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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON
URBAN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
(1999-2000)**

THIRTEENTH LOK SABHA

**MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT
(DEPARTMENT OF LAND RESOURCES)**

**INTEGRATED WASTELANDS DEVELOPMENT
PROJECT (IWDP) SCHEME**

THIRD REPORT



*[Action taken by Government on the recommendations contained
in the Seventh Report of the Standing Committee on Urban and
Rural Development (Twelfth Lok Sabha)]*

Presented to Lok Sabha on 16.3.2000

Laid in Rajya Sabha on 16.3.2000

**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

March, 2000/Phalguna, 1921 (Saka)

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COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON
URBAN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
(1999-2000)

Shri Anant Gangaram Geete - *Chairman*

MEMBERS

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3. Shri Padmanava Behera
4. Shri Jaswant Singh Bishnoi
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22. Shri Chandresh Patel
23. Shri Dharam Raj Singh Patel
- *24. Prof. (Shrimati) A.K. Premajam

* Nominated w.e.f. 24.1.2000.

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27. Shri Maheshwar Singh
28. Shri Sunder Lal Tiwari
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Rajya Sabha

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39. Shri Onward L. Nongtdu
40. Shri N. Rajendran
41. Shri Solipeta Ramachandra Reddy
42. Shri Suryabhan Patil Vahadane
43. Shri A. Vijaya Raghavan

SECRETARIAT

- | | | | |
|----|------------------------|---|-------------------------|
| 1. | Shri S.C. Rastogi | - | <i>Joint Secretary</i> |
| 2. | Shri R. Kothandaraman | - | <i>Deputy Secretary</i> |
| 3. | Shrimati Sudesh Luthra | - | <i>Under Secretary</i> |

* Died on 13.1.2000.

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Urban and Rural Development (1999-2000) having been authorised by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present the Third Report on Action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Seventh Report of the Standing Committee on Urban and Rural Development (Twelfth Lok Sabha) on Integrated Wastelands Development Project (IWDP) Scheme.

2. The Seventh Report was presented to Lok Sabha on 28th July, 1998. The replies of the Government to all the recommendations contained in the Report were received on 27th October, 1998.

3. The replies of the Government were examined and the Report was considered and adopted by the Committee at their sitting held on 7th March, 2000.

4. An analysis of the action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the 7th Report of the Committee (Twelfth Lok Sabha) is given in *Appendix III*.

NEW DELHI ;
15 March, 2000
25 Phalguna, 1921 (*Saka*)

ANANT GANGARAM GEETE,
Chairman,
Standing Committee on
Urban and Rural Development.

CHAPTER I

REPORT

This Report of the Committee on Urban & Rural Development (1999-2000) deals with action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in their Seventh Report on 'Integrated Wastelands Development Project (IWDP) Scheme (1998-99)' of the Ministry of Rural Development (erstwhile Department of Wastelands Development of Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment) which was presented to Lok Sabha on 28th July, 1998.

2. Action taken notes have been received from the Government in respect of all the 24 recommendations contained in the Seventh Report which have been categorised as follows:-

- (i) Recommendations/observations which have been accepted by the Government:
Para Nos. 2.24, 2.25, 2.26, 2.27, 2.28, 3.8, 4.17, 4.18, 4.20, 5.9, 5.10, 5.11, 5.12, 6.15, 6.16, 6.17, 6.18, 6.19 and 8.2.
- (ii) Recommendations/observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue:
Para Nos. 2.21, 4.19 and 7.5.
- (iii) Recommendations/observations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee:
Para Nos. 2.22 and 2.23.
- (iv) Recommendations in respect of which final replies of the Government are still awaited:
Para No. NIL

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

A. District level mapping of Wastelands

Recommendation (Para No.2.22)

4. The Committee had recommended as under:

“The Committee note that the Department of Wastelands Development in collaboration with NRSA has undertaken a study to identify the wastelands by using remote sensing satellite images. They further note that the NRSA have so far completed the district level mapping of wastelands of 241 districts against a total number of 521 districts in the country. The Committee recommend that the Department of Wastelands Development should urge upon the NRSA to complete the work of mapping of wastelands in the remaining districts of the country on priority basis.”

5. The Government in their reply have stated as under:

“NRSA, Hyderabad has already completed district level mapping of wastelands in 241 districts. They have promised to complete the mapping of wastelands in the remaining districts by the end of December, 1998.”

6. **The Committee find that the government has been furnishing the same data i.e. 241 districts where the work of mapping of Wastelands has been completed, for the last three years (refer Ninth Report 1996-97, page 6, Ninth Report 1997-98, Para No.2.9, Second Report 1998-99, Para No.2.7).**

The Committee are concerned to note that there is no progress in this regard since 1996-97. They take serious note of it and hope that the work relating to mapping would be completed expeditiously.

