

**COMMITTEE ON PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE
(2019-2020)**

SEVENTEENTH LOK SABHA

24

TWENTY FOURTH REPORT

**[Report on delay in laying of the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts
of the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export
Development Authority (APEDA), New Delhi]**

(Presented on 23 September, 2020)



सत्यमेव जयते

**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI
SEPTEMBER, 2020/ASVINA, 1942(SAKA)**

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INTRODUCTION

I, Chairperson of the Committee on Papers Laid on the Table of the House (2019-20), having been authorized by the Committee to present this Report on their behalf, present this Twenty Fourth Report in respect of delay in laying of the Annual Reports together with the Audited Accounts of the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority, New Delhi.

2. In terms of the recommendation of the Committee on Papers Laid on the Table contained in its First Report, Second Report (5th Lok Sabha) and Second Report (6th Lok Sabha) presented to the House on 08 March 1976, 12 May 1976 and 22 December 1977 respectively, the Annual Report and Audited Accounts of the Organization/Company are required to be laid on the Table of the House within nine months of the closure of the Accounting Year.

3. The Committee considered the issue of delay in laying of the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority, New Delhi and took oral evidence of the representatives of the Ministry of Commerce & Industry (Department of Commerce) and the Authority at their sitting held on 13th April, 2018.

4. The Committee considered and adopted this Report at their sitting held on 22nd September, 2020.

5. The Committee wish to express their thanks to the officers of the Ministry of Commerce & Industry (Department of Commerce) and the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority, New Delhi for furnishing the written replies, other material/information and for placing their views in the matter before the Committee.

6. The Observations/Recommendations of the Committee have been printed in bold letters at the end of the Report.

New Delhi
22 September, 2020
31 Bhadrapada, 1942 (Saka)

Shyam Singh Yadav
Chairperson
Committee on Papers Laid on the Table
Lok Sabha

REPORT

Delay in laying of the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), New Delhi

The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) was established by the Government of India under the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority Act passed by the Parliament in December, 1985. The Act (2 of 1986) came into effect from 13th February, 1986 by a notification issued in the Gazette of India: Extraordinary: Part-II [Sec. 3(ii): 13.2.1986). APEDA laid their documents as per Section 21 sub sections 1, 2 & 3 of the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority Act, 1985 and also as per Rule 237 of the General Financial Rules 2017, the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of autonomous bodies are to be laid on the Table of the Parliament by 31st December (of the following financial year). APEDA received grant-in-aid from the Government of India for implementing its export promotion scheme. During the three years the funds released by the Government of India to the Authority are as given below:

Year	Rs. in Crore
2014-15	130.00
2015-16	137.06
2016-17	101.25

2. In term of recommendations of the Committee on Papers Laid on the Table contained in Paras 1.16 and 3.5 of its First Report (5th Lok Sabha), Paras 4.16 and 4.18 of Second Reports of 5th Lok Sabha and Paras 1.12 and 3.6 to 3.8 of Second Report of 6th Lok Sabha presented to the House on 08.03.1976, 12.05.1976 and 22.12.1977 respectively, the Annual Report and Audited Accounts together along-with Review Statement of the Institutes/Organizations (Statutory/Autonomous Organization, Public Undertakings, corporations, Joint ventures, Societies etc.) are required to be laid within 09 months of the closure of the respective Accounting Year. To comply with this requirement, proper time schedule should be laid down for compilation of Annual Report and Accounts and their auditing.

3. The Ministry of Commerce & Industry (Department of Commerce) have informed in their written reply dated 04th April, 2018 that the reports are accordingly to be laid in Parliament within nine months from the close of the financial year, to which it pertains.

