

NEWS ITEMS ON CAG /AUDIT REPORTS

1. From fake accounts to payments to dead patients, CAG finds serious lapses in Ayushman Bharat implementation (*thehindubusinessline.com*) 16 Aug 2023

All is not well with the government's flagship health insurance scheme, Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY). A CAG report tabled in the Lok Sabha last week, has found glaring loopholes in implementation of the scheme including misappropriation of funds, fake accounts, releasing funds without proper evidence and even claims paid in the name of patients who were already dead.

Interestingly, the report of the autonomous audit agency found that such cases are relatively high in Kerala, which ranks first in the NITI Aayog Health Index and other social health parameters.

Launched in September 2018, PM-JAY is touted to be the world's largest health insurance scheme fully funded by the government. The scheme aims to provide free healthcare to over 50 crore poor families. The scheme provides funding of up to ₹5 lakh per family annually.

As per the scheme, a patient can avail of treatment only once without an Aadhar or an Aadhar enrollment slip. They are further mandated to provide a signed declaration saying that they will produce the Aadhar before their next treatment. However, the CAG report found that 8.2 lakh patients availed of treatment for two or more times without an Aadhar or any other biometric proof for a cumulative claim settlement worth ₹1,678.68 crore.

Kerala cases

Kerala tops the list with the highest number of such cases. The State saw 2.02 lakh patients availing treatments two or more times without biometric verification between September 2018 and March 2021. Cumulatively, they were paid ₹472.64 crore. It was followed by Chhattisgarh which saw ₹234.86 crore in claim payments to such patients.

Dead men pay bills?

The report also highlighted something rather bizarre. Thousands of claims are made against patient names, who were shown 'dead' earlier. "The audit noted that patients earlier shown as 'died' in the system continued to avail treatment under the Scheme. Data analysis of mortality cases revealed that 88,760 patients died during treatment specified under the Scheme. A total of 2,14,923 claims shown as paid in the system, related to fresh treatment in respect of these patients [sic]," reads the CAG report.

In 3,903 of such cases, claims amounting to ₹6.97 crore pertaining to 3,446 patients were paid to hospitals. Strangely, in these cases too, Kerala tops the list. In the state, such claims were made in the names of 966 'already dead patients. They were paid a claim amount worth ₹2.61 crore. Madhya Pradesh comes next with 403 claims in the name of dead patients.

"The implementation of the Scheme needs improvement in light of the findings made in the report. It is expected that the compliance to the observations and

recommendations made in this Report will help in improving the implementation of the Scheme,” the report added. <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/data-stories/data-focus/from-fake-accounts-to-payments-to-dead-patients-cag-finds-serious-lapses-in-ayushman-bharat-implementation/article67198748.ece>

2. Under PMJAY, Rs 6.9 crore paid for treatment of ‘dead’ patients: CAG
(*indianexpress.com*) 16 Aug 2023

The scheme, launched in 2018, has been rolled out in both rural and urban areas with the aim of reducing out-of-pocket expenditure for the poor and vulnerable population seeking healthcare.

PMJAYThe scheme, launched in 2018, has been rolled out in both rural and urban areas with the aim of reducing out-of-pocket expenditure for the poor and vulnerable population seeking healthcare.

Flagging irregularities in the audit of the Ayushman Bharat – Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY) health insurance scheme, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) has said that Rs 6.97 crore was paid for the treatment of 3,446 patients who had previously been declared dead in the database.

The scheme, launched in 2018, has been rolled out in both rural and urban areas with the aim of reducing out-of-pocket expenditure for the poor and vulnerable population seeking healthcare.

In the performance audit, under the head “Treatment of a beneficiary shown as ‘died’ during earlier claim/treatment”, the CAG noted that “patients earlier shown as ‘died’ in TMS (the Transaction Management System of the scheme) continued to avail treatment under the scheme”.

The audit noted that there were 3,903 such claims, pertaining to 3,446 patients, and that Rs 6.97 crore was paid to hospitals across the country.

Kerala had the most number of such “dead” patients – 966 – whose claims were paid. A total of Rs 2,60,09,723 were paid for their “treatment”. Madhya Pradesh had 403 such patients, for whom Rs 1,12,69,664 was paid. Chhattisgarh came in third with 365 patients, for whose treatment Rs 33,70,985 was paid.

According to existing guidelines, if a patient dies after admission to a hospital and before discharge, payment to the hospital is done following an audit.

During desk audit (in July 2020), audit had earlier reported to National Health Authority (NHA) that the IT system (TMS) was allowing pre-authorisation request of same patient who was earlier shown as ‘died’ during her/his earlier treatment availed under the scheme. NHA, while acknowledging the audit comment, stated in July 2020 that necessary check(s) have been put in place on 22 April 2020 to ensure that PMJAY ID of any patient who has been shown as died in TMS is disabled for availing further benefit under the scheme,” the CAG report said.

According to the report, when the CAG flagged that the necessary checks were not followed, the NHA stated in August 2022 that “back-date of admission is allowed in the system for various operational reasons”.

The CAG stated that the “reply is not tenable, as pre-authorisation initiation, claim submission and final claim approval” by the State Health Authority for “beneficiaries already shown as died during treatment earlier, indicate flaws in application and make it susceptible to misuse at user levels”.

The CAG report has asked the NHA and the SHA to “ensure a comprehensive investigation of all cases to obviate the risk of irregular payment and malfeasance”.

The health insurance scheme provides a cover of Rs 5 lakh per family every year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalisation across public and private empanelled hospitals in India.

The audit report also flagged that a total of 78,396 cases were reported in which the same patient was admitted in 2,231 distinct hospitals during the same hospitalisation period.

Gujrat reported the most cases (21,514), followed by Chhattisgarh (9,640) and Kerala (9,632). The CAG report stated that in July 2020, “the desk audit has revealed that the IT systems (TMS) did not prevent any patient from getting admission in multiple hospitals during the same period of hospitalizations”.

The NHA, while “acknowledging the lapse, stated (July 2020) that primarily these cases arise in scenarios where a baby is born in one hospital and shifted to neo-natal care in another hospital using PMJAY ID of mother.”

The CAG, however, pointed out that contrary to the NHA claim, a total of 23,670 male patients were admitted to multiple hospitals during the same period of hospitalisation.

As per the guidelines, dedicated Anti-Fraud Cells in the states are responsible for carrying out surprise inspections, imposing penalty, de-empanelment, prosecution, and other deterrence measures.

According to the data on the recovery of penalties from defrauding hospitals in 13 states (NHA did not have data of the remaining states and Union Territories), Chhattisgarh and Meghalaya did not make a single recovery of penalties, with a 100 per cent of their recoveries pending. In Madhya Pradesh, 96.08 per cent of cases had no penalty recovery. The audit noted that

in the NHA, “out of Rs 17.28 crore penalty imposed on 184 defaulting hospitals in these 13 States, recovery of only ₹ 4.96 crore had been effected.”

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/under-pmjay-rs-6-9-crore-paid-for-treatment-of-dead-patients-cag-8894327/>

3. PMJAY scheme | Rs 6.9 crore paid for treatment of dead, highest cases in Chhattisgarh, Haryana: CAG report (cnbctv18.com) 14 Aug 2023

The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) has recently raised concerns about the efficacy of the Ayushman Bharat – Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY) health insurance scheme. According to CAG's audit, a staggering Rs 6.97 crore was disbursed for the treatment of 3,446 patients who had previously been declared deceased in the scheme's database.

Under the CAG's performance audit, the irregularity was observed under the category "Treatment of a beneficiary shown as 'died' during earlier claim/treatment." The report noted that the guidelines for claims submitted by hospitals had distinct payment structures for cases involving mortality. Furthermore, it was stipulated that if a patient passes away after hospital admission but before discharge, payment to the hospital should occur following an audit of such cases.

However, the CAG's audit revealed that despite claims of corrective measures being put in place, the system allowed for patients previously marked as deceased to continue receiving treatment under the PMJAY scheme.

Data analysis revealed that 88,760 patients were documented to have died during treatment covered by the scheme. Shockingly, 3,903 claims totalling Rs 6.97 crore were paid out to hospitals in connection with 3,446 patients who had been marked as dead, CAG said.

The irregularities were noted to be widespread, with Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Jharkhand, Kerala, and Madhya Pradesh being identified as states with the highest number of such cases. Conversely, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Assam, Chandigarh, Manipur, and Sikkim had the lowest number of cases.

An additional concern was raised about the functioning of the system itself. The CAG observed that the system not only allowed the initiation of pre-authorization requests for beneficiaries previously declared deceased but also permitted entries for admission dates, surgery dates, and discharge dates.

The National Health Authority (NHA) responded, justifying that the allowance of back-dating of admissions was due to operational reasons. However, the CAG found this explanation insufficient, arguing that the flawed application made the system susceptible to misuse and irregular payments.

The CAG report further requested comprehensive investigations by the NHA and State Health Agencies (SHA) to mitigate the risks associated with irregular payments and potential malfeasance. As the government strives to provide affordable and accessible healthcare to the vulnerable population, the revelations from the CAG audit underscore the need for greater scrutiny and oversight in the implementation of such critical schemes.

Launched in 2018 with the intention of alleviating the financial burden on economically disadvantaged individuals seeking healthcare, PMJAY has been rolled out across both rural and urban areas.

Ayushman Bharat PMJAY is the largest health assurance scheme in the world which aims at providing a health cover of Rs 5 lakh per family per year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalisation to over 12 crore poor and vulnerable families (approximately 55 crore beneficiaries) that form the bottom 40 percent of the Indian population. The households included are based on the deprivation and occupational criteria of the Socio-Economic Caste Census 2011 (SECC 2011) for rural and urban areas, respectively, and state governments. <https://www.cnbctv18.com/economy/pmjay-scheme-cag-report-audit-over-6-crore-paid-to-dead-highest-cases-chhattisgarh-haryana-17537921.htm>

4. Rs 6.97 crore spent on 3,446 patients earlier shown as ‘died’! CAG flags lapses in PMJAY – THESE states reported highest such cases (*timesnownews.com*) Aug 16, 2023

"Data analysis of mortality cases in TMS revealed that 88,760 patients died during treatment specified under the Scheme. A total of 2,14,923 claims shown as paid in the system, related to fresh treatment in respect of these patients," the CAG report said. Rs 6.97 crore was disbursed for the treatment of 3,446 patients who had previously been declared dead.

The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) last week released a report flagging several discrepancies in the Ayushman Bharat – Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY). It has come to light that a whopping Rs 6.97 crore was paid for the treatment of over 3,000 beneficiaries already shown as ‘died’ in the system.

The CAG's audit revealed that staggering Rs 6.97 crore was disbursed for the treatment of 3,446 patients who had previously been declared deceased in the scheme's database. In the category 'Treatment of a beneficiary shown as ‘died’ during earlier claim/treatment', the audit institution noted that the guidelines for payment of claims submitted by hospitals provide different payment structure for ‘mortality’ cases.

These further stipulate that if death of the patient happens after admission in hospital and before discharge, payment to the hospital is done after audit of such cases. These three dates, as the case may be, are captured in TMS. The CAG report, however, highlighted that despite claims of corrective measures being put in place, the system allowed for patients previously marked as dead to continue receiving treatment under the PMJAY scheme.

"Data analysis of mortality cases in TMS revealed that 88,760 patients died during treatment specified under the Scheme. A total of 2,14,923 claims shown as paid in the system, related to fresh treatment in respect of these patients," the CAG report said.

Audit further noted that in 3,903 of above claims amounting to Rs 6.97 crore pertaining to 3,446 patients were paid to hospitals. Maximum number of such cases were observed in Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Jharkhand Kerala and Madhya Pradesh and minimum number of cases were observed in Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Assam, Chandigarh, Manipur and Sikkim.

Free hospitalisation coverage of Rs 5 lakh per entitled family

The health insurance scheme provides free hospitalisation coverage of Rs 5 lakh per entitled family (household) per year, through a network of public and private empanelled health care providers. The CAG audit noted that in two cases the claims exceeding Rs 5 lakh were paid in one policy year.

NHA, while acknowledging the audit comment, in its reply (dated 27 July 2020) stated that the errors will be rectified after due diligence. Payment of claim amount exceeding the permissible limit indicates lack of adequate validation controls in TMS system as well as State-specific system which needs to be reviewed/corrected in the system to prevent any further misuse. <https://www.timesnownews.com/business-economy/economy/rs-6-97-crore-spent-on-3446-patients-earlier-shown-as-died-cag-flags-lapses-in-pmjay-these-states-reported-highest-such-cases-article-102762348>

5. Ayushman Bharat Scheme: CAG report exposes dummy numbers, Aadhar irregularities (*livemint.com*) 14 Aug 2023

The recent report by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) regarding the Ayushman Bharat - Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana, presented in Parliament this week, highlights some astonishing and significant figures.

As per a report by FIT Quint, the report reveals that around 750,000 beneficiaries were associated with an invalid mobile number, specifically 9999999999.

Moreover, the CAG identified 4,761 registrations that were linked to only seven Aadhar numbers, indicating potential irregularities.

Additionally, the audit found instances of hospitals that were absent from the list of facilities registered under the public health insurance scheme.

In an interview with FIT Quint, Srinivas Kodali, a researcher specializing in data, governance, and the internet, as well as Shweta Mohandas, a policy officer at the Centre for Internet and Society. They also consulted with a public health expert in order to gain a deeper understanding of the matter.

Verifying one Unique ID for multiple beneficiaries: What's the process?

When an individual visits a hospital to access the advantages offered by the Ayushman Bharat scheme, they are required to present their Aadhar card, which is then utilized to verify 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.

As per the CAG audit findings, approximately 4,761 enrollments were recorded using only seven Aadhaar numbers in Tamil Nadu.

Mint could not independently confirm the development.

In the 2019 report, concerns were raised regarding the absence of publicly accessible data related to the "most conducted surgeries." This raised suspicions that hospitals might engage in fraudulent activities by conducting surgeries that are financially advantageous for them.

Were dummy numbers employed by hospitals for monetary claims?

Srinivas Kodali suggests that there might be indications of a potential 'fraudulent activity' by private hospitals within the nationwide public health insurance scheme. The report highlights instances where ₹1.1 crore was disbursed for 403 patients who were supposedly deceased, FIT Quint reported.

"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."

The report from 2019 also raised concerns about the absence of publicly accessible information concerning the surgeries that are most frequently conducted. This observation implied the potential for hospitals to engage in fraudulent practices by prioritizing surgeries that yield financial gains for them.
<https://www.livemint.com/politics/news/ayushman-bharat-scheme-cag-report-exposes-dummy-numbers-aadhar-irregularities-11691998961683.html>

6. Even pensioners availed benefits under PMJAY in many states: CAG report (*newindianexpress.com*) Aug 14, 2023

The CAG has detected that 1,07,040 pensioners and their kin were included as beneficiaries under the Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojna (PM-JAY) scheme in many states including Tamil Nadu.

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. "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 Comptroller and Auditor General of India's audit has noted that 1,558 pensioners were included as beneficiaries in Karnataka under the scheme and that they availed treatments under the scheme costing Rs 4.65 crore.

The audit was conducted by doing a comparison of the pension database of the state governments and the database of the PM-JAY scheme.

114 pensioners were included as beneficiaries under the scheme in Haryana and availed of treatment under the scheme costing Rs 26.81 lakh.

In Chandigarh, the CAG has noted that 34 government pensioners and 68 members from their families were included as beneficiaries and that two of them had availed treatment under the scheme at a cost of Rs 11.700.

In Himachal Pradesh, it was revealed that 22 pensioners were included as beneficiaries and had availed treatment under the scheme costing Rs 3.33 lakh.

The CAG in its report in a very categorical way has stated that “delayed action in weeding out the ineligible beneficiaries resulted in ineligible persons availing benefits of the scheme and excess payments of premiums to insurance companies.”

The report further added that upon being informed about these discrepancies, the National Health Authority (NHA) stated that it is developing an SOP for the state to ensure the removal of ineligible persons including pensioners from the list of beneficiaries under the scheme.

Nos of pensioners included in PM-JAY

-Tamil Nadu-1, 07,040

-Karnataka-1,558

-Chandigarh-34

-Haryana-114

-Himachal Pradesh-22

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/nation/2023/aug/14/even-pensioners-availed-benefits-under-pmjay-in-many-states-cag-report-2605195.html>

7. Ayushman Bharat scheme: Over Rs 1.1 cr paid to 403 'dead' beneficiaries in MP, reveals CAG report (*daijiworld.com, latestly.com*) Aug 15, 2023

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India in its report on Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) for the period September 2018 to March 2022 has revealed that over Rs 1.1 crore was paid to about 403 patients in Madhya Pradesh who were declared 'dead' in the database.

