

NEWS ITEMS ON CAG/ AUDIT REPORTS

1. CAG raises concerns over delegation of powers within NHAI to appraise & approve govt-funded projects (*timesofindia.indiatimes.com*) August 13, 2023

The Comptroller and Auditor General of India has flagged concerns over the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) delegating the powers within the organisation for appraisal and approval of fully government funded projects. It has observed that this delegation of power implied non-separation of roles of execution, appraisal and approval of projects and denied the opportunity of independent scrutiny.

The CAG report on Bharatmala, the government's flagship highway development programme, has referred to the decision of the NHAI board meeting of November 16, 2017 where the delegation of powers for appraisal and approval of government funded or EPC projects was given the go ahead.

The decision specified that projects costing up to Rs 500 crore can be appraised by an internal appraisal committee headed by NHAI chairman and can be approved by the chairman. For projects costing between Rs 500 crore and Rs 1,000 crore, committees chaired by designated members can appraise them and the executive committee under NHAI chairman can approve them. In the case of projects costing more than Rs 1,000 crore, a committee headed by the member concerned can appraise them and these can be approved by the NHAI board. The board has representatives from other ministries as well.

Officials said the appraisal committee headed by members from NHAI also have representatives from Niti Aayog.

The CAG, in its report, said that as per the NHAI Act, at least two non-government professionals having knowledge or experience in financial management, transportation planning or any other relevant discipline were to be appointed as part-time members of NHAI board. It said this requirement was also insisted by Niti Aayog while commenting on the draft Cabinet note on Bharatmala programme during inter-ministerial consultation. However, non-government professionals were not appointed to the NHAI Board.

The audit report said, "Implication of such delegation to NHAI whereby the EPC projects to be implemented by NHAI were to be entirely appraised and approved within NHAI only with no financial capping defined, were evident in test checks done by audit."

The CAG has recommended the government to review the project appraisal and approval mechanism, including delegation of powers, for ensuring proper scrutiny, selection and approval of all modes of project construction at competent levels.

CAG cites 'avoidable lapses' in land acquisition

The Comptroller and Auditor General of India, in its report on the Bharatmala highway development programme, has cited "avoidable lapses" of implementing agencies while

acquiring land. It found that only the NHAI had 1,635 hectares of surplus land till March 2021.

The auditor said the highway construction agencies failed to scrutinise land schedules and land acquisition plans and also failed to match the same with actual alignment of the project, which resulted in acquisition of excess land than required for projects. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/cag-raises-concerns-over-delegation-of-powers-within-nhai-to-appraise-approve-govt-funded-projects/articleshow/102706469.cms?from=mdr>

2. CAG audit flags huge cost overruns in Dwarka Expressway project (*economictimes.indiatimes.com*) August 14, 2023

The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG), in a latest audit report, has flagged huge cost overruns in the Dwarka Expressway project.

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)'s decision to opt for elevated carriageway on the Haryana portion of the expressway has pushed up the construction cost to Rs 251 crore per km from the originally approved Rs 18.2 crore per km, the report pointed out.

The NHAI is building the expressway in question under the Bharatmala programme. The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) had approved an overall average construction cost of Rs 18.2 crore per km while approving the Bharatmala programme.

The CAG's audit report dealt with the 'Implementation of Phase-I of Bharatmala Pariyojana (BPP-1)'. It found that the NHAI Board approved the Dwarka Expressway with "civil cost of Rs 7,287.29 crore with per km Rs 250.77 crore as against per km civil cost of Rs 18.2 crore approved by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA)".

The project was approved for decongesting NH-48 between Delhi and Gurgaon. The CAG said that the Haryana government had handed over 90 meter right of way (RoW) to NHAI free of cost and to build a 14-lane highway at grade, 70-75 meter of RoW was enough.

"However, for no reasons on record, the project highway in the Haryana region, where its length was 19 km, was planned with eight lane elevated main carriage way and six lane at grade road when NHAI already had 90 meter right of way and the same was sufficient for building 14 lane at grade national highway," it said.

According to officials quoted by ToI, while CCEA's nod was based on building standard four-lane highways, this specific project is of 14 lanes — eight-lane access-controlled and six lanes of service roads. Most of the access-controlled part is elevated.

The CAG report pointed out that the construction cost of the expressway rose manifold owing to such massive structures.

As per sources cited by ToI, the expressway was approved after multiple rounds of inter-ministerial consultations and after considering the trend of high traffic growth between Delhi and Gurgaon.

They made a reference to the experience of 8-lane Delhi-Gurgaon Expressway, which got choked within five years after it became fully operational.

The report also revealed that the NHAI board had also approved the Delhi-Vadodara Expressway with civil cost of around Rs 32,839 crore — a project that was not included in the CCEA-approved list of BPP-I projects.

According to the CAG, "NHAI, which was developing 70,950 km of national highways length out of 76,999 km of national highways length determined for BPP-I, was also delegated the power to decide the mode of construction of the projects being implemented by it. Audit observed that the decisions on mode of construction were being taken by NHAI without any valid justification on record."

"The audit further observed that before delegating the powers to decide the mode of construction of projects, the appraisal and approval mechanism proposed to CCEA did not define the term 'project' and 'package'. Thus, for taking decision on mode of construction, whether the packages in which a single project was divided for construction purposes would constitute separate projects or all packages combined would constitute a single project was not clearly defined, the CAG further said in its report.

The implementing bodies did not follow the appraisal and approval mechanism prescribed by the CCEA for BPP-I, the CAG report pointed out. "Out of 50 sample projects of NHAI, in case of eight projects, appraisal by Project Appraisal and Technical Scrutiny Committee was not done due to either these being appraised under old NHDP programme or they being balance works/ one time improvement works," the report said.

In 35 out of 50 projects, tender notices were floated without any technical and financial appraisal of projects by Project Appraisal and Technical Scrutiny Committee, the report revealed. The process was done afterwards, it added.

The CAG found that "out of these 35 sample projects, in case of two projects viz, Shamli-Muzaffarnagar (Pkg-II) and Delhi-Vadodara Expressway (Pkg -18), the Project Appraisal and Technical Scrutiny Committee did not include any expert from NITI Aayog."

The report also flagged that the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway could remain "underutilised" for the next 25 years. That is because of the fact that the stretch has more lane capacity than needed to meet the next 15 years' traffic demand, it added. <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/infrastructure/cag-audit-flags-huge-cost-overruns-in-dwarka-expressway-project/articleshow/102715287.cms?from=mdr>

3. Dwarka Expressway Cost 14 Times More Than Sanctioned, Says Government Auditor (*ndtv.com*) August 13, 2023

The Expressway, meant to de-congest NH-48 between Delhi and Gurugram by developing it into a 14-lane national highway, was built at a "very high" per km cost of ₹ 250.77 crore against the CCEA approved per km cost of ₹ 18.20 crore.

The cost of the Dwarka highway built under the Centre's Bharatmala Pariyojana phase-1 has exceeded the amount approved by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) in 2017 by 14 times, the government's top auditor Comptroller and Auditor General or CAG has found.

The report said the Expressway, prioritised to de-congest NH-48 between Delhi and Gurugram by developing it into a 14-lane national highway running parallelly, was built at a "very high" per km cost of ₹ 250.77 crore against the CCEA approved per km cost of ₹ 18.20 crore.

The report quoted the Ministry of Road Transport and Highway's response on this from April 2022, saying the "Dwarka Expressway was decided to be developed as an eight-lane elevated corridor with minimal entry exit arrangements to allow smooth movements of inter-state traffic". This was cited as a reason for the high cost.

But the Comptroller and Auditor General of India said there was no justification on record for planning/construction of eight lanes (elevated lanes) for average daily traffic of 55,432 passenger vehicles. Only six lanes (at grade lanes) were planned/constructed for the average annual daily traffic of 2,32,959 passenger vehicles.

This is not the only highway with a mismatch of approved and actual costs. The report revealed that across India, the sanctioned cost under the Bharatmala Pariyojana were 58 per cent higher than the approved cost.

The sanctioned cost of 26,316 km of project length was ₹ 8,46,588 crore (Rs 32.17 crore/km) as against CCEA approved length of 34,800 km at cost of ₹ 5,35,000 crore (Rs 15.37 crore/km).

Despite the increasing cost, the 2022 deadline for completing 34,800 km of national highways has not been met. Only 13,499 km of national highways length has been completed till 31 March 2023, which is 38.79 per cent of CCEA approved length. This includes the construction undertaken during the COVID pandemic.

About the stark increase in costs, the report said significant changes were made in the scope of projects and cost estimates. Also, richer project specifications adopted have pushed up the sanctioned cost of projects awarded under Bharatmala Pariyojana Phase 1. This has resulted in a cost increase of ₹ 10 crore per km of construction.

Given the need for more funds, funds approved for other schemes (Rs 1,57,324 crore) were being utilised. So far, 78 such projects (1,752 km taken together) approved under other schemes, were being reported as achievements of Bharatmala Pariyojana Phase-1 as on 31 March 2023, the report said.

The discrepancies didn't just exist in fund management. Even the appraisal and approval mechanisms decided by CCEA were also not strictly followed, the report said.

CAG said here were cases of successful bidders not fulfilling tender condition or bidders being selected on basis of falsified documents. Work has been awarded without there being approved detailed project reports or was based on faulty detailed project report.

It added that implementing agencies were still awarding projects without ensuring availability of requisite land, resulting in delayed commencement of projects construction and their completion. Also, many Bharatmala projects were being implemented without environmental clearance in contravention of prescribed procedure.

It added that safety consultants too were not ensured at all stages of construction. Due to wrong computation of price-adjustment formula in case of some projects, contractors/concessionaires were paid excess price adjustments to the tune of ₹ 99.16 crore. There was diversion of funds to the tune of ₹ 3,598.52 crore from escrow accounts for HAM/BOT projects, the report added.

But the report added that the pace of per day project length constructed under Bharatmala Pariyojana has improved from 1.04 km in 2018-19 to 12.37 km in 2022-23.

Another CAG report, released on the same day, said toll rules have been violated across several states in south India, leading to an undue burden of ₹ 154 crores on road users.

Due to non-implementation of NH Fee Amendment Rules 2013, NHAI continued to collect user fee in three toll plazas (namely Nathavalasa, Chalageri, Hebbalu) during delayed period of construction though the amended rule said no user fee shall be levied for the delayed period. The road users continued to pay user fee during the delayed period of the projects. <https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/dwarka-expressway-cost-14-times-more-than-sanctioned-says-government-auditor-4295039>

4. Dwarka Expressway cost 14 times more than approved amount, says CAG (*nationalheraldindia.com*) August 14, 2023

Flagging the “very high” civil cost of Dwarka Expressway, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) said that the project built under the Centre’s Bharatmala Pariyojana phase-1, has exceeded the amount approved by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) by 14 times.

The CAG, in its annual report has said that National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) Board approved the Dwarka Expressway with civil cost of Rs 7,287.29 crore with per km Rs 250.77 crore as against per km civil cost of Rs 18.20 crore approved by CCEA.

The report also revealed that the Delhi-Vadodara Expressway with civil cost of around Rs 32,839 crore which was not included in the CCEA approved list of BPP-I projects was approved at the level of NHAI Board.

“NHAI, which was developing 70,950 km of national highways length out of 76,999 km of national highways length determined for BPP-I, was also delegated the power to decide the mode of construction of the projects being implemented by it. Audit observed that the decisions on mode of construction were being taken by NHAI without any valid justification on record,” the CAG report said.

Saying that the “audit further observed that before delegating the powers to decide the mode of construction of projects, the appraisal and approval mechanism proposed to CCEA did not define the term ‘project’ and ‘package’ CAG pointed out, “For taking decision on mode of construction, whether the packages in which a single project was divided for construction purposes would constitute separate projects or all packages combined would constitute a single project was not clearly defined.”

The appraisal and approval mechanism prescribed by the CCEA for BPP-I was not being followed by implementing agencies, the report said.

“Out of 50 sample projects of NHAI, in case of eight projects, appraisal by Project Appraisal and Technical Scrutiny Committee was not done due to either these being appraised under old NHDP programme or they being balance works/ one time improvement works,” it said.

For 35 projects out of 50 projects, the notice inviting tender were floated without there being any technical and financial appraisal of projects by Project Appraisal and Technical Scrutiny Committee as the same was done afterwards, the report added.

“Out of these 35 sample projects, in case of two projects viz, Shamli-Muzaffarnagar (Pkg-II) and Delhi-Vadodara Expressway (Pkg -18), the Project Appraisal and Technical Scrutiny Committee did not include any expert from NITI Aayog,” it said.

The CAG audit further observed that out of 50 sample projects of NHAI, 46 projects were approved by competent authority after a period ranging from seven days to 404 days of floating of notice inviting tender for these projects. <https://www.nationalheraldindia.com/national/dwarka-expressway-cost-14-times-more-than-approved-amount-says-cag>

5. Dwarka eway construction cost very high, reveals CAG report (*tribuneindia.com*) August 14, 2023

The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) has flagged the “very high” civil construction cost of the Dwarka Expressway in its latest report.

In its audit report on ‘Implementation of Phase-I of Bharatmala Pariyojana’ (or BPP-I) for the period 2017-18 to 2020-21, the CAG highlighted that the 29-km expressway aiming to decongest Gurugram Delhi was built at a cost of Rs 250.77 crore per km against Rs 18.2 crore per km approved by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA). The CAG has also highlighted that the Dwarka Expressway was “appraised and approved” without any detailed project report.

According to the report, the project sanctioned by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) was initially planned by the Haryana Government under its Gurgaon-Manesar Urban Construction Plan-2031. However, as state made no evident progress it was later approved in BPP-I by CCEA, the report noted. For this purpose, 90-m right of way was handed over by Haryana to the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) free of cost.

"Up to 70-75 metre right of way was required to build 14-lane national highway at grade. However, for no reasons on record, the project in Haryana region, where its length was 19 km, was planned with eight-lane elevated main carriageway and six lanes at grade road, when NHAI already had 90-m right of way.

The same was sufficient for building 14 lanes at grade due to such massive structures, this project, constructed on engineering, procurement, and construction (EPC) mode, for a length of 29.06 km had sanctioned civil construction cost of Rs 7,287.29 crore i.e., Rs 250.77 crore/km as against per-km civil construction cost of Rs 18.20 crore approved by CCEA," reads the report.

It also highlights that the Transport Ministry justified the free passage to the NHAI saying necessary underpasses dovetailed with requirements of local authorities were also incorporated to avoid future interventions. It stated that this development plan required 90m right of way to ensure technical standards and meet criteria of road safety.

The CAG report mentioned that the ministry's reply "may be viewed" against the fact that construction of underpasses/flyovers at the intersection point of the highway at grade could have been considered a feasible option rather than building the whole eight-lane main carriageway as elevated.

Project approved without detailed report

In its audit report on 'Implementation of Phase-I of Bharatmala Pariyojana', the CAG highlighted that the Dwarka Expressway was "appraised and approved" without any detailed project report

The report notes that Dwarka Expressway was initially planned by the Haryana Government under its Gurgaon-Manesar Urban Construction Plan-2031 <https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/haryana/dwarka-eway-construction-cost-very-high-reveals-cag-report-534880>

6. Rs 18 crore per km to Rs 250 crore per km, CAG flags 'very high' project cost of Dwarka Expressway (*indianexpress.com*)
Written by Harikishan Sharma | Updated: August 13, 2023

The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) has flagged the "very high" civil construction cost of the 29.06-km Dwarka Expressway, which was sanctioned by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) at a cost of Rs 250.77 crore per km against Rs 18.20 crore per km approved by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) for National Corridors/National Corridors Efficiency Improvements Programme, under which this project was being constructed.

In its audit report on ‘Implementation of Phase-I of Bharatmala Pariyojana’ (or BPP-I) — conducted for the period 2017-18 to 2020-21 — the CAG has made several observations on 14-lane road project — eight elevated lanes and six lanes at grade (or elevation of the road) — meant to decongest NH-48 between Delhi and Gurgaon.

The report notes that Dwarka Expressway was initially planned by Haryana government under its Gurgaon-Manesar Urban Construction Plan-2031. For that, Haryana acquired right of way (width of a road) of 150 metres to construct the main carriage way of 25 metres, with a 7-m-wide median and a dedicated utility corridor for trunk services.

“However, with no further progress being made by Haryana government, this project was later approved in BPP-I by CCEA,” the report noted. For this purpose, 90 m right of way was handed over by Haryana to the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) free of cost, the audit report stated.

The report highlighted, “Audit observed that up to 70-75 metre right of way was required to build 14-lane national highway at grade. However, for no reasons on record, the project in Haryana region, where its length was 19 km, was planned with eight-lane elevated main carriageway and six lanes at grade road, when NHAI already had 90 m right of way and the same was sufficient for building 14 lanes at grade.... Due to such massive structures, this project, constructed on EPC [Engineering, Procurement, and Construction]mode, for a length of 29.06 km had sanctioned civil construction cost of Rs 7,287.29 crore i.e., Rs 250.77 crore/km as against per-km civil construction cost of Rs 18.20 crore approved by CCEA...”

Mentioning the ministry’s observations, the report stated: “MoRTH replied (April 2022) that Dwarka Expressway was decided to be developed as an eight-lane elevated corridor with minimal entry-exit arrangements to allow smooth movements of inter-state traffic. As for six lanes at grade road, this was effectively the six-lane existing carriageway available to local commuters prior to upgrade of road. Further, necessary underpasses dovetailed with requirements of local authorities were also incorporated to avoid future interventions. It stated that this development plan required 90 meter right of way to ensure technical standards and meet criteria of road safety. Accordingly, based on discussions, the required right of way was provided by Haryana government free of cost to NHAI.”

The CAG report mentioned that the ministry’s reply “may be viewed” against the fact that construction of underpasses/flyovers at the intersection point of the highway at grade could have been considered a feasible option rather than building the whole eight-lane main carriageway as elevated. “In fact, in Dwarka Expressway itself, at one location where the main carriageway was at grade, suitable underpass was being constructed to avoid traffic congestion. This could have mitigated the huge cost of building the whole stretch in Haryana region as elevated. Further, MoRTH did not counter audit observation that 14-lane national highway could have been built at grade in available 90 meter right of way.”

The CAG has also highlighted that the Dwarka Expressway was “appraised and approved without any detailed project report”.

“Audit observed that the four projects of Dwarka Expressway were appraised and approved by Competent Authority based on a brief by [the] technical division of NHAI. Thus, Dwarka Expressway was appraised and approved without any detailed project report,” the report said.

It has flagged the effects of “non-preparation of detailed project report”, which it said were manifested in several ways.

Although “sufficient” right of way was with NHAI to build all 14 lanes at grade level, “for no reasons on record, it was being constructed with eight-lane elevated road and six lanes at grade road, resulting in very high per km civil cost of Rs 250.77 crore for this project”, the report noted.

It also noted that the planned toll rates and tolling mechanism “might hinder” recovery of capital cost and “might also result in undue financial burden on commuters” between Delhi and Gurgaon, up to Kherki Daula toll plaza. The lane configurations of the expressway were determined without analysing development of competing infrastructure such as Rapid Rail Transit System Shahjahanpur-Neemrana-Behror (RRTS SNB), the report stated.

Part of national highways project

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved Bharatmala Pariyojana in October 2017 as a new umbrella programme for development of national highways of 74,942 km length. Of this, 34,800 km, including the Residual National Highways Development Programme (NHDP) length of 10,000 km, was approved under Phase-I of Bharatmala Pariyojana for development up to September 2022, at an investment outlay of Rs 5,35,000 crore.

“MoRTH replied (April 2022) that the Dwarka Expressway project was given to M/s AECOM (lead partner in association with other members) as a variation to consultancy services for preparation of feasibility report of greenfield Delhi-Jaipur Expressway. There was no provision for detailed project report in the existing consultancy services,” the CAG pointed out. “However, it may be noted that with the advent of model EPC Agreement, the detailed design has been included in the scope of EPC contractor.”

Accordingly, it said, the feasibility report “containing good for tender drawings were sufficient for invitation of bids and appraisal of the project”.

The report said, “Reply of MoRTH regarding feasibility report containing good for tender drawing being equivalent to detailed project report was in contravention to its own Standard Operating Procedure (December 2017) for BPP-I which stated that detailed project reports presented the outline/layout for any project and hence should be prepared judiciously keeping in mind the latest technologies available and good quality detailed project reports were key for timely and economical construction of quality projects. In fact, considering the importance of good detailed project reports, MoRTH, through Standard Operating Procedure, assigned additional duty to NHAI to develop a detailed guidance document for detailed project report consultant to ensure quality design and quality detailed project report preparation including topics on the use of technology in detailed project report, standard designs for structures, guidelines

for access control etc. However, no such detailed guidance document was prepared by NHAI.”

During conducting the audit, the CAG examined “planning, financial management, implementation, and monitoring of 66 sampled projects being implemented under Phase-I of Bharatmala Pariyojana”, the report mentioned. <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/rs-18-cr-per-km-to-rs-250-cr-per-km-cag-flags-very-high-project-cost-of-dwarka-expressway-8890020/https://indianexpress.com/article/india/rs-18-cr-per-km-to-rs-250-cr-per-km-cag-flags-very-high-project-cost-of-dwarka-expressway-8890020/>

7. CAG flags high cost of Dwarka E-way (*timesofindia.indiatimes.com*) 14 AUGUST 23

The Comptroller and Auditor General of India has flagged how the NHAI's decision to go for elevated carriageway on the Haryana portion of Dwarka Expressway has pushed up the construction cost to Rs 251 crore per km.

It also flagged how the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway may remain "underutilised" for the next 25 years as the stretch has more lane capacity than required to meet the next 15 years' traffic demand.

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) is building both the expressways under the Bharatmala highway development programme. The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) had approved an overall average construction cost of Rs 18.2 crore per km while approving the Bharatmala programme.

