

TWELFTH KERALA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**COMMITTEE
ON
PUBLIC ACCOUNTS
(2008-2011)**

ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTEENTH REPORT

(Presented on 22nd March, 2010)



SECRETARIAT OF THE KERALA LEGISLATURE
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM
2010

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On

**Action taken by Government on the Recommendations contained
in the Sixty Third Report of the Committee on
Public Accounts (1991-1993)**

487/2010.

CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
Composition of the Committee ..	v
Introduction ..	vii
Report ..	1
Appendix :	
Summary of Main Conclusions/Recommendations ..	8

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INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman, Committee on Public Accounts having been authorised by the Committee to present this Report on their behalf present the Hundred and Fifteenth Report on Action Taken by Government on the Recommendations contained in the Sixty Third Report of the Committee on Public Accounts (1991-93).

The Committee considered and finalised this Report at the meeting held on 20th January, 2010.

Thiruvananthapuram,
22 March, 2010.

ARYADAN MUHAMMED,
Chairman,
Committee on Public Accounts.

REPORT

This Report deals with the action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the 63rd Report of PAC (1991-93).

The 63rd Report of the Committee on Public Accounts (1991-93) was presented to the House on July 22, 1993. The Report contained Eight recommendations relating to Water Resources Department. Government were addressed to furnish the statements of action taken on the recommendations contained in the report on 12th August, 1993 and the final replies were received on 9th March 2006.

The Committee examined the statements of action taken at its meeting held on 20-12-2006 and were not satisfied with the Statement of Action Taken by Government on the recommendation Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 and 8 (Para Nos.15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21 and 22) and decided to pursue them further. Those recommendations, action taken statements and the further recommendations are incorporated in Chapter I of this Report.

The Committee decided not to pursue further action on recommendation No. 5, Para No.19 in the light of the reply furnished by Government. The recommendation of the Committee and Action Taken by Government is incorporated in Chapter-II of this Report.

CHAPTER I

RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH ACTION TAKEN BY
GOVERNMENT ARE NOT SATISFACTORY AND WHICH
REQUIRES REITERATION**WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT****Recommendation***(Sl. No. 1, Para No. 15)*

1.1 The Committee note large scale irregularities and misdeeds in the execution of anti-sea erosion works. Notwithstanding the bitter criticisms and intense recommendations of erstwhile Public Accounts Committee that anti-sea erosion works should be completed well before the onset of monsoon, nine works in Kollam, Alappuzha, Ernakulam, Thrissur and Kozhikode Divisions were executed during monsoon season resulting in extensive damage and total collapse of the sea walls. The Department in its note furnished to the committee disowns responsibility over the sinking of sea walls constructed during the period 1984-85 and 1986. History of the construction and collapse of some of the sea wall is dubious to the Department and to the C.T.E. The C.T.E. in his note had confirmed that undersize stones were used for armour stones and extreme care was not taken by the Department in the choice of proper size armour stones. This reveals the fact that Department had no proper planning in selection of sites and programming of works, which resulted in washing away of sea walls and loss of huge sum of public money.

Action Taken

1.2 Generally the construction of sea walls are being arranged with a time of completion of 12 to 24 months. In the programme chart, there is no break up period for monsoon season. Therefore, in one year, if monsoon period is exempted only six months time will be available i.e., anti-sea erosion works with time of completion of 12 months will take a minimum period of two years for completion. It shows that a sea wall has to withstand two monsoon seasons during construction and during that period there is always the possibility of sinkage. Moreover, even in the design itself it is recommended that 10% of the original estimate has to be set apart for the subsequent years for rectifying damages. All the investigations and research works regarding the sea walls are being carried out by the Central Water Power Research Station in co-ordination with Coastal Erosion Field Studies of the Irrigation Department.

Recommendation

(Sl. No. 2, Para No. 16)

1.3 The reason adduced by the Department for dumping of stones during monsoon months was the threat of loss to life and property. Dismissing this argument, the Committee, maintain that loss to life and property could be avoided by evacuating and rehabilitating the people dwelling at sea coast at a lesser cost rather than dumping of stones hurriedly in the rough sea and high tides which is always fraught with risk of sinking.

Action Taken

1.4 The sea wall construction starts in October-November and ends before the onset of the monsoon. Generally the filter bed core layer and most of the armour cores are dumped and so 75% of the work will be completed before the onset of monsoon and in most cases only the armour cores packing will be left behind after completion of the work. The armour layer packing is essential to avoid high waves action and to prevent head side scouring resulting in heavy damages in some cases and causing collapse of the seawall.

