

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS IN INDIA

**[Action taken by the Government on the Observations/
Recommendations of the Committee contained in
their Twenty-Fifth Report (16th Lok Sabha)]**

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS

**PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE
(2017-18)**

HUNDRED-SECOND REPORT

SIXTEENTH LOK SABHA



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

HUNDRED SECOND REPORT

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE
(2017-18)

(SIXTEENTH LOK SABHA)

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS IN INDIA

[Action taken by the Government on the Observations/
Recommendations of the Committee contained in
their Twenty-Fifth Report (16th Lok Sabha)]

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS



Presented to Lok Sabha on:

28/03/2018

Laid in Rajya Sabha on:

28/03/2018

**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

March, 2018/ Chaitra, 1940 (Saka)

CONTENTS

	PAGE
COMPOSITION OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE (2017-18)	(iii)
INTRODUCTION	(iv)
CHAPTER I Report	1
CHAPTER II* Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government	
CHAPTER III* Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the replies received from the Government	
CHAPTER IV* Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration	
CHAPTER V* Observations/Recommendations in respect of which the Government have furnished interim replies	

APPENDICES*

- I Minutes of the 22nd^h Sitting of Public Accounts Committee (2017-18) held on 23rd March, 2018.
- II Analysis of the Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee contained in their Twenty-Fifth Report (Sixteenth Lok Sabha)

* Not appended to the cyclostyled copy of the Report

COMPOSITION OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE
(2017-18)

Shri Mallikarjun Kharge		Chairperson
<u>MEMBERS</u>		
<u>LOK SABHA</u>		
2.	Shri Sudip Bandyopadhyay	
3.	Shri Subhash Chandra Baheria	
4.	Shri Prem Singh Chandumajra	
5.	Shri Nishikant Dubey	
6.	Shri Gajanan Chandrakant Kirtikar	
7.	Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab	
8.	Smt. Riti Pathak	
9.	Shri Neiphiu Rioh*	
10.	Shri Abhishek Singh	
11.	Prof. Ram Shanker	
12.	Dr. Kirit Somaiya	
13.	Shri Anurag Singh Thakur	
14.	Shri Shivkumar C. Udasi	
15.	Dr. P. Venugopal	
<u>RAJYA SABHA</u>		
16.	Shri Naresh Agrawal	
17.	Shri Satyavrat Chaturvedi	
18.	Shri Bhubaneswar Kalita	
19.	Shri Mohd. Ali Khan†	
20.	Shri Sukhendu Sekhar Roy‡	
21.	Shri Ajay Sancheti	
22.	Shri Bhupender Yadav	
<u>SECRETARIAT</u>		
1.	Shri A.K. Singh	Additional Secretary
2.	Shri T. Jayakumar	Director
3.	Shri A.K. Yadav	Deputy Secretary

* Ceased to be a Member of Committee consequent upon acceptance of his resignation from Lok Sabha w.e.f. 22 February, 2018.

† Elected w.e.f. 29 December, 2017 in lieu of vacancy caused due to retirement of Shri Shantaram Naik.

‡ ceased to be a Member of Committee consequent upon his retirement from Rajya Sabha on 18 August, 2017 and re-elected w.e.f. 29 December, 2017.

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson, Public Accounts Committee (2017-18) having been authorised by the Committee, do present this Hundred-Second Report (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) on action taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations of the Committee contained in their Twenty-Fifth Report (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) on 'Disaster preparedness in India'.

2. The Twenty-Fifth Report was presented to Lok Sabha/laid in Rajya Sabha on 10 December, 2015. Replies of the Government to the Observations/ Recommendations contained in the Report were received on 22 January, 2018. The Public Accounts Committee considered and adopted the Hundred-Second Report at their sitting held on 23 March, 2018 Minutes of the sittings are given at *Appendix-I*.

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

4. The Committee place on record their appreciation of the assistance rendered to them in the matter by the Office of the C&AG of India.

5. An analysis of the action taken by the Government on the Observations/ Recommendations contained in Twenty-Fifth Report (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) is given at *Appendix-II*.

