

NEWS ITEMS ON CAG/ AUDIT REPORTS (06.09.2022)

1. Modi govt pushes ministries to boost capex to help India get into top 3 global economies (theprint.in) 6 September, 2022

The Centre has yet again directed its ministries and departments to increase the pace of capital spending to not only boost growth but also help create more jobs, ThePrint has learnt — a development that comes at a time when states' capex has slowed.

The directions on capital spending came from Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba in a review meeting he chaired on 12 August to discuss the preparation of Vision India 2047 — a plan to bring India among the top three global economies and inch closer to the status of a developed nation by the 100th year of its Independence.

According to the minutes of the review meeting accessed by ThePrint, Gauba asked ministries and departments "to step-up capital expenditure and monitor it to ensure that expenditure incurred is [according to] the requirement projected".

Capital expenditure is the money that the government spends for long term-asset creation. It could be investing in machinery, buildings, healthcare, and infrastructure, among other things.

Budget 2022-23 shows that the central government is projected to spend a record Rs 7.5 lakh crore in capital creation in the financial year 2022-23. Out of this, Rs 1 lakh crore is kept aside as assistance that will be given to states in the form of 50-year interest-free loans to fund the capital expenditure plans.

Until July, the Modi government had spent Rs 2,08,670 crore on capital expenditure — a jump of 62.5 per cent from the Rs 1,28,428 spent in April-July 2021 — according to the Controller General of Accounts (CGA), the central government's principal adviser on accounting matters.

Keeping aside the interest-free loans to states, the central government will have to spend Rs 55,000 crore on average in the next eight months to meet the capex target.

The government's push on capital spending comes when the retail inflation remains elevated (6.7 per cent in July) and rising global interest rates, which have pushed the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to hike interest rates in order to suppress demand.

But such a push has also led the gross fixed capital formation — a proxy for investment levels in the economy — to register a healthy growth of 20.1 per cent in the first quarter of 2022-23 over the same period last year.

Data with the CGA shows that the ministries of road transport and highways and railways have witnessed healthy growth in capital spending in April-July, with capital expenditure by the two ministries jumping over 40 per cent till July.

Resolve pending matters through 'Special Campaign'

It was also decided in the meeting that all ministries and departments need to focus on the disposal of pending matters during the 'Special Campaign' — the central government's

initiative to dispose of any pending matters before it — to be scheduled from 2 October to 31 October this year.

“A few hours may be set aside every week for [the] disposal of such matters. Monitoring of pendency to be done on a regular basis,” the minutes of the meeting said.

The ministries and the departments have also been told to immediately review the observations contained in the CAG report tabled in Parliament earlier this year and take corrective/remedial actions.

“Officers at all levels to be sensitised about the importance of CAG’s observations so that systemic improvements are carried out in a time-bound manner,” the minutes stated.

Directions were also issued to take prompt action to fill up direct recruitment vacancies, fill up posts on promotion, and vacancies anticipated on account of superannuation in various ministries and government departments.

In the meeting, the cabinet secretary also highlighted Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s Independence Day address about what India should aspire for in the next 25 years.

According to a senior government official, the secretary of agriculture and farmers’ welfare stressed the need to “re-organise the ministry” and the “change” required in its outlook. “He observed that it is necessary to shift focus from production towards value chain creation, with the government playing the role of a facilitator,” the senior official told ThePrint. <https://theprint.in/economy/modi-govt-pushes-ministries-to-boost-capex-to-help-india-get-into-top-3-global-economies/1117003/>

STATES NEWS ITEMS

2. Audit report flags misuse of funds in Madhya Pradesh (thehindu.com) SEPTEMBER 05, 2022

A confidential 36-page report by the Madhya Pradesh Accountant-General has unearthed an alleged fraud to the tune of several crores in the State’s nutrition programme for schoolchildren.

Since the audit report came to light, the Opposition Congress has been attacking Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan who supervises the Women and Child Development Department. The only response from the government till Monday evening was that the “report was not final”.

The audit report observes that there was “large scale fraud/misappropriation etc in the identification of beneficiaries, production, transportation, distribution and quality control of THR [Take Home Ration]”.

The THR is a component of the Supplementary Nutrition Programme, one of the services provided under the Integrated Child Development Scheme or ICDS. In simple words, THR comprises food grains and other items provided to address the nutritional requirements of 49.58 lakh beneficiaries — children (0.5–3 years), pregnant and lactating mothers, and out-of-school adolescent girls (11-14 years).

Fake beneficiaries

While the department procured and distributed 4.05 tonnes of THR to these beneficiaries between 2018 and 2021 that cost the exchequer ₹2,393.21 crore, the auditor examined the THR given to 24% of the beneficiaries (nearly 12 lakh) and found that there were irregularities in estimating the number of beneficiaries, transportation, ration mills producing beyond capacity and falsified distribution, among others.

The auditor found that the Women and Child Development Department had estimated, without conducting any baseline survey, the number of out-of-school adolescent girls at 36.08 lakh, way higher than the School Education Department estimate of 9,000 in 2018-19 and the ration was drawn in their names. In 49 anganwadis in eight districts, where only three such adolescent girls were registered, rations worth ₹110.83 crore were distributed to 29,104 such girls after listing 63,748 as beneficiaries.

Similarly, the registration number of “trucks” that six manufacturing plants or firms claimed to have been used to transport 1,125.64 tonnes of rations costing ₹6.94 crores were found to be those of motorcycles, cars, autos and tankers. The report says that more than 10,000 tonnes of rations, costing ₹62.72 crores, were not transported nor available in the warehouse.

The report highlights that in the 2017-19 period, Madhya Pradesh reported the maximum number of infant deaths and stood third in terms of maternal mortality in the country.

On the alleged scam, State Home Minister Narottam Mishra said that the audit report was not final but a part of the process. He said that the Public Accounts Committee would examine it.

Meanwhile the Congress has been attacking the Chief Minister on the issue.

“The Home Minister gives a clean chit to the culprits even before an investigation. This incident has shown that the MP government backs criminals and the corrupt. The Chief Minister’s involvement should also be probed as the department comes directly under him,” said Congress media-in-charge K.K. Mishra.

Congress general secretary in charge of communications Jairam Ramesh tweeted that the “BJP government of Madhya Pradesh had earlier ruined the future of the youth with the Vyapam scam. Now injustice to poor children and pregnant women! Did Mama [Mr. Chouhan] form the government with Maharaj [Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia] just to commit such scams?”. <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/audit-report-flags-misuse-of-funds-in-madhya-pradesh/article65854495.ece>

3. Madhya Pradesh: Audit report claims massive corruption in nutrition scheme; Kamal Nath seeks probe ([theweek.in](https://www.theweek.in)) 05 Sep 2022

Citing an audit report of Madhya Pradesh Accountant General (AG), which indicates massive corruption in the nutritious food programme of the women and child development department (DWCD), ex-chief minister Kamal Nath has demanded a high-level probe into the matter and stringent action against the guilty persons.

Nath also pointed out that currently Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan holds the charge of DWCD.

The report of the MP Accountant General office (a copy available with THE WEEK) shows huge discrepancies in the take home ration (THR) component of the supplementary nutrition programme under Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS). THR is given to kids between six months and three years of age, out of school adolescent girls and pregnant and lactating women.

The report by deputy accountant general (audit management group II) points out fake distribution of THR worth Rs 110.83 crores to out of school adolescent girls through data manipulation, fake production of THR worth Rs 58 crores and fake supply of THR worth Rs 4.95 crores by six manufacturing plants.

Also there are glaring irregularities in transport of THR worth Rs 6.94 crores as the registration numbers of the trucks shown to be used for transport, when verified, were found to belong to motorcycles, cars, autos and tankers, or the trucks (numbers) did not exist in database at all, the report mentions.

The report also said that all samples sent to independent laboratories drawn out of 38,304 metric tons THR costing Rs 237 crores, did not conform to the required nutritional value. This indicates that the beneficiaries got poor quality THR, the report said. Various other irregularities in stock maintenance and distribution were also found.

The audit was conducted on state DWCD's procurement and distribution of 4.05 metric tons of THR to 1.35 crores beneficiaries at the cost of Rs 2393.21 crores between April 2018 and March 2021.

Interestingly, the Congress was in power in the state from December 2018 to March 2020, while the rest of the period was under the BJP rule.

Kamal Nath, however, tweeted to say that it was common for corruption and scam to happen in all the schemes under the BJP government in Madhya Pradesh. "Now nutritious food scam has come to the fore. A huge game was played in the name of production, transport and distribution of nutritious food given to kids and women according to a report of the accountant general. The numbers of trucks used for transport of thousands of kgs of nutritious food worth crores of rupees found to be of autos, cars and tankers. Scam was also done by distribution of ration worth crores in the name of kids who did not go to school," Nath said.

He further said that on one hand Madhya Pradesh is the worst performer as regards malnutrition and on the other there is a scam in the name of nutritious food. This shows the outlook and attitude of the government. "There should be a high-level probe into the scam, stringent action on the guilty and accountability should also be fixed," Nath said.

Reacting, BJP spokesman Hitesh Bajpai said that every observation of the Accountant General office cannot be considered a scam unless proved so. "The AG office points out discrepancies that are reflected in audit sheets. This cannot be called a financial scam. The allegations of the Congress are political in nature and totally unsubstantiated," Bajpai told THE WEEK. <https://www.theweek.in/news/india/2022/09/05/madhya-pradesh-audit-report-claims-massive-corruption-in-nutrition-scheme-kamal-nath-seeks-probe.html>

4. Massive Food Scam In MP; Women And Children Suffered (timesnownews.com) 06 Sep 2022

The Madhya Pradesh government's nutrition program for children has been plagued by eye-popping levels of corruption, running the danger of leaving them undernourished and costing taxpayers crores of rupees in lost revenue. Examples include ration transport vehicles that were discovered to be motorbikes and extreme exaggeration of the number of recipients. A confidential 36-page study obtained exclusively from the Madhya Pradesh Accountant General revealed large-scale fraud, inconsistencies in the identification of recipients, manufacturing, distribution, and quality control of the ambitious free meal plan for schools. Some of the report's more severe results were based on an analysis of around 24 percent of recipients of the Take Home Ration plan for 2021, a program entrusted with delivering much-needed nutrition to 49.58 lakh enrolled.

Video **Link:** <https://www.timesnownews.com/videos/mirror-now/politics/breaking-news-massive-food-scam-in-mp-women-and-children-suffered-latest-news-video-94023120>

5. MP में टेक होम राशन, मुफ्त भोजन योजना में घोटाला: कागजों में बांटा 110 क रोड़ का राशन; CAG रिपोर्ट में खुलासा, बाइकार को बताया ट्रक (bhaskar.com) 06 Sep 2022

मध्यप्रदेश में टेक होम राशन और मुफ्त भोजन योजना में बड़ा घोटाला सामने आया है। यह खुलासा सीएजी (नियंत्रक एवं महालेखा परीक्षक) की रिपोर्ट में हुआ है। सीएजी ने 8 जिलों में सैंपल जांच में पाया है कि वर्ष 2018-21 के दौरान 8 जिलों की 48 आंगनवाड़ियों में रजिस्टर्ड बच्चों से ज्यादा को 110.83 करोड़ रुपए का राशन कागजों में बांट दिया गया। इतना ही नहीं, इन जिलों में करीब 97 हजार मीट्रिक टन पोषण आहार स्टॉक में बताया था, जबकि करीब 87 हजार मीट्रिक टन पोषण आहार बांटना बताया यानी करीब 10 हजार मीट्रिक टन आहार गायब था। इसकी कीमत करीब 62 करोड़ रुपए है।

प्रदेश में महिला एवं बाल विकास विभाग 3 साल की उम्र के बच्चों, गर्भवती और 11 से 14 साल तक की स्कूल से बाहर होने वाली लड़कियों को पूरक पोषण आहार के तहत टेक होम राशन बांटता है। रिपोर्ट के अनुसार लाभार्थियों की पहचान, उत्पादन, परिवहन वितरण और टेक-होम राशन के गुणवत्ता के नियंत्रण में बड़े पैमाने पर हेराफेरी हुई है। ऑडिटर जनरल ने राज्य सरकार के मुख्य सचिव को कथित घोटाले की जांच एक स्वतंत्र एजेंसी से कराने को कहा है। साथ ही, अधिकारियों की जिम्मेदारी तय करने को कहा है।