B. Perspective Plan for the Development of Wastelands in the Country

Recommendation (Para No.2.23)

7. The Committee has recommended as under:

“The Committee note that the Department have not yet prepared any perspective plan for the development of wastelands in the country as the exact data about the extent of wastelands was not available. The Committee recommend that while every effort should be made to have the complete data at the earliest, the Government instead of waiting for data should prepare a plan to develop 175 m.ha., wastelands, as estimated by National Commission on Agriculture, over a period of next 10-15 years.”

8. The Government in their reply have stated as noted below:

“The Department of Wastelands Development has requested the State Governments to prepare State action plans for the development of wastelands since land is a State subject. On the basis of State action plans, the Department will prepare perspective Plan for the development of entire wastelands in the country in a time bound manner.”

9. The Committee are not inclined to accept the reply of the Government. They find that though the land is a State subject, the task of development of wastelands is being undertaken by the different Ministries/Departments of the Central Government. They note with concern that even after more than 50 years of Independence, the Government are yet to chalk out a perspective plan for the development of wastelands in the country. They would therefore like to reiterate their recommendation to prepare a national plan to begin with for development of 175 m. ha. wastelands, as estimated by National Commission on Agriculture without further loss of time.

C. Implementation of High Level Committee Report and establishment of a Central Land Use Authority

Recommendation (Para No. 2.24)

10. The Committee had recommended as under:

“The Committee observe that at present several Ministries/Departments of the Government of India are engaged in the development of wastelands in the country. However, there was no agency at the Centre to coordinate their activities.....

The lack of co-ordination between different schemes of different Ministries/Departments of Government of India could be gauged from the fact that the Department of Wastelands Development in their written reply have stated that they do not have information about the area of wastelands actually developed under several schemes of the Government of India.

The Committee note that the High-Level Committee under the Chairmanship of Shri Mohan Dharia had recommended the establishment of a Central Land Use Authority and also the creation of a separate Department of Land Resources at the Centre.

The Committee also hope that in the larger interest of the country the Government will accept these recommendations of the Mohan Dharia Committee and will take immediate steps to set up a Central Land Use Authority and for creation of a separate Department of Land Resources at the Centre.”

11. The Government in their reply have stated as under:

“The decisions of the Government on various recommendations of Mohan Dharia Committee have already been taken except recommendation regarding creation of a Department of Land Resources, which is pending with the Cabinet Secretariat. This is taking time since it involves unification of land based activities of various Ministries/Departments. The recommendation relating to creation of Central Land Use Authority was, however, not accepted by the Government.”

12. As regards the creation of Central Land Use Authority, the Committee would like that Government should reconsider the suggestion of the Committee as the creation of the said Authority would be of great help for better implementation of different schemes.

D. Implementation of Wastelands Development Projects

Recommendation (Para No.2.26)

13. The Committee had observed as under:

“The Committee note that though the Department was created in July, 1992 it could develop only 1.82 lakh hectares of wastelands under the IWDP, while funds were released by them for the development of about 2.38 lakh hectares of wasteland. The Committee feel that adequate attention has not been paid by the Government towards the challenging task of development of wastelands in the country.”

14. The Government in their reply have stated as under:

“The development of wastelands is being undertaken by various Ministries/Departments and State Governments under their programmes. The community organisation/institutional arrangements under the new Guidelines is a time consuming process and as such implementation of the projects are getting delayed. However, the State Governments have been requested to ensure that these Guidelines are scrupulously followed by all the Project Implementing Agencies at the field level for achieving quality output in the development of wastelands. The State Governments have also been requested to set up Monitoring and Evaluation Cell at the State level for monitoring and reviewing of all area development programmes in the State. It is hoped that the State Governments will pay adequate attention for expeditious implementation of Wastelands Development Projects.”

15. While appreciating the steps taken by the Government for the better implementation of Wastelands development projects by the respective State Governments, the Committee desire that the matter regarding monitoring of the implementation of various schemes for Wastelands Development should be constantly pursued with the State Governments and the feed back obtained.

E. Adequate attention to prevent degradation of developed land

Recommendation(Para No.2.28)

16. The Committee earlier recommended as under:

“The Committee are constrained to note that the Government have no policy for preventing developed wasteland from degradation. They recommend that while developing wastelands, the Government should also pay adequate attention to prevent developed land from degradation.”

17. The Government in their reply have stated as under:

“For want of post-project maintenance, the situation of developed land again becoming degraded may arise. Under the new Guidelines for Watershed Development, it has been provided that all assets created including land developed should be maintained by the Panchayati Raj Institutions after the completion of the project in order to avoid developed land becoming degraded again. The Watershed Development Fund which is to be carried for post project maintenance will be used for this purpose.”

18. The Committee are happy to note that under the new guidelines maintenance of assets created under Watersheds Development would be the duty of Panchayats. They however, feel that the Government should keep a watch on maintenance of such assets by the Panchayats in different States. It should also be ensured that sufficient funds are placed at the disposal of Panchayats for proper maintenance of these assets.

F. Proper utilisation of the allocated funds

Recommendation (Para No.4.18)

19. The Committee earlier recommended as under:

“The Committee note that the Department in their written reply have stated to achieve 100 per cent targets so far as utilization of funds is concerned. However, the information in regard to individual projects/States reveals a different story as funds to the tune of 30 to 51 per cent were lying unspent with States/UTs.....

