

CHAPTER I

REPORT

This Report of the Standing Committee on Information Technology deals with action taken by Government on the recommendations/ observations of the Committee contained in their Forty-eight Report (Fourteenth Lok Sabha) on 'Real Estate Management in Department of Posts' pertaining to the Department of Posts (DoP).

2. The Forty-eight Report was presented to Lok Sabha on 21 August, 2007 and was laid on the table of Rajya Sabha on 21 August, 2007. It contained 22 recommendations/observations.

3. Action Taken Notes in respect of all the recommendations/ observations contained in the Report have been received and categorised as under:

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

Para Nos.: 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 19 and 22

Total: 14

Chapter-II

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

Para No.: NIL

Total: Nil

Chapter-III

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

Para Nos.: 3, 4, 5, 6, 17 and 18

Total: 06

Chapter-IV

- (iv) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies are of interim nature:

Para Nos.: 20 and 21

Total: 02

Chapter-V

4. The Committee trust that utmost importance would be given to the implementation of the recommendations/observations accepted by the Government. In cases, where it is not possible for the Department to implement the recommendations in letter and spirit for any reason, the matter should be reported to the Committee with reasons for non-implementation. The Committee further desire that Action Taken Notes on the recommendations/observations contained in Chapter-I and final action taken replies to the recommendations contained in Chapter-V of this Report should be furnished to them at an early date.

5. The Committee will now deal with action taken by the Government on some of their recommendations.

I. Non-Utilization of Vacant Plots

Recommendation (Para No. 2 and 22)

6. In their Forty-Eighth Report the Committee had noted with concern that despite 1871 plots measuring about 38224902 sq. ft. lying vacant in various parts of the Country for years together, as many as 21175 Sub-Post Offices & Head Post Offices, out of a total of 25501 such Post Offices, were operating from the rented buildings compelling the Department to pay an annual rent of more than Rs. 45 crore. Compounding the problem, several plots had been lying vacant for more than 50 years, many of those being situated in prime locations having high commercial value. Further, a large number of Administrative Offices and Post Offices were functioning in rented building in several places where plots were lying vacant. Perturbed with this gross underutilization of vacant plots and the inability of the Department to carry on the building activities in a phased manner on the vacant plots, the Committee keeping in mind the handicap of scarcity of funds faced by the Department, had recommended that an imaginative use of land asset in a planned way over the years would have generated the much needed resources for the Department for development of vacant land in particular. Taking note of the inaction on the part of the Department which resulted in turning these valuable vacant plots into non-performing assets, the Committee had impressed upon the Department that a concrete and time-bound plan of action should be immediately drawn out for a prudent and effective use of vacant land owned by the Department.

7. The Committee in their earlier Report had also identified several deficient areas in the real estate management in DoP, which *inter alia* included the absence of a nodal authority for prudent real estate management, non-existence of boundary walls around vacant postal land resulting in their encroachment over a period of time, need for evolving an appropriate coordination mechanism with State Governments, shortage of skilled manpower in Postal Civil Wing, substandard and unattractive general ambience of the Post Offices, absence of system for data generation, lack of modern/computerized infrastructure in the Department and under exploitation of immense potential of growth of Postal Network, etc. restraining the Department from optimally and judiciously utilizing their precious real estates for a long time. Concerned with these sorry state of affairs and the uncertainty regarding the time likely to be taken for setting up of the proposed Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) to become operational for taking care of all the matters/problems relating to real estate management of the Department, the Committee had recommended that DoP should take all necessary remedial/corrective measures for not only improving the whole system of real estate management but also for rendering better quality of Universal Service Obligation by the Department.

8. The Department in their Action Taken Note have stated as under:—

“Adequate number of buildings could not be constructed in the past due to fund constraints. The Hon’ble Standing Committee is requested to extend their help in obtaining more funds from the Planning Commission for construction of more buildings on vacant plots.

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) directed the Department of Posts to work out a Plan for commercial exploitation of vacant plots of the Department in consultation with Ministry of Finance and Department of Urban Development. For achieving this objective, the DoP has mooted a proposal for setting up a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV). Draft Cabinet Note has been prepared and the proposal has been sent to the Cabinet for their approval.

The SPV would attend to the development and management of Postal estates and commercial exploitation of vacant plots located at prime locations in the Country. The SPV shall formulate plans and execute schemes for optimal utilization of postal land. It would develop postal land with public private partnership so as to generate non-tariff revenue for Department of Posts from Postal estates.”

The Department have further stated that the following remedial/ corrective measures have been taken:—

- “1. A number of periodical statements have been prescribed for monitoring various aspects of real estate management.
2. Heads of Circles have been directed to hold meetings with State Civil/Police authorities for removal of encroachments.
3. Decision has been taken to provide boundary wall to 100 plots in the current Plan to prevent their encroachment.
4. Measures have also been taken to strengthen the Postal Civil Wing. Proposal is being processed for availing services of BSNL architects to expedite preparation of drawings.
5. A Plan is in process for computerization of the information flow for accurate and up-to-date information.
6. A scheme for improvement of environment and ergonomics in offices has been included in the current Five Year Plan.
7. For rendering better quality of Universal Service Obligation by the Department, substantial outlays have been made for opening 2,000 Sub Post Offices, 3,000 Branch Post Offices and 10,000 Franchise Outlets and upgradation of technology/ computer systems.”

9. The Committee note that in accordance with their recommendation for immediate preparation of a time bound Action Plan to commercially exploit the vacant plots, the Department of Posts have mooted a proposal for setting up a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) which is under the consideration of the Cabinet. The Committee also note that the SPV, when operationalised, would attend to the development and management of postal estates and commercial exploitation of vacant plots located at prime locations, thereby enabling the Department to generate additional revenue. The Committee are also aware that like any other project of such magnitude, the SPV will also require a reasonable gestation period to be fully functional. However, in view of the fact that the management of real estates has for years together consistently remained a grossly neglected area in the Department causing countless missed opportunities of revenue earning, the Committee strongly feel that till such time the SPV moves from proposal stage to fully operational stage, the Department ought to resort to all short-term measures so that prudent utilisation of these valuable assets of the Department for generation of additional resources is not delayed

further. The Committee would like to be apprised of the action taken by the Department in this regard at the earliest.

10. The Committee further note that pursuant to their earlier recommendations, the Department of Posts are taking a number of remedial/corrective measures at various levels in order to plug the loopholes and effectively carry out the responsibility of managing their real estate prudently and providing better quality of services under Universal Service Obligation. The Committee hope that the positive momentum displayed by the Department would culminate in effective management of real estate and improved quality of USO services.