As per the CAG report, the NHAI board approved the Dwarka Expressway project with a civil cost of Rs 7,287.3 crore to decongest NH-48 between Delhi and Gurgaon. It said that the Haryana government had handed over 90 meter right of way (RoW) to NHAI free of cost and to build a 14-lane highway at grade, 70-75 meter of RoW was enough.

"However, for no reasons on record, the project highway in the Haryana region, where its length was 19 km, was planned with eight lane elevated main carriage way and six lane at grade road when NHAI already had 90 meter right of way and the same was sufficient for building 14 lane at grade national highway," it said. The CAG said the construction cost increased due to such massive structures.

Officials said while cabinet approval was based on building standard four-lane highways, this project is of 14 lanes - eight-lane access-controlled and six lanes of service roads - and most portion of the access-controlled stretch is elevated. They added the costs have been approved by committees that had representatives from road and finance ministries and also from Niti Aayog.

Sources also said that the project was cleared after several rounds of inter-ministerial consultations and considering the trend of high traffic growth between Delhi and Gurgaon. They cited the experience of 8-lane DelhiGurgaon Expressway which got choked within five years after it became fully operational. "While building a highway meets the requirement of next 10-15 years, any expressway is planned to meet the need of 35-40 years," said an official.

Though the road transport ministry had submitted that the decision for elevated with minimal entry exit was taken to allow smooth movements of inter-state traffic, the CAG said construction of underpasses and flyovers at the intersection point of at grade highway could have been considered as a feasible option.

On the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway project, the CAG referred to the norms of Indian Road Congress, which says that the required daily traffic for a eight-lane expressway is 1.3 lakh passenger car units (vehicles). The report said the NHAI did not carry out the cost-benefit analysis to compare deliverables and cost in respect of four, six and eight lane configurations. It added, considering the traffic of 40,000 PCUs, the eight and six lane infrastructure of this project "would remain underutilised upto 2048 and 2039 respectively".

The CAG said, "MoRTH/ NHAI could have considered the option of limiting the configuration of lanes at present to what was feasible as per IRC specification and acquiring only the land in line with the configuration for construction of higher lanes so that extra lanes can be constructed in future as and when optimal traffic was expected to ply on them." <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/delhi/cag-flags-high-cost-of-dwarka-e-way/articleshow/102707144.cms?from=mdr>

8. Dwarka highway cost 14 times more than Modi govt's approved price: CAG (editorji.com) 14 August 2023

The Dwarka highway, built to decongest NH-48 between Delhi and Gurugram, cost 14 times more than the approved amount.

This revelation has been made in an analysis by the Comptroller and Auditor General, as per an NDTV report.

The highway was constructed under the Narendra Modi government's Bharatmala Pariyojana.

The expressway was built at a "very high" cost of ₹250.77 crore per kilometre, even as the cost approved by the Modi government was ₹18.20 crore. <https://www.editorji.com/india-news/dwarka-highway-cost-14-times-more-than-modi-govt-s-approved-price-cag-1691988946831>

9. Dwarka Expressway: New Audit Highlights 14 Fold Cost Disparity (clipper28.com) 14 AUGUST 23

In a recent government audit, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) shed light on the "very high" civil construction cost of the Dwarka Expressway project. The Dwarka Expressway, aimed at easing traffic congestion between Delhi and Gurugram, was sanctioned at a cost of Rs 250.77 crore per km by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH). This is significantly higher than the approved cost of Rs 18.20 crore per km set by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) for similar projects under the National Corridors Efficiency Improvements Programme.

The audit report, covering the period from 2017-18 to 2020-21, raised concerns about the cost of the 14-lane road project, which includes eight elevated lanes and six lanes at ground level. The Expressway's primary purpose was to ease congestion on NH-48 between Delhi and Gurugram by expanding it into a wider national highway.

The Dwarka Expressway's construction cost of Rs 250.77 crore per km far exceeded the approved amount by the CCEA, which was only Rs 18.20 crore per km. This significant discrepancy, highlighted by the government's top auditor, indicates that the project was executed at a cost that was 14 times higher than initially approved.

The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways provided a response in April 2022, explaining that the decision to develop an eight-lane elevated corridor was made to ensure smooth traffic flow between states. However, the CAG expressed doubts about the justification for constructing eight elevated lanes for an average daily traffic of 55,432 passenger vehicles, when only six lanes at ground level were planned for an average annual daily traffic of 2,32,959 passenger vehicles.

The audit report also revealed that this issue was not isolated. The cost discrepancies extended across multiple projects under the Bharatmala Pariyojana. The sanctioned costs for these projects were 58% higher than the approved costs, indicating a broader trend of cost inflation.

Despite the cost challenges, the report did note some positive developments. The construction pace under the Bharatmala Pariyojana improved from 1.04 km per day in 2018-19 to 12.37 km per day in 2022-23. However, the audit underscored the importance of adhering to approved project costs, transparent appraisal mechanisms, and careful implementation to avoid these kinds of discrepancies in the future. <https://clipper28.com/en/in-a-recent-government-audit-the-comptroller-and-auditor-general-of-india-cag-shed-light-on-the-very-high-civil-construction-cost-of-the-dwarka-expressway-project/>

10. CAG flags 'sky-high' cost of Dwarka Expressway
(*telanganatoday.com, thestatesman.com, daijiworld.com, ibtimes.co.in*) 13 AUGUST 23

The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) in its audit report on 'Implementation of Phase-I of Bharatmala Pariyojana (BPP-1)' has revealed that the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) Board approved the Dwarka Expressway with civil cost of Rs 7,287.29 crore with per km Rs 250.77 crore as against per km civil cost of Rs 18.20 crore approved by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA).

The report also revealed that the Delhi-Vadodara Expressway with civil cost of around Rs 32,839 crore which was not included in the CCEA approved list of BPP-I projects was approved at the level of NHAI Board.

"NHAI, which was developing 70,950 km of national highways length out of 76,999 km of national highways length determined for BPP-I, was also delegated the power to decide the mode of construction of the projects being implemented by it. Audit

observed that the decisions on mode of construction were being taken by NHAI without any valid justification on record,” the CAG report said.

The CAG in its report said, “The audit further observed that before delegating the powers to decide the mode of construction of projects, the appraisal and approval mechanism proposed to CCEA did not define the term ‘project’ and ‘package’. Thus, for taking decision on mode of construction, whether the packages in which a single project was divided for construction purposes would constitute separate projects or all packages combined would constitute a single project was not clearly defined.”

The appraisal and approval mechanism prescribed by the CCEA for BPP-I was not being followed by implementing agencies, the report said.

“Out of 50 sample projects of NHAI, in case of eight projects, appraisal by Project Appraisal and Technical Scrutiny Committee was not done due to either these being appraised under old NHDP programme or they being balance works/ one time improvement works,” it said.

For 35 projects out of 50 projects, the notice inviting tender were floated without there being any technical and financial appraisal of projects by Project Appraisal and Technical Scrutiny Committee as the same was done afterwards, the report said.

“Out of these 35 sample projects, in case of two projects viz, Shamli-Muzaffarnagar (Pkg-II) and Delhi-Vadodara Expressway (Pkg -18), the Project Appraisal and Technical Scrutiny Committee did not include any expert from NITI Aayog,” it said.

The CAG audit further observed that out of 50 sample projects of NHAI, 46 projects were approved by competent authority after a period ranging from seven days to 404 days of floating of notice inviting tender for these projects. <https://telanganatoday.com/cag-flags-sky-high-cost-of-dwarka-expressway>

11. CAG red flags Centre's Bharatmala Pariyojana, says ineligible bidders selected for highways project (*newindianexpress.com*) August 13, 2023

The CAG report tabled in Parliament last week also found that fund management, planning and monitoring of the projects were not up to the mark.

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) has found fault with the implementation of Phase I of the Centre's flagship Bharatmala Pariyojana, the highways development programme while reviewing several projects awarded under the scheme.

In its latest report, the CAG has observed that ineligible bidders were selected and bids were awarded on the basis of faulty detailed project reports (DPRs) or without DPRs in violation of prescribed processes of the tendering.

It further pointed out that DPRs prepared by consultants were not appraised with due diligence by the competent authority before the approval of projects. It has recommended that the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) consider

establishing a DPR Cell in the implementing agencies to create institutionalized in-house expertise for reviewing the project reports and road designs.

In October 2017, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved Bharatmala Pariyojana for the development of 74,942 km of national highways. The primary focus of the programme was on optimising the efficiency of the movement of freight and people across the country.

A total length of 34,800 km including the Residual National Highways Development Program (NHDP) length of 10,000 km, was approved under Phase I of Bharatmala Pariyojana (BPP-I), for development up to September 2022, at an investment outlay of Rs 5,35,000 crore.

The CAG report tabled in Parliament last week also found that fund management, planning and monitoring of the projects were not up to the mark.

“Due to wrong computation of price-adjustment formula in case of EPC (Engineering, Procurement and Construction) HAM (Hybrid Annuity Model) projects, contractors/concessionaires were paid excess price adjustments to the tune of Rs 99.16 crore. MoRTH should review the interpretation of the price adjustment formula in HAM projects so as to avoid undue benefit to the concessionaire. Poor monitoring of escrow accounts by NHAI resulted in the diversion of funds to the tune of Rs 3,598.52 crore from escrow accounts by concessionaires,” the report of the federal assessor reads.

HAM is a combination of two models --EPC and BOT--Annuity (Build, Operate, Transfer) model. Under the EPC model, private entities build roads and have no role in its ownership, toll collection or maintenance.
<https://www.newindianexpress.com/thesundaystandard/2023/aug/13/cag-red-flags-centres-bharatmala-pariyojana-says-ineligiblebidders-selected-for-highways-project-2604678.html>

12. CAG Finds Irregularities in Award of Highway Projects under Bharatmala Pariyojana (*thewire.in*) August 11, 2023

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India has found instances of irregularities in the award of the Union government’s Bharatmala highway projects.

The audit – which covered the period from 2017-18 to 2020-21 – examines planning, financial management, implementation, and monitoring of 66 sampled projects being implemented under Phase-I of Bharatmala Pariyojana.

The CAG report revealed instances of irregularities in the allocation of projects by implementing agencies, in violation of tendering protocols. For instance, in some cases, the successful bidder did not fulfill the tendering condition or the bidder was selected on the basis of falsified documents. Works were awarded in the absence of detailed project reports, or there were faulty project reports.

According to the Times of India, the implementing agencies were awarding projects without ensuring availability of required land and forest clearance, which are resulting in delayed commencement and completion of projects.

The National Highways Authority of India and National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited are the implementing agencies.

The CAG also found deficiencies in the appraisal and approval mechanism proposed to the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) in many of the high cost Engineering Procurement and Construction (EPC) projects or fully funded government projects. The Delhi-Vadodara Expressway and Dwarka Expressway could not be assessed either by the CCEA or the highways ministry to be scrutinised at that level.

“Even the appraisal and approval mechanism decided by CCEA was also not strictly followed,” the CAG said.

The CAG pointed out that there were significant cost overruns. It noted that only 75.62% of CCEA approved length has been awarded while 158.24% of approved financial outlay was sanctioned up to March 31, 2023.

The Phase-I of Bharatmala Pariyojana was for development up to September 2022, at an investment outlay of Rs 5,35,000 crore.

The Economic Times reported, citing the CAG report, that significant changes made in the scope of projects and cost estimates as well as richer project specifications adopted have pushed up the sanctioned cost of projects. “This has resulted in sanctioned civil cost being Rs 23.89 crore per kilometre (km) as against the CCEA approved cost of Rs 13.98 crore per km and sanctioned pre-construction cost being Rs 8.28 crore per km as against the CCEA approved cost of Rs 1.39 crore per km,” the auditor noted.

In another report, the CAG found that NHAI continued to collect user fee in three toll plazas (namely Nathavalsala, Chalageri, Hebbalu in Southern India) during delayed period of construction. This was in violation of rules stating that no user fee shall be levied for the delayed period, leading to higher toll collection from commuters, the business daily reported. <https://thewire.in/government/cag-finds-irregularities-in-award-of-highway-projects-under-bharatmala-pariyojana>

13. एक KM के 251 करोड़? द्वारका एक्सप्रेस-वे पर CAG की चौंकाने वाली रिपोर्ट (tv9hindi.com) August 14, 2023

दिल्ली-गुरुग्राम को जोड़ने वाले द्वारका एक्सप्रेस-वे को लेकर ऑडिटर कंट्रोलर एंड ऑडिटर जनरल (CAG) की एक रिपोर्ट ने गंभीर सवाल खड़े किए हैं. ऑडिट रिपोर्ट में दावा किया गया है कि कैबिनेट द्वारा इस एक्सप्रेस-वे के लिए 18.20 करोड़ प्रति किमी. का बजट पास हुआ था, लेकिन NHAI ने इसका बजट करीब 251 करोड़ प्रति किमी के हिसाब से पास किया. बजट को लेकर जमीन-आसमान के इस अंतर पर ही सवाल खड़े हो रहे हैं.

द्वारका एक्सप्रेस-वे को लेकर रिपोर्ट ने कहा है कि भारतमाला परियोजना-1 के तहत बन रहे द्वारका एक्सप्रेस-वे के लिए कैबिनेट कमेटी ऑफ इकॉनॉमिक अफेयर्स की तरफ से 18.20 करोड़ प्रति किमी. के बजट का अप्रूवल मिला था. लेकिन बाद में नेशनल हाइवे अथॉरिटी ऑफ इंडिया (NHAI) ने इसका कुल बजट 7287.29 करोड़ रुपये जो कि 250.77 करोड़ रुपये प्रति किमी तक होता है पास किया.

दिल्ली से गुरुग्राम को जोड़ने वाले इस एक्सप्रेस-वे की कुल लंबाई करीब 29 किमी. है, इसमें 10 किमी दिल्ली में और बाकी गुरुग्राम में आता है. दिल्ली के महिपालपुर की शिव मूर्ति से शुरू होने वाला ये 14 लेन का एक्सप्रेस-वे गुरुग्राम में खेरकी टोल प्लाज़ा तक जाता है. दिल्ली के मुख्यमंत्री अरविंद केजरीवाल ने भी इस बारे में ट्वीट किया और मोदी सरकार पर निशाना साधा. अरविंद केजरीवाल ने ट्वीट कर लिखा कि मोदी सरकार ने भ्रष्टाचार के 75 वर्ष के सारे रिकॉर्ड तोड़ दिए.

CAG ने कई अन्य प्रोजेक्ट पर उठाए सवाल CAG द्वारा जो रिपोर्ट तैयार की गई है, उसमें 2017 से 2021 तक के कई प्रोजेक्ट्स का ऑडिट किया गया है जो NHAI के कार्यक्षेत्र में आते हैं. द्वारका एक्सप्रेस-वे के अलावा दिल्ली-वडोदरा एक्सप्रेस-वे पर भी सवाल हैं, ऑडिट के मुताबिक ये पूरा प्रोजेक्ट CCEA द्वारा अप्रूव किए गए प्रोजेक्ट की लिस्ट में नहीं था, यहां करीब 33 हजार करोड़ रुपये के इस प्रोजेक्ट को NHAI ने अपने स्तर पर ही अप्रूव किया.

कैग की रिपोर्ट कहता है कि देश में भारतमाला परियोजना-1 के तहत करीब 76999 किमी. हाइवे बन रहे हैं, इनमें 70950 किमी. हाइवे NHAI बना रही है. कंस्ट्रक्शन के दौरान एनएचआई ने कई फैसले ऐसे लिए हैं, जिनकी कोई जवाबदेही नहीं रही है. CCEA ने भारतमाला प्रोजेक्ट-1 के लिए जो नियमावली तय की थी, उसे इस एजेंसी द्वारा सही तरीके से लागू नहीं किया गया.

NHAI को लेकर कई खुलासे हुए हैं, जिनमें 50 में से 35 प्रोजेक्ट हैं जहां टेंडर से जुड़ी प्रक्रिया का पालन नहीं हुआ है. उदाहरण के तौर पर शामली-मुजफ्फरनगर, दिल्ली-वडोदरा एक्सप्रेस-वे समेत कुछ ऐसे प्रोजेक्ट हैं, जहां प्रोजेक्ट अप्रैजल-टेक्निकल स्कूटनी कमेटी में नीति आयोग के किसी सदस्य को ही शामिल नहीं किया गया था. <https://www.tv9hindi.com/india/delhi-gurugram-dwarka-expressway-cag-report-on-project-budget-2041941.html>

14. द्वारका एक्सप्रेसवे के निर्माण में गड़बड़झाला, 18 करोड़/KM की जगह दिए गए 250 करोड़ रुपये; CAG का खुलासा (livehindustan.com) August 13, 2023

High Project Cost of Dwarka Expressway: भारत के नियंत्रक और महालेखा परीक्षक (CAG) ने 29.06 किलोमीटर लंबे द्वारका एक्सप्रेसवे के निर्माण में बहुत अधिक परियोजना लागत को चिह्नित किया है। CAG ने अपनी रिपोर्ट में कहा है कि आर्थिक मामलों की कैबिनेट समिति (CCEA) द्वारा अनुमोदित दर 18.20 करोड़ रुपये प्रति किलोमीटर के बजाय सड़क परिवहन और राजमार्गमंत्रालय (MoRTH) ने कंस्ट्रक्शन कंपनी को 250.77 करोड़ रुपये प्रति किलोमीटर की दर से लागत राशि को मंजूरी दी है।

यह एक्सप्रेसवे दिल्ली से गुरुगुग्राम को जोड़ता है। परियोजना के मुताबिक एनएच 48 को 14 लेन के एक्सप्रेसवे के रूप में विकसित किया गया है। प्रोजेक्ट के फिजिबिलिटी स्टडी के अनुसार, दिल्ली से गुरुगुग्राम के बीच एनएच-48 पर जाने वाले औसत 3,11,041 दैनिक गाड़ियों में 2,88,391 यात्री वाहन (92.72 फीसदी) शामिल थे। इनमें से 2,32,959 गाड़ियां दो शहरों के बीच दैनिक यात्रा करती हैं।

वर्ष 2017-18 से 2020-21 की अवधि के बीच 'भारतमाला परियोजना के चरण- I के कार्यान्वयन' (या BPP-I) पर अपनी ऑडिट रिपोर्ट में CAG ने 14-लेन सड़क परियोजना पर कई टिप्पणियाँ की हैं। इस एक्सप्रेसवे पर आठ एलिवेटेड लेन और छह लेन ग्रेड (उंची की गई सड़क) हैं- जिसका उद्देश्य दिल्ली और गुड़गांव के बीच NH-48 पर यात्री भीड़ और ट्रैफिक लोड को कम करना है।

रिपोर्ट में कहा गया है कि द्वारका एक्सप्रेसवे की योजना शुरुआत में हरियाणा सरकार ने अपने गुड़गांव-मानेसर शहरी निर्माण योजना-2031 के तहत बनाई थी। इसके लिए, हरियाणा ने 25 मीटर के मुख्य कैरिज वे के निर्माण के लिए 150 मीटर के रास्ते (सड़क की चौड़ाई) का अधिकार हासिल कर लिया था, जिसमें 7 मीटर चौड़ा मध्य भाग और ट्रंक सेवाओं के लिए एक समर्पित उपयोगिता गलियारा भी शामिल था लेकिन परियोजना में प्रगति नहीं होने पर इसे भारतमाला परियोजना के चरण- I में शामिल कर लिया गया।

<https://www.livehindustan.com/national/story-cag-flags-very-high-project-cost-of-dwarka-expressway-rupees-250-crore-given-instead-of-rs-18-crore-per-kilo-meter-8571888.html>

15. द्वारका एक्सप्रेसवे के 1 किलोमीटर की लागत 250 करोड़ रुपये, CAG रिपोर्ट ने उठाए सवाल (dnaindia.com) 14 Aug 2023

दिल्ली में बनाए जा रहे द्वारका एक्सप्रेसवे पर CAG की रिपोर्ट ने कई अहम सवाल उठाए हैं। CAG रिपोर्ट में कहा गया है कि इस सड़क की लागत कई गुना ज्यादा है। रिपोर्ट के मुताबिक, जो लागत प्रति किलोमीटर 18 करोड़ रुपये होनी थी, वह 250 करोड़ रुपये तक खर्च हुए हैं। सीएजी की ऑडिट रिपोर्ट में कहा गया है कि कैबिनेट ने इस सड़क के लिए प्रति किलोमीटर का बजट 18.20 करोड़ रुपये प्रस्तावित था लेकिन इसके लिए प्रति किलोमीटर 251 करोड़ रुपये का बजट पास किया गया। अब इस लागत में इतना ज्यादा अंतर आने पर सवाल खड़े हो रहे हैं।

भारतमाला परियोजना-1 के तहत बनाया जा रहा यह द्वारका-एक्सप्रेसवे दिल्ली और गुरुग्राम में आता है। दिल्ली को गुरुग्राम से जोड़ने वाली यह सड़क 29 किलोमीटर लंबी है। यह सड़क दिल्ली के महिपालपुर में शिवमूर्ति के पास से शुरू होता है और गुरुग्राम में खेरकी टोल प्लाजा तक जाता है। यह एक्सप्रेसवे 14 लेन का बनाया जा रहा है। अब इसकी लागत को लेकर हंगामा खड़ा हो गया है और विपक्षी नेताओं ने भी इस पर सवाल पूछने शुरू कर दिए हैं।

क्या कहती है CAG रिपोर्ट?