NEW DELHI;
27 March, 2018
06 Chaitra, 1940 (Saka)

MALLIKARJUN KHARGE
Chairperson
Public Accounts Committee

CHAPTER – I

REPORT

This Report of the Public Accounts Committee deals with Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations of the Committee contained in their Twenty Fifth Report (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) on “**Disaster Preparedness In India**” based on the C&AG Report No. 5 of 2013 (Performance Audit) Union Government, relating to the Ministry of Home Affairs.

2. The Twenty-Fifth Report (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) was presented to Lok Sabha/laid in Rajya Sabha on 10th December, 2015. It contained 22 Observations/ Recommendations. Action Taken Notes in respect of all the Observations/ Recommendations have been received from the Ministry of Home Affairs over an year's delay from the date of presentation of its original Report and categorized as under:

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

Paragraph Nos. 1, 3-5, 7-16, and 18-22

Total:19
Chapter- II

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

Paragraph Nos. 2, 6 and 17

Total: 03
Chapter- III

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

- NIL -

Total: Nil
Chapter- IV

(iv) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which Government have furnished interim replies:

- NIL -

Total: NIL
Chapter- V

3. The Action Taken Notes furnished by the Ministry of Home Affairs on the observation/ recommendations of the Committee contained in their Twenty-Fifth Report (16th Lok Sabha) have been reproduced in the relevant Chapters of this Report. In the succeeding paragraphs, the Committee have dealt with the Action Taken by the Government on some of

their Observations/Recommendations made in the 25th Report which need comments of the Committee.

**I Preparation of Disaster Management Plans by Ministries/Departments
[Recommendation Para No. 3]**

4. The Committee had noted that National Executive Committee (NEC) was to prepare National Plan for disaster management of the Country and circulate the same to Ministries/ Departments/ States so that they can draw their own plans in accordance with it. However, neither NEC nor MHA prepared National Plan till 2013 when it was sent to the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) for further necessary action. The Committee had understood the difficulties/problems in formation of a National Plan for a country with very diverse geo-climatic conditions. Moreover, a number of Ministries/ Departments and other agencies/Governments were involved. Still the Committee felt that the NEC took a very long time of 7 years i.e. from 2006 to 2013 to finalise the Plan. Quite evidently, the inadequate number of meetings held by NEC due to lack of adequate secretarial support was one of the factors responsible for this delay. The Committee had noted that in the meantime, NDMA issued guidelines, in 2007, for preparation of State Disaster Management Plans. The NDMA had issued 17 guidelines on various types of disasters and related issues till October 2012. Till 2014, twenty States had shared their plans with NDMA. The Government had also provided Grants-in-aid ranging between Rs.8-10 lakh to the States for finalisation of their plans. The Committee, however, find that avoidable delays took place in finalisation of National as well as States' Plans for management of disasters. The Committee were of the firm view that delays had taken place because the NEC and NDMA had delayed the finalisation of Guidelines and National Plan for disaster management. As due to several natural and man-made causes, an alarming rise in disasters was witnessed in the country, the Committee had desired the Ministry of Home Affairs that it must take up the matter urgently with the remaining State Governments/ Ministries/ Departments/ agencies, who had not drafted or finalised their State Disaster Management Plans and get needful done. The Ministry should inform the latest position in this regard to the Committee within three months from the date of presentation of this report to the Parliament. The Committee had also desired to be informed of the status of National Plan for disaster management, which was statedly pending for NDMA approval.

5. The Ministry of Home Affairs in their Action Taken Note have stated as under:

" State Disaster Management Plan:

Till date 28 states and 6 UTs have prepared State Disaster Management Plans (SDMPs), which have been shared with the NDMA. State of Telangana, being a new State, is in the process of preparing its SDMP. UT of Chandigarh has prepared its draft DMP and will share it with NDMA shortly.

National Disaster Management Plan (NDMP)

The National Executive Committee (NEC) in its 15th Meeting held on 21.10.2013 under the chairmanship of Home Secretary finalized the draft NDMP and the same was forwarded to NDMA for their approval. The draft NDMP after wider consultation was restructured and revised. The draft NDMP is being further revisited in the NDMA as per the Sendai Framework of Action declared in March, 2015, after the 3rd World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai. After revision of the draft NDMP, it was submitted for obtaining approval of Hon'ble Prime Minister in his capacity as Chairman, NDMA. Accordingly, Hon'ble Prime Minister had approved and released the National Disaster Management Plan on 01.06.2016.