II. Encroachment of Vacant Land and Court cases

Recommendation (Para Nos. 3, 4 and 5)

11. Taking serious note of 187 vacant plots of high commercial value being under encroachment and illegal occupation for many years and the scant attention being paid by the Department towards that aspect, the Committee had recommended that the Department should take effective steps to protect their valuable estates. The Committee had also recommended that the Department should formulate a time-bound plan on priority basis for construction of boundary walls/fencing with a view to checking such encroachments besides evolving an appropriate co-ordination mechanism at State level by associating State police and civil authorities for meeting the menace effectively. The Committee had also noted that the Department had paid an amount of over Rs. 2.26 crore during the last 5 years as the cost of litigation for cases of encroachment of land and estates related matters. Dismayed at the absence of any mechanism at DoP level to monitor such cases, the Committee had desired that these cases should be looked into thoroughly at DoP level through a permanent standing mechanism and effective steps be taken to protect these valuable and dear assets of the Department.

12. The Department in their Action Taken Note have stated as follows:—

“This issue has been engaging the attention of the Department for a number of years and boundary walls have been constructed as and when funds are available. During the year 2005-06 and 2006-07, funds were provided for construction of boundary walls on 39 plots.

It has been decided to construct boundary walls around 100 vacant plots at prime locations with high commercial value during the 11th Five Year Plan. This will require about Rs. 10 crores and the Department would provide more plots with boundary walls in case more funds are made available under Plan. Circles have also been directed to closely monitor the encroachment cases.

Coordination meetings with local Police and civil authorities at least once in six months have been prescribed now. A report on six monthly basis from the Circles has now been prescribed to be sent to Headquarters of Department of Posts for review/monitoring of the progress of vacation of encroachments. The Secretary (P) has written demi-officially to the Chief Secretaries of States concerned urging them to get the encroachments freed where there is no court case pending and several Chief Secretaries have also initiated action on the basis of same."

The Department have further stated as under:—

"The encroachment took place due to non-provision of boundary walls, which could not be constructed due to shortage of funds.

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The Department is closely monitoring the court cases at the Headquarters level. For the purpose, all the Head of Circles have been advised to keep liaison with the Government Standing Counsels for early disposal of the cases."

13. The Committee note that in line with their recommendation, the Department have now prescribed coordination meetings with local police and civil authorities at least once in six months for removal of encroachments of vacant land owned by DoP. As informed, several Chief Secretaries have already initiated action, upon the request of the Secretary, DoP to get the encroached plots freed. The Committee also note that the Department are closely monitoring the Court cases at the Headquarters level. The Committee feel that these are steps in the right direction and should be persisted with for an optimum outcome. The Committee would like to be apprised of the periodic progress made in this regard.

14. The Committee, however, regret to point out that the action taken reply is completely silent about the precise progress made in the construction of boundary walls. Although funds had been provided for construction of boundary walls in 39 plots, the Committee have not been informed about the headway made thereon. Further, although the Department have projected a figure of 100 plots around which boundary walls will be constructed during the Eleventh Five Year Plan, no indication has been made about the target in this regard in the current fiscal (2007-08). All these clearly show that the departmental machinery for the purpose is yet to be fully energized, which is a matter of concern for the Committee. In the opinion of the Committee, it is high time the Department came out with a concrete and year-wise plan of action with a case specific approach to construct boundary walls/fencing in order to protect their valuable assets from encroachment/illegal occupation.

III. Disposal of unwanted plots

Recommendation (Para No. 6)

15. In the Forty-eighth Report, the Committee had observed that till now the Department have not been able to crystallize their policy in the matter of utilization/disposal of unwanted land as the Department gave inconsistent replies to the issue at different points of examination. Concerned with this highly indecisive state of the Department on this very crucial matter, the Committee had recommended that the Department should come up with a well thought of and clear-cut policy with regard to the utilization or otherwise of the plots presently lying vacant with the Department.

16. The Department in their Action Taken Note have stated as under:

“As stated during the oral evidence, exercise to identify the plots, which can be disposed of/returned to State Government has been started. However, the Department is constructing buildings on vacant plots in phased manner subject to availability of funds. Besides, formation of the Special Purpose Vehicle is underway for utilization of vacant plots in prime locations and the Cabinet Note for formation of the Special Purpose Vehicle has been sent to Cabinet Secretariat”.

17. The Department of Posts have 1871 plots lying vacant for a number of years now. Out of these vacant plots, 952 have been lying vacant for more than 25 years each. Furthermore, 187 out of

the 1871 plots are under encroachment for varying periods of time. There are several plots in the possession of DoP, which they do not require due to various reasons. In their earlier Report, the Committee had expressed their concern over the inability of DoP to crystallize their policy in the matter of utilization of/disposal of unwanted land. The Committee regret to point out that the latest reply of the Department once again indicates their indecisive and ambiguous attitude on such a vital issue. The Committee strongly feel that the Department have already wasted a lot of time in deciding about the vacant plots which they do not require and the settlement of this matter does not brook further delay. They, therefore, desire that the Department come up with a clear-cut policy in regard to such plots without any further delay.

IV. Need for Appointment of a Nodal Authority

Recommendation (Para No. 17)

18. The Committee in their earlier Report had observed that one of the main reasons for the sorry state of affairs in the real estate management in DoP was the absence of a nodal authority for the management and oversight of their estates. Considering that in this process of inaction the Department had already lost several opportunities of resource generation and consolidation, the Committee had recommended that the Department should take immediate action in the direction of making functional a nodal authority for management of all their assets that should be given a clear-cut mandate about its specific responsibilities and duties.

19. The Department in their Action Taken Note have stated as under:—

“The recommendation of the Committee is being examined. However, it is felt that setting up of the Special Purpose Vehicle for which the Cabinet Note has been put up to Cabinet Secretariat for approval will greatly help in the matter.”

20. The Committee are disappointed to note the attempt of the Department to downplay the need and role of a nodal authority to oversee the management of their real estates. The Committee disapprove of this attitude of avoiding timely decisions of the Department more so, when the level of real estate management in the Department of Posts over the years has been far from satisfactory, rather virtually non-existent. At the cost of sounding repetitive, the Committee would like to stress upon the fact that the SPV will take

some time to get fully operational. The nodal authority recommended by the Committee is intended to not only cover this interregnum but also act as the core in the Department to monitor and coordinate with the SPV, which as per the indications given by the Department would be a company and not a part of the Department. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Department should put in place a regular nodal authority in place without any further delay.

V. Need for Increase in Budgetary Support

Recommendation (Para No. 18)

21. In their earlier Report the Committee had observed that one of the major factors which had hampered the efforts of DoP for augmentation of departmental buildings was the non-availability of adequate budgetary support as indicated below:

(Rs. in crore)		
Plan	Amount Sought	Amount Allocated
8th Plan	425.00	121.35
9th Plan	525.25	119.62
10th Plan	745.00	98.54

Considering the need for a prudent management of the assets particularly for discharging the Universal Services Obligation, the Committee had hoped that the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Finance would adopt a more realistic approach towards the whole issue.