CAG ने द्वारका एक्सप्रेसवे के इस प्रोजेक्ट की 2017 से 2021 तक की रिपोर्ट का ऑडिट किया है। द्वारका एक्सप्रेसवे के साथ-साथ दिल्ली-वडोदरा एक्सप्रेसवे पर भी सवाल खड़े हुए हैं। रिपोर्ट के मुताबिक, यह पूरा प्रोजेक्ट CCEA की ओर से अप्रूव्ड प्रोजेक्ट की लिस्ट में ही नहीं था और NHAI ने अपने स्तर पर 33 हजार करोड़ रुपये खर्च कर लिए। CAG की रिपोर्ट के मुताबिक, भारतमाला

परियोजना-1 के तहत लगभग 76,999 किलोमीटर की सड़कें बनाई जा रही हैं। इसमें से 70,950 किलोमीटर सड़क NHAI बना रहा है।

NHAI के कई फैसलों पर अब सवाल उठ रहे हैं। ऑडिट रिपोर्ट के मुताबिक, NHAI ने CCEA की ओर से तय की गई नियमावली का भी सही से पालन नहीं किया। 50 में से 35 प्रोजेक्ट ऐसे हैं जहां टेंडर से जुड़ी प्रक्रियाओं का पालन नहीं किया गया है।
<https://www.dnaindia.com/hindi/india/news-cag-report-question-costing-of-dwarka-expressway-250-crore-for-1-km-4098061>

16. द्वारका एक्सप्रेसवे निर्माण में कैग का बड़ा खुलासा, तय थे 18 करोड़ रुपये प्रति किमी खर्च हो गए 250 करोड़ (news24online.com) 14 Aug 2023

दिल्ली से गुरुग्राम को जोड़ने वाले द्वारका एक्सप्रेसवे के निर्माण में बड़े गड़बड़झाला का खुलासा है। ये खुलासा ऑडिटर कंट्रोलर एंड ऑडिटर जनरल (CAG) की रिपोर्ट से हुआ है। CAG की रिपोर्ट के मुताबिक 29.06 किलोमीटर लंबे द्वारका एक्सप्रेसवे के निर्माण में लागत को बहुत बताया गया है।

भारत के नियंत्रक और महालेखा परीक्षक (कैग) ने अपनी रिपोर्ट में कहा कि आर्थिक मामलों की कैबिनेट समिति (CCEA) की ओर से द्वारका एक्सप्रेसवे (Dwarka Expressway) के निर्माण 18.20 करोड़ रुपये प्रति किलोमीटर अनुमोदित किया गया था, लेकिन सड़क परिवहन और राजमार्ग मंत्रालय (MoRTH) ने 250.77 करोड़ रुपये प्रति किलोमीटर की दर से निर्माता कंपनी को लागत राशि की मंजूरी दी गई। यानी CCEA की ओर से स्वीकृत राशि से 14 गुना ज्यादा हो गई।

14 लेन वाले द्वारका एक्सप्रेसवे (Dwarka Expressway) का निर्माण दिल्ली से गुरुग्राम को जोड़ने के लिए किया गया है। इसके तहत दिल्ली और गुरुग्राम के बीच नेशनल हाईवे 48 (NH 48) के सामानांतर विकसित किया गया है। ताकि नेशनल हाईवे पर भीड़ को कम किया जा सके।

इसके साथ ही कैग ने अपनी रिपोर्ट में भारत माला परियोजना के तहत बन रहे सड़कों के स्वीकृत और लागत राशि पर भी सवाल उठाया है।
<https://hindi.news24online.com/state/delhi/dwarka-expressway-cag-flags-very-high-project-cost-rupees-250-crore-given-instead-of-rs-18-crore-per-kilo-meter/305186/>

17. सीएजी ने द्वारका एक्सप्रेसवे की लागत को 'बहुत ज्यादा' बताया (bhaskarhindi.com) 14 Aug 2023

भारत के नियंत्रक और महालेखा परीक्षक (सीएजी) ने 'भारतमाला परियोजना (बीपीपी-1) के चरण-1 के कार्यान्वयन' पर अपनी ऑडिट रिपोर्ट में खुलासा किया है कि भारतीय राष्ट्रीय राजमार्ग प्राधिकरण (एनएचएआई) बोर्ड ने द्वारका एक्सप्रेसवे को प्रति किमी 250.77 करोड़ रुपये के साथ 7,287.29 करोड़ रुपये की नागरिक लागत के साथ मंजूरी दे दी, जबकि आर्थिक मामलों की कैबिनेट समिति (सीसीईए) द्वारा अनुमोदित प्रति किमी नागरिक लागत 18.20 करोड़ रुपये थी।

रिपोर्ट से यह भी पता चला है कि लगभग 32,839 करोड़ रुपये की नागरिक लागत वाला दिल्ली-वडोदरा एक्सप्रेसवे, जो बीपीपी-आई परियोजनाओं की सीसीईए अनुमोदित सूची में शामिल नहीं था, को एनएचएआई बोर्ड के स्तर पर मंजूरी दी गई थी।

सीएजी की रिपोर्ट में कहा गया है, "एनएचएआई, जो बीपीपी-1 के लिए निर्धारित 76,999 किलोमीटर राष्ट्रीय राजमार्गों की लंबाई में से 70,950 किलोमीटर लंबाई के राष्ट्रीय राजमार्गों का विकास कर रहा था, को इसके द्वारा कार्यान्वित की जा रही परियोजनाओं के निर्माण के तरीके को तय करने की शक्ति भी सौंपी गई थी। ऑडिट में पाया गया कि निर्माण के तरीके पर निर्णय एनएचएआई द्वारा रिकॉर्ड पर किसी वैध औचित्य के बिना लिया जा रहा था।"

सीएजी ने अपनी रिपोर्ट में कहा, "ऑडिट में आगे देखा गया कि परियोजनाओं के निर्माण के तरीके को तय करने की शक्तियां सौंपने से पहले, सीसीईए को प्रस्तावित मूल्यांकन और अनुमोदन तंत्र ने 'प्रोजेक्ट' और 'पैकेज' शब्द को परिभाषित नहीं किया था। इस प्रकार, निर्माण के तरीके पर निर्णय लेने के लिए, क्या जिन पैकेजों में निर्माण उद्देश्यों के लिए एक एकल परियोजना को विभाजित किया गया था, वे अलग-अलग परियोजनाएं बनाएंगे या सभी पैकेज संयुक्त रूप से एक ही परियोजना बनाएंगे, यह स्पष्ट रूप से परिभाषित नहीं है। रिपोर्ट में कहा गया है कि बीपीपी-1 के लिए सीसीईए द्वारा निर्धारित मूल्यांकन और अनुमोदन तंत्र का कार्यान्वयन एजेंसियों द्वारा पालन नहीं किया जा रहा था।

रिपोर्ट में कहा गया है कि बीपीपी-1 के लिए सीसीईए द्वारा निर्धारित मूल्यांकन और अनुमोदन तंत्र का कार्यान्वयन एजेंसियों द्वारा पालन नहीं किया जा रहा था।

कहा गया है, "एनएचएआई की 50 नमूना परियोजनाओं में से, आठ परियोजनाओं के मामले में, परियोजना मूल्यांकन और तकनीकी जांच समिति द्वारा मूल्यांकन नहीं किया गया था क्योंकि या तो इनका मूल्यांकन पुराने एनएचडीपी कार्यक्रम के तहत किया गया था या वे शेष कार्य/एक बार सुधार कार्य थे।"

रिपोर्ट में कहा गया है कि 50 परियोजनाओं में से 35 परियोजनाओं के लिए परियोजना मूल्यांकन और तकनीकी जांच समिति द्वारा परियोजनाओं का कोई तकनीकी और वित्तीय मूल्यांकन किए बिना निविदा आमंत्रित करने का नोटिस जारी किया गया था, जैसा कि बाद में किया गया था।

यह भी कहा गया, "इन 35 नमूना परियोजनाओं में से दो परियोजनाओं, शामली-मुजफ्फरनगर (पीकेजी-2) और दिल्ली-वडोदरा एक्सप्रेसवे (पीकेजी -18) के मामले में, परियोजना मूल्यांकन और तकनीकी जांच समिति में नीति आयोग का कोई भी विशेषज्ञ शामिल नहीं था।" सीएजी ऑडिट में आगे पाया गया कि एनएचएआई की 50 नमूना परियोजनाओं में से 46 परियोजनाओं को इन परियोजनाओं के लिए निविदा आमंत्रित करने के नोटिस जारी होने के सात दिनों से 404 दिनों की अवधि के बाद सक्षम प्राधिकारी द्वारा अनुमोदित किया गया था।

<https://www.bhaskarhindi.com/national/cag-termed-the-cost-of-dwarka-expressway-as-excessive-955026>

18. कैग रिपोर्ट में दावा- हाइवे परियोजनाओं में अनियमितताएं (ndtv.in)
August 13, 2023

पिछले दिनों संसद में पेश कैग की रिपोर्ट में आयुष्मान भारत योजना में कई अनियमितताओं की खबरें सामने आईं. अब नेशनल हाइवे ऑथॉरिटी की भारतमाला परियोजना के तहत भी इस तरह की कई अनियमितताओं की खबरें सामने आई हैं.

Video Link: <https://ndtv.in/videos/irregularities-in-highway-projects-claims-in-cag-report-717367>

19. CAG ने द्वारका एक्सप्रेसवे की परियोजना लागत को 'बहुत अधिक' बताया, 18 करोड़ रुपये प्रति किमी से 250 करोड़ रुपये प्रति किमी (jantaserishta.com) 13 Aug 2023

भारत के नियंत्रक और महालेखा परीक्षक (CAG) ने 29.06 किलोमीटर लंबे द्वारका एक्सप्रेसवे की "बहुत अधिक" सिविल निर्माण लागत को चिह्नित किया है, जिसे सड़क परिवहन और राजमार्ग मंत्रालय (MoRTH) द्वारा 250.77 करोड़ रुपये की लागत पर मंजूरी दी गई थी। राष्ट्रीय गलियारों/राष्ट्रीय गलियारों दक्षता सुधार कार्यक्रम के लिए आर्थिक मामलों की कैबिनेट समिति (सीसीईए) द्वारा अनुमोदित 18.20 करोड़ रुपये प्रति किमी के मुकाबले किमी, जिसके तहत इस परियोजना का निर्माण किया जा रहा था।

'भारतमाला परियोजना के चरण- I के कार्यान्वयन' (या BPP-I) पर 2017-18 से 2020-21 की अवधि के लिए आयोजित अपनी ऑडिट रिपोर्ट में - CAG ने 14-लेन सड़क परियोजना - आठ एलिवेटेड लेन पर कई टिप्पणियां की हैं। और ग्रेड (या सड़क की ऊंचाई) पर छह लेन - दिल्ली और गुड़गांव के बीच NH-48 पर भीड़ कम करने के लिए है।

रिपोर्ट में कहा गया है कि द्वारका एक्सप्रेसवे की योजना शुरुआत में हरियाणा सरकार ने अपने गुड़गांव-मानेसर शहरी निर्माण योजना-2031 के तहत बनाई थी। इसके लिए, हरियाणा ने 25 मीटर के मुख्य कैरिज वे के निर्माण के लिए 150 मीटर के रास्ते (सड़क की चौड़ाई) का अधिकार हासिल कर लिया, जिसमें 7 मीटर चौड़ा मध्य भाग और ट्रंक सेवाओं के लिए एक समर्पित उपयोगिता गलियारा था।

<https://jantaserishta.com/national/rs-18-crore-per-km-to-rs-250-crore-per-km-cag-flags-very-high-project-cost-of-dwarka-expressway-2709386>

20. CAG: ईएएसए की आवश्यकताओं का अनुमान लगाने में विफल रहा एचएएल, गोवा सरकार पर भी सवाल (amarujala.com) August 11, 2023

हिंदुस्तान एयरोनॉटिक्स लिमिटेड ने यूरोपीय देशों में अपनी निर्यात क्षमता बढ़ाने के लिए 2009 में हेलीकॉप्टर 1 के यूरोपीय विमानन सुरक्षा एजेंसी (ईएएसए) प्रमाणन के लिए आवेदन किया था। हालांकि ईएएसए की कठोर आवश्यकताओं का अनुमान लगाने में वह विफल रहा जिसके चलते अनुपालन में अधिक समय लगा और अतिरिक्त शुल्क का भुगतान करना पड़ा। कैग की एक रिपोर्ट में यह जानकारी दी गई। आधिकारिक बयान के अनुसार, मार्च 2020 में समाप्त वित्त वर्ष के लिए भारत के नियंत्रक और महालेखा परीक्षक (कैग) की 2023 की रिपोर्ट संख्या 18 गुरुवार को संसद में पेश की गई।

रिपोर्ट के अनुसार, "हिंदुस्तान एयरोनॉटिक्स लिमिटेड (एचएएल), ईएएसए की कठोर आवश्यकताओं के समय पर अनुपालन के लिए परामर्श सेवाओं का लाभ उठाने के लिए तकनीकी विशेषज्ञों की पहचान करने में भी विफल रही। इससे 108.24 करोड़ रुपये का खर्च बर्बाद हो गया।" इसके अलावा एचएएल ने "परियोजना 1 से जुड़े जोखिमों की परिकल्पना नहीं की जिसके परिणामस्वरूप कई अनियोजित गतिविधियां शुरू हुईं।"

गोवा सरकार ने कोरोनाकाल में जरूरत से अधिक दलहन खरीदा

नियंत्रक व महालेखा परीक्षक (कैग) ने अपनी रिपोर्ट में कहा है कि गोवा सरकार ने कोविड-19 महामारी के दौरान लोगों को बांटने के लिए अरहर दाल या अरहर की खरीद पर 1.91 करोड़ रुपये का 'निरर्थक' खर्च किया। रिपोर्ट के अनुसार खरीदी गई अरहर दाल 400 मीट्रिक टन (एमटी) थी, जो नागरिकों को इसके वितरण के लिए आवश्यक मात्रा से अधिक थी। 240 मीट्रिक टन से अधिक उपज अवितरित रही और खराब हो गई। यह मवेशियों और पोल्ट्री के खाने लायक भी नहीं रहा। भारत के नियंत्रक और महालेखा परीक्षक (कैग) की 2021 की एक रिपोर्ट बृहस्पतिवार को राज्य विधानसभा में पेश की गई। कैग के अनुसार, राज्य में जरूरत से ज्यादा तुअर दाल खरीदने के कारण राज्य नागरिक आपूर्ति विभाग को 1.91 करोड़ रुपये का नुकसान हुआ।

<https://www.amarujala.com/business/business-diary/goa-govt-incurred-infructuous-spending-of-rs-1-91-crore-through-excess-procurement-of-tur-dal-during-pandemi-2023-08-11>

21. 'Incorrect assessment' led to delays in development of HAL's intermediate jet trainer, says CAG (*theprint.in*) August 11, 2023

The Intermediate Jet Trainer (IJT) has suffered delays due to incorrect selection of engine and delayed resolution of the 'stall and spin' function of the aircraft, the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) has said.

IJT is an indigenously designed and developed aircraft by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) to replace the ageing fleet of the Kiran jet trainer aircraft in service with the Indian Air Force (IAF) the Stage-II training of pilots. Stall and spin refer to the aerodynamic nature of the aircraft.

"The incorrect assessment of the required thrust and lack of clarity on Type A engines led to improper engine selection which in turn had a cascading effect on the Design and Development (D&D) process," the CAG report tabled in Parliament on 10 August stated.

It added that although stall tests were initiated quite early in the IJT programme, a lack of clarity on resolution of stall and spin issues and improper planning in the initial stages of the development process led to a delay of more than 20 years in the project.

The state owned HAL had initially identified one type of engine for the design and development phase and procured a French engine on loan basis, which was then returned to the Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) in June 2010.

The HAL placed an order for the second engine, AL-55i, from Russia in July 2005, and it was received in January 2009.

The national auditor stated that the integration of the second engine — which was a higher thrust engine after the build-up of the prototype — necessitated modifications as the aircraft failed to demonstrate the stall and spin characteristics.

The Ministry of Defence had sanctioned Rs 180 crore for the indigenous design and development of the project in 1999.

In its report, the national auditor flagged that HAL failed to deliver the aircraft to the IAF, despite having incurred an expenditure of Rs 710.08 crore as of March 2022.

The report concluded that the HAL should have anticipated the impact of integrating a new engine at a later stage and taken timely measures to resolve issues pertaining to spin and stall characteristics.

Last year, the IJT had successfully demonstrated the capability to carry out six-turn spins to the left hand and right hand sides.

According to HAL, the IJT incorporates the simplicity necessary for ease of conversion from Basic Piston Trainer and the sophistication required for quick conversion to the complexities of an Advanced Jet Trainer. Apart from pilot training, the aircraft can be used for general flying, navigation formation flying, instrument and cloud flying, basic air to ground and air to air weapon aiming, tactical and night flying.

<https://theprint.in/defence/incorrect-assessment-led-to-delays-in-development-of-hals-intermediate-jet-trainer-says-cag/1710694/>

22. Only 52% of awarded routes under UDAN scheme commenced operations: CAG (*moneylife.in*) August 14, 2023

In its latest report on the Ministry of Civil Aviation's regional connectivity scheme - UDAN, the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) stated that only 52 per cent (403 out of 774 routes) of the awarded routes were unable to commence operations.

Out of the 371 commenced routes, only 112 routes (30 per cent) successfully completed the full concession period of three years.

The CAG report also highlighted that among these 112 routes, only 54 routes (seven percent of the awarded routes) connecting 17 RCS Airports managed to sustain operations beyond the three-year concession period, as of March 2023.

Under UDAN, airlines were invited to propose connectivity to underserved/unserved airports in October 2016 for the first time.

The report noted: "Up to March 2021, three rounds of bidding for UDAN 1, 2, and 3 were completed and are included in the scope of this audit. In the first round of bidding, proposals for 132 RCS routes were received and awarded, connecting 45 underserved/unserved airports.

"In the second round, 228 fixed-wing routes and 83 heliport routes connecting 30 unserved/underserved airports and 31 heliports were awarded. During the third round

of bidding, 305 fixed-wing routes and 26 water aerodrome routes connecting 23 underserved/unserved airports and 10 water aerodromes were awarded," the report said.

The CAG report found that while the response to the scheme was positive -- passenger travel on RCS routes increased from 2.63 lakh in 2017-18 to 24.97 lakh in 2022-23 -- implementation improvements were necessary based on audit observations.

The report presented 16 recommendations to enhance the scheme's implementation in the future.

The report recommended devising a suitable mechanism to assess route feasibility for sustainable long-term operations and identifying unserved/underserved airports, taking into account factors such as stage length, alternative transportation options, terrain, socioeconomic conditions, and tourism potential.

It also pointed out that the Ministry of Civil Aviation and the Airport Authority of India did not undertake an exercise to identify potentially eligible heliports.

"Most of the heliports identified for operations based on helicopter operators' proposals either remained unutilised/underutilised or saw discontinued RCS operations," stated the audit report.

Regarding the collection and remittance mechanism of the Regional Air Connectivity Fund (RCF) levy, the audit report criticised the absence of clear rules.

It suggested the ministry establish a monitoring mechanism to ensure collected RCF levy from passengers does not exceed the amount to be remitted to the government or become a profit source for airlines.

Additionally, the report pointed out delays in remitting dues by airline operators and recommended introducing penalties for such delays according to the Draft Standard Operating Procedure.

The report also highlighted significant delays in the revival/development of identified RCS airports, despite budgetary support sanctioned by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs in March 2017.

"Out of the 116 airports/heliports/water aerodromes where expenditure was incurred, operations commenced at only 71 (61 per cent), while operations could not begin or were discontinued at 83 airports/heliports/water aerodromes despite an expenditure of Rs 1,089 crore," the report noted. <https://www.moneylife.in/article/only-52-percentage-of-awarded-routes-under-udan-scheme-commenced-operations-cag/71678.html>

23. CAG report reveals challenges in UDAN scheme implementation; only 52% of awarded routes commenced operations (*thestatesman.com*) August 11, 2023

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24. **MP News: आयुष्मान योजना के तहत 'मुर्दा' का चल रहा था इलाज, CAG रिपोर्ट में हुआ चौंकाने वाला खुलासा** (*abplive.com*) 13 Aug 2023

Ayushman Bharat Yojana Scam: आयुष्मान योजना के सबसे अधिक लाभार्थी मध्य प्रदेश में हैं. कैग रिपोर्ट से खुलासा हुआ कि **MP** में करीब **25** अस्पताल ऐसे हैं, जिन्होंने क्षमता से अधिक बेड ऑक्यूपेंसी दिखाई.

CAG Report on MP Medical System: प्रधानमंत्री आयुष्मान कार्ड योजना (**Pradhan Mantri Ayushman Card Yojana**) के तहत मध्य प्रदेश (**Madhya Pradesh**) में बड़े फर्जीवाड़े का खुलासा हुआ है. निजी अस्पताल ने इस कदर फर्जीवाड़ा किया कि उन्होंने मुर्दा तक का इलाज किया और फिर दोबारा मार दिया. कैग की रिपोर्ट (**CAG Report**) आने के बाद प्रधानमंत्री आयुष्मान कार्ड योजना में इस बड़े फर्जीवाड़े पर्दाफाश हुआ है. इस रिपोर्ट के अनुसार **100** बेड की क्षमताओं वाले निजी अस्पतालों ने **230** मरीजों एडमिट करने को दर्शाया है.

कैग की रिपोर्ट में खुलासा हुआ कि **447** मरीज जिनकी अस्पताल में भर्ती हुए बिना ही मौत हो गई, इन मरीजों के लिए भी **1.2** करोड़ की राशि क्लेम की गई. एक ही मरीज का एक ही समय में एक साथ कई अस्पतालों में इलाज किया गया. रिपोर्ट के अनुसार **8081** मरीजों का एक ही समय में एक साथ कई अस्पतालों में इलाज करवाया. इसमें **213** अस्पताल शामिल.