Preparation of Disaster Management Plans(DMPs) by Ministries/ Departments of Government of India:

(a) For assistance of the Ministries/ Departments of the Government of India in preparation of their DMP, NDMA formulated and circulated a 'Suggested Structure for Disaster Management Plan-Departments/ Ministries in the Government of India'.

(b) As on 22.01.2016, Ministries/ Departments of (i) Railways, (ii) Petroleum & Natural Gas, (iii) Heavy Industry and (iv) Steel have prepared their DM Plan.

The NDMA and the Ministry of Home Affairs are constantly pursuing the matter with other Ministries/Departments to formulate their Disaster Management Plans in accordance with the NDMA guidelines. Their further queries in this regard were addressed during the National Executive Committee meeting held on 15.2.2016.

The latest Status of the preparation of Disaster Management Plans by Ministries/Departments of Govt. of India is as under:-

(a) Following Departments/Ministries have prepared their DM Plans:

- (i) Departments of Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries,
- (ii) Ministry of Railways,
- (iii) Ministry of Women & Child Development,
- (iv) Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas,
- (v) Ministry of Power,
- (vi) Ministry of Steel,

- (vii) Ministry of Mines,
- (viii) Department of Heavy Industries and
- (ix) Department of School Education and Literacy
- (b) DM Plan of Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries has been approved.
- (c) Comments of NDMA have been sent on the DMP of following Ministries/Departments
 - (i) Ministry of Railways,
 - (ii) Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas,
 - (iii) Ministry of Power,
 - (iv) Ministry of Steel
 - (v) Ministry of Mines
 - (vi) Ministry of Heavy Industries
- (d) DM Plan of Ministry of (i) Women & Child Development and (ii) Department of School Education and Literacy is under examination.
- (e) A D.O. letter dated 30th August, 2016 has been sent by the Home Secretary to the Secretaries of all the Ministries/Departments of the Government of India reminding them to comply with the mandatory requirement of preparation, review and updation of the DMP."

6. The Committee find that in response to their recommendation 28 States and 6 UTs have prepared State Disaster Management Plans (SDMPs) and shared the same with NDMA. State of Telangana, being a new State is in the process of preparing its SDMP. UT of Chandigarh has also prepared its draft DMP. As regards National Disaster Management Plan (NDMP) it has been released by Hon'ble Prime Minister on 01.06.2016. However, the DMP of only one Department i.e. Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries has been approved till submission of ATNs by MHA. DMPs of eighth Ministries/Departments have either been prepared, returned to Ministries/Departments with comments of NDMA or under examination of NDMA. Though MHA has reminded in August 2016 to all the Ministries/Departments of Govt. of India to comply with the mandatory requirement of preparation, review and updation of the DMPs, the status is very bleak. It seems that the Ministries/Department are not as responsive as they should have been. The Ministry of Home Affairs have not given any assurance regarding the timelines for finalization of DMPs by the Ministries/Departments. The Committee, therefore, desire the Ministry of Home Affairs to set a target date and pursue with the Ministries/Departments of Government of India to finalise their DMPs at the earliest. The Committee would also like to be apprised of the steps taken by the Ministry in this regard.

II Flood control and Inter-Linking of Rivers [Recommendation Para No. 13]

