. After the policy note is prepared the same will be placed before the Cabinet for its approval whereafter the policy will be placed before Parliament for programme of action in this regard and the policy on museums will form part of the over all National Policy on Culture. The Committee desire that all necessary steps be taken by Ministry to expedite finalisation of policy on Culture and apprise the Committee about the progress made in this regard.

123. During the course of examination, the Committee's attention was drawn to the fact that some of the museums/similar institutions of national importance under the Department of Culture were functioning without proper heads. The Committee consider this as an unhealthy situation and not conducive to the proper functioning of such institutions set up for

promotion of education and propagation of culture. They are of the view that Government should take necessary steps to ensure that such appointments are made in time from among the eminent personalities in the relevant field.

New Delhi;
23 August, 1995

1 Bhadra, 1917 (Saka)

RAM NAIK,
Chairman,
Public Accounts Committee.

APPENDIX I

(Vide Para 2)

PARA 11 OF THE REPORT OF THE C&AG OF INDIA FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH, 1992, NO. 11 OF 1993 UNION GOVERNMENT (OTHER AUTONOMOUS BODIES) REGARDING SALAR JUNG MUSEUM, HYDERABAD

11.1 Introduction

The Salar Jung Museum (Museum) at Hyderabad is a repository of the artistic achievements of diverse European, Asian and Far Eastern Countries of the world. A major portion of these collection were acquired by late Shri Mir Yousuf Ali Khan, popularly known as 'Salar Jung III'. The administration of the Museum was with Salar Jung Estate Committee till 1958 and thereafter, on donation of the collection to the Government of India, the Museum came under the control of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Government of India. With the enactment of the Salar Jung Museum Act, 1961 (NO. 26 of 1961) in Parliament declaring the Museum as an institution of national importance, the administration of the Museum was entrusted to the Salar Jung Museum Board (Board). The main functions of the Board as envisaged in Section 15 of the Act are:—

- to manage the Museum efficiently and to plan, promote, organise and implement programmes for the development of the Museum;**
- to provide for instruction and research in matters relating to Museums and libraries and for the advancement of learning and dissemination of knowledge in such matters; and**
- to perform such other functions as the Central Government may, from time to time, assign to the Board.**

The Government of India had appointed the Randhawa Committee and Dr. Motichandra Committee during August 1968 and November 1969 respectively for formulating a national policy on Museums to improve their working and define their role in promoting the cause of education. The Government of India adopted the Reports of these Committees in 1969 and 1970.

11.2 Scope of Audit

The accounts of the Museum are audited under Section 19(2) of the Comptroller & Auditor General's (Duties, Powers and Conditions of

Service) Act, 1971. A review of the working of the Museum covering the period from 1985-86 to 1991-92 was conducted during April-June 1990 and July-August 1992.

11.3 Organisational set-up

The Governor of Andhra Pradesh is the ex-officio Chairman of the Board, assisted by ten members of whom four are ex-officio, four are nominated by the Government of India and the remaining two by the State Government. The four ex-officio members are the representative of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, the Mayor of the Municipal Corporation of Hyderabad, the Vice-Chancellor of the Osmania University and the Accountant General (Accounts and Entitlements), Andhra Pradesh. One of the four members to be nominated by the Government of India shall be a member of the family of the late Nawab Salar Jung Bahadur and the remaining three persons are drawn from those having knowledge and experience in matters relating to the administration of museums and libraries.

11.4 Highlights

- Cheques for Rs. 13.38 lakhs were drawn on 31 March, 1991 in advance of requirement to show grants as utilised. Out of these, two cheques for Rs. 8.67 lakhs were yet to be handed over to the parties even after a lapse of 17 months (August 1992).

[Paragraph 11.5.2 (c)]

- Non-investment of surplus grants as required under Board's resolutions resulted in loss of interest amounting to Rs. 1.99 lakhs.

[Paragraph 11.5.3]

- An Amount of Rs. 5.12 lakhs remitted into Bank in September 1991 was not credited to the Museum account by the Bank.

[Paragraph 11.5.4]

- There were discrepancies in the actual number of art objects taken over from the Salar Jung Estate and as shown in the registers.

[Paragraph 11.6]

- Physical verification of art objects and simultaneous cross referencing to basic records was not done. Physical verification of

Persian and Arabic manuscripts was done by the Officers of Manuscript Section themselves and no physical verification of photo negatives of art objects was ever done.

[Paragraph 11.7]

- **Combined art purchase committee for all the three national museums as suggested by Government of India was not formed. Regulations for purchase of new art objects as envisaged under the Act were also not framed.**

[Paragraph 11.8]

- **Art objects requiring conservation were not identified. There were abnormal delays in completion of chemical treatment of the objects.**

[Paragraph 11.10]

- **More than 60 per cent of art objects were not displayed even after seven years. Even among new purchases acquired at a cost of Rs. 16.99 lakhs during 1985-86 to 1991-92, 75 per cent of the objects were not displayed. The museum has no plan for display of various art objects lying in Stores.**

[Paragraph 11.11.2]

- **Tribal art gallery to promote tribal culture as envisaged by the Government was not established and the entire grant of Rs. 6 lakhs received during 1985-86 to 1991-92 remained unutilised.**

[Paragraph 11.11.4]

- **Mobile exhibitions intended to cover rural population who could not normally afford to come to the Museum was defeated due to limiting of visits to the City areas.**

[Paragraph 11.12.2]

- **Non-completion of air conditioning of galleries/store rooms inspite of an expenditure of Rs. 60.42 lakhs during the period March 1987 to July 1990 resulted in delaying much needed protection to art objects.**

[Paragraph 11.13.2 and 11.13.3]

- **There was delay of over 18 months in commissioning of lifts meant for handicapped visitors though the work was completed during April, 1991.**

(Paragraph 11.13.6)

- Mobilisation advance of Rs. 210 lakhs was paid during March 1991 and March 1992 for construction of two new independent buildings without stipulating and conditions for procurement of material or payment of interest.

[Paragraph 11.13.7]

- Staff quarters meant for watch and ward staff constructed in December 1989 at a cost of Rs. 37.20 lakhs were not allotted for want of adequate water supply.

[Paragraph 11.13.8]

- The Museum was without any effective fire fighting system for the last several years though expenditure of Rs. 19.05 lakhs was incurred.

[Paragraph 11.14.4]

- Publications worth Rs. 12.74 lakhs were lying unsold due to unrealistic assessment of the demand.

[Paragraph 11.16]

- Though Randhawa Committee (1968-69) suggested a review of the working of the Museum every five years no such review was conducted.

[Paragraph 11.17]

11.5 Finance and Accounts

11.5.1 The Museum is financed by grants-in-aid from the Government both for development and upkeep. In addition, the Museum receives revenue by sale of tickets, apart from other miscellaneous receipts, such as sale of souvenirs, picture post cards and interest. The receipts and expenditure of the Museum during the period 1985-86 to 1991-92 were as follows:—

(Rupees in Lakhs)

Year	Opening Grants from Central Govt. balance			Sale of Tickets	Other Receipts	Total of		Closing balance
	Plan	Non-plan	Receipts			Expenditure		
1985-86	4.14	34.48	25.50	17.34	5.87	87.33	84.56	2.77
1986-87	2.77	57.85	31.82	18.09	6.90	117.43	111.29	6.14
1987-88	6.14	64.75	38.50	19.10	11.11	139.60	135.10	4.50
1988-89	4.50	52.00	45.00	19.41	9.35	130.26	127.29	2.97
1989-90	2.97	87.00	46.00	19.64	8.04	163.65	110.63	53.02
1990-91	53.02	91.00	63.05	15.73	12.49	235.29	231.85	3.44
1991-92	3.44	160.00	62.92	19.19	15.41	260.96	204.65	56.31

the inventory registers to the master registers was stated to be mainly due to double entries (961 items) and cancellations (231 items). However, there was no complete or detailed item-wise accounts explaining the double entries and cancellations.

11.6.2 The check of registers disclosed that certain art objects included in the High Court Registers were not taken by the Museum in Inventory Registers. The figures adopted were in excess in some cases and were less in some other cases. Consequently, there was a net short account of 470 objects in 60 registers. It was stated (December 1990) by the Director that there was a lot of shifting from one room to another at the time when the Museum was under the control of the Salar Jung Estate Committee and at this later period of time it was not possible for him to comment on these variations.

11.6.3 While compiling the master registers in 1976, 111 number of art objects were deleted from earlier inventory registers without proper investigation and record of reasons which included:

- (i) 64 items of art objects stated to be missing;
- (ii) 17 items deleted without assigning any reason;
- (iii) eight items omitted on the ground of non-inclusion in the inventory register of 1964;
- (iv) seven items stated to have been handed over to one Shri Ali Pasha without indicating the purpose and reasons for non-retrieval;
- (v) five items stated to have been written off but for which orders of competent authority were not available;
- (vi) one item stolen without indication of any investigation having been conducted; and
- (vii) nine items appearing in the inventory prepared on the basis of physical verification deleted on the ground that they were not appearing in the High Court registers.

11.6.4 Cost of another 45 objects, reported to have been stolen in 1972 was not available with the Museum which included one bronze elephant, one manicuring box, 42 paintings and a gold serpent. Subsequently 39 paintings were reported to have been recovered by Central Bureau of Investigation, responsibility was fixed for two items (manicuring box and gold serpent) and one item (bronze elephant) was written off.

11.6.5 At the time of shifting of the Museum from old buildings to the new building in 1968, 40 mirrors were left in the old buildings. The Museum stated (December 1990) that the mirrors left in the old buildings were part of the architecture. As they were embedded in the wall it was not possible to take them out. As these objects were entered in the High Court registers, these were the property of the Museum. Even though the matter was stated (December 1990) to have been reported to the Board, no recorded evidence was forthcoming.