मध्य प्रदेश में **96** फीसदी तक नहीं हुई रिकवरी

कैग की रिपोर्ट के अनुसार मध्य प्रदेश में करीब **25** अस्पताल ऐसे हैं, जिन्होंने क्षमता से अधिक बेड ऑक्यूपेंसी दिखाई. यानी कि इन अस्पतालों ने ज्यादा मरीजों की भर्ती दिखा कर क्लेम लिया गया. जवाहरलाल नेहरू कैंसर अस्पताल और अनुसंधान केंद्र में **20** मार्च **2023** तक **100** बेड थे, लेकिन इसमें **233** मरीजों को दिखाया गया कैग की रिपोर्ट में सरकारी अस्पताल समेत कुल **24** अस्पतालों

के नाम शामिल. कैग की रिपोर्ट में कहा गया डिफाल्टिंग अस्पतालों से होने वाली रिकवरी के मामले में मध्य प्रदेश के आंकड़े सबसे खराब हैं. मध्य प्रदेश में फर्जीवाड़ा करने वाले में 96 फीसदी तक की रिकवरी अब तक नहीं हो पाई.

आयुष्मान कार्ड धारकों में मध्य प्रदेश अव्वल प्रधानमंत्री आयुष्मान योजना के सबसे ज्यादा आयुष्मान कार्ड धारक मध्य प्रदेश में ही हैं. यहीं पर सबसे ज्यादा लापरवाही देखी जा रही है. कैग की रिपोर्ट में खुलासा हुआ है कि मध्य प्रदेश में आयुष्मान के लिए जिला स्तर पर शिकायत निराकरण समितियों का गठन नहीं किया गया. आयुष्मान योजना में सूचना शिक्षा और संवाद का प्लान तो बनाया लेकिन उसे लागू नहीं किया गया.

कैग की पैन इंडिया ऑडिट रिपोर्ट में अनियमितताओं के सबसे ज्यादा मामले मध्य प्रदेश में ही हैं. मध्य प्रदेश में कई संदिग्ध कार्ड और मृत लोगों को भी लाभार्थी के रूप में रजिस्ट्रेशन की जानकारी पाई गई है. <https://www.abplive.com/states/madhya-pradesh/ayushman-bharat-yojana-fraud-in-mp-hospital-exposed-by-cag-report-treatment-claims-of-dead-bodies-ann-2472964>

25. आयुष्मान योजना पर क्या है कैग की रिपोर्ट, जानें कितनी है लाभार्थियों की संख्या (tv9hindi.com) 13 Aug 2023

आयुष्मान भारत प्रधानमंत्री जन आरोग्य योजना में पंजीकृत लाभार्थियों की संख्या कितनी है. इसे लेकर हाल ही में कैट ने क्या रिपोर्ट पेश की है. यह सवाल सरकारी नौकरियों की तैयारी करने वाले अभ्यर्थियों के महत्वपूर्ण हो सकता है. ऐसे सवाल अक्सर प्रतियोगी परीक्षाओं में पूछे जाते हैं. गवर्नमेंट जॉब की तैयारी करने वाले कैंडिडेट्स को इसकी जानकारी जरूर होनी चाहिए. आइए इससे संबंधित सवालों के जवाब जानते हैं.

इस योजना में मृत मरीजों के इलाज होने का मामला सामने आया है. भारत के नियंत्रक एवं महालेखा परीक्षक की रिपोर्ट में इसमें हुई अनियमितताएं सामने आई हैं. इस योजना में मृत मरीजों के भी इलाज करने का खुलासा हुआ है. देश के कई राज्यों में इस तरह के मामले सामने आए हैं. झारखंड, हरियाणा, छत्तीसगढ़ में ज्यादा और अंडमान निकोबार द्वीप समूह, असम और चंडीगढ़ में ऐसे मामले अपेक्षाकृत कम सामने आए हैं.

रिपोर्ट में उल्लेख है कि 88760 मृत रोगियों के 2.14 लाख से अधिक इलाज के दावों का भुगतान किया जाना पाया गया है. पंजीकृत घरों में 11 से 201 सदस्यों तक के परिवार मिले, जो इस घपले की ओर इशारा करते हैं. इस योजना में ऐसे पेंशन भोगी पाए गए हैं, जिनके पास पीएमजेएवाई कार्ड मिले और वे योजना का लाभ उठाते हुए पाए गए. लाभार्थियों के चयन और सामने आने के बाद उसे हटाने में देरी हुई है, जिसकी वजह से अपात्रों को इस योजना का लाभ मिला. ऐसे लाभार्थी भी मिले हैं, जिन्हें एक ही मोबाइल नंबर से पंजीकृत किया गया है. कुछ आधार में भी गड़बड़ी पाई गई है. जिससे यह साबित होता है कि सत्यापन की प्रक्रिया में किसी न किसी स्तर पर लापरवाही हुई है.

9 राज्यों के 100 अस्पताल शामिल

रिपोर्ट कहती है कि इस घोटाले में निजी अस्पतालों की मिलीभगत, सिस्टम में खामियां और ढांचागत कमजोरी आदि शामिल हैं। सत्यापन में गड़बड़ी, जन्मतिथि में फर्जीवाड़ा, गलत नाम भी सामने आए हैं। कई ऐसे अस्पताल सूचीबद्ध हैं, जिनके पास इलाज की समुचित व्यवस्था ही नहीं है। नौ राज्यों में गड़बड़ी करने वाले सौ ऐसे अस्पताल मिले हैं, जिन पर 12.32 करोड़ का जुर्माना लगाया गया है, लेकिन वह जमा नहीं हुआ। हेल्थ मिनिस्ट्री ने कैग को स्पष्ट किया है कि लाभार्थियों के सत्यापन में मोबाइल नंबरों का इस्तेमाल नहीं किया गया है। योजना ई-केवाईसी के माध्यम से लाभार्थियों को पहचानती है। राष्ट्रीय स्वास्थ्य प्राधिकरण ने लाभार्थियों के सत्यापन को फिंगर प्रिंट, आइरिस स्कैन, फेस सत्यापन और ओटीपी जैसे विकल्प दिए हैं।

क्या है आयुष्मान भारत-पीएम जन आरोग्य योजना?

केंद्र सरकार की ओर चलाई जाने वाली दुनिया की सबसे बड़ी स्वास्थ्य बीमा परियोजना है। इसे फरवरी 2018 में लांच किया गया था। इसमें लाभार्थी को पांच लाख रुपये तक का हेल्थ बीमा कवर मिलता है। लाभार्थी को इस योजना के तहत सर्जरी, दवा तक का लाभ मिलता है। इसकी पात्रता नवीनतम सामाजिक आर्थिक जाति जनगणना के आधार पर लाभार्थी पा सकता है। योजना में राज्य एवं केंद्र की वित्तीय साझेदारी है।

सभी राज्य एवं केंद्र शासित प्रदेशों में केंद्र एवं राज्य के बीच 60 और 40 फीसदी के हिसाब से योगदान दे रहे हैं। जम्मू-कश्मीर, हिमाचल प्रदेश और उत्तराखंड के मामले में केंद्र का योगदान 90 फीसदी है। ऐसे केंद्रशासित प्रदेश, जहां विधायिका नहीं है। वहां केंद्र सौ फीसदी आर्थिक बोझ उठा रहा है। परियोजना में अभी तक 7.87 करोड़ लाभार्थी पंजीकृत किए गए हैं। राष्ट्रीय स्वास्थ्य प्राधिकरण इसकी नोडल एजेंसी है। राज्य सरकारों के साथ जॉइन्ट रूप से इस योजना के प्रभावी कार्यान्वयन को इसे स्वायत्त इकाई के रूप में गठित किया गया है।

<https://www.tv9hindi.com/education/current-affairs-in-hindi-what-is-cag-report-on-ayushman-yojana-know-the-number-of-beneficiaries-2040493.html>

26. प्राइवेट ही नहीं, सरकारी अस्पतालों ने भी खूब किया आयुष्मान घपला! कोरोना में फ़र्जी बेड ओक्यूपेंसी दिखा वसूला लागत से ज्यादा
(thesootr.com) 12 Aug 2023

BHOPAL: 10 August, 2023 को जारी हुई नियन्त्रक एवं महालेखापरीक्षक (कैग) की रिपोर्ट में यह खुलासा हुआ है कि मध्य प्रदेश के करीब **25** के आसपास सरकारी और प्राइवेट अस्पतालों ने साल **2021** में अपने यहाँ क्षमता से अधिक बेड ओक्यूपेंसी (मरीजों की भर्ती) दिखाकर क्लेम लिया। कैग ने अपनी इस रिपोर्ट में देशभर के अलग-अलग राज्यों के करीब **190** हॉस्पिटलों के बारे में बताया है जिन्होंने मरीजों की संख्या को लेकर भारी-भरकम फर्जी वाड़ा किया है। बता दें कि मप्र में **2.47** करोड़ आयुष्मान योजना के कार्ड धारक हैं। और इसकी मदद से राज्य में करीब **4.47** लाख लोगों ने इलाज कराया है।

उदाहरण के तौर पर रिपोर्ट में भोपाल के जवाहर लाल नेहरू कैंसर हॉस्पिटल एंड रिसर्च सेंटर ने **20** मार्च **2021** को ओक्यूपेंसी **233** बताई जबकि अस्पताल की कुल बेड क्षमता **100** की ही है। इसी तरह भोपाल के ही नवोदय कैंसर हॉस्पिटल की असल बेड क्षमता **35** बेड की है, पर **12** मार्च **2021** को अस्पताल ने अपनी बेड ओक्यूपेंसी **48** बताई। इसी तरह इंडियन इंस्टि ट्यूट ऑफ़

हेड एंड नेक ऑन्कोलॉजी और इंदौर कैंसर फाउंडेशन चैरिटेबल ट्रस्ट ने भी 31 मार्च 2021 को 30 की जगह 48 बेड ओक्यूपेन्सी दिखाकर ज्यादा क्लेम लिया। फ़र्जी और लागत से ज्यादा क्लेम के इस खेल में सरकारी अस्पताल भी पीछे नहीं रहे... इंदौर के गवर्नमेंट कैंसर हॉस्पिटल ने 31 मार्च 2021 को अपनी बेड क्षमता 129 दर्शाई जबकि अस्पताल की कुल बेड क्षमता 108 ही है। <https://thesootr.com/elections/cag-finds-irregularities-in-ayushman-bharat-scheme-in-mp/44896>

27. CAG Report: हरियाणा के 1421 मरीजों ने एक ही तारीख में कई अस्पतालों में कराया इलाज, कैग रिपोर्ट में खुलासा (amarujala.com) 13 August 2023

भारत के नियंत्रक एवं महालेखा परीक्षक (कैग) ने आयुष्मान भारत स्कीम की कई खामियों का उजागर किया है। कैग ने सितंबर 2018 से 2021 तक आयुष्मान भारत की एक समीक्षक रिपोर्ट संसद में पेश की है। रिपोर्ट के मुताबिक हरियाणा के 1421 मरीज ऐसे पाए गए हैं, जिन्हें एक ही तारीख में अलग-अलग अस्पतालों में भर्ती दिखाया गया है। इस मिलीभगत में राज्य के 134 अस्पताल शामिल थे।

कैग ने जब सवाल उठाया तो नेशनल हेल्थ अथॉरिटी (एनएचए) की ओर से बताया गया कि ऐसे मामलों में महिलाओं की डिलीवरी होने पर शिशुओं को दूसरे अस्पताल में मां की आयुष्मान आईडी पर दाखिल कराया गया, लेकिन कैग ने इस दावे को खारिज करते हुए कहा कि उन्होंने जो डाटा विश्लेषण किया है, उनमें पुरुष और गर्भवती महिलाओं के अलावा दूसरी महिलाएं शामिल हैं। इस तरह के कुल 2662 केस हैं, जिनमें 620 महिलाएं और 801 पुरुष शामिल हैं। कैग के मुताबिक सबसे ज्यादा मामले गुजरात, छत्तीसगढ़, केरल, मध्यप्रदेश और पंजाब में आए हैं।

आधे अधूरे 114 कार्ड पर भुगतान

वहीं, आयुष्मान के 114 उन कार्ड पर भुगतान किया गया, जो आधे अधूरे थे। उनमें कई त्रुटियां थीं। इन कार्ड पर करीब साढ़े आठ लाख रुपये की राशि जारी की गई है। जांच में यह भी सामने आया है कि हरियाणा में 114 पेंशनभोगियों को भी आयुष्मान भारत स्कीम में शामिल किया गया है। जबकि नियम के मुताबिक लाभार्थी व्यक्ति सिर्फ एक ही इंश्योरेंस स्कीम का लाभ उठा सकता है। यही नहीं, इनमें से कुछ ने आयुष्मान भारत के तहत इलाज कराया और अस्पतालों को करीब 26 लाख रुपये जारी कर दिए गए। कैग ने सूचना, शिक्षा और संचार योजना के कार्यान्वयन में भी कमियां पाई हैं। आयुष्मान भारत के तहत लाभार्थियों को पांच लाख रुपये तक इलाज का भुगतान किया जाता है।

मृतकों को जिंदा दिखाकर करवाया भुगतान

कैग ने अपने ऑडिट में यह भी पाया है कि कुछ मरीजों की मौत हो गई थी, लेकिन उन्हें जिंदा दिखाकर उनके इलाज के लिए भुगतान हासिल किया गया। इस तरह के कुल 406 केस थे। इनमें से 354 मरीजों को जीवित दिखाकर इलाज के नाम पर 54 लाख रुपये का भुगतान हासिल किया गया।

विशेषज्ञ नहीं थे, इसलिए दूसरे जिले में कराया इलाज

कैग ने अपनी रिपोर्ट में राज्य में मैन पॉवर की कमी पर भी सवाल उठाए हैं। हरियाणा के विभिन्न जिलों में 14 तरह के अलग-अलग विशेषज्ञ नहीं थे। इससे आयुष्मान भारत के लाभार्थियों को दूसरे जिले में इलाज के लिए यात्रा करनी पड़ी है। वहीं, स्वीकृत पदों के मुताबिक 36 फीसदी डॉक्टर व कर्मचारी कम थे। इसके अलावा 3666500 रुपये की पेनाल्टी में से 1685250 रुपये की वसूली नहीं की गई। <https://www.amarujala.com/chandigarh/comptroller-and-auditor-general-of-india-exposed-several-flaws-in-ayushman-bharat-scheme-in-haryana-2023-08-11>

28. 'Dummy Numbers & Mismanagement': 5 Takeaways from CAG Report on Ayushman Bharat (*thequint.com*) 13 Auust 2023

The Comptroller and Auditor General's report on the Ayushman Bharat - Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana, tabled in the Parliament earlier this week, brings to light some startling, big numbers.

-7.5 lakh beneficiaries linked to invalid mobile number – 9999999999.

-4,761 registrations made against seven Aadhar numbers.

-Missing hospitals enrolled under public health insurance scheme.

But how do we make sense of these numbers? What impact will these discrepancies have on the ground when it comes to public health?

FIT spoke with Srinivas Kodali, researcher working on data, governance, and the internet, Shweta Mohandas, policy officer at Centre for Internet and Society, and a public health expert to understand it better. Here are five takeaways.

One Unique ID, Several Beneficiaries: How Is It Verified?

When someone goes to a hospital and asks to avail benefits under the Ayushman Bharat scheme, they have to show their Aadhar card, which is used to check the patient's eligibility.

“AB-PMJAY identifies the beneficiary through Aadhaar identification wherein the beneficiary undergoes the process of mandatory Aadhaar based e-KYC. The details fetched from the Aadhaar database are matched with the source database and accordingly, the request for Ayushman card is approved or rejected based on the beneficiary details,” an unnamed official told news agency PTI.

According to the CAG audit, however, around 4,761 registrations were made against seven Aadhaar numbers in Tamil Nadu.

Further, the guidelines also state that State Health Authorities (SHA) send an SMS notification to the registered contact number to check for their eligibility.

The question then arises:

-Were the notifications of 7.5 lakh beneficiaries sent to 9999999999?

-Who received them?

-How was the eligibility of the beneficiaries identified when they didn't receive the notification?

-What about people who did not have phone/phone numbers at all?

Did Hospitals Use Dummy Numbers to Claim Money?

But there is a possibility that that the pan-India public health insurance scheme points to a 'fraud of some kind' by private hospitals, says Srinivas Kodali. The report has pointed out that Rs 1.1 crore was paid for 403 patients who were reportedly dead.

“It’s possible that many of the 7.5 lakh people who registered 9999999999 as their number don’t exist and the hospitals used these dummy numbers to claim money from the government. There are so many missing hospitals enrolled in the Ayushman Bharat scheme.”-Srinivas Kodali

It's a fair presumption that money that should have been spent on public health infrastructure is going to private hospitals and companies, Kodali adds.

CAG Report Adds Value to Claims of Mismanagement

While some people might have concerns about the legitimacy of the CAG report, Kodali says that the report should not be seen in isolation.

In August 2022, the Times of India had reported that as many as 26 percent of the claims under PMJAY from Punjab and Haryana were fraudulent.

This was not a lone instance though.

In 2019, when the Union government first released a report about the scheme, it was found that 341 hospitals across 16 states had been indulging in fraud.

The 2019 report had also questioned why no data regarding the "most performed surgeries" was available in the public domain, hinting that it was possible that hospitals could be committing fraud by performing surgeries that are profitable for them.

If Data Is Flawed, Then It Impacts Future Policies

Policy expert Shweta Mohandas has many concerns about how the data was collected and entered into systems under the Ayushman Bharat scheme.

But one major concern that trumps all the others is that if this incorrect data is used to train artificial intelligence bots and systems, the results that come out of it would be inconsistent too.

She notes that any deductions made using this data, and any health policies derived from it would be factually wrong.

"If another pandemic happens, we will need data like this to understand who requires insurance and the scale of how many people require other beneficiary schemes. This incorrect data will then cause more problems because the policy will be flawed and it'll be difficult to do ground surveillance and assess healthcare needs." -Shweta Mohandas

Mohandas also brings to attention the need to train ground staff better when it comes to data collection.

Be it ASHA workers, healthcare operators, or nurses, there should be orientation programmes for them on how to collect data, how to enter it into systems, and how to address privacy concerns of patients.

Mandating Phone Numbers Decreases Access to Healthcare

"Mobile numbers are significant for searching records related to any beneficiary in the database, who may approach the registration desk without the ID," the auditors have explicitly said in the CAG report.

"The mobile number is recorded only for the sake of reaching out to beneficiaries in case of any requirements and for collecting feedback regarding the treatment provided," an unnamed official from the Centre told PTI.

A public health expert whom FIT spoke to underlined how the digital divide is resulting in decreased access to healthcare services for people who actually need it the most.

She says that schemes like these can end up becoming decreasing healthcare access due to lack of phone number or adequate documentation. <https://www.thequint.com/fit/key-takeaways-from-cag-report-on-ayushman-bharat-pradhan-mantri-jan-arogya-yojana#read-more>

29. Ayushman Bharat: Kerala, UP among states with most delayed application processing (*mathrubhumi.com*) 11 August 2023

New Delhi: Kerala is third on the list of states experiencing delays in processing applications under Ayushman Bharat, the Union Government's nationwide public health insurance scheme to provide low-income workers with free access to health insurance coverage.

According to the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG), officials in Kerala took up to 223 days to take action over applications. However, the union government's instructions state that a decision be taken within 24 hours of receiving applications. Meanwhile, delays are even worse in Jammu & Kashmir and Uttar Pradesh, where applications are processed in 404 and 334 days, respectively.

Meanwhile, fake Aadhaar numbers are rampantly found used in applications. The same Aadhaar number was used by 4,761 applicants, with the bulk of cases identified in Tamil Nadu. At the same time, officials are unclear how applications are manipulated using Aadhaar numbers. <https://english.mathrubhumi.com/news/kerala/ayushman-bharat-kerala-up-among-states-with-most-delayed-application-processing-1.8811638>

30. CAG Report On Central Government Schemes | Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Aarogya Yojana | PMJAY
(*telanganatoday.com*) 12 August 2023

The latest report by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India has made some shocking revelations about a central government scheme.

This has sparked yet another controversy at a time when the Centre is already grappling with a no-confidence motion, violence in Haryana and Manipur.

Video Link: <https://telanganatoday.com/cag-report-on-central-government-schemes-ayushman-bharat-pradhan-mantri-jan-aarogya-yojana-pmjay>

31. ‘Will probe be ordered into CAG report findings on Ayushman Bharat?’: AAP (*theprint.in*) 11 August 2023

Questioning the Centre over the discrepancies in the database of the Ayushman Bharat scheme by the Comptroller and Auditor General, the AAP on Friday asked whether the government will initiate any probe into it.

“The Centre formed the AB-PMJAY scheme to carry out a scam. But there won’t be any investigation,” chief spokesperson Priyanka Kakkar said addressing a press conference.

“The CAG report has highlighted irregularities. I want to ask whether a probe will be ordered in this,” she said.

“The health scheme of Delhi government that has no restrictions should be implemented across the country,” she added.

The CAG has highlighted discrepancies including invalid names, unrealistic dates of birth, duplicate health IDs and unrealistic family sizes in the database of Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY).

Ineligible households were found registered as PMJAY beneficiaries and had availed the benefits ranging between Rs 0.12 lakh to Rs 22.44 crore under the scheme, said the audit report tabled in Parliament on Tuesday.

“According to National Health Authority (NHA) records, 7.87 crore beneficiary households were registered, constituting 73 per cent of the targeted households of 10.74 crore (November 2022).

“In the absence of adequate validation controls, errors were noticed in beneficiary database i.e. invalid names, unrealistic date of birth, duplicate PMJAY IDs, unrealistic size of family members in a household etc,” the report said.

The CAG report pointed out that several beneficiaries were registered against the same mobile number under the health insurance scheme. It stated that 7.49 lakh people are registered against the mobile number 9999999999 as beneficiaries.

Health Ministry sources on Wednesday said there is no role of mobile number in the verification process. “The mobile number is captured only for the sake of reaching out to the beneficiaries in case of any need and for collecting feedback regarding the treatment provided,” an official source said. <https://theprint.in/india/will-probe-be-ordered-into-cag-report-findings-on-ayushman-bharat-aap/1710766/>

32. CAG: Govt diverted funds of pension schemes for publicity of other schemes (*indianexpress.com*) 10 August 2023

THE MINISTRY of Rural Development (MoRD) diverted funds from the National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP), which includes old age pension schemes, for publicising some of its other schemes, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) has said.