(Remarks on Para Nos. 15 & 16)

1.5 The Committee opine that the reply from the department is not satisfactory and suggests that the reply to the Committee be precise and clear. The Statement of Action Taken from the department to the recommendations of each Para relating to anti-sea erosion works during monsoon season is contradictory. The Committee remarks that an expert agency should be appointed to study how the anti-sea erosion works are to be improved by adopting new technology suitable to our State and not causing any loss to Government.

Recommendation

(Sl. No. 3, Para No. 17)

1.6 The execution of works during monsoon months without placing the filter course core materials and armour course properly, abandoning of works in midway after spending considerable amount and the inaction of the Department in taking action against the persons responsible for squandering public money, leave no doubt that there was malicious intention behind the works executed.

Action Taken

1.7 ASE works are not generally carried out during monsoon season. However in certain cases where the works are nearing completion, by placing

the armour stones in the near side alone, permission will be given to complete such work even after the commencement of monsoon. While executing ASE works which cannot be completed within one season, the procedure followed is to take up only a certain length of the work.

1.8 In any ASE work if the contractor abandons the work midway, the procedure followed is to rearrange the entire balance work at the risk and cost of original contractor. The loss sustained if any to Government, will be made good from the defaulted contractor and there are no specific cases noticed in which the above practice was not followed.

Further Recommendation

1.9 **Notwithstanding strict instruction from Government that anti-sea erosion works shouldn't be done during monsoon seasons, works were executed during monsoon season resulting in total collapse of the sea walls and loss of huge sum of public money. The Committee opines that this is absolutely illegal and not justifiable.**

1.10 **The Committee strongly recommends to take action against the officers who were responsible for squandering public money and to recover the amount from them.**

Recommendation

(Sl. No. 4, Para No. 18)

1.11 Taking all the facts into consideration and after examining the C.T.E. and Government spokesmen, the Committee recommend that Government should order an enquiry to bring the persons responsible to spot light for the total collapse of the sea walls and loss sustained to Government should be recovered from them.

Action Taken

1.12 The construction of sea wall is being executed as per the approved design. During the execution period the work will be inspected by higher authorities like the Executive Engineer, the Superintending Engineer and some times by the Chief Engineer. Hence it is clear that the total collapse of sea wall is not due to lack of supervision of departmental officers. The formation of mud bank by the sea and heavy erosion of land concentrating at a particular location are a rare phenomena noticed in Kerala sea coast. In certain occasions this type of sea erosion may occur at the location where sea wall is newly constructed and in such cases failure of sea wall may occur. Government have noticed this and a Committee had been formed under Dr. Manmohan. As per his report the newly formed sea wall is susceptible to failure continuously for five years and maintenance is required for that period. Government have accepted the

recommendation of PAC to initiate an enquiry wherever sea wall collapse occurs in future. Government have issued strict directions to the Chief Engineer, Irrigation and Administration to the effect that whenever sea wall collapse occurs in future an enquiry shall be conducted by an officer not below the rank of Superintending Engineer, a representative of Chief Technical Examiner and an Officer of the Coastal Erosion Studies Wing (KERI) to probe into the reasons for the collapse and to submit recommendations for the recovery of the loss, if the calamity was due to defective planning and execution of work.

1.13 The Chief Engineer has also reported that works are being periodically inspected by the Superintending Engineer and the Chief Technical Examiner and the Coastal Erosion Officials.

Further Recommendation

1.14 The Committee strongly recommends to take action to see that such instances are not repeated in future.

Recomemndation

(Sl. No. 6, Para No. 20)

1.15 The Committee observe that unless the sea wall is maintained properly, it will not be an effective protection against waves. The Central Water and Power Research Station had recommended about 5 to 10 per cent of the capital cost for annual maintenance. However only 1.23 per cent was spent on maintenance during the period 1985-86 to 1988-89. The witness stated that central assistance had been discontinued since 1992 and therefore necessary provisions have to be made in the State Budget. The Committee are of the opinion that maintenance of sea wall is a must and it should not be hindered due to paucity of funds.

Action Taken

1.16 Government agree that maintenance of sea wall is a must and it should not have been hindered due to paucity of funds. Action has been taken by Government to obtain continued central assistance for the construction and maintenance of sea wall. Sufficient funds are also allotted for this in the budget for 2001-2002. The budget allocation of the year 1996-97 under 2711-02-103-99 ASE Works plan was Rs. 371.17 lakh and under non-plan head of account, the amount was Rs. 1055 lakh and for original works under 4711-02-103- ASE Civil Works (P) the amount provided was to Rs. 1083.79 lakh.

Further Recommendation

1.17 The Committee recommends that in our State Budget, from the budget allocation of Irrigation Department, 5% to 10% has to be set apart for seawall construction and annual maintenance.