7. The Committee had noted that the total flood affected area in the country is vast i.e. 456.40 lakh hectares of land. An average of 72.25 lakh hectare of land is affected annually by floods of which 37.89 lakh hectare is cropped area. Thus, floods cause loss of livelihood of lakhs of farmers in the country, thereby making a dent in the economy. The Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR) was to prepare a detailed action plan for management of floods as per NDMA guidelines on which MoWR has taken action. However, according to MOWR there are many additional activities indicated in these guidelines including safety issues of large dams, flood forecasting etc. which are not presently carried out by the organisations of MoWR /States/local administrations. The Committee were informed that such activities require major overhaul including re-structuring and strengthening of the organisations besides huge financial requirements in consultation with Planning Commission and Ministry of Finance. Time lines indicated in the guidelines need to be finalised in consultation with all the linked agencies which include States, NRSC, IMD, GSI, MHA etc. The Committee had noted that 14 States had responded to establishing a Dam Safety Organisation (DSO). The Audit had also revealed that only eight States had prepared Emergency Action Plans (EAP) for 192 (4.06%) large dams as against 4728 large dams in 29 States as of September 2011, as highly skilled manpower and extensive field survey for the same, which require coordination with other departments also, needs a lot of time. This has resulted in 96 % of large dams rendering huge area and property vulnerable to cascading effects of dam failure. Also, while there are 4728 reservoirs and barrages in the country, the Central Water Commission (CWC) provided inflow forecasts to only 28 reservoirs and barrages as only 28 requests were received by CWC for such forecasts. An IIPA study report given to MoWR in 2009, had highlighted various deficiencies in the scheme of things which included non-functional telemetry stations and absence of dedicated communication facilities in flood forecasting stations. As per the Ministry, under the Flood Management Programme (FMP), it was able to implement 252 works out of 420 works and, as against target of 2.18 mha, could protect 1.96 mha of flood affected area from the flood. The short fall of only 0.19 mha. was due to late approval of the scheme and slow execution by State Government due to lesser working period. The Committee, had *inter-alia* desired that the MHA must coordinate with MoWR to (i) encourage the States and ensure that all the concerned States establish their Dam Safety Organisation and prepare Emergency Action Plans for large dams so that in case of any adverse situation or emergency, immediate and corrective steps are taken for safety of people from the

cascading effects of floods; (ii) Ensure that deficiencies pointed out by IIPA in their study in forecasting of floods are rectified and consult and coordinate with the States to expand their plan for inflow forecast network to additional reservoirs in the country; (iii) Implement and execute more works under the Flood Management Programme to save people, livestock and property from the impact of the flood; (iv) As floods are a grave perennial problem for States like Assam, Bihar, U.P. etc., the Committee were convinced that a well-coordinated strategy was required to tackle floods as National emergency, particularly in monsoon months, and merely the non-mandatory Guidelines of NDMA were inadequate to handle preparedness and mitigation efforts concerning floods. The Committee had, therefore, recommended that the MHA, MoWR, Department of Space, IMD, Dam Owning Companies and all concerned State Governments must come together to assess and minimize the damage caused by floods. As some of the neighboring countries are also suspected to engage in building dams on rivers flowing through the Indian Sub-Continent, which impact the flood plains adversely in India, the Committee had desired that the matter needed greater attention from the PMO and the MEA to protect the country from any potential man-made floods caused by such activities; and (v) the Ministry of Water Resource/ Irrigation Departments should also take necessary steps to manage the flood water by diverting it to water deficit States through implementation of schemes for "Inter-linking of rivers" and creating network of canals.

8. The Ministry of Water Resources in their action taken notes have *inter-alia* stated as under:

"(i) Central Water Commission provides guiding and advisory role in matters concerning Dam Safety and has accordingly prepared 'Guidelines for Development and Implementation of Emergency Action Plan (EAP) for Dams' and circulated to States for its implementation by Dam owning authorities. EAPs are project specific and are to be prepared by Dam owners i.e. most State Govt/PSUs, keeping in view EAP Guidelines. CWC had formulated a Dam Safety Bill-2010 making EAPs mandatory for existing as well as new dams within five years of its enactment. The bill was resubmitted in 2014 which also could not materialise due to change in Government at centre. After incorporating the bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh into Andhra Pradesh and Telangana and consultation with Ministry of Law, the draft Dam Safety Bill 2016 has been prepared covering whole of India. As States having more than 20 dams needs to establish a DSO, 16 States are having full fledged Dam Safety Cell/Organisation. Through persuasion, EAP for 321 Dams have been prepared by 13 States/Dam owning agency and for 122 Dams are in various stages of preparation by 5 States. CWC and Ministry of WRRD&GR has continuously impressed upon the States for implementation of the flood plain zoning approach to avoid encroachment of flood plains/water bodies.