22. The Department in their Action Taken Note have stated as under:—

“An outlay of Rs. 346.50 crore had been projected for Plan activity ‘Estates Management’ for the 11th Five Year Plan. But due to overall reduction of total outlay of DoP from Rs. 12353.84 crore to Rs. 4000.00 crore by the Planning Commission, a revised outlay of Rs. 126.81 crore has been tentatively projected by the Department for the Plan activity ‘Estates Management’.

The observations of the Hon’ble Standing Committee will be conveyed and stressed upon the Planning Commission and Finance Ministry.”

23. The Committee are extremely concerned to note that DoP have to project a revised outlay of Rs. 126.81 crore against the originally projected Outlay of Rs. 346.50 crore towards the Plan activity 'Estates Management' during the Eleventh Plan period. Such a retrograde step has been necessitated due to overall reduction of the total Outlay of DoP from Rs. 12353.84 crore to Rs. 4000.00 crore by the Planning Commission. The activities under the head 'Estates Management' have been very adversely affected in the past as well due to allocation of grossly insufficient funds as can be seen from the amounts sought and amounts finally allocated during each of the last three Annual Plans. It may be recalled that non-availability of adequate budgetary support to DoP has continued to remain one of the major hindrances in the way of the Department's efforts towards augmentation of departmental buildings and prudent management of real estates. Needless to mention, the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Finance should consider the issue in its entirety in a realistic manner in order to enable DoP to utilize their precious assets for better productivity. The Department, on their part, should forcefully present their case, of course with a concrete and effective roadmap.

CHAPTER II

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

Introductory

Recommendation (Para No. 1)

The Indian Postal System is expected to fulfill the Universal Service Obligation in terms of providing basic postal services throughout the Country, irrespective of terrain, at an affordable price. For meeting this requirement, the Department of Posts (DoP) have set up a network of 1,55,333 Post Offices as on 31st March, 2006. The Post Offices comprises of Head Post Offices, Sub Post Offices and Extra Departmental Post Offices. The operational arm of DoP dealing with administrative aspects is divided into Postal Circles, Regional Offices, Postal Divisions, Railway Mail Service Divisions, Postal Stores Depots, Central Stamp Depots, Postal Training Centres and Postal Staff College. Accommodation for running an Extra Departmental Post Office is provided by the Extra Departmental Postmaster known as Gramin Dak Sevak. Accommodation for other categories of Post Offices and the Administrative Offices is provided by DoP. The Department have their own as well as rented buildings housing their various offices. Besides, they have staff quarters. The Department also have vacant plots of land all over the Country on which construction of departmental buildings is undertaken with the assistance from Plan funds. These plots were acquired/purchased/gifted for construction of postal buildings over a period of time. Thus, land and buildings constitute an important asset for DoP, which requires prudent management. The Committee's examination has, however, revealed several disquieting aspects in the real estate management in DoP which are dealt with in the succeeding paragraphs.

Action Taken by the Government

The observations of the Standing Committee have been noted for compliance.

Non-Utilisation of Vacant Plots

Recommendation (Para No. 2)

The Committee note that out of a total of 25,501 Sub-Post Offices and Head Post Offices in the Country, as many as 21175 are operated

from rented buildings. The Department stated that they pay an annual rent of over Rs. 45 crore on this account. As against this, 1871 plots, measuring about 38224902 sq. ft. are lying vacant in various parts of the Country. Several plots have been lying vacant for more than 50 years. Significantly, 403 plots are lying vacant in prime locations having high commercial value. Further, a large number of Post Offices and Administrative Offices are functioning in rented buildings in several places across the Country where plots are lying vacant. All these facts clearly show the level of unsatisfactory management of real estate, which persisted in the Department of Posts over the years. The Committee cannot but express their concern over the matter. The Department of Posts have sought to explain that construction of building activities on vacant plots is taken up in a phased manner and is subject to availability of funds. According to them, during the preceding Five-Year Plans, the allotment of funds for real estate management has not been adequate so as to take up a large number of building projects on the vacant plots available with the Department. Indeed, scarcity of funds is a contributory factor. But, an imaginative use of the land asset in a planned manner over the years would have generated resources required for various programmes aimed at improving the overall status of the Department in general and development of vacant land in particular. Unfortunately, such an approach was conspicuously absent in the Departmental strategy. Consequently, these properties of DoP have been rendered into non-performing assets. The Committee recommend that atleast now, a concrete and a time-bound plan of action should be drawn for a prudent and effective use of vacant land owned by DoP. The Committee particularly desire that an immediate Action Plan should be drawn for using the vacant plots in prime locations with high commercial value.

Action Taken by the Government

Adequate number of buildings could not be constructed in the past due to fund constraints. The Hon'ble Standing Committee is requested to extend their help in obtaining more funds from the Planning Commission for construction of more buildings on vacant plots.

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) directed the Department of Posts to work out a plan for commercial exploitation of vacant plots of the Department in consultation with Ministry of Finance and Department of Urban Development. For achieving this objective, DoP has mooted a proposal for setting up a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV). Draft Cabinet Note has been prepared and the proposal has been sent to the Cabinet for their approval.

The SPV would attend to the development and management of Postal estates and commercial exploitation of vacant plots located at prime locations in the Country. The SPV shall formulate plans and execute schemes for optimal utilization of postal land. It would develop postal land with public private partnership so as to generate non-tariff revenue for Department of Posts from Postal Estates.

Renovation/Reconstruction of Dilapidated Buildings

Recommendation (No. 7)

From the information made available the Committee note that as many as 217 Postal buildings including staff quarters in the Country are either in a dilapidated or unusable condition. Curiously enough, out of this, 100 buildings were in Gujarat alone. In the opinion of the Committee, this does not augur well for a public utility whose services depend on the reach and spread of its offices. It is all the more so in the case of the Department of Posts who are already constrained in their activities due to the acute paucity of departmental buildings. The Committee were informed that the Department have made a projection of Rs. 55 crore for reconstruction of their 55 departmental buildings during the Eleventh Five Year Plan. The Committee expect the Government to make adequate provisions in this regard so that this much needed activity of the Department does not suffer due to resource crunch.

Action Taken by the Government

Eleven departmental buildings have been approved for reconstruction during the first year (2007-08) of 11th Five Year Plan subject to the approval of the competent authority. The preparatory action for preparation of preliminary drawings has been completed for a number of projects which will greatly expedite the building activity. For the remaining period of 11th Five Year Plan, more such buildings will be identified/earmarked for renovation/reconstruction.