सरकार बोली- यह रिपोर्ट अंतिम सत्य नहीं

रिपोर्ट पर सरकार के प्रवक्ता नरोत्तम मिश्रा ने कहा कि CAG की रिपोर्ट अंतिम नहीं होती। यह उनकी राय होती है। इसके बाद ऑडिट रिपोर्ट पर राज्य सरकार स्कूटनी करती है, इसीलिए इसे अंतिम निष्कर्ष कहना ठीक नहीं है। यह रिपोर्ट जब आती है, तो अकाउंट सेक्शन की कमेटी होती है, वह इसमें अंतिम निर्णय करती है।

हर काम में भ्रष्टाचार व घोटाले होना आम बात: कमलनाथ

पूर्व मुख्यमंत्री कमलनाथ ने सरकार पर हमला बोलते हुए कहा है कि अब शिवराज सरकार में पोषण आहार घोटाला सामने आया है। मध्यप्रदेश में भाजपा सरकार में हर योजना में, हर काम में भ्रष्टाचार व घोटाला

आम है। जहां घोटाला हुआ है, वह विभाग मुख्यमंत्री के पास है, टेक होम राशन के नाम पर फर्जीवाड़ा किया गया है। एक तरफ तो मध्यप्रदेश वर्षों से कुपोषण में देश में अक्वल है। दूसरी तरफ पोषण आहार के नाम पर इस तरह का फर्जीवाड़ा, इस सरकार की सोच व नीयत बता रहा है। इस घोटाले की जांच कर दोषियों पर कार्रवाई होना चाहिए।

घटिया सप्लाई करने वाली फर्मी को 238 करोड़ का भुगतान

प्रदेश सरकार ने पोषण आहार की गुणवत्ता की जांच स्वतंत्र लैब से भी कराई है। रिपोर्ट कहती है कि प्रदेश की विभिन्न फर्मी ने घटिया क्वालिटी का करीब 40 हजार मैट्रिक टन पोषण आहार बांटा है। इसके एवज में अफसरों ने करीब 238 करोड़ रुपए का भुगतान भी कर दिया। लेकिन घटिया क्वालिटी का पोषण आहार सप्लाई करने वाली फर्मी के खिलाफ कार्रवाई नहीं की गई। इतना ही नहीं जिम्मेदार अधिकारियों से इस संबंध में कोई पूछताछ भी नहीं की गई।

8 जिलों में सैंपल जांच

सीएजी ने धार, मंडला, झाबुआ, रीवा, सागर, सतना, मंडला और शिवपुरी जिले की आंगनबाड़ियों में सैंपल जांच की थी। इसमें पाया गया कि पोषण आहार स्टॉक में 97 हजार मैट्रिक टन में से 87 हजार मीट्रिक टन बांट दिया। यानी 10 हजार टन गायब था। इसकी कीमत करीब 62 करोड़ रुपए है। इसी तरह 6 फर्मी से 6.94 करोड़ का राशन का परिवहन बाड़क, ऑटो और टैंकर से होना पाया गया है। यहां 4.95 करोड़ का 821.8 टन राशन की नकली आपूर्ति का संदेह होना बताया गया है।

ऐसे पकड़ में आया घोटाला

2018-19 में स्कूल शिक्षा विभाग ने स्कूल से बाहर लड़कियों की संख्या 9 हजार होने का अनुमान लगाया था, लेकिन महिला एवं बाल विकास विभाग ने 36.08 लाख मान लिया। दरअसल, महिला एवं बाल विकास विभाग को स्कूल नहीं जाने वाली छात्राओं की संख्या का बेसलाइन सर्वे करना था। इसके आधार पर राशन बांटा जाना था, लेकिन यह सर्वे नहीं किया गया। स्कूल शिक्षा विभाग के 9 हजार बच्चों की संख्या को दरकिनार कर सर्वे के 36 लाख से ज्यादा संख्या मान ली गई।

दो विकासखंडों में स्टॉक रजिस्टर ही नहीं

शिवपुरी जिले के दो विकासखंडों खनियाधाना और कोलारस में सिर्फ आठ महीने के अंदर पांच करोड़ रुपए के पोषण आहार का भुगतान स्वीकृत कर दिया गया। इनके पास स्टॉक रजिस्टर तक नहीं मिला। इसके चलते पोषण आहार के आने-जाने की कोई एंट्री या पंचनामा नहीं मिला है। इतना ही नहीं, बिना किसी प्रक्रिया के अधिकारियों ने फर्मी को पूरा भुगतान तक कर दिया है।

58 करोड़ का नकली उत्पादन

रिपोर्ट के अनुसार 58 करोड़ का नकली उत्पादन किया गया। धार, मंडला रीवा सागर और शिवपुरी में यह गड़बड़ी देखने को मिली है। यहां चालान जारी करने की तारीख पर टेक होम राशन के स्टॉक नहीं होने के बाद भी 822 मीट्रिक टन राशन की सप्लाई बता दी गई। मतलब जो था नहीं उसे भी बांट दिया गया।

क्लैरिकल मिस्टेक बता रही सरकार

माल की ढुलाई के लिए जिन गाड़ियों को ट्रक बताया गया है, वह बाइक और ऑटो के नंबर हैं। सरकार इसके लिए क्लैरिकल (लिपिकीय) त्रुटि को जिम्मेदार बता रही है। एमपी एगो की जांच में पाया गया कि एमपी जीएफ 9139 को एमपी-04 और एमपी 09 एचजी 9555 को 9559 के रूप में लिस्टेड किया था। वहीं, घटिया राशन पर सरकार ने कहा है कि इसे प्रयोगशाला में भेजा गया था, जांच में गड़बड़ी मिलने के बाद भुगतान में 15% या 38 करोड़ रुपए काटे गए हैं। <https://www.bhaskar.com/local/mp/news/revealed-in-the-cag-report-the-truck-told-the-bike-and-the-car-government-bid-report-is-not-the-final-truth-130278626.html>

6. महिलाओं के पोषण के नाम पर मध्यप्रदेश में हुआ करीब 160 करोड़ का राशन घोटाला, ऑडिट रिपोर्ट में हुआ खुलासा ([bhaskarhindi.com](https://www.bhaskarhindi.com)) 05 Sep 2022

मध्यप्रदेश के महिला एवं बाल विकास विभाग के पोषण आहार में चारा घोटाला की तर्ज पर राशन घोटाला सामने आया है। कैग की टेक होम राशन की ऑडिट रिपोर्ट में उत्पादन, वितरण, परिवहन और गुणवत्ता में बड़ी गड़बड़ी उजागर हुई है। रिपोर्ट में हुए खुलासों पर मध्यप्रदेश के गृह मंत्री नरोत्तम मिश्रा ने अपनी प्रतिक्रिया देते हुए कहा है कि सीएजी की रिपोर्ट कोई फाइनल रिपोर्ट नहीं होती, ये सिर्फ राय देती है। अकाउंट कमेटी और विधानसभा की लोक लेखा समिति के पास भी मामला जांच के लिए जाता है। तब पता चलेगा।

क्या घोटाला हुआ?

आपको बता दें मध्यप्रदेश में पूरक पोषण आहार के अंतर्गत तीन साल की उम्र के बच्चों, गर्भवती व स्तनपान कराने वाली माताओं और 11 से 14 वर्ष के आयु वर्ग में स्कूल से बाहर की किशोरियों की पोषण आहार दिया जाता है। राशन घोटाला की गड़बड़ी मुख्यतः मध्यप्रदेश के धार, मंडला, रीवा, सागर और शिवपुरी में देखने को मिली है। जहां स्टॉक में राशन नहीं होने पर भी 822 मीट्रिक टन राशन सप्लाई कर दिया गया।

बिना सर्वे के किया वितरित

स्कूल शिक्षा विभाग के 9 हजार बच्चों की संख्या को ना मानते हुए बिना सर्वे के 36 लाख से ज्यादा संख्या मान ली, और स्कूल नहीं जाने वाली छात्राओं को बिना सर्वे किए हुए पोषण आहार वितरित कर दिया। 2018-21 के बीच करीब 48 आंगनवाड़ियों में दर्ज बच्चों की संख्या से ज्यादा 110 करोड़ का राशन कागजों पर बांटा गया है।

कागजों में बांटा नकली आहार

2018 से 2021 के बीच करीब 1.35 करोड़ महिलाओं को 2393 करोड़ का 4.05 मीट्रिक टेक होम राशन वितरित किया गया है। ऑडिट रिपोर्ट में दावा किया जा रहा है कि टेक होम राशन बड़ी मात्रा में सिर्फ कागजों में बांट दिया गया। साथ ही करीब 58 करोड़ का नकली पोषण आहार का उत्पादन किया गया।

छोटे वाहनों को कागजों में बताया ट्रक

रिपोर्ट में दावा किया जा रहा है कि राशन बनाने वाली 6 फर्मों से परिवहन के नाम बाइक, कार, ऑटो और टैंकर के नंबरों को ट्रक बताकर करीब 6.94 करोड़ का 1125.64 मीट्रिक टन राशन के परिवहन होना बताया गया है। ऑडिट रिपोर्ट में उत्पादन और वितरण में घोटाला होना बताया जा रहा है।

सैंपल गुणवत्ता जांच में बड़ी लापरवाही

रिपोर्ट में बताया गया है सैंपल की गुणवत्ता जांच में भी बड़ी लापरवाही सामने आई। टेक होम राशन के पोषण मूल्य का आकलन करने के लिए सैंपल को जांच के लिए संयंत्र, परियोजना और आंगनवाड़ी स्तर पर लेकर राज्य से बाहर स्वतंत्र प्रयोगशालाओं में भेजना था, लेकिन विभाग ने संयंत्र स्तर पर ही स्वतंत्र प्रयोगशालाओं में सैंपल भेजे, जो सैंपल स्वतंत्र प्रयोगशालाओं में जांच के लिए भेजे गए और वो जरूरी पोषण मूल्य के अनुरूप मानकों पर खरे नहीं उतरे। रिपोर्ट में बताया गया है कि जिन अधिकारियों की जिम्मेदारी तय करनी चाहिए थी, वो नहीं की गई। साथ ही रिपोर्ट में खुलासा हुआ की सीडीपीओ, डीपीओ, प्लांट अधिकारी और परिवहन की व्यवस्था करने वाले अधिकारी इस भ्रष्टाचार में शामिल हैं। <https://www.bhaskarhindi.com/politics/news/crores-of-ration-scam-in-madhyapradesh-in-the-name-of-nutrition-of-women-revealed-in-audit-report-404300>

7. मध्य प्रदेश में टेक होम राशन पर महालेखाकार ने उठाए सवाल, 110 करोड़ रुपये का गोलमाल (naidunia.com) 05 Sep 2022

प्रदेश में स्कूल छोड़ने वाली किशोरी बालिका, गर्भवती और धात्री माताओं के साथ तीन साल तक के बच्चों को आंगनबाड़ियों से दिए जाने वाले टेक होम राशन में बड़ी गड़बड़ी सामने आई है। महालेखाकार ने मुख्य सचिव इकबाल सिंह को भेजी 36 पेज की रिपोर्ट में 110 करोड़ के गोलमाल का आरोप लगाया है।

इसमें बताया गया कि टेक होम राशन के परिवहन में ट्रकों के नंबर गलत पाए गए। वे नंबर मोटरसाइकिल, टैंकर, कार, आटो के थे। 62 करोड़ 72 लाख रुपये का 10,176 टन पोषण आहार न गोदाम में पाया गया, न परिवहन के प्रमाण मिले। बिजली और कच्चे माल की खपत में अंतर है, इस अंतर के हिसाब से 58 करोड़ रुपये का फर्जी उत्पादन बताया गया।

इतना ही नहीं, 237 करोड़ रुपये के 38 हजार 304 टन पोषण आहार के नमूने की स्वतंत्र एजेंसी से जांच ही नहीं कराई गई। महालेखाकार ने मुख्य सचिव से कहा कि स्वतंत्र एजेंसी से जांच कराकर दोषी अधिकारियों की जिम्मेदारी तय की जाए।

रिपोर्ट के मुताबिक भोपाल, छिंदवाड़ा, धार, झाबुआ, रीवा, सागर, सतना और शिवपुरी में टेक होम राशन वितरण की जांच की गई। इनके अभिलेख देखे गए और 49 आंगनवाड़ी केंद्रों की पड़ताल की गई। इसमें लाभार्थियों की संख्या में अंतर सामने आया। स्कूल शिक्षा विभाग और महिला बाल विकास विभाग ने अलग-अलग संख्या बताई। इसके लिए कोई आधारभूत सर्वे भी नहीं कराया गया।