11.6.6 The above discrepancies/defects would indicate that the art objects received from the Estate were not fully and completely accounted for at any point of time (*viz.*) (1) at the time of take over of the administration by the Board in 1961 or (2) at the time of preparation of inventory registers in 1964 or (3) at the time of preparation of master registers in 1976. Under the circumstances, it could not be concluded that all the art objects received were properly accounted for by the Board.

The Director of the Museum stated (August 1990) that the records received from the Estate were found to be inadequate as they were maintained by unqualified staff and therefore, he was not definite about the exact number and value of art objects and curios listed in the records left by the Estate Committee.

11.7 *Physical verification*

11.7.1 According to financial rules the physical verification of all stores should be done at least once in a year. The Randhawa Committee whose recommendations (1968-69) were accepted by the Government of India, however, prescribed that in the case of Salar Jung Museum the physical verification of art objects be conducted once in three years. Accordingly, during the period from 1968-69 to 1989-90, seven cycles of physical verification should have been completed. The Museum while expressing (November 1991) its inability to mention the mode of physical verification undertaken prior to 1975 on the ground that the records for that period were not available, stated that systematic physical verification was conducted in the year 1975 and 1976 during which nine objects were found short, of which eight were written off and the cost of one recovered. From 1980-81 even though the physical verification was taken up of one third of the art objects per annum, cross verification with the master registers was not done. The last physical verification of all objects together with cross verification with the master registers was conducted during September 1985 to May 1989. The verification was made by the Officers of the Museum only. During this verification two objects were found missing (Sea shell arranged with Sea weeds in a glass dome and miniature paintings of Ragini Malkus). Though the investigation of the missing objects was entrusted in July 1989 by the Board to one of its members the investigation has not been undertaken so far (August 1992). In respect of Manuscripts Section physical verification of Persian/Arabic manuscripts was done internally by the staff working in the same section. No physical verification of photo negatives was ever done.

11.7.2 Physical verification of objects and simultaneous cross referencing to basic records was not done. But the verifying officers listed out the verified art objects in 38 registers. After a lapse of time these registers have been tallied with the master registers. Against the entries made in these registers it was noticed that there were recordings to show that certain items were without master register numbers and that certain items were double entries. The circumstances under which the art objects were

without master register numbers was not clarified especially when numbers were reportedly given to all art objects at the time of preparation of the master registers in 1976. It was also not clarified as to why double entries arose. In the circumstances, it could not have been ensured that the documentation of art objects was complete and that the shortage of two objects arrived at by the Museum reflected the correct position.

11.7.3 Further, while conducting physical verification, physical condition of the art objects, viz., whether they were in good, fair or damaged condition, etc., was not indicated in the case of 3,540 objects. Though the Museum stated (August 1992) that the physical condition was indicated in accession registers, the entries were not available in all the cases.

11.7.4 There was no evidence of any independent verification by experts in the field to show that the articles existing with the Museum were genuine as collected by the late Salar Jung and were not duplicates. The system did not provide for verification at periodical intervals by experts in the field to guard against disappearance of genuine objects and their replacement by duplicates. The Museum stated in August 1992 that inspection was done by experts and eminent persons from the beginning till 1991 but there was no recorded evidence to this effect.

11.8 *Collection of exhibits*

11.8.1 The Board constituted an Art Purchase Committee for purchasing art objects. The Committee consisted of seven members, of whom two were Directors of Archaeology and Museums and one was Director General of Archaeological Survey of India. The Museum purchased 3,795 art objects and received 2,063 objects as gifts during the period 1961-62 to 1991-92, in addition to the 42,465 art objects taken over from the Salar Jung Estate. Of the 3,795 art objects, 657 valued Rs. 16.99 lakhs were purchased during the period 1985-86 to 1991-92.

11.8.2 With a view to avoiding competition among the three national museums which are financed by the Government of India and also as a measure of economy, Government desired (February 1963) that there should be a combined Art Purchase Committee for the three museums, viz. Indian Museum, Calcutta, National Museum, New Delhi and Salar Jung Museum, Hyderabad. However, the Board continued with the existing acquisition Committee to buy objects of special interest to the Museum.

11.8.3 According to Section 16(2) of the Act, the Board may purchase art objects subject to such regulations as may be made by the Board. However, even after three decades, such regulations were not framed (August 1992) although art objects were being purchased every year. The Museum stated (August 1992) that the procedure followed by the Committee is a standard one followed everywhere. But, even this standard procedure was not got approved by the Board as envisaged in the Act.

11.8.4 Art objects were proposed to be acquired by the Board to fill the gaps in the collection of the late Nawab Salar Jung. However, the gaps to be filled in were not identified by the Museum. The tenders for purchase of art objects did not also indicate the specific age of the antiquities. The Museum stated (August 1992) that the gaps have been identified and most of the purchases made by the Committee were Indian miniature paintings, Indian bronzes and textiles. However, agenda/resolution of the Art Purchase Committee and the Board does not indicate that these gaps have been identified.

11.8.5 It was specified in the tender advertisements for purchase of art objects, that documents of registration made under the Antiquities and Art Treasures Act, 1972 in respect of the Articles should be presented before the Art Purchase Committee. The purchases during 1985-86 to 1991-92 included 562 art objects relating to the period upto the 19th century, which should have been registered under the above Act. Though the Museum stated (August 1992) that it generally purchased registered antiquities only, test check revealed that details of registration were not recorded in the purchase documents nor the fact of registrations verified by the Museum. Therefore, there was neither evidence to show that the 562 objects purchased were registered objects nor was the nature of their antiquity officially confirmed.

11.8.6 According to the to the Antiquities and Art Treasures Act, 1972 'Antiquities' include paintings, sculptures, objects of art, crafts, things of historical interest, etc., which have been in existence for not less than 100 years. It was, however, noticed that 95 out of 657 art objects (11 per cent) purchased during 1985-86 to 1991-92 related to the 20th century. It was stated by the Museum (August 1992) that apart from antiquities, objects of aesthetic value of modern art could also be purchased as it was proposed to establish one gallery for modern art.

11.8.7 Though tenders were invited for acquisition of art objects through national dailies a list of reputed dealers in antiquities was not maintained by the museum nor reputed suppliers of other museums contacted for the purchases. 657 art objects were purchased during 1985-86 to 1991-92 of which 619 (94 per cent) were from Hyderabad based local dealers only. The Museum stated (August 1992) that the big dealers of the country did not attend the meetings of the Committee due to low allocation of funds and low prices offered by the Museum, but go to the National Museum, New Delhi. The reply of the Museum shows the need for constitution of a combined Art Purchase Committee for all the three national museums as desired by Government.

11.9 *Documentation*

11.9.1 There were 48,323 art objects including 657 new purchases made during the period 1985-86 to 1991-92 and 4 objects received as gift. All art objects including those acquired were entered in the general Accession

Registers maintained by the Museum and Index cards were prepared. However, Index cards were kept in the cabinets to the extent of 32,016 art objects only. The remaining index cards were not kept in the cabinets due to non-availability of cabinets (August 1992). The Museum stated (August 1992) that more cabinets would be purchased and all the the index cards kept in the cabinets.

11.9.2 According to the Randhawa Committee Report, negatives of objects photographed were to be arranged in a systematic manner serially numbered and preserved. It was noticed that negatives were not serially numbered in the Museum and the information on the negatives prior to April 1985 was not available. 5,628 negatives were available in the Museum relating to the period 1985-86 to 1991-92 out of which 1,935 were of art objects and 3,693 were of manuscripts. The reply did not cover the negatives for the period prior to 1985. The Museum stated in August 1992 that more than 50,000 negatives were available but as per the statement furnished by the Museum no details for the period prior to 1985 were available.

11.10 *Preservation of Museum exhibits*

11.10.1 One of the main tasks of the Museum is the preservation and conservation of cultural property. A chemical conservation laboratory was established in 1962-63 with a sanctioned strength of 21 members of various cadres. An expenditure of Rs. 1.34 lakhs was incurred on the laboratory (other than salaries) during 1985-86 to 1991-92. The average expenditure on the laboratory worked out to Rs. 0.19 lakh *per annum* only against the average annual expenditure of Rs. 78.36 lakhs on the Museum.

11.10.2 The Museum was having 48,323 art objects in its possession. The art objects requiring conservation and preservation treatment were not identified and a plan of action for carrying out restoration work in a phased manner was not drawn up. Of the 657 art objects purchased for Rs. 16.99 lakhs during 1985-86 to 1991-92, 503 were in a damaged condition as recorded by the Art Purchase Committee at the time of acquisition. Test check by Audit of the concerned acquisition registers relating to the period prior to 1985-86 disclosed that out of 10,843 objects recorded in 57 registers, 4,654 (43 per cent) were in damaged condition. Information as to whether the damages occurred at the time of acquisition, in storage, in display or due to mishandling were not on record. The Museum stated (August 1992) that the staff of the laboratory visit the exhibited area and stores and spot out deteriorating objects. In the absence of an identified list of art objects requiring preservation and its periodical updating, the method adopted by the Museum for spotting out art objects cannot be deemed to be comprehensive or scientific. It was noticed in audit on test check of 36 out of 129 accession registers that there were 98 art objects in badly damaged condition prior to 1979. However, only 26 of these were given for restoration treatment (August 1992). The Museum

stated (August 1992) that the Chemical treatment of Museum objects was a very slow process and any slightest undue haste or carelessness might spoil the object forever.

11.10.3 Abnormal delays in completion of chemical treatment upto seven years were noticed in nine cases as indicated below:

The Museum stated (August 1992) that efforts will be made to treat the objects within a reasonable period.