Preservation of Heritage Buildings

Recommendation (Para No. 8)

The Committee, note that the Department of Posts are operating 37 of their offices from "Heritage Buildings". These buildings, which were constructed before 1939 and survive in anything like their original condition and have significance in Indian history, architecture and archaeology have been identified as "Heritage Buildings" according to the guidelines given by the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH). The Committee desire that the Department should

continue their good work in preserving these invaluable assets of the nation. The Committee, however, regret to note that presently there is hardly any interaction between DoP and the Ministry of Culture, etc. in regard to these heritage buildings particularly for showcasing them as heritage sites. The Department's reply that 'no further interaction is required in our case' is indicative of their mindset on the subject, which urgently requires a transformation. The Committee, therefore, desire that DoP should explore the tourism potential of these heritage buildings in consultation with the Ministry of Culture, INTACH, etc., so that the Department of Posts reap the benefits therefrom.

Action Taken by the Government

In order to protect the Heritage Buildings of DoP which are invaluable assets of the nation, a portion of the Plan funds are earmarked and allotted every year for their maintenance. In the Eleventh Five Year Plan also, an outlay of Rs. 5.00 crore has been kept under the sub head "Preservation of Heritage Buildings".

As regards exploring of the tourism potential of the heritage buildings is concerned, the concerned Circle Heads have been requested to explore the tourism potential of the heritage buildings in their Circles in consultation with local authorities of Ministry of Culture and INTACH, etc. under intimation to this office so that a policy can be formed in this regard.

Vacant Space in Departmental Buildings

Recommendation (Para No. 9)

Apart from vacant land in sizeable area lying idle in possession of the Department for decades and its concomitant problems, another deficiency observed by the Committee in DoP's real estate management concerns non-utilization of available space in the existing departmental buildings. The Committee's examination revealed that in 99 existing departmental buildings across the country substantial vacant space has been lying idle. In certain cases, they have been lying idle for several decades. It is strange and yet true that as per the information initially made available to the Committee, vacant space has been lying idle in Hamirpur, Uttar Pradesh since 1854! When confronted with this startling disclosure, DoP, later, tried to wriggle out of the issue by stating that the picture got distorted due to misconstruing the term "vacant space" as "vacant land" by U.P. Circle. In the Committee's opinion neither way, the Department's position get glorified. On the contrary, this further reinforces the Committee's apprehension about the criminal negligence of DoP in their asset management, which is deplorable, to

say the least. The Department have now informed the Committee that they have plans to utilize the surplus space for various business and operational requirements, and Heads of Circles have been given authority to even rent out the surplus space. As location-wise, the post offices are generally situated on prime properties, the Committee desire that the Department should take initiatives well above Heads of Circle levels so that the vacant space in departmental buildings is judiciously and optimally put to use without any further delay. The Committee would like to be apprised of the steps taken and achievements of the Department in this regard at the earliest.

Action Taken by the Government

Instructions and guidelines for renting out of vacant built up space available in departmental buildings already stand issued at the level of Headquarters of Department of Posts as per which authority has been given to Heads of the Circles to rent out the surplus space available in the departmental buildings. To monitor the achievements, a half-yearly statement has been prescribed to be sent by the Heads of Circles to the Headquarters of Department of Posts.

Improvement in General Ambience

Recommendation (Para No. 10 & 11)

It is common knowledge that aesthetics of the buildings and the general ambience play an important role in the marketing of products. The Committee are happy to note that in recognition of this, DoP have engaged the School of Planning and Architecture, Delhi for creation of new look "Brand Image" Post Offices. In the Committee's opinion, the process of consultation in this exercise should be wider. The Committee suggest that DoP should also consult other reputed National Institutions in the field so that attractive aesthetic concepts with mass appeal are successfully developed in the process. While going for this image makeover, the Committee would like the Department to ensure that the historicity and glorious legacy of the Postal Department is appropriately reflected and maintained.

In this context, the Committee have further been informed that instructions have been issued to all Heads of Circles from time-to-time to provide ramps and low height counters, etc. for physically challenged persons, though no specific time frame has been prescribed for the purpose. The Committee are anxious that while the new buildings, no doubt, should be designed as per the requirements prescribed under the Disability Law, even in the existing ones, the requirements/ instructions should be implemented, subject to feasibility, in a time

bound manner so that the physically challenged do not face any problems in utilizing the services of the Post Offices.

Action Taken by the Government

The recommendations of the Standing Committee that while going for the image makeover the Department is to ensure that the historicity and glorious legacy of the Department is appropriately reflected and maintained, will be kept in view. Consultation with other reputed National Institutions in the field such as TERI, INTACH, J.J. School of Architecture etc. will be sought when required.

All the Heads of Circles have been instructed to provide ramps in the existing Post Offices, wherever feasible, on priority basis and in a time bound manner so that physically challenged persons are not inconvenienced.

Strengthening of Postal Civil Wing

Recommendation (Para No. 12)

The Committee's examination further revealed inordinate delays in execution of projects by the Department of Posts. These delays were primarily caused due to the unduly long time taken in completion of civil works procedures. The Department, in turn, attributed this to the acute shortage of engineers and architects in the Department. According to them, this has happened because after the constitution of BSNL and MTNL, a majority of engineers and architects of what was hitherto Post and Telegraph Civil Wing opted for these Public Sector Undertakings. The Government side continued to face a lot of attrition because of the remunerative packages of the PSUs. The Committee note that as a stop-gap arrangement, the Department have reached an agreement with BSNL for technical assistance in civil works. Besides, the Department have also initiated actions to fill up the vacancies of the engineers and architects. The Committee desire that the action to fill up the existing vacancies should be expedited so that Postal Civil Wing becomes functional in right earnest and is able to contribute towards creation of new infrastructure and maintenance of the existing one at the earliest.

Action Taken by the Government

Action regarding filling up of existing vacancies in Postal Civil Wing has already been initiated. The Department of Telecommunications, which is the cadre controlling authority for

Gazetted Officers of Civil Wing, has been intimated regarding vacancy position in the Department of Posts and requested for filling up of the vacant posts in the Department. As regards Junior Engineers, the departmental examinations for their selection have been conducted and result is awaited. Staff Selection Commission has also been requested to provide candidates through competitive examination for recruitment of Junior Engineers. The Department is in correspondence with BSNL for providing services of their architects for the Department of Posts.