4. The Committee note that the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the APEDA for the years from 2013-14 to 2016-17 were laid on the Table of the House on 20.03.2015, 14.03.2016, 18.12.2017 and 02.04.2018 respectively by the Ministry of Commerce & Industry (Department of Commerce) with delay ranging from 2½ months to 11½ months. (**Annexure-I**)

5. The chronological sequence, as submitted by the Ministry, in respect of finalization of Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the Authority for the years from 2013-2014 to 2016-2017 are given at **Annexure-II**.

6. The Ministry in their written reply have submitted the following reasons for delay in laying of the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts for the years from 2013-14 to 2016-17 :-

"APEDA's annual accounts are subject to CAG Audit. Annual Accounts are first placed before the Authority in its forthcoming meeting as per the procedure. Once approved by the Authority, these are forwarded to the Office of the CAG for Certification Audit and Transaction Audit. Since CAG Office have their own schedule and commitments the audit is conducted by them as per their convenient dates. During both the audits issues/queries raised by them are duly attended to on priority. However, at times, the information/ clarification sought is not readily available and it takes time to compile the same.

First the Certification Audit is conducted after which Transactional Audit is conducted. Replies to the half margins issued by the Audit are sent as soon as possible. Based on those replies, after the internal review by the Audit, the Audit Certificate is issued. This Certificate along with Annual Accounts is printed and the accounts are forwarded to APEDA's parent Ministry i.e., Ministry of Commerce and Industry for laying the accounts before two Houses of Parliament.

There have been some delays for the year 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2016-17 due to time taken in compiling information asked for by CAG Audit team and issuance of CAG Certificate. However, for 2015-16, there was a delay of nearly 2 years which is sincerely regretted and is requested to be condoned. The submission of Annual Accounts for 2015-16 to the audit was delayed due to the decision of APEDA Authority, in its 88th Meeting held on 7th October 2016, with respect to treatment of a specific fund called Basmati Development Fund (BDF), which was merged in APEDA accounts earlier but was demerged subsequently. As a result, the modified Annual Accounts had to be presented again to the CAG Audit for obtaining the Audit Certificate."

7. The committee note that persistent delays in laying the documents indicate that due importance was not given to timely laying of the papers before Parliament and the things were taken in a casual manner. To this the Ministry, in their written reply, have submitted as under:-

"Due importance is given to timely laying of the papers before the Parliament. However, as explained above, laying of Annual Accounts and Annual Report of APEDA for 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2016-17 were delayed due to delay in receipt of Audit Certificate. For 2015-16, there was considerable delay, which occurred due to revision of Accounts as per the decision of APEDA Authority."

8. On being enquired by the Committee whether any time schedule has been laid down either by the Board or by the Ministry indicating normative time for completion of the task at each stage involved in finalization of the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts viz. compilation of Annual Accounts, auditing of Accounts, approval of the documents from the Competent Authority, translation and printing and processing in the Ministry for being laid on the Table of the House, the Ministry in its written reply has stated as under: -

"No specific time schedule has been laid down by APEDA for compilation of Annual Accounts Auditing of Accounts, approval of documents from competent authority, translation, printing and processing. However efforts are made to ensure that the activities mentioned above are completed as soon as possible. As directed, time schedule for various activities shall be prepared to avoid delays in future. It will be ensured that the annual accounts duly finalized and approved by the Authority are sent to the office of CAG in the month of June. The matter will also be taken up with CAG to work out mechanism for avoiding delays."

9. The Committee considered the matter of delays in laying of the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority for the years from 2013-2014 to 2016-2017 and took evidence of the representatives of the Ministry of Commerce & Industry (Department of Commerce) on 13.04.2018 on the issue.