Recommendation

(Sl. No. 7 Para No. 21)

1.18 The Committee noticed that the Chief Technical Examiner and the Inspection Wing of the Finance Department had noticed and reported instances of defects in the execution of anti-sea erosion works. But the Irrigation Department is not sending any rectification reports in respect of the defects pointed out by the Chief Technical Examiner. The Committee view this very seriously and recommends that they may be furnished with the details regarding the action taken on these cases. The Committee is of the opinion that there should be some machinery to review and analyse the Chief Technical Examiner's report and the action taken by the department on the recommendations periodically.

Action Taken

1.19 The recommendation of the Public Accounts Committee has been accepted. The Deputy Chief Engineer (Works) in the office of the Chief Engineer, (Irrigation and Administration) has been entrusted with the work of analyzing the Chief Technical Examiner's reports and he will be responsible for the follow up action.

Further Recommendation

1.20 The Committee recommends to take immediate action on the Enquiry Reports of Chief Technical Examiner analyzed by the Deputy Chief Engineer.

Recommendation

(Sl. No. 8, Para No. 22)

1.21 The Committee learn that a sum of Rupees one hundred crores and thirty-eight lakhs has been expended for anti-sea erosion works since 1959, but even 25 per cent of its benefits could not be achieved. The Committee opine that since anti-sea erosion work is a fight against the vagaries of nature, maximum sincerity for meticulous planning should be bestowed for its success.

Action Taken

1.22 The views of the Committee are noted for future guidance and meticulous planning.

Remarks

1.23 The Committee points out that the Irrigation Department hadn't considered Accountant General's Paragraphs seriously. Our State couldn't achieve 25% of the benefits of the anti-sea erosion works done. So, the defects of the work have to be identified and proper planning has to be done to achieve benefits.

CHAPTER II

RECOMMENDATION WHICH THE COMMITTEE DOES NOT
DESIRE TO PURSUE IN THE LIGHT OF THE REPLY
FURNISHED BY GOVERNMENT**Recommendation***(Sl. No. 5, Para No. 19)*

2.1 During evidence the Committee came to understand that no change in the design of sea wall construction is effected for the past 23 years. The design still followed is that formulated by Central Water and Power Research Station (Pune) in 1970. The Committee are of the opinion that the Department should study the problems and behaviour of the Kerala Coast and bring about appropriate modifications for more economic design taking into account the enormous amount now being spent for the sea walls that amounts to roughly more than one crore per kilometre.

Action Taken

2.2 The research and studies are done by the Central Water Power and Research Station in Co-ordination with Coastal Erosion Field Studies Wing of the Irrigation Department. A lot of experiments in this field are going on and some experimental works are taken up for execution in Alappuzha and Kollam Division.

2.3 The failure of sea wall is not due to the typical design of the sea wall. Now the sea wall protecting some area of Kerala coasts is being constructed with new design by the introduction of woven geofabric filter as filter media.

ARYADAN MUHAMMED,

Thiruvananthapuram,
22 March, 2010.*Chairman,
Committee on Public Accounts*

APPENDIX

Summary of Main Conclusions/Recommendations

<i>Sl. No.</i>	<i>Para No.</i>	<i>Department Concerned</i>	<i>Conclusions/Recommendations</i>
1	1.9	Water Resources	Notwithstanding strict instruction from Government that anti-sea erosion works shouldn't be done during monsoon seasons, works were executed during monsoon season resulting in total collapse of the sea walls and loss of huge sum of public money. The Committee opines that this is absolutely illegal and not justifiable.
2	1.10	„	The Committee strongly recommends to take action against the officers who were responsible for squandering public money and to recover the amount from them.
3	1.14	„	The Committee observe that unless the sea wall is maintained properly, it will not be an effective protection against waves. The Central Water and Power Research Station had recommended about 5 to 10 per cent of the capital cost for annual maintenance. However only 1.23 per cent was spent on maintenance during the period 1985-86 to 1988-89. The witness stated that central assistance had been discontinued since 1992 and therefore necessary provisions have to be made in the State Budget. The Committee are of the opinion that maintenance of sea wall is a must and it should not be hindered due to paucity of funds.
4	1.17	„	The Committee recommends that in our State Budget, from the budget allocation of Irrigation Department, 5% to 10% has to be set apart for seawall construction and annual maintenance
5	1.20	„	The Committee recommends to take immediate action on the Enquiry Reports of Chief Technical Examiner analyzed by the Deputy Chief Engineer.

ERRATA

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS (2008-11) ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTEENTH REPORT

<i>Page No.</i>	<i>Para No.</i>	<i>Read</i>
8 (Appendix)	1.14	For the entries in para No. 1.14 the following may be substituted “The Committee strongly recommends to take action to see that such instances are not repeated in future”.

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