Commercial Evaluation of Vacant Land

Recommendation (Para No. 13)

The Committee are dismayed to note that sufficient importance is not being attached to commercial evaluation of Postal land on the plea that it would be required for future developmental work of the Department of Posts. The Committee, however, did point out during evidence the enormous worth of the Postal land lying vacant across the Country, but the Department of Posts appeared to be blissfully unaware of its market value. Though the Department of Posts have categorized their vacant plots as plots in prime locations and plots under illegal encroachment, the status of rest of the plots has not been specified. The Committee are of the opinion that maintaining a category-wise record of Postal land—both under use and vacant, will be useful for its future development. They feel that in the absence of such categorization and commercial evaluation of land, construction plans as well as asset valuation for various purposes would become unrealistic. The Committee, therefore, desire the Department of Posts not only to activate its machinery to categorize and evaluate vacant land and maintain records thereof but also to review and update at fixed periodical intervals. The Committee would like to be apprised of the further action taken in the matter.

Action Taken by the Government

The Department has compiled category-wise record of all the vacant plots, covering plots in category of prime locations, and in category of plots with no commercial viability.

As per the recommendation of the Standing Committee, the exercise of evaluation of Postal land (both in use and vacant plots) has been started and the Circles have been instructed accordingly to determine the market value of the departmental plots.

Performance during Xth Plan

Recommendation (Para No. 14)

The Committee regret to note that the Department's performance in the matter of achieving the physical targets laid down for construction of departmental buildings in the Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-07) has not been encouraging at all. As against the stipulated targets of 140, 33 and 56 projects for construction of Post Offices/Mail Offices, Administrative Offices and Staff Quarters, the achievement had been 106, 21 and 41 projects only respectively. Thus, there have been shortfalls everywhere. DoP attributed the shortfalls to the general administrative reasons. The Committee cannot remain satisfied with this. They, therefore, desire that the reasons for the shortfalls should be carefully analyzed so that necessary corrections could be carried out in the Eleventh Five Year Plan.

Action Taken by the Government

The non-availability of preliminary drawings is found to delay start of any project. Now, this is being remedied and in order to achieve the physical targets set out for the 11th Five Year Plan, action has already been initiated and preliminary drawings have been got prepared in respect of a number of building projects proposed to be taken up during the 11th Five Year Plan. The delay in clearance of the drawings from the local authorities will be taken care of by quick submission of the drawings and better follow-up/liaison with local authorities.

BSNL has been approached to provide architectural services in view of their past experience. There is need to quickly process the Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC) for expediting Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approval for the 11th Five Year Plan. The EFC Memo has been prepared and is under process. Its early clearance from CCEA will be watched.

With these steps, it is hoped that there will be no short fall in achieving the physical targets. The new projects will be commenced as soon as approval of CCEA is received.

Approach to XIth Plan

Recommendation (Para No. 15)

As regards approach to the 11th Plan is concerned, the Committee have been informed that the proposals include construction of buildings for remaining Regional Offices, Head Post Offices-cum-Divisional

Offices, Mukhya Dak Ghar and Sub Post Offices with staff strength of more than 15 starting from higher selection grade downwards, commercial exploitation of 500 plots of land on which construction will not be required to be done for departmental purposes for next twenty years, reconstruction of 55 dilapidated/unused departmental buildings, 120 new staff quarters, etc. The Committee fervently hope that considerations like Universal Service Obligation of the Department, need for provision of better quality of service and products in the emerging competitive market environment, proper amenities and working conditions of the staff, etc. will get due attention in the approach.

Action Taken by the Government

In view of the funds constraints, it is necessary to concentrate on bigger buildings. However, the Department is keenly aware of its Universal Service Obligations and will ensure that the same will be complied with by the Department.

In this direction, the Department has proposed opening of 2000 Sub-Offices and 3000 branch Post Offices in the current Five Year Plan. Besides the Department is also proposing to open 10,000 franchise outlets. No buildings are required to be provided for the Branch Offices and franchise offices as well as for majority of the Sub-Post Offices which would be housed in rented buildings and hence element of buildings would not figure as a constraint in fulfilling of U.S.O. by the Department through opening of above outlets, etc.

Need for provision of better quality of service and products in the emerging competitive market environment, proper amenities and working conditions of the staff during the 11th Five Year Plan are being given proper attention. Substantial amounts have been earmarked for the 11th Plan for computerization of Post Offices, improvement of environment, ergonomics, new business projects to meet the needs of competitive market environment.

Infrastructure and Growth of Postal Network

Recommendation (Para No. 16)

The Committee particularly while examining the successive Demands for Grants have time and again, commented upon various aspects in relation to the growth of Postal Network. They, therefore, do not wish to repeat those points here. However, they wish to emphasize that growth is closely linked to the infrastructural provisions. Land and buildings are indeed vital contributory factors. During the course of the examination of the subject the Committee were informed

that no survey about the requirement of Post Offices in the Country had been done by the Department till date. The Committee are really surprised as to why the Department never realized the need for such a survey. It could have given them a fair idea of the communication requirements across the length and breadth of the Country. The Committee, therefore, desire that a survey may be conducted by DoP and they be apprised of the results at the earliest.

Action Taken by the Government

A survey for assessing the need for Post Offices (Branch/Gramin Post Offices and Sub Post Offices) throughout the Country has already been started. Information on need of Post Offices has been received from some of the Postal Circles. A final picture will emerge when reports from all the Circles become available.

Absence of System for Data Generation

Recommendation (Para No. 19)

The Committee are dissatisfied to note that during examination of the subject different sets of data were furnished to them on the same aspects. This included the number of vacant plots, the annual rent for hiring buildings, the number of Post Offices functioning through departmental and rental buildings, the period(s) since space was lying vacant in various Circles in the Country, and even the number of Head Post Offices and Sub Post Offices in the Country. This clearly shows that there is hardly any authentic system either at the National level or at subsequent levels, which generate, maintain and update such data. The Committee consider this as a highly unsatisfactory position and desire that this should be rectified forthwith.

Action Taken by the Government

The information changes from time to time and it is being compiled manually, which may sometimes leads to discrepancies due to wrong information, etc.

The Department has initiated steps to set up a Centralized Data System by developing a new software which is likely to be installed at various administrative levels in the Department throughout the Country to ensure availability of accurate and reliable data from the field units to the Centralized Data Centre at the Headquarters of the Department of Posts.

Need for Streamlining Real Estate Management in DoP

Recommendation (Para No. 22)

To sum up, the foregoing paragraphs have identified several deficient areas in the real estate management in DoP that warrant immediate Governmental attention. The Committee regret to conclude that DoP had not been careful about their precious assets and had not made optimum utilization of the same over a period of time. While conceding the same in evidence, the representatives of DoP have assured the Committee that with the implementation of the proposed Special Purpose Vehicle, the system will get streamlined. At this stage, the Committee are not inclined to share this optimism. Since the setting up of the proposed Land Development Authority/Special Purpose Vehicle may take some time, the Committee desire that in the light of the recommendations/observations of the Committee in the preceding paragraphs, DoP should take necessary remedial/corrective measures for not only improving the system but also for rendering better quality of Universal Service Obligation by the Department. The Committee would like to be apprised of the precise action taken in the matter.