10. Elaborating further reasons for delay in laying of the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of APEDA, the Chairman, APEDA explained the following :-

“There were procedural problems in the years 2013-14 and 2014-15 due to which there was delay in laying of Annual Reports and Audited Accounts ranging from 2 months to 2 ½ months. Further, the delay in the year 2015-16 was due to a decision taken on advise of CAG that the Basmati Development fund should not be treated as separate fund. This need to be treated as fund under Authority and to make a consolidated balance sheet. After merger it was taken up in the authority meeting. In this regard, the representations were received from traders specially Basmati Exporters and they requested that such merger would create a lot of problems in export activities of Basmati. Thereafter, Authority had taken up the issue with CAG to prevent the merger and to continue the earlier system. A decision was taken by the Authority to keep Basamati Development fund again as separate account which was as per past practice. After that authority had prepared these accounts and sent to CAG for auditing and further action was initiated on received of Audit Certificate. This was one of the main reason for delay in 2015-16. They further added, there has been delay in two-three other places.”

11. The Committee, subsequently note that the Annual Report and Audited Accounts for the year 2017-18 have been laid on the Table of the House on stipulated time period (Winter session 2018) i.e. 31.12.2018. Further, the Annual Report and Audited Accounts for the year 2018-19 have not been laid yet. **(Annexure-I)**

Observations / Recommendations

12. The Committee has observed that despite repeated recommendations made by the Committee in their First Report (5th Lok Sabha) in Paras 1.16 and 3.5; Second Reports (5th Lok Sabha) in Paras 4.16 and 4.18 of and Second Report (6th Lok Sabha) in Paras 1.12. and 2.6 to 3.8 presented to the House on 08.03.1976, 12.05.1976 and 22.12.1977 respectively, that the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the Autonomous Bodies and Statutory Bodies are required to be laid within nine months from the closure of the accounting year, the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the APEDA for the Years 2013-14 to 2016-2017 were laid on the Table of the House with delay ranging from 2½ months to 11½ months. It is, therefore, appeared that the Ministry of Commerce & Industry (Department of Commerce) as well as Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), New Delhi have not adhered to the recommendations made by the Committee from time to time.

13. While examining the reasons for delay in laying of documents of APEDA the Committee note that there have been some delay for the years 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2016-17 due to time taken in compiling information asked for by CAG audit team and issuance of CAG Certificate. The Committee also note the Annual Report and Audited Accounts of the APEDA for the year 2015-16 were delayed more than 11 months due to the decision of APEDA Authority, to treat Basmati Development Fund (BDF) as specific fund, which was merged in APEDA accounts earlier on the advise of C.A.G. The Committee feel that the Ministry should have devised appropriate system to obviate such kind of delay as they are duty bound to fulfil Parliamentary Obligations to lay these documents within the stipulated time line. The Committee were, however, happy to note that the documents for the year 2017-18 were laid on the Table of the House by 31st December, 2018 within stipulated time period. However, the Annual Report and Audited Accounts for the year 2018-19 have not been laid yet.

14. The Committee also observed that no specific time schedule has been laid down by APEDA for compilation of Annual Accounts, Auditing of Accounts, approval of documents from competent authority, translation, printing and processing. The Committee, however, feel that a time schedule is must for timely completion of these works for the sake of accountability. The Committee, therefore, recommend that a time schedule, on the lines of other organizations should be framed to avoid delay in future

15. The Committee also impressed upon the Ministry that if due to unavoidable reasons, the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the APEDA could not be laid on the Table of the House within the stipulated time; a statement explaining the reasons as to why the requisite documents could not be laid within prescribed period should be laid on the Table of the House within 30 days or as soon as the House meets, whichever is later.

New Delhi
22 September, 2020
31 Bhadrapada, 1942 (Saka)

Shyam Singh Yadav
Chairperson
Committee on Papers Laid on the Table
Lok Sabha

Annexure-I
vide para 04 and 10 of the Report

Statement showing the dates of laying of the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority, New Delhi for the years 2013-14 to 2018-19 vide Bulleting Part-I.