11.10.4 *Oil paintings*

There were 897 oil paintings in the Museum as on 1 March, 1992. In the case of oil paintings also the damaged paintings requiring restoration were not identified by the Museum. The oil paintings restored during the period 1985-86 to 1991-92 were 121 only (1985-86: 16; 1986-87: 16; 1987-88: 17; 1988-89: 18; 1989-90: 19; 1990-91: 15; 1991-92: 21). In the absence of identification of the paintings requiring restoration, the adequacy of the restoration work carried out could not have been ensured.

11.11 *Display*

11.11.1 The main function of the Museum is to display art objects in its possession. Upto 1985-86, there were 47,662 art objects in the Museum. Together with the 657 objects acquired at a cost of Rs. 16.99 lakhs during 1985-86 to 1991-92 and four objects received as gift the Museum was having 48,323 objects. There were 35 galleries for display of art objects. During the period 1985-86 to 1991-92 eleven galleries were taken up for reorganisation at a cost of Rs. 26.34 lakhs.

11.11.2 Out of 47,662 art objects in the Museum as on April 1985, 29,030 objects were not displayed for more than seven years (August 1992). Even in case of 657 objects acquired during 1985-86 to 1991-92, 497 objects were not displayed. The objects not displayed numbering 29,691 as at the end of March 1992 were held either in stores or in other places like the Board room, Director's room, etc. The Board stated (August 1992) that as per internationally accepted policy Museums would not exhibit their total collection for public view. The Museum is exhibiting 30 per cent of its collection against 10-15 per cent exhibited by other leading Museums in the world. The Museum has no long term display policy or a calendar to show when a particular art object lying in store will be displayed.

11.11.3 *Reorganisation of galleries*

Eleven galleries were taken up for reorganisation at a cost of Rs. 26.34 lakhs during 1985-86 to 1991-92.

According to the conditions in the tender notice the work on reorganisation was to be completed within the stipulated period which was 90 days in most of the cases. It was observed that in 8 out of the 11 galleries the work was not completed within the time schedule and there were delays ranging from 30 to 150 days as indicated below. Even though

there were delays in completion of works, five galleries works were entrusted to a local private firm.

Sl. No.	Delay	Number of galleries
(1)	Upto 30 days	3
(2)	30—100 days	2
(3)	Exceeding 100 days	3
		8

The delay resulted in non-display of the art objects shifted from the galleries under reorganisation. The contracts also did not provide penalty clause for delay in not adhering to the time schedule. The Museum stated (August 1992) that on certain occasions if a particular material was not available in the market the same had to be procured from Bombay. Further, as there were only few firms who could take up the work the Museum could not be too harsh with the firms. The delay of 100 days is not justified in view of the fact that the conditions of contract were known to the firms. If the contract included a penalty clause this could have a salutary effect on the firm.

In four cases there were delays ranging from four to seven months in inauguration after reorganisation. It was also noticed that there was reduction in number of art objects displayed after reorganisation. In the case of six galleries the number of objects displayed decreased by 1,117.

11.11.4 *Establishment of Tribal Art Gallery*

Government advised the Museum to open a Gallery during the VII five year plan for tribal art to promote tribal culture. Provision of Rs. 6 lakhs was made in the budget estimates for purchase of art objects during the period 1985-86 to 1991-92. Even though the Museum stated (August 1992) that it was purchasing objects of tribal art every year, categories of such art objects proposed for acquisition were not specified by the Art Purchase Committee. Press advertisement issued for purchase of art objects did not specify that tribal art objects would be purchased.

11.12 *Mass Education Programme*

11.12.1 Under the Mass Education Programme, the Museum has taken up 13 different activities like Temporary Exhibition, Mobile Exhibition, Special Exhibition, Popular Lectures, Training Courses, Seminars, Symposiums and Workshops, Preparation of Models. The expenditure incurred on these programmes (other than salaries) was Rs. 6.57 lakhs during the period 1985-86 to 1991-92.

11.12.2 Mobile exhibitions

The object of mobile exhibition was to reach the people living in slum areas and outlays districts and various school children who cannot normally afford to come to the Museum. An exhibition van for the above purpose was purchased at a cost of Rs. 2.35 lakhs. The van was specially designed with built-in show cases, internal lighting arrangement and a commentary box to provide pertinent information about the exhibits. One driver and cleaner were employed for the van.

No target was fixed as to the number of slums, outlying districts and schools to be covered *per annum* by the mobile van. Details of utilisation (reckoning the working days as 285 *per annum*) of the van are given below:

Year	Number of days the van was put to use	Number of days the van was kept idle	Number of schools visited	Expenditure incurred on POL. repairs salaries etc. (Rupees)	Percentage of non-utilisation of the van (Column 3 to 285 days)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1985-86	61	224	69	26142	78.60
1986-87	53	232	67	30507	81.40
1987-88	60	225	89	38799	78.95
1988-89	44	241	68	51047	84.56
1989-90	23	262	23	57361	91.93
1990-91	38	247	60	53968	86.66
1991-92	39	246	59	57109	86.30

The percentage of non-utilisation of the van compared to the actual number of working days ranged from 78.60 per cent to 91.93 per cent during the above period. There was a steep fall in the utilisation of the van from 61 days in 1985-86 to 23 days in 1989-90.

The driver and cleaner were idle for more than 220 days every year. The Museum stated (August 1992) that the services of the driver and cleaner were utilised for upkeep and maintenance of the van and the utility of the van should not be counted with the number of days in a year as preparation of new exhibition, enlargement of photographs, preparation of the replicas and text material were time-consuming processes. The reply was not convincing as the driver and cleaner are not meant for the above purpose.

Further, the object of the mobile exhibition reaching the people/students of the outlying districts was not fulfilled since the visits by the van are limited to Hyderabad city only. The Museum stated (August 1992) that the van was not supposed to go outside Hyderabad. The purpose of mobile exhibition to reach those people/children who could not normally afford to come to the Museum was not achieved.

11.12.3 Special exhibitions

Museums are required to conduct special exhibitions with a view to expose the works of art of India and other countries to the public at large. The Museum conducted only three special exhibitions on Indian Metal-ware, Decorative arts of India and Hyderabad manuscripts during 1985-86 to 1991-92.

11.12.4 Preparation of models

The Museum undertook casting models of five objects (veiled Rebecca, Double Statue, Parvathi, Ganesh and Small Lady Figure) in plaster of Paris for public sale under the Mass Education Programme, by employing two junior modellers. Against 8400 models to be cast during 1985-86 to 1991-92, 2,168 number of models valued at Rs. 0.24 lakh only were cast incurring an expenditure of Rs. 2.78 lakhs which was mainly on salaries. The poor performance showed that the modellers were not employed gainfully and the object of dissemination of Museum knowledge through models was also not achieved. The Museum accepted (August 1992) the audit observation

11.13 Buildings

11.13.1 The Museum had deposited Rs. 166.63 lakhs with the Central Public Works Department (CPWD) to end of March 1992 for construction of second phase of Museum building, staff quarters, sales and display centre, laying of circular road, providing of street lights, air conditioning of galleries and stores. The works relating to providing street light, laying of circular road, air conditioning of certain galleries construction of second phase of Museum building were completed and put to use but the works have not been capitalised. The Museum stated (August 1992) that the matter was reported to both the Director General, CPWD and to the Board for settlement of accounts and early completion of remaining works.

11.13.2 Air-conditioning of galleries

To protect the objects from fluctuating temperature and moisture, air conditioning of six galleries (Nos. 2, 3, 4, 6, 14 & 17A) was entrusted to CPWD at an estimated cost of Rs. 46.69 lakhs. The entire amount was deposited with the CPWD between March 1987 and March 1989. Even though the air conditioning of all the six galleries was programmed to be

completed by March 1989, work on four out of six galleries was only completed (August 1992) even after a lapse of three and half years. Except for the first three galleries, the air-conditioning work was done gallery-wise. The work on the fourth gallery (No. 6) was completed and handed over to the Museum on 4 July, 1991 but the next gallery (No. 14) was handed over to CPWD only on 28 May, 1992 after a gap of 10 months. Work on this gallery was not taken up (August 1992) by CPWD even after a further gap of three months. Further, even after the work on the first four galleries (Nos. 2, 3, 4 & 6) was completed and tested in the presence of Museum Engineer on 25 February, 1992, the Museum had not put up the airconditioning to use on the plea that the work was not done as per original plan, thus delaying the art objects the much needed protection.

11.13.3 Air-conditioning of four store rooms in the second floor

Air-conditioning of four store rooms in the second floor was entrusted to CPWD at an estimated cost of Rs. 13.73 lakhs and the amount deposited in July 1990. Even though CPWD awarded the work to a contractor the work had not yet started (August 1992) even after a lapse of over two years. The Museum stated (August 1992) that even though a time schedule was drawn up in consultation with the Director General, CPWD for completion of work, the work was not completed (August 1992). Thus the art objects lying in the stores are without much needed protection even after depositing an amount of Rs. 13.73 lakhs over two years back.

11.13.4 Air-conditioning (AC) Plant

AC plant for art galleries was installed in 1986 at a cost of Rs. 22.65 lakhs. A test check of the AC plant maintenance register for June 1989 and March 1990 showed that the plant was not operated for 526.5 hours (73.27 per cent) out of 720 hours in June 1989 and 595.50 hours (80 per cent) out of 744 hours in March 1990. The plant was run for two out of three shifts only. The non-utilisation of the AC plant throughout the day was stated to be due to low voltage and frequent power shuts by Andhra Pradesh State Electricity Board, but effective action was not taken to increase the contracted load from 200 KVA to the required 300 KVA as suggested by CPWD. The objective of protecting the exhibits from fluctuating temperature remained unfulfilled. The Museum stated (August 1992) that they are pursuing the matter with Electricity Board for increase of load from 200 to 300 KVA.