(ii) The work on the Flood Forecasting Network has been initiated and it was expected to be completed by March, 2017.

(iii) CWC performs the Flood Forecasting and Warning job on flood prone interstate river basins in the country. It issues the forecast to the users such as various Civil and Engineering Departments of the State and Central Governments including, Railway, Defence, Revenues Authorities, Public Sector Undertakings besides National Disaster Management Cell in the Ministry of Home Affairs, who are responsible for taking timely flood fighting measures, rescue operations including shifting of flood affected people to safer places etc.

Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation has developed bilateral arrangements with neighbouring countries on data sharing and project planning/implementation with flood mitigation as one of the objectives.

(iv) The Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation is working on its flagship programme 'Inter Linking of River' Project through National Water Development Agency (NWDA) in consultation with State Governments.

Large dams and canal system are proposed to be constructed to store and transfer flood waters of the surplus rivers in Interbasin Water Transfer proposals. NWDA has identified 30 such Interbasin Water Transfer links (16 under Peninsular Component and 14 under Himalayan Component). For transferring surplus waters of Mahanadi and Godavari, dams are proposed to be constructed at Manibhadra on Mahanadi and Inchampalli and Polavaram on Godavari rivers. Similarly dams on Manas and Sankosh in Brahmaputra basin (in Bhutan) and Kosi, Gandak, Ghagra and Sarda in Ganga basin (in Nepal) are proposed for storing and transferring water in. In addition, there is incidental flood control benefit from existing dams namely Nagarjunasagar, Almatti, Srisailam etc. are also considered in Interbasin Water Transfer proposals.

The main purpose for construction of these dams where no specific flood storage is envisaged is for increasing irrigation area."

9. The Committee find that guidelines issued by Central Water Commission (CWC) for development and implementation of Emergency Action Plan (EAP) for Dams to all States/ Dam Owning Agencies are in the process of implementation. Sixteen States have Dam Safety Cell/Organisation. Karnataka, Punjab and Rajasthan are being pursued for establishment of Dam Safety Organisation. CWC, Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation has continuously impressed upon the States for implementation of the flood plain zoning approach to avoid encroachment of Flood Plains/Water Bodies through a model bill circulated by Government. The work on the Flood Forecasting Networks and rectification of deficiencies by IIPA are being initiated and it was expected to be completed by March 2017. The Government of India has established system for flood forecasting and flood management through various agencies of Central and State Governments which

coordinate and take necessary steps before and after the flood situation. Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation has developed bilateral arrangements with neighboring countries on data sharing and project planning/implementation with flood mitigation as one of the objectives. However, despite all efforts the annual floods from rivers flowing in to our country from neighboring countries is a regular phenomena. The Committee, therefore, desire that greater role of PMO/MEA is required to prevent loss to crops and property caused every year by floods from rivers flowing in to our country from the neighboring countries. The Committee exhort the Ministry to accelerate the pace of implementation of 'Inter-Linking of Rivers' Project and set a timeline as presently most of the works under project have neither been taken up nor finalised.

III Expanding the laboratory network to manage Biological Disaster [Recommendation Para No. 18]

10. The core function for preparedness for biological disaster is disease surveillance which is undertaken through Integrated Disease Surveillance Project (IDSP) run by the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC). The Committee note that under IDSP, surveillance units have been established in all States/Districts and linked through an IT network established with the help of NIC and ISRO. Satellite connectivity will be available once the migration from existing satellite to GSAT-12 is done by ISRO. About 90% of the districts report weekly surveillance data through the portal. The Committee also note that the draft Public Health (Prevention, Control and Management of Epidemics, Bio Terrorism and Disasters) Bill is under finalisation by the MOH&FW. As regards strengthening of districts laboratories for diagnosis of epidemic prone diseases, 42 labs have become functional and 300 labs were proposed to be set up under 12th Plan. Additionally, in 17 States, 85 Medical Colleges labs have been linked to adjoining districts so far and 190 Medical Colleges are proposed to be linked in 12th Plan in the State referral lab network. Under the scheme of Indian Council of Medical Research for 'Establishment of a network of labs for managing Epidemics and Natural Calamities', a three tier network of 160 labs is proposed to be set up. The Committee are happy to note that a reasonable progress has been made in surveillance and in setting up of laboratories. However, the pace of setting up of laboratories needs to be accelerated in view of the density of population in the country which makes it a potential hub for faster spread of diseases. The Committee had, therefore, desired the Ministry to step up their efforts to set up labs in the remaining districts. The Committee sought to be informed of

status of the Public Health Bill which was said to be at the drafting stage. The Committee had recommended to set up surveillance at national entry level point and strengthening laboratory infrastructure in the country to prevent spread of diseases in the Country through these points.