The Committee are constrained to observe that the State Governments are not fully utilising the funds released under the scheme for the development of wastelands in their States.....

They hardly need to emphasize that by not properly utilising the funds released by the Central Government, the State Governments are not only blocking the scarce and precious money but also become instrumental in delaying the process of development of wastelands resulting in further delay in regeneration of national wealth which otherwise would have been produced by the wastelands developed under the scheme. They, therefore, urge the Central Government to impress upon the State Governments to properly utilise the funds for the purposes of the scheme so that the projects could be completed in time.”

20. The Government in their reply have stated as below:-

“Concerned State Governments and Project Implementing Agencies have been requested to achieve the set targets as per approved work programme under IWDP scheme. As a result, most of the State Governments have already accelerated the utilisation of funds for ongoing projects. However, the position of utilisation of funds in Delhi & Meghalaya is still not encouraging.”

21. While noting the improvement in the utilisation of funds for ongoing projects in most of the State Governments as stated in the replies of the Government, the Committee would like the Government to analyse the reasons for underutilisation of funds for IWDP Schemes in Delhi and Meghalaya for taking corrective steps.

CHAPTER II

RECOMMENDATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY GOVERNMENT

Recommendation (Para No.2.24)

The Committee observe that at present several Ministries/Departments of the Government of India are engaged in the development of wastelands in the country. However, there are no agency at the Centre to coordinate their activities. The lack of proper coordination has resulted in overlapping of different schemes.

The lack of coordination between different schemes of different Ministries/Departments of Government of India could be gauged from the fact that the Department of Wastelands Development in its written reply has stated that they do not have information about the area of wastelands actually developed under several schemes of the Government of India.

The Committee note that the high level Committee under the Chairmanship of Shri Mohan Dharia had recommended the establishment of a Central Land Use Authority and also the creation of a separate Department of Land Resources at the Centre.

As has been admitted by the Secretary, Department of Wastelands during his evidence and also in the written information furnished to the Committee the need for a Central Coordinating Agency was being felt by them very badly. With this background in view, while the Committee would like to know the action taken by the Government on these recommendations of the Mohan Dharia Committee they feel that these recommendations of the Mohan Dharia Committee merit serious consideration by the Government. They also hope that in the larger interest of the country the Government will accept these recommendations of the Mohan Dharia Committee and will take immediate steps to set up a Central Land Use Authority and for creation of a separate Department of Land Resources at the Centre.

Reply of the Government

The decisions of the Government on various recommendations of Mohan Dharia Committee has already been taken except recommendation regarding creation of Land Resources, which is pending with the Cabinet Secretariat. This is

taking time since it involves unification of land based activities of various Ministries/Departments. The recommendation relating to creation of Central Land Use Authority was, however, not accepted by the Government.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, Department of Wastelands Development
O.M. No.G.33011/13/96-Admn.(Coord.) dated 27th October, 1998.]

Comments of the Committee

(Please *see* Para No.12 of Chapter-I of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No.2.25)

The Committee also urge the Government to impress upon the State Governments that they should bring all activities relating to the development of wastelands under the control of one Department with a view to avoiding overlapping of different schemes and to have better coordination in their implementation.

Reply of the Government

The Department of Wastelands Development has requested the State Governments to declare one of their Department preferably, Department of Rural Development as the nodal Department for undertaking all land based activities in the State in order to avoid overlapping of different schemes and for better coordination in their implementation.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, Department of Wastelands Development
O.M. No.G.33011/13/96-Admn.(Coord.) dated 27th October, 1998.]

Recommendation (Para No.2.26)

The Committee note that though the Department was created in July, 1992 it could develop only 1.82 lakh hectares of wastelands under the IWDP, while funds were released by them for the development of about 2.38 lakh hectares of wasteland. The Committee feel that adequate attention has not been paid by the Government towards the challenging task of development of wastelands in the country.

Reply of the Government

The development of wastelands is being undertaken by various Ministries/Departments and State Governments under their programmes. The community organisation/institutional arrangements under the new Guidelines is a time consuming process and as such implementation of the projects are getting delayed.

However, the State Governments have been requested to ensure that these Guidelines are scrupulously followed by all the Project Implementing Agencies at the field level for achieving quality output in the development of wastelands. The State Governments have also been requested to set up Monitoring & Evaluation Cell at the State Level for monitoring and review of all area development programmes in the State. It is hoped that the State Governments will pay adequate attention for expeditious implementation of Wastelands Development Projects.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, Department of Wastelands Development
O.M. No.G.33011/13/96-Admn.(Coord.) dated 27th October, 1998.]

Comments of the Committee

[Please *see* Para No.15 of Chapter-I of the Report]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.27)

The development of Wastelands in the country is an important weapon in the country's war against poverty. As observed by the Mohan Dharia Committee in its report that even if 120 m.ha. of wastelands could be made productive it could generate employment to about 30 million families. With an average income of Rs.10,000/- per ha., the national income of the country could go up by Rs.1,20,000/- crore every year.