As per the report available with IANS, Madhya Pradesh comes second after Kerala, where Rs 2.60 crore was paid to 966 patients, who were declared dead but continued to avail treatment under the scheme.

The report further revealed that a total 8,081 patients were shown to be hospitalised simultaneously at multiple hospitals in different parts of Madhya Pradesh.

It also noted that in four states -- Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab and Tamil Nadu -- excess payment totalling Rs 57.53 crore were made to the Empanelled Health Care Providers (EHCPs).

"In Madhya Pradesh, 25 hospitals submitted claims twice in respect of 81 patients (162 claims) for various surgical procedures during the same length of stay. The state health authority (SHA) paid the full amount for both claims as against the prescribed rate of 50 per cent payment on second claim, which resulted in over-payment of Rs 29.61 lakh to EHCPs. The SHA also made a double payment of Rs 3.27 lakh to 13 hospitals which submitted claims twice in respect of 35 patients for caesarean delivery during the same length of stay," the report said.

The Congress on Monday hit out at Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan-led state government, saying every day "new corruption of the BJP was coming to the fore".

Former Chief Minister and state Congress chief Kamal Nath said, "Shivraj government has done corruption with people alive. They have not spared even the god and dead persons, which is horrific and shameful for entire Madhya Pradesh."

He further said the CAG report has also mentioned about 8,081 cases of 4,590 patients, who simultaneously availed treatment at multiple hospitals, and flagged the involvement of 213 hospitals in it.

"The BJP government has lodged false cases against the Congress leaders, including me and Priyanka Gandhi following the expose on 50 per cent commission regime. Now, the CAG report on the Ayushman Bharat scheme, has clearly established that the Shivraj Singh Chouhan government is the most corrupt government in the world. Will the Shivraj Singh Chouhan government would also lodge a criminal case against the CAG in the wake of the latest report?" Kamal Nath said. <https://www.daijiworld.com/news/newsDisplay?newsID=1110125>

8. Deficiencies in IEC Implementation Highlighted in AB-PMJAY Audit (*english.newstracklive.com*) Aug 16, 2023

The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) has identified shortcomings in the execution of the Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) strategy within the Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY), according to its latest performance audit report.

The AB-PMJAY initiative offers health coverage of up to Rs 5 lakhs per family annually, focusing on secondary and tertiary care hospitalization services. The scheme ensures beneficiaries have seamless, cashless, and paperless access to medical services.

In a recently presented audit report on AB-PMJAY in Parliament, the CAG unveiled that the National Health Authority (NHA) disbursed Rs 64.07 crore between 2018 and 2021 for IEC endeavors. However, the report noted that the absence of a dedicated budget for these activities prevented a verification of whether expenses adhered to prescribed budget limits.

Crucially, the NHA failed to provide comprehensive information and records detailing the IEC plan's scope and implementation status at the central level. Consequently, the audit couldn't ascertain if planned IEC activities were methodically executed or if projected targets were achieved.

Similarly, the report highlighted the lack of insight into the monitoring mechanism for IEC activities across different states in India at the central level. The audit could not confirm whether the NHA effectively oversaw state-level IEC initiatives aimed at enhancing beneficiary awareness, scheme enrollment, and coverage.

In certain states, such as Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Maharashtra, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, and Uttarakhand, dedicated IEC cells were established. In contrast, 12 states, including Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Gujarat,

Jharkhand, Karnataka, Mizoram, Nagaland, Puducherry, Rajasthan, and Tripura, lacked such cells. The status of the remaining states remained undisclosed.

Additionally, the audit unveiled that several states, namely Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chandigarh, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, and Uttar Pradesh, reported IEC expenditures ranging from zero to 20.24 percent of the allocated budget. This figure fell below the recommended threshold of 25 percent.

In light of these findings, the audit report emphasized the need for the NHA to actively engage with entitled beneficiaries and raise awareness about the scheme. It also underlined the necessity for State Health Agencies (SHAS) to commit sufficient resources to IEC activities, ensuring comprehensive awareness generation for the program. <https://english.newstracklive.com/news/deficiencies-in-iec-implementation-highlighted-in-abpmjay-audit-sc1-nu318-ta318-1292562-1.html>

9. CAG flags deficiencies in implementation of IEC plan in AB-PMJAY
(*daijiworld.com, lokmattimes.com*) Aug 16, 2023

In its performance audit report on Ayushman Bharat–Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY), the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) highlighted deficiencies in implementation of the Information, Education and Communication (IEC) plan under the scheme.

The AB-PMJAY provides a health cover up to Rs 5 lakhs per family per year, for secondary and tertiary care hospitalisation services.

It provides cashless and paperless access to services for the beneficiaries at the point of service.

The CAG’s audit report on AB-PMJAY which was presented in Parliament recently, revealed that in between 2018-21, the National Health Authority (NHA) had spent Rs 64.07 crore for IEC activities .

“During 2018-19 to 2020-21, NHA has incurred an expenditure of 64.07 crore on IEC activities. However, NHA did not allot a specific budget for these activities, in the absence of which audit could not verify whether the expenditure was within the prescribed budget ceiling.

"The NHA did not provide any details and records about a comprehensive IEC plan and its implementation status at the Central level. In the absence of these details and records, audit could not verify whether IEC activities were carried out at the central level in a planned manner and how far the planned targets were achieved," the report added.

It went on to say that “the NHA also did not provide any details of the mechanism for monitoring of IEC activities in various states all over India at the Central level”.

"The audit could not verify whether NHA has monitored the IEC activities being carried out in States for creating awareness regarding benefits of the scheme among

beneficiaries in order to increase registration of beneficiaries and coverage of the scheme.

“In seven states -- Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Maharashtra, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand -- IEC cell was formed. In 12 states -- Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Mizoram, Nagaland, Puducherry, Rajasthan and Tripura -- IEC Cell was not formed, whereas no information was available about remaining states,” the report added.

It further revealed that in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chandigarh, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Tripura and Uttar Pradesh, expenditure on IEC activities ranged from zero to 20.24 per cent of the allotted budget against the prescribed benchmark of 25 per cent.

“NHA needs to make special efforts and sensitise the entitled beneficiaries to generate awareness about the scheme. It needs to ensure that adequate expenditure is done by the SHAS (State Health Agencies) to generate awareness about the scheme,” the CAG audit report said. <https://www.daijiworld.com/news/newsDisplay?newsID=1110561>

10. Congress charges at Modi govt over CAG report, AAP alleges ₹7.5 lakh crore scam (*hindustantimes.com*) Aug 14, 2023

The Congress party on Monday demanded Prime Minister Narendra Modi break his silence on the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India reports flagging discrepancies in the database of a centrally sponsored health scheme and the high cost of Dwarka Expressway. On the eve of the 77th Independence Day, Congress general secretary (communications) Jairam Ramesh said the prime minister will “unleash his torrent of lies” tomorrow from the ramparts of the Red Fort.

“But will he have the courage to question his own government and his ministers on their corruption and incompetence?” Ramesh asked, alleging that the CAG report has exposed the “sheer corruption and incompetence of the Modi government.”

The Congress MP listed the red flags of the report, including the inflated project cost of the Dwarka Expressway, which went up 14 times from the sanctioned ₹18 crore/km to ₹250 crore/km.

A performance audit by the CAG also found several discrepancies in India’s public health assurance scheme Ayushman Bharat – Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) that led to crores of rupees in expenditure on ineligible beneficiaries, mainly due to inadequate validation controls. The faults in the database of AB-PMJAY include invalid names, unrealistic dates of birth, duplicate health IDs and unrealistic family sizes, the government’s auditor said in a report tabled in Parliament.

“CAG has raised similar questions on irregularities in the Ayodhya Development Project and the diversion of old page pension funds under National Social Assistance Programme for publicity of the Modi government's schemes instead,” Ramesh said.

“We demand answers from the Prime Minister, Chuppi Todiye, Pradhan Mantri-ji! (Break your silence, Mr Prime Minister).”

Earlier today, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge accused the Modi government of corruption in infrastructure projects and said it is "taking the nation on a highway to hell". Citing the CAG report on the 'Bharatmala Pariyojana' highway projects, Kharge said Prime Minister Modi should look within before harping on corruption by his political opponents.

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) also targeted the ruling BJP, with Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal alleging that the PM Modi-led government has broken "all records of corruption".

"The Modi government has broken all the records of corruption in the past 75 years," Kejriwal charged in a post on X, earlier known as Twitter, sharing a screenshot of a media report on the CAG report.

Rajya Sabha MP and AAP national spokesperson Sanjay Singh also targeted Modi over the media report and said his government is the "most corrupt" since independence.

"The Narendra Modi government constructed the road (Dwarka Expressway) at the cost of ₹250 crore per kilometer while it was to be constructed at the rate of ₹18 crore per kilometer," he said, citing the CAG report.

Under the 'Bharatmala Pariyojana', a total of 75,000 kilometers of roads were to be constructed at the rate of ₹15 crore per kilometer, Singh said.

"But the Narendra Modi government increased the cost to ₹25 crore per kilometer," he claimed.

"This government has committed a scam worth ₹7.5 lakh crore in the Bharatmala project," Singh charged and asked the prime minister to stop talking about his government's commitment to end corruption in the country. <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/congress-charges-at-modi-govt-over-cag-report-aap-alleges-7-5-lakh-crore-scam-101692013952780.html>

11. Cong questions alleged irregularities flagged by CAG in several govt schemes, urges PM to break silence (*newsroomodisha.com*) August 14, 2023

The Congress on Monday took a swipe at the government over alleged irregularities in several of the government projects highlighted by the Comptroller Auditor General (CAG) of India in its report, saying that Prime Minister Narendra Modi will unleash torrents of lies from the ramparts of the Red Fort and questioned will he have the courage to question his own government and ministers about their corruption and incompetence.

The remarks from the Congress came after the CAG reports tabled in Parliament last week highlighted several alleged irregularities in the projects and schemes of the government.

In a statement, Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said, "Tomorrow, the Prime Minister will unleash his torrent of lies from the ramparts of the Red Fort for one last

time, taking off from his tsunami of lies to the nation in the Parliament last week. But will he have the courage to question his own government and his ministers on their corruption and incompetence?”

He said that last week the CAG tabled a series of reports in Parliament. Even a defanged CAG has been able to expose the corruption and incompetence of the Modi government.

Sharing a few of the alleged irregularities in the government projects and schemes highlighted by the CAG, Ramesh, who is also the party’s communication in-charge said, “CAG has flagged an overall cost overrun of more than 100 per cent in the much-hyped Bharatmala Pariyojana. This project was approved and monitored by none other than the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) that is chaired by the Prime Minister.”

He said that the sanctioned cost of the 26,316 km of highways that have been awarded was Rs 8,46,588 crore, as against the CCEA-approved length of 34,800 km at a cost of Rs 5,35,000 crore.

“This means that these projects were awarded at a cost of Rs 32.17 crore per km, more than double the cost of Rs 15.37 crore per km approved by the CCEA. Despite multiple cost overruns, only 13,499 km of national highways have been completed till 31 March 2023, less than 39 per cent of the CCEA-approved length,” Ramesh said.

He said that the CAG also raised concerns about the inflated project cost of the Dwarka Expressway, which went up 14 times from the sanctioned Rs 18 crore per km to Rs 250 crore per km.

Ramesh added that the CAG has also highlighted irregularities in the Bharatmala bidding process – successful bidders not fulfilling tender conditions, bidders being selected on the basis of falsified documents, work awarded without approved detailed project reports or faulty DPRs and the diversion of funds to the tune of Rs 3,598.52 crore from escrow accounts.

“Will the Prime Minister take responsibility for this incompetence and corruption in the Bharatmala projects under his direct watch?” he questioned.

He also pointed out that the CAG has uncovered violations of toll rules, with NHAI wrongly collecting Rs 132.05 crore from commuters in just 5 randomly audited toll plazas. At the same time, the NHAI lost revenue of Rs 133.36 crore due to lack of provision for revenue sharing in concession agreements in two sections of NH projects.

“If this audit were extrapolated to the whole country, the overall loss to the exchequer and the commuters would amount to lakhs of crores. Will the Prime Minister take action against the Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways?” he asked.

“The CAG has reported payouts to the dead in the Prime Minister’s favourite Ayushman Bharat Scheme. 88,760 patients had died during treatment and yet, 2,14,923 claims were shown as paid in respect of ‘fresh treatments’ given to these dead ‘patients’.

“Other than that, 7.5 lakh recipients were linked to a single mobile number and 4,761 registrations made against seven Aadhar numbers. In total there are more than 1.24 crore fake beneficiaries linked to only 1,86,855 mobile numbers,” he said, asking the Prime Minister if he will order an investigation on who were the real beneficiaries of this massive Digital India scam in Ayushman Bharat.

He said that the CAG has raised similar questions on irregularities in the Ayodhya Development Project and the diversion of old age pension funds under the National Social Assistance Programme for publicity of the Modi government’s schemes instead.

“We demand answers from the Prime Minister and also that he break his silence,” he added. <https://newsroomodisha.com/cong-questions-alleged-irregularities-flagged-by-cag-in-several-govt-schemes-urges-pm-to-break-silence/>

12. Modi govt. has broken all graft records: AAP chief on CAG report
(*thehindu.com*) August 15, 2023

Aam Aadmi Party chief Arvind Kejriwal on Monday said Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led Centre “has broken all the records of corruption over the past 75 years”.

Mr. Kejriwal made the comment in a post on X (formerly Twitter), where he tagged a media report, according to which the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India, in an audit report on the ‘Implementation of Phase-1 of Bharatmala Pariyojana’ from 2017-18 to 2020-21 has highlighted the cost escalation in constructing the 29.06 km Dwarka Expressway from ₹18 crore per km to ₹250 crore per km.

Addressing a press conference, AAP MP Sanjay Singh said, “Under the Bharatmala Pariyojana, 75,000 km of roads were to be constructed at the rate of ₹15 crore per km. However, the Modi government increased the cost to ₹25 crore per km, thereby committing a scam worth ₹7.5 lakh crore in the project.”

The party’s national spokesperson Reena Gupta said as per a CAG report, the Centre had spent the money meant for old age pensions on promoting the PM’s image. <https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Delhi/modi-govt-has-broken-all-graft-records-aap-chief-on-cag-report/article67195059.ece>

13. 'मरे हुए' लोगों के इलाज पर खर्च हो गए 6.9 करोड़ रुपये, आयुष्मान भारत योजना को लेकर चौंकाने वाली रिपोर्ट (*abplive.com*) 16 Aug 2023

आयुष्मान भारत योजना (PMJAY) को लेकर भारत के नियंत्रक और महालेखा परीक्षक (CAG) की एक और चौंकाने वाली रिपोर्ट सामने आई है. जिसमें बताया गया है कि कुल 3,446 ऐसे मरीजों के इलाज पर कुल 6.97 करोड़ रुपये का भुगतान किया गया, जो पहले ही मर चुके थे. डेटाबेस में इन सभी मरीजों को मृत दिखाया गया है. ये पहला मौका नहीं है जब आयुष्मान भारत योजना को लेकर ऐसी रिपोर्ट सामने आई हो, इससे पहले भी सीएजी की एक रिपोर्ट में बताया गया था कि करीब 7.5 लाख से ज्यादा लोगों को एक ही मोबाइल नंबर पर रजिस्टर कर दिया गया और वो नंबर भी अमान्य था.

आयुष्मान भारत-प्रधानमंत्री जन आरोग्य योजना (PMJAY) को साल 2018 में शुरू किया गया था. इसका मकसद गरीबों को मुफ्त इलाज देना था, जिसे ग्रामीण और शहरी क्षेत्रों में शुरू किया गया.

डेटाबेस से हुआ खुलासा

सीएजी ने जब आयुष्मान भारत योजना के डेटाबेस का ऑडिट शुरू किया तो इसमें की तरह की अनियमितताएं पाई गईं, बताया गया कि ट्रांजेक्शन मैनेजमेंट सिस्टम ऑफ स्कीम में पहले से मृत घोषित मरीजों का इलाज लगातार जारी था और उनके इलाज के लिए पैसों का भुगतान भी किया जा रहा था. यानी आयुष्मान भारत योजना के तहत इन हजारों मरीजों का इलाज होता दिखाया जा रहा था. देशभर के अलग-अलग अस्पतालों में कुल 3,446 मरीज ऐसे थे, जिनके इलाज के लिए अस्पतालों को 6.97 करोड़ रुपये का भुगतान किया गया था.

केरल में ऐसे सबसे ज्यादा मरीज

इंडियन एक्सप्रेस की रिपोर्ट के मुताबिक केरल में ऐसे मरीजों की संख्या सबसे ज्यादा थी. यहां कुल 966 ऐसे मरीज पाए गए, जिन्हें मृत घोषित करने के बावजूद उनका इलाज जारी था. इनके इलाज पर 2,60,09,723 रुपये का भुगतान अस्पतालों को किया गया. इसके बाद मध्य प्रदेश में 403 और छत्तीसगढ़ में 365 ऐसे मरीज मिले. जिनके इलाज पर लाखों रुपये खर्च हुए.