Year	Date by which required to be laid	Date of laying of Annual Reports and Audited Accounts	Extent of delay
2013-2014*	31.12.2014	20.03.2015	2½ months
2014-2015*	31.12.2015	14.03.2016	2½ months
2015-2016*	31.12.2016	18.12.2017	11½ months
2016-2017*	31.12.2017	02.04.2018	03 months
2017-2018#	31.12.2018	31.12.2018	No Delay
2018-2019#	31.12.2019	Not Laid	-

*** Period under examination by the Committee.**

Current Status.

Annexure-II
vide para 05 of the Report

**The chronological sequence in respect of finalization of
Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the
Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA),
New Delhi for the year 2013-14 to 2016-17**

- (a) **The date on which Authority approached the Audit Authorities to appoint the auditors for auditing the Accounts, date of their appointment; and time taken in Appointment after closure of Financial year;**

		2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
1.	Date on which Authority approached the Audit Authorities to appoint the auditors for auditing the Accounts	30.06.2014	08.06.2015	26.07.2016 And 27.09.2017	27.09.2017
2.	Date of their appointment	10.07.2014	19.06.2015	09.08.2016 And 30.12.2016	13.10.2017
3.	Time taken in Appointment after closure of Financial year (No. of days)	101 days	80 days	131 days and 275 days	196 days

- (b) **The date of compilation of Annual Accounts of Authority and time taken after the closure of respective Accounting;**

After compilation of Annual accounts and approval of the authority they are forwarded to CAG usually within a week.

- (c) **The date on which the Annual Accounts were submitted to Auditors for auditing and time taken after appointment of auditors;**

		2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
1.	Date of submission of Annual accounts to auditors	14.07.2014	24.06.2015	10.08.2016 And 02.01.2017	16.10.2017
2.	Number of days taken by CAG Audit team for audit after their appointment	18	28	41 And 5	24

(d) The date and duration for auditing the Annual Accounts of Authority by Auditors;

		2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
1.	Dates of Audit team Inspection	14.07.2014 to 01.08.2014	24.06.2015 to 21.07.2015	10.08.2016 to 19.09.2016 and 02.01.2017 to 06.01.2017	16.10.2017 to 08.11.2017

(e) The date of queries raised by Auditors during auditing of Annual Accounts and time taken after submission of Annual Accounts to Audit Authorities;

The queries were raised by the CAG on last day of Audit. Accordingly these were raised as under:

		2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
1.	Date of raising of queries (Half Margins) by CAG	01.08.2014	21.07.2015	19.09.2016 And 06.01.2017	08.11.2017

(f) The date on which the replies to the audit queries was furnished to the Auditors and the time taken to resolve the queries;

1.	Dates on which the replies to the audit queries was furnished to the Auditors	01.09.2014	03.09.2015	25.10.2016 And 14.02.2017	10.12.2017
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(g) The date on which draft Audit Report was issued by Audit Authorities and time taken after receipt of Annual Accounts;

		2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
1.	Date on which draft Audit Report was issued by Audit Authorities and time taken after receipt of Annual Accounts	15.09.2014 (63 days)	10.09.2015 (78 days)	23.11.2016 (105 days) And 06.03.2017 (63 days)	25.12.2017 (70 days)

(h) The date on which the final Audit Report received by Authority and time taken after issue of draft Report;

		2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
1.	Date of receipt of CAG certificate in APEDA	07.01.2015	14.12.2015	11.05.2017	09.03.2018
2.	Annual Report sent to MoC&I	17.02.2015	22.12.2015	20.07.2017	Report is under printing and shall be forwarded to the Ministry once printed.