इसके बिना टेक होम राशन का वितरण किया गया, जो संदेहास्पद प्रतीत होता है। पड़ताल में यह बात भी सामने आई कि 49 आंगनवाड़ी केंद्रों में शाला त्यागी किशोरी बालिकाएं केवल तीन दर्ज थीं, जबकि एमआइएस पोर्टल पर 63 हजार 748 और 2018 से 2021 के बीच 29 हजार 104 को टेक होम राशन वितरित किया गया। कोलारस और खनियाधाना में जो पोषण आहार भेजना बताया गया, उसकी अभिलेखों में पुष्टि नहीं हुई। शिवपुरी और सागर के गोदामों से पोषण आहार वितरित होना बताया गया, पर यह भंडार में ही मिला।

महालेखाकार की आपत्तियों से महिला एवं बाल विकास विभाग असहमत है। विभाग के मुताबिक रिपोर्ट के कई तथ्य वास्तविकता से मेल नहीं खाते हैं। राज्य की प्रयोगशाला में जांच कराने पर 38 हजार 304 टन टेक होम राशन को अमानक पाने पर 38 करोड़ रुपये काटकर भुगतान किया गया। एमपी एगो की जांच में वाहन नंबर लिखने की त्रुटि पाई गई है। सभी जिलों से तथ्यात्मक प्रतिवेदन मंगाकर आगामी कार्रवाई की जाएगी।

कागजों में बंट गया पोषण आहार, उच्च स्तरीय हो जांच: कमल नाथ

प्रदेश कांग्रेस अध्यक्ष कमल नाथ ने कहा कि टेक होम राशन के नाम पर जमकर फर्जीवाड़ा हुआ है। कागजों में पोषण आहार बंट गया। इसकी उच्च स्तरीय जांच करार दोषियों के विरुद्ध कड़ी कार्रवाई की जाए।

रिपोर्ट अंतिम नहीं: डा. नरोत्तम मिश्रा

राज्य सरकार के प्रवक्ता व गृह मंत्री डा. नरोत्तम मिश्रा ने महालेखाकार की रिपोर्ट को लेकर कहा कि कोई भी रिपोर्ट अंतिम नहीं होती है। यह प्रक्रिया का हिस्सा है। सरकार की लेखा शाखा इसका परीक्षण करती है। कई बार यह विधानसभा की लोक लेखा समिति में भी जाती है। हमने देखा है कि कई बार आपत्तियां निरस्त भी होती हैं। <https://www.naidunia.com/madhya-pradesh/bhopal-accountant-general-raised-questions-on-take-home-ration-in-madhya-pradesh-7801634>

8. MP Scam: Shivraj singh chouhan की सरकार में MP में सामने आया Bihar जैसा Chara Ghotala (abplive.com) 05 Sep 2022

Bihar का Fodder Scam माने चारा घोटाला तो आपको याद ही हुआ होगा जिसमें बिहार के पूर्व मुख्यमंत्री Lalu Prasad Yadav को जेल की हवा खानी पड़ी. अब ऐसा ही एक घोटाला BJP की Shivraj Singh Chauhan सरकार के दौरान Madhya Pradesh में भी सामने आया है जिसमें चारा घोटाला की तरह ही घोटाला किया गया है. CAG ने इस घोटाले को उजागर किया है और इसमें कई अधिकारियों के शामिल होने की बात कही जा रही है. What is MP Scam? इस स्कैम को कैसे अंजाम दिया गया और कैसे ये स्कैम पकड़ में आया? इन सभी सवालों के जवाब Uncut पर दे रहे हैं भूपिंदर सोनी.

Video Link: <https://www.abplive.com/uncut/bin-manga-gyan-bihar-like-fodder-scam-happened-in-mp-too-2208649>

9. MP: 10 लाख बच्चे कुपोषित, फिर भी CM की नाक के नीचे करोड़ों का टेक होम राशन घपला! घोटाले के बाद जागा विभाग, कलेक्टर्स को पत्र जारी (thesootr.com) 05 Sep 2022

Bhopal: भारत सरकार ने वर्ष 2030 तक देश को कुपोषण मुक्त करने का लक्ष्य रखा है पर मध्य प्रदेश सरकार ने तो जैसे राज्य के माथे से कुपोषण का कलंक मिटने न देने की कसम ले रखी हैं। जहाँ राज्य में पहले ही 10 लाख से ज्यादा कुपोषित बच्चें दर्ज हैं....वहीं सतना जिले के मझगवां क्षेत्र से अब एक और अति कुपोषित बच्ची का पता फिर से चला है! मामला मझगवां विकासखण्ड अंतर्गत चित्रकूट नगर परिषद के वार्ड 13 - पथरा के ग्राम सुहागी के आदिवासी बस्ती सुरंगी टोला से सामने आया है। जहाँ सात साल की ये बच्ची सोमवती इतनी कमज़ोर है की वो ठीक से चल तक नहीं पा रही हैं। कुपोषित

मासूम का मामला मामला मुख्यमंत्री तक पहुंचा और सरकारी तंत्र पर सवाल खड़े हुए तो प्रशासन में हड़कंप मच गया। इसके बाद जिला प्रशासन तुरंत हरकत में आया और आनन फानन में मामले में संज्ञान लिया...महिला एवं बाल विकास ने एक टीम कुपोषित बच्ची के घर पहुंचाई गई। और अब मासूम को जिला अस्पताल में गहन इकाई शिशु वार्ड में भर्ती कराया गया है....जहाँ उसका उपचार जारी है। गौरतलब है कि चित्रकूट का मझगवां क्षेत्र में पहले भी ऐसे कई मामले आ चुके हैं। द सूत्र की आज कि इस पड़ताल करती रिपोर्ट में आपको दिखाएंगे कि आखिर वो क्या कारण हैं जिनकी वजह से मध्य प्रदेश से कुपोषण सालों से दूर नहीं हो पा रहा है। साथ ही आपको बताएंगे कि जहाँ एक तरफ राज्य में कुपोषण के इतने बुरे हाल हैं, वहीं दूसरी तरफ मप्र CAG ने महिला बाल विकास विभाग की टेक होम राशन योजना में एक बड़ा घोटाला उजागर किया है, और हमेशा की तरह विभाग घोटाले के बाद एक्शन मोड में आया और पत्रचार शुरू कर दिया है। लेकिन इसके पहले देखिये कि क्या हैं सतना जिले का ये पूरा मामला...

क्या है पूरा मामला

दरअसल, कुपोषण का ये मामला तब सामने आया जब जिले के चित्रकूट अंतर्गत आने वाले सुरंगी टोला की एक बालिका का गंभीर रूप से कमजोर स्वास्थ्य का वीडियो वायरल हो गया। कुपोषित बच्ची का नाम सोमवती है। 7 वर्षीय इस बच्ची का जन्म 2015 में हुआ था। और वह सुरंगी टोला बस्ती में अपने नाना के घर में रहती है। इसके नाना और मौसी मजदूरी करते हैं। वीडियो में साफ़ दिखाई देता है कि बच्ची शारीरिक रूप से बेहद ही कमजोर है और हड्डियों का ढांचा भर रह गई है। सोमवती का हाल का वीडियो वायरल होने पर सीएम शिवराज सिंह के 'ऑफिस ऑफ द शिवराज सिंह' के ट्विटर हैंडल से प्रशासन को निर्देश दिए गए। ट्वीट में कहा गया कि - "बेटी सोमवती को जिला कलेक्टर सतना द्वारा अस्पताल में भर्ती करवाया गया है और उसकी देखभाल की व्यवस्था की गई है। बिटिया को पूर्ण स्वास्थ्य लाभ दिया जाएगा और उसके उचित पालन पोषण की व्यवस्था भी होगी।" मामले में जांच के लिए सोमवार को भोपाल से संचालक स्तर के अधिकारी भेजे गए हैं। और कहा जा रहा कि अतिरिक्त संचालक महिला एवं बाल विकास राजपाल कौर दीक्षित सतना मामले में जांच करेंगे

बच्ची 2019 और 2020 में भी कुपोषण का शिकार रही है

इस पूरे मामले में अचरज वाली बात यह है कि यह पहली बार नहीं है कि यह बच्ची इस हालत में है। बच्ची को महिला बाल विकास की सेवाओं के साथ दो बार जुलाई 2019 और नवंबर 2020 में एनआरसी सामुदायिक केंद्र मझगवां में भर्ती कर उपचार किया गया है। ऐसा खुद महिला बाल विकास सतना के जिला कार्यक्रम अधिकारी सौरभ सिंह ने बताया। सोमवती का यह मामला सिर्फ इसलिए ही चिंता का विषय नहीं है कि वह छोटी बच्ची हैं और कुपोषित हैं...मामला ज्यादा चिंताजनक इसलिए भी हो जाता है कि इस बच्ची के कुपोषणग्रस्त होने का पता सरकार को साल 2019-2020 में ही चल गया था....लेकिन इन चार सालों में भी उसके हालत जस-की-तस बनी हुई है! आखिर इतने सालों में बच्ची की हालत में सुधार क्यों नहीं हुआ? द सूत्र ने जब मामले की पड़ताल की तो कई प्रदेश में कुपोषण के कई कारण नज़र आए। और राज्य में कुपोषण के जो आंकड़े हैं वो अपने आप में चौकाने वाले हैं:

मध्य प्रदेश: 10 लाख से ज्यादा बच्चे कुपोषण के शिकार

- पूरे मध्य प्रदेश की बात करें तो राज्य में आज भी शून्य से लेकर 5 वर्ष की उम्र के 65 लाख दो हजार से ज्यादा बच्चे हैं। इनमें से 10 लाख 32 हजार 166 बच्चे कुपोषण के शिकार हैं। इनमें से छह

लाख 30 हजार 90 बच्चे अति कुपोषित की श्रेणी में हैं। 2 लाख 64 हजार 609 ठिगनेपन और 13 लाख सात हजार 469 दुबलेपन के शिकार हैं।

- राष्ट्रीय परिवार स्वास्थ्य सर्वेक्षण के 2019 से 2021 के आंकड़ों के मुताबिक प्रदेश में हर पांच बच्चे में से एक निर्बल है।
- आंकड़ों के मुताबिक मप्र में एनीमिक बच्चों की संख्या में भी बढ़ोतरी हुई है और ये आंकड़ा 72.7 फीसदी हो गया है।
- मई में जारी किये गए सैंपल रजिस्ट्रेशन सिस्टम-2022 के अनुसार शिशु मृत्यु दर में के मामले में भी मध्य प्रदेश में देश में पहले नंबर पर है। इसके अनुसार मध्यप्रदेश में जन्म लेने वाले हर एक हजार बच्चों में से 43 बच्चे आज भी जन्म के एक साल के अंदर ही दम तोड़ देते हैं। यह राष्ट्रीय औसत 28 से ज्यादा है।
- नेशनल फैमिली हेल्थ सर्वे 5 की रिपोर्ट में भी मध्य प्रदेश खिसक कर देश में चौथे पायदान पर पहुंच गया है। सर्वे के आंकड़ों के हिसाब से प्रदेश में इन्फैंट डेथ रेट (28-365 दिन) 41.3 (हर 1000 जीवित जन्म में पर) है। वहीं नवजात मृत्यु दर भी 29 (हर 1000 जीवित जन्म में पर) है।
- वहीं 2016 से 2018 के बीच एमपी में करीब 57 हजार बच्चों की कुपोषण से मौत हुई थी।

सतना: 8,838 बच्चों कुपोषण से ग्रस्त

- वर्तमान वर्ष 2022 में सतना जिले में कुल 8,838 बच्चे कुपोषण से ग्रस्त हैं - जहाँ 1417 बच्चे अति गंभीर रूप से कुपोषित (SAM) हैं...वहीं 7421 मध्यम कुपोषण (MAM) बच्चे हैं।
- साल 2021 में टोटल 23,006 बच्चे कुपोषित थे - 3,120 बच्चे अति गंभीर कुपोषित (SAM) थे और 19,886 बच्चे मध्यम कुपोषण (MAM) से ग्रस्त थे।
- वहीं वर्ष 2020 में 21,791 बच्चे कुपोषित थे - 2123 बच्चे अति गंभीर रूप से कुपोषित (SAM) थे...और 19668 मध्यम कुपोषण (MAM) बच्चें थे।
- आपको बता दें कि आंकड़ों के अनुसार सतना जिले में टोटल 3034 आंगनबाड़ी सेंटर्स हैं जिसमें 158603 लाभार्थी बच्चे दर्ज हैं। इसमें से हर एक बच्चे पर पोषक आहार योजना के तहत 8 से 12 रुपये सरकार खर्च करने का दावा करती हैं।