Action Taken by the Government

The following remedial/corrective measures have been taken:

1. A number of periodical statements have been prescribed for monitoring various aspects of real estate management.
2. Heads of Circles have been directed to hold meetings with State Civil/Police authorities for removal of encroachments.
3. Decision has been taken to provide boundary wall to 100 plots in the current Plan to prevent their encroachment.
4. Measures have also been taken to strengthen the Postal Civil Wing. Proposal is being processed for availing services of BSNL architects to expedite preparation of drawings.
5. A Plan is in process for computerization of the information flow for accurate and up-to-date information.
6. A scheme for improvement of environment and ergonomics in offices has been included in the current Five Year Plan.
7. For rendering better quality of Universal Service Obligation by the Department, substantial outlays have been made for opening 2,000 Sub Post Offices, 3,000 Branch Post Offices and 10,000 Franchise outlets and upgradation of technology/ computer systems.

CHAPTER III

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS, WHICH THE
COMMITTEE DO NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW
OF THE REPLY OF THE GOVERNMENT

—Nil—

CHAPTER IV

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

Encroachment of Vacant Land

Recommendation (Para No. 3)

One of the possible fallouts of occupation/retention of vacant land for inordinate period(s) is the threat of encroachment by unscrupulous elements. Not surprisingly, the priceless asset of the Department of Posts was also not an exception. The Committee note with concern that out of 1871 vacant plots, 187 plots have been encroached upon. Pertinently, out of these, 118 plots are under illegal occupation for more than ten years. Evidently, this indicates the scant attention hitherto being paid by DoP authorities to the task of protecting their assets.

4. What has surprised the Committee is the casual attitude shown by DoP in the matter in utter disregard of the gravity of the issue. The Department in their initial response merely stated that the concerned Circles have been instructed from time to time to review all encroachment cases personally and to take effective steps to free the land from encroachment. Further, Secretary, DoP during evidence held on 26th June, 2007 attempted to minimize the seriousness of the matter by stating that “out of 1800 plots, only 187 are encroached, which is, of course, not a very high percentage of the total number of plots.” However, after the Committee were seized of the matter, Secretary (Posts) has on 28th June, 2007 written demi-officially to the Chief Secretaries of the States concerned for help in the removal of encroachments. DoP have also assured the Committee that all legal means are being explored to protect the vacant plots. While the Committee are dismayed over the continuous inaction of the Department, they hope that DoP will now wake up from slumber and take effective steps to protect their valuable estates. The Committee also desire that the Department should formulate a time-bound plan for construction of boundary walls/fencing with a view to checking such encroachments. There is also an imperative need for evolving an appropriate co-ordination mechanism at State level by associating State police and civil authorities for meeting the menace effectively.

Action Taken by the Government

This issue has been engaging the attention of the Department for a number of years and boundary walls have been constructed as and when funds are available. During the year 2005-06 and 2006-07, funds were provided for construction of boundary walls on 39 plots.

It has been decided to construct boundary walls around 100 vacant plots at prime locations with high commercial value during the 11th Five Year Plan. This will require about Rs. 10 crores and the Department would provide more plots with boundary walls in case more funds are made available under Plan. Circles have also been directed to closely monitor the encroachment cases.

Coordination meetings with local Police and civil authorities at least once in six months have been prescribed now. A report on six monthly basis from the Circles has now been prescribed to be sent to Headquarters of Department of Posts for review/monitoring of the progress of vacation of encroachments. Secretary (P) has written demi-officially to the Chief Secretaries of States concerned urging them to get the encroachments freed where there is no court case pending and several Chief Secretaries have also initiated action on the basis of same.

Comments of the Committee

(Kindly *see* Paragraph No. 14 of Chapter-I)

Disputes/Court Cases

Recommendation (Para No. 5)

The Committee's examination further revealed that increase in the incidence of cases of encroachment has, in turn, resulted in outgo of substantial amounts from the exchequer on account of litigation. The Committee note that an amount of over Rs. 2.26 crore was spent by DoP during the last five years against encroachment of land and other matters. From the details furnished to the Committee, it is seen that out of the 360-disputes/court cases, five States, *viz.*, Tamil Nadu (55), Rajasthan (50), Gujarat (44), Maharashtra (41) and Kerala (34) accounted for the maximum. The Committee are also surprised to note that there is no mechanism at DoP level to monitor such cases. This situation calls for an immediate remedy. The Committee, therefore, desire that these cases should be looked into thoroughly at DoP level through a permanent standing mechanism and effective steps be taken to protect

the valuable and dear assets of the Department. The Committee would like to be apprised of the precise action taken in the matter.

Action Taken by the Government

The encroachments took place due to non-provision of boundary walls, which could not be constructed due to shortage of funds.

The Department proposes to construct boundary walls around 100 vacant plots during the 11th Plan to protect the valuable asset for which funds to the tune of Rs. 10 crores would be required. Boundary walls can be provided to more plots if more funds become available.

The Department is closely monitoring the court cases at the Headquarters level. For the purpose, all the Heads of Circles have been advised to keep liaison with the Government Standing Counsels for early disposal of the cases. For close monitoring of the cases, a report on six monthly basis has now been prescribed to be sent to Headquarters of the Department of Posts.

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Paragraph No. 13 of Chapter-I)

Disposal of Unwanted Plots

Recommendation (Para No. 6)

The Committee note that one area where DoP have not been able to crystalize their policy is related to the approach towards utilization/disposal of unwanted land. During the presentation before the Committee on 26 December, 2006 the then, Secretary of the Department of Posts had admitted that, "plots in some localities where the Department did not need the Post Offices can be disposed of." Again, during the oral evidence of the Department on 26 June, 2007, Secretary of the Department when confronted with the futility of the situation where the Department were neither able to construct buildings for years together and were unable to safeguard these plots, had maintained that, "where there were no prospects of building, the land may be returned to the Government." However, when the Committee asked for written clarifications in the matter subsequently, the Department informed in writing that they had no plan for disposal of vacant plots. It is but obvious to the Committee that the Department seems to be in a highly indecisive state on this very crucial matter. It is, therefore, high time that the Government came up with a well thought of and clear-cut policy with regard to the utilization or otherwise of the plots presently lying vacant with the Department of Posts.