फिलहाल योजना के तहत जो गाइडलाइन बनाई गई हैं, उनके मुताबिक अगर किसी मरीज की अस्पताल में भर्ती होने और डिस्चार्ज होने के बीच मौत हो जाती है तो ऑडिट के बाद अस्पताल को इसका भुगतान किया जाता है.

पहले ही दी गई थी जानकारी

सीएजी रिपोर्ट में ये भी बताया गया है कि 2020 में ऐसी खामियों को लेकर राष्ट्रीय स्वास्थ्य प्राधिकरण (एनएचए) को जानकारी दी गई थी, जिसके कुछ महीने बाद उनकी तरफ से कहा गया था कि सिस्टम में खामी को ठीक कर दिया गया है जिसके बाद मृत दिखाए गए शख्स के इलाज के लिए फंड जारी नहीं किया जा सकता है. हालांकि ये दावा गलत था और इसके बाद भी योजना के कई लाभार्थियों को इलाज के दौरान मृत दिखाया गया था. जिससे पता चलता है कि सिस्टम की खामियों को दूर नहीं किया गया.

<https://www.abplive.com/news/india/cag-report-on-ayushman-bharat-scheme-pmjay-over-six-crore-spent-on-treatment-of-dead-patients-2474710>

14. कैग ने किया आयुष्मान भारत में बड़े भ्रष्टाचार का खुलासा, एक मोबाइल नंबर पर 7.5 लाख लोगों का रजिस्ट्रेशन (newsnasha.com) 15 Aug 2023

आयुष्मान भारत-प्रधानमंत्री जन आरोग्य योजना के तहत लाभार्थियों के पंजीकरण और सत्यापन में अनियमितताओं को उजागर करते हुए, भारत के नियंत्रक और महालेखा परीक्षक (सीएजी) ने खुलासा किया है कि लगभग 7.5 लाख लाभार्थी एक ही सेलफोन

नंबर - 9999999999 से जुड़े हुए थे । कैग ने लोकसभा में पेश आयुष्मान भारत योजना के ऑडिट पर अपनी रिपोर्ट में यह चौंकाने वाली जानकारी दी है।

गलत मोबाइल नंबर से रजिस्टर किया गया
खास बात यह है कि जिस मोबाइल नंबर से करीब 7.5 लाख लोगों ने रजिस्ट्रेशन कराया था, वह नंबर भी गलत था, यानी उस नंबर का कोई सिम कार्ड ही नहीं है। BIS डेटाबेस के विश्लेषण से इतनी बड़ी संख्या में फर्जी रजिस्ट्रेशन का खुलासा हुआ. रिपोर्ट में ऐसा ही एक और मामला सामने आया है, जिसमें बताया गया है कि दूसरे नंबर 8888888888 से करीब 1 लाख 39 हजार 300 लोग जुड़े हुए हैं, जबकि 90000000 से 96,046 अन्य लोग जुड़े हुए हैं। इसके अलावा 20 ऐसे नंबर भी सामने आए हैं, जिनसे 10,000 से 50,000 लाभार्थी जुड़े हुए हैं।

इंडियन एक्सप्रेस की रिपोर्ट है कि CAG ने कुल 7.87 करोड़ लाभार्थियों की रिपोर्ट दी है, जो 10.74 करोड़ (नवंबर 2022) के लक्षित परिवारों का 73% है। इसके बाद सरकार ने इसका दायरा बढ़ाकर 12 करोड़ कर दिया।

फ़ोन नंबर के बिना इलाज कराने में कठिनाई
रिपोर्ट में कहा गया है कि डेटाबेस में किसी भी लाभार्थी से संबंधित रिकॉर्ड खोजने के लिए मोबाइल नंबर बहुत महत्वपूर्ण है। इसकी मदद से कोई भी बिना आईडी कार्ड के रजिस्ट्रेशन डेस्क पर जा सकता है। यदि मोबाइल नंबर ही गलत है तो ई-कार्ड खो जाने की स्थिति में लाभार्थी की पहचान करना मुश्किल हो सकता है।

यानी इसके बाद लाभार्थी को योजना का लाभ मिलना लगभग असंभव हो जाएगा। अस्पताल उन्हें सुविधाएं देने से इनकार कर देंगे और लोगों को कठिनाइयों का सामना करना पड़ सकता है। <https://www.newsnasha.com/cag-revealed-big-corruption-in-ayushman-bharat-registration-of-7-5-lakh-people-on-one-mobile-number/>

15. क्लेम जमा कराने से पहले ही भुगतान, 18 साल से ज्यादा के लोगों का इलाज बच्चों के स्पेशल पैकेज में बताकर 18.16 करोड़ का भुगतान (thesootr.com) 15 Aug 2023

राजस्थान में लागू स्वास्थ्य बीमा योजना में कई तरह की गड़बड़ियां सामने आई हैं। नियंत्रक और महालेखा परीक्षक (सीएजी) द्वारा केन्द्र सरकार द्वारा संचालित आयुष्मान भारत-प्रधानमंत्री जन आरोग्य योजना की ऑडिट में सामने आया है कि राजस्थान में 18.16 करोड़ के क्लेम ऐसे मामलों में पास कर दिए गए, जिनमें लाभार्थियों की उम्र 18 वर्ष से ज्यादा थी, लेकिन उनका उपचार पीडियाट्रिक स्पेशलिटी पैकेज यानी बच्चों की बीमारियों के लिए बनाए गए पैकेज में कर दिया गया। इसी तरह क्लेम जमा होने से पहले ही क्लेम का भुगतान, डिस्चार्ज से पहले ही क्लेम जमा कराने और भुगतान किए जाने जैसी अनियमितताएं भी पकड़ी गई हैं।

राजस्थान में लागू हैं चिंरजीवी स्वास्थ्य बीमा योजना

राजस्थान का डाटा नहीं जाता केन्द्र के पास

चूंकि राजस्थान ने खुद के नाम से योजना संचालित की हुई है, इसलिए राजस्थान उन छह राज्यों में शामिल है, जिसका डाटा केन्द्र सरकार की नेशनल हेल्थ अथॉरिटी (एनएचए) के पास नहीं जाता। यानी राजस्थान में इस योजना के कि तने लाभार्थी इसका डाटा एनएचए नहीं रखता। राजस्थान में लाभार्थियों के लिए आधार के स्थान जन आधार को लाभार्थी आईडी के रूप में मान्यता मिली है। ऐसे में एनएचए के पास लाभार्थियों की आईडी भी नहीं है। खुद के नाम से योजना चलाने के कारण दूसरे राज्यों में जिस तरह की गड़बड़ियां जैसे मृतक लाभार्थियों के नाम से क्लेम उठाया जाना या एक ही समय में दो अस्पतालों में मरीज को भर्ती दिखा कर क्लेम उठाए जाने जैसी गड़बड़ियां राजस्थान के मामले में सीएजी की इस ऑडिट में सामने नहीं आईं हैं, लेकिन फिर जांच के दौरान वेलिडेशन सम्बन्धी कुछ गड़बड़ियां सीएजी ने पकड़ी हैं।

यह अनियमितताएं आई सामने

राजस्थान में सीएजी ने आठ जिलों के 65 अस्पतालों में सैंपल जांच की थी और जनवरी-फरवरी 2022 में जांच के दौरान निम्न अनियमितताएं सामने आईं 21 लाख रूपए के 281 क्लेम ऐसे थे, जिनमें क्लेम बाद में सबमिट किया गया और भुगतान पहले ही कर दिया गया।

942 क्लेम ऐसे थे जो पेशेंट के अस्पताल से डिस्चार्ज होने से पहले ही सबमिट कर दिए गए और इनमें 803 क्लेम का 47 लाख रूपए का भुगतान भी कर दिया गया।

15 हजार 530 क्लेम ऐसे थे, जिनमें डिस्चार्ज के बाद प्री-ऑथराइजेशन किया गया। प्री-ऑथराइजेशन वह प्रक्रिया है जिसमें जो क्लेम बनाया जाता है, उसे डॉक्टर द्वारा स्वीकृत कराया जाता है। यह प्रक्रिया मरीज को डिस्चार्ज करने से पहले ही की जाती है। लेकिन इन मामलों में मरीज के डिस्चार्ज होने के बाद डॉक्टर से क्लेम की स्वीकृति कराई गई और इनमें से 12.48 करोड़ के 12 हजार 826 क्लेम्स का भुगतान भी कर दिया गया।

18.16 करोड़ रूपए के ऐसे क्लेम का भुगतान कर दिया गया, जिसमें मरीज की उम्र 18 साल से ज्यादा थी, लेकिन उनका उपचार पीडियाट्रिक स्पेशलिटी पैकेज के तहत किया गया।

15 हजार 100 क्लेम ऐसे थे, जिनमें ट्रांजेंशन आईडी ही जनरेट नहीं की गई और इनमें से 5.13 करोड़ के 12 हजार 72 क्लेम्स का भुगतान भी कर दिया गया।

आपात परिस्थितियों में भर्ती किए गए मरीजों की ट्रांजेंशन आईडी भर्ती होने के 72 घंटे में जनरेट करनी होती है, लेकिन 185 क्लेम्स में ऐसा नहीं किया गया और 9 लाख रूपए के 158

क्लेम का भुगतान भी कर दिया गया। <https://thesootr.com/state/rajasthan-flaws-in-health-insurance-plan-payment-before-submission-of-claim/45024>

16. सीएजी ने पकड़ा मोदी सरकार का आयुष्मान भारत घोटाला (*samtamarg.in*)
15 Aug 2023

नियंत्रक एवं महालेखा परीक्षक(सीएजी) की एक हालिया जारी हुई रिपोर्ट में आयुष्मान भारत - प्रधानमंत्री जन आरोग्य योजना को लेकर चौंकाने वाले खुलासे हुए हैं। इस योजना में फर्जी मोबाइल नंबरों पर लाखों लोगों का रजिस्ट्रेशन दर्शाकर इलाज किया जा रहा था। रिपोर्ट के मुताबिक, इस योजना के करीब 7.5 लाख लाभार्थी एक ही मोबाइल नंबर पर रजिस्टर्ड हैं। जिस मोबाइल नंबर से करीब 7.5 लाख लोगों का रजिस्ट्रेशन कराया गया, उस नंबर का कोई भी सिम कार्ड नहीं है। बीआईएस के डेटाबेस के एनालिसिस से इतनी बड़ी संख्या में फर्जी रजिस्ट्रेशन का खुलासा हुआ है। इस योजना का लाभ उठाते हुए राशि हड़पने के लिए मर चुके लोगों का भी इलाज किया गया।

इस मोबाइल नंबर में सभी 10 नंबर में 9 का अंक (9999999999) है। सीएजी की रिपोर्ट सामने आने के बाद स्वास्थ्य मंत्रालय में हड़कंप मचा है। सीएजी की रिपोर्ट के मुताबिक, इस योजना के तहत इलाज करा रहे कई रोगियों को पहले मरा हुआ दिखाया गया था, लेकिन उसके बाद भी योजना राशि उठाने के लिए उनका इलाज चलता रहा। ऐसे मरीजों का डाटा चेक करने पर सीएजी ने बताया, कि आयुष्मान भारत योजना के तहत इलाज के दौरान 88760 मरीजों की मौत हुई। 224923 दावों को सिस्टम में भुगतान के रूप में दिखाया गया। इसमें 3446 मरीजों को 6.97 करोड़ रुपए का भुगतान किया गया। आयुष्मान भारत योजना के तहत सबसे ज्यादा गड़बड़ी छत्तीसगढ़, हरियाणा, झारखंड, केरल और मध्यप्रदेश में देखी गयी। <https://samtamarg.in/2023/08/15/cag-caught-modi-governments-ayushman-bharat-scam/>

17. राज्यों का पाप हमारे मत्थे मत डालिए... कैग रिपोर्ट पर बोलीं फाइनेंस मिनिस्टर निर्मला सीतारमण (*navbharattimes.indiatimes.com*) 15 Aug 2023

विपक्ष ने सीएजी (CAG) की रिपोर्ट में सामने आई अनियमितताओं को लेकर केंद्र सरकार पर निशाना साधा है। कांग्रेस का कहना है कि इस मामले में प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी (Prime Minister Narendra Modi) को अपनी चुप्पी तोड़नी चाहिए और उनकी सरकार में हुए भ्रष्टाचार को लेकर उठ रहे सवाल का जवाब देना चाहिए। इस पर प्रतिक्रिया देते हुए फाइनेंस मिनिस्टर निर्मला सीतारमण (Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman) ने आज कहा कि केंद्र सरकार कैग की रिपोर्ट पर जांच करने के लिए तैयार है। लेकिन राज्यों से जो गलत डेटा आया है उसका पाप हमारे मत्थे नहीं आना चाहिए।

सीतारमण ने एक चैनल से बातचीत में कहा, 'कोविड के समय भी जब सरकार जनता के हित में काम कर रही थी तो विपक्ष ने हर चीज पर उंगली उठाई। कैग ने अपनी रिपोर्ट में जो अनियमितताएं उजागर की हैं, सरकार उनकी जांच कराएगी। लेकिन राज्यों ने जो डेटा गलत दिया है, उसका पाप हमारे मत्थे नहीं आना चाहिए।' उन्होंने कहा कि कांग्रेस को एक जिम्मेदार विपक्ष की भूमिका निभानी चाहिए। आपको प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी के कामकाज से जलन हो सकती है लेकिन जब वह देश के लिए संदेश देते हैं तो क्या उनका सम्मान नहीं होना चाहिए। उन्होंने कहा कि आज लाल किले पर हुए

समारोह में एक भी कांग्रेसी नेता शामिल नहीं हुआ। मोदी विरोध के कारण विपक्ष का अपने कर्तव्य से हटना शोभा नहीं देता है।

महंगाई पर क्या कहा

सरकार ने सोमवार को जुलाई में महंगाई के आंकड़े जारी किए। बीते महीने देश में खुदरा महंगाई 7.44 फीसदी रही जो मई 2022 के बाद से सबसे अधिक है। जून में यह 4.81 फीसदी रही थी। जुलाई में सब्जियों खासकर टमाटर की महंगाई दर में जबरदस्त उछाल आई। इस बारे में सीतारमण ने कहा कि महंगाई के खिलाफ सरकार की लड़ाई और ज्यादा सख्त होने वाली है। उन्होंने कहा कि बारिश के कारण टमाटर का उत्पादन प्रभावित हुआ है। नेपाल से आयात हो रहा है। दिल्ली और आसपास के राज्यों में 60 रुपये किलो बेच रही है।

उन्होंने कहा कि पिछले नौ साल में पीएम मोदी ने स्थाई सरकार और पारदर्शी सरकार दी है। वह दिनरात जनता के हित में काम कर रहे हैं। लोगों तक सरकार का काम पहुंच रहा है। मोदी का जनता के साथ सीधा जुड़ाव रहता है। मन की बात इसका उदाहरण है। जनता भी बार-बार मोदी पर भरोसा जताती है। उनकी हर योजना दलित, वंचित और शोषित वर्ग को ध्यान में रखकर बनाई जाती है। डीबीटी की वजह से दो लाख करोड़ रुपये से ज्यादा की बचत हुई। सरकार यह पैसा जनता के हित में खर्च कर रही है। जनता मोदी पर भरोसा करती है विपक्ष के नाटक पर नहीं।

<https://navbharattimes.indiatimes.com/business/business-news/what-govt-is-doing-to-reduce-inflation-says-finance-minister-nirmala-sitharaman/articleshow/102742436.cms>

18. Road ministry says cost overruns in Dwarka Expressway flagged by CAG report a 'gross mis-representation' (moneycontrol.com) 14 Aug 2023

The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways of India (MoRTH) on August 14 said the huge cost overruns in many high-cost Engineering Procurement and Construction (EPC) projects such as the Dwarka Expressway project flagged by Comptroller and Auditor General is a gross misrepresentation of facts.

MoRTH said the average cost of special projects enveloping substantial lengths of bridges/via-ducts/tunnels under Phase-I of the Bharatmala Pariyojna stands at around Rs 152 crore per km.

The road ministry added that CAG in its report had said that the civil cost to construct the Dwarka Expressway project came in at Rs 250 crore per km, which is incorrect as the approved civil cost for four packages of the project is Rs 206.39 crore per kilometre and awarded civil cost is Rs 181.94 crore/km.

The CAG in its report on the implementation of Phase-I of Bharatmala Pariyojana had said that the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)'s decision to opt for an 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 road ministry pointed out that the project outlay of Rs 18.2 crore per km approved by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs for the first phase of the Bharatmala Pariyojana was for the project as a whole and not for the Dwarka Expressway project, specifically.