चित्रकूट: 993 बच्चे कुपोषित

- वहीं अगर सिर्फ चित्रकूट के वार्ड-13 की करें तो वहां कुल जनसंख्या 580 है।
- जानकारी के अनुसार इस वार्ड के आंगनबाड़ी केंद्र में 5 वर्ष तक के बच्चों की कुल 54 बच्चे रजिस्टर्ड हैं। यहाँ ज्यादातर मवासी अनुसूचित जनजाति के लोग निवासी हैं।
- वहीं मझगांव ब्लॉक के महिला एवं बाल विकास की चित्रकूट-1 परियोजना में 5 वर्ष तक के कुल 15875 हैं। इनमें मध्यम श्रेणी के कमजोर 812 और 181 सैम बच्चे हैं। मझगांव में कुल 203 आंगनबाड़ी केंद्र हैं।

MP को 400 करोड़ का पोषण अभियान फण्ड

अब अगर आपको लगता है कि कुपोषण पर काम करने के लिए सरकार के पास फंड्स की कोई कमी है तो ऐसा बिलकुल भी नहीं है। क्योंकि पोषण योजनाओं के लिए भारी भरकम बजट है। मध्य प्रदेश में

कुपोषण दूर करने के लिए करीब 97135 आंगनबाड़ी केंद्रों की मदद से कई तरह के पोषण अभियान चलाए जा रहे हैं। इसी साल मप्र सरकार ने बच्चों के लिए अलग से बजट की व्यवस्था की है। 17 विभाग जो बच्चों के लिए योजनाएं संचालित करते हैं उनका बजट प्रावधान किया 57 हजार 803 करोड़ रु। इसमें स्वास्थ्य विभाग का बजट भी शामिल है। पोषण अभियान के लिए भी केंद्र द्वारा मध्य प्रदेश को वर्ष 2017-18 से वर्ष 2021-22 तक करीब 39398.53 लाख रुपए दिए जा चुके हैं। इसमें से जनवरी, 2022 तक 20087.83 लाख रुपए खर्च भी किये जा चुके हैं।

कुपोषित बच्चों को ट्रैक करने का और उनके फॉलोअप का सिस्टम फेल

अब सवाल ये है कि योजना के बावजूद और इतना खर्च करने के बाद भी नवजातों की मौतों का सिलसिला रुकने का नाम क्यों नहीं ले रहा? दरअसल, 7 साल कि सोमवती का सालों-साल कुपोषित बने रहना इस बात की साफ गवाही देता है कि सरकारी सिस्टम की किस कदर लापरवाह है। और यह दिखाता है कि उसका कुपोषित बच्चों के लिए बनाया गया ट्रैकिंग सिस्टम किस कदर फेल है। बता दें कि विभाग की कुपोषण से निबटने की रइनीति के अनुसार SAM और MAM - दोनों तरह के कुपोषित बच्चों के फॉलोअप का प्रॉपर सिस्टम होता है। लेकिन साफ है कि वो जरूरत के अनुसार काम नहीं कर रहा। इसके साथ ही सरकार की करोड़ों के बजट वाली महत्वकांक्षी पोषण योजनाओं पर बड़े सवाल खड़े होते हैं।

कुपोषण दूर करने के लिए सरकार को कन्वर्जन्स के तहत काम करना होगा: प्रतीक, सोशल वर्कर

चित्रकूट क्षेत्र में कुपोषण की कारणों को जब हमने जाना तो सामने आया कि जिले में ये समस्या सिर्फ पोषण योजना या आंगनबाड़ी/ICDS स्कीम के विफलता से ही नहीं। बल्कि स्वास्थ्य व्यवस्था, रोजगार व्यवस्था और खेती व्यवस्था से भी उतनी ही जुड़ी हुई है। देखिये कि इस पूरे मसले पर सामाजिक कार्यकर्ता प्रतीक का क्या कहना है। प्रतीक करीब 15 सालों से मझगवां में कुपोषण दूर करने पर काम कर रहे हैं:

प्रतीक: "मझगांव एक आदिवासी बाहुल्य क्षेत्र है। यहाँ कुपोषण की समस्या बड़ी है....अभी भी कई बच्चे गंभीर हैं..स्थिति नाजुक है.... इस आदिवासी समुदाय की कुपोषण की समस्या का समाधान सिर्फ इक्ड्स के तहत संभव नहीं है क्योंकि यहाँ के लोगो का खाद्य-सुरक्षा चक्र टूट गया है। यहाँ का समुदाय आजीविका के समस्या भी देख रहा है। इसी वजहों से बच्चों में कुपोषण है और महिलाओं में एनीमिया है.... इसके लिए सरकार को कन्वर्जन्स के तहत उसके सभी विभागो जैसे -स्वास्थ्य, कृषि, पशुपालन, पंचायत और उद्यानिकी - को एक साथ काम करना होगा....तभी इस समुदाय की खानपान की व्यवस्था दुरुस्त होगी...उनकी आजीविका का साधन बनेगा...और कुपोषण दूर हो सकेगा।"

प्रतीक ने सरकारी तंत्र की लापरवाही को भी इसके लिए साफ तौर पर जिम्मेदार बताया....उन्होंने बताया कि कैसे अधिकारी कागज़ों पर तो सब करते हैं पर जमीने स्तर पर कोई कुछ देखने ही नहीं जाता। और पोषण आहार का फायदा दिनों-दिन मिलता ही नहीं है। पहले ये आदिवासी लोग खान-पान के लिए लोग जंगलों पर निर्भर थे, तब उन्हें पर्याप्त न्यूट्रीशन जंगलों की उपज से मिलता था। पर अब फारेस्ट राइट एक्ट में दिक्कतों के चलते वो भी मुमकिन नहीं....अब महिलाएं लकड़िया बेचकर और पुरुष थोड़ी बहुत मजदूरी करके गुज़ारा करते हैं....उससे क्या ही पोषण मिलेगा....वहीं युवा पलायन कर चुके हैं। यानी, साफ है कि कुपोषण दूर करने के लिए सरकारी विभागों में आपसी सामंजस्य ही नहीं है तो....कुपोषित बच्चों के लिए ट्रैकिंग सिस्टम का काम न करना अचरज की बात नहीं है।

कुपोषण तो दूर कर नहीं पाए, करोड़ों का टेक होम राशन घोटाला जरूर कर दिया

अब चौकाने वाली बात है कि सरकार की करोड़ों के बजट वाली महत्वाकांक्षी पोषण योजनाएं कैसे विभाग में व्याप्त भ्रष्टाचार की वजह से फेल हो रही हैं। जहाँ पोषण आहार की कमी से एक बच्ची हड्डी का ढांचा बनकर रह गई हैं... वहीं महिला एवं बाल विकास विभाग के कर्मचारी बच्चों के हक के पोषण पर घोटाले करने से बाज़ नहीं आ रहे। ये खुलासा हुआ है मध्य प्रदेश CAG रिपोर्ट में हुआ है जिसमें बताया गया कि कैसे 2393 करोड़ का 4.05 मीट्रिक टेक होम राशन में गड़बड़ियां की गई हैं। पता हो कि यह विभाग CM शिवराज सिंह चौहान के पास है। CAG की 36 पन्नों की रिपोर्ट के मुताबिक:

- करोड़ों का पोषण आहार का कागजों में ट्रकों से परिवहन दिखाया गया, लेकिन जांच में सामने आया कि ये मोटरसाइकिल और ऑटो से किया गया
- रिपोर्ट में दावा किया गया कि छह कारखानों से 6.94 करोड़ रुपये की लागत के 1 हजार मीट्रिक टन से ज्यादा राशन का परिवहन किया गया
- लेकिन परिवहन विभाग से सत्यापन करने पर पता लगा कि ट्रकों के जो नंबर दिये गये हैं उन पर मोटरसाइकिल, कार, ऑटो और टैंकर रजिस्टर्ड हैं
- लाखों ऐसे बच्चे जो स्कूल नहीं जाते उनके नाम पर भी करोड़ों का राशन बांट दिया गया
- योजना के तहत 49.58 लाख रजिस्टर्ड बच्चों और महिलाओं को पोषण आहार दिया जाना था
- इसमें 6 महीने से 3 साल की उम्र के 34.69 लाख बच्चे, 14.25 लाख गर्भवती महिलाएं और स्तनपान कराने वाली मां और 11-14 साल की लगभग 64 हजार बच्चियां शामिल थीं जिन्होंने स्कूल छोड़ दिया
- इसके अलावा विभाग में बड़े पैमाने पर धोखाधड़ी, लाभार्थियों की पहचान में अनियमितता
- स्कूली बच्चों के लिए महत्वाकांक्षी मुफ्त भोजन योजना के वितरण और गुणवत्ता नियंत्रण में गड़बड़ी भी पायी गयी
- इस तरह से CAG की रिपोर्ट में 110.83 करोड़ रु. मूल्य के राशन का फर्जीवाड़ा सामने आया है

CAG कि रिपोर्ट राय होती है आखिरी फैसला नहीं: गृह मंत्री नरोत्तम मिश्रा

अब रिपोर्ट सामने आने के बाद सरकार के प्रवक्ता और गृहमंत्री नरोत्तम मिश्रा ने भी अजीबोगरीब प्रतिक्रिया दी है। उन्होंने कहा है कि प्रतिक्रिया कि CAG कि रिपोर्ट राय होती है आखिरी फैसला नहीं! अकाउंट कमेटी अंतिम निर्णय करती है। कभी-कभी विधानसभा की लोक लेखा समिति के पास भी मामला जांच के लिए जाता है। सबको पता है कि CAG अपनी रिपोर्ट पूरा ऑडिट कर ही बनाते है। और जो भी रिपोर्ट आई है, वो बहुत सारे सवाल खड़े करती है.... और सवालों के साथ सरकार की मंशा को भी कटघरे में खड़ा करती है।

घोटाला होने के बाद विभाग ने जारी किये कलेक्टर को लेटर

यही नहीं....जब पूरा घोटाला CAG ने लम्बी-चौड़ी फ़ाइल के साथ सामने रख दिया। उसके बाद महिला एवं बाल विकास विभाग के नींद खुली और संचालक रामराव भोंसले ने सभी जिलों के कलेक्टर को आनन-फानन में एक पत्र जारी किया। जिसमें पूरक पोषण आहार की गुणवत्ता और निगरानी सिस्टम मेन्टेन करने की बात की गई है। पर अब पछताये होत क्या जब चिड़िया चुग गई खेत!

2030 तक भारत ने खुद को कुपोषण मुक्त करने का लक्ष्य रखा है। अब सवाल भारत सरकार पर भी है कि भारत सरकार ने लक्ष्य रख लिया लेकिन कुपोषण के मामले में जो राज्य सबसे ज्यादा भागीदारी निभा रहा है.... वो मप्र है। और केंद्र सरकार भी मप्र की मॉनिटरिंग करने में दिलचस्पी नहीं दिखाती। ऐसे में सवाल तो यही उठता है कि कैसे दूर होगा कुपोषण का कलंक और भारत आठ साल में कुपोषण मुक्त हो पाएगा। <https://thesootr.com/madhya-pradesh/new-malnutrition-case-in-satna-haunts-mp-amid-take-home-ration-scam-/20888>

10. बाढ़ और बारिश से बेंगलुरु का हाल बेहाल, जानें आखिर क्यों हुए सिलिकॉन सिटी के ऐसे हालात (gnttv.com) 06 Sep 2022

मूसलाधार बारिश की वजह से सिलिकॉन सिटी बेंगलुरु हाल बेहाल हो चुका है। सोमवार रात भी बेंगलुरु में भारी बारिश हुई जिसकी वजह से सड़कें समंदर बन गईं और कई घरों में पानी घुस गया। वहीं जगह-जगह जलजमाव की वजह से भारी ट्रफिक जाम हुआ। हालांकि हालात से निपटने के लिए प्रशासन जुटा हुआ है। लेकिन मौसम विभाग ने 9 सितंबर तक कर्नाटक में भारी बारिश जारी रहने की संभावना जताई है।

बेंगलुरु के लिए नई नहीं है ये समस्या

हालांकि, बेंगलुरु के लिए ये समस्या नई नहीं है। इससे पहले 30 अगस्त को हुई भारी बारिश में आउटर रिंग रोड पर इतना भारी जाम लगा था कि लोग 5 घंटे तक ट्रैफिक जाम में फंसे रहे थे। इसी सिलसिले में आउटर रिंग रोड कंपनी एसोसिएशन ने मुख्यमंत्री को चिट्ठी लिख कर चिंता जताई थी। जिसमें कहा गया था कि सिर्फ एक दिन में 5 घंटे की देरी से कंपनियों को करीब 225 करोड़ का नुकसान हुआ था। इस बारिश ने सिलिकॉन सिटी के पूरे सिस्टम की पोल खोलकर रख दी है।

बेंगलुरु के इस हाल को देखकर इतना तो कहा जा सकता है कि इसके पीछे कई कारण हैं। जैसे सिलिकॉन सिटी का ड्रेनेज सिस्टम, बुनियादी ढांचे की कमी आदि। चलिए विस्तार इनके बारे में जानते हैं....