11.13.5 Construction of sales and display centre

To shift the present sales counter from the existing place at the entrance to a more spacious place the Board in August 1987 accorded sanction for construction of sales and display centre within the courtyard of the Museum at an estimated cost of Rs. 7.95 lakhs. The work was entrusted to CPWD and the amount deposited in January 1989. The roof of the centre was laid with fibre glass in spite of the advice of the CPWD that they

should not be held responsible if the fire broke out in the Museum. Permission of the Fire department sought for by CPWD was also not obtained (August 1992). Even though the roof was laid the sale centre has not been completed (August 1992) even after three and half years thus making the entire expenditure unfruitful. The Museum stated (July 1992) that the Board had taken a decision to use special quality fire resistant fibre glass as (i) the masonry shed proposed by CPWD will not be suitable from aesthetic point of view and (ii) it will make the entire centre completely dark in case of electricity failure. As regards non-obtaining of permission from Fire department for use of fibre glass for the roof the Museum stated (July 1992) that it was the duty of CPWD to obtain permission before starting the work and it is presumed that they have obtained permission.

11.13.6 Installation of second lift

For the use of handicapped and general public who visits the Museum, the Board in September 1986 had approved installation of second lift of 13 passenger capacity. The first lift of 10 passenger capacity was reserved for use of staff and occasionally for use of handicapped persons. An amount of Rs. 11.88 lakhs was deposited with CPWD in March 1986 which included Rs. 4.61 lakhs for installation of the lift. Even though the CPWD informed the Museum in April 1991 that the installation of lift was completed and trial run taken on 25 April, 1991, the Museum, instead of taking over the lift and putting it to use, had requested a State Government Engineer to inspect the lift. The State Government Engineer had also inspected the lift on 24 December, 1991 and certified that it could be put to use safely. The Museum stated (July 1992) that as it had no Senior Electrical Engineer of its own, it had asked an Electrical Engineer of State Government to inspect the lift, But, even after the first inspection by him on 24 December, 1991 some more accessories and details were received and hence he was again requested to inspect the lift. The Museum further stated that it was already making huge payments to the Electricity Board towards electricity consumption charges and there was no need to operate both the lifts every day. However, the work done by CPWD, being a Government Department should have been accepted particularly when CPWD stated that the trial runs were conducted satisfactorily. The Museum appeared to be bogged down by procedural considerations rather than putting the lift to use. On the one hand the Museum was prepared to increase the electricity load as mentioned in para 13.4 and on the contrary expressed concern about extra electrical consumption charges.

11.13.7 Construction of two new independent buildings

The Board in March 1986 had approved construction of two new independent wings on either side of the existing building to house Western and Far Eastern art objects. The new construction was approved by the Board without obtaining specific permission from Government of India.

An architectural competition was conducted to get the best design and the prize winning artist from Delhi was retained for a consultancy fee of four per cent of the estimate cost of the work for furnishing detailed drawings, supervision, etc. While providing the design for competition in March 1990 the prize winning artist mentioned the area of the proposed buildings as 9,609 sq.m. and the cost of the project as Rs. 5.70 crores. But it was found by Board of Assessors that area of the proposed building was 10,500 sq.m. As per the original design itself the estimated cost of the project was accordingly revised to Rs. 9.95 crores. While concluding agreement with the artists for payment of consultancy fee at 4 per cent no safeguards such as a ceiling on the consultancy fees payable or clauses for review of this contract after a specific time were taken. Government in December 1990 had ordered to limit the outlay on new building to Rs. 6 crores during VIII Five Year Plan (1992—1997) in light of priorities and guidelines spelt out by the Planning Commission. But, the construction work was actually commenced in March 1992 and it was proposed to complete the work within 30 months *i.e.*, by September 1994. The construction work was entrusted to National Buildings Construction Corporation (NBCC), a Government of India Undertaking without any competitive tender and it was agreed to pay them fees at 12.5 per cent of the actual cost of construction. The Agreement with NBCC revealed that no safeguards were taken by stipulating any ceiling on the fees payable to them. No final agreement indicating item-wise rates as envisaged in the original preliminary agreement was also concluded (August 1992). In addition, a retired Engineer-in-Chief was appointed as Adviser for the construction work on a consolidated fee of Rs. 4000 per month plus actual travel expenses. Had the work been entrusted to CPWD, their departmental charges would be 7 per cent on the actual cost of construction *i.e.*, Rs. 69.65 lakhs. However, the charges agreed for payment to Design Team (4 per cent), NBCC (12 1/2 per cent) and total payment fee Rs. 1.60 lakhs to the Engineer-in-Chief (from June 1991, the date of appointment to proposed date of completion—September 1994 at Rs. 4,000 p.m.) amounted around Rs. 165.78 lakhs. Thus, there would have been a saving of Rs. 96.13 lakhs on this account alone. Further, the Museum had paid mobilisation advance of Rs. 210 lakhs (Rs. 110 lakhs in March 1991 and Rs. 100 lakhs in March 1992) as per the terms of contract. Even though the mobilisation advance was to be paid normally in cases where heavy machinery, tools, etc., were to be purchased for utilisation in the work, the agreement stipulated no such conditions or any rate of interest while agreeing to pay the advance. However, the Museum demanded interest from NBCC, for the first instalment of Rs. 110 lakhs paid in March 1991, but interest at the rate of 12 per cent amounting to Rs. 12 lakhs for the period April 1991 to February 1992 has not been recovered (August 1992).

11.13.8 Construction of staff quarters

To provide accommodation to the Watch and Ward staff who had to perform duties in shifts round the clock the Board in June 1983 had approved construction of 40 quarters within the Museum premises. The estimated cost of construction was Rs. 29.97 lakhs and the same was revised to Rs. 37.20 lakhs in September 1987. An amount of Rs. 31.76 lakhs (Rs. 14.07 lakhs in March 1986 and Rs. 17.69 lakhs in March 1987) was deposited with CPWD to take up construction. The construction of the quarters was completed in December 1989. However, action to propose water connections to the quarters was initiated only in July 1989 when the construction work was nearing completion. As there was no response from the Water Works Department to provide water connections the quarters could not be allotted (August 1992). The Board decided in February 1991 to have two or three bore wells dug for the purpose. But this was not pursued as the point selected by the Ground Water Department in the front lawn was not acceptable to the Museum as it was too far from the quarters. The Museum expressed (August 1992) its inability to allot the quarters without adequate water supply. Thus, the quarters constructed in December 1989 at a cost of Rs. 38.89 lakhs were not put to use even after 32 months and the Museum had incurred (August 1992) an additional expenditure of Rs. 3.50 lakhs (HRA paid to security staff from January 1990 to August 1992: Rs. 2.30 lakhs, Standard licence fee lost during the above period: Rs. 1.20 lakhs). In addition there was an additional contingent liability of Rs. 0.92 lakh to the Museum towards property tax to Municipal Corporation of Hyderabad.

11.13.9 Non-allotment of Director's quarters

To provide residential accommodation to its Director the Museum constructed Director's Quarters within the Museum premises in May 1985 at a cost of Rs. 4.40 lakhs. The Director of the Museum had constructed his own house with the help of house building advance of Rs. 1.70 lakhs sanctioned by the Board and vacated the quarters in February 1991. The quarters were not allotted (August 1992) to any other Officer of the Museum. Thus, the quarter meant specifically for the Director was vacant from February 1991 to August 1992 besides extra payment of Rs. 0.28 lakh to the Museum towards HRA paid to the Director (Rs.0.17 lakh), Standard Licence fee lost due to non-allotment of quarters (Rs. 0.04 lakh), electricity & water charges (Rs. 0.03 lakh) and Telephone charges (0.04 lakh) during the period from February 1991 to August 1992. The Museum stated (August 1992)

that the quarter cannot be allotted to any other Officer as the same was constructed as per the provisions laid down for the post of Director.

11.14 Security

11.14.1 The Security staff of the Museum consisted of 52 members as on 1 March, 1992 of whom two were police personnel taken on deputation, 29 ex-servicemen employed on contract basis and the rest were employees of the Museum. Except for the Security Officer and Security Assistant who were police personnel, the rest had no special training in handling security matters. The Museum stated (June 1990 & August 1992) that others had been on the job since decades and had gained adequate experience and that there was no system of training on Museum security. There was also no system of conducting drills, periodical parades and practice in handling arms and ammunition to the security personnel.

11.14.2 Closed circuit television

As part of security measure, a closed circuit TV with two cameras was installed in June 1980 in the 'Jade Room' of the Museum by the Electronic Corporation of India Limited (ECIL) at a cost of Rs. 0.85 lakh. An amount of Rs. 0.22 lakh was spent in March 1988 for replacement of two neon tubes of the TV. However, since inception the TV worked for only two years intermittently and did not work from July 1985 even after replacement of the tubes. The Museum stated (August 1992) that the ECIL authorities have reported that this model of TV system had become outdated and they did not have spare parts to repair the system. Hence, the Museum had again approached ECIL for installation of a new system and the same is awaited (August 1992). Thus, the expenditure of Rs. 1.07 lakhs remained largely unfruitful and Museum was without a closed Circuit TV which was an essential security arrangement.

11.14.3 Fire Alarm System

In order to prevent any fire in the galleries of the Museum and to have round the clock watch fire alarm system (SMOKE detector gadgets) was installed in March 1980 at a cost of Rs. 0.43 lakh through ECIL. However, the system functioned intermittently only for five months since inception and was not in working condition from January 1985 (August 1992). The Museum stated (August 1992) that ECIL, who installed the system, had expressed their inability to put back the system in working condition and hence the Museum had opted to go for the fire fighting equipment system. Thus, the entire expenditure of Rs. 0.43 lakh became unfruitful.