The Committee, therefore, urge that all out efforts should be made by the Government by pooling all the available resources under different Centrally funded/sponsored schemes to develop the wastelands in the country over a period of 10-15 years.

Reply of the Government

The Government is in the process of unifying all land based activities under one Department to be named as Department of Land Resources. As soon as the new Department is created sufficient funds will be available for treatment of entire wastelands in the country over a period of 10-15 years.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, Department of Wastelands Development
O.M. No.G.33011/13/96-Admn.(Coord.) dated 27th October, 1998.]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.28)

The Committee are constrained to note that the Government have no policy for preventing developed wasteland from degradation. They recommend that while developing wastelands, the Government should also pay adequate attention to prevent developed land from degradation.

Reply of the Government

For want of post-project maintenance, the situation of developed land again becoming degraded may arise. Under the new Guidelines for Watershed Development, it has been provided that all assets created including land developed should be maintained by the Panchayati Raj Institutions after the completion of the project in order to avoid developed land becoming degraded again. The Watershed Development Fund which is to be created for post project maintenance will be used for this purpose.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, Department of Wastelands Development
O.M. No.G.33011/13/96-Admn.(Coord.) dated 27th October, 1998.]

Comments of the Committee

[Please *see* Para No.18 of Chapter-I of the Report]

Recommendation (Para No. 3.8)

The Committee note that though the guidelines under the scheme provide for planting fruit bearing trees on the wastelands, these guidelines are not being followed by implementing agencies. The Committee, therefore, recommend that while sanctioning funds for a project, the Department should ensure that guidelines laid by them are followed by the implementing agencies. They also recommend that while selection a variety of trees to be planted under I.W.D.P. emphasis should be given to such varieties which suited the requirement and need of the local people.

Reply of the Government

Under the new Guidelines for Watershed Development the projects are planned, executed and monitored with the active involvement of local community and Panchayati Raj Institutions. The species to be planted is also decided by the local community as per their need and requirement. While sanctioning the projects, the DRDAs are requested to ensure that these Guidelines are scrupulously followed by the PIAs while implementing the projects.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, Department of Wastelands Development
O.M. No.G.33011/13/96-Admn.(Coord.) dated 27th October, 1998.]

Recommendation (Para No. 4.17)

The Committee note that though the IWDP is the biggest scheme of the Department of Wastelands Development and major portion of the funds allocated to that Department are allocated to this scheme, neither the Planning Commission

nor the Department of Wastelands Development have given any importance to the development of wastelands in the country as against the demand made by Department for allocation of Rs.220 crore during the year 1997-98 only a small amount of Rs.74.50 crores was allocated by the Planning Commission. On the other hand, the Department while admitting that funds were no constraint so far as development of wastelands was concerned, could only develop 1.82 lakh hectares of wastelands over a period of about 5 years. As the Committee have already remarked, the development of wastelands not only regenerate the natural resources but also help in generation of national wealth and alleviation of rural poverty, the Committee therefore, recommend that the Planning Commission while considering the proposal of the Department of Wastelands for allocation of funds should adopt a more pragmatic approach. At the same time they urge the Department to pool all the resources at their command so as to achieve better results under the scheme.

Reply of the Government

The observation of the Committee regarding enhancement of allocation for development of wastelands will be conveyed to the Planning Commission during Annual Plan Discussions. As regards pooling of resources in order to achieve better results under the scheme, all out efforts are being made to unify land based activities of various Ministries/Departments under one Department in order to achieve better results for development of wastelands in the country.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, Department of Wastelands Development

O.M. No.G.33011/13/96-Admn.(Coord.) dated 27th October, 1998.]

Recommendation (Para No. 4.18)

The Committee note that the Department in its written reply has stated to achieve 100 per cent targets so far as utilization of funds is concerned. However, the information in regard to individual projects/States reveals a different story as funds to the tune of 30 to 51 per cent were lying unspent with States/UTs. The Governments of Meghalaya and the National Capital Territory of Delhi have not spent any amount out of the funds released under the scheme.

The Committee are constrained to observe that the State Governments are not fully utilising the funds released under the scheme for the development of wastelands in their States. As may be seen from the Statement at Appendix-II that the amount of unspent balances with the State Governments ranges from 30 per cent to 100 per cent.

They hardly need to emphasize that by not properly utilising the funds released by the Central Government, the State Governments are not only blocking the scarce and precious money but also become instrumental in delaying the process of development of wastelands resulting in further delay in regeneration of

national wealth which otherwise would have been produced by the wastelands developed under the scheme. They, therefore, urge the Central Government to impress upon the State Governments to properly utilise the funds for the purposes of the scheme so that the projects could be completed in time.

Reply of the Government

Concerned State Governments and Project Implementing Agencies have been requested to achieve the set targets as per approved work programme under IWDP scheme. As a result, most of the State Governments have already accelerated the utilisation of funds for ongoing projects. However, the position of utilisation of funds in Delhi & Meghalaya is still not encouraging.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, Department of Wastelands Development
O.M. No.G.33011/13/96-Admn.(Coord.) dated 27th October, 1998.]