The CAG report, on the performance audit of the NSAP from 2017-18 to 2020-21, was tabled in Lok Sabha on Tuesday.

“The allocation under NSAP to the states/ UTs were meant for disbursement of pension under various sub-schemes of NSAP. Out of the total allocation to a state/ UT, three per cent fund was meant for administrative expenditure. During audit, instances of diversion of funds by ministry and states/ UTs out of allocated funds for NSAP were noticed,” the report said.

“The Ministry of Rural Development in January 2017 decided to campaign through hoardings in states and UTs for giving due publicity to all programmes/ schemes of the ministry. Administrative approval and financial sanction of Rs 39.15 lakh was taken (June 2017) for publicity campaign through hoardings, with a limit of 10 hoardings at each capital city of the state and UT. Administrative approval and expenditure sanction of Rs 2.44 crore was taken (August 2017) for campaigning (for) Gram Samridhi, Swachh Bharat Pakhawada and publicity material of multiple schemes of the ministry through five hoardings in each district of 19 states,” it said.

“Work orders were issued to DAVP (Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity) in June and September 2017. Publicity campaigns were to be undertaken in September 2017. The funds for the said campaign were stated to be available under National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme and were approved by the competent authority to be incurred under the same head; however, audit observed that funds were actually incurred from social security welfare-NSAP schemes,” the report said.

“However, the advertisement of only PMAY-G (Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana – Gramin) and DDU-GKY (Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana) schemes were mentioned in the work order and no schemes of NSAP were included... Further, the campaigns were to be undertaken by DAVP under intimation to the department; however, the payment to DAVP was made without confirmation of the execution of the work,” it said.

“Hence, planned IEC (Information, Education and Communication) activities under NSAP were not undertaken as envisaged and funds of Rs 2.83 crore were diverted for campaigning in respect of other schemes of the ministry. Hence, IEC activities intended

to create awareness among potential beneficiaries of NSAP could not be taken up even though there was earmarking of funds for IEC activities,” it said.

According to the report, the MoRD, in its reply (December 2022), said the matter had been taken up with the IEC division of the department.

Schemes covered by NSAP

The NSAP, launched on August 15, 1995, comprises three pension schemes – IGNOAPS, IGNDPS and Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme (IGNWPS) -- and two other schemes – NFBS, which is a one-time assistance to a bereaved family in case of death of its breadwinner, and Annapurna scheme, which provides food security to the elderly who are not covered under IGNOAPS.

The CAG also reported diversion of Rs 57.45 crore across six states – Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Jammu & Kashmir, Odisha, Goa and Bihar. For instance, Central and State share (Rs 42.93 crore) under IGNOAPS was diverted to pay pension under IGNDPS in 2018-19 due to non-availability of funds under IGNDPS in Bihar, it said. In Rajasthan, National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS) funds meant for 12,347 beneficiaries were diverted for payment of insurance premium to LIC for BPL and Aastha Card holders under Pannadhay Jeevan Amrit Yojana (Aam Aadmi Beema Yojana) in September and December 2017, as per the report. The report also said that in 10 states/ UTs, the funds meant for administrative expenses under the NSAP (Rs 5.98 crore) were used on “inadmissible items” during 2017-21. These included payment of honorarium, wages, transportation etc.

According to the CAG report, about 4.65 crore beneficiaries availed the old age, widow, disability pensions and family benefit annually during 2017-21.

“The Centre released Rs 8,608 crore per annum on an average during 2017-21. In addition, states and UTs have also allocated Rs 27,393 crore per year on an average during the said period for pension and family benefit,” it said. <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/cag-govt-diverted-funds-of-pension-schemes-for-publicity-of-other-schemes-8885049/>

33. CAG: अयोग्य लाभार्थियों को बांट दिए 79 करोड़, एनएसएपी के तहत 2017 से 2021 के बीच जारी की गई धनराशि (amarujala.com)

12 Aug 2023

भारत के नियंत्रक और महालेखा परीक्षक (सीएजी) के एक ऑडिट से पता चला है कि 2017 से 2021 के बीच ग्रामीण विकास मंत्रालय के राष्ट्रीय सामाजिक सहायता कार्यक्रम (एनएसएपी) के तहत अयोग्य लाभार्थियों को करीब 79 करोड़ हस्तांतरित किए गए हैं। संसद में पेश ऑडिट रिपोर्ट में यह जानकारी दी गई है। रिपोर्ट के अनुसार लाभार्थियों को उनकी मृत्यु के बाद भी दो करोड़ रुपये का भुगतान किया गया था।

वहीं, समय-समय पर सर्वेक्षण नहीं होने के कारण कई पात्र लाभार्थी कल्याणकारी योजनाओं का लाभ नहीं उठा सके। भारत ने 1995 में गरीबी रेखा से नीचे रहने वाली बेसहारा आबादी और कमजोर समूहों को सामाजिक सुरक्षा प्रदान करने के लिए एनएसएपी लॉन्च किया था।

पांच उप योजनाएं

एनएसएपी के तहत तीन उप-योजनाएं शामिल हैं। इंदिरा गांधी राष्ट्रीय वृद्धावस्था पेंशन योजना, इंदिरा गांधी राष्ट्रीय विधवा पेंशन योजना और इंदिरा गांधी राष्ट्रीय विकलांगता पेंशन योजना। इसके अलावा दो उप योजनाओं में राष्ट्रीय पारिवारिक लाभ योजना व अन्नपूर्णा योजना है।

60 से कम उम्र के 57,394 अपात्रों को दी पेंशन

14 राज्यों और केंद्र शासित प्रदेशों (यूटी) में 60 साल से कम उम्र के 57,394 अपात्र लोगों को आईजीएनओएपीएस के तहत 30.47 करोड़ रुपये की पेंशन का भुगतान किया गया। आईजीएनडब्ल्यूपीएस/यूटी के तहत 17 राज्यों में 40 वर्ष से कम उम्र के लगभग 38,540 अपात्र लोगों को 26.45 करोड़ की पेंशन का भुगतान किया गया।

अयोग्य लोगों को विकलांगता पेंशन के 15.11 करोड़ बांटे

हिमाचल प्रदेश, ओडिशा, बिहार, अरुणाचल प्रदेश, तमिलनाडु, पंजाब और लद्दाख समेत 16 राज्यों में 21,322 लोगों को आईजीएनडीपीएस के तहत विकलांगता पेंशन के रूप में 15.11 करोड़ का अयोग्य भुगतान किया गया। इन मामलों में विकलांगता का प्रतिशत या तो 80 प्रतिशत से कम था या सुनिश्चित नहीं किया जा सका। <https://www.amarujala.com/india-news/cag-reports-claims-79-crore-distributed-to-ineligible-beneficiaries-funds-released-under-nsap-between-2017-21-2023-08-12>

34. CAG Report 2023: J&K में जिस जगह को राज्य सरकार ने 'स्वदेश दर्शन' के तहत चुना, BSF ने वहीं जमाया डेरा, CAG Report में खुलासा (abplive.com) 12 August 2023

भारत सरकार पर्यटन मंत्रालय की ओर से संचालित स्वदेश दर्शन स्कीम (Swadesh Darshan Scheme) के तहत जम्मू-कश्मीर के सुचेतगढ़ (Suchetgarh) में बने भवन को लेकर बड़े पैमाने पर अनियमितता का मामला सामने आया है। सीएजी रिपोर्ट में खुलासा हुआ है कि हिमालयन सर्किट (Himalayan Circuit) के तहत आने वाले इस भवन पर बीएसएफ का कब्जा है, जो परियोजना के मकसद के ठीक उलट है।

8 राज्यों से जवाब का इंतजार

सीएजी की रिपोर्ट सामने आने के बाद केंद्रीय पर्यटन मंत्रालय ने सितंबर 2022 में बिहार, छत्तीसगढ़, गोवा, जम्मू और कश्मीर, राजस्थान, सिक्किम, उत्तराखंड और तेलंगाना की सरकारों को भी इसकी सूचना दी है। साथ ही प्रदेश सरकार से भी इसको लेकर रिपोर्ट मांगी है। केंद्र सरकार को आठ राज्यों की सरकारों से जवाब मिलने का इंतजार है। जानकारी के मुताबिक, केंद्रीय पर्यटन मंत्रालय ने इस परियोजना पर जारी कार्यों की प्रगति का मूल्यांकन नहीं किया था।

सीएजी की रिपोर्ट से खुलासा

रिपोर्ट में बताया गया है कि जम्मू-कश्मीर के सुचेतगढ़ में इस स्कीम के तहत बने भवन निर्माण का काम हिमालयन सर्किट के तहत 3.71 करोड़ की लागत से पूरा किया गया था। यहां तक सबकुछ

सही है, लेकिन सीएजी की जांच में फिजिकल वेरिफिकेशन के दौरान पाया गया कि जिस भवन का निर्माण स्वदेश दर्शन स्कीम के मकसद से किया गया था, वो सीमा सुरक्षा बल के कब्जे में है। इतना नहीं, बीएसएफ द्वारा इसका इस्तेमाल भी किया जा रहा है। सीएजी की इस रिपोर्ट से भारत सरकार पर्यटन मंत्रालय द्वारा राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर तैयार स्वदेश दर्शन परियोजना का मकसद ही खटाई में पड़ गया है।

100% केंद्र प्रयोजित परियोजना

बता दें कि स्वदेश दर्शन योजना 100 प्रतिशत केंद्र प्रायोजित परियोजना है। इसकी रूपरेखा जनवरी 2015 में केंद्रीय पर्यटन मंत्रालय द्वारा राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर पर्यटन के बुनियादी ढांचे के विकास के मकसद से किया गया था। मंत्रालय ने इसके तहत विकास के लिए 15 पर्यटक सर्किट की पहचान की थी। शुरुआती चरण में इस योजना के तहत कुल 76 परियोजनाएं स्वीकृत की गईं। स्वदेश दर्शन योजना के लिए जनवरी 2015 में 500 करोड़ रुपये शुरुआती बजट के रूप में जारी किया गया था। यह केंद्रीय पर्यटन मंत्रालय की महत्वाकांक्षी परियोजना है। इस योजना के तहत हिमालय सर्किट, उत्तर पूर्व सर्किट, कृष्णा सर्किट, बौद्ध सर्किट, तटीय सर्किट, रेगिस्तानी सर्किट, जनजातीय सर्किट, इको सर्किट, वन्यजीव सर्किट, ग्रामीण सर्किट, आध्यात्मिक सर्किट, रामायण सर्किट, विरासत सर्किट, तीर्थकर सर्किट और सूफी सर्किट को विकसित करने की योजना है। पर्यटन मंत्रालय ने 15 सर्किटों के लिए कुल 76 परियोजनाओं को मंजूरी दी थी। साल 2014-15 से 2018-19 तक की अवधि के लिए 5,455.69 करोड़ रुपए खर्च करने की मंजूरी दी गई थी।

क्या है स्वदेश दर्शन स्कीम का मकसद

स्वदेश दर्शन स्कीम देशभर में पर्यटन को आर्थिक विकास और रोजगार सृजन के एक प्रमुख इंजन के रूप में स्थापित करना था। युवाओं के लिए आजीविका का जरिया बनाने के साथ देश के सांस्कृतिक और ऐतिहासिक विरासत की पहचान को फिर से स्थापित करने के अलावे टूरिज्म को बढ़ावा देना भी इसमें शामिल है। स्थानीय समुदायों की सक्रिय भागीदारी के माध्यम से रोजगार पैदा करना एक अहम मकसद भी है। <https://www.abplive.com/states/jammu-and-kashmir/cag-report-on-swadesh-darshan-scheme-infrastructure-created-at-suchetgarh-j-k-occupied-by-bsf-2472398>

35. Ayodhya विकास परियोजना पर CAG ने उठाए सवाल, इन मामलों पर लगे आरोप, 208 पन्नों की रिपोर्ट में 18 बार अयोध्या का जिक्र (abplive.com) 12 August 2023

CAG Report: केंद्र सरकार की स्वदेश दर्शन योजना को लेकर सामने आई भारत के नियंत्रक और महालेखा परीक्षक (सीएजी) की रिपोर्ट के अनुसार इस पर सवाल उठने लगे हैं। दरअसल भारत के नियंत्रक और महालेखा परीक्षक (सीएजी) ने स्वदेश दर्शन योजना के तहत उत्तर प्रदेश में अयोध्या विकास परियोजना के कार्यान्वयन में कई गड़बड़ी पाई है। सीएजी के अनुसार उत्तर प्रदेश में अयोध्या विकास परियोजना के कार्यान्वयन में ठेकेदारों को अनुचित लाभ देने समेत कई अनियमितताएं पाई गई हैं। 208 पन्नों की रिपोर्ट में 18 जगह अयोध्या का जिक्र किया गया है।

सीएजी ने जनवरी स्वदेश दर्शन योजना की शुरुआत 2015 से लेकर मार्च 2022 तक के परफॉर्मेंस को ऑडिट किया है। इस पर लोकसभा में पेश की गई परफॉर्मेंस ऑडिट रिपोर्ट के अनुसार ठेकेदारों को 19.73 करोड़ रुपये का अनुचित लाभ दिया गया है।

रिपोर्ट में बताया गया है कि ठेकेदारों को परियोजनाएं/सर्किट के तहत अनुचित लाभ पहुंचाया गया. सीएजी की रिपोर्ट में अयोध्या की विकास परियोजनाओं को भी शामिल किया गया है.

ठेकेदारों को पहुंचाया लाभ

सीएजी ने अपनी रिपोर्ट में अयोध्या विकास परियोजना में ठेकेदारों को दिए गए अनुचित लाभ का पूरा विवरण देते हुए बताया कि उत्तर प्रदेश राजकीय निर्माण निगम की ओर से नियुक्त किए गए ठेकेदार को पांच प्रतिशत की दर से परफॉर्मेंस गारंटी जमा करनी जरूरी थी. इसके अनुसार अनुबंध राशि 62.17 करोड़ रुपये का 5 प्रतिशत कुल 3.11 करोड़ रुपये हुआ. वहीं ठेकेदार ने इसके नवीनीकरण (सितंबर 2021) के समय रिकॉर्ड पर कोई कारण बताए बिना ही परफॉर्मेंस गारंटी की राशि काफी कम जमा की थी. सीएजी की रिपोर्ट में बताया गया कि ठेकेदार ने केवल 1.86 करोड़ रुपये जमा किए थे.

ठेकेदारों की बोलियों का नहीं हुआ तुलनात्मक विश्लेषण

रिपोर्ट में बताया गया है कि अयोध्या के गुप्तार घाट पर काम को समान आकार के 14 लॉट में बांटा गया था. जिसका काम अलग-अलग निजी ठेकेदारों को सौंप दिया गया था. रिपोर्ट में इस बात का जिक्र किया गया है कि निष्पादन एजेंसी (सिंचाई विभाग) ने ठेकेदारों की ओर से प्रस्तावित वित्तीय बोलियों/दरों का तुलनात्मक विश्लेषण करने में उचित सावधानी नहीं बरती. वहीं एक जैसी प्रकृति और स्वीकृत लागत के काम एक ही ठेकेदारों को दे दिए, जिसके कारण 19.13 लाख रुपये का नुकसान उठाना पड़ा.

रिपोर्ट में कहा गया है कि गुप्तार घाट में वृक्षारोपण कार्य के लिए 37.70 लाख की राशि के 900 ट्री गार्ड खरीदे गए. लेकिन जनवरी 2022 में किए गए सर्वेक्षण के दौरान ये खुले क्षेत्र में अनुपयोगी पाए गए.

बिना GST वाले ठेकेदार को भी हुआ पेमेंट- रिपोर्ट

इसके अलावा रिपोर्ट में कहा गया- “तीन ठेकेदारों को काम देने के बाद राज्य सरकार ने स्वतः संज्ञान के आधार पर उनका जीएसटी रजिस्ट्रेशन रद्द कर दिया था. ऐसे में वो अब रजिस्टर्ड ठेकेदार नहीं थे, लेकिन एक ठेकेदार को उसके जीएसटी पंजीकरण के संदर्भ में कुल 19.57 लाख रुपये का अनियमित भुगतान किया गया था. <https://www.abplive.com/states/up-uk/ayodhya-development-project-cag-said-in-its-report-that-undue-favors-were-given-to-contractors-in-ayodhya-development-project-2472175>

36. अयोध्या के विकास में धांधली: CAG रिपोर्ट में खुलासा- बेवजह खर्च किए 8 करोड़, बिना काम ठेकेदारों को भुगतान (bhaskar.com) 12 August 2023

पीएम नरेंद्र मोदी जनवरी में अयोध्या में भगवान राम के भव्य मंदिर का उद्घाटन करेंगे। उसी वक्त रामलला की प्राण प्रतिष्ठा भी मंदिर के गर्भगृह में की जाएगी। श्रीराम का भव्य मंदिर केंद्र और राज्य दोनों सरकारों के एजेंडे में शीर्ष पर है। बावजूद अफसर विकास के काम में धांधली से बाज नहीं आ रहे हैं।

दरअसल, बुधवार 9 अगस्त को **CAG** की एक रिपोर्ट लोकसभा में पेश की गई। इसमें दावा किया गया कि अयोध्या में डेवलपमेंट प्रोजेक्ट में जमकर धांधली हुई है। अफसरों और ठेकेदारों की मिलीभगत से करोड़ों रुपए का हेरफेर हुआ है।

CAG ने 2015 से 2022 तक का ऑडिट किया

गड़बड़ी का यह खुलासा तब हुआ जब **CAG** ने देश के 6 राज्यों में स्वदेश दर्शन योजना का ऑडिट किया। इनमें उत्तर प्रदेश में अयोध्या, गोवा की सिक्केरिम-अगुआड़ा जेल, हिमाचल प्रदेश का हिमालयन सर्किट, तेलंगाना का हेरिटेज सर्किट, सिक्किम का रंगपो-सिंगतम और मध्य प्रदेश का बौद्ध सर्किट है। इन योजनाओं का **CAG** ने 2015 से 2022 तक का ऑडिट किया। इस रिपोर्ट में 19.73 करोड़ की वित्तीय गड़बड़ियां निकलकर सामने आईं।

रिपोर्ट में अयोध्या डेवलपमेंट प्रोजेक्ट पर **CAG** ने कहा कि इस प्रोजेक्ट में ठेकेदारों को अनुचित लाभ पहुंचाया गया। अयोध्या के विकास के लिए नोडल एजेंसी के रूप में उत्तर प्रदेश राजकीय निर्माण निगम (**UPRNN**) को ये काम सौंपा गया था।

3.11 करोड़ अनुबंध राशि की जगह 1.86 करोड़ जमा कराए

रिपोर्ट में बताया गया कि एजेंसी द्वारा नियुक्त ठेकेदार को 5% की दर से बैंक की परफॉर्मेंस गारंटी जमा करनी थी। लागत 62.17 करोड़ रुपए थी। इस हिसाब से अनुबंध मूल्य का 5% 3.11 करोड़ रुपए होना चाहिए था। ठेकेदार ने कागजों पर ऑन रिकॉर्ड, कोई कारण बताए बिना इसके नवीनीकरण (सितंबर 2021) के समय परफॉर्मेंस गारंटी से कम राशि 1.86 करोड़ रुपए ही जमा की।

3 ठेकेदारों का रजिस्ट्रेशन रद्द होने पर भी 19.57 लाख का भुगतान

यूपी सरकार के सिंचाई विभाग ने अयोध्या के गुप्तार घाट के सौन्दर्यीकरण का काम पांच अलग-अलग ठेकेदारों को दिया। वो भी उनकी बिड का बिना सही तरह से आंकलन किए हुए। गुप्तार घाट के 14 हिस्सों में विकास और सौन्दर्यीकरण का काम होना था। इस गलती का खामियाजा विभाग को 19 लाख के नुकसान के रूप में उठाना पड़ा।

राज्य की योगी सरकार ने 3 ठेकेदारों का रजिस्ट्रेशन स्वतः संज्ञान लेते हुए रद्द किया था। इसके बाद उन ठेकेदारों को **GST** नहीं मिलनी चाहिए थी। मगर अफसरों की लापरवाही कहें या मिलीभगत एक ठेकेदार को 19 लाख 57 हजार का भुगतान किया गया।

भुगतान ऐसे ठेकेदारों को हुआ, जिन्होंने काम ही नहीं किया

धांधली का ये खेल यहीं नहीं थमा। **CAG** ने रिपोर्ट में बताया है कि गुप्तार घाट में किए जा रहे कामों का भुगतान उन ठेकेदारों को किया गया, जिन्होंने काम किया ही नहीं। अयोध्या डेवलपमेंट प्रोजेक्ट में 8 करोड़ 22 लाख रुपए अतिरिक्त खर्च कर दिए गए।

अयोध्या के गुप्तार घाट के डेवलपमेंट में 1,447.50 रुपए प्रति वर्ग मीटर की दर से 23,767 वर्ग मीटर में पत्थर पटिया की आपूर्ति और फिक्सिंग का कार्य शामिल था। इसमें एमएस क्लैप (आपूर्ति और फिक्सिंग) की लागत 216.88 रुपए प्रति वर्ग मीटर शामिल है। आपूर्ति के लिए 136.88 रुपए

और फिक्सिंग के लिए **80.00** रुपए। ये सब सिर्फ कागजों में दिखाया गया और ठेकेदारों को भुगतान भी कर दिया गया।