MoRTH accepted that the average cost of creating the Dwarka Expressway would be lower by Rs 1,200 crore if constructed at grade as recommended by the CAG, but would have resulted in deficient development of the highway as per past practices reflected on National Highway-48.

The CAG in its report found that the NHAI Board approved the Dwarka Expressway with a "civil cost of Rs 7,287.29 crore at Rs 250.77 crore per km as against civil cost of Rs 18.2 crore per km approved by the CCEA".

The auditor noted that NHAI has awarded these projects to be completed between November 2020 and September 2022, but they are still incomplete.

"These projects had achieved physical progress ranging between 60.50 percent to 99.25 percent as on 31 March 2023," CAG said in its report.

The CAG also pointed out that in the Dwarka Expressway, "for no reason on record", an eight-lane elevated main carriageway and six-lane at-grade road were constructed across a 19 km stretch in Haryana.

The auditor pointed out that a 14-lane national highway could have been built at grade in place of the aforementioned carriageway and road.

The CAG also said there was no justification on record for planning or construction of eight elevated lanes for average daily traffic of 55,432 passenger vehicles.

It also pointed out that only six lanes (at-grade lanes) were planned or constructed for average annual daily traffic of 2,32,959 passenger vehicles, besides freight vehicles.

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.

Bharatmala Pariyojana is the new umbrella programme used by MoRTH that focuses on optimising the efficiency of freight and passenger movement across the country.

A total length of 34,800 km including the Residual National Highways Development Programme (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. <https://www.moneycontrol.com/news/business/road-ministry-says-cost-overruns-in-dwarka-expressway-flagged-by-cag-report-a-gross-mis-representation-11184861.html>

19. Road Transport and Highways Ministry issues clarification on high capital cost for Dwarka Expressway (*newsonair.gov.in*) 14 Aug 2023

Road Transport and Highways Ministry on Monday (14 August 2023) said that Dwarka Expressway is an engineering marvel involving the construction of 8-lane, expressways on a single pier which has been conceived and designed considering present traffic volume.

Issuing a clarification on high capital cost for Dwarka Expressway in the performance audit by CAG, the Ministry said, it would also result in reduction of pollution in the entire Delhi-NCR region which has already benefited from similar development on the Eastern Peripheral Expressway and Delhi-Meerut Expressway. This projects also features India's first 4-level interchange and 8-lane Tunnel.

In the performance audit report by CAG, it has been brought out that per kilometre cost of Dwarka Expressway is 250 crore rupees as against CCEA approved per kilometre cost of 18.2 crore rupees.

Ministry said that the per kilometre cost of 18.2 crore rupees was considered as normative cost for the formulation of Bharatmala Pariyojna for approval of CCEA. It said, the civil cost or capital cost of the project being undertaken under the Bharatmala Pariyojna varies based on its design features, terrain and geographical locations. Ministry further clarified that under Bharatmala Pariyojna, the average cost for special projects enveloping substantial lengths of bridges, viaducts, and tunnels is 152 crore rupees per kilometre. <https://newsonair.gov.in/News?title=Road-Transport-and-Highways-Ministry-issues-clarification-on-high-capital-cost-for-Dwarka-Expressway&id=466114>

20. 'Overall Outlay Provided, Civil Cost Varies on Nature of Project': MoRTH Responds to CAG Report on Dwarka Expressway (*swarajyamag.com*) 14 Aug 2023

Responding to the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India report on Dwarka Expressway, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has clarified that the approval of Bharatmala Pariyojana was done and as such project-wise cost was not approved.

The CAG report had pointed out that the per kilometre cost of the Expressway is Rs 250 crore, as against the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA)-approved per kilometre cost of Rs 18.2 crore. <https://swarajyamag.com/infrastructure/overall-outlay-provided-civil-cost-varies-on-nature-of-project-morth-responds-to-cag-report-on-dwarka-expressway>

21. CAG flags irregularities in projects under Bharatmala Pariyojana Phase-I, cost overruns in Dwarka Expressway (*moneycontrol.com*) 14 Aug 2023

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India has found instances of irregularities in the awarding of projects by agencies implementing central government-funded highway projects.

In its report on the implementation of Phase-I of Bharatmala Pariyojana, the auditor has also found deficiencies in the appraisal and approval mechanism proposed to the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) and also flagged huge cost overruns in many of the high-cost Engineering Procurement and Construction (EPC) projects, including the construction of the Dwarka Expressway project and Delhi-Vadodara Expressway.

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)'s decision to opt for an 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 CCEA had approved an overall average construction cost of Rs 18.2 crore per km while approving the Bharatmala programme.

The CAG in its report found that the NHAI Board approved the Dwarka Expressway with a "civil cost of Rs 7,287.29 crore at Rs 250.77 crore per km as against civil cost of Rs 18.2 crore per km approved by the CCEA".

The auditor noted that NHAI has awarded these projects to be completed between November 2020 and September 2022, but they are still incomplete.

"These projects had achieved physical progress ranging between 60.50 percent to 99.25 percent as on 31 March 2023," CAG said in its report.

The CAG also pointed out that in the Dwarka Expressway, "for no reason on record", an eight-lane elevated main carriageway and six-lane at-grade road were constructed across a 19 km stretch in Haryana.

The auditor pointed out that a 14-lane national highway could have been built at grade in place of the aforementioned carriageway and road.

The CAG also said there was no justification on record for planning or construction of eight elevated lanes for average daily traffic of 55,432 passenger vehicles.

It also pointed out that only six lanes (at grade lanes) were planned or constructed for average annual daily traffic of 2,32,959 passenger vehicles, besides freight vehicles.

In its report, the CAG also said that the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways of India (MoRTH) did not counter the audit observation that a 14-lane national highway could have been built at grade, and did not reply to the audit observation on passenger traffic.

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

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

The CAG report also found instances of irregularities in the awarding of projects by agencies implementing central government-funded highway projects in the construction of Phase-I of Bharatmala Pariyojana.

Highlighting issues with awarding of projects by implementing agencies, the CAG said instances of irregularities in the award of projects by implementing agencies were observed.

This was in clear violation of the prescribed processes of tendering.

According to the CAG, the lacunae was in instances of successful bidder not fulfilling tender condition or bidder selected on the basis of falsified documents, award of works without there being approved detailed project reports or based on faulty detailed project report.

The NHAI and the National Highways & Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (NHIDCL) are the implementing agencies that develop centrally funded road projects.

The CAG also noted that detailed project reports prepared by consultants were not appraised with due diligence by the competent authority before the approval of projects.

Pointing out that there were significant cost overruns, the auditor noted that only 75.62 percent of CCEA-approved length has been awarded while 158.24 percent of approved financial outlay sanctioned by the CCEA has been used 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.

In another report, the CAG found that the NHAI continued to collect user fee in three toll plazas (namely Nathavalasa, Chalageri and Hebbalu in Southern India) during the 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. <https://www.moneycontrol.com/news/business/cag-flags-irregularities-in-awarding-projects-under-bharatmala-pariyojana-phase-i-cost-overruns-in-dwarka-expressway-project-11180881.html>

22. CAG highlights irregularities in construction of Dwarka Expressway: ‘Cost exceeded 14 times’ (livemint.com) 14 Aug 2023

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) on Monday flagged the exceeding cost of Dwarka Expressway, a project under the Centre's Bharatmala Pariyojana Phase-1. The top auditor of the government pointed out that the amount spent on the project has exceeded the amount allocated by 14 times.

CAG report mentioned that the 14-lane national highway which was approved by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) in 2017 has a very high per km cost

at ₹250.77 crore. However, the cost approved by the CCEA was just ₹18.20 crore, as per a report by NDTV.

The 14-lane expressway was sanctioned by the government in order to decongest the NH-48 between Delhi and Gurugram. The Ministry of Road and Transport justified the high cost of the project and said the eight-lane elevated corridor is built with minimal entry-exit arrangements.

“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,” the ministry said in its response. But, CAG was not satisfied with the rationale given by the ministry.

Earlier planned by Haryana govt

CAG report notes that earlier the expressway was planned by the Haryana government under the Gurgaon-Manesar Urban Construction Plan-2031. The Haryana government acquired 150 meters right of way for the project. It planned to construct a main carriage way of 25 meters and 7 meters wide dedicated corridor for trunks services, The Indian Express highlighted from the report.

“However, with no further progress being made by the Haryana government, this project was later approved in BPP-I by CCEA,” the report said.

“Audit observed that up to 70-75 meters, right of way was required to build a 14-lane national highway at grade. However, for no reasons on record, the project in the Haryana region, where its length was 19 km, was planned with an 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 ₹7,287.29 crore i.e., ₹250.77 crore/km as against per-km civil construction cost of ₹18.20 crore approved by CCEA...” the report said.
<https://www.livemint.com/news/india/himachal-pradesh-landslides-hit-shimla-s-summer-hill-area-rescue-operation-underway-11692163266364.html>

23. Dwarka Expressway: CAG flags 'very high' cost for NHAI project in Delhi as budget escalates by 14 times (cnbctv18.com) 15 Aug 2023

The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) in its audit report has highlighted huge cost escalation in the construction of the Dwarka Expressway. As per the report, the National Highways Authority of India’s (NHAI) decision to go for an elevated carriageway on the Haryana portion of the expressway has pushed the 'civil construction cost' by 14 times. This has taken the budget from the originally approved amount of Rs 18.2 crore per km to Rs 251 crore per km.

In its audit report on the 'Implementation of Phase-I of Bharatmala Pariyojana' (or BPP-I) for the period 2017-18 to 2020-21, CAG stated that the 29-km expressway was built at a cost of Rs 250.77 crore per km. The report further added that the Dwarka Expressway was "appraised and approved" without any detailed project report.

Notably, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved an average budget of Rs 18.2 crore per km.

Additionally, the project was approved for decongesting NH-48 between Delhi and Gurugram in Haryana by developing it into a 14-lane National Highway running parallel to the National Highway.

Quoting the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways' response to the cost overruns, the CAG report mentioned, "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."

Regarding the cost escalation, the ministry said, "As for six lane at grade road, this was effectively the six lane existing carriageway available to the local commuters prior to upgradation of road. Further, necessary underpasses dovetailed with requirements of local authorities were also incorporated to avoid future interventions."

However, the auditor mentioned that there was no justification on record for planning or constructing the eight lanes.

The audit report noted that the individual projects of the Dwarka Expressway were appraised and approved by the NHAI Board without any detailed project report. The CAG report mentioned that despite having sufficient right of way for constructing all 14 lanes at grade, NHAI constructed the eight-lane elevated road and six-lane at grade, which resulted in a "very high" per km civil cost of Rs 250.77 crore for the project.

The planned toll rates and tolling mechanism of the expressway might hinder the recovery of the capital cost. Lane configurations of the expressway were determined without an analysis of the development of competing infrastructure, the CAG report observed. <https://www.cnbcv18.com/economy/dwarka-expressway-cag-flags-very-high-cost-for-nhai-project-in-delhi-as-budget-escalates-14-times-17530271.htm>

24. CAG flags high cost of Dwarka Expressway due to NHAI's decision to go for elevated carriageway (*timesofindia.indiatimes.com*) Aug 14, 2023

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) has highlighted a cost escalation in the construction of the Dwarka Expressway due to an elevated carriageway. The decision by NHAI led to a construction cost increase of Rs 251 crore per km, according to the CAG. The Delhi-Mumbai Expressway might remain underutilized for 25 years, as indicated by the CAG. These expressways are part of the Bharatmala highway development program. NHAI approved the Dwarka Expressway with a civil cost of Rs 7,287.3 crore, while the Cabinet approved Rs 18.2 crore per km construction cost for Bharatmala. Practical alternatives were ignored in favor of elevated carriageways. Delhi CM Kejriwal accused the Modi government of record corruption, as expressed in a media clip he shared. The Dwarka Expressway aimed to ease highway congestion but was criticized for negligence in its approval process. The report questions approval procedures and suggests more practical options were overlooked, sparking criticism of the Modi government for its development decisions.

Video Link: <https://videos/toi-original/dwarka-expressway-cost-14-times-more-than-approved-amount-says-cag/videoshow/102729723.cms>

25. From ₹18 cr to ₹250 cr per km: CAG flags high cost of Dwarka Expressway
(fortuneindia.com) Aug 14, 2023

The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) says the absence of a detailed project report for the construction of Dwarka Expressway led to cost overruns from ₹18.20 crore per kilometre to ₹250.77 crore per km.

Despite sufficient right of way being available with the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) for constructing all 14 lanes of Dwarka Expressway at grade, for no reasons on record, it was being constructed with eight-lane elevated road and six lanes at grade road, resulting in a very high per km civil cost of ₹250.77 crore, the auditor says in its report.

Dwarka Expressway aims to de-congest NH-48 between Delhi and Gurugram. The 14-lane national highway will run parallel to existing NH-48.

While a 90-metre right of way was handed over by the Haryana Government to NHAI free of cost, the auditor observed that around up to 70-75 metre of right of way was required to build 14 lane national highway at grade.

"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 carriageway and six lanes 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," the CAG says.

Due to such massive structures, this project for a length of 29.06 km had sanctioned civil construction cost of ₹7,287.29 crore, or ₹250.77 crore per km, as against per km civil construction cost of ₹18.20 crore approved by Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), says the auditor.

Construction of underpasses or flyovers at the intersection point of at grade highway could have been considered as a feasible option than constructing the whole of the eight-lane main carriageway as elevated, says the CAG.

"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 portion," it says, adding that the highway ministry did not counter the audit observation that 14 lane national highway could have been built at grade with available 90 metre right of way.

"As per feasibility report, average daily traffic of 55,432 passenger vehicles, besides freight vehicles, (2018) was travelling beyond Gurugram for larger distances and this traffic was to be shared between National Highway 48 and the eight lane elevated main carriageway of Dwarka Expressway. There was no justification on record for planning/construction of eight lanes (elevated lanes) for average daily traffic of 55,432 passenger vehicles, besides freight vehicles, whereas only six lanes (at grade lanes) were planned/constructed for average annual daily traffic of 2,32,959 passenger vehicles, besides freight vehicles," the auditor says.

The planned toll rates and tolling mechanism of Dwarka Expressway might hinder the recovery of the capital cost of the project and might also result in undue financial burden on commuters moving between Delhi-Gurugram, claims the CAG.

Due to per km civil cost for Dwarka Expressway coming to ₹250.77 crore and it being structure intensive project, management derived a toll rate of ₹290 per car single trip, as per applicable rules, for recovering such huge capital expenditure over its design life as against ₹60 being charged from a car on the existing toll plaza at Kherki Daula on NH-48.

However, considering the rate to be very high, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) approved for tolling of Delhi-Gurugram section of NH-48, after buying back the concession from existing concessionaire of NH-48, and Dwarka Expressway (NH-248BB) as a combined loop through Intelligent Transit System for section actually used by the commuter at the toll rates of existing NH-48. "In this regard, Audit further observed that charging lower rate of toll, as decided by MoRTH, would not be in consonance with National Highway Fee Rules which prescribed higher toll rates for super structures like major and minor bridges as compared to linear road length because of the latter being less capital intensive. Also, charging of toll at low rates would be detrimental to recovery of the huge capital cost of Dwarka Expressway. On the other hand, charging of high toll rates, in order to cover high cost of this project, would again be detrimental to recovery of huge capital cost of the Dwarka Expressway due to diversion of traffic to non-tollable roads lying in its vicinity," the audit reports points out. <https://www.fortuneindia.com/macro/from-18-cr-to-250-cr-per-km-cag-flags-high-cost-of-dwarka-expressway/113731>

26. This Expressway in Delhi Costs 14 Times more than the Approved Budget; here's What the CAG Found (*swarajyamag.com*) 14 Aug 2023

According to the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG), the cost of the Dwarka Expressway constructed under the Centre's Bharatmala Pariyojana phase-1 has exceeded the approved budget by 14 times. The CAG report states that the highway was built at a significantly higher cost of Rs 250.77 crore per kilometre, compared to the approved cost of Rs 18.20 crore per kilometre.

In response to the report, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways explained that the Dwarka Expressway was designed as an eight-lane elevated corridor with minimal entry and exit arrangements to facilitate smooth inter-state traffic movement. This was cited as a reason for the higher cost. <https://swarajyamag.com/infrastructure/this-expressway-in-delhi-costs-14-times-more-than-the-approved-budget-heres-what-the-cag-found>

27. CAG's RED FLAG for Haryana portion of Dwarka Expressway - What Went Wrong? DETAILS (*timesnownews.com*) August 14, 2023

The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) has highlighted significant cost overruns in the Dwarka Expressway project in its latest audit report, according to The Economic Times report. The project, being undertaken by the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) under the Bharatmala programme, has faced financial

challenges due to the decision to construct an elevated carriageway on the Haryana portion of the expressway.