11.14.4 Fire fighting equipment

On the advice of the Central Building Research Institute (CBRI), Roorkee, the Board approved in December 1986 installation of fire fighting equipment in three phases at a cost of Rs. 19.05 lakhs. Under the first phase, the fire extinguisher equipment was installed in July 1987 at a

cost of Rs. 1.72 lakhs. The fire extinguisher equipment required frequent replacement of chemicals contained therein. But this was not done even once even though the equipment was installed over five years back. In the absence of refilling of chemicals the equipment might not serve its purpose. Under the second phase, the hydrant system was installed in December 1989 at a cost of Rs. 5.99 lakhs. A sump of one lakh litre capacity was constructed in December 1990 at a cost of Rs. 1.94 lakhs for providing proper water supply source through an automatic pump. However, this system was not tested even after a lapse of two and a half years. Under the third phase, the work of fire detection and public address system was entrusted to a Bombay firm in December 1989 at an estimated cost of Rs. 4.50 lakhs. The Museum stated (August 1992) that the contractor who had reported completion of work was to demonstrate the system in the presence of CBRI authorities. Thus, the Museum was without any fire fighting system for the last several years.

11.15 Library

11.15.1 There were 55,363 books in the Museum Library (43,660 donated from collections of Late Nawab Salar Jung, 6,235 purchased up to March 1992 and 5,468 received as gifts). There were also 8,465 manuscripts in Arabic, Persian and Urdu languages in the manuscript section (MSS). The Library and MSS were provided with 13 staff members and was allotted 10,348 sq.ft. out of 75,394 sq.ft. (13.73 per cent) area available in the Museum. Both the Library and the MSS were only reference libraries. While the library was opened to all, the MSS was open to scholars only. The number of general readers and the number of scholars who visited the library and the MSS during 1985-86 to 1991-92 was as follows:

Year	Library Section				Mss		
	Number of general readers	Number of Scholars	Average number of general readers per day	Average number of Scholars per day	Average number of scholars visited per day	Number of scholars visited	Average number of scholars visited per day
1985-86	570	1,589	2	6	8	267	1
1986-87	530	1,747	2	6	8	185	1
1987-88	340	1,761	2	6	8	200	1
1988-89	1,462	570	5	2	7	239	1
1989-90	1,579	780	6	3	9	154	1
1990-91	1,183	885	4	3	7	144	1
1991-92	1,227	1,013	4	4	8	208	1

Average number of readers/scholars are worked out taking 285 working days in a year.

On an average four general readers and three scholars visited the library and only less than a single scholar per day visited the MSS during the period 1985-86 to 1991-92. This indicated the low utilisation of the facility provided by the Museum at a cost of around Rs. 3.45 lakhs per annum on salaries. The Museum stated (August 1992) that the library being only a reference one attracts limited readers and exhibitions were held on special occasions to popularise the manuscripts.

Even though the collections of the library included 43,660 books relating to the period of the late Nawab Salar Jung, 2,119 books were not catalogued (August 1992).

11.15.2 Microfilm unit

A microfilm unit was purchased in 1983 at a cost of Rs. 2.17 lakhs with a view to take microfilms of all rare manuscripts identified by the MSS and to make them available for the benefit of research scholars conducting research work on various subjects. Out of a total of 8,465 manuscripts, 2,103 were identified by the Museum as rare manuscripts. The number of manuscripts and folios microfilmed during the period 1985-86 to 1991-92 were given below:

Year	Number of manuscripts	Number of folios microfilmed
1985-96	236	52,240
1986-87	68	15,586
1987-88	245	37,521
1988-89	166	25,629
1989-90	155	2,878
1990-91	120	16,928
1991-92	69	12,177
	1,059	1,62,959

There was a steep decline in the outturn of the unit in all the years (except in 1987-88) compared to the folios microfilmed in 1985-86. Folios microfilmed were only 2,878 in 1989-90. Non-servicing of the unit and non-availability of bulb were stated (June 1990) to be reasons for poor outturn of the unit in 1989-90. The Museum further stated (August 1992) that inspite of best efforts there were no repairers in Hyderabad who could repair the machine properly. Thus, even after acquiring the microfilm unit nine years back at a cost of Rs. 2.17 lakhs (besides salaries to the staff) only 1,059 out of 2,103 manuscripts could be microfilmed.

11.16 Publications

11.16.1 The Museum published 60 publications from inception to end of March 1992. The Board constituted a five member publications Sub-Committee. The prescribed number of two meetings were not held except in 1985-86. While the Committee did not hold any meeting in 1987-88 and 1991-92 one meeting each was held during the years 1986-87 and 1988-89 to 1990-91. The expenditure during the period 1985-86 to 1991-92 under printing and publicity was Rs. 11.22 lakhs.

No publication programmes were drawn up and no targets fixed.

11.16.2 Tenders were not invited for printing of publications to secure benefits of competitive rates as required under the financial rules but quotations from a few firms only were obtained. The Museum stated (August 1992) that the purpose of printing of publications was not only to supply information but also to make them attractive and on par with the leading Museums of the world. Hence tenders were invited only from selective Presses. In fact for the more prestigious publications the Board decided that they should be got printed from a particular private firm of Bombay. Even then tenders should have been called for spelling out the specifications and the printing entrusted to those firms only who had satisfied all the specifications.

11.16.3 Out of the 1,50,534 copies published, 95,674 books valuing Rs. 12.74 lakhs were lying unsold to end of March 1992. The number of copies of books published to the copies lying unutilised was 63.55 per cent. A few illustrations are detailed hereunder:

(Rupees in lakhs)						
Name of publication	Month & year published	Cost (Rs.)	Number of copies published	Number of copies sold	Balance available	Percentage of balance available
1) Arms and Armour (Edged arms)	November 1989	0.88	500	2	498	99
2) Decorative Art	November 1988	0.75	1,080	104	976	90
3) Portfolio No. I & II	1987	1.39	10,000	2,220	7,780	78
4) Gulshan-e-Mushwari	June 1986	1.06	1,081	274	807	74

The Museum stated (August 1992) that its publications were research publications and were purchased by universities and colleges and not by the general public. Various institutions and universities were given the information about the Museum publications so that they could purchase them as and when required. This indicates that the Museum had not undertaken realistic assessment of number of copies required before publishing the books.

11.16.4 According to Dr. Motichandra Committee Report, each Museum should have a properly trained publication officer for careful

planning and execution of publication work but there was no publication officer in the Museum. The Museum stated (August 1992) that the Government was requested to sanction a post of Publication Officer.

11.16.5 According to the Randhawa Committee Report, a review of all books published should be maintained in the library of the Museum and photographs of such reviews should be pasted in the book itself. The Museum stated (August 1992) that the reviews were done by outside scholars. But no such reviews were produced to audit.

11.17 Evaluation

One of the recommendations of the Randhawa Committee (1968-69) was that Government should normally have the working of the Museums reviewed every five years. No such review had been conducted (August 1992).

The review was referred to the Ministry in September 1990 and July 1992. The Ministry stated in August 1992 that a fact finding Committee was constituted and reply will be sent soon after the Committee's report.

APPENDIX II

Conclusions / Recommendations

Sl. No.	Para No.	Ministry / Deptt. Concerned	Conclusions / Recommendations
1	2	3	4
1.	94	Human Resource Development (Deptt. of Culture)	<p>The Salar Jung Museum at Hyderabad is a repository of the artistic achievements of diverse European, Asian and Far Eastern countries of the World. A major portion of these collections were acquired by late Shri Mir Yousuf Ali Khan, popularly known as 'Salar Jung III'. The administration of the Museum was with Salar Jung Estate Committee till 1958. Thereafter, by virtue of a compromise deed based on a High Court decree in December, 1958 the Museum came under the control of the then Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Government of India. Later, with the enactment of the Salar Jung Museum Act, 1961 by Parliament, the Museum and the Library was declared as an institution of National importance and the administration of the Museum was entrusted to the Salar Jung Museum Board with the Governor of Andhra Pradesh as its Chairman assisted by ten members. The main functions of the Board as envisaged in the Act are: efficient management of the Museum and to plan, promote, organise and implement programmes for its development, besides providing for instruction and research relating to museums and libraries, advancement of learning and dissemination of knowledge etc. The Audit paragraph based on a review of the working of the Museum covering the</p>

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			<p>from 1985-86 to 1991-92 and further examination of the subject by the Committee have revealed several irregularities in the functioning of the Museum which are dealt with in the succeeding paragraphs.</p>
2.	95	Human Resource Development (Deptt. of Culture)	<p>The Museum is financed by grants-in-aid from the Government both for development and upkeep. In addition, the Museum also receives revenue from other miscellaneous receipts. Based on the budget estimates prepared by the Museum, the Government of India release lump sum grants leaving it to the Museum to defray this amount under the various heads according to local priorities decided by the Salar Jung Museum Board. During examination, the Committee have come across several cases of financial irregularities of varied nature such as, non-utilisation of grants, irregularities in drawing cheques for payment, non-reconciliation of cash book with bank pass book, non-maintenance of asset register in the prescribed form etc. Some of such instances are briefly dealt with below :</p> <p>Under the financial rules, only so much of grant shall be paid during any financial year as is likely to be expended during that year. In the case of Salar Jung Museum, the Committee find that amounts of Rs. 2.31 lakhs, Rs. 1.26 lakhs, Rs. 6.31 lakhs and Rs. 10.01 lakhs were drawn by the authorities of the Museum on 31 March of 1987, 1988, 1989 and 1990 respectively to show grants as utilised during these financial years. In fact, the authorities of the Museum expended this amount varying from six months to over one and a half years later. Another case of financial irregularity observed by the Committee was that out of three cheques for Rs. 13.83 lakhs drawn for payment to contractors on 30 March, 1991, to cheques</p>

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for Rs. 8.67 lakhs were not handed over to the party till August, 1992 even after a lapse of 17 months as the works were not completed. It was found that the Museum authorities drew the cheques towards the end of the financial year to ensure and to show in the accounts that they have spent the amount, but the work itself was not completed. The cheques were eventually released on 3 December, 1992 only after the completion of the work.