37.70 लाख से **900** ट्री-गार्ड खरीदे, इस्तेमाल नहीं किए

यही नहीं, साइट निरीक्षण के दौरान यह देखा गया कि एमएस क्लैप लगा ही नहीं था। कुछ जगहों पर लगा था मगर टूटी हालत में था। चूंकि साइट पर एमएस क्लैप की आपूर्ति और फिक्सिंग का कोई काम नहीं किया गया था। इसलिए इसकी लागत ठेकेदारों के बिलों से काटनी चाहिए थी।

कटौती करने के बजाए अंतिम बिल में ठेकेदारों को **57.73** लाख रुपए (**12%** जीएसटी सहित) का अतिरिक्त भुगतान हुआ। विभाग (काम करने वाली एजेंसी), यूपी सरकार, राज्य पर्यटन विभाग ने सीएजी की ऑडिट रिपोर्ट को स्वीकार कर लिया है। एजेंसी से अतिरिक्त भुगतान की वसूली शुरू करने का निर्देश भी दे दिया है।

रिपोर्ट में ये भी कहा गया है कि गुप्तार घाट में वृक्षारोपण के लिए **37.70** लाख की राशि के **900** ट्री गार्ड खरीदे गए थे। लेकिन जनवरी **2022** में किए गए सर्वेक्षण के दौरान ये खुले क्षेत्र में अनुपयोगी पाए गए। इससे सीधे तौर पर **37.70** लाख का नुकसान सरकारी खजाने पर पड़ा है।

कैग ने अयोध्या विकास परियोजना के कामों में **8.22** करोड़ रुपए के अनावश्यक खर्च का भी जिक्र किया। रिपोर्ट में साफ कहा गया है कि राज्य सरकार सेंटेंज, जीएसटी और श्रम उपकर के लिए देय वास्तविक राशि के आकलन में उचित सावधानी भी नहीं बरती गई।

काम कर रही एजेंसियों द्वारा किए गए कार्यों की गलत लागत (वास्तविक लागत के बजाय अनुमानित लागत) पर विचार करने के कारण **6.07** करोड़ रुपए की अतिरिक्त राशि स्वीकृत की गई और इसमें से **3.98** करोड़ रुपए जारी भी किए गए (सिंचाई विभाग **1.18** करोड़ रुपए और उत्तर प्रदेश राजकीय निर्माण निगम **2.80** करोड़ रुपए), जिसके परिणामस्वरूप अतिरिक्त भुगतान हुआ है।

नियम तोड़े, लागत **3.86** करोड़ बढ़ गई

राज्य के निगरानी तंत्र में भी तमाम खामियों का जिक्र करते हुए कहा गया कि कार्यदायी एजेंसी (उत्तर प्रदेश राजकीय निर्माण निगम) ने राज्य सरकार के आदेशों के अनुसार सरकारी कार्य होने के अनुमान में विभागीय बचत के लिए नियमतः कार्यों की लागत में **5%** की कमी भी नहीं की। इसके चलते विकास कार्य की स्वीकृत लागत **3.86** करोड़ रुपए से अधिक हो गई।

केंद्र की इस योजना में साफ कहा गया है कि राज्य सरकारें अपने राज्यों में चल रहे कामों की परियोजना की निगरानी करेंगे। समय-समय पर प्रोग्रेस रिपोर्ट केंद्र को भेजते रहेंगे। मगर परियोजना की मंजूरी की तारीख से दो साल की देरी के बाद (अगस्त **2019**) में स्टेट लेवल मॉनिटरिंग कमेटी का गठन तो किया गया मगर फरवरी **2021** से पहले पर्यटन मंत्रालय को कोई प्रगति रिपोर्ट नहीं भेजी गई।

इतना ही नहीं, उसके बाद भी पर्यटन मंत्रालय को हर महीने वित्तीय और भौतिक प्रगति रिपोर्ट नहीं भेजी गई थी, जो राज्य सरकार द्वारा बरती गई लापरवाही का संकेत देती है।

रामायण सर्किट का हिस्सा है अयोध्या परियोजना आपको बता दें कि अयोध्या विकास परियोजना स्वदेश दर्शन योजना के तहत बनाए जा रहे रामायण सर्किट का हिस्सा है। केन्द्र की मोदी सरकार ने इसे 27 सितंबर, 2017 को 127.21 करोड़ रुपए की लागत से मंजूरी दी थी, जिसमें से 115.46 करोड़ रुपए जारी किए जा चुके हैं। उत्तर प्रदेश में अयोध्या के अलावा रामायण सर्किट के तहत चित्रकूट और श्रृंगवेरपुर दो अन्य परियोजनाएं भी शामिल हैं। <https://www.bhaskar.com/local/uttar-pradesh/lucknow/news/rigging-in-the-development-till-ayodhya-131677635.html>

37. अयोध्या: विकास कार्यों में सामने आया 20 करोड़ का घोटाला, ठेकेदारों को मिला अनुचित लाभ, कैग रिपोर्ट में खुलासा (amarujala.com) 12 August 2023

अयोध्या से एक चौंकाने वाली खबर सामने आ रही है। यहां स्वदेश दर्शन योजना के तहत हुए विकास कार्यों में 20 करोड़ का घोटाला सामने आया है। भारत के नियंत्रक एवं महालेखा परीक्षक (कैग) ने अपनी रिपोर्ट में यह खुलासा किया है। रामनगरी के गुप्तारघाट के आस-पास हुए काम में ठेकेदारों को अनुचित लाभ पहुंचाने की बात सामने आ रही है। कैग की इस रिपोर्ट से प्रशासनिक हलचल बढ़ गई है।

कैग ने जनवरी 2015 से मार्च 2022 के बीच स्वदेश दर्शन योजना का ऑडिट किया था, जिसकी रिपोर्ट बुधवार को संसद में पेश की गई और कहा गया कि छह राज्यों की छह परियोजनाओं में ठेकेदारों को 19.73 करोड़ रुपये का गलत तरीके से लाभ दिया गया। अयोध्या स्वदेश दर्शन योजना के तहत रामायण सर्किट का हिस्सा है। इसके लिए 27 सितंबर 2017 को 127 करोड़ 21 लाख का बजट मंजूर हुआ था। इसमें से 115 करोड़ रुपये अभी तक जारी किए जा चुके हैं।

अयोध्या में परियोजना संबंधित अनुचित लाभों पर कैग रिपोर्ट में कहा गया है कि काम कराने वाली एजेंसी यानी उत्तर प्रदेश राजकीय निर्माण निगम के ठेकेदार को अनुबंध मूल्य 62.17 करोड़ रुपये के पांच प्रतिशत की दर पर प्रदर्शन गारंटी जमा करनी थी, जो करीब 3.11 करोड़ होती है। लेकिन ठेकेदार ने केवल 1.86 करोड़ रुपये जमा किए। यही नहीं योजनाओं की मॉनीटरिंग पर भी सवाल खड़े किए गए जिससे प्रशासनिक लापरवाही साफ उजागर होती है।

सभी सवालों का दिया जा रहा है जवाब गुप्तारघाट के पास कराए विकास कार्यों में ऑडिट टीम की तरफ से उठाई गई सभी आपत्तियों का बिंदुवार जवाब दे दिया गया है। जीएसटी के कटौती के लिए ऑडिट टीम ने 57.73 लाख रुपये के अनियमित भुगतान पर रिकवरी की बात कही थी। हम लोगों ने उसके स्थान पर करीब 65 लाख की रिकवरी कर ली है। इसके अलावा कैग की तरफ से पूछे गए सभी सवालों का जवाब दिया जा रहा है। -जय सिंह, अधिशाषी अभियंता, सरयू नहर खंड, अयोध्या <https://www.amarujala.com/lucknow/ayodhya-20-crore-scam-surfaced-in-development-works-2023-08-12>

38. अयोध्या डेवलपमेंट प्रोजेक्ट में ठेकेदारों को अनुचित फायदा पहुंचाया गया: कैग रिपोर्ट (thewirehindi.com) 11 August 2023

भारत के नियंत्रक एवं महालेखा परीक्षक (कैग) ने कथित तौर पर स्वदेश दर्शन योजना के तहत केंद्र सरकार की अयोध्या विकास योजना के अमल में अनियमितताएं पाई हैं।

इंडियन एक्सप्रेस की रिपोर्ट के अनुसार, अनियमितताओं में ठेकेदारों को अनुचित लाभ देना भी शामिल है.

कैग ने जनवरी 2015 से मार्च 2022 के बीच स्वदेश दर्शन योजना का ऑडिट किया था, जिसकी रिपोर्ट बुधवार को संसद में पेश की गई और कहा गया कि छह राज्यों में छह परियोजनाओं/सर्किटों में ठेकेदारों को 19.73 करोड़ रुपये का अनुचित लाभ दिया गया.

अयोध्या परियोजना संबंधित अनुचित लाभों पर कैग रिपोर्ट में कहा गया है, 'कार्यान्वयन करवाने वाली एजेंसी यानी उत्तर प्रदेश राजकीय निर्माण निगम द्वारा नियुक्त ठेकेदार को अनुबंध मूल्य 62.17 करोड़ रुपये के पांच प्रतिशत की दर पर प्रदर्शन गारंटी जमा करनी थी, जो 3.11 करोड़ रुपये होता है. हालांकि, ठेकेदार ने इसके नवीनीकरण के समय (सितंबर 2021) रिकॉर्ड पर कोई कारण बताए बिना कम राशि यानी केवल 1.86 करोड़ रुपये जमा करवाए.'

रिपोर्ट में आगे बताया गया, 'अयोध्या के गुप्तार घाट में काम को समान आकार के 14 लॉट में बांटा गया था और विभिन्न निजी ठेकेदारों को काम सौंपा गया था. लेकिन कार्यान्वयन करवाने वाली एजेंसी (सिंचाई विभाग) ने ठेकेदारों द्वारा प्रस्तावित वित्तीय बोलियों/दरों के तुलनात्मक विश्लेषण करने में उचित सावधानी नहीं बरती और समान प्रकृति और स्वीकृत लागत के काम एक ही ठेकेदार को अलग-अलग दरों पर दे दिए, जिसके परिणामस्वरूप जो 19.13 लाख रुपये बच सकते थे, वो खर्च हुए.'

अखबार के मुताबिक, रिपोर्ट में यह भी कहा गया है, 'तीन ठेकेदारों को काम देने के बाद राज्य सरकार ने स्वतः संज्ञान लेते हुए उनका जीएसटी पंजीकरण रद्द कर दिया. इस प्रकार, वे अब पंजीकृत ठेकेदार नहीं थे, न ही जीएसटी लेने के हकदार थे. लेकिन, एक ठेकेदार को उसके जीएसटी पंजीकरण के लिए कुल 19.57 लाख रुपये का अनियमित भुगतान किया गया. बाकी दो ठेकेदारों के मामले में यह भुगतान लंबित था, जबकि जीएसटी की पूरी राशि खुद निष्पादन एजेंसी (सिंचाई विभाग) को काटकर जमा की जानी थी.'

कैग ने कहा कि ठेकेदारों को उस काम के लिए भुगतान किया गया जो हुए ही नहीं थे. 'गुप्तार घाट के विकास कार्य में 1,447.50 रुपये प्रति वर्ग मीटर की दर से 23,767 वर्ग मीटर में पत्थर के पट्टिया की आपूर्ति और फिक्सिंग का काम शामिल था. इसमें एमएस क्लैप (आपूर्ति और फिक्सिंग) की 216.88 रुपये प्रति वर्ग मीटर की लागत शामिल है. (आपूर्ति के लिए 136.88 रुपये और फिक्सिंग के लिए 80.00 रुपये). यह काम करवाया गया और निजी ठेकेदारों को उनके संबंधित अनुबंधों में बताई गई दरों पर भुगतान किया गया.'

'हालांकि साइट निरीक्षण में पाया गया कि कोई भी एमएस क्लैप ठीक नहीं किया गया था. हालांकि इस काम के एवज में ठेकेदारों को 51.55 लाख रुपये (12 प्रतिशत जीएसटी को छोड़कर) का भुगतान किया गया था. चूंकि साइट पर एमएस क्लैप की आपूर्ति और फिक्सिंग का कोई काम नहीं किया गया था, इसलिए इसकी लागत ठेकेदारों के बिलों से काट ली जानी चाहिए थी. इस प्रकार, कटौती न करने के परिणामस्वरूप अंतिम बिल में ठेकेदारों को 57.73 लाख रुपये (12 प्रतिशत जीएसटी सहित) का अतिरिक्त भुगतान हुआ.'

अयोध्या विकास परियोजना स्वदेश दर्शन योजना के तहत रामायण सर्किट का हिस्सा है. इसे 27 सितंबर 2017 को 127.21 करोड़ रुपये की लागत से मंजूरी दी गई थी, जिसमें से 115.46 करोड़

रुपये जारी किए जा चुके हैं. अयोध्या के अलावा उत्तर प्रदेश में रामायण सर्किट में दो अन्य परियोजनाएं चित्रकूट और श्रृंगवेरपुर हैं.

रिपोर्ट में जिन पांच अन्य परियोजनाओं का जिक्र किया गया है, वे गोवा की सिंकेरिम-अगुआडा जेल; हिमाचल प्रदेश का हिमालयन सर्किट; तेलंगाना का हेरिटेज सर्किट; सिक्किम में रंगपो-सिंगतम का डेवलपमेंट और मध्य प्रदेश का बौद्ध सर्किट हैं. <https://thewirehindi.com/255416/cag-report-finds-irregularities-in-ayodhya-development-project/>

39. अयोध्या विकास परियोजना पर सीएजी ने उठाए सवाल, ठेकेदारों को पहुंचाया गया इतना फायदा (*hindi.oneindia.com*) 12 August 2023

सीएजी (CAG) ने केंद्र सरकार (Central government) की स्वदेश दर्शन योजना (Swadesh Darshan Scheme) को लेकर अपनी एक रिपोर्ट पेश (submit a report) की है. जिसमें अयोध्या विकास परियोजना (Ayodhya development project) के कार्यान्वयन में ठेकेदारों (Contractors) को अनुचित लाभ (unfair advantage) देने की बात कही गई है. बल्कि, ठेकेदारों (Contractors) को करोड़ों का फायदा पहुंचाने का भी आरोप लगा है

Video Link: <https://hindi.oneindia.com/videos/cag-flags-undue-benefits-to-contractors-in-ayodhya-development-project-3952836.html>

40. अयोध्या विकास परियोजना पर CAG ने उठाए सवाल (*jantakiawaz.org*) 12 August 2023

केंद्र सरकार की स्वदेश दर्शन योजना को लेकर सामने आई भारत के नियंत्रक और महालेखा परीक्षक (सीएजी) की रिपोर्ट के अनुसार इस पर सवाल उठने लगे हैं. दरअसल भारत के नियंत्रक और महालेखा परीक्षक (सीएजी) ने स्वदेश दर्शन योजना के तहत उत्तर प्रदेश में अयोध्या विकास परियोजना के कार्यान्वयन में कई गड़बड़ी पाई है. सीएजी के अनुसार उत्तर प्रदेश में अयोध्या विकास परियोजना के कार्यान्वयन में ठेकेदारों को अनुचित लाभ देने समेत कई अनियमितताएं पाई गई हैं. 208 पन्नों की रिपोर्ट में 18 जगह अयोध्या का जिक्र किया गया है.

सीएजी ने जनवरी स्वदेश दर्शन योजना की शुरुआत 2015 से लेकर मार्च 2022 तक के परफॉर्मेंस को ऑडिट किया है. इस पर लोकसभा में पेश की गई परफॉर्मेंस ऑडिट रिपोर्ट के अनुसार ठेकेदारों को 19.73 करोड़ रुपये का अनुचित लाभ दिया गया है.

ठेकेदारों को पहुंचाया लाभ अखबार की रिपोर्ट के अनुसार सीएजी ने अपनी रिपोर्ट में अयोध्या विकास परियोजना में ठेकेदारों को दिए गए अनुचित लाभ का पूरा विवरण देते हुए बताया कि उत्तर प्रदेश राजकीय निर्माण निगम की ओर से नियुक्त किए गए

ठेकेदार को पांच प्रतिशत की दर से परफॉर्मेंस गारंटी जमा करनी जरूरी थी. इसके अनुसार अनुबंध राशि 62.17 करोड़ रुपये का 5 प्रतिशत कुल 3.11 करोड़ रुपये हुआ. वहीं ठेकेदार ने इसके नवीनीकरण (सितंबर 2021) के समय रिकॉर्ड पर कोई कारण बताए बिना ही परफॉर्मेंस गारंटी की

राशि काफी कम जमा की थी. सीएजी की रिपोर्ट में बताया गया कि ठेकेदार ने केवल **1.86** करोड़ रुपये जमा किए थे. ठेकेदारों की बोलियों का नहीं हुआ तुलनात्मक विश्लेषण

रिपोर्ट में बताया गया है कि अयोध्या के गुप्तार घाट पर काम को समान आकार के **14** लॉट में बांटा गया था. जिसका काम अलग-अलग निजी ठेकेदारों को सौंप दिया गया था. रिपोर्ट में इस बात का जिक्र किया गया है कि निष्पादन एजेंसी (सिंचाई विभाग) ने ठेकेदारों की ओर से प्रस्तावित वित्तीय बोलियों/दरों का तुलनात्मक विश्लेषण करने में उचित सावधानी नहीं बरती. वहीं एक जैसी प्रकृति और स्वीकृत लागत के काम एक ही ठेकेदारों को दे दिए, जिसके कारण **19.13** लाख रुपये का नुकसान उठाना पड़ा.

रिपोर्ट में कहा गया है कि गुप्तार घाट में वृक्षारोपण कार्य के लिए **37.70** लाख की राशि के **900** ट्री गार्ड खरीदे गए. लेकिन जनवरी **2022** में किए गए सर्वेक्षण के दौरान ये खुले क्षेत्र में अनुपयोगी पाए गए.

बिना **GST** वाले ठेकेदार को भी हुआ पेमेंट

इसके अलावा रिपोर्ट में कहा गया- "तीन ठेकेदारों को काम देने के बाद राज्य सरकार ने स्वतः संज्ञान के आधार पर उनका जीएसटी रजिस्ट्रेशन रद्द कर दिया था. ऐसे में वो अब रजिस्टर्ड ठेकेदार नहीं थे, लेकिन एक ठेकेदार को उसके जीएसटी पंजीकरण के संदर्भ में कुल **19.57** लाख रुपये का अनियमित भुगतान किया गया था.

<https://www.jantakiawaz.org/local/uttar-pradesh/-cag—652082>

41. CAG report shows how Orthodox tea subsidy was wasted (eastmojo.com) 11 August 2023

Where did the subsidy given to encourage production of Orthodox tea go?

An audit conducted by CAG found that the subsidy was used for consumption by factory workers and distributed as samples and/or gifts.

Orthodox tea is produced primarily for export purposes, and it fetches a higher price in the global markets.

Orthodox tea refers to loose-leaf tea produced using traditional (orthodox) methods, which involve plucking, withering, rolling, oxidation/fermentation. It focuses on preserving the singular virtues of the leaf resulting in fermented tea leaves and getting high prices. Compared to CTC tea, orthodox tea provides the most authentic tea experience. There are different grades of orthodox tea: Fine Tippy Golden Orange Pekoe, Flowery Broken Orange Pekoe and others. To encourage tea producers to increase the production of orthodox tea in the country, the Tea Board framed a scheme for the disbursement of subsidies for the production of Orthodox tea.

The Audit observed that there was no provision in the scheme guidelines to furnish the data regarding the quantity of Orthodox tea, exported by the producers so as to measure the benefit derived from the subsidy.

The Management, while accepting the facts, stated (June 2022) that the distribution of labour tea from the garden was customary and had been followed for long. Sometimes, the manufacturers distributed the samples/gift tea as a marketing and promotion strategy adopted for domestic and international markets which helped in export also.

“The reply of the Management needs to be viewed in the light of the fact that the objective of the scheme was to produce Orthodox tea for export and hence the subsidy should have been limited to the quantity exported. Further, the distribution of Orthodox tea as labour tea did not fulfil the scheme objective, which aimed at the production of Orthodox tea for export purposes to fetch foreign earnings,” the Audit found.

As per scheme guidelines, the subsidy was paid for the total production of Orthodox tea by the manufacturers.

“During scrutiny of records, Audit noticed that out of the total production, a considerable quantity of Orthodox tea was used for consumption by factory workers and distributed as samples/gifts etc. Thus, the subsidy was also paid for tea, used for the above purposes which defeated the very purpose of subsidy for the production of orthodox tea to promote/increase the export of Orthodox tea. Moreover, there were no records with the Tea Board from which it could verify the quantity of Orthodox tea exported by a producer for which the subsidy had been disbursed on earlier occasions,” the Audit found.

The Management stated that there was no provision in the scheme guidelines to furnish records by the beneficiary in support of the quantity of Orthodox tea exported for the said period.

“The reply of the Management may be seen in light of the fact that in the absence of any export data furnished by the producers, the impact of the subsidy disbursed under the scheme was not ascertainable and the Management was not in a position to assess the extent of achievement of the objective of increasing the export of Orthodox tea,” the Audit found.

As per general eligibility conditions for disbursement of subsidy, PF dues of the applicant tea garden/factory must not exceed Rs 10,000 at the time of submission of application and at the time of release of subsidy. In compliance with the above, the manufacturer has to furnish a copy of the latest PF challan payment receipt in support of payment of the latest PF dues.
<https://www.eastmojo.com/national/2023/08/11/bad-harvest-cag-report-shows-how-orthodox-tea-subsidy-was-wasted/>

STATES NEWS ITEMS

42. Major Time, Costs Overruns in UP Irrigation Projects: CAG Report (*newslick.in*) 12 August 2023

The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) has found serious deficiencies in the performance of the Bansagar Canal Project and the modernisation of the Chaudhary Charan Singh Lahchura Dam Project in Uttar Pradesh from 2014-15 to 2020-21.

The audit report, which assessed the efficiency and effectiveness of the two projects and was sent to the Yogi Adityanath government on March 3 and tabled on August 8, revealed time and cost overruns with the objectives not achieved.