The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) has highlighted significant cost overruns in the Dwarka Expressway project in its latest audit report, according to The Economic Times report. The project, being undertaken by the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) under the Bharatmala programme, has faced financial challenges due to the decision to construct an elevated carriageway on the Haryana portion of the expressway. This choice has caused the construction cost to skyrocket from the originally approved Rs 18.2 crore per kilometer to a staggering Rs 251 crore per kilometer.

The Economic Times report added that the CAG's audit report focused on the 'Implementation of Phase-I of Bharatmala Pariyojana (BPP-1)' and revealed that the NHAI Board approved the Dwarka Expressway with a civil cost of Rs 7,287.29 crore, resulting in a per kilometer cost of Rs 250.77 crore, in stark contrast to the approved per kilometer cost of Rs 18.2 crore by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA).

Initially designed to alleviate congestion on NH-48 between Delhi and Gurgaon, the report criticized the decision to construct an eight-lane elevated main carriage way and a six-lane atgrade road for a 19-kilometer stretch in the Haryana region. This was despite the availability of a 90-meter right of way (RoW), which the CAG deemed sufficient for a 14-lane at-grade national highway.

The discrepancy between the project's design and the CCEA's approval was attributed to the fact that the specific project involved 14 lanes, comprising an eight-lane access-controlled highway and six lanes of service roads. However, the CCEA's approval was based on the construction of standard four-lane highways.

The CAG report also highlighted flaws in the appraisal and approval process for projects under BPP-I. It revealed that in 35 out of 50 projects, tender notices were issued without prior technical and financial appraisals by the Project Appraisal and Technical Scrutiny Committee. Additionally, in two projects, expert input from NITI Aayog was absent from the Project Appraisal and Technical Scrutiny Committee.

Furthermore, the CAG report raised concerns about the underutilization of the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway for the next 25 years. The expressway's excess lane capacity was projected to remain unutilized due to traffic demand not meeting the expanded capacity, which could persist for at least the next 15 years. <https://www.timesnownews.com/business-economy/real-estate/cags-red-flag-for-haryana-portion-of-dwarka-expressway-what-went-wrong-details-article-102724319>

28. Centre's corruption in infra projects taking nation on highway to hell: Congress (indiatoday.in) Aug 14, 2023

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Monday accused the Modi government of corruption in infrastructure projects and said it is "taking the nation on a highway to hell".

Citing a Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India report on the 'Bharatmala Pariyojana' highway projects, Kharge said Prime Minister Narendra Modi should look within before harping on corruption by his political opponents.

"BJP's corruption and loot are taking the nation on a highway to hell," Kharge said on X, formerly Twitter, citing the CAG report.

<https://www.indiatoday.in/amp/india/story/congress-highway-to-hell-remark-mallikarjun-kharge-bjp-infra-projects-2420901-2023-08-14>

29. AAP protests at Dwarka Expressway over irregularities flagged by CAG report (*indianexpress.com*) August 16, 2023

The AAP on Wednesday protested at the under-construction Dwarka Expressway here after the Comptroller Auditor General of India reportedly flagged the huge cost escalation in the construction of the expressway.

Several party leaders and workers, including chief national spokesperson Priyanka Kakkar and Reena Gupta, gathered near the Dwarka Expressway Highway, alleging the project to be a “scam”.

“This is such a big scam that the road, for which an approval of Rs 18 crore per km was given, was built at a cost of Rs 251 crore,” Kakkar told PTI.

According to media reports, the CAG audit report on the implementation of Phase-I of the ‘Bharatmala Pariyojana’ highway projects flagged how the National Highways Authority of India’s (NHAI) decision to go for an elevated carriageway on the Haryana portion of the Dwarka Expressway pushed up the construction cost to Rs 251 crore per kilometer from Rs 18.2 crore per kilometer.

Delhi Chief Minister and AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal had alleged that the Narendra Modi-led government has broken “all records of corruption”.

However, the Ministry of Road, Transport and Highways has rejected the charge, calling it “gross misrepresentation of facts”.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/delhi/aap-protests-at-dwarka-expressway-over-irregularities-flagged-by-cag-report-8894745/>

30. BJP's Malviya calls CAG report on Dwarka Expressway 'misleading' (*daijiworld.com*) Aug 15, 2023

BJP IT Cell chief Amit Malviya on Tuesday called the Comptroller and Auditor General of India's (CAG) audit report on the ‘Implementation of Phase-I of Bharatmala Pariyojana (BPP-1), which flagged the sky-high cost of Dwarka Expressway, as "misleading".

"Under the Bharatmala Pariyojana, project-wise cost was not approved. It only provided overall outlay for the program. As such, ascribing increase of cost from Rs 18.2 crore per km to Rs 250 crore per km is gross misrepresentation. The per km cost of Rs 18.2 crore was considered for formulation of Bharatmala Pariyojna with clear proviso that cost for flyovers, ring roads can be established after DPRs (detailed project

reports), as there are no cost norms for these," he wrote on X (formerly twitter) while sharing a media report on CAG's revelation on Dwarka Expressway.

"The civil cost of the project being undertaken under the Bharatmala Pariyojna varies based on its design features, terrain and geographical locations. In short, construction cost varies based on the nature of the project.

"In the CAG report, civil cost has been mentioned as Rs 250 crore per km whereas approved civil cost for 4 packages is Rs 206.39 crore per km and awarded civil cost is Rs 181.94 crore per km," Malviya claimed.

The CAG audit report 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 appraisal and approval mechanism prescribed by the CCEA for BPP-I was not being followed by implementing agencies, the report said. <https://www.daijiworld.com/news/newsDisplay?newsID=1110273>

31. CAG ने पकड़ा NHAI का खेल, सरकार ने कहा 18 करोड़ में बनाओ, बना रहा 250 करोड़ में (navbharattimes.indiatimes.com) Aug 15, 2023

देश के नियंत्रक एवं महालेख परीक्षक (Controller & Auditor General) ने एक बड़ा खेल पकड़ा है। यह खेल नेशनल हाइवे अथॉरिटी ऑफ इंडिया (National Highway Authority of India) ने किया है। यह खेल 'भारतमाला परियोजना (BPP-1) के चरण-1 में हुआ है। सीएजी ने पिछले दिनों ही इस प्रोजेक्ट के बारे में अपना ऑडिट रिपोर्ट (CAG Audit Report) संसद में पेश किया है। इसमें बताया गया है कि सरकार ने द्वारका एक्सप्रेसवे प्रोजेक्ट (Dwarka Expressway Project) के लिए प्रति किलोमीटर कंस्ट्रक्शन कॉस्ट 18.20 करोड़ रुपये की हरी झंडी दी थी। लेकिन, एनएचएआई के बोर्ड ऑफ डाइरेक्टर ने प्रति किमी 250.77 करोड़ रुपये के कंस्ट्रक्शन कॉस्ट की मंजूरी दे दी। इसी के साथ इस प्रोजेक्ट का कॉस्ट 7,287.29 करोड़ रुपये पर पहुंच गया।

क्यों बनाया जा रहा है द्वारका एक्सप्रेसवे

द्वारका एक्सप्रेसवे का निर्माण इसलिए किया जा रहा है ताकि दिल्ली से गुड़गांव जाना-आना आसान हो सके। इस समय इसके लिए एनएच-48 का उपयोग होता है। उस पर लगभग हर समय वाहनों का काफी दबाव होता है। इसके लिए हरियाणा सरकार ने अपने राज्य में एनएचएआई को फ्री में जमीन उपलब्ध कराई है। हरियाणा सरकार की तरफ से 90 मीटर चौड़ी जमीन का राइट ऑफ वे फ्री में मिला है। इतनी जमीन में 14 लेन का हाईवे आराम से बन सकता है। राजमार्ग मंत्रालय के अधिकारी बताते हैं कि 14 लेन की सड़क बनाने के लिए 70 से 75 मीटर चौड़ी जमीन पर्याप्त है।

सरकार ने क्या मंजूर किया

सीएजी रिपोर्ट के अनुसार सीसीईए ने भारतमाला प्रोजेक्ट को हरी झंडी देते वक्त 18.2 करोड़ रुपये प्रति किलोमीटर की लागत तय की थी। बाद में एनएचएआई के बोर्ड ने द्वारका एक्सप्रेसवे प्रोजेक्ट का सिविल कॉस्ट बढ़ा कर 7287.3 करोड़ रुपये कर दिया। मतलब कि हर किलोमीटर सड़क निर्माण की लागत 251 करोड़ रुपये हो गया।

इतना भारी खर्च की जरूरत नहीं

सीएजी का कहना है कि हरियाणा में द्वारका एक्सप्रेसवे का हिस्सा करीब 19 किलोमीटर का है। वहां इस सड़क में आठ लेन का एलिवेटेड मेन कैरिजवे होगा और छह लेन का ग्रेड रोड। जब एनएचएआई को हरियाणा सरकार ने फ्री में 90 मीटर चौड़ी जमीन दी है, तो वहां एलिवेटेड सड़क क्यों बनाई जा रही है। इतनी जमीन में तो आराम से 14 लेन की सड़क बन जाती। सीएजी का कहना है कि प्रोजेक्ट कॉस्ट में इतनी बढ़ोतरी इसलिए हुई क्योंकि वहां मैसिव स्ट्रक्चर बनाया जा रहा है।

कैबिनेट अप्रूवल वाला कॉस्ट चार लेन की सड़क का है

एनएचएआई के आधिकारिक सूत्रों का कहना है कि कैबिनेट जो प्रति किलोमीटर सिविल कॉस्ट का अप्रूवल दिया है, वह तो चार लेन की सड़क का है। द्वारका एक्सप्रेसवे 14 लेन का बनाया जा रहा है। इसमें आठ लेन का एक्सेस कंट्रोल रोड है और छह लेन का सर्विस रोड। एक्सेस कंट्रोल रोड का अधिकांश सेक्शन एलिवेटेड ही है। इसलिए प्रोजेक्ट कॉस्ट बढ़ा है। इस बढ़े हुए कॉस्ट को केंद्रीय सड़क परिवहन एवं राजमार्ग मंत्रालय, वित्त मंत्रालय और नीति आयोग की भी मंजूरी मिली है।

भविष्य की सड़क है यह

उनका कहना है कि आने वाले दिनों में दिल्ली और गुड़गांव के बीच ट्रैफिक में भारी बढ़ोतरी होगी। दिल्ली-गुड़गांव के बीच जो आठ लेन का एक्सप्रेसवे बना है, वह तो इसके पूरी तरह से तैयार होने के पांच साल बाद ही चॉकड हो गया। वहां जगह जगह जाम लगने लगा। जब कोई नया हाइवे बनता है तो उसकी प्लानिंग अगले 10 से 15 साल की डिमांड को देख कर किया जाता है। जब एक्सप्रेसवे बनाया जाता है तो प्लानिंग होती है अगले 35 से 40 साल के डिमांड की। जब भविष्य के लिए निर्माण होगा तो उसी हिसाब से इनवेस्टमेंट भी तो बढ़ाना ही होगा।

<https://navbharattimes.indiatimes.com/business/business-news/dwarka-epressway-nhai-flags-high-cost-of-dwarka-expressway/articleshow/102713354.cms>

32. ज्यादा टोल वसूल जनता को लगाया 132 करोड़ का चूना, CAG की रिपोर्ट में सामने आई गड़बड़ी (*jansatta.com*) 15 Aug 2023

सड़कों पर टोल से अधिक पैसा वसूली का मामला सामने आया है। यह वसूली तय नियमों का उल्लंघन करके की गई है और जनता से टोल कंपनियों ने 132 करोड़ रुपये से अधिक की वसूली की है। भारतीय राष्ट्रीय राजमार्ग प्राधिकरण की दक्षिण भारत में टोल परिचालन पर भारत के नियंत्रक एवं महालेखा परीक्षक (सीएजी) के प्रतिवेदन में

ये गड़बड़ियां सामने आई हैं। यह रिपोर्ट हाल ही में संसद के पटल पर पेश की गई है। रिपोर्ट बताती है कि दक्षिण भारत के प्रमुख टोल पर मौजूदा चार लेन के राजमार्ग के सुधार कार्य की वजह से विलंबित समय सीमा में टोल नहीं लिए जाने आदेश जारी किया गया था। इसके बाद

इस कारण मई 2020 से मार्च 2021 तक 124.18 करोड़ रुपए का शुल्क टोल प्लाजा का उपयोग करने वाले वाहन चालकों से वसूला गया। जबकि एनएचएआइ ने परनूर टोल प्लाजा के मामले में लागू शुल्क के 75 फीसद तक उपयोगकर्ता शुल्क को कम करने में विलंब किया और मदपम टोल प्लाजा पर शुल्क संशोधन नहीं किए जाने की शर्त के बाद भी संशोधन किया।

इस कारण से इन दो टोल प्लाजा पर कुल 7.87 करोड़ रुपए का अधिक शुल्क संग्रहण किया गया। रिपोर्ट के मुताबिक इस प्रकार सभी पांच टोल से संबंधित एजेंसी ने कुल 132.05 करोड़ का अनुचित भार लगाया। रिपोर्ट में बताया गया है कि सीएजी ने दक्षिण भारत के पांच राज्य तमिलनाडु, कर्नाटक, आंध्र प्रदेश, तेलंगाना, और केरल में 37 राजमार्ग से संबंधित इन पांच टोल प्लाजा का चयन किया था।

पूरे भारत में 1.36 लाख किलोमीटर (मार्च 2021) राजमार्ग के 0.27 लाख किलोमीटर मार्ग दक्षिण भारत के राज्यों में है। दक्षिण राज्यों ने वर्ष 2017-18 से 2020-21 तक एनएचएआइ और उसके रियायत ग्राहियों के मध्यम से कुल 28523.88 करोड़ (28.75 फीसद) टोल का अंशदान था।

राष्ट्रीय राजमार्ग संशोधन नियम 2011 के मुताबिक केंद्र सरकार ने प्रमुख मार्ग पर टोल शुल्क से आम जनता को राहत दी थी। यह राहत 1956 के बाद बने पुलों के लिए थी। सीएजी की जांच रिपोर्ट बताती है कि परनूर टोल प्लाजा जो कि वर्ष 1954 में बनाया गया था। बावजूद इसके वाहन चालकों से शुल्क की वसूली की गई जबकि तय प्रावधान शुल्क वसूलने की मंजूरी नहीं देते थे। वर्ष 2017 – 2018 से 2020 – 2021 तक उपयोगकर्ताओं से 22.10 करोड़ का अतिरिक्त टोल शुल्क वसूला गया।
<https://www.jansatta.com/national/toll-tax-crore-imposed-cag-report-revealed-irregularities/2961947/>

33. **द्वारका एक्सप्रेसवे के निर्माण में घोटाला, 18 करोड़ की जगह कैसे खर्च हुए 250 करोड़? | CAG का खुलासा** (dnaindia.com) Aug 15, 2023

Dwarka Expressway: 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, वो 250 करोड़ रुपये तक खर्च हुए हैं।

Video Link: <https://www.dnaindia.com/hindi/india/video-scam-in-the-construction-of-dwarka-expressway-how-250-crores-were-spent-instead-of-18-crores-cags-disclosure-4098193>

34. अप्रूवल मिला 18.20 करोड़ और खर्च हुए 251 करोड़, CAG रिपोर्ट में द्वारका एक्सप्रेस-वे पर उठे कई सवाल (jansatta.com) Aug 14, 2023

ऑडिटर कंट्रोलर एंड ऑडिटर जनरल (CAG) की एक रिपोर्ट ने दिल्ली-गुरुग्राम को जोड़ने वाले द्वारका एक्सप्रेस-वे को लेकर पास किए गए बजट पर गंभीर सवाल खड़े किए हैं। CAG के मुताबिक 29.06 किलोमीटर लंबे द्वारका एक्सप्रेसवे को कैबिनेट कमेटी ऑफ इकॉनॉमिक अफेयर्स (CCEA) की तरफ से 18.20 करोड़ प्रति किमी. के बजट का अप्रूवल मिला था, लेकिन नेशनल हाइवे अथॉरिटी ऑफ इंडिया (NHAI) ने इसका कुल बजट 7287.29 करोड़ रुपये कर दिया। इसका मतलब 18.20 करोड़ प्रति किमी. की जगह 250.77 करोड़ रुपये प्रति किमी का खर्च सामने आया है।

भारतमाला परियोजना के चरण- I (BPP-I) के प्रोजेक्ट पर 2017-18 से 2020-21 की दौरान की गई अपनी ऑडिट रिपोर्ट में CAG ने 14-लेन सड़क परियोजना पर कई टिप्पणियां की हैं। जिससे कई सवाल उठते हैं।