It is further disquieting to note that no action was taken by the authorities concerned to reconcile the balance amounts as per the Museum records with that of the bank. Further, although the financial rules prescribe that institutions receiving grants from the Government of India should maintain the asset register and furnish a copy thereof to Government annually, no such register was maintained by the Museum. Yet another irregularity related to non-investment of surplus grants in violation of the Government instructions and also the specific decision of the Board resulting in loss of interest. Surprisingly, the accounts wing of the Museum was run without any regular officer.

It is evident from the facts stated above that there was a total absence of administration and financial management in the Museum over the years. The Committee consider it amazing that such gross acts of irregularities, violations, improprieties etc. went undetected for a prolonged length of time. This is clearly indicative of the lack of accountability which persisted in the Museum over considerable period. The Committee strongly deprecate the callous attitude of the Museum authorities. The Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of Culture) admitted these irregularities and attributed them to the mal-administration of the Museum, lack of knowledge of procedures, absence of officers etc.

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			<p>They stated that some of these irregularities have also been included among other points in the charge sheet issued to the then Director and that adequate remedial steps have since been taken. The Committee cannot remain satisfied with this and they desire that all the cases of financial irregularities/violations/improprieties etc. mentioned above should be thoroughly looked into and action taken against all the officers found responsible for the various acts of omissions and commissions. The Ministry should also ensure the efficacy of the remedial steps taken with a view to obviating recurrence of such cases in future.</p>
3.	96	<p>Human Resource Development (Deptt. of Culture)</p>	<p>The Committee note that based on a compromise deed filed with the High Court of Andhra Pradesh, 38,371 art objects listed in 85 High Court registers were taken over in 1961 by the Government from the Salar Jung Estate Committee. On the basis of the High Court registers, inventory registers were prepared in 1964 according to which the number of art objects was 46,081. This figure was stated to have been arrived at after deleting 1,971 items on grounds of double entries in the High Court registers and addition of 9,681 items which were not shown in the High Court Registers. After the Museum was shifted to new buildings in 1968, Master registers were prepared in 1976 in which 44,797 art objects were listed. The decrease in the number of art objects from the inventory registers to the master registers was reportedly due to double entries and cancellation of certain items. Thus, there were discrepancies/defects in the actual number of art objects taken over from the Salar Jung Estate Committee and as shown in the subsequent registers prepared by the Government. The Committee are surprised to note that the art objects received from the Estate were not fully and completely accounted for at any point of time, viz. (1) at the time of take over of the administration by the Board in</p>

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4.	97	Human Resource Development (Deptt. of Culture)	<p>1961 or (2) at the time of preparation of inventory registers in 1964 or (3) at the time of preparation of master registers in 1976.</p> <p>What has caused concern to the Committee is that despite the glaring discrepancies in the number of art objects, no serious efforts were made by the authorities to conduct a thorough physical verification. Pertinently, the Randhawa Committee which was appointed by Government of India in 1968 in the context of formulating a national policy on Museums and whose recommendations were stated to have been accepted by the Government in 1969 had prescribed that in case of Salar Jung Museum the physical verification of art objects should be conducted once in three years. The then Director of Salar Jung Museum also seems to have suggested on 25 September, 1967 the desirability of physical verification before the Museum was shifted to the new building. Distressingly, no such physical verification was done prior to 1975. Further though physical verification was taken up from 1980-81 simultaneous cross referencing to basic records was not done. The Ministry stated that even though the Salar Jung Museum Board Officials had been reporting to the Board periodically that physical verifications had been carried out at the rate of one third of the objects every year, making a 100 per cent in three years, in reality, the Museum authorities had not followed the prescribed procedure. This clearly indicates that neither was any proper procedure for physical verification attempted by the Museum authorities nor did the Ministry bother to enquire about the exact nature of such verifications. The Secretary (Department of Culture) conceded during evidence "It is certainly a failure because this verification should have been completed every three years."</p>

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5.	98	Human Resource Development (Deptt. of Culture)	<p>The Committee Find that after the discrepancies in the art objects and the shortcomings in physical verifications were pointed out by Audit, the Department of Culture appointed a Committee of Experts on 23 March, 1993 to physically verify all the objects in the original registers and other records so as to determine whether there were any missing objects and to fix the responsibility therefore and to suggest a system for future. The Report of the Expert Committee which was submitted on 29 September, 1994 established that a large number of articles were missing from the collection of the Muscum and that many articles had not been correctly accounted for. The findings of the Expert Committee based on collated records has revealed that 636 art objects have been lost from the Museum collections which consist of cancelled/missing objects (263), substituted objects (one) and art objects not produced before the Committee and declared untraceable (372). Although the Expert Committee submitted their Report in September, 1994 the matter was referred to Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in June, 1995 only (i.e. after this Committee selected the subject for oral examination) to investigate as to the persons who have connived in the loss/pilferage of articles and also take the help of other linked agencies to go into the roots of such thefts. The Committee are unhappy over the delay in the follow-up-action on the report of the Expert Committee. They desire that the CBI investigation and the action against the officers found guilty of having connived in the theft of articles should be got expedited. The Committee would like to be informed of the progress made in the matter within three months.</p>
6.	99	-do-	<p>The Committee have been informed that after receipt_ of the report of the Expert Committee, at the instance of the Ministry, the Director of the Salar Jung Muscum is stated to have called for the explanation of all the officers responsible for</p>

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their failure in conducting physical verification and that their replies were being placed before the Museum Board for further action against them. The Committee consider it relevant to point out that though the inadequacies in physical verification was brought to the notice of the Ministry as early as 1991, no concrete action has been initiated against the officials of the Museum who had not only failed in their duties but also misled the Board by submitting wrong certificates regarding physical verification. This is unfortunate to say the least. While taking a serious view of this dereliction of duty by the officials, the Committee recommend that the matter should be thoroughly inquired into and punishment meted out to the erring officials. The Committee may be apprised of the conclusive action taken in this regard.

7. 100

Human
Resource
Development
(Deptt. of
Culture)

The Committee are astonished to note that there was no system in the Museum providing for verification at periodical intervals by experts in the field to guard against disappearance of genuine objects and their replacement by duplicates. Unfortunately, it was also not considered necessary to include this issue among the terms of reference to the Expert Committee which undertook the physical verification. Thus, there is no certification as on date on the authenticity/genuineness of the art objects in the possession of the Museum. The Committee are deeply concerned to note that no system was built up in the Museum for the last 30 years to have a scrutiny of the genuineness of the objects which are considered to be one of the rare collections and ranked as one of the foremost of its kind in India and abroad. The Department of Culture assured that with the proposed introduction of the Computerised Archival Storage System, aspects of verification of genuineness of the objects could be adequately attended to. The Committee cannot remain convinced with this. They

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			recommend that at least now a system should be devised in the Museum for periodical verification by experts to guard against disappearance of genuine objects, and their substitution by fakes. The Committee would also like to be informed of the progress made in the introduction of Computerised Archival Storage System.
8.	101	Human Resource Development (Deptt. of Culture)	The Committee further note that as per the Report of the Expert Committee, various inventories have occasional remarks as 'written off', 'cancelled' against the relevant entries in the Register. The Expert Committee had expressed their doubts over the competence of the Board to write off the antiquities and therefore, recommended that the matter should be referred to the Ministry of Law. Surprisingly, the Ministry have not done it so far. The Ministry contended that they have appointed a Review Committee who will be asked to go into this question and suggest recommendations in this regard. According to the Ministry, after the Report of the Review Committee is received, the issue, if necessary, will be referred to the Ministry of Law for their final opinion. The Committee would like to be apprised of the further action taken in the matter.
9.	102	-do-	The Committee would also like to be informed of the terms of references of the Review Committee, their recommendations and the action taken thereon.
10.	103	-do-	Another area in the functioning of the Salar Jung Museum which caused concern to the Committee related to the acquisition of art objects. The Salar Jung Museum Board constituted an art purchase committee consisting of seven members for purchasing art objects. The art objects were proposed to be acquired by the Board to fill the gaps in the collections of the Museum. The Committee, however, find certain irregularities in the purchase of art

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			<p>objects. According to the Antiquities and Art Treasurers Act, 1972, 'Antiquities' include paintings, sculptures, objects of art, crafts, things of historical importance etc. which have been in existence for not less than 100 years. Curiously enough, 95 out of 657 art objects purchased during 1985-86 to 1991-92 related to the 20th Century. Surprisingly, this was justified by the Museum under the plea of "aesthetic value". Secondly, the Museum had neither maintained a list of reputed dealers in antiquities nor reputed suppliers of other Museums contracted for the purchases. Some of the local dealers of Hyderabad were favoured in purchasing 94 per cent of the objects during the period from 1985-86 to 1991-92. Obviously, no standard procedure was laid down for regulating the functioning of the art purchase committee and the reasonableness of the purchases made was left entirely to the discretion of the members of the art purchase committee. The Committee consider this as totally unsatisfactory and, therefore, desire that a review of the purchases made during 1985-86 to 1991-92 be made with a view to ascertaining the reasonableness of acquisitions made.</p>
11.	104	<p>Human Resource Development (Deptt. of Culture)</p>	<p>In this connection, the Committee find that with a view to avoiding competition among the three National Museums viz., Indian Museum, Calcutta, National Museum, New Delhi and Salar Jung Museum, Hyderabad, and to effect economy, the Government desired in February 1963 that there should be a combined art purchase committee for three museums and issued guidelines that purchases may be made through the Committee. Strangely enough, the Salar Jung Museum Board continued with the existing acquisition committee to buy objects. The Ministry pleaded that the Boards of the various museums being different and that their specific needs also being different, the combined art purchase committee could not function.</p>