Comments of the Committee

[Please *see* Para No.21 of Chapter-I of the Report]

Recommendation (Para No. 4.20)

The Committee regret to observe that off late it has become a tendency on the part of State Governments to divert the funds released by the Central Government for specific projects to other activities not related to the development work. The Committee feel that this tendency on the part of the State Governments not only delays the implementation of the various schemes for which the funds are meant but also compel the poor people for whose benefit and upliftment these schemes have been conceived to continue to live below the poverty line.

The Committee, therefore, urge the Central Government that they should take up the matter with the State Governments at the highest level so as put an immediate stop to the practice of diversion of funds meant for Centrally funded/sponsored schemes by the State Governments.

Reply of the Government

The Committee's observations have been noted. In this connection, a letter to Chief Secretaries of the concerned State Governments have been issued to ensure that the funds meant for IWDP scheme are not diverted to any other schemes.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, Department of Wastelands Development
O.M. No.G.33011/13/96-Admn.(Coord.) dated 27th October, 1998.]

Recommendation (Para No. 5.9)

The Committee note that as admitted by the Secretary, Department of Wastelands Development, during his evidence before the Committee, the monitoring mechanism as at present existing is neither adequate nor satisfactory. The Committee feel that in view of the importance, size and amount of funds involved in the IWDP scheme, the Department should evolve some effective monitoring system so as to ensure that the projects under the scheme were implemented as per schedule and there was no scope for non-utilisation/diversion of funds in the hands of implementing agencies.

Reply of the Government

The Department of Wastelands Development has requested the State Governments to ensure that the funds meant for IWDP scheme are not diverted to any other scheme of the State Government under any circumstances. A condition to this effect is also incorporated in each sanction order while releasing the funds to DRDAs for implementation of Wastelands Development Projects. The State Governments have also been requested to establish a Monitoring and Evaluation cell at the State Headquarters for monitoring the progress of all ongoing projects. A few State Governments have already set up M&E Cells and others are in the process of setting up these Cells.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, Department of Wastelands Development

O.M. No.G.33011/13/96-Admn.(Coord.) dated 27th October, 1998.]

Recommendation (Para No. 5.10)

The Committee note that the Department while releasing funds to NGOs, also send a list of such NGOs to State Governments with the request that they may direct their officers to visit such projects when they happen to be in that area. The Committee hope that this change will not only encourage NGOs to come forward to undertake projects for development of Wastelands but will also keep the State Governments informed of the projects being implemented in their States. The Committee will like to be informed of the impact of this change on the monitoring of projects being implemented by the NGOs.

Reply of the Government

Before the project is sanctioned in favour of an NGO, a pre-appraisal report is obtained from the concerned DRDA/State Government. After sanction of the project, a copy of the sanction letter is also endorsed to the concerned DRDA. Thus, the involvement of DRDA/State Government is ensured in respect of all projects sanctioned under “Support to NGOs/VAs” Scheme. A consolidated list of projects sanctioned under the scheme was also sent to concerned State Governments in

August, 1996 with a request to keep a watch on the implementation of the projects. The scheme has since been transferred to CAPART. However, a few ongoing projects which are being implemented by cooperatives and trusts etc. are being handled by the Department.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, Department of Wastelands Development

O.M. No.G.33011/13/96-Admn.(Coord.) dated 27th October, 1998.]

Recommendation (Para No. 5.11)

The Committee also recommend that in addition to the visit by the State Government officials, Central Government officers should also visit such projects from time to time.

Reply of the Government

Central Government officers are visiting NGOs projects also alongwith other projects sanctioned under various schemes of the Department.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, Department of Wastelands Development

O.M. No.G.33011/13/96-Admn.(Coord.) dated 27th October, 1998.]

Recommendation (Para No. 5.12)

The Committee also note that Central Government have written to State Governments to constitute two Coordination Committees at State level for better coordination in the implementation of various schemes. They hope that the State Governments will respond positively by constituting such Committees. They will like to be informed of the constitution of such Committees by the State Governments.

Reply of the Government

As per information received from the States, these Committees have been set up in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Mizoram, West Bengal, Gujarat, Haryana and Kerala. The remaining States have been reminded.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, Department of Wastelands Development

O.M. No.G.33011/13/96-Admn.(Coord.) dated 27th October, 1998.]

[With reference to the Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment O.M. No.33011/13/96-Admn(Coord.) dated 22.2.2000]

Recommendation (Para No. 6.15)

As observed by the Committee, the IWDP scheme is an important scheme. The extent of wastelands in the country clearly indicates that it will practically be impossible for the Government alone to develop the same. The Committee therefore recommend that Government should make all possible efforts to involve people from all walks of life in the development of wastelands in the country so that this movement could become a national movement.