1. भारी बारिश

सिलिकॉन सिटी बेंगलुरु में इस बार रिकॉर्ड तोड़ बारिश हो रही है। शहर में अगस्त में जितनी बारिश हुई है, वह चार साल में सबसे ज्यादा है। आईएमडी के मुताबिक, इस साल अगस्त में, बेंगलुरु में 370 मिमी बारिश हुई है। ऐसी बारिश पिछले बार अगस्त 1998 में हुई थी। उस साल 387.1 मिमी बारिश रिकॉर्ड बारिश हुई थी।

बारिश हर साल बढ़ रही है। मौसम विभाग के अनुसार, बेंगलुरु में 2021 में 1,500 मिमी वार्षिक बारिश दर्ज की गई थी। जबकि 2020 में ये 1,200 मिमी थी और 2019 में 900 मिमी।

2. बुनियादी ढांचे की कमी

इसका एक कारण बुनियादी ढांचे की कमी भी माना जा रहा है। भारी बारिश के कारण बेंगलुरु की आउटर रिंग रोड पर भारी जलभराव हो गया है, जो शहर को अपने टेक पार्क से जोड़ता है। इसका प्रमुख कारण बुनियादी ढांचे की कमी है। न्यूज वेबसाइट फर्स्टपोस्ट के मुताबिक, एक कार्यकर्ता नागेश अरास ने न्यूज मिनिट को बताया कि 2005 में, 110 गांवों को बृहत बेंगलुरु महानगर पालिका (BBMP) में मिला दिया

गया था, लेकिन नगर निगम ने गांवों को शहर के सीवेज से जोड़ने की जहमत नहीं उठाई. बारिश के पानी के साथ सीवेज का पानी मिल जाता है और आउटर रिंग रोड पर फैल जाता है."

इसके अलावा, सड़क बहते पानी के लिए एक बांध की तरह काम करती है. पुलियों की कमी के कारण, बारिश का पानी और सीवेज का पानी का साथ में बहता है, जिससे जलभराव हो जाता है.

3. खराब ड्रेनेज सिस्टम

बेंगलुरु में बाढ़ का एक और कारण खराब ड्रेनेज सिस्टम है. कई मीडिया रिपोर्ट्स के अनुसार, अचानक और भारी बारिश से निपटने के लिए शहर ड्रेनेज सिस्टम बेहद खराब है. नालियां अक्सर कचरे से भरी रहती हैं, जो सीवेज के प्रवाह को रोक देती हैं और जब अचानक से ढेर सारा पानी बहता है तो सड़कें ब्लॉक हो जाती हैं. क्योंकि पानी को निकलने की जगह नहीं मिलती.

कॉम्पट्रोलर एंड ऑडिटर जनरल (CAG) की एक रिपोर्ट में कहा गया है कि वृषभावती में 1990 के दशक की शुरुआत में 226 किमी के नाले थे, 2017 तक 110 किमी से थोड़े ज्यादा नाले थे. कोरमंगला घाटी की कहानी भी ऐसी ही थी, यहां की नालियां भी आधे से कम थीं. इस रिपोर्ट में 2013-14 से 2017-18 को कवर किया गया था.

4. नालों का रखरखाव

नालों के साथ एक और समस्या उनके रखरखाव की है. सीएजी की रिपोर्ट में खुलासा हुआ है कि बीबीएमपी ने साल 2019-20 से नाले के रखरखाव के लिए ठेका किसी और को दिया हुआ है. लेकिन यह शहर के कुल नालों का केवल 45 प्रतिशत ही कवर करती है, जो कि 842 किलोमीटर में से 377 किलोमीटर है.

5. नालों और झीलों का कनेक्शन

सीएजी रिपोर्ट में प्रकाशित गूगल अर्थ इमेज के मुताबिक, नालों के पुनर्निर्माण के कारण वे सिकुड़ गए हैं. साथ ही जांच से यह भी पता चला कि कुछ नाले झीलों से सीधे नहीं जुड़े हैं, इससे ओवरफ्लो और फ्लैश फ्लड होता है. इसके कारण कई झीलें सूख गईं या फिर उन्हें की अन्य चीज के लिए इस्तेमाल कर लिया गया. इतना ही नहीं अगस्त 2020 में सीएजी की इस रिपोर्ट के जवाब में, राज्य सरकार ने स्वीकार किया था कि सीवेज की समस्या के कारण के कारण कई नालों को झीलों से काट दिया गया है. <https://www.gnttv.com/india/story/bengaluru-rains-floods-and-rains-bengaluru-are-bad-shape-know-why-situation-happened-silicon-city-443949-2022-09-06>

11. Cry Me a River: Why Bengaluru suffers from flooding repeatedly ([firstpost.com](https://www.firstpost.com)) September 05, 2022

Rafts are out in Bengaluru as parts of India's tech capital are waterlogged on Monday due to heavy overnight rainfall. Twitter was flooded with images of vehicles submerged in water and commuters trying to wade through it.

In the Spice Garden area of Marathahalli, two-wheelers were seen floating. The road from Spice Garden to Whitefield has been blocked due to severe waterlogging.

The police said that traffic has been heavily impacted on the following roads of Mahadevapura due to flooding in adjoining areas: Whitefield Main road, OAR, Balagere Main road, ORR Bellandur near Ecospace, Sarjapur Road near Rainbow Drive, Yemalur Main road and Borewell road.

The heavy rain also led to the traffic police advising residents not to venture out of their homes, except for an emergency. The police also asked parents to avoid sending their children to school.

Reports have said that around 30 apartment complexes are still inundated with water and the basements have over one foot of inundated rainwater.

According to the India Meteorological Department, Bengaluru city saw 131 mm of rain overnight and has predicted even more rainfall for the city, with a yellow warning for the next two days until 7 September.

Visuals on social media also showed a man being rescued by local security guards after he was stuck on a waterlogged road near the Marathahalli-Silk Board junction road.

The heavy rain has also disrupted flight services at Bengaluru's Kempegowda International Airport, reported The Hindu.

Six aircraft, including two international flights, were diverted to Chennai airport.

Nine flights, including six international ones, were delayed due to the rains. Passengers also had to walk through water stagnated in the vehicle parking areas outside the terminal.

Visuals showed that the areas outside the airport have been inundated.

As Bengaluru continues to grapple with the heavy rain, we examine what exactly is causing floods in the city.

Heavy rainfall

Garden city Bengaluru has been breaking record after record when it comes to weather milestones. The amount of rain the city has received in August is the highest in four years.

The IMD said that in August this year, Bengaluru received 370 mm of rainfall, falling only a little short of the all-time record of 387.1 mm of rainfall, which occurred in August 1998.

According to weather department, the annual rainfall in Bengaluru recorded in 2021 was 1,500 mm, in 2020 it was 1,200 mm and in 2019 it was above 900 mm.

Lack of infrastructure

The heavy rainfall caused massive waterlogging on Bengaluru's Outer Ring Road (ORR), which connects the city to its tech parks. One of the key reasons for this is the lack of infrastructure. The development in the area has far outstripped its infrastructure.

Nagesh Aras, an activist told News Minute that in 2005, as many as 110 villages were merged into Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) but the city corporation hasn't bothered to link the villages with the city's sewage system. "This is why the stormwater drains fail and the

raw sewage mixed with rainwater spills out onto the Outer Ring Road,” he was quoted as saying.

Moreover, there are no culverts along the stretch. The road acts like a dam to the flowing water and with the lack of culverts, the rainwater and sewage water have no other way to flow but to be accumulated, leading to waterlogging.

Rainbow Drive Layout located in Sarjapur also sees frequent waterlogging owing to bad planning. Ram Prasad, the co-founder of Friends of Lakes, a citizens’ collective, was quoted as telling Indian Express that over a period of time, the buildings which were constructed close to the layout raised their height, thereby making the area a “soup bowl”.

Poor drainage system

Another reason for the flooding in Bengaluru can be attributed to the poor drainage system.

According to a report, the city’s drainage system is ill-equipped to deal with episodes of sudden and heavy rainfall. Drains are often clogged with garbage, restricting the flow of sewage, and are too narrow to shoulder the burden of the ever-increasing population.

Several drains are being covered with stone slabs and converted into footpaths. While this provides much-needed space for pedestrians, it also means that these drains are not opened and desilted regularly.

A report from the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) said that Vrushabhavati which had 226 km of drains in the early 1990s, had little over 110 km of drains by 2017. The story of Koramangala valley was similar as well, the drains here too were reduced by half.

Another issue with the drains is the maintenance of them. The CAG report revealed that since 2019-20, BBMP has been giving annual maintenance contracts for drain maintenance, but this covers only 45 per cent of the total drains in the city, which is 377 km out of 842 km. The situation is worse in peripheral areas of Bengaluru, where contracts are given for cleaning less than 50 per cent of the drain length. <https://www.firstpost.com/explainers/cry-me-a-river-why-bengaluru-suffers-from-flooding-repeatedly-11187091.html>

12. Change in stormwater mgmt need of the hour, say experts ([hindustantimes.com](https://www.hindustantimes.com)) Sep 06, 2022

With continuous rains causing flooding in low-lying regions of Bengaluru, the urban experts have called for a change in the way the storm water in the city is handled. Flooding has left a trail of destruction and suffering for people living in low-lying regions of the city and other places where drains and lakes have overflowed into homes and basements.

The rains have again exposed chinks in Bengaluru’s poor quality of infrastructure and planning, with Karnataka chief minister Basavaraj Bommai admitting that there was a lack of town planning and unscientific methods were used for creating new residential layouts.

Bommai said on Monday that he has instructed the officials to see to it that water is drained out from the inundated roads at the earliest, as reported by PTI.

“There have been heavy rains in Bengaluru, I have spoken to the commissioner (BBMP) and other officials. I have asked officials to depute two state disaster response fund (SDRF) teams

to Mahdevapura and Bommanahalli zones in the city that have been worst affected, with boats and other equipment..also engineers are there,” Bommai was quoted as saying by PTI.

“There is a plan on how to create a temporary drain and how to go about it (drain out water), it will be operationalised...”he added.

Meanwhile, urban planner V Ravichandar said unless a change in storm water drainage is brought about, the situation in the city is going to be difficult. “Our growth is unplanned and rampant. We have occupied several low-lying areas in the city and these areas don’t have a storm water drain. A re-look at the drainage system is much needed now,” he said.

Ashwin Mahesh, an urban planning expert, said that a fundamental change is needed in the idea of transporting rainwater through stormwater drains. According to him, the design of the city storm water drains is wrong. “Water moves faster in a cylindrical space than rectangular space. It is scientifically proven. Except for the TenderSure roads in Bengaluru, we have rectangular drainages. Apart from transporting we should use socking pits to absorb water locally,” he said.

On September 15, 2020, the Comptroller & Auditor General (CAG) had pulled up the agencies for inefficiency in identifying and managing storm water drains (SWDs) in the city. A performance audit report tabled in the legislative assembly on Wednesday mentioned a lack of financial discipline, shoddy mapping of SWDs and tertiary drains, lack of documents related to various works taken up, and failure to clear lake and SWD encroachments.