11. The Ministry Health and Family Welfare (Department of Health and Family Welfare) while furnishing the action taken notes has stated as under:

"Under the scheme of Department of Health Research for the 'Establishment of a Network of Laboratories to Managing Endemic and Natural Calamities', 10 regional laboratories, 30 State level laboratories and 120 Medical College laboratories are to be established with an estimated outlay of Rs.646.83 crores. In this regard Department of Health Research had approved setting up of 82 Viral Research and Diagnostic Laboratories (VRDL) (5 regional level, 15 State level and 62 Medical college level) out of which funds have been released to 43 VRDLs across the country.

Under Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP), [as on Feb. 2016] 111 district hospital laboratories have been made functional for strengthening diagnosis of epidemic prone diseases in 22 States referral laboratory network has been established by utilizing 99 existing functional laboratories in the Medical Colleges and various other major centres in the States and linking them with adjoining districts for providing diagnostic services.

The Public Health Bill has been drafted. Further consultation with stakeholders is to be undertaken.

Existing 21 Points of Entries (PoEs) have been strengthened. Establishment of addition to 30 Health Units at PoEs (21 Airports, 2 ports and 7 ground crossings) has been approved. Each Point of Entry has been linked with a health facility. In addition to the existing quarantine facility at Delhi and Mumbai International Airports, new quarantine facility has been established at Kochi Airport and existing facility at Kolkata Airport is being renovated. Development of new quarantine facility at 7 other International Airport is in progress."

12. The Committee note that under the scheme of Department of Health Research for the 'Establishment of a Network of Laboratories for Managing Endemic and Natural Calamities', 10 regional laboratories, 30 State level laboratories and 120 Medical College laboratories are to be established with an estimated outlay of Rs.646.83 crores. Department of Health Research had approved setting up of 82 Viral Research and Diagnostic Laboratories (VRDL) (5 regional level, 15 State level and 62 Medical college level) out of which funds have been released to 43 VRDLs across the country. Under integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP), [as on Feb. 2016] 111 district

hospital laboratories have been made functional for strengthening diagnosis of epidemic prone diseases in 22 States, referral laboratory network has been established by utilizing 99 existing functional laboratories in the Medical Colleges and various other major centres in the States and linked them with adjoining districts for providing diagnostic services. Further, the Public Health Bill has been drafted. Further consultation with stakeholders is to be undertaken. Existing 21 Points of Entries (PoEs) have been strengthened. Establishment of addition to 30 Health units at PoEs (21 Airports, 2 ports and 7 ground crossings) has been approved. Each point of Entry has been linked with a health facility. In addition to the existing quarantine facility at Delhi and Mumbai International Airports, new quarantine facility has been established at Kochi Airport and existing facility at Kolkata Airport is being renovated. Development of new quarantine facility at 7 other International Airport is in progress. The Committee, however, are not happy with the poor progress made in finalisation of the Public Health Bill. In 2015, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare had informed the Committee that the Public Health (Prevention, Control and Management of Epidemics, bio-terrorism and disasters) Bill was under finalisation. Now, after a lapse of more than two years the Ministry have stated that the Bill has been drafted and first consultation with stakeholders is to be undertaken. This show the non-chalant attitude of the Ministry to bring a suitable law to prevent/control epidemics, bio-terrorism and disasters in the country. The Committee are unable to understand the cause of such an inordinate delay in finalisation of a Bill of urgent public importance. The Committee, therefore, desire the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare to earnestly complete the consultation process and expeditiously finalise the proposed legislation. They would also like to be apprised of the possible time period to be taken to introduce the Bill in Parliament.