(i) The date of finalization of Annual Reports and time taken after receipt of final Audit Report;

		2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
1.	Date of Issue of CAG certificate	07.01.2015	11.12.2015	05.05.2017	07.03.2018
.	Date of receipt of CAG certificate in APEDA	07.01.2015	14.12.2015	11.05.2017	09.03.2018
3.	Annual Report sent to MoC&I	--	22.12.2015	20.07.2017	Report is under printing and shall be forwarded to the Ministry once printed 23.03.2018
4.	Annual Report forwarded by MoC&I for laying on the Table of the House	16.03.2015	22.02.2016	28.11.2017	The Report shall be forwarded by the Ministry on receipt of the same from APEDA 27.03.2018

(j) The date on which documents were got approved from the Competent Authority and time taken after finalization of Annual Report;

		2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
1.	Date of Accounts approved by APEDA Authority	26.06.2014 (81 st meeting)	02.06.2015 (84 th meeting)	11.07.2016 (87 th meeting) And 07.10.2016 (88 th meeting Revised Accounts)	21.09.2017 (90 th meeting)
2.	Date on which annual accounts of APEDA were sent to CAG for Audit	30.06.2014	08.06.2015	26.07.2016 And 15.11.2016	27.09.2017
3.	Dates of CAG Audit team's visit to APEDA	14.07.2014 to 01.08.2014	24.06.2015 to 21.07.2015	10.08.2016 to 19.09.2016 And 02.01.2017 to 06.01.2017	16.10.2017 to 08.11.2017
4.	Date of Issue of CAG certificate	07.01.2015	11.12.2015	05.05.2017	07.03.2018
5.	Date of receipt of CAG certificate in APEDA	07.01.2015	14.12.2015	11.05.2017	09.03.2018
6.	Annual Report sent to MoC&I	17.02.2015	22.12.2015	20.07.2017	Report is under printing and shall be forwarded to the Ministry once printed.
7.	Annual Report forwarded by MoC&I for laying on the Table of the House	16.03.2015	22.02.2016	28.11.2017	The Report shall be forwarded by the Ministry on receipt of the same from APEDA.

(k) The date on which documents were taken up for translation & printing and the time taken for completing the task at each stage;

Documents are translated and printed usually within a week's time from the date of issuance of audit certificate from the office of CAG

(l) The date and time taken for sending the documents to the Ministry for being laid in House after the completion of printing work;

		2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
1.	Annual Report sent to MoC&I	--	22.12.2015	20.07.2017

(m) The date of laying of the documents on the Table of the House and time taken by the Ministry in the process of laying of the documents after receipt of the Annual Report and Audited Accounts from the Authority.

		2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
1.	Annual Report sent to MoC&I	--	22.12.2015	20.07.2017
2.	Annual Report forwarded by MoC&I for laying on the Table of the House	16.03.2015	22.02.2016	28.11.2017

**The Extracts of the Minutes of the sitting of the Committee held on
13.04. 2018**

The Committee sat on Friday, 13th April, 2018 from 11:30 hrs to 13:15 hrs. in Committee Room No. '03', Parliament House Annexe Extension Building, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Shri Chandrakant Khaire - **Chairperson**

MEMBERS

2. Shri P.R. Sundaram
3. Smt. Veena Devi
4. Smt. Mausam Noor
5. Shri Choudhury Mohan Jatua
6. Shri Bheemrao B. Patil

SECRETARIAT

1. Smt. Preeti Srivastava - Joint Secretary
2. Smt. Rita Jaikhani - Director
3. Smt. Maya Lingi - Additional Director
4. Shri R.S. Banga - Deputy Secretary

**REPRESENTATIVES OF MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
(DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE)**

1. Shri S K Sarangi - Joint Secretary

**REPRESENTATIVES OF AGRICULTURAL PROCESSED FOOD PRODUCTS
EXPORT DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (APEDA), NEW DELHI.**

1. Shri. D.K. Singh - Chairman
2. Shri Tarun Bajaj - General Manager
3. Shri S.S. Nayyar - General Manager

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At the outset, the Hon'ble Chairperson welcomed the Members to the sitting of the Committee.

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5. The Committee then called the representatives of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (Department of Commerce) and Agricultural Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), New Delhi.

6. The Chairperson welcomed the representatives of the Ministry and APEDA to the sitting of the Committee and explained the purpose of convening the meeting. The Chairperson also explained to the witnesses the provisions of Direction 58 of Directions issued by the Speaker, Lok Sabha regarding confidentiality of the proceedings.