Action Taken by the Government

As stated during the oral evidence, exercise to identify the plots, which can be disposed of/returned to State Government has been started. However, the Department is constructing buildings on vacant plots in phased manner subject to availability of funds. Besides, formation of the Special Purpose Vehicle is underway for utilization of vacant plots in prime locations and the Cabinet Note for formation of the Special Purpose Vehicle has been sent to Cabinet Secretariat.

Comments of the Committee

(Please *see* Paragraph No. 17 of Chapter-I).

Need for Appointment of a Nodal Authority

Recommendation (Para No. 17)

The Committee observe that one of the main reasons for the sorry state of affairs in the real estate management in DoP is that the Department do not have any nodal authority mandated with the management and oversight of their estates. The Committee find the reply of the Department in this context that 'this is one of the normal functions of the administrative authorities at various levels. At every management level, all the authorities have a role to play. This is one of the normal management functions' as highly unsatisfactory. Bereft of a nodal authority, there has been no focus or direction in the asset management by the various Circles and functionaries at lower levels in DoP. As a result, on the one hand, these prime properties have continued to languish and on the other hand the common man has been deprived of more accessible and better communication facilities. In this process of inaction, the Department have also lost several opportunities of resource generation and consolidation. The Committee, therefore, are of the firm opinion that the Department should take immediate action in the direction of having a nodal authority for management of all their assets. This nodal authority should be given a clear-cut mandate about its specific responsibilities and duties and it should be made functional without any further loss of time.

Action Taken by the Government

The recommendation of the Committee is being examined. However, it is felt that setting up of the Special Purpose Vehicle for which the Cabinet Note has been put up to Cabinet Secretariat for approval will greatly help in the matter.

Comments of the Committee

(Please *see* Paragraph No. 20 of Chapter-I)

Need for Increase in Budgetary Support

Recommendation (Para No. 18)

The Committee find that one of the major factors which had hampered the efforts of DoP for augmentation of departmental buildings was the non-availability of adequate budgetary support. The data pertaining to the funds sought by the Department for construction of buildings from 8th Five Year Plan onwards and the actual releases thereagainst as indicated below are clear pointers towards this fact.

(Rs. in crore)

Plan	Amount Sought	Amount Allocated
8th Plan	425.00	121.35
9th Plan	525.25	119.62
10th Plan	745.00	98.54

Considering the need for a prudent management of the assets particularly for discharging the Universal Service Obligation, the Committee are of the view that the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Finance adopt a more realistic approach towards the whole issue.

Action Taken by the Government

An outlay of Rs. 346.50 crore had been projected for Plan activity 'Estates Management' for the 11th Five Year Plan. But due to overall reduction of total outlay of the DoP from Rs. 12353.84 crore to Rs. 4000.00 crore by the Planning Commission, a revised outlay of Rs. 126.81 crore has been tentatively projected by the Department for the Plan activity 'Estates Management'.

The observations of the Hon'ble Standing Committee will be conveyed and stressed upon the Planning Commission and the Finance Ministry.

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Paragraph No. 23 of Chapter-I)

CHAPTER V

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES ARE OF INTERIM NATURE

Sample Market Survey of DoP Plots

Recommendation (Para No. 20)

The Committee note that the Department of Posts awarded a Market Survey on 28 June, 2006 with a view to assessing the possible revenue generating potential of four plots of land under their jurisdiction in Mumbai, Chennai, Chakamangalur and Ahmedabad. The Survey was stated to have been undertaken as per the advice of the Planning Commission. The Committee have been informed that the final report and other deliverables were received from the consultant on 6 March, 2007. The Survey has recommended that the sites in Mumbai and Chennai should be developed as soon as possible, the site in Ahmedabad should be developed simultaneously or after the plot adjoining to it is redeveloped by the owner and the plot in Chakamangalur should be developed when the local real estate market matures. Based on the feedback from this Market Survey, the Department are now stated to have initiated follow-up action. While the Committee welcome the Survey as a step in the right direction, they would eagerly await further action taken in the matter.

Action Taken by the Government

As intimated against para XV, the proposal for setting up the SPV has already been sent to the Cabinet Secretariat for approval.

Setting up of Special Purpose Vehicle

Recommendation (Para No. 21)

The Committee have been informed that DoP now propose to set up a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) for the optimum development and management of Postal Estates. The proposal is to set-up a wholly owned company with limited liability and 100% equity participation by the Government and registered under the Companies Act, 1956. The thrust areas of the proposed SPV would be: (i) to optimize utilization of Postal Land and properties and to generate non-tariff

revenue for DoP from Postal Estates, (ii) to provide functionally useful modern space for Post Office operations and to improve the general ambience and aesthetics of Postal Buildings, and (iii) to provide convenience, modern facilities and amenities to the users of India Post. According to DoP, it is likely that with the coming into being of the proposed company, the need for budgetary support for construction activities is likely to reduce gradually. DoP also assured the Committee that the proposed SPV would not impinge upon the Universal Service Obligation of DoP rather, it would facilitate USO in a better manner. As regards the status of the proposal, the Committee have been informed that the draft note as approved by the Minister of Communications and Information Technology has been circulated to the nodal Ministries/Departments and Planning Commission for their views/comments. Since the proposal is yet to assume a final shape, the Committee would await the details.

Action Taken by the Government

Based on the views/comments received from various nodal Ministries/Departments and the Planning Commission, the Note for Cabinet has been finalized and has been sent to the Cabinet Secretariat for decision of the Cabinet in the matter.

NEW DELHI;
10 April, 2008

21 Chaitra, 1930 (Saka)

NIKHIL KUMAR,
Chairman,
Standing Committee on
Information Technology.

APPENDIX I

MINUTES OF THE TWENTY-THIRD SITTING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (2007-08)

The Committee sat on Thursday, the 10th April, 2008 from 1100 hours to 1210 hours in Room G-074, Parliament Library Building, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Shri K.V. Thangka Balu — *In the Chair*

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Abdullakutty
3. Shri Nikhil Kumar Choudhary
4. Shri Sanjay Shamrao Dhotre
5. Shri Narahari Mahato
6. Shri Bhubaneshwar Prasad Mehta
7. Shri P.C. Thomas

Rajya Sabha

8. Shri Praveen Rastrapal
9. Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad
10. Shri N.R. Govindraj
11. Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar
12. Shri Gireesh Kumar Sanghi

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri P. Sreedharan — *Joint Secretary*
3. Shri P.C. Koul — *Deputy Secretary*
4. Shri D.R. Mohanty — *Under Secretary*

2. As the Chairman was not present, the Committee under Rule 258(3) chose Shri K.V. Thangka Balu, M.P. and a member of the Committee to preside over the sitting.