Reply of the Government

General awareness among the masses is created through distribution of pamphlet/literature on Wastelands Development programme to the general public. Recently Department with the assistance of Postal Authorities has got printed the message of Wastelands Development on Post Cards and Inland Letters etc. Department has also constituted a Media Committee under the Chairmanship of AS(WD) for preparation of video films and other media related requirement for wastelands development. Department is also preparing a brochure in various languages highlighting the activities of the Department for distribution to the general public during Regional Workshops. NIC has been requested to prepare a multi media/CD-ROM on Wastelands Development which will be distributed to DRDAs for creation of mass awareness amongst the watershed community at the field level.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, Department of Wastelands Development

O.M. No.G.33011/13/96-Admn.(Coord.) dated 27th October, 1998.]

Recommendation (Para No. 6.16)

The Committee hope that the observations made by the Mohan Dharia Committee regarding involvement of women in the implementation of projects under IWDP will be kept in view while selecting projects under IWDP and also at the time of reconstituting watershed monitoring committees at the District level.

Reply of the Government

While sanctioning the projects State Governments/DRDAs are requested to ensure involvement of women in various Committees as envisaged under the new Guidelines.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, Department of Wastelands Development

O.M. No.G.33011/13/96-Admn.(Coord.) dated 27th October, 1998.]

Recommendation (Para No. 6.17)

The Committee also feel that at present the involvement of cooperative sector is not significant. They therefore, urge the Government to encourage the cooperative sector to come forward to take up the task of development of wastelands in the country.

Reply of the Government

The observation of the Committee has been noted. So far only two projects under the IWDP scheme have been sanctioned to cooperative sector. However, it will be ensured that more and more projects are sanctioned under the scheme for implementation by the cooperative sector. The Department has, however, sanctioned large number of projects in favour of cooperative sector under “Support to NGOs/VAs (Grants in Aid)” scheme.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, Department of Wastelands Development

O.M. No.G.33011/13/96-Admn.(Coord.) dated 27th October, 1998.]

Recommendation (Para No. 6.18)

The Committee feel that the involvement of village panchayat in the implementation of projects under IWDP will not only reduce expenditure but will also create employment opportunities for the rural poor and unemployed people.

The Committee hope that with the enactment of the Constitution (73rd Amendment Bill), 1992, the Panchayats would be provided with enough funds so as to enable them to implement the various projects under IWDP in their respective jurisdiction. The Committee recommend that while selecting an implementing agency under the IWDP scheme. DRDA/Zila Parishad should give preference to village panchayats. They also recommend that the guidelines for the scheme should be considerably modified so as to ensure a proper place for village panchayats so far as the development of wasteland is concerned.

Reply of the Government

The observation of the Committee has been noted. Under the new Guidelines for watershed Development, the active involvement of Village Panchayat is ensured. Panchayati Raj Institutions are already functioning as PIAs for IWDP projects in various States.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, Department of Wastelands Development

O.M. No.G.33011/13/96-Admn.(Coord.) dated 27th October, 1998.]

Recommendation (Para No. 6.19)

As regards, the involvement of local people in the IWDP schemes, the Committee feel that a lot more is required to be done to convince and assure the local people about the feasibility of the projects and also about the benefits that will accrue to them (local people) by the development of the wastelands. To achieve this objective, more attention has to be paid to the publicity of the scheme through different means. The Committee, therefore, recommend that Government should chalk out a proper plan of publicity and should allocate sufficient funds for the purpose.

Reply of the Government

Under the new Guidelines for Watershed Development local community is involved in planning, execution, monitoring and maintenance of IWDP projects. The involvement of the Panchayati Raj Institution is also envisaged under the Guidelines. Department has recently decided to hold Regional Workshops in various States for creation of awareness among the masses. Sufficient funds have been kept under the head “communication” for publicity. Department is also utilising postal media by printing the message of Wastelands Development on Post Cards and Inland Letters. A Media Committee is functioning in the Department which takes care of Media/publicity related matters.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, Department of Wastelands Development

O.M. No.G.33011/13/96-Admn.(Coord.) dated 27th October, 1998.]

Recommendation (Para No. 8.2)

The Committee note that the Government have evolved a strategy to develop wastelands during Ninth Plan. The Committee hope that the Government will take all necessary steps according to the strategy evolved by them for the development of wastelands during the Ninth Plan. They also recommend that the Government, in the light of practical experience gained should review the strategy laid down by the Government.

Reply of the Government

DOWD has taken all necessary steps to implement the strategy evolved for development of wastelands during Ninth Five Year Plan based on the practical experience gained in the implementation of the programmes.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, Department of Wastelands Development

O.M. No.G.33011/13/96-Admn.(Coord.) dated 27th October, 1998.]

CHAPTER III

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

Recommendation (Para No. 2.21)

The Committee note that though the definition of the wastelands as laid down by the Expert Committee of the Planning Commission does not connote to the barren land as the term is commonly understood, however, the said definition was held as most appropriate and proper by the Mohan Dharia Committee. The Committee therefore, feel that for the purposes of identifying wasteland for development, the definition laid down by the Expert Committee of the Planning Commission should continue to be used by the Department.