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			<p>While no specified orders to supercede the guidelines were issued, the combined art purchase Committee became non-functional as none of the museums evinced any interest in this regard. The Committee cannot but express their dissatisfaction over the manner in which the idea of combined art purchase committee was relegated to the background by the Ministry.</p>
12.	105	<p>Human Resource Development (Deptt. of Culture)</p>	<p>The Committee have been informed that an Expert Committee appointed by the Department of Culture in January 1994 issued certain guide lines suggesting a workable method for combined purchase of art objects by different museums. According to these guidelines, the Directors of each museum will be a member of the art purchase committee of the other museums. The Ministry stated that these guidelines will be reviewed further after two years so that a systematic purchase of art objects is made in-built. The Committee desire that the Ministry should keep a strict vigil over the implementation of the guidelines, monitor the improvements effected and carry out the necessary review in order to streamline the process of acquisition of art objects and making the acquisition procedure more transparent.</p>
13.	106	-do-	<p>The Committee are unhappy to note that no sincere effort was made by the Museum authorities to preserve the photo-negatives of the objects in a systematic manner despite the recommendations made by the Randhawa Committee in this regard way back in 1969. It is incredible and yet true that the work of keeping the negatives in Salar Jung Museum was entrusted to an unskilled class IV employee resulting in total disarray. Significantly, this was in gross violation of the clear instructions from the Board stating that the negatives should be under the personal custody of the Director of the Museum and that usage should be made sparingly. This speaks volumes of the laxity and</p>

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			<p>indifferent attitude of the authorities concerned towards an institution declared by Parliament as of national importance. The Department of Culture pleaded that the system was attempted to be brought back to order and the work of systematic serial numbering of the photonegatives is expected to be completed by the end of August 1995. Considering the crucial importance of the photo negatives in ensuring genuineness of the art objects, the Committee desire that the work should be expeditiously completed. They would like to be informed of the progress made in the matter.</p>
14.	107	Human Resource Development (Deptt. of Culture)	<p>During examination the Committee found that the preservation of museum exhibits left a lot to be desired. The Committee find that out of 10,843 objects relating to the period prior to 1985-86, recorded in 57 registers, 4,654 i.e. 43 per cent of the objects were in a damaged condition. And, of the 657 art objects purchased for Rs. 16.99 lakhs during 1985-86 to 1991-92, 503 objects were also in a damaged condition. Unfortunately, the Ministry failed to provide any satisfactory explanation for the damage caused to these objects and action taken on this count. What was further intriguing was that though a chemical conservation laboratory was established in 1962-63 for attending to the work of preservation and conservation of cultural property, there were abnormal delays in completion of chemical treatment of objects in several cases, the delay leading even upto seven years. Significantly, the Expert Committee has identified 200 art objects which warranted conservation with a measure of urgency preservation including 347 manuscripts. The Committee regret to conclude that no serious attempt was made by the Board to identify the art objects requiring conservation and preservation treatment and no plan of action carrying out restoration work in a phased</p>

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manner was drawn up. The Committee cannot but express their deep concern over the damage caused to the art objects. The Ministry stated that the laboratory of the Museum was not properly equipped earlier and the Board has now initiated steps to strengthen it. The Committee desire that the process of conservation and preservation of art objects should be systematised and a review should be undertaken to find out the number of art objects requiring urgent attention and a plan of action drawn up to carry out the restoration work in a time-bound manner. They also desire that reasons for damaged objects should be looked into with a view to fixing responsibility. The Committee would like to be intimated about the precise progress made in this regard.

15. 108

Human
Resource
Development
(Deptt. of
Culture)

The Committee are astonished to note that 60 per cent of the items purchased by the Museum were not displayed at all for seven years. The main reason attributed by the Ministry in this regard was the paucity of space. They, however, assured that the Museum was in the process of constructing two new wings, with the completion of which more objects will be displayed. The Committee recommend that the Museum should devise a long term display policy with a view to ensuring efficient display of objects acquired by the Museum and enabling the public to have a view of these rare collections.

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Yet another shortcoming observed by the Committee related to the inordinate delay in opening up a gallery for tribal art. Even though the Government advised the Museum to open the gallery during the Seventh Five year Plan and a special provision of Rs. 6 lakhs was provided in the budget, the entire grant remained unutilised. The Ministry stated that one of the two new wings which are under the process of construction would be fully ready by 31 March, 1996. The gallery of tribal art will be opened in

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			<p>this new building within two months of completion of construction. The Committee consider the inordinate delay in this case as unfortunate and desire that sustained efforts should be made by the Ministry/Museum to expedite opening of the gallery for tribal art with a view to launching a long-term programme for promoting tribal culture.</p>
17.	110	<p>Human Resource Development (Deptt. of Culture)</p>	<p>The mobile exhibition is one of the important activities taken up by the Museum under the aegis of mass education programme. The basic objective of the mobile exhibition was to reach the people living in slum areas and outlying districts and under-privileged school children who cannot normally afford to come to the Museum. Though an exhibition van for the above purpose was purchased at a cost of Rs. 2.35 lakhs, it remained largely under-utilised defeating the very purpose of mobile exhibition. In the opinion of the Committee, since the Museum has an acknowledged role to play in the field of informal and continuing education, this area deserves much more serious attention of the Ministry. The Committee recommend that in addition to the programmes drawn up as a part of mobile exhibition to cover rural population, other activities like temporary exhibition, special exhibition, popular lectures, training courses, seminars and symposiums should also be taken up at regular intervals to promote mass education programme at a wider scale.</p>
18.	111	-do-	<p>The Committee's examination also found certain glaring irregularities in the civil works undertaken by the Museum. The Museum deposited Rs. 166.63 lakhs with the Central Public Works Department (CPWD) for executing various construction works. While there were several cases of delays in execution of these works, in some cases the works have also not been capitalised. The Ministry have held CPWD responsible for the various delays. It was stated that inspite of repeated reminders,</p>

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			<p>the concerned Superintending Engineers have not even submitted audited accounts for some of these works for the last one decade. The Chief Engineer, CPWD had been asked to remit their unutilised advance with penal interest. The Committee regret to note that except reminding the Department, the Museum authorities have not taken recourse to any other action against the Department for recovery of the unutilised advance even though ten years elapsed in between. This is clearly indicative of the casual and negligent attitude of the authorities concerned in regard to recovery of Museum funds. While expressing their strong displeasure over this state of affairs, the Committee desire that proper explanation be called from the officials of the Museum for their failure in initiating timely action for effecting recovery of unutilised funds from CPWD. The Committee also recommend that the matter regarding recovery of unutilised advance with penal interest should be vigorously pursued with the Department at the highest level and recourse to legal action may be taken, if necessary. The Committee would like to be apprised of the results in this regard.</p>
19.	112	Human Resource Development (Deptt. of Culture)	<p>During the course of their examination, the Committee also came across certain reported irregularities in the contract awarded to National Building Construction Corporation (NBCC) in 1986 for construction of two new independent wings of the Museum building. Surprisingly, before entering into contract, the authorities had not obtained any competitive offer. Several irregularities were found in the contract. Amazingly, even the amount contracted was not specified in the agreement document. Further, an amount of more than Rs. 2 crores was paid as mobilisation advance to the contractor with no stipulations in the contract for recovery or penal interest. The Ministry while admitting the</p>

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			<p>shortcomings/irregularities held the then Director responsible for not following the advice of the Board scrupulously and entering into preliminary agreement with NBCC. They stated that a fresh contract has been entered into with NBCC incorporating therein <i>inter alia</i> penal provisions for slowing down the work. It was also stated that the Museum had since recovered an amount of Rs. 34.4 lakhs of the sums advanced and collected penal interest amounting to Rs. 18.75 lakhs and the remaining dues were stated to be under the process of recovery. While expressing their severe unhappiness over the manner in which the whole matter was dealt with, the Committee desire that all steps should be taken to ensure that there was no financial loss to the Museum. The Committee would like to be apprised of the further developments.</p>
20.	113	<p>Human Resource Development (Deptt. of Culture)</p>	<p>The Committee also found certain inadequacies in the Museum Library and its utilisation and also the microfilming unit which was purchased in 1983 at a cost of Rs. 2.17 lakhs with a view to taking microfilms of all rare manuscripts available in the Museum. The physical verification by the Expert Committee has also established that in the manuscript library there were cases of loss of books, substitution of books, double entries and bifurcation of manuscripts. Recounting the corrective steps taken, the Ministry stated that the museum services have since been geared up, effective steps have been taken to recover books from the defaulting staff and the microfilming unit has been conditioned and put to use. The recommendations of the Expert Committee in this regard are stated to have been in the process of implementation. Since the Library and the Museum has been declared as an institution of national importance and it is one of the premier manuscript libraries of India, its maintenance and preservation needs serious attention from the Board/Ministry.</p>

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21.	114 Human Resource Development (Deptt. of Culture)	<p>The Committee note with concern that Museum publications worth Rs. 12.74 lakhs were lying unsold due to unrealistic assessment of the demand. In this connection Dr. Motichandra Committee which was appointed by Government of India in 1969 had in their Report which was stated to have been adopted by Government in 1970 recommended that the Museum should have a properly trained publication officer for careful planning and execution of publication work, but there was no publication officer in the Museum. Further, the Randhawa Committee recommended that a review of all books published should be maintained in the library of the Museum, but no such review seems to have been done by the Museum. Above all, the publications sub-committee constituted by the Board for this purpose also did not function properly. Evidently, this wing of the Museum was left unattended to and neither the recommendations of the Motichandra Committee nor those of Randhawa Committee were implemented. The Committee deprecate the casual and negligent attitude of the authorities in this regard. They recommend that besides implementation of the recommendations of these two committees, a realistic assessment of demand for books be undertaken and a definite publication programme drawn for efficient utilisation of the resources of the Museum.</p>	
22.	115 -do-	<p>During the course of examination the Committee's attention was drawn to the inadequate security system which prevailed in the Museum. The Committee have been informed that the existing system of security where internal and outside security were looked after by different officials resulted in shifting of responsibility and as a consequence, the entire security suffered. According to the Ministry, the new system now proposed to be envisaged will</p>	