“There were discrepancies between the figures exhibited in the budget estimates and actual expenditure recorded in the cash book. This indicated the lack of reconciliation mechanism and correct reporting of expenditure, and exposes the financial indiscipline reigning in BBMP,” the report said.

It also added that out of the 1,988 encroachments identified by BBMP, 1,225 were declared to be removed. However, evictions were incomplete and did not improve the condition of drains.

“Bengaluru’s storm water drain network is over 850km. While it’s supposed to channel storm water during the rains and be empty the rest of the year, the reality is different, with the drains filled with sewage and garbage,” said Naresh Narasimhan, architect, and urban activist.

Meanwhile, following Bommai’s directions, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) started clearing properties, which have encroached storm-water drains in the city. On Saturday, constructions were razed in Dodda Bommasandra as well as Varthur.

“Encroachments have to be removed immediately as they have reduced the width of our rajakaluves. We are also doing some lining and cleaning work due to which rainwater flows quickly now. In zones like Mahadevapura and Bommanahalli, previous authorities had given licences to build, but now the drains at those places are affected. Hence, we are concentrating more on clearing encroachments in Dasarahalli, Rajarajeshwarinagar, Yeshwanthpur, KR Puram, and Mahadevapura,” said BBMP chief civic commissioner Tushar Giri Nath. <https://www.hindustantimes.com/cities/bengaluru-news/change-in-stormwater-mgmt-need-of-the-hour-say-experts-101662403108396.html>

SELECTED NEWS ITEMS/ARTICLES FOR READING

13. India's external debt rises 8.2% to \$620.7 bn till Mar 2022: FinMin report ([business-standard.com](https://www.business-standard.com)) September 5, 2022

India's external debt rose by 8.2 per cent year-on-year to USD 620.7 billion as of March 2022, which according to the finance ministry is sustainable.

While 53.2 per cent of it was denominated in the US dollar, Indian rupee-denominated debt, estimated at 31.2 per cent, was the second largest, as per the status report on India's external debt released by the ministry.

"India's external debt continues to be sustainable and prudently managed. As of end-March 2022, it stood at USD 620.7 billion, growing by 8.2 per cent over the level a year ago. External debt as a ratio to GDP was 19.9 per cent, while reserves to external debt ratio were 97.8 per cent," it said.

Foreign currency reserves as a ratio to external debt stood slightly lower at 97.8 per cent as of end-March 2022 than 100.6 per cent a year ago.

The report said the long-term debt estimated at USD 499.1 billion constituted the largest chunk of 80.4 per cent, while the short-term debt at USD 121.7 billion accounted for 19.6 per cent of the total.

The short-term trade credit was predominantly in the form of trade credit (96 per cent) financing imports.

The sovereign debt at USD 130.7 billion rose higher by 17.1 per cent over its level a year ago, mainly because of the additional allocation of Special Drawing Rights (SDR) by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) during 2021-22.

The non-sovereign debt, on the other hand, grew 6.1 per cent to USD 490.0 billion over the level as of end-March 2021, it said, adding commercial borrowings, NRI deposits and short-term trade credit are the three biggest constituents of the non-sovereign debt, accounting for as much as 95.2 per cent.

While NRI deposits declined by 2 per cent to USD 139.0 billion, commercial borrowings at USD 209.71 billion and short-term trade credit at USD 117.4 billion rose by 5.7 per cent and 20.5 per cent, respectively, it said.

Observing that the debt vulnerability indicators continued to be benign, the report said the debt service ratio fell significantly to 5.2 per cent during 2021-22 from 8.2 per cent in the previous year, reflecting buoyant current receipts and moderating external debt service payments.

The debt service payment obligations arising out of the stock of external debt as of end-March 2022 are projected to trend downwards over the coming years, it said, adding that from a cross-country perspective, India's external debt is modest.

In terms of various debt vulnerability indicators, India's sustainability was better than the Low- and Middle-Income Countries (LMICs) as a group and vis-a-vis many of them individually, it said. https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/india-s-external-debt-rises-8-2-to-620-7-bn-till-mar-2022-finmin-report-122090501185_1.html

14. FCI's wheat stocks plunge to 14-year low ([financialexpress.com](https://www.financialexpress.com)) September 6, 2022

Wheat stocks in the central pool held by the Food Corporation of India (FCI) and state agencies dipped to 25 million tonne (mt) at the beginning of this month, the lowest level since 2008.

According to estimates, by October 1, the wheat stock is expected to be around 22.9 mt against the buffer norm of 20.5 mt. However, rice stocks as on September 1, 2022, with the FCI were a comfortable 24.65 mt. Rice stock could fall to 20 mt by October 1, still nearly double the buffer requirement of 10.2 mt. Current stocks exclude more than 12 mt of rice yet to be received from millers.

While the government is yet to take a decision on extending Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) beyond September 30, the cumulative foodgrain stocks at the beginning of this month was 49.65 mt against buffer stock norm of 30.7 mt for October 1.

Official sources told FE that the government is closely watching the grain stock position and condition of kharif sown paddy crops before taking a call in extending the free ration scheme.

In July, FE had reported that rice stocks in the central pool are likely to plunge below the buffer norm by 2.2 mt or 16%, if PMGKAY is extended to the whole of the second half of the current financial year.

Launched in April 2020 as part of the Covid-19 relief measures, 5 kg of grains are distributed free under PMGKAY to more than 800 million beneficiaries every month free of cost. Additionally, these people also get an equal quantity of highly subsidised foodgrains under the National Food Security Act (NFSA).

Meanwhile, the food ministry has allowed states to lift foodgrains for distribution under PMGKAY for this month till September 30 against earlier directive of grain lifting to be completed by August 31.

A food ministry official told FE that depletion in wheat stock attributed to a more than 56% drop in procurement in the current rabi season to only 18.8 mt against 43 mt purchased by FCI and agencies in the 2021-22 season (April-June) because of lower production and the free ration scheme being implemented since May 2020.

Wheat output in the 2021-22 crop year (July-June), as per the agriculture ministry, has declined by around 3% on year to 106.8 MT because of heat waves during the flowering stage of the crop in March.

Last week, the government had set a marginally higher target of 51.8 mt of kharif rice procurement for 2022-23 season (October-September) by the FCI and state agencies against the actual procurement in previous year despite the possibility of drop in output because of lower paddy-sowing. Kharif rice procurement was 50.9 mt in 2021-22 season.

Overall paddy sowing area across the country was reported at 38.3 million hectare (mh) which was 5.6% less than year ago because deficiency in the monsoon rainfall in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal.

The government has purchased more than 59 mt of rice in the 2021-22 season (October-September) so far and overall procurement in the season is likely to be 60 mt. In the previous year, rice procurement was a record 60 mt.

The government had revised the norms for PMGKAY in May by allocating around 11 mt of rice while reducing wheat allocation by the same quantity.

The economic cost of foodgrain procurement by the FCI, which includes expenses such as minimum support price payment to farmers, procurement, acquisition and distribution costs, etc, for rice and wheat are estimated at 3,670 and 2,588 per quintal, respectively, for 2022-23.

The government distributes rice and wheat to beneficiaries under NFSA at Rs 3 and 2 per kg, respectively. <https://www.financialexpress.com/economy/fcis-wheat-stocks-plunge-to-14-year-low/2656474/>

15. Time for an 'Accurate and Down-to-Earth Assessment' of Vikrant, Say Veterans (thewire.in) 06 Sep 2022

Retired Commodore Jaideep Maolankar was the first ever to have successfully landed a locally designed Light Combat Aircraft (Navy) or LCA(N) prototype on the flight deck of INS Vikramaditya, the Indian Navy (IN)'s sole operational aircraft carrier, in January 2020. He is also one of the few military experts to offer a relatively objective and levelheaded assessment of the projected capabilities of the newly commissioned INS Vikrant.

“It’s all a matter of perspective,” Commodore Maolankar declared on the Mojo Story digital news channel soon after Vikrant’s September 2 commissioning at Kochi, injecting a refreshing ‘laconic reality check’ into the breathless hysteria in official, military and media circles that greeted the carrier’s induction into service.

However few, if any, of these aforementioned worthies even remotely mentioned that Vikrant would not be operationally deployable till end-2023, and that too with a combat air arm comprising deficient Russian MiG-29K/KUB fighters. Furthermore, these combat aircraft would soon be supplemented, and eventually replaced by an imported French or US-origin fighter, acquired as an ‘interim measure’, for an estimated \$6-8 billion. Thereafter, the latter too will then be astonishingly switched by yet another platform – the under-development LCA(N) also known as the twin-engine LCA(N) deck-based fighter (TEDBF) – that is not likely to be ready before 2030-32, if not later.

“For everybody who does not fly, these ships (like Vikrant) are projected as massive, the biggest, the largest and the something-est,” Maolankar matter-of-factly stated. Even their names are grandiose, three-syllable names, said the veteran aviator and top former naval test pilot. Carriers, he said, bring conventional fighters to the fight for combat, power projection or humanitarian tasks – and from that perspective, Vikrant was a ‘modest carrier’.

“Such an accurate and down-to-earth assessment was at variance with the frenzied reaction to Vikrant’s commissioning by a cross-section of serving and veteran naval officers, other military and defence officials, analysts and electronic and print media reporters,” said a senior security officer. Commodore Maolankar’s credentials as one of the Navy’s veteran aviators make his sobering assessments all the more credible and mature, he added, declining to be named.

Earlier, Commodore Maolankar had been equally forthright about the ongoing LCA(N) programme, at a juncture when the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and the country’s entire military-industrial complex were crowing about its under-powered prototypes, with myriad other shortcomings. “With limited human and financial resources allocated to it, developing the LCA(N) is a mountainous task,” Maolankar had candidly declared at the annual Naval Aviation Seminar in Delhi in May 2015. He further stated that the LCA(N) was merely an adjunct to the Indian Air Force (IAF)’s LCA Tejas programme, and also that there was little or no synergy between the many fighter designers tasked with its development.

“Such platforms cannot be advanced in isolation,” he had added, attracting unfair and uncalled-for public castigation from senior Navy officers at the seminar for iterating a reality, which many who were present and in the know, timidly declined to voice.

But soon after, the commodore was vindicated by no less than the former IN Chief of Staff Admiral Sunil Lanba, when he announced in December 2016 that in its present form, the LCA(N) was ‘overweight’ and did not meet the operational capability required of a fighter by the Navy. At the time the navy chief had declared that the single-engine LCA(N) – powered by the General Electric F404-GE-IN20 turbofan engine – did not fulfil the IN’s ‘thrust-to-weight’ requirement for taking off with an adequate fuel and weapons load from an aircraft carrier’s deck.

Consequently, in January 2017 the Navy issued a global request for information with the intent of importing 57 multi-role carrier-borne fighters (MRCBF) – recently reduced to 26 – as a ‘stop gap’ tactic till the TEDBF was ready. Both the MRCBF procurement and the TEDBF remain works in progress.

Nevertheless, Maolankar reiterated on Mojo Story last week that the necessity of locally developing naval fighters as import substitutes was simply not an option for multiple reasons – of which vendor hesitancy in weapons and technology transfer to India topped the list.

Meanwhile, a comparison between Vikrant and the second-hand 44,750-tonne Vikramaditya (brave as the sun) is instructive. The latter’s commissioning too was beset by delays, cost overruns and numerous obstacles.

Originally built as a Kiev-class Aviation Cruiser by Nikolayev South (now Black Sea Shipyard, Ukraine) Vikramaditya took nine years to refurbish in Russia, eventually arriving at INS Kadamba or naval base Karwar, on India’s south-west coast in early 2014. The refurbishment and upgrade of the 22-deck carrier at the FSUE Sev mash shipyard in Severodvinsk, northern Russia cost \$2.3 billion, a nearly three-fold increase from the \$974 million agreed upon earlier as the cost of its refit.

This fire-gutted carrier was originally commissioned as Baku in Ukraine in 1987, before becoming Admiral Gorshkov with the Russian Navy four years later, before it was

decommissioned in 1996. Its retrofit under the IN's Project 11430 began in 2005 and included fabricating 234 hull sections and replacing and adding 2,500 tons of new steel as well as converting the warship from a vertical take-off and landing (VTOL) configuration to a short take-off but arrested recovery (STOBAR) layout with a ski jump. Vikrant too has a similar flight deck configuration.