Bansagar Project is a joint venture between Uttar Pradesh (UP) Bihar and Madhya Pradesh (MP) under which Bansagar Dam was constructed on the Sone river in MP. UP is entitled to utilise 43,560 mcft of water from Bansagar reservoir.

UP's Bansagar Canal Project (BCP) aimed to construct canal systems in UP to utilise 34,008 million cubic feet (mcft) of water from Bansagar Dam to increase the irrigation intensity of nine canal systems from 85% to 150% in cultivable command area (CCA) of 2.32 lakh hectares in Prayagraj and Mirzapur districts.

Approved by Central Water Commission in January 1994, the project's cost escalated to Rs 3,419.37 crore during 1996-97 to 2020-21 from the estimated Rs 330.19 crore. Due to slow progress, the scheduled completion date in 2004 was revised four times and the project was commissioned in July 2018.

Even after the project's commissioning date, BCP authorities demanded 5,782 mcft (17%)-16,476 (48%) water from MP as against the target of 34,008 mcft without providing a reason.

Moreover, BCP didn't even get the decreased water supply and received only 1,680 mcft (5%)-2,921 mcft (9%). Consequently, additional irrigation intensity fell short of its target by 44%-45% in Rabi and 325-33% in Kharif seasons.

Lahchura Dam provides water to the Dhasan Canal System (DCS), which has a CCA of 97,169 hectares in Mahoba and Hamirpur districts. Lahchura Dam also receives water from Pahari Dam. Both dams had become old and outdated with the shutters intended to control water flow not working properly during rains.

The Lahchura Dam and Pahari Dam Projects were approved in February 1979 and February 2008 at an estimated cost of Rs 7.04 crore and Rs 76.68 crore respectively. However, the cost of both projects escalated with Rs 328.30 crore spent on Lahchura Dam during 1978-79 to 2014-15 and Rs 354.20 crore spent on Pahari Dam during 2009-10 to 2017-18. Due to slow work, they were completed in March 2015 and March 2018 respectively.

The CAG noticed that the objectives of both BCP and Lahchura and Pahari Dam Projects were not achieved—augmentation of water availability in the canal network, creation of additional irrigation intensity and change in cropping pattern.

The audit revealed deficient planning for remodeling of canal systems, insufficient storage capacity of dams, inadequate supply of water in canals and consequently non-operation of canals for full cropping period.

Similarly, there was a shortage of water supply to the DCS due to the inadequate capacity of Lahchura and Pahari dams. The canal irrigation in Kharif was provided to only 455-2,153 hectares (3-15%) against the target of 14,575 hectares.

Both BCP and Lahchura Dam Project lacked planning and execution. “In BCP, issues like the current availability of water in the canal systems and capacity enhancement of existing canal systems were either not addressed or inadequate provisions were made in the DPRs due to which envisaged objective of enhancing irrigation intensity of the canal could not be achieved,” the report reads.

The scope for modernisation of Lahchura and Pahari Dam Projects was “limited to replacing the old structures of the dams”.

The insufficient water storage capacity of Lahchura and Pahari dams was not addressed. Resultantly, the project would not be able to provide canal irrigation in the entire command area of 97,169 hectares. The scope for construction in both projects could not be firmed up and kept changing during the course of the execution.

Therefore, the projects could be completed after a delay of more than 14 years (BCP) and six years (Lahchura Dam Project) along with huge cost overruns.

“In BCP, the provision of cost escalation in labour, petroleum, oil and lubricants, and materials was included belatedly after NIT and technical bid evaluation. Ineligible contractors were awarded work in the Lahchura Dam Project.”

The audit also noticed “unjustified payment of price adjustment, irregular grant of interest-free advances to contractors, unauthorised sanction of variations in the quantities of the contract, grant of time extension without proper justifications and inadequate quality control”.

Neither the envisaged connectivity between canals was achieved nor were canal networks maintained regularly.

Besides, the command area of the canal systems was also not developed, which restricted the utilisation of created irrigation intensity. <https://www.newsclick.in/major-time-costs-overruns-irrigation-projects-cag-report>

43. Unnao News: कैग ने बेसिक शिक्षा विभाग में भी पकड़ा 29.87 करोड़ का गड़बड़झाला (amarujala.com) 12 August 2023

उन्नाव। उप्र स्थानीय निधि लेखा परीक्षा विभाग (कैग) ने बेसिक शिक्षा विभाग में भी 29.87 करोड़ का गड़बड़झाला पकड़ा है। विधानसभा समिति को दी गई रिपोर्ट में कैग ने एमडीएम में मिले करोड़ों के इस अनुदान के वितरण और उपभोग संबंधी अभिलेख प्रस्तुत न करने का आपत्तिजनक बताया है।

वित्तीय वर्ष 2016-17 में बीएसए कार्यालय की जिला बेसिक शिक्षा समिति को अनुरक्षण व विविध व्यय के लिए 18.37 लाख रुपये मिले थे। विभाग की ओर से इस पूरी धनराशि के खर्च के प्रमाण व अभिलेख आदि के साक्ष्य कैग को नहीं दिए गए। जिस पर कैग ने इस धनराशि के दुरुपयोग की आशंका जताई है। कैग ने उसी वित्तीय वर्ष में ही मध्याह्न भोजन के लिए 29.68 करोड़ के मिले अनुदान पर सवाल उठाए हैं। रिपोर्ट में बताया है कि इस अनुदान के वितरण और उपभोग संबंधी लेखा अभिलेख जिम्मेदारों द्वारा प्रस्तुत नहीं किए गए। कैग ने इसे आपत्तिजनक बताते हुए धनराशि के गड़बड़झाले की आशंका जताई है। इससे पहले कैग तीन नगर पालिकाओं और यूएसडीए में भी करोड़ों की गड़बड़ी की रिपोर्ट दे चुका है। <https://www.amarujala.com/uttar-pradesh/unnao/cag-also-caught-a-mess-of-2987-crores-in-basic-education-department-unnao-news-c-221-1-skn1054-1741-2023-08-12>

44. उन्नाव में CAG ने पकड़ा 16.71 करोड़ का गड़बड़झाला: 20 मामलों में पकड़ी गई गड़बड़ी, बकाएदारों से नहीं की गई वसूली (bhaskar.com) 12 August 2023

उन्नाव की 3 नगर पालिकाओं में 16.71 करोड़ का नियम विरुद्ध भुगतान किया गया। आलम यह है कि जिम्मेदारों ने हर कदम पर शासनादेश की धजियां उड़ाते हुए करोड़ों के वारे न्यारे कर दिए। इसके अलावा बकाएदारों से वसूली न करके सरकारी खजाने को तगड़ी आर्थिक चोट पहुंचाई गई। इसका खुलासा स्थानीय निधि लेखा परीक्षा विभाग (कैग) की रिपोर्ट में हुआ है।

रिपोर्ट अब शासन तक पहुंचने के बाद जिम्मेदारों पर कार्रवाई की संभावना बढ़ गई है। कैग द्वारा शासन को भेजी गई रिपोर्ट में बताया गया कि नगर पालिका परिषद उन्नाव में वित्तीय वर्ष 2016-17 में नाला सफाई के नाम पर दो बार में 16 और 34 लाख का भुगतान किया गया। कैग ने इसमें सवाल उठाते हुए रिपोर्ट दी है कि नाला सफाई में जमकर अनियमितता की गई। इसकी स्थानीय स्तर पर अफसरों द्वारा कराई गई जांच में इसकी पुष्टि भी हुई।

इसके बाद भी पूरा भुगतान कर दिया गया। कैग ने नाला निर्माण में 79.94 लाख का अनियमित भुगतान भी पकड़ा है। इसमें 11.67 लाख का एस्टीमेट से अधिक का भुगतान बिना सक्षम अधिकारी से स्वीकृति कराने की पुष्टि हुई है। 14वें वित्त से कराए गए निर्माण कार्यों में बिना सक्षम अधिकारी की स्वीकृति के 24.35 लाख का भुगतान किया गया। पालिका के जिम्मेदारों ने शासनादेश के अनुसार न तो वाटर टैक्स की वसूली की और न ही पड़ाव अड्डों की नीलामी। इससे सरकार को क्रमशः 2.80 करोड़ और 16.12 लाख की आर्थिक चोट पहुंची।

दुकानों और हॉल की नीलामी नहीं की आईडीएसएमटी योजना से निर्मित दुकानों और हाल की नीलामी न करके प्रति वर्ष के हिसाब से 1.72 करोड़ की आर्थिक क्षति सरकार को हुई। बोर्ड की स्वीकृति के बिना प्रकाश विभाग में आउट

सोर्सिंग पर रखे गए कार्मिकों पर 7.83 लाख और स्वास्थ्य में कर्मियों के वेतन का 1.40 करोड़ भुगतान कर दिया गया। तत्कालीन अध्यक्ष रामचंद्र को शिष्टाचार व्यय के रूप में 8.23 लाख और उनके कैंप कार्यालय की साजसज्जा पर 7.86 लाख का अनियमित व अनानुमोदित व्यय भी कैग ने पकड़ा है।

बिना परीक्षण के रीबोर किया

कैग ने कुल 20 मामलों में गड़बड़ी पकड़ी है। इसमें बिना जल परीक्षण के हैंडपंपों के रीबोर में किया, 10.46 लाख का भुगतान, बांगरमऊ नगर पालिका परिषद में वित्तीय वर्ष 2017-18 में कैग ने छह कार्यों में 4.63 करोड़ की गड़बड़ी पकड़ी है। जिम्मेदारों ने फ्लोराइडयुक्त क्षेत्र में बिना जल परीक्षण के हैंडपंपों के रीबोर में 10.46 लाख का अनियमित भुगतान किया। शासनादेश द्वारा निर्धारित प्रक्रिया के विपरीत नाला निर्माण कराकर 46.43 लाख का अनियमित भुगतान किया गया। जिम्मेदारों ने ई-टेंडरिंग व्यवस्था से बचने के लिए राज्य वित्त से प्राप्त अनुदानों की धनराशि न होने के बाद भी 3.73 करोड़ के टेंडर निकाल दिए।

कम दर पर वाटर टैक्स की वसूली

कैग ने इसे भी अनियमित श्रेणी में रखी है। इसके अलावा शासनादेश के विपरीत कम दर पर वाटर टैक्स की वसूली करके 18.16 लाख और ठेके की बकाया धनराशि 3.61 लाख की वसूली न करके आर्थिक क्षति पहुंचाई गई। बिना किसी आंकलन और ठोस आधार के डोर टू डोर कूड़ा कलेक्शन और सफाई व्यवस्था का कार्य मे. आर्यन ग्रुप को प्रतिमाह 10.64 लाख में दे दिया गया। गंगाघाट नगर पालिका परिषद में वित्तीय वर्ष 2016-17 में तीन कार्यों में 1.10 करोड़ की वित्तीय अनियमितताएं पकड़ी गई हैं।

सोलर लाइट में भी अधिक भुगतान

कैग ने सोलर लाइट की स्थापना में उच्च दर पर भुगतान से 15.49 लाख का अधिक भुगतान पकड़ा है। इसी प्रकार गृह व जलकर की मांग वसूली के लिए प्रभावी कार्रवाई न किए जाने पर कुल 92.34 लाख (गृहकर 69.80 लाख और जलकर 22.53 लाख) की आर्थिक क्षति पहुंचने की रिपोर्ट दी है। इसी प्रकार सोलर एनर्जी बेस्ड वाटर सिस्टम सबमर्सिबल की स्थापना के लिए विस्तृत इस्टीमेट तैयार न करके उच्च दर पर भुगतान किया गया। कैग ने इसमें 3.07 लाख की वसूली और अन्य अनियमितताएं दर्शाई हैं। <https://www.bhaskar.com/local/uttar-pradesh/unnao/news/cag-caught-1671-crore-scam-in-unnao-131677308.html>

45. Bihar per capita income is lower than J'khand, UP & Odisha: CAG (timesofindia.indiatimes.com) 12 August 2023

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India has said that the per capita income of Bihar is lower than its neighbours -- Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha and Madhya Pradesh.

The CAG report has shown an increase in economic growth for the period from 2011 to 2022 as the Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of its Gross State Domestic Product GSDP has been 10.18 per cent, which is higher than the national CAGR of the country within 10.11 per cent.

However, the per capita income of Bihar is Rs 54,383 at the end of 2021-22.

The figure is lower compared to other states like Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha and Madhya Pradesh having Rs 88,535; Rs 79,396; Rs 1,39,995 and Rs 1,37,339 respectively.

This is an eye-opener for the Nitish Kumar government as he has been in power in the state for 18 years, but the per capita income is much lower than neighbouring states.

Bihar has registered Rs 6,75,448 crore as the GSDP with a growth rate of 15.04 per cent during the year of 2021-22. It has witnessed a growth of 10 per cent per year except for the pandemic period when the growth rate was 0.80 per cent in 2020-21.

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/patna/bihar-per-capita-income-is-lower-than-jkhand-up-odisha-cag/articleshow/102664190.cms?from=mdr>

46. CAG flags 17-yr delay, cost overrun in Ranchi civic works (*indianexpress.com*) 13 August 2023

The report, which relates to Jharkhand government’s local bodies, social infrastructure, and power and energy departments, has a section on “Management of the sewerage and drainage system in Ranchi city”, covering a period of 17 years from 2005.

Flagging irregularities in management of sewerage and drainage system in Ranchi between 2005 and 2022, the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India has reported additional expenditure of more than Rs 70 crore, award of consultancy services to “ineligible and inexperienced companies”, and giving projects to contractors who submitted “forged and fabricated documents” to qualify for the tender, among others.

The report, which relates to Jharkhand government’s local bodies, social infrastructure, and power and energy departments, has a section on “Management of the sewerage and drainage system in Ranchi city”, covering a period of 17 years from 2005.

This CAG report stated that it contained significant results of audits of departments of the Jharkhand government under General, Social and Economic sectors, including state public sector enterprises. “The instances mentioned in this report are among those which came to notice in the course of test audit for the period 2020-21, as well as those which came to notice in earlier years but could not be reported in previous Audit Reports,” the CAG noted.

The sewerage and drainage project in the state capital, initiated in June 2005, could not be completed in more than 17 years until August 2022. The deadline was extended first from September 2017 to March 2019, and then to January 2023, “defeating the primary objective of the project”, the report noted. “The Department also awarded the work to an inexperienced and ineligible contractor, in violation of tender conditions, which worsened the project woes,” the audit report noted.

The report stated that consultancy charges amounting to Rs 16.04 crore, paid for preparation of the detailed project report (DPR) by the consultant, proved “wasteful” since the DPR “did not serve the intended purpose”, as a fresh survey had to be conducted to “work out new alignments (with new estimates)”. The DPR has also not

been used for taking up any work in the remaining three zones, and the tender for fresh survey/updation of the DPR was under process, it stated.

The CAG report said Ranchi Municipal Corporation had issued a tender for construction of drainage and sewerage, but the contractor failed to complete it. It said the contractor also submitted “forged and fabricated documents” to qualify for the tender.

The CAG reported: “The tender for the project (construction of sewer and drainage) [was] extended favour to the contractor [Joint Venture of Jyoti Build Tech Pvt. Ltd. (Lead Partner) and Vibhor Vaibhav Private Limited]. The lead partner of the JV contractor did not have the requisite experience and financial capacity to meet the tender eligibility conditions and had submitted forged and fabricated documents to qualify for the tender.”

The CAG reported that during the execution of work, the contractor failed to provide the required manpower and machinery at the work site, made slow progress and stopped the work despite grant of time extension twice.

The civic body terminated the contract in October 2019.

The report also highlighted that the contractor was paid mobilisation advance at the rate of 15 per cent against the provision of 5 per cent, thereby resulting in “excess payment of Rs 35.93 crore”. <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/cag-flags-17-yr-delay-cost-overrun-in-ranchi-civic-works-8890018/>

47. Fiscal mismanagement, statistical jugglery mar West Bengal state finances (*orissapost.com*) 13 Auust 2023

Kolkata: The caution of utter financial mismanagement and blatant statistical jugglery to cover that up in the state finance of West Bengal has been cautioned by the economics-related academic circles for quite some time. The same thing has been revealed in the latest report of the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG).

As per the CAG report, the instance of blatant jugglery has been witnessed in the attempt to project a lower revenue deficit through misclassification of revenue transactions under capital section and non-accountal of other liabilities.

CAG report has observed that the revenue deficit increase of 50.18 per cent as portrayed by the state government for 2020-21, the latest available, would have been much higher had not the state resorted to such misclassifications.

Economists like PK Mukhopadhyay feel that a revenue deficit increase of 50.18 per cent on a year-on-year basis is as it is very high for a state government like West Bengal with extremely limited avenues of state’s own tax revenue generation.

“If you study the latest CAG report carefully you will see that there had been an increase in revenue expenditure of 9.44 per cent during the fiscal under review. So, such an unbridled increase in revenue expenditure with limited avenues of state’s own tax generation is bound to result in such a high revenue deficit increase. So, again it is

natural that the state government will try to project a lower revenue deficit increase figure through such misclassifications as pointed out in the CAG report,” he explained.

He said that the only way to come out of this mismanagement and resultant financial jugglery is to either have a check on revenue expenditure or increase the avenues of state’s own tax revenue generation.

“In case of West Bengal there is a requirement for both. First, the state government should drastically cut down its expenditures on account of non-productive dole schemes and spending behind festivals. At the same time, the state government should frame policies for attracting big-ticket investments both in the manufacturing and services sector to open other avenues of state’s own tax revenue generally which so far is heavily dependent on the state excise component,” Mukhopadhyay explained.

Economists studying the contents of the latest CAG report have also pointed out the concerns about increasing outstanding liabilities of West Bengal thus restricting the most important aspect of asset creation in the state.

CAG, in its report, has pointed out that starting from the financial year 2016 till 2020-21, outstanding liabilities of the West Bengal government were also above the targets.

“The liabilities of the state have been increasing year-on-year and over 58.84 per cent of market borrowings during the year 2020-21 were utilised to balance the revenue account of the state thereby restricting asset creation in the state,” the CAG report reads.

Economists have pointed out that the highlighted CAG report has also highlighted the aspect of the state pathetically lagging in the advance planning and accurate estimation of revenues and expenditure, with blatant instances of excess expenditure in grant or large savings.

“What is more pathetic as pointed out in the CAG report is that the controlling officers of the state government have not come out with definite explanations on the reasons for such excess expenditure,” Mukhopadhyay pointed out.

The CAG report has also raised concerns over a number of unnecessary supplementary provisions on this count.

Raising concern over this excess expenditure of grants, the CAG report has pointed out that persistent excess expenditure over grants approved by the State Legislature is in violation of the will of the Legislature and needs to be viewed seriously.

The CAG report has also questioned the transparency in financial reporting and obscured proper analysis of allocative priorities and quality of expenditure by the state government. <https://www.orissapost.com/fiscal-mismanagement-statistical-jugglery-mar-west-bengal-state-finances/>

48. CAG expose of Bengal's fin mismanagement, statistical jugglery has lessons for every State (*bizzbuzz.news*) 14 Aug 2023

The caution of utter financial mismanagement and blatant statistical jugglery to cover that up in the state finance of West Bengal has been cautioned by the economics related academic circles for quite some time. The same thing has been revealed in the latest report of the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG).

As per the report, the instance of blatant jugglery has been witnessed in the attempt to project a lower revenue deficit through misclassification of revenue transactions under capital section and non-accountal of other liabilities.

The CAG report has observed that the revenue deficit increase of 50.18 per cent as portrayed by the state government for 2020-21, the latest available, would have been much higher had not the state resorted to such misclassifications.

Economists like P.K. Mukhopadhyay feel that a revenue deficit increase of 50.18 per cent on a year-on-year basis is as it is very high for a state government like West Bengal with extremely limited avenues of tax revenue generation on its own.

“If you study the latest CAG report carefully you will see that there had been an increase in revenue expenditure of 9.44 per cent during the fiscal under review. So, such an unbridled increase in revenue expenditure with limited avenues of state's own tax generation is bound to result in such a high revenue deficit increase. So, again it is natural that the state government will try to project a lower revenue deficit increase figure through such misclassifications as pointed out in the CAG report,” he explained.

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Mukhopadhyay said that the only way to come out of this mismanagement and resultant financial jugglery is to either have a check on revenue expenditure or increase the avenues of state's own tax revenue generation.

“In case of West Bengal there is a requirement of both. First the state government should drastically cut down its expenditures on account of non-productive dole schemes and spending behind festivals. At the same time, the state government should frame policies for attracting big-ticket investments both in the manufacturing and services sector to open other avenues of state's own tax revenue, which so far is heavily dependent on the state excise component,” he pointed out.

Economists studying the contents of the latest CAG report have also pointed out the concerns about increasing outstanding liabilities of West Bengal thus restricting the most important aspect of asset creation in the state.

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Many economists have pointed out that the CAG report has also highlighted the aspect of the state pathetically lagging as regards advance planning and accurate estimation of revenues and expenditure, with blatant instances of excess expenditure in grant or large savings.

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The CAG report has also raised concerns over a number of unnecessary supplementary provisions on this count. It cited the excess expenditure of grants, while persistent excess expenditure over grants approved by the State Legislature is in violation of the will of the Legislature and needs to be viewed seriously.

The CAG report has also questioned the transparency in financial reporting and obscured proper analysis of allocative priorities and quality of expenditure by the state government. <https://www.bizzbuzz.news/eco-buzz/cag-expose-of-bengals-fin-mismanagement-statistical-jugglery-has-lessons-for-every-state-1240168>

49. Goa Govt Under CAG Scanner For Loss Of Rs 1.91 Cr In Tur Dal Procurement (*businessworld.in*) 12 Aug 2023

The Goa government has come under fire from the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) for a loss of Rs. 1.91 crore that resulted from the purchase of significant amounts of tur dal without considering customer demand or the lifting capability of Fair Price Shops.