Reply of the Government

The definition of wastelands as laid down by the Expert Committee of Planning Commission was considered to be most appropriate and proper and as such has been adopted by the department for identifying the wastelands and their development.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, Department of Wastelands Development
O.M. No.G.33011/13/96-Admn.(Coord.) dated 27th October, 1998.]

Recommendation (Para No. 4.19)

The Committee recommend that while at one stage the Department has stated that no amount remains unutilised under the scheme, they have also furnished details of amount which remained unspent with individual projects. The Committee are constrained to observe the while furnishing information to the Committee at their behest no check appears to have been exercised in the Department to ensure that there was no contradiction in the information furnished to the Committee. The Committee, therefore, recommend that while furnishing information to the Committee a proper check must be exercised in the Department.

Reply of the Government

The observation of the Committee has been noted for compliance. It will be ensured that a proper check is exercised before furnishing any information to the Committee.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, Department of Wastelands Development

O.M. No.G.33011/13/96-Admn.(Coord.) dated 27th October, 1998.]

Recommendation (Para No. 7.5)

The Committee note that during 1996-97 a meagre amount of Rs.2 crore was provided for Technology Development, Extension & Training Scheme.

The Committee further note that the Government have substantially stepped up the budget allocation for the Technology Development, Extension and Training Scheme, during the year 1997-98. The Committee hope that with the increased allocation for T.D.E&T. Scheme, some tangible results will be achieved and the user will be benefitted by the technological development in the field.

Reply of the Government

It is a fact that Rs. 2 crore were provided during 1996-97 for Technology Development, Extension & Training Scheme. However, on the basis of directions of the Standing Committee of Parliament, the provision was stepped up to Rs. 8 crore during 1997-98 and the same level has also been maintained during the current year (1998-99) for effective implementation of the scheme.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, Department of Wastelands Development

O.M. No.G.33011/13/96-Admn.(Coord.) dated 27th October, 1998.]

CHAPTER IV

RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE

Recommendation (Para No. 2.22)

The Committee note that the Department of Wastelands Development in collaboration with NRSA has undertaken a study to identify the wastelands by using remote sensing satellite images. They further note that the NRSA have so far completed the District level mapping of wastelands of 241 Districts against a total number of 521 Districts in the country. The Committee recommend that the Department of Wastelands Development should urge upon the NRSA to complete the work of mapping of wastelands in the remaining Districts of the country on priority basis.

Reply of the Government

NRSA, Hyderabad has already completed district level mapping of wastelands in 241 districts. They have promised to complete the mapping of wastelands in the remaining districts by the end of December, 1998.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, Department of Wastelands Development
O.M. No.G.33011/13/96-Admn.(Coord.) dated 27th October, 1998.]

Comments of the Committee

[Please see Para No. 6 of Chapter I of the Report]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.23)

The Committee note that the Department has not yet prepared any perspective plan for the development of wastelands in the country as the exact data about the extent of wastelands was not available. The Committee recommend that while every effort should be made to have the complete data at the earliest, the Government instead of waiting for data should prepare a plan to develop 175 m. ha. wastelands, as estimated by National Commission on Agriculture, over a period of next 10-15 years.

Reply of the Government

The Department of Wastelands Development has requested the State Governments to prepare State Action Plans for Development of Wastelands since land is a State subject. On the basis of State Action Plans, the Department will prepare perspective-plan for development of entire wastelands in the country in a time bound manner.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, Department of Wastelands Development

O.M. No.G.33011/13/96-Admn.(Coord.) dated 27th October, 1998.]

Comments of the Committee

[Please *see* Para No.9 of Chapter I of the Report.]

CHAPTER V

RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH FINAL REPLIES
OF THE GOVERNMENT ARE STILL AWAITED

- NIL -

NEW DELHI;
15 March, 2000
25 Phalguna, 1921 (Saka)

ANANT GANGARAM GEETE,
Chairman,
Standing Committee on
Urban and Rural Development.

APPENDIX I

COMMITTEE ON URBAN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (1999-2000)

EXTRACTS OF THE MINUTES OF THE FIFTH SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY, THE 7TH MARCH, 2000

The Committee sat from 1500 hrs. to 1645 hrs. in Committee Room 'D'
Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Shri Anant Gangaram Geete — *Chairman*

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha,

2. Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar
3. Shri Padmanava Behera
4. Shri Jaswant Singh Bishnoi
5. Shri Swadesh Chakraborty
6. Shri Haribhai Chaudhary
7. Prof. Kailasho Devi
8. Shrimati Hema Gamang
9. Shri Vijay Goel
10. Shri R.L. Jalappa
11. Shri Madan Lal Khurana
12. Shri P.R. Kyndiah
13. Shri Bir Singh Mahato
14. Shrimati Rancee Narah
15. Dr. Ranjit Kumar Panja
16. Shri Dharam Raj Singh Patel
17. Prof. (Shrimati) A.K. Premajam
18. Shri Nikhilananda Sar
19. Shri Maheshwar Singh
20. Shri Sunder Lal Tiwari
21. Shri D. Venugopal
22. Shri Chintaman Wanaga