7. Explaining the reasons for delay in laying of the Annual Report and Audited Accounts of the APEDA for the years 2013-14 to 2015-16 the Chairman of the APEDA apprised the Committee during the evidence that the delay during these three years, especially in first two years has been a delay of 2 months and 2½ months which was due to procedural problems. Further, they stated the detail about the delay in the year 2015-16 was due to a decision taken on advised of CAG that the Basmati Development fund should not be treated as separate fund. This need to be treated as fund under Authority and to make a consolidated balance sheet. After merger it was taken up in the authority meeting. In this regard, the representations were received from traders specially Basmati Exporters and they requested that such merger would create a lot of problems in export activities of Basmati. Thereafter, Authority had taken up the issue with CAG to prevent the merger and to continue the earlier system. A decision was taken by the Authority to keep Basamati Development fund again as separate account which was as per past practice. After that authority had prepared these accounts sent to CAG for auditing and further action was initiated on received of Audit Certificate. This was one of the main reason for delay in 2015-16. They further added, there has been delay in two-three other places. For instance, there was delay in sending the report. They got the certificate and there was some delay in getting the annual report printed and translated. They took two months for this process while generally it takes around one month to one and half month.

8. The representative of the Ministry submitted the objective of the Ministry is to receive the Annual Accounts of all Boards and Authorities by 31 December for which they monitor. The Ministry also take up with the CAG to expedite the process and try to make all the accounts available on time. Further, it is also submitted that all the Accounts of the Organisations are recorded in the related accounting software so that further delayed could be avoided.

9. Thereafter, the Hon'ble Chairperson thanked the representatives of the Ministry and the APEDA for the useful discussion and requested to respond to the queries raised by the Members - in connection with examination of the subject.

The witnesses then withdrew.

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15. A copy of the verbatim proceedings of the sitting of the Committee has been kept on record.

The Committee then adjourned.

**THE EXTRACTS OF THE MINUTES OF THE SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE
HELD ON 22.09.2020**

The Committee sat on Tuesday, 22th September, 2020 from 11:00 hrs to 13:00 hrs. in Committee Room 'B', Parliament House Annexe Building, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Shri Shyam Singh Yadav - **Chairperson**

MEMBERS

2. Shri Shafiqur Rahman Barq
3. Shri Raja Amareshwar Naik
4. Smt. Aparupa Poddar
5. Shri T. N. Prathapan

SECRETARIAT

1. Smt. Suman Arora - Joint Secretary
2. Smt. B.Visala - Director
3. Shri R.K.Chaudhary - Under Secretary

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2. At the outset, the Hon'ble Chairperson welcomed the Members to the sitting of the Committee and explained the purpose of convening the meeting.

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4. The Committee then took up for consideration Eight Draft Reports (Original) regarding delay in laying of the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the :-

- (i) The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), New Delhi;
- (ii) The Maulana Azad Education Foundation, New Delhi;
- (iii) The Commission of Railway Safety, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh;
- (iv) The National Legal Services Authority (NALSA), New Delhi;

- (v) The National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research, Raebareli, U.P;
- (vi) The Ujala Society, Jammu;
- (vii) The Port Blair Municipal Council (PBMC), Port Blair; and
- (viii) The National Commission for Scheduled Tribes, New Delhi.

After deliberations, the Committee adopted these Eight Reports (Original) without modifications.

5. The Committee then took up for consideration draft Report regarding Action taken by Government on the recommendations/Observations made by the Committee in their 21st Report (16th Lok Sabha) in respect of delay in laying of the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi.

After deliberations, the Committee adopted the Draft Action Taken Report without modifications.

6. The Committee authorized the Hon'ble Chairperson to present both the Original Reports and the Action Taken Report to the Parliament.

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The Committee then adjourned.