3. The Committee, then took up the following Draft Reports for consideration and adopted the same:

- | | | | | |
|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| (i) | *** | *** | *** | *** |
| (ii) | *** | *** | *** | *** |
| (iii) | *** | *** | *** | *** |
| (iv) | *** | *** | *** | *** |
- (v) Draft Report on Action Taken by the Government on Recommendations/Observations of the Committee contained in their Forty-eighth Report on 'Real Estate Management in the Department of Posts'.

4. The Committee, then, authorised the Chairman to finalise the above Draft Reports in the light of the factual verification made by the concerned Ministry/Departments and present the same to the House on a date convenient to him.

The Committee, then, adjourned.

***Matter not related to the Report.

APPENDIX II

[Vide Paragraph No. 5 of Introduction]

ANALYSIS OF ACTION TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS CONTAINED IN FORTY-EIGHTH REPORT (FOURTEENTH LOK SABHA) OF THE COMMITTEE

- (i) Recommendations/Observations which
have been accepted by the Government:
Sl. Nos. 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13,
14, 15, 16, 19 & 22
- Total : 14
Percentage: 63.63%
- (ii) Recommendations/Observations which
the Committee do not desire to pursue
in view of the replies of the Government:
Sl. Nos. Nil
- Total: Nil
Percentage: Nil
- (iii) Recommendations/Observations in respect
of which replies of the Government have
not been accepted by the Committee
and which require reiteration:
Sl. Nos. 3, 4, 5, 6, 17 & 18
- Total: 6
Percentage: 27.27%
- (iv) Recommendations/Observations in respect
of which replies are of interim nature:
Sl. Nos. 20 & 21
- Total: 2
Percentage: 9.09%

FIFTY-NINTH REPORT
STANDING COMMITTEE ON
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(2007-2008)

(FOURTEENTH LOK SABHA)

MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(DEPARTMENT OF POSTS)

*[Action taken by the Government on the Recommendations/Observations
of the Committee contained in their Forty-eighth Report
(Fourteenth Lok Sabha) on 'Real Estate Management
in the Department of Posts']*

*Presented to Lok Sabha on 16 April, 2008
Laid on the table of Rajya Sabha on 15 April, 2008*



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

April, 2008/Chaitra, 1930 (Saka)

C.I.T. No. 181

Price : Rs. 40.00

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Published under Rule 382 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha (Twelfth Edition) and printed by Jainco Art India, New Delhi-110 005.

CONTENTS

	PAGE No.
COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE	(iii)
INTRODUCTION	(v)
CHAPTER I Report	1
CHAPTER II Recommendations/Observations which have been accepted by the Government	11
CHAPTER III Recommendations/Observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of replies of the Government	22
CHAPTER IV Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration	23
CHAPTER V Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies are interim in nature	28
APPENDICES	
I. Minutes of the Twenty-third sitting of the Standing Committee on Information Technology (2007-2008) held on 10.04.2008	30
II. Analysis of Action Taken by the Government on the Recommendations/observations contained in the Forty-eighth Report (Fourteenth Lok Sabha)	32

(As on 8 April 2008)

COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE
ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(2007-2008)

Shri Nikhil Kumar — *Chairman*

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Abdullakutty
3. Shri Ramesh Dube
4. Shri Nikhil Kumar Choudhary
5. Shri Sanjay Shamrao Dhotre
6. Smt. Jayaprada
7. Shri Narahari Mahato
8. Shri Bhubaneshwar Prasad Mehta
9. Shri Harish Nagpal
10. Shri G. Nizamuddin
11. Shri Sohan Potai
12. Shri Lalmani Prasad
- *13. Vacant
14. Shri Badiga Ramakrishna
- @15. Vacant
16. Shri Tufani Saroj
17. Shri Tathagata Satpathy
18. Smt. Rubab Sayeda
19. Shri K.V. Thangka Balu
20. Shri P.C. Thomas
21. Shri Kinjarapu Yerrannaidu

*Vice Kunwar Jitin Prasad ceased to be a member on being inducted to the Union Council of Ministers on 7 April, 2008.

@Vice Shri Prem Kumar Dhumal ceased to be a member on resignation from Lok Sabha on 7 January, 2008. (Shri Prem Kumar Dhumal was nominated to the Committee on 5 October, 2007 *vice* Shri Vishnu Deo Sai ceased to be member of the Committee *w.e.f.* 30 August, 2007)

Rajya Sabha

22. Shri Praveen Rashtrapal
23. Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad
24. Shri Dara Singh
25. Shri A. Vijayaraghavan
26. Shri N.R. Govindraj
- \$27. Vacant
- %28. Vacant
29. Shri Shyam Benegal
30. Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar
31. Shri Gireesh Kumar Sanghi

SECRETARIAT

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|-------------------------|
| 1. Shri M. Rajagopalan Nair | — | <i>Secretary</i> |
| 2. Shri P. Sreedharan | — | <i>Joint Secretary</i> |
| 3. Smt. Sudesh Luthra | — | <i>Director</i> |
| 4. Shri P.C. Koul | — | <i>Deputy Secretary</i> |
| 5. Shri D.R. Mohanty | — | <i>Under Secretary</i> |

\$ Vice Shri Motiur Rahman passed away on 18 December, 2007.

% Vice Shri Eknath K. Thakur ceased to be a member on expiry of his term in Rajya Sabha on 2 April, 2008.

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman, Standing Committee on Information Technology (2007-2008) having been authorised by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present this Fifty-ninth Report on action taken by the Government on the recommendations/observations contained in the Forty-eighth Report on 'Real Estate Management in Department of Posts' relating to the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (Department of Posts).

2. The Forty-eighth Report was presented to the Speaker on 3 August, 2007. The Report was subsequently presented to the Lok Sabha on 21 August, 2007 and laid on the Table of Rajya Sabha on the same day. The Department furnished their Action Taken Notes on the Recommendations/Observations contained in the Forty-eighth Report on 2 November, 2007.

3. The Report was considered and adopted by the Committee at their sitting held on 10 April, 2008.

4. For facility of reference and convenience, Recommendations/Observations of the Committee have been printed in bold letters in the Report.

5. An analysis of Action Taken by Government on the Recommendations/Observations contained in the Forty-eighth Report (Fourteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee is given at **Annexure-II**.

NEW DELHI;
10 April, 2008
21 Chaitra, 1930 (Saka)

NIKHIL KUMAR,
Chairman,
Standing Committee on
Information Technology.

59

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(2007-2008)**

FOURTEENTH LOK SABHA

**MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS
AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(DEPARTMENT OF POSTS)**

*[Action taken by the Government on the Recommendations/Observations
of the Committee contained in their Forty-Eighth Report
(Fourteenth Lok Sabha) on 'Real Estate Management
in the Department of Posts']*

FIFTY-NINTH REPORT



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

April, 2008/Chaitra, 1930 (Saka)