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			<p>have only a single security agency both for internal and external security and also will provide complete electronic system. The Museum authorities are stated to have approached the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) for this purpose and a survey had reportedly been carried out by the technical team of the CISF. The Committee desire that besides the introduction of the measures enumerated above, the Museum should also keep track with the developments taking place in the security systems of other museums of the world with a view to upgrading and strengthening the security system for effective protection of the museum.</p>
23.	116	<p>Human Resource Development (Deptt. of Culture)</p>	<p>It is distressing to note that though the Randhawa Committee recommended a review of the working of the Museum every five years and the Government accepted the recommendation as far back as 1969, no such review was either conducted by the Museum or got enforced by the Department of Culture. Explaining the reasons for the same, the Ministry stated that though the recommendations of the Randhawa Committee report in this regard should have been brought to the knowledge of the Board or the Government for constituting the Review Committee, unfortunately this was not done. In regard to the implementation of other recommendations of the committee, it was stated that though this Report was placed before the Board for noting the action to be taken, their implementations were not brought before the Board or the Government by the then Director. The Committee were further informed that apart from the non-implementation of the recommendations of Randhawa Committee report, even the recommendations of the Sihare Committee report, which was a later report on Museum have been left unimplemented by the Museum. This is clearly indicative of the irresponsible and casual attitude of the</p>

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			<p>authorities concerned in implementing the Government policies. The Committee are of the firm view that had the Government implemented these recommendations, the irregularities/lapses committed could have been noticed earlier and timely steps could have been taken to correct the system of administration of the Museum.</p>
24.	117	Human Resource Development (Deptt. of Culture)	<p>As regards the present status of implementation of the recommendations of the Randhawa Committee, the Ministry stated that some of these recommendations have now been got implemented, and the Museum has now proposed constitution of a Review committee on which action is at hand. The recommendations of the Sihare Committee are expected to be fully implemented with effect from April 1996. The Committee would like to stress the need for faithful implementation of the recommendations of the various committees appointed from time to time by Government. The Ministry should ensure that in future the reviews are undertaken in the prescribed time so as to improve the functioning of the Museum. The Committee would like to know the progress made in this direction.</p>
25.	118	-do-	<p>The Committee observe that based on a number of allegations received from different corners against the administration of the Salar Jung Museum and against the then Director, Dr. M.L. Nigam, an independent Fact Finding Committee was constituted in 1991 to go into the allegations and render the report. The Fact Finding Committee took up 16 major allegations against the Director for examination. Briefly, the main allegations related to missing of antiquities, irregular awarding of contracts, failure to prevent encroachment into the museum premises, irregular shifting of residence and drawal of house rent allowance, non-maintenance of personal service book and destruction of records, impropriety in the</p>

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appointment of employees, non-utilisation of huge stock of teak wood and costly equipments, non-utilisation of 40 staff quarters, purchasing art objects of dubious authenticity, inept handling of important purchases, purchase of land for private house, non-reply to audit report, alleged misuse of staff car and telephone facilities, misuse of museum employees, misbehaviour with the staff, etc. The Report of the Fact Finding Committee submitted in November 1992 largely sustained the allegations against the former Director. Subsequent to the submission of the Report, the Salar Jung Museum Board appointed a sub-committee to go through the Report of the Fact Finding Committee and submit its recommendations on actionable points. The sub-committee report was considered by the Board on 22 December, 1992 wherein it was decided that the entire report be referred to the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) for their advice. The Central Vigilance Commission gave its report recommending chargesheet on 20 October, 1993. However, the actual chargesheet including 9 Articles from the 16 allegations was issued to Dr. M.L. Nigam on 2 July, 1994 only. Dr. Nigam filed a writ petition in the High Court of Andhra Pradesh and obtained a stay on 4 August, 1994. Since then the matter is pending. The Committee are deeply concerned to note that despite the grave nature of offences perpetuated against this prime institution, no single person has effectively been punished as yet. Undoubtedly, there had been inordinate delays in processing the charges, issuing the chargesheet and getting the stay vacated. The Committee cannot but express their strong displeasure over the same and recommend that immediate and urgent steps should be taken to get the stay order vacated and enlist the case for facilitating the future course of action. The precise progress made in this direction may be intimated to the Committee within a period of three months.

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26.	119	Human Resource Development (Deptt. of Culture)	<p>It is a matter of concern to the Committee that though the administration of the Museum was entrusted to the Salar Jung Museum Board by virtue of Salar Jung Museum Act, 1961 and the entire functioning of Salar Jung Museum is administered by this Central Act and Rules thereunder, the former Director of the Museum is stated to have completely carried on the administration in disregard of the laid down rules/procedures which reportedly resulted in gross mismanagement and earned a bad repute to this institution of national importance. In the light of the above, the Committee are of the firm view that the role of the Director in the overall administration of the museum needs a critical review and an in-built system of checks and balances needs to be evolved to ensure enforcement of accountability on the part of the Director to guard against any such misuse of authority in future.</p>
27.	120	-do-	<p>The Salar Jung Museum had been under the control of the Department of Culture for over 30 years. The facts stated in the foregoing paragraphs make it abundantly clear that the Museum was grossly mismanaged over the years resulting in financial irregularities, continued loss/pilferage of valuable articles and art objects and several other shortcomings. Significantly, even though the Salar Jung Museum Board is autonomous in nature, the representatives of the Ministry in the Board are required and expected to discharge their functions in terms of the provisions of the Salar Jung Museum Act, 1961. The Act also provides ample powers to the Government to issue directions to the Board in the functioning of the Museum. Thus, the Ministry had sufficient powers for administering control over the Museum. The Committee further understand that the Office of the C&AG have also been issuing Inspection reports to the Ministry on the functioning of the Museum. Unfortunately, as</p>

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would be evident from the facts narrated above, the Department of Culture had woefully failed in exercising effective control over the Museum over the years which is deplorable. During evidence, the Secretary, Department of Culture admitted, "The Department cannot divest itself of its responsibility." The Committee need hardly comment further on this self-admitted dereliction of duty on the part of the Ministry. The Committee hope that the Ministry would at least now take effective steps and keep a close vigil on the working of the Museum with a view to ensuring that the Museum is run in consonance with the functions envisaged in the Act and also obviating recurrence of such irregularities in future.

28. 121 Human Resource Development (Deptt. of Culture) To sum up, the facts stated in the foregoing paragraphs have revealed several irregularities/shortcomings in the functioning of the Salar Jung Museum. Briefly, these include, financial and administrative irregularities, lapses in the upkeep of accounts, discrepancies in the number of art objects actually in possession of the Museum, failure to account for the art objects, loss of art objects, failure to conduct physical verification as per the prescribed procedure, lapses/inadequacies in purchase, documentation, conservation and display of art objects maintenance of the library, irregularities in the execution of civil works and above all lack of effective control over the Museum. The Ministry of Human Resource Development have admitted these irregularities/inadequacies. The Committee are of the strong view that while there was an atmosphere non-accountability prevalent at large in the Salar Jung Museum, the Department of Culture were equally remiss in the discharge of the responsibility cast upon them by the Salar Jung Museum Act, 1961. The Committee consider it unfortunate that though the irregularities in the Museum were within the knowledge of the Ministry at least since 1991, no

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			<p>single person has effectively been punished for the same till now. The Committee cannot but strongly deplore this sorry state of affairs in the Museum which was declared as an institution of national importance by Parliament way back in 1961. It is, therefore, highly imperative that this unsatisfactory situation is remedied forthwith. The Committee therefore recommend that the facts contained in the Report should be thoroughly looked into and Government take appropriate corrective/remedial measures with a view to ensuring that the Salar Jung Museum plays the role assigned to it in the Salar Jung Museum Act 1961 effectively in the promotion of education and propagation of culture and that irregularities of the nature commented upon in this Report do not recur.</p>
29.	122	<p>Human Resource Development (Deptt. of Culture)</p>	<p>The Committee observe that the Government of India had appointed the Randhawa Committee and Dr. Motichandra Committee during August 1968 and November 1969 respectively for formulating a national policy on museums to improve their working and define their role in promoting the cause of education. Though the Reports of these committees were stated to have been adopted by the Government as far back as in 1969 and 1970 respectively, their recommendations were not implemented in letter and spirit. According to the Ministry, the Department of Culture, for the first time, is formulating a detailed written down policy on Culture. Based on the suggestions emanating from various seminars held all over the country during 1990, the paper was prepared and placed before the Committee of Secretaries and Ministers of various State Governments. Then an Approach Paper on the National Policy of Culture was prepared and was placed in both the Houses of Parliament. A Committee has been appointed by the Ministry for finalising the various stages of preparation of the Cultural policy. After the policy note is prepared the</p>

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30.	123	Human Resource Development (Deptt. of Culture)	<p>same will be placed before the Cabinet for its approval whereafter the policy will be placed before Parliament for programme of action in this regard and the policy on museums will form part of the overall National policy on Culture. The Committee desire that all necessary steps be taken by Ministry to expedite finalisation of policy on Culture and apprise the Committee about the progress made in this regard.</p> <p>During the course of examination, the Committee's attention was drawn to the fact that some of the museums/similar institutions of national importance under the Department of Culture were functioning without proper heads. The Committee consider this as an unhealthy situation and not conducive to the proper functioning of such institutions set up for promotion of education and propagation of culture. They are of the view that Government should take necessary steps to ensure that such appointments are made in time from among the eminent personalities in the relevant field.</p>