CAG की रिपोर्ट के मुताबिक एनएचएआई बोर्ड ने दिल्ली और गुड़गांव के बीच एनएच-48 पर भीड़भाड़ कम करने के लिए 7,287.3 करोड़ रुपये की नागरिक लागत के साथ द्वारका एक्सप्रेसवे परियोजना को मंजूरी दी। इसमें कहा गया है कि हरियाणा सरकार ने एनएचएआई को 90 मीटर राइट ऑफ वे (आरओडब्ल्यू) मुफ्त में सौंपसौ दिया है और ग्रेड पर 14-लेन राजमार्ग बनाने के लिए 70-75 मीटर आरओडब्ल्यू पर्याप्त है।

हालांकि रिकॉर्ड में बिना किसी कारण के हरियाणा क्षेत्र में परियोजना राजमार्ग जहां इसकी लंबाई 19 किमी थी को आठ लेन एलिवेटेड मुख्य कैरिज वे और ग्रेड रोड पर छह लेन के साथ योजनाबद्ध किया गया था, जबकि एनएचएआई के पास पहले से ही 90 मीटर राइट ऑफ वे था और उतना ही यह ग्रेड राष्ट्रीय राजमार्ग पर 14 लेन के निर्माण के लिए पर्याप्त था। CAG के मुताबिक इस वजह से लागत में भारी वृद्धि हुई है।

अधिकारियों ने कहा कि कैबिनेट की मंजूरी मानक चार-लेन राजमार्गों के निर्माण पर आधारित जबकि यह परियोजना 14 लेन की है। आठ-लेन एक्सप्रेस-नियंत्रित और छह लेन सर्विस रोड। एक्सप्रेस-नियंत्रित खंड का अधिकांश हिस्सा ऊंचा है। उन्होंने ने कहा कि लागत को उन समितियों द्वारा अनुमोदित किया गया है जिनमें सड़क और वित्त मंत्रालयों और नीति आयोग के प्रतिनिधि भी शामिल थे। <https://www.jansatta.com/national/cag-report-dwarka-expressway-morth-ccea-delhi-gurgaon-haryana/2960624/>

35. द्वारका एक्सप्रेसवे की लागत CCEA द्वारा स्वीकृत राशि से 14 गुना अधिक है: कैग (ndtv.in) 14 Aug 2023

केंद्र की भारतमाला परियोजना फेज -1 के तहत निर्मित द्वारका हाईवे की लागत 2017 में आर्थिक मामलों की कैबिनेट समिति (सीसीईए) द्वारा जारी राशि से 14 गुना अधिक हो

गई है। यह सरकार के टॉप ऑडिटर कंट्रोलर एंड ऑडिटर जनरल या कैग (CAG) ने कहा है। रिपोर्ट में कहा गया है कि एक्सप्रेसवे दिल्ली और गुरुग्राम के बीच NH-48 को समानांतर रूप से चलने वाले 14-लेन नेशनल हाईवे में विकसित करके भीड़भाड़ कम करने के लिए प्राथमिकता दी गई।

इस एक्सप्रेसवे को CCEA द्वारा अनुमोदित प्रति किमी लागत ₹18.20 करोड़ के मुकाबले ₹250.77 करोड़ प्रति किमी की बहुत ऊंची लागत पर बनाया गया।

रिपोर्ट में अप्रैल 2022 से इस पर सड़क परिवहन और राजमार्ग मंत्रालय की प्रतिक्रिया का हवाला देते हुए कहा गया है। इसके मुताबिक, "द्वारका एक्सप्रेसवे को अंतर-राज्यीय यातायात की सुचारू आवाजाही की अनुमति देने के लिए न्यूनतम प्रवेश निकास व्यवस्था के साथ आठ-लेन एलिवेटेड कॉरिडोर के रूप में विकसित करने का निर्णय लिया गया था।" इसे उच्च लागत के कारण के रूप में बताया गया था।

लेकिन भारत के कंट्रोलर एंड ऑडिटर जनरल (CAG) ने कहा कि 55,432 यात्री वाहनों के औसत दैनिक यातायात के लिए आठ लेन (एलिवेटेड लेन) की योजना/निर्माण का रिकॉर्ड पर कोई औचित्य नहीं था। 2,32,959 यात्री वाहनों के औसत वार्षिक दैनिक यातायात के लिए केवल छह लेन (ग्रेड लेन पर) की योजना/निर्माण की गई थी।

यह एकमात्र हाईवे नहीं है, जिसकी स्वीकृत लागत और वास्तविक लागत में अंतर है। रिपोर्ट से पता चला कि पूरे भारत में, भारतमाला परियोजना के तहत वास्तविक लागत (प्रोजेक्ट पूरी होने की कुल लागत) स्वीकृत लागत से 58 प्रतिशत अधिक थी। 26,316 किलोमीटर की परियोजना लंबाई की स्वीकृत लागत 8,46,588 करोड़ रुपये (32.17 करोड़ रुपये/किमी) थी। जबकि सीसीईए द्वारा अनुमोदित 34,800 किमी की लंबाई की लागत 5,35,000 करोड़ रुपये (15.37 करोड़ रुपये/किमी) थी।

वहीं, बढ़ती लागत के बावजूद, 34,800 किमी नेशनल हाईवे को पूरा करने की 2022 की समय सीमा पूरी नहीं हुई है। 31 मार्च 2023 तक केवल 13,499 किमी नेशनल हाईवे की लंबाई पूरी की गई है, जो सीसीईए द्वारा अनुमोदित लंबाई का 38.79 प्रतिशत है। इसमें कोविड महामारी के दौरान किया गया निर्माण भी शामिल है।

<https://ndtv.in/india/dwarka-expressway-built-cost-14-times-more-than-sanctioned-cost-says-government-auditor-4295628>

36. द्वारका एक्सप्रेस-वे पर CAG की रिपोर्ट से हंगामा, अरविंद केजरीवाल ने मोदी सरकार पर लगाए गंभीर आरोप (*punjabkesari.in*) 15 Aug 2023

दिल्ली के मुख्यमंत्री अरविंद केजरीवाल ने सोमवार को आरोप लगाया कि प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी नीत सरकार ने 'भ्रष्टाचार के सभी रिकॉर्ड तोड़ दिए हैं।' उन्होंने यह आरोप

भारत के नियन्त्रक एवं महालेखा परीक्षक (कैग) की रिपोर्ट के बाद लगाया जिसमें कथित तौर पर द्वारका एक्सप्रेस वे निर्माण पर 'बहुत अधिक व्यय' की बात की गई है। हालांकि, सड़क, परिवहन एवं राजमार्ग मंत्रालय ने एक बयान जारी कर इन आरोपों का खंडन किया और कहा कि "तथ्यों को गलत तरीके से पेश किया गया है।"

मोदी सरकार ने पिछले 75 साल के भ्रष्टाचार के सभी रिकॉर्ड तोड़ दिए मीडिया में आई खबरों के मुताबिक 'भारतमाला परियोजना' नामक राजमार्ग योजना के पहले चरण को लेकर तैयार कैग की रिपोर्ट में इंगित किया गया है कि कैसे भारतीय राष्ट्रीय राजमार्ग प्राधिकरण (एनएचएआई) द्वारा हरियाणा में द्वारका एक्सप्रेस-वे के एक हिस्से को ऊपरगामी पुल के रूप में बनाने के फैसले से लागत 18.2 करोड़ रुपए प्रति किलोमीटर से बढ़कर 251 करोड़ रुपए प्रति किलोमीटर हो गई। केजरीवाल ने मीडिया में कैग रिपोर्ट को लेकर छपी खबर का स्क्रीनशॉट माइक्रोब्लॉगिंग साइट 'एक्स' (पूर्व में ट्विटर) पर साझा करते हुए आरोप लगाया, "मोदी सरकार ने पिछले 75 साल के भ्रष्टाचार के सभी रिकॉर्ड तोड़ दिए हैं।"

आप नेता संजय सिंह ने भी केंद्र पर साधा निशाना दिल्ली स्थित आम आदमी पार्टी (आप) के मुख्यालय में आयोजित संवाददाता सम्मेलन में पार्टी के राज्यसभा सदस्य एवं राष्ट्रीय प्रवक्ता संजय सिंह ने भी मीडिया रिपोर्ट को लेकर मोदी पर निशाना साधा और कहा कि आजादी के बाद से उनकी सरकार 'सबसे भ्रष्ट' है। उन्होंने कैग रिपोर्ट का हवाला देते हुए कहा, "नरेन्द्र मोदी सरकार ने 250 करोड़ रुपए प्रति किलोमीटर की दर से सड़क (द्वारका एक्सप्रेस-वे) का निर्माण किया जबकि इसका निर्माण 18 करोड़ रुपए प्रति किलोमीटर की दर से किया जाना था।" सिंह ने कहा कि 'भारतमाला परियोजना' के तहत 15 करोड़ रुपए प्रति किलोमीटर की दर से 75 हजार किलोमीटर सड़क का निर्माण किया जाना है।

इस सरकार ने भारतमाला योजना में 7.5 लाख करोड़ रुपए का घोटाला किया उन्होंने कहा, "लेकिन नरेन्द्र मोदी सरकार ने लागत बढ़ाकर 25 करोड़ रुपए प्रति किलोमीटर कर दी है।" सिंह ने आरोप लगाया, "इस सरकार ने भारतमाला योजना में 7.5 लाख करोड़ रुपए का घोटाला किया है।" उन्होंने प्रधानमंत्री से कहा कि वह देश से भ्रष्टाचार खत्म करने की अपनी सरकार की प्रतिबद्धता के बारे में बात करना बंद करें। 'आप' सांसद ने यह भी आरोप लगाया कि इस परियोजना का 'सबसे अधिक लाभ' उद्योगपति गौतम अडाणी को हुआ है जिनकी कंपनी 'भारतमाला योजना' के तहत केरल, छत्तीसगढ़, तेलंगाना, आंध्र प्रदेश, महाराष्ट्र, ओडिशा, मध्यप्रदेश, पश्चिम बंगाल और गुजरात सहित विभिन्न राज्यों में सड़क निर्माण में संलग्न है।

आरोप का खंडन करते हुए मंत्रालय ने कहा कि प्रति किलोमीटर लागत की तथ्यात्मक स्थिति यह है कि 'भारतमाला परियोजना' की मंजूरी में परियोजना-वार लागत को मंजूरी नहीं दी गई थी। मंत्रालय ने बयान में कहा, "यह केवल कार्यक्रम की रूपरेखा प्रस्तुत करता है। ऐसे में लागत को 18.2 करोड़ रुपए प्रति किलोमीटर से बढ़ाकर 250 करोड़ रुपए प्रति किलोमीटर बताना तथ्यों को लेकर घोर गलतबयानी है।" बयान में कहा गया

कि मंत्रिमंडल की आर्थिक मामलों की समिति (सीसीईए) की मंजूरी के के समय 'भारतमाला परियोजना' के लिए 'मानक कीमत' 18.2 करोड़ रुपये (प्रति किलोमीटर) मानकर विचार किया गया।

मंत्रालय ने कहा, "भारतमाला परियोजना के तहत निर्माण पर खर्च डिजाइन, ढलान और क्षेत्र और भौगोलिक स्थिति पर निर्भर करता है।" मंत्रालय ने कहा, "भारतमाला परियोजना के तहत, विशेष परियोजना जिनमें पुलों/सुरंगों की पर्याप्त लंबाई वाले सड़कों का निर्माण किया गया उनकी औसत लागत 152 करोड़ रुपये प्रति किलोमीटर है।" मंत्रालय ने कहा कि निर्माण लागत परियोजना की प्रकृति के आधार पर भिन्न होती है।

आप नेता सिंह ने संवाददाता सम्मेलन में यह भी आरोप लगाया कि केंद्र की आयुष्मान भारत योजना और वृद्धा पेंशन योजना के क्रियान्वयन में भी अनियमितताएं हुईं। उन्होंने आरोप लगाया, "यह साफ दिख रहा है कि भारतमाला परियोजना के तहत सड़क निर्माण की लागत बढ़ी है, आयुष्मान योजना के तहत मरे हुए लोगों का भी इलाज किया जा रहा है, 10 लाख लोगों का आयुष्मान भारत कार्ड केवल तीन फोन नंबर के आधार पर बनाया गया।" <https://www.punjabkesari.in/national/news/uproar-over-cag-report-on-dwarka-expressway-1866300>

37. द्वारका एक्सप्रेसवे पर स्वीकृत लागत से चौदह गुना अधिक खर्च हुआ: कैग रिपोर्ट (thewirehindi.com) 14 Aug 2023

भारत के नियंत्रक एवं महालेखा परीक्षक (कैग) ने अपनी रिपोर्ट में 29.06 किलोमीटर लंबे द्वारका एक्सप्रेसवे की 'बहुत अधिक' निर्माण लागत का मसला उठाया है।

एनडीटीवी के अनुसार, कैग ने पाया कि केंद्र सरकार की भारतमाला परियोजना के चरण -1 के तहत निर्मित द्वारका हाईवे की लागत 2017 में आर्थिक मामलों की कैबिनेट समिति (सीसीईए) द्वारा अनुमोदित राशि से 14 गुना अधिक हुई है।

कैग रिपोर्ट में कहा गया है कि दिल्ली और गुड़गांव के बीच नेशनल हाईवे -48 पर भीड़भाड़ कम करने के उद्देश्य से इसके समानांतर चलने वाले 14-लेन राष्ट्रीय राजमार्ग के तौर पर विकसित किए जाने वाले एक्सप्रेसवे को सीसीईए द्वारा अनुमोदित 18.20 करोड़ रुपये प्रति किलोमीटर की लागत के मुकाबले 250.77 करोड़ रुपये प्रति किलोमीटर की 'बहुत अधिक' लागत पर बनाया गया।

रिपोर्ट में अप्रैल 2022 से इस पर सड़क परिवहन और राजमार्ग मंत्रालय की प्रतिक्रिया का हवाला देते हुए कहा गया है, 'द्वारका एक्सप्रेसवे को अंतरराज्यीय यातायात की सुचारू आवाजाही की अनुमति देने के लिए न्यूनतम प्रवेश-निकास व्यवस्था के साथ आठ-लेन एलिवेटेड कॉरिडोर के रूप में विकसित करने का निर्णय लिया गया था.' ऊंची लागत के लिए इसे ही वजह बताया गया है।

लेकिन कैग का कहना है कि रिकॉर्ड पर 55,432 यात्री वाहनों के औसत वाले दैनिक यातायात के लिए आठ लेन (एलिवेटेड लेन) की योजना/निर्माण का कोई स्पष्टीकरण नहीं था. केवल सालाना 2,32,959 यात्री वाहनों के औसत दैनिक यातायात के लिए केवल छह लेन (ग्रेड लेन पर) की योजना/निर्माण की बात की गई थी.

इंडियन एक्सप्रेस के मुताबिक, कैग रिपोर्ट में कहा गया है, 'ऑडिट में पाया गया कि द्वारका एक्सप्रेसवे की चार परियोजनाओं का एनएचएआई के तकनीकी प्रभाग के संक्षिप्त विवरण के आधार पर सक्षम प्राधिकारी द्वारा मूल्यांकन और अनुमोदन किया गया था. इस प्रकार, द्वारका एक्सप्रेसवे का मूल्यांकन और अनुमोदन बिना किसी विस्तृत प्रोजेक्ट रिपोर्ट के किया गया.'

इसने 'विस्तृत प्रोजेक्ट रिपोर्ट तैयार न करने' के प्रभावों को चिह्नित किया है, जिसके बारे में कहा गया है कि यह कई तरीकों से सामने आया है.

कैग की रिपोर्ट में अनुमोदित राशि और असल खर्च में विसंगति का यह अकेला मामला नहीं है. रिपोर्ट कहती है कि पूरे देश में भारतमाला परियोजना के तहत मंजूर हुई राशि (sanctioned cost) अनुमोदित राशि (approved cost) से 58 फीसदी अधिक रही.

26,316 किमी की परियोजना की स्वीकृत लागत 8,46,588 करोड़ रुपये (32.17 करोड़ रुपये/किमी) थी, जबकि सीसीईए द्वारा अनुमोदित 34,800 किमी की लंबाई की लागत 5,35,000 करोड़ रुपये (15.37 करोड़ रुपये/किमी) थी.

बढ़ी लागत के बावजूद 34,800 किमी राष्ट्रीय राजमार्गों को पूरा करने का काम 2022 की तय समयसीमा में पूरा नहीं हुआ है. 31 मार्च 2023 तक केवल 13,499 किमी राष्ट्रीय राजमार्ग पूरे हुए थे, जो सीसीईए द्वारा अनुमोदित लंबाई का 38.79 प्रतिशत है. इसमें कोविड महामारी के दौरान किया गया निर्माण भी शामिल है.