A comparison with China's progress

Aircraft carrier operations represent the apex of flexible naval power projection, and nuclear rivals China and India have placed these platforms at the centre of their maritime force development plans in their respective strategies of 'dominating' the strategic Indian Ocean Region. By comparison, China is relatively new to carrier operations, having had to start from scratch in the mid-1980s with neither naval aircraft, vessel, training pipeline, or operational experience to build upon.

Starting in 1985, China began by acquiring four retired carriers to analyse and study in its quest to launch such platforms for the Peoples Liberation Army Navy (PLAN): the British-built HMAS Melbourne from Australia and three ex-Soviet carriers – Minsk, Kiev and Varyag. The last named underwent an extensive refit, to emerge as the Liaoning, the PLAN's first operational carrier with 40 embarked fighters and helicopters and one which, in turn, served as a basis for China's subsequent design iterations for similar platforms. Presently, other than Varyag, the PLAN operates the follow-on Shandong and Fujian, which is being kitted out. Naval analysts anticipate China operating a total of five or six such carriers by 2030, each one an improvement on the previous platforms.

India, by contrast, began operating carriers in 1961, with INS Vikrant (ex-HMS Hercules), a 16,000-tonne Majestic-class carrier followed by INS Virat (ex-HMS Hermes), a 23,900-tonne Centaur-class platform with VTOL Sea Harrier's that was retired in early 2017.

IN officials maintain that the force's 'institutional' maturity, experience, and knowledge provide it with a decisive operational edge over rival navies, including China's. The IN is also one of the world's few navies to have operated CATOBAR [Catapult Assisted Take-Off But Arrested Recovery], VTOL and STOBAR platforms, which not only gives it higher aviation skills, but also advanced carrier tactics, techniques and procedures.

Other officers, however, cautioned against such assertiveness, arguing that past performance was no guarantee of future success. They advised that it would be a grave error to underestimate the PLAN's ability to telescope the basics of carrier aviation within a shorter timescale, and counselled the IN to adopt a more pragmatic and rationale approach to capability building. <https://thewire.in/security/time-for-an-accurate-and-down-to-earth-assessment-of-vikrant-say-veterans>

16. The Commissioning of INS Vikrant calls for the bigger and better budget for Indian Navy ([financialexpress.com](https://www.financialexpress.com)) Sep 5, 2022

With the commission of INS Vikrant, India now has two aircraft carriers which will play vital role in projecting India's marine power and maintaining the security architecture in the region. Addressing the gathering, the Prime Minister said, "here on the coast of Kerala, every Indian is witnessing the sunrise of a new future."

“Vikrant is distinguished, Vikrant is special. Vikrant is not just a warship and stands testimony to Indian skills and talent,” PM Modi said while commissioning it at the Cochin Shipyard. “No matter how difficult the goal is, no matter how big the challenges are, when Bharat decides, no goal is impossible to achieve,” he added.

The Vikrant is among the world’s biggest naval vessels at a length of 262 metres (860 feet). Speaking on the occasion, Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral R Hari Kumar voiced the Navy’s resolve for India@100 to become completely self-reliant until 2047, comprising of ‘Made in India’ ships, submarines, aircraft, unmanned vessels and systems and remain a ‘Combat Ready, Credible, Cohesive and Future-Proof Force’.

The commissioning of the INS Vikrant is indeed the moment of such historical significance which also calls for the greater scale of the modernization for the Indian Navy. Here budget matters.

The success of INS Vikrant and Rationalizing of Navy Budget

What needs to be highlighted is the recognition that Indian Navy has achieved such a feat despite the lowest share in the defence budget. PM Modi in his speech on the day of the commission of INS Vikrant, succinctly put it across. He called for greater budget for the Indian Navy and clearly outlined the need to increase the navy budget, what is in real terms must be translated into the sizeable proportions for its varied modernisation drive.

In FY2023, the budget for the Indian Navy has been increased upto Rs 47,590.99 crore as a capital outlay in comparison to Rs 33,253.55 crore in previous year’s budget. This is indeed a step in the direction of rationalising of 43.11 percent against the allotted capital outlay for the Indian Navy in FY2022. But that is half the story as Indian Navy is already pressed for the critical modernisation under the crumbling budget. As the Former the Chief of the Indian Navy, Admiral Karambir Singh, raised the red flag on the dwindling Navy budget. The budget, which was increased by 18 percent in 2012, has been raised by a paltry 13 percent in FY2020. Certainly, the numbers depict the already lower base of overall allocation of the naval budget.

Built at an estimated cost of Rs 20,000 crore, Vikrant has state-of-the-art features and can operate air wing consisting of 30 aircrafts, including MiG-29K fighter jets besides the domestically manufactured Advanced Light Helicopters (ALH).

The saga of aircraft carrier is similar to building a new city from scratch but far more complex. The success of INS Vikrant lies in the developing the crucial design and super structures indigenously and it does raise the capability at par with the most advanced aircraft carriers in the world.

Take a case of the HMS Prince of Wales which was developed at a cost of £3 billion. Despite the technological prowess of UK and the much higher cost of the built, she suffered a jolt, and was ground to halt in less than hours after setting off to undertake training exercises with the US Navy and Marine Corps and the Royal Canadian Navy.

The critics do point out the cost overrun in the making of Vikrant but that is simply the case of aircraft carriers built or under planned anywhere in the world. The reason is entirely different from land or air-based asset. This adds to the sheer challenge and complexity in building an aircraft carrier.

As it is also the case for the HMS Queen Elizabeth and HMS Prince of Wales was slated to be £3.9 billion, but as of the 2019 financial year, the programme cost had been scaled up by 95% to £7.6 billion, according to the UK's Ministry of Defence.

The reason for such cost overrun cannot be fixed in its entirety as Professor Trevor Taylor, professorial research fellow in defence management at the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) for Defence and Security Studies explains: "A constant challenge for complex warship construction is that, unlike army vehicles and combat aircraft, ship designers cannot build a prototype for testing and modification. They have to rely on their knowledge, past experience and computer modelling."

The scale of the economy matters hugely in building such warship as it entails an entire spectrum of industrial capacity and capabilities. It is massive in case of INS Vikrant with over 76% of the components and machinery aboard IAC-1, is domestically produced. This consists of 23,000 tonnes of military grade steel, 2,500 km of electric lines, 150 km of pipes, 2,000 valves, rigid hull boats, galley equipment, air conditioning, and refrigeration units, and steering gear, among many other finished goods. In terms of employment opportunities, over 50 Indian firms were actively involved in the project and more than 2,000 personnel were employed directly on-board IAC-1, while 40,000 more people were employed indirectly.

Combat worthy

It might take another few months for INS Vikrant to be combat ready. By definition, the Carrier must have the galaxy of combat jets which could carry out sorties and the warship must be equipped with surface to air missiles. The navy's Vice Chief of Staff Vice Admiral SN Ghormade clarified recently that the navy will begin MiG-29K fighter landing trials on Vikrant in November and this would be completed by mid-2023. Also, the deck integration trials of fixed wing aircraft and exploitation of its Aviation Facility Complex (AFC), which is the core of combat capability would commence post launch of INS Vikrant. While it was supplied by Russia's Nevskoe Design Bureau (NDB), the upgrade is assimilated with state-of-the-art system integration as compared to INS Vikramaditya (ex-Admiral Gorshkov), the navy's other 44,750-tonne refurbished Kiev-class carrier.

So, the immediate gaps would be to choose right aircraft which could justify the combat capability of such a giant warship. Beyond the MiG- 29K, the Indian Navy has already initiated the process to acquire either the Rafale (M) or the F-18 'Super Hornet' as an 'interim measure', till the indigenous twin-engine deck-based fighter (TEDBF), the naval version of the Tejas Light Combat Aircraft gets into the shape.

The budgetary issue again comes up for TEDBF program as government intends to focus on the interim measures. The stopgap arrangement must not be in the way for that the government must refocus on the development cost with speed and scale.

Meanwhile, INS Vikrant will have greater air power in its rotary wing for Kamov-31, MH-60R multi-role helicopters, in addition to indigenously manufactured Advanced Light Helicopters (ALH). Using a novel aircraft-operation mode known as Short Take Off But Arrested Recovery (STOBAR), INS Vikrant is equipped with a ski-jump for launching aircraft, and a set of 'arrester wires' for their recovery onboard.

Specification: Length: 262.5 m · Width: 62.5 m · Displacement: 42,800 tons · Speed: 28 knots · Power: 24 MW Equipment: * RAN-40L 3D Air surveillance Radar *MF-STAR (Naval Radar system) *TACAN (tactical air navigation system) *Rezistor-E Aviation Complex *Shakti EW suite (an electronic layer of defence against anti-ship missiles) *Diver Detection System *ELK-7036 VUHF COMINT Facts: *Over 2,500 km of cabling *Cruising range of 7,500 nautical mile. It produces electricity that is sufficient to power 5000 households. The INS Vikrant carries General Electric LM-2500 gas turbines that collectively generate 80 MW of power (120,000 hp), which would be adequate to push the carrier up to speeds of about 28 kt or 52 km/hour. <https://www.financialexpress.com/defence/the-commissioning-of-ins-vikrant-calls-for-the-bigger-and-better-budget-for-indian-navy/2655963/>

17. Govt drops plan to directly sponsor roads sector InvITs ([livemint.com](https://www.livemint.com)) Sep 6, 2022

The road transport and highways ministry has dropped a plan to bring public money into infrastructure development through government-sponsored road and highway sector InvITs, two officials aware of the development said.

The plan now is to bring retail investment through non-government and private sector InvITs, for which the market regulator's approval is awaited, one of the two government officials said.

The government had earlier considered a plan to launch multiple road and highway InvITs in the public sector to raise money from small investors, with assured returns backed by sovereign guarantees.

However, the long gestation period of highway projects and their fluctuating revenue streams have prompted a rethink: rather than giving assured returns on these financial instruments, the Centre will leave it to the market to determine returns, the officials said.

"Government will not directly sponsor any more public InvITs. The NHAI InvIT, which was launched last year, is now an independent trust and not a public sector undertaking. So, even they can convert the private nature of their InvITs into public once Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) clearance is available for road and highways sector investment trusts to go public and tap funds from retail investors," one of the two officials said on condition of anonymity as he is not authorized to speak to reporters.

A query sent to the ministry remained unanswered.

The change in plans means MoRTH will no longer sponsor new public InvITs. However, all private InvITs could tap funds from retail investors. Leading InvITs registered under Sebi include Brookfield-sponsored India Infrastructure Trust, MEP Infrastructure Investment Trust, IRB InvIT Fund, Tower Infrastructure Trust, and IndInfravit, sponsored by L&T Infrastructure Development Projects.

Infrastructure trusts, or InvITs, are collective investment vehicles which enable direct investments from individual and institutional investors in infrastructure projects, which earn them a small portion of the income in returns.

InvITs allow developers to monetize their assets by pooling multiple infrastructure assets under a single entity (trust structure).

Such infrastructure trusts are popular among investors, especially in the case of long-term revenue-generating assets such as toll roads.

In an attempt to bring public money into infrastructure development, the minister of road transport and highways, Nitin Gadkari, had earlier indicated plans to launch around 10 road and highway InvITs to raise money from small investors—with returns backed by sovereign guarantees—and make small investors part of India's highway development programme.

Public InvITs have so far eluded the road sector, and the new initiative is expected to deepen the asset monetization market in the highway sector. So far, all road sector InvITs have been private trusts.

Roads form a significant portion of the national monetization pipeline, with national highway and road assets worth ₹1.6 trillion identified to be monetized by 2024-25, out of the target of ₹6 trillion.

This makes the exercise of exploring assets for monetization all the more important for the MoRTH.

The National Highway Authority of India has a project bank of 20,000 km of completed roads. NHAI is offering these roads in bundles and will be offering projects worth ₹40,000 crore in the next two financial years. <https://www.livemint.com/industry/infrastructure/govt-drops-plan-to-directly-sponsor-roads-sector-invits-11662395005911.html>

18. Bad to Worse? ([thestatesman.com](https://www.thestatesman.com)) GOVIND BHATTACHARJEE | September 6, 2022

Privatisation of the public sector is a priority area of the government, but little progress has been achieved in this, save for the sale of Air India to the Tatas. Meagre proceeds from disinvestment for several years now have been a major reason for fiscal deficit targets going haywire. Though the government's intention of privatising two Public Sector Banks (PSBs) announced in the FY22 budget did not materialise, the prevalent thinking is to ultimately privatise all PSBs including the monolith State Bank of India. A paper ~ "Privatisation of Public Sector Banks: An Alternate Perspective" ~ published in the RBI Bulletin in August 2022, however, advocated a gradual approach instead of a big bang approach for all-out privatisation of PSBs, in line with recent research which suggests that "private ownership alone does not automatically generate economic gains in developing economies" and that "a more cautious and nuanced evaluation of privatization is required".