Rajya Sabha

23. Shrimati Shabana Azmi
24. Shri Karnendu Bhattacharjee
25. Shri C. Apok Jamir
26. Shri Onkar Singh Lakhawat
27. Prof. A. Lakshmisagar
28. Shri Onward L. Nongtdu
29. Shri Solipeta Ramachandra Reddy
30. Shri Suryabhan Patil Vahadane
31. Shri A. Vijaya Raghavan

SECRETARIAT

- | | | |
|---------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| 1. Shri S.C. Rastogi | — | <i>Joint Secretary</i> |
| 2. Shrimati Sudesh Luthra | — | <i>Under Secretary</i> |
| 3. Shri P.V.L.N. Murthy | — | <i>Assistant Director</i> |

2. At the outset, the Chairman welcomed the members to the sitting of the Committee.

Consideration of draft Action Taken Reports

3. ** ** ** **

4. The Committee then considered Memorandum No.7 regarding draft report on the action taken by the Government on the recommendations 'contained in the Seventh Report of the Committee (12th Lok Sabha) on 'Integrated Wastelands Development Project (IWDP) Scheme' of the Department of Wastelands Development of the then Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment. After some discussion, the Committee adopted the draft action taken Report.

5. ** ** ** **

6. ** ** ** **

7. ** ** ** **

8. The Committee authorised the Chairman to finalise the draft action taken Reports on the basis of factual verification from the concerned Ministries/ Departments and to present the same to Parliament.

The Committee then adjourned.

** Verbatim proceeding relating to other Subjects have been kept separately.

APPENDIX II**STATEMENT SHOWING THE AMOUNT RELEASED AND EXPENDITURE
INCURRED UNDER IWDP SCHEME STATEWISE (1991-92 TO 1996-97)**

(in Rs.)

Total Project cost	Total Release	Total Achievement	Total Balance	Unspent Balance as a % of total release
1	2	3	4	5
1. Andhra Pradesh				
5377.78	2853.15	1718.21	1134.94	39.78%
2. Bihar				
1828.63	1208.51	645.99	562.52	46.55%
3. Gujarat				
4026.16	2349.01	1511.75	837.26	35.64%
4. Haryana				
1893.63	1138.08	1236.1	- 112.52	108.61% (Expenditure as a % of release)
5. Himachal Pradesh				
1284.51	862.57	610.004	252.57	29.28%
6. Jammu & Kashmir				
137.11	111.79	91.38	20.41	18.26%

	1	2	3	4	5
7. Karnataka					
	929.11	787.89	596.20	191.69	24.33%
8. Kerala					
	1649.61	1019.02	2703.94	214.28	21.03%
9. Madhya Pradesh					
	3503.72	1247.98	663.42	584.56	46.84%
10. Maharashtra					
	198.76	180.50	183.65	- 3.15	101.74% (Expenditure as a % of Release)
11. Meghalaya					
	117.39	57.42	0	57.42	100%
12. Manipur					
	202.20	200.47	199.79	0.68	0.33%
13. Mizoram					
	359.95	351.95	341.52	10.43	2.96%
14. Nagaland					
	1674.67	1028.71	720.9	307.81	29.92%

	1	2	3	4	5
15. Orissa					
2010.29	1242.56	791.76	450.80	36.28%	
16. Punjab					
1318.73	771.16	593.26	177.90	23.07%	
17. Rajasthan					
3500.89	2156.46	1803.39	353.07	16.37%	
18. Sikkim					
1151.52	758.03	748.8	9.23	1.22%	
19. Tamil Nadu					
1576.09	638.44	306.92	328.63	51.47%	
20. Tripura					
145.44	64.58	53.48	11.10	17.19%	
21. Uttar Pradesh					
5250.20	2035.17	1288.91	745.69	36.64%	
22. West Bengal					
1214.82	807.49	567.22	240.27	29.75%	
23. Delhi					
55.75	15.00	0	15.00	100%	

APPENDIX III
[vide Para 4 of the Introduction]

**ANALYSIS OF THE ACTION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT ON THE
RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE 7TH REPORT OF THE
STANDING COMMITTEE ON URBAN AND RURAL
DEVELOPMENT (12TH LOK SABHA)**

I.	Total number of recommendations	24
II.	Recommendations that have been accepted by the Government	19
	(Para Nos. 2.24, 2.25, 2.26, 2.27, 2.28, 3.8, 4.17, 4.18, 4.20, 5.9, 5.10, 5.11, 5.12, 6.15, 6.16, 6.17, 6.18, 6.19 and 8.2.)	
	Percentage to the total recommendations	(79.17%)
III.	Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's replies	3
	(Para Nos. 2.21, 4.19 and 7.5.)	
	Percentage to total recommendations	(12.50%)
IV.	Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee	2
	(Para Nos. 2.22 and 2.23.)	
	Percentage to total recommendations	(8.33%)
V.	Recommendations in respect of which final replies of the Government are still awaited	Nil