लागत में भारी बढ़ोतरी के बारे में रिपोर्ट में कहा गया है कि परियोजनाओं के दायरे और लागत अनुमान में महत्वपूर्ण बदलाव किए गए हैं. इसके अलावा, अपनाई गई कुछ महंगी परियोजना विशिष्टताओं ने भारतमाला परियोजना चरण 1 के तहत आने वाली परियोजनाओं की स्वीकृत लागत को बढ़ा दिया है. इसके परिणामस्वरूप प्रति किमी निर्माण की लागत में 10 करोड़ रुपये की वृद्धि हुई है.

विसंगतियां सिर्फ फंड प्रबंधन में ही मौजूद नहीं थीं. रिपोर्ट में कहा गया है कि यहां तक कि सीसीईए द्वारा तय किए गए मूल्यांकन और अनुमोदन तंत्र का भी सख्ती से पालन नहीं किया गया.

कैग ने कहा कि सफल बोलीदाताओं द्वारा निविदा शर्तों को पूरा नहीं करने या फर्जी दस्तावेजों के आधार पर बोलीदाताओं का चयन किए जाने के मामले मिले थे. स्वीकृत

विस्तृत परियोजना रिपोर्ट के बिना या दोषपूर्ण विस्तृत परियोजना रिपोर्ट के आधार पर काम आवंटित किया गया है।

इसमें यह भी कहा गया है कि कार्यान्वयन एजेंसियां अभी भी अपेक्षित भूमि की उपलब्धता सुनिश्चित किए बिना प्रोजेक्ट आवंटित कर रही हैं, जिसके परिणामस्वरूप परियोजनाओं का निर्माण शुरू होने और पूरा होने में देरी हो रही है। इसके अलावा, कई भारतमाला परियोजनाएं निर्धारित प्रक्रिया का उल्लंघन करते हुए पर्यावरण मंजूरी के बिना कार्यान्वित की जा रही थीं।

इसके साथ ही कैग की एक अन्य रिपोर्ट में कहा गया है कि दक्षिण भारत के कई राज्यों में टोल नियमों का उल्लंघन किया गया है, जिससे सड़क उपयोगकर्ताओं पर 154 करोड़ रुपये का अनुचित बोझ पड़ा है।

रिपोर्ट के अनुसार, एनएच शुल्क संशोधन नियम 2013 को अमल में न लाने के कारण एनएचएआई ने निर्माण की विलंबित अवधि के दौरान तीन टोल प्लाजा (नाथवलासा, चलागेरी, हेब्बालु) में यूजर शुल्क लेना जारी रखा, हालांकि संशोधित नियम में कहा गया है कि विलंबित अवधि के लिए ऐसा कोई शुल्क नहीं लगाया जाएगा। <https://thewirehindi.com/255550/cag-report-says-dwarka-expressway-cost-14-times-more-than-the-approved-amount/>

38. Only 7% of routes under RCS-UDAN scheme sustainable beyond 3-year concession period: CAG (*moneycontrol.com*) 14 Aug 2023

Only 54 routes or 7 percent of all awarded routes under the government's ambitious regional connectivity scheme (RCS), Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik (UDAN) have managed to sustain operations beyond the three-year concession period, the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) said in a report.

In its latest report on the Ministry of Civil Aviation's RCS-UDAN scheme, the auditor general pointed out that 52 percent (403 out of 774 routes) of the awarded routes were unable to commence operations.

"Out of the 371 commenced routes, only 112 routes (30 percent) successfully completed the full concession period of three years," the CAG said in its report.

Of the 112 routes only 54 routes managed to sustain operations beyond the three-year concession period as of March 2023, the report added.

As on February 9, 2023, after four rounds of bidding under UDAN, 467 routes have commenced, operationalising 70 airports, including two water aerodromes and nine heliports, the MoCA has said in a written reply to the Parliament.

The report comes at a time when, the government's RCS-UDAN scheme has failed to catch the eye of travellers during the first quarter of the financial year 2023-24 (Q1FY24), the busiest travel period in India's aviation history.

Only 5.5 lakh passengers took to the air under the RCS-UDAN scheme during April-June 2023-24. During this time, domestic carriers in the country carried around 3.86 crore passengers, as per government data seen by Moneycontrol.

The number of fliers in the UDAN scheme in Q1FY24 was marginally higher than the 5.2 lakh passengers in the corresponding period of the previous year.

The mediocre air traffic numbers of the RCS-UDAN scheme also come at a time when the government has doubled the funding under the scheme in the Budget for 2023-24.

In the Budget for 2023-24, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman earmarked Rs 1,244.07 crore for the scheme, up from Rs 600.71 crore (BE FY23) and a revised estimate of Rs 1,078.81 crore.

The CAG report also 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," the audit report stated.

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 that 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 auditor general also asked the MoCA to come up with a suitable mechanism to reconcile the viability gap funding (VGF) claims lodged by the airlines from the flight data available with Airport operators instead of disbursing the VGF on a self-certification basis.

It also asked MoCA to revamp the system of booking seats on flights under the UDAN scheme.

"The system of booking of seats on RCS routes needs to be revamped to ensure that airline operators do not charge airfare more than the airfare cap as stipulated in the Scheme," the CAG said in its report.

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.

Furthermore, the CAG report asked airlines to develop a transparent system of booking seats on RCS flights which should be monitored by MoCA to ensure that seats under the UDAN scheme are sold on priority against seats not covered by the scheme.

The CAG also called for the audit of Regional Air Connectivity Fund Trust accounts, while pointing out that an amount of Rs 600 crore was lying ideal in the Regional Air Connectivity Fund Trust account from December 2017 to March 2022.

The CAG also said that MoCA after six years of operating the scheme should now come up with a better mechanism for the identification of airports for revival/development, in the light of experience gained.

Pointing to examples of delays and the award of routes under UDAN without the proper infrastructure, the CAG report pointed out that there were delays of four to 54 months in preparing the Detailed Project Reports (DPR) in respect of 30 helipads/heliports.

CAG also said that 83 routes connecting 31 helipads/heliports were awarded to the four helicopter operators — Pawan Hans Limited, Heritage, Heligo and Sky One — in January 2018, but the helipads/heliports for which the routes were awarded were not ready to commence operations.

The auditor also said that in order for the airlines to operate from RCS airports, the stipulation to obtain additional performance guarantees should be adhered to in true spirit.

It pointed out that until April 2023 there was no penal clause under routes awarded under the UDAN scheme

The CAG also called for an audit of the performance of airlines operating on routes under the UDAN scheme.

Earlier this year, a Parliamentary Standing Committee also took note of the dwindling numbers under the RCS-UDAN scheme and has sought an explanation from MoCA.

It also noted that as per the Output Outcome Monitoring Framework for 2022-23 (till December 31, 2022), the Ministry has not been able to achieve the targets in most cases, with achievements in the range of 40 percent to 67 percent only.

"The Committee notes the low performance of the Ministry on almost all the constituents of the RCS-UDAN Scheme, except one. The Committee hopes that with the increased allocation, the Ministry would do meticulous planning to ensure full utilisation of funds and achievement of targets," the Committee had said in its report.

UDAN, a regional airport development program under the Centre's regional connectivity scheme, is aimed at refurbishing under-served airports to make air travel affordable.

The scheme was initiated on 21 October 2016 with the objective to fulfil the aspirations of people, with enhanced aviation infrastructure and air connectivity in tier II and tier III cities.

The UDAN scheme is applicable for a period of 10 years from the date of its notification. The Union government has set a target of operationalising 1,000 UDAN routes and reviving/developing 100 unserved and underserved airports/heliports/water aerodromes by 2024. <https://www.moneycontrol.com/news/business/only-7-of-routes-under-rcs-udan-scheme-sustainable-beyond-3-year-concession-period-cag-11182261.html>

39. CAG flays Centre's 'Swadesh Darshan' scheme, says tourism ministry has 'no long-term vision' (newindianexpress.com) 16 Aug 2023

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG), the country's top auditing body, has revealed that the much-talked-about Swadesh Darshan Scheme (SDS) was brought in by the Ministry of Tourism without an effective mechanism for evaluation or approval of projects sent by the state government or Union Territories (UTs) within a "definite time frame."

The audit has found that the ministry had taken 1-6 years to review and return the proposals of 202 projects. The report states that a total of 71 project proposals pertaining to 2015-2019 were returned by the ministry in August-October 2019 with the request to submit the proposal in line with the scheme guidelines of October 2017.

"Further, 131 project proposals were returned (in November 2021) on the ground that the scheme was under review. From the 10 available details of 96 project proposals out of 202, it was noticed that the ministry took up to six years to review and return the proposals of states," reads the CAG audit document submitted during the recently concluded Parliament session.

The ministry kept 43 proposals pending for three years or more without taking any action, and nine of these proposals were returned after 5-6 years of submission," it noted. The federal auditor selected 14 projects related to 10 tourist circuits from 13 states out of 76 projects (15 circuits) approved under the scheme for review.

The ministry did not have any long-term vision or policy for implementing the scheme, the CAG also noted. "While 18-36 months had been given to the state governments/UTs to complete the projects, the ministry itself kept the project proposals

pending for up to six years in a few cases without any action as it did not have a defined timeline for approval or rejection of project proposals,” the CAG remarked.

Flagship scheme for tourism development

The Swadesh Darshan Scheme, launched in 2015 with an outlay of Rs 500 crore, is a Central sector flagship scheme for the development of tourism infrastructure in the country.

A total of 76 projects comprising 910 sites and 6,898 components in 243 districts were sanctioned under it during 2015-2019. According to the tourism ministry, 63 projects are complete.

The scheme has been revamped as ‘Swadesh Darshan 2.0’ with the objective of developing sustainable and responsible tourism destinations. The ministry has identified 55 destinations for development for which it has already started appointing consultants. <https://www.newindianexpress.com/nation/2023/aug/16/cag-flays-centres-swadesh-darshan-scheme-says-tourism-ministry-has-no-long-term-vision-2605705.html>

40. CAG Questions Selection of SDS Projects by J&K Govt (*kashmirobserver.net*) August 14, 2023

The Comptroller and Auditor General of India has slammed the Jammu & Kashmir Government for selecting three projects under the Tourism Ministry’s” Swadesh Darshan” scheme.

The CAG report, which was tabled in the Parliament in the recently concluded monsoon session, has pointed out that these projects were selected without considering factors such as current tourist traffic, connectivity potential, and stakeholder consultation.

The Swadesh Darshan scheme was launched by the Union Tourism Ministry in 2015 for the development of tourist infrastructure in India.

In its report, the CAG said that these projects were picked up from existing developed tourist destinations or unviable sites were selected.

“As per the scheme guidelines, tourist circuits/destinations were to be identified considering factors such as current tourist traffic, connectivity potential and significance attached to the site, holistic tourist experience. However, identification criteria for the components planned and executed under the project was not mentioned in the respective DPRs. The projects were picked up from existing developed tourist destinations or unviable sites were selected. It was noticed that three projects were planned without considering factors such as current tourist traffic, connectivity potential, stakeholder consultation,” the CAG said.

The CAG revealed that a project under the scheme was executed at Suchetgarh , Jammu, despite being a sensitive location.

“Suchetgarh (Jammu) is situated in a sensitive border location. Despite knowing this fact, the state government selected this location for the execution of a project under the Himalayan circuit in Jammu & Kashmir and completed it by incurring an expenditure of Rs 3.71 crore. During the site visit, it was noticed that the project completed under the scheme is occupied and used by the Border Security Force (BSF) for their operational purposes, hence defeating the very purpose of the project,” reads the report.

The CAG noticed that Jammu & Kashmir government took up a project under the scheme in Salamabad Uri without ensuring availability of land for it.

“The component ‘Integrated Development of Border Tourism at Salamabad-Uri’ under Swadesh Darshan Scheme was entrusted to J&K Projects Construction Corporation (JKPCC) by State Tourism Department. The land belonged to National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) and despite knowing this fact, the implementing agency went ahead with project execution. During physical inspection, it was seen that NHPC had constructed a wall around the land and work had been stopped after incurring an expenditure of Rs 1.27 crore for earthwork for basement and foundation columns, etc., which thus proved to be unfruitful,” the report states.

The CAG report mentions that the J & K Government took up work for an amusement park at Tattoo Ground Srinagar without ensuring availability of land for the same.

“Similarly, land of Amusement Park at Tattoo Ground, Srinagar was in occupation by the Armed Forces. Without ensuring land availability, work was taken up and an expenditure of Rs 0.16 crore was incurred. Later, the Armed Forces did not allow construction and work was stopped. Thus, due to poor planning, the project turned out to be a total loss and got dropped,” the report states. <https://kashmirobservers.net/2023/08/14/cag-questions-selection-of-sds-projects-by-jk-govt/>

41. CAG questions selection of projects in J&K under Swadesh Darshan scheme (*thedispatch.in*) August 15, 2023

SRINAGAR: The Comptroller and Auditor General of India has slammed the Jammu & Kashmir Government for selecting three projects under the Tourism Ministry’s “Swadesh Darshan” scheme.

The CAG report, which was tabled in the Parliament in the recently concluded monsoon session, has pointed out that these projects were selected without considering factors such as current tourist traffic, connectivity potential, and stakeholder consultation.

The Swadesh Darshan scheme was launched by the Union Tourism Ministry in 2015 for the development of tourist infrastructure in India.

In its report, the CAG said that these projects were picked up from existing developed tourist destinations or unviable sites were selected.

“As per the scheme guidelines, tourist circuits/destinations were to be identified considering factors such as current tourist traffic, connectivity potential and significance attached to the site, holistic tourist experience. However, identification

criteria for the components planned and executed under the project was not mentioned in the respective DPRs. The projects were picked up from existing developed tourist destinations or unviable sites were selected. It was noticed that three projects were planned without considering factors such as current tourist traffic, connectivity potential, stakeholder consultation,” the CAG said.

The CAG revealed that a project under the scheme was executed at Suchetgarh, Jammu, despite being a sensitive location.

“Suchetgarh (Jammu) is situated in a sensitive border location. Despite knowing this fact, the state government selected this location for the execution of a project under the Himalayan circuit in Jammu & Kashmir and completed it by incurring an expenditure of Rs 3.71 crore. During the site visit, it was noticed that the project completed under the scheme is occupied and used by the Border Security Force (BSF) for their operational purposes, hence defeating the very purpose of the project,” reads the report.

The CAG noticed that Jammu & Kashmir government took up a project under the scheme in Salamabad Uri without ensuring the availability of land for it.

“The component ‘Integrated Development of Border Tourism at Salamabad-Uri’ under Swadesh Darshan Scheme was entrusted to J&K Projects Construction Corporation (JKPCC) by State Tourism Department. The land belonged to National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) and despite knowing this fact, the implementing agency went ahead with project execution. During physical inspection, it was seen that NHPC had constructed a wall around the land and work had been stopped after incurring an expenditure of Rs 1.27 crore for earthwork for basement and foundation columns, etc., which thus proved to be unfruitful,” the report states.

The CAG report mentions that the J & K Government took up work for an amusement park at Tattoo Ground Srinagar without ensuring the availability of land for the same.

“Similarly, land of Amusement Park at Tattoo Ground, Srinagar was in occupation by the Armed Forces. Without ensuring land availability, work was taken up and an expenditure of Rs 0.16 crore was incurred. Later, the Armed Forces did not allow construction and work was stopped. Thus, due to poor planning, the project turned out to be a total loss and got dropped,” the report states. <https://www.thedispatch.in/cag-questions-selection-of-projects-in-jk-under-swadesh-darshan-scheme/>

42. Key Facilities Not Availed by Tourists Due To Restricted Entry at SKICC/ Centaur Hotel: CAG (*kashmirilife.net*) 15 Aug 2023

SRINAGAR: The Comptroller and Auditor General of India has revealed that facilities built under the “Swadesh Darshan” scheme were not being utilized by tourists due to highly restricted entry into the premises of SKICC/ Centaur Hotel.

CAG in its report has stated that cruise-cum-floating restaurant completed with a tendered cost of Rs 1.83 crore was handed over to J&K Tourist Department in August 2021.

The report, however, states that the jetty constructed in SKICC/Centaur Lake View Hotel premises could not be utilized by tourists due to highly restricted entry in SKICC/Centaur premises being guarded round the clock by the CRPF.

Similarly, it has been pointed out that the musical fountain with multimedia laser and video show on a water screen at SKICC, Srinagar adjacent to Centaur Lake View Hotel premises completed at a cost of Rs 8 crore in August 2017, could not be used regularly for tourists due to frequent events held for high ranking officers and dignitaries in SKICC/Centaur premises.

In its response to CAG, Tourism Department, J&K stated that despite VVIP movements and the fountain remaining closed, the fountain show had attracted tourists.