Noting that profit maximisation is not the only objective of PSBs which carry social obligations also and that without their support, financial inclusion which was a priority area of government would not have been possible, the paper argued that such a gradual approach would ensure that a void is not created in financial inclusion and monetary transmission. The article offers a counterpoint to the case made out by Poonam Gupta and Arvind Panagariya that the "PSBs have underserved the economy and their stakeholders". It noted that when profit maximisation is the sole motive, private sector banks (PVBs) may be more efficient, but "when the objective function is changed to include financial inclusion ~ like total branches, agricultural advances and PSL (priority sector lending) advances ~ PSBs prove to be more efficient than PVBs".

For financial inclusion, the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana was launched which envisages universal access to banking facilities with at least one basic banking account for every household. As many as 78 per cent of the 45 crore Jan Dhan Accounts opened till July 2022 were in PSBs, with more than 60 per cent of accounts opened in rural and semi-urban areas where the PVBs have limited and reluctant presence. PSBs have always allocated a much larger share of their total credit to PSL compared to the PVBs; they also raised higher resources than the PVBs in recent years indicating the growing market confidence in them. During the Covid-19 shock, they played a crucial role in monetary policy transmission by reducing lending rates more than the PVBs at the cost of profitability and served the social purpose by supporting countercyclical macroeconomic policies needed in those difficult times. They also have higher labour cost efficiency than the PVBs, and generate higher levels of output with lower labour cost.

The banking scenario in India has been undergoing substantial transformation in recent times. For several years now, the government has been merging smaller banks with larger ones to achieve higher economies of scale and better synergy to increase their domestic and global competitiveness. In 2017 SBI was merged with its five associates and another bank, followed by the merger of Vijaya Bank and Dena Bank with Bank of Baroda in 2018. This was followed by a megamerger of ten PSBs into four large banks in 2019 when the government also infused Rs 55,250 crore to help the newly merged and some other PSBs to advance more credit and to meet the crucial BASEL III regulatory norms. As the Economic Survey, 2019-20, observed, Indian banks suffer from “dwarfism”, with only the SBI raking among the top 100 banks in the world, whereas the fifth largest economy in the world would need at least six.

The USA has 18 banks among the top 100, China 12, and Japan, South Korea and the UK six each. India’s banking sector is still disproportionately under-developed compared to the size of its economy, which was a major reason behind the merger, because no economy can realise its full potential unless it is supported by its banking sector. Our experience with forced merger so far has been less than encouraging; in fact, the non-productive assets (NPA) often became worse after merger, with write-offs and persistent slippages eating into both profit and capital. Assets of the merged entities increased, but return on assets decreased due to their underutilization in the post-merger period, and consequently the return on equity decreased significantly. It is also unrealistic to expect that a strong bank would clean up the weak bank’s problems, and the results of the latest mega-mergers are yet to show up in improved performance and competitiveness of PSBs, though it has led to the consolidation of the sector.

One issue that dogged the PSBs more than the PVBs was the unresolved issue of NPAs and cleaning up of their balance sheets. The NPAs have indeed been at the root of their trouble. Their steady loss of profitability and yielding of ground to the PVBs resulted from NPAs, for which the Government, the unholy nexus between politicians and industrialists and a culture of crony capitalism were far more responsible than the PSBs themselves. Once politicians got unfettered control over the PSBs, cronyism, corruption and interference became the order of the day, when we especially needed a renewed focus on management, strengthening of regulatory institutions and ensuring public scrutiny. After liberalisation, the PSBs were made to compete with the private sector including foreign banks and chase quick profits which could only come from corporate loans.

But the bank management still remained captive to the politician-bureaucratic nexus which forced the banks to give loans to industries and individuals regardless of their viability. The result was the NPA crisis and ballooning of defaulting loans. The deterioration in their asset

quality had its root in the credit boom of 2006-2011 when bank-lending grew at an average rate of over 20 per cent, combined with lax credit appraisal and post-sanction monitoring standards, project delays and cost overruns and absence of a strong bankruptcy regime until 2016. The humongous defaults in loan repayments by an array of illustrious businessmen and industrialists could not have taken place without the active participation, collusion and connivance of the people who controlled the levers of the system. The entire economy has been paying the price of such misdemeanour ever since and the subsequent economic slowdown well before the pandemic can be attributed in a substantial measure to the inability of the PSBs to clean up their balance sheets of the NPAs.

Investment has dried up for their lack of capital and the inevitable casualty was the economic growth which had slumped below 5 per cent before the pandemic. Provisioning for NPAs and writing them off had landed the PSBs in the red, and the Government had to use public funds for their recapitalisation which was inadequate. When PSBs had to restrict their lending due to the Prompt Corrective Action limitations imposed by the RBI, NonBanking Financial Companies (NBFCs) became the major lenders. Their credit flow boosted both investment and private consumption for some time until but the collapse of IL&FS in September 2018 which sent shockwaves through the entire financial system ~ converting the twin balance sheet (Banks and Infrastructure Companies) first into a triple balance sheet problem with the NBFCs, and then into a quadruple balance sheet problem by including their major borrowers ~ the real estate sector.

The resulting public anger has led to increased demands for the privatisation of the PSBs which have also been facing stiff competition from the new generation PVBs which have established an edge in the market in Fintech and are leveraging technology in a way that the PSBs cannot match and consequently lost much of their market share to them. But PSBs have an inherent advantage in having a much wider rural network than any PVB and must leverage this for the “last mile” connectivity to include the rural sector into a modern banking network driven by technology, using the Jan-DhanAadhaar-Mobile trinity to their advantage. Privatising them would deprive the government of control over a very important lever of growth. Fortunately, the culture of leniency that had led to the NPA crisis is now a thing of the past and NPAs have been reduced substantially from their peak in 2018 when the Gross NPAs had amounted to nearly 15 per cent of Gross Lending, to about 10 per cent in 2020, aided by the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) of 2016.

Hopefully, the establishment of National Asset Reconstruction Company Limited (NARCL) will clean up the legacy burden of NPAs, and the recently constituted National Bank for Financing infrastructure and Development (NABFiD) will provide an alternate channel of infrastructure funding, thus reducing the asset liability mismatch of PSBs. Privatisation cannot be the answer to all problems in the public sector. As I have argued in this column and elsewhere, the answer lies in giving them genuine autonomy by eliminating the scope of interference by politicians and bureaucrats and in instituting a robust regulatory system for all banks with multiple checks to cover the identified risks, which is still missing. In the absence of regulation, bad will only become worse and the entire economy will pay the price. <https://www.thestatesman.com/opinion/bad-to-worse-1503108259.html>

19. Fake beneficiaries, trucks on paper: Internal auditor points to big gaps in MP's ICDS ration ([indianexpress.com](https://www.indianexpress.com)) 06 Sep 2022

An internal audit report by Madhya Pradesh government has pointed to large-scale irregularities — from fictitious beneficiaries to non-existent supply trucks — in the implementation of the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS), the Centre's flagship nutrition programme that focuses on children under six, nursing mothers and adolescent girls through distribution of take-home ration (THR) and cooked meals.

Additional Chief Secretary, WCD, Ashok Shah told The Indian Express that findings of the draft report will be verified before it is finalised.

For the report, the auditors reviewed THR component of ICDS distributed to 11.98 lakh beneficiaries — 24% of total beneficiaries — and found that in 2020-21, ration worth Rs 110.83 crore was distributed to fake beneficiaries.

As part of THR, raw ingredients or pre-cooked packets are distributed to beneficiaries — children between eight months and three years, pregnant and lactating mothers and Out-of-school Adolescent Girls (OOSAG).

Shah said: "While the report pointed out that trucks shown for distribution of THR were registered as other vehicles, MP Agro [which undertakes distribution of ration] in a written reply had clarified that it was a clerical error and trucks were used for the distribution. Similarly, in April this year, the Centre, based on recommendation of MP government, had stopped THR distribution to out-of-school adolescent girls. It was decided that instead of giving them THR, those coming to schools should be given midday meals."

According to the 36-page internal report, on verification at anganwadi centres, only three adolescent girls were found to be registered across 49 anganwadi centres in eight districts, as opposed to the state's MIS portal, where 63,748 girls were registered, of whom ration was ostensibly distributed to 29,104 adolescent girls.

The Centre had earlier urged the state WCD Department to conduct a baseline survey by April 2018 to identify OOSAGs. With the baseline survey not completed by February 2021, the WCD Department instead estimated the figure at 36.08 lakh.

However, the report noted, the Education Department had estimated only 9,000 OOSAGs in 2018-19. The report said WCD Department finally accepted that the figure had been inflated by around 5.5 lakh.

WCD Department is under supervision of Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan since 2020, when BJP leader and former WCD minister, Imarti Devi, was dropped as minister following her defeat in by-polls that year.

Shah said, "After the ministry was taken over by the Chief Minister, a decision was taken to weed out all fictitious beneficiaries and bring in transparency. The first rounds of meetings with an international external agency have been held. With their help, the department will bring in transparency and increase accountability."

The report also pegged the “fake production of THR” at Rs 58 crore, noting that six plants involved in production of ration — at Badi, Dhar, Rewa, Mandla, Sagar and Shivpuri — supplied 821.558 metric tonnes of THR, costing Rs 4.95 crore, despite non-availability of stock at the time challan was issued.

The report said 1,125.64 metric tonnes of THR costing Rs 6.94 crores was distributed through trucks, but during verification of the registered vehicles it was found that these trucks were registered as motorcycles, cars, autos and tankers. In some cases, the purported trucks did not exist in the database.

The auditors have reported other irregularities, including that they came across 2,865 packets of THR in Shivpuri and Sagar districts, while the packets were shown as “distributed” in the records. <https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/bhopal/internal-audit-points-to-big-gaps-in-mps-integrated-child-development-scheme-ration-supply-8133200/>

20. DMF Funds Used for Pvt Mine workers’ safety kits in Odisha’s Sundargarh (odishabytes.com) Sep 6, 2022

Rourkela: District Mineral Foundation (DMF) fund to the tune of Rs 32.33 crore was reportedly used for supply of safety equipment and kits to workers in private mines and industries in Odisha’s Sundargarh.

While mines and industries are required to provide safety equipment to workers as part of statutory obligation, the district administration in Sundargarh appeared to have done the job, reports said.

Reports quoting RTI documents said that after a meeting chaired by the district Collector on August 4, 2021, the DMF Chief Executive Officer (CEO) on September 1 sent a reminder to the District Labour Office (DLO) for urgent supply of a list of mining workers for distribution of personal protective equipment and other essential items.

Around two months prior to that on June 9, 2021, a tender was floated for supply of safety equipment and kits for 10,000 mining workers. Geelon Industries Pvt Ltd which quoted Rs 13,500 emerged L1 bidder, while Veer Enterprises and Shree Hari General Supplier were L2 and L3 bidders respectively, they said.

As per RTI information obtained by Rashmi Ranjan Padhi from the Public Information Officer (PIO) of Sundargarh DMF, before procurement and distribution started, it was surprisingly decided that 14,050 mining workers will be covered by the scheme. It was subsequently increased to 24,139, covering both private industrial and mining workers.

Citing documents, the Congress leader reportedly said Geelon Industries was allowed to supply kits for 14,042 workers, while Veer Enterprises and Shree Hari were asked to provide the same for 3,025 and 7,062 workers.

Alleging that the increased procurement was done without floating any fresh tender, Padhi claimed that all the suppliers were from outside Odisha. While Geelon was paid more than Rs 18.82 crore, Veer Enterprises and Shree Hari were made payments of Rs 9.46 crore and Rs 4.05 crore respectively towards the procurement, it was stated.

Padhi further alleged that the prescribed quality and brands mentioned in the tender documents were not followed. While Rs 13,500 was paid towards each package, the kits supplied were worth hardly Rs 8,000 apiece. The difference could be to the tune of Rs 12 crore in a deal of Rs 32.33 crore, he claimed. <https://odishabytes.com/dmf-funds-used-for-pvt-mine-workers-safety-kits-in-odishas-sundargarh/>