The issue of wasting only became public in August 2022, when the government had placed advertising seeking bidders to dispose of the tur dal.

As per reports, the CAG-2021 report, tabled in the house during the monsoon session that culminated on Thursday, said: "During Covid-19 pandemic, Department of Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs (DCS&CA) decided to provide relief to the 2.04 lakh Above Poverty Line (APL) and Annapurna (ANP) ration card holders through supply of one kg tur dal for four months (April to July 2020) under Public Distribution System."

"Sale of 100 MT of tur dal was planned through the Goa State Horticultural Corporation Ltd (GSHCL), while the remaining tur dal was to be sold through Fair Price Shops (FPS). Accordingly, the Civil Supply Department had placed an order with National Agriculture Co-operative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED) for supply of 800 MT of tur dal.

The Goa government decided to distribute 408 MT of tur dal, one kg per card, for a period of two months (April and May 2020), despite the Secretary, DCS&CA having granted post-facto administrative approval and expenditure sanction of Rs 6.80 crore for the procurement of 800 MT.

Only 139.57 MT (or 34.23 per cent) of the 400 MT of tur dal given by NAFED were hoisted by FPS during April–May 2020, and only 16.42 MT of the remaining 260.43

MT were lifted by FPS. The reason for low off-take was poor response from ration card holders, the report said.

In contrast to the partially polished tur dal given by DCS&CA at a higher price of Rs 80/kg, GSHCL refused to hoist the tur dal since they were buying polished dal from the open market for Rs 73/kg, which was favoured by consumers. The Education Department then consented to lift the final 241.21 MT in its entirety for distribution under the Mid-Day Meal programme.

However, a quality check carried out by the Food and Drugs Administration at the behest of the Secretary, Civil Supplies revealed that the entire quantity of tur dal was 'unsafe food'.

According to a report by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, attempts to get rid of the tur dal as ingredients for cattle or poultry feed were unsuccessful. The audit found that the Department neglected to evaluate demand, particularly consumer preference for polished dal, before beginning purchase.

<https://www.businessworld.in/article/Goa-Govt-Under-CAG-Scanner-For-Loss-Of-Rs-1-91-Cr-In-Tur-Dal-Procurement-/12-08-2023-487549/>

50. CAG points to Goa losses, Oppn attacks state govt for lack of prudence (*daijiworld.com*) Aug 13 2023

Referring to the report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG), in which it has observed how the state faced losses, the opposition parties of Goa have said that the BJP government in the state has been exposed for not exercising prudence in spending.

The CAG report tabled in the assembly has pointed out that the failure of the Goa police to pay the annual spectrum charges to the Central government on time resulted in an avoidable payment of late fee of Rs 2.39 crore. It also mentioned that the Goa government faced a loss of Rs 1.91 crore due to the procurement of large quantities of tur dal without any assessment of consumer demand and lifting capacity of Fair Price Shops.

Reacting to the observations in the CAG report, Leader of Opposition Yuri Alemao said that the government is not exercising any prudence in spending. "They are playing with figures to show that they are within the fiscal law," Alemao said.

"The Comptroller and Auditor General of India has categorically stated in its report that the Goa government has violated the Goa Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (GFRBM) Act. This vindicates my stand in the just concluded Budget Session of the Goa Assembly," he said.

"In the general discussion on the budget, I had brought to the notice of the Chief Minister that his figures showing the government is working within the parameters of fiscal responsibility are wrong. They are clearly erroneous and misleading," Alemao stated.

“The CAG has observed that the outstanding debt of the state government to gross state domestic product(GSDP) increased from 26% to 32%. The ceiling under the GFRBM Act is 25%, “ he pointed out.

Goa Forward Party MLA Vijai Sardesai said the CAG report has exposed what his party had said regarding the scam in the purchase of tur dal. “I had then said that Rs 1.91 cr worth tur dal was purchased without justification. This has been indicted in the CAG report. If you go indepth into the CAG report, this BJP government in the state has been completely exposed,” Sardesai said.

The CAG report on the home department stated. “Failure of Goa police department to pay annual spectrum charges to Government of India on time resulted in avoidable payment of late fee of Rs 2.39 crore.”

“The main duty of the state police force is the maintenance of law and order within the state and wireless communication systems play an important role in this function. Ministry of Communication, Department of Telecommunication, Government of India is responsible for facilitating faster means of communication through the allotment of necessary spectrum,” it said.

“Till March 2018, the department had paid only Rs 0.07 crore. The total amount payable worked out to Rs 23.77 crore, which included a late fee of Rs 19.38 crore. The Ministry conveyed waiver of late fee upto June 2018 on all networks existing prior June 1, 2004 and requested all states to clear their dues at the earliest, but not later than December 06, 2018,” it further said.

“Thus, with the waiver of late fee of Rs 19.38 crore, the liability of the department as on March 31, 2018 was ` Rs 4.39 crore. Accordingly, the department should have cleared the outstanding dues of Rs 4.86 crore by June 30, 2018. However, the department continued to make part payments which resulted in levy of late fee of `Rs 2.39 crore,” it said.

The CAG also pulled up the Goa government over a loss of Rs 1.91 crore due to procurement of large quantities of tur dal without assessment of consumer demand and lifting capacity of Fair Price Shops.

The tur dal wastage issue had come to light in August 2022 after the government had issued advertisements seeking bidders to dispose it off.

The CAG-2021 report, tabled in the House during the monsoon session that culminated on Thursday, said: "During Covid-19 pandemic, Department of Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs (DCS&CA) decided to provide relief to the 2.04 lakh Above Poverty Line (APL) and Annapurna (ANP) ration card holders through supply of one kg tur dal for four months (April to July 2020) under Public Distribution System."

"Sale of 100 MT of tur dal was planned through the Goa State Horticultural Corporation Ltd (GSHCL), while the remaining tur dal was to be sold through Fair Price Shops (FPS). Accordingly, Civil Supply Department had placed an order with National Agriculture Co-operative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED) for supply of 800 MT of tur dal.

It noted that though the Secretary, DCS&CA had granted post-facto administrative approval and expenditure sanction of Rs 6.80 crore for procurement of 800 MT, the Goa government, in its cabinet meeting (22/04/2020) resolved to distribute 408 MT tur dal, one kg per card for a period of two months (April and May 2020).

NAFED had supplied 400 MT of tur dal, out of which only 139.57 MT (34.23 per cent) was lifted by FPS during April-May 2020, while only 16.42 MT of the balance 260.43 MT was lifted by FPS.

The reason for the low off-take was the poor response from the ration card holders, the report said.

The GSHCL refused to lift the tur dal as they were procuring polished dal from the open market at Rs 73/kg, which was preferred by consumers, as against the partially polished tur dal supplied by DCS&CA at a higher price of Rs 80/kg. Thereafter, the education department agreed to lift the remaining 241.21 MT for distribution under the Mid-Day Meal scheme.

However, a quality check carried out by the Food and Drugs Administration at the behest of the secretary, civil supplies, revealed that the entire quantity of tur dal was “unsafe food”.

Efforts to dispose off the tur dal as ingredients for cattle/poultry feed did not fructify as the tur dal was not suitable even for that as per the report of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research.

The audit noticed that before taking up procurement, the department failed to assess the demand, including consumer preference for polished. <https://www.daijiworld.com/news/newsDisplay?newsID=1109499>

51. 28 crore excess fee collected at Paranur toll plaza, finds CAG (*dtnext.in*) 12 Aug 2023

CHENNAI: Loopholes in the implementation of the toll collection rules by the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) have resulted in road users paying excess user fees and also losses incurred by the toll plazas in some cases, the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) has found.

The CAG’s audit report on toll operations of NHAI in Southern India said that due to the non-implementation of amended toll fee rules, which mandate the collection of only 75 per cent of the user fee applicable without any annual revision while upgrading the four-lane highway to six-lane till completion of the project, NHAI has collected user fee of Rs 132.05 crore from motorists leading to an undue burden on road users.

The excess user fees were collected from five projects in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh.

In the case of Paranur public-funded toll plaza on the Tambaram to Tindivanam stretch of National Highway 32 where the user fee is collected by the NHAI, expansion of

existing four-lane to eight-lane in two sections commenced in July 2018 (Section I - Irumbilyur to Vandalur, 2.3 km) and in March 2019 (Section II - Vandalur to Guduvanchery, 5.3 km).

“Section I was completed in March 2020 and work was in progress (March 2021) in Section II. NHAI did not reduce the toll fee to 75 per cent in respect of these sections resulting in an excess collection of toll amounting to Rs 6.54 crore from August 2018 to March 2021.” Subsequent to the audit observation, the toll was reduced to 75 per cent in April 2021 in respect of Section II.

In another case, the CAG found that despite the NH Fee Rules specifying that no toll can be levied on a bridge built before September 1956, NHAI collected a toll at Paranur public-funded toll plaza, a bridge that was constructed in 1954. It said NHAI collected an excess toll fee of Rs 22 crore from road users during 2017-2018 to 2020-2021. <https://www.dtnext.in/news/city/28-crore-excess-fee-collected-at-paranur-toll-plaza-finds-cag-729847?infinitescroll=1>

52. CAG Report 2023: हिमाचल सरकार ने केंद्र को दिया 'झूठा' आश्वासन, CAG की रिपोर्ट में हुआ बड़ा खुलासा (*abplive.com*) 12 Aug 2023

हिमाचल प्रदेश सरकार ने केंद्रीय पर्यटन मंत्रालय को झूठा यूटिलाइजेशन सर्टिफिकेट (Utilisation Certificate) थमा दिया. यह खुलासा संसद में पेश हुई कैग (CAG) की रिपोर्ट में हुआ है. कैग की रिपोर्ट से पता चला है कि हिमाचल प्रदेश सरकार ने केंद्र को गलत जानकारी दी. साल 2008 में जिला सोलन के क्यारीघाट के लिए एक करोड़ 60 लाख रुपए सैंक्शन हुई. इसमें एक करोड़ 28 लाख रुपए हिमाचल प्रदेश पर्यटन निगम को रिलीज की गई. यह धन राशि जमीन की उपलब्धता न होने की वजह से खर्च नहीं सकी. बावजूद इसके सरकार ने जनवरी, 2013 में केंद्रीय पर्यटन मंत्रालय को गलत यूटिलाइजेशन सर्टिफिकेट जमा कर दिए.

ऐसे हुआ गड़बड़झाले का खुलासा!

साल 2017 के मार्च महीने में जब स्वदेश दर्शन स्कीम आई, तब क्यारीघाट में ही कनवेक्शन सेंटर के लिए 25 करोड़ रुपए की राशि आई. इसमें पता चला कि हिमाचल प्रदेश पर्यटन निगम ने एक करोड़ 28 लाख रुपए की राशि, जो जिला सोलन के समग्र विकास प्लान के तहत मिली थी. उसे क्यारीघाट प्रोजेक्ट में एडिशनल फंड के तौर पर ट्रांसफर कर दिया गया. कैग (Comptroller and Auditor General of India) की रिपोर्ट में यह खुलासा हुआ है कि हिमाचल प्रदेश सरकार ने केंद्र को पहले गलत जानकारी दी और गुमराह करने की कोशिश की.

केंद्र सरकार को गुमराह करने की कोशिश?

हिमाचल प्रदेश सरकार (Himachal Pradesh Government) ने केंद्रीय पर्यटन मंत्रालय को यह धनराशि लैप्स न हो जाने के डर से सही जानकारी नहीं दी. केंद्र सरकार को यह बताने की कोशिश की गई कि संबंधित प्रोजेक्ट में इस धनराशि को खर्च कर लिया गया है. कैग की रिपोर्ट में कहा गया है कि सितंबर, 2022 में केंद्रीय मंत्रालय ने कहा कि वह इस मामले को हिमाचल प्रदेश सरकार के साथ सामने उठाएगी. कैग की रिपोर्ट में हिमाचल प्रदेश सरकार की ओर से जमा किए गए यूटिलाइजेशन सर्टिफिकेट का झूठा चिंता का विषय है. <https://www.abplive.com/states/himachal->

53. हिमाचल सरकार ने केंद्र को दिया 'झूठा' आश्वासन, CAG की रिपोर्ट में हुई बड़ा खुलासा (*aajkinews.net*) 12 Aug 2023

शिमला | हिमाचल प्रदेश सरकार ने केंद्रीय पर्यटन मंत्रालय को झूठा यूटिलाइजेशन सर्टिफिकेट (**Utilisation Certificate**) थमा दिया. यह खुलासा संसद में पेश हुई कैग (**CAG**) की रिपोर्ट में हुआ है. कैग की रिपोर्ट से पता चला है कि हिमाचल प्रदेश सरकार ने केंद्र को गलत जानकारी दी. साल **2008** में जिला सोलन के क्यारीघाट के लिए एक करोड़ **60** लाख रुपए सैंक्शन हुई. इसमें एक करोड़ **28** लाख रुपए हिमाचल प्रदेश पर्यटन निगम को रिलीज की गई. यह धन राशि जमीन की उपलब्धता न होने की वजह से खर्च नहीं सकी. बावजूद इसके सरकार ने जनवरी, **2013** में केंद्रीय पर्यटन मंत्रालय को गलत यूटिलाइजेशन सर्टिफिकेट जमा कर दिए.

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SELECTED NEWS ITEMS/ARTICLES FOR READING

54. An economic strategy for India: Many bottlenecks and challenges that India faces require deeper integration across levels of govt (*financialexpress.com*) 14 Aug 2023

Last year saw the 75th anniversary of India's Independence, a milestone that led to considerable reflection, as well as visions of where India's economy could be at the country's centenary. In fact, every Independence Day marks a milestone, and this one led me to reflect back to an event from half a year ago—the "India Dialog" conference held at Stanford University. Among numerous presentations, what stood out were those that offered a roadmap of India's economic strategy. Indeed, the term "roadmap" comes

from a document that underpinned the conference, the “Competitiveness Roadmap for India@100,” published in July 2022 to help design India’s growth journey over the next 25 years.

The conference began with a keynote by Bibek Debroy, chairman of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister. He emphasised seven aspects of what he saw as the transformation that India’s economy is undergoing. These are acceleration in urbanisation; greater formalisation of business enterprises; diversification in agriculture and rural India more generally; a shift from self-employment to employer-employee structures; focused provision of basic necessities such as toilets, drinking water and greater financial inclusion; a digital infrastructure that supports public service delivery as well as private services such as payments; and improvements in transport infrastructure and logistics spanning multiple modes.

The competitiveness report itself was produced by Michael E Porter and Christian HM Ketels, from Porter’s Institute for Strategy and Competitiveness at Harvard, which inspired India’s own Institute for Competitiveness. Ketels presented the lessons of the report, stressing the joint importance of pursuing social progress alongside material prosperity. Importantly, he noted that India is doing many of the right things, but may need to do them differently. Many of the bottlenecks and challenges that India faces require more coordination and integration across levels of government and across domains. Among the many examples he gave, the challenge of low female labour force participation provides an important illustration. Childcare, childhood poverty, skills-based education, healthcare and public safety, mostly thought of in moralistic terms and siloed or fragmented in implementation, all combine to create barriers to female labour force participation and productivity. He highlighted the changes in institutional architectures needed for the next phase of India’s growth and development, including at the level of states and cities.

Later in the conference, in another keynote, Arvind Virmani, of EGROW Foundation and NITI Aayog, and another veteran policy advisor, reminded the audience of how far India has come in terms of dismantling the intricate and growth-preventing web of controls on its economy, and of major institutional reforms in areas such as the tax system. He highlighted the potential for digital technology in areas such as health and education, as a tool for overcoming problems of scaling up to meet India’s development needs. He emphasised the opportunities to participated in global and regional production networks more fully, including the benefits of trade agreements in addition to physical infrastructure. Importantly, he honed in on the large and specific needs of training in the middle of the skills distribution, where, for example, large and complex commercial and industrial building projects need plumbers and electricians with skills far beyond those of residential housing.

If a strong recognition of the need to tackle inequality in dimensions such as education, health, geography and gender was a common theme in these keynote presentations represented a commonality of ideas across the Indian intellectual spectrum, the focus on the role of business was more novel. Academic analyses of India’s development have tended to under-analyse the role of dynamic, employment-generating business firms. The country needs firms to be established at higher rates, and have an environment that enables them expand more robustly (or exit more quickly and effectively if they fail). These ideas were much more in evidence in the conference,

especially with respect to the middle of the size distribution of firms, as well as in the context of tackling geographic clustering and regional inequality.

What was made clear was that social progress and material prosperity do not have to be in opposition to each other, or have hard-and-fast trade-offs in practice. Nor do “pro-business” and “pro-market” policies have to be mutually exclusive, if “business” is considered in an inclusive manner. The conference also highlighted the role of urbanisation and cities, and the need to coordinate policies and implementation across central, state and local government. It highlighted the need to strengthen institutional and fiscal capacity at the state and municipal levels.

The idea of a roadmap for India’s social and economic progress is nothing new, of course, and has many previous incarnations. On the economic front, the Stanford conference suggested that there is a substantially new strategic vision being formulated, one that is very hopeful, even ambitious—aiming to get India close to high-income status at its 100th anniversary, without short-changing social progress. The political challenges, sometimes alluded to in the conference, but mostly beyond its scope, may remain as the biggest hurdles. Politics permeates society and structures of power can stifle progress, but seeing the road ahead clearly is important as one attempts to travel it. <https://www.financialexpress.com/opinion/an-economic-strategy-for-india-many-bottlenecks-and-challenges-that-india-faces-require-deeper-integration-across-levels-of-govt/3209384/>

55. AI offers a rare opportunity to transform our economy (*livemint.com*) 13 Aug 2023

Just as the smartphone revolutionized communication and commerce across India, AI is poised to super-charge economic growth. It could add hundreds of billions in dollar value to India’s GDP within two years. And if used in service of humanity, AI could help solve some of our most pervasive social challenges, be it access to healthcare, protection against natural disasters or financial inclusion. India has all the ingredients for AI success. A large talent pool, supportive government policies, strong academic institutions, and world-class research and innovation facilities. Also, our massive and tremendously diverse population gives us access to some of the richest data-sets for AI innovation. This coming wave of generative AI may be more revolutionary than any innovation of technology before. Here is where I believe some of the biggest opportunities lie:

Boosting core sectors: Across India’s farmlands, a quiet transformation is afoot. Agri-tech solutions powered by AI are already empowering farmers to increase crop output and yields by predicting the best time to sow seeds, warning of pest outbreaks, and even optimizing the use of water and fertilizers. In manufacturing, where exports are projected to hit \$1 trillion by 2028, AI will improve efficiencies across the value chain—whether that’s by accurately forecasting supply and demand to prevent overstocking or by inspecting thousands of products at scale to minimize defects. In healthcare, where AI presents a huge opportunity, deep learning algorithms can help doctors diagnose diseases earlier. Meanwhile, AI-powered wearables can monitor how well patients respond to treatment. As for retail, AI is helping brands predict customer needs more accurately, and deliver personalized service at every touchpoint. With a wide range of use cases across industries, AI could become as ubiquitous as electricity.

Reshaping work and employment: With over half of India's 1.4 billion population under age 30, there need to be sufficient employment opportunities. Generative AI will create these. Bringing AI + data + CRM together will transform the way work is done. Repetitive tasks will be automated, freeing up people to engage in more creative, productive and fulfilling careers.

Skills like managing, advising, innovating, critical thinking and communicating will be increasingly in demand. So too will jobs in fields like data science, cognitive intelligence, digital transformation, business development and security. Filling these roles will require significant investments in upskilling and reskilling. The government is already thinking ahead with initiatives like the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana 4.0, which seeks to provide on-the-job training in coding, AI, robotics, mechatronics and other skills.

Bridging the socio-economic divide: Despite rapid economic growth, millions in India lack access to basic services. AI can help close these gaps.

Take healthcare. In rural India, where medical infrastructure and trained clinicians are scarce, AI-based diagnostic tools like smart stethoscopes and portable blood analysers can be used even by lay people to capture a patient's health markers and then transmit this data to remote doctors for diagnosis. In financial services too, AI-based credit modelling tools are using alternative data sources, such as weather forecasts and satellite images of crop health, to determine a farmer's credit-worthiness. Of course, for these applications to work, India's digital divide must first be addressed by improving internet and smartphone access across marginalized communities.

Enabling smarter governance: From smart traffic management to public safety controls to air pollution mitigation, the use cases for AI in governance are endless. New Delhi plans to use AI to synchronise traffic signals so that there's less congestion. Tamil Nadu expects to roll out a system of smart street monitoring to detect street light failures in real time. Even the Kumbh Mela uses AI-based crowd management to prevent stampedes.

Meanwhile, AI will help e-governance platforms like IndiaStack become more intelligent and customized for local communities. Digital India Bhashini, an AI-led language translation platform, will soon use a WhatsApp chatbot powered by ChatGPT to disseminate information on government schemes in 12 languages. At Salesforce, we're bringing trusted generative AI to the enterprise with AI Cloud, offering the benefits of generative AI while ensuring data security. To scale up AI use in a meaningful way, greater public and private sector collaboration is essential. Businesses and governments must work together to:

Incentivize AI research: Offer strong financial backing to startups and academic institutions developing cutting-edge AI solutions for public good. Establish more centres of AI excellence in educational institutions.

Reduce brain drain: Retain India's AI talent by providing high-quality education, infrastructure, competitive pay and professional opportunities.

Train for the AI age: Fund more education and training programmes at scale to help people upgrade AI skills. Provide free online courses to bridge gaps in AI expertise.

Keep AI ethics front and centre: Create guard-rails that root out algorithmic biases, improve transparency in AI functioning, and ensure the technology is used responsibly.

Used responsibly, this once-in-a-generation technology could transform the lives of millions of Indians for the better. <https://www.livemint.com/opinion/online-views/ai-offers-a-rare-opportunity-to-transform-our-economy-11691942757829.html>