“For cafeteria, it stated that initially the cruise was supposed to operate from the banks of Char Chinaari Ghat to Nehru Park Ghat, and as such two jetties along with rescue boats and ambulance boats were provided to the cruise. The jetties were portable and could be dragged in water to the place of choice,” the report states. <https://kashmirilife.net/key-facilities-not-availed-by-tourists-due-to-restricted-entry-at-skicc-centaur-hotel-cag-325261/>.

43. कैग ने केंद्र की पर्यटन योजना के तहत जम्मू-कश्मीर में परियोजनाओं के चयन पर सवाल उठा (samacharnama.com) 16 Aug 2023

भारत के नियंत्रक एवं महालेखा परीक्षक ने पर्यटन मंत्रालय की "स्वदेश दर्शन" योजना के तहत तीन परियोजनाओं का चयन करने के लिए जम्मू-कश्मीर सरकार की आलोचना की है।

हाल ही में संपन्न मानसून सत्र में संसद में पेश की गई सीएजी रिपोर्ट में बताया गया है कि इन परियोजनाओं का चयन वर्तमान पर्यटक यातायात, कनेक्टिविटी क्षमता और हितधारक परामर्श जैसे कारकों पर विचार किए बिना किया गया था।

भारत में पर्यटक बुनियादी ढांचे के विकास के लिए केंद्रीय पर्यटन मंत्रालय द्वारा 2015 में स्वदेश दर्शन योजना शुरू की गई थी।

कैग ने अपनी रिपोर्ट में कहा कि इन परियोजनाओं को मौजूदा विकसित पर्यटन स्थलों से उठाया गया था या अव्यवहार्य स्थलों का चयन किया गया था।

“योजना के दिशानिर्देशों के अनुसार, पर्यटक सर्किट/गंतव्यों की पहचान वर्तमान पर्यटक यातायात, कनेक्टिविटी क्षमता और साइट से जुड़े महत्व, समग्र पर्यटक अनुभव जैसे कारकों को ध्यान में रखते हुए की जानी थी। हालाँकि, परियोजना के तहत नियोजित और निष्पादित घटकों के लिए पहचान मानदंड का उल्लेख संबंधित डीपीआर में नहीं किया गया था। परियोजनाएं मौजूदा विकसित पर्यटन स्थलों से ली गईं या अव्यवहार्य स्थलों का चयन किया गया। यह देखा गया कि वर्तमान पर्यटक यातायात, कनेक्टिविटी क्षमता, हितधारक परामर्श जैसे कारकों पर विचार किए बिना तीन परियोजनाओं की योजना बनाई गई थी,” सीएजी ने कहा। <https://samacharnama.com/city/pulwama/pulwama-cag-questions-selection-of-projects-in-jammu-and/cid11929690.htm>

44. रामनगरी अयोध्या के विकास कार्यों में करोड़ों का घोटाला: कैग रिपोर्ट का दावा (newsnasha.com) 15 Aug 2023

रामनगरी अयोध्या से हैरतअंगेज खबर सामने आ रही है। रामनगरी में स्वदेश दर्शन योजना के तहत हुए विकास कार्यों में 20 करोड़ का घोटाले का मामला सामने आया है। देश के नियंत्रक एवं महालेखा परीक्षक कैग की रिपोर्ट में यह खुलासा हुआ है।

रामनगरी के गुप्तारघाट के आस-पास हुए काम में ठेकेदारों को अनुचित लाभ पहुंचाने की बात सामने आई है। कैग की इस रिपोर्ट से प्रशासनिक अमले में हड़कंप मच गया है। भारत के नियंत्रक एवं महालेखा परीक्षक ने कथित तौर पर स्वदेश दर्शन योजना के तहत केंद्र सरकार की अयोध्या विकास योजना के अमल में अनियमितताएं पाई हैं।

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।

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। 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।

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। <https://www.newsnasha.com/cag-report-claims-scam-of-crores-in-development-works-of-ramnagari-ayodhya/>

45. Less than 20% of govt khadi units working, says CAG (livemint.com) 14 Aug 2023

Only 18 out of the 92 departmental trading units of the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) are functional, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) has flagged amid a push for Khadi products.

These units include the Central Sliver Plants and sales outlets named Khadi Gramodyog Bhavans.

A CAG report showed that as of 31 March 2021, as many as 74 trading units were defunct. The compliance audit evaluated the operations of the 18 functional units and supply chain management during 2017-18 to 2020-21.

The audit also conducted a general scrutiny of 25 defunct departmental trading units to ascertain reasons and impact of closure.

“During audit, it was observed that these initiatives could not meet the desired degree of success as there were many challenges and weakness in implementation,” the report said. It noted that despite less than 20% of the departmental trading units being able to continue operations, the KVIC has not done any analysis to identify the reasons for the units becoming defunct.

It said the reasons for closure were not available for 11 out of 25 departmental trading units and in the case of three, the reasons and justifications were not fully convincing. More efforts by KVIC could have prevented their closure.

“In case of another two departmental trading units, private parties were generating considerable revenue through unauthorised sales of Khadi products indicating scope for revenue generation through these departmental trading units,” it said.

The development comes at a time when the government has been trying to promote Indian products through concepts like ‘Vocal for Local’, ‘Khadi for Nation’ and ‘Khadi for Fashion’.

Queries sent to the MSME ministry and KVIC remained unanswered till press time. <https://www.livemint.com/news/india/cag-flags-only-18-functional-trading-units-out-of-92-in-kvic-lack-of-analysis-on-closure-reasons-report-11692031550260.html>

46. Small tea growers who contributed 50% of total tea production in 2020-21 lack registration: CAG (zeebiz.com) Aug 15, 2023

The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) in its audit report on the 'Role of Tea Board' in the development of tea has recommended that the board should build a well-defined strategy for identification of all the small tea growers and should maintain a database for extending developmental assistance and regulatory control.

The report revealed that small tea growers contributed towards more than 50 per cent of total tea production in 2020-21.

"However, in absence of a well-defined strategy for identification and registration of the small tea growers, 38 per cent of small tea growers were not registered as of March 2021 and were out of the ambit of Tea Board's regulatory activities and development assistance," it stated.

The report also says that similarly, 119 out of 1,573 big tea growers were not registered as of March 2021.

The Tea Board of India was established on April 1, 1954, as per the provisions of Section 4 of the Tea Act, 1953.

The board is assigned with the overall development of the tea industry in India and is functioning under the administrative control of the Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

The CAG also found lapses on the part of the tea board in monitoring tea production to confirm that brews of standard quality are produced.

"Under the Tea Act, the board is authorised to inspect the quality of tea. However, factories were not adequately inspected in the five financial years," the CAG report reads.

The report also revealed that the shortfall of inspection ranged between 78.62 per cent and 91.95 per cent which showed poor monitoring on the part of the tea board. <https://www.zeebiz.com/economy-infra/news-small-tea-growers-who-contributed-50-of-total-tea-production-in-2020-21-lack-registration-comptroller-and-auditor-general-of-india-cag-249058>

STATES NEWS ITEMS

47. Improve quality of capital expenditure: CAG to govt (*navhindtimes.in*) 15 August 2023

With Goa confronted by rising debt, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) has asked the state to improve the quality of capital expenditure so as to cut down on borrowings.

CAG in the State Finances Audit Report, for the year ended March 2022, has pointed out poor quality of capital expenditure leading to measly returns on investment.

The report highlights that as on March 31, 2022, the state's total investment in various government owned companies, corporations, other bodies, etc., amounted to `657.6 crore.

"The return on this investment ranged from 0.20 per cent to 0.32 per cent during 2017-22 while the government paid an average interest of up to 7 per cent on its borrowings during the same period," says the report.

It says that, the government needs to initiate measures to earn adequate returns on its investments to keep its fiscal deficit (borrowings) at low levels.

The report discloses that, the return on investment actually came down over a five year period, from 1.96 per cent in 2017-18 to 1.6 per cent in 2021-22. While during this period the outgo on net outgo on interest, viz. the difference between the interest paid

on market borrowings and the return on investments, rose from ₹1,242 crore in 2017-18, to ₹1,781 crore in 2021-22.

The report notes that, other than below par investments in state PSUs and corporations the government also earns poorly on loans to cooperative societies and many institutions. The interest received on the loans and advances as a percentage of the average outstanding receipt was only 1.5 per cent in 2021-22.

A whopping ₹248.6 crore of the capital expenditure incurred by the state is blocked in 141 incomplete projects. The report mentions that, the number of incomplete projects is increasing and the projects are delayed by as much as seven years.

“Blocking of funds in incomplete projects negatively impacts the quality of expenditure and deprives the state of the intended benefits. Further, funds borrowed for implementation of these projects during the respective years adds to the fiscal burden in terms of servicing of debt and interest liabilities,” warns the report.

CAG has asked the state government to take effective steps to complete all the delayed projects expeditiously so that the intended benefits reach the beneficiaries without further delay. <https://www.navhindtimes.in/2023/08/15/goanews/improve-quality-of-capital-expenditure-cag-to-govt/>

SELECTED NEWS ITEMS/ARTICLES FOR READING

48. Impeding climate finance: International Finance Corporation seems to have a rather risk-averse capital deployment strategy (*financialexpress.com*) August 15, 2023

The G20 meeting in September is the final chance for one of the most crucial items on the agenda—Multilateral Development Bank (MDB) reform. The International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group, plays a crucial role in promoting private sector investment in developing countries. However, a critical analysis of IFC’s capital deployment strategy reveals a risk-averse approach that may hinder its ability to drive capital for sustainable development.

The IFC’s substantial cash holdings raise questions about its effectiveness as a development finance institution. It is missing opportunities to provide much-needed capital for sustainable projects. Since IFC is not a deposit-taking institution, its cash reserves far exceed what is necessary for operational and financing purposes. By the end of 2022, IFC held \$32.5 billion of capital available to absorb potential losses against a total asset base of \$99 billion, while capital required to maintain an AAA credit rating is \$20.1 billion, as per IFC’s statement. Reducing the cash buffer will release \$12.4 billion of liquidity to deploy into high-impact projects.

Although IFC operates in developing countries, 1.6 times the conservative debt-to-equity is still not justified. Indian Non-Banking financial company’s debt-to-equity ratio is approximately 6 times. By exercising a more aggressive approach to debt financing, the IFC could effectively leverage its balance sheet and maximise its impact by channelling additional funds into sustainable development projects.

Over the past five years, IFC has typically mobilised about 80 cents of external capital for every dollar it invested, as it always protects itself from downside risk. Given the multi-trillion-dollar climate and development challenges and IFC's limited assets of ~\$100 billion, this mobilisation rate needs to increase. Embracing more innovative instruments, such as first-loss guarantees and partial credit guarantees, can crowd in additional private capital. IFC can invest in the "first" 20% of projects, crowding in private capital for the remainder. IFC should target private capital mobilisation on the order of 5:1 rather than 0.8:1.

Currently, IFC does not take on technology or commercial risks and tends to invest in companies that already have an established credit history and can access private financing. It should assume these risks that private financiers are not yet comfortable which warrants credit underwriting practices be less conservative, thereby attracting a higher proportion of private capital in projects.

In 2022, IFC's exposure to the financial market and fund was 48%. By relying on financial markets and funds to determine project selection, the IFC exposes itself to the risk of ESG-washing, where projects with limited environmental or social impact receive funding.

As a global institution, IFC invests and borrows in diverse currencies, with USD borrowings accounting for just 42% of borrowing. IFC's largest exposure is 10.5% of its portfolio (India), and its top three investees (India, Brazil, and China) are all relatively stable countries with minimal currency risk. Private sector investors regularly take unhedged risks in these markets, building in currency exchange rate risk as part of their expected risk vs. return profile. In contrast, IFC hedges on every transaction and passes this cost onto borrowers, making capital more expensive and, therefore, less impactful than even commercial financial institutions. The conservative currency hedging policy locks clients into higher rates with IFC than is available in the market.

The IFC's increasing average lending and investment size suggests a bias towards large projects as well. An analysis of 450 recent projects suggested an average investment size of \$88 million. Just 8.5% of projects were for an investment of less than \$10 million. This bias towards larger projects may limit the IFC's ability to support smaller-scale initiatives that can have a profound effect on inclusive growth. It means that investments tend to go to large, well-banked firms that do not necessarily need IFC's support. Diversifying investment sizes and embracing a more inclusive approach would allow the IFC to reach a broader range of projects and play a more catalytic role in investing in startups and companies promoting innovative solutions in emerging fields like battery storage, green hydrogen, EVs, etc.

The excessive compliance requirements for IFC investments, regardless of project size, is another challenge for small companies. The excessive compliance costs deter small projects and work in favour of large companies with extensive armies of accountants and lawyers.

While IFC is vital in stimulating private sector investment in developing countries, its capital deployment strategy exhibits a risk-averse approach that hampers its potential for driving sustainable development. As a development institution, IFC should be at the forefront of being more aggressive in taking risks that the private sector will not and

crowding in further private sector investment. Instead, it has shown a more conservative approach than private investors, limiting its additionality and development impact. <https://www.financialexpress.com/opinion/impeding-climate-finance-international-finance-corporation-seems-to-have-a-rather-risk-averse-capital-deployment-strategy/3210610/>

49. India's thermal power plants utilise 63% of imported coal during 2022-23
(*moneycontrol.com*) August 16, 2023

Domestic thermal power plants consumed 34.6 percent (21.4 MMT) of 61.7 million metric tons (MMT) of coal imported for the power sector in 2018-19. Five years down the line, in 2022-23, imported coal consumption by domestic thermal power plants increased to 35.1 MMT, accounting for 63.1 percent of the total coal imports for the sector, data from the Ministry of Power showed.

The increase in consumption of imported coal by the domestic thermal power plants happened even as the overall import of coal for the power sector declined 9.8 percent from 61.7 MMT in 2018-19 to 55.6 MMT in 2022-23.

On the contrary, imported coal based (ICB) power plants, which cannot run on domestically produced coal, consumed 65.3 percent (40.3 MMT) of the total essential fossil fuel imported for the power sector in 2018-19. The same rather declined to 36.8 percent in 2022-23.

The reverse trend, where domestic coal based power plants are using more imported coal than ICB plants has happened due to a government policy which was first issued last year in May and again re-issued this year to avoid a coal crisis at thermal power plants and ensure continuous generation of electricity despite a steep rise in demand during the peak summer months.

This year, the government issued the order on January 9, where it asked all gencos to use imported coal to the extent of 6 percent of their requirement. This mandate will remain in effect until September this year. Power generation companies (gencos) failing to comply with the directive face restrictions on a pro-rata basis, as per the order.

The consumption by imported coal based power plants reduced over the years because most of these plants remained shut due to high international coal prices and their power purchase agreements (PPAs) did not have adequate provisions for pass-through of the increased cost of generation.

While there are at least 150 domestic thermal power plants, ICB plants are only 15. Some of these include Coastal Gujarat Power Ltd, Adani Power Mundra Ltd, Essar Power Gujarat Ltd, JSW Ratnagiri Ltd, Tata Trombay Ltd., GSECL Sikka Ltd., IL&FS Tamilnadu Power Company Ltd, Muthiara-Coastal Energen, Udupi Power and so on.

But since last year, the government has been invoking section 11 of the Electricity Act, 2003, under which these ICB plants have to mandatorily operate to meet the country's increasing power demand. This year, the mandate will be in effect till September.

“As per the existing import policy, coal is kept under Open General License (OGL) and consumers are free to import coal from the source of their choice as per their contractual agreement on payment of applicable duty,” Union Minister of Coal Pralhad Joshi told the Lok Sabha on August 9.

Most of the requirement of coal in the country is met through indigenous production. “The focus of the government is on increasing domestic production of coal and eliminating non-essential import of coal,” the minister said.

In 2022-23, coal production in India increased by about 14.77 percent over the previous year. During the current year till July, 2023, domestic coal production has increased by over 9.2 percent compared to the same period of last year. The domestic coal production is estimated to increase to more than one Billion Tonne (BT) in the current year 2023-24, as per the ministry of coal. <https://www.moneycontrol.com/news/power/indias-thermal-power-plants-utilise-63-of-imported-coal-during-2022-23-11202131.html>

50. Boosting Atmanirbharta in Defence: Army Orders Made-In-India Weapons worth Rs 7,300 Crore Utilising Emergency Purchase Powers
(*swarajyamag.com*) August 16, 2023

The Army has utilised emergency purchase powers to acquire weapon systems worth Rs 7,300 crore from Indian manufacturers, aiming to address the border threat posed by China.

Additionally, contracts valued at Rs 7,000 crore are nearing finalization and are anticipated to be signed within the upcoming weeks. <https://swarajyamag.com/defence/boosting-atmanirbharta-in-defence-army-orders-made-in-india-weapons-worth-rs-7300-crore-utilising-emergency-purchase-powers>