

## Chapter 7 : General Services

### 7.1 E-Governance

Directorate of Information Technology (DIT) was created in April 1999, with the aim to facilitate IT usage in the State through e-Governance. Later, in April 2001, the Tripura State Computerisation Agency (TSCA)<sup>27</sup> was constituted with the main objective of implementing the computerization projects in different departments of the State Government. Both the DIT and the TSCA were Agartala centric and without organizational set up extended upto the district level.

#### (a) National E-Governance Plan (NeGP)

GOI approved (May 2006) the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) in pursuance of its policy of introducing e-Governance on a massive scale as enunciated in the National Common Minimum Programme. NeGP aims to “Make all Government Services accessible to the common man in his locality, through common service delivery outlets and ensure efficiency, transparency and reliability of such services at affordable costs to realize the basic needs of the common man”.

For delivery of “web-enabled” anywhere access to information and service across the country, NeGP envisages 3 pillars of e-Governance infrastructure viz (i) State Wide Area Networks (SWAN) (ii) State Data Centres (SDC) for secured and fail-safe data storage and (iii) Common Service Centres (CSCs) as the primary front-ends for service delivery.

#### (i) State Wide Area Networks (SWAN)

SWAN was aimed at setting up a network to connect the State headquarters with all districts, sub-divisional blocks, revenue circle, police circle headquarters, police stations and other offices with sufficient bandwidth to support various applications including voice data and video.

Audit analysis revealed that prior to inception of NeGP, Additional Central Assistance (ACA) of Rs.2.50 crore released by the State Industries and Commerce Department in February 2004 to Information Technology (IT) Department for SWAN activities remained unimplemented. Subsequently, the scheme was integrated with NeGP to provide connectivity extending up to block level through 2 MBPS lease lines.

GOI in September 2005 provided Rs 2.94 crore to the TSCA for site preparation of SWAN. An Implementation Committee constituted in August 2005 had selected BSNL as Bandwidth service provider to provide (March 2007) 61 leased lines to the 61 identified Points of Presence (POP), after a delay of 19 months. Though, Service Level Agreement (SLA) was signed with BSNL in May 2007, no time limit was prescribed therein for completion of the work.

<sup>27</sup> TSCA is a registered society formed in April 2001, to implement computerisation project in different departments of the State Government

Out of 61 Point of Presences, 57 had been commissioned till August 2009. Although more progress was verbally reported in the Exit Conference (October 2009), the details about such progress were not made available despite persuasion (January 2010).

### **(ii) State Data Centres (SDC)**

SDC was proposed to be created to consolidate service, applications and infrastructure to provide efficient electronic delivery service. Some of its key functions are Central Repository of the State, Secure Data Storage, Online Delivery Services, Citizen Information/Services Portal, State Internet Portal, Disaster Recovery, Remote Management and Service Integration etc. For creation of SDC, TSCA received Rs. 3.28 crore from GOI in April 2008. The State Data Centre Project Implementation Committee constituted in July 2008, decided to set up the SDC at the IT Directorate, and TSCA was designated as the implementing agency.

Audit scrutiny of records of the Director, IT revealed that Rs. 26.42 lakh had been paid (July 2008) to the Deputy GM Electrical Division, Tripura State Electricity Corporation Ltd, Capital Complex, Agartala for providing non-stop power supply (500 KVA) to the centre by August 2008. The non-stop power supply was yet to be provided (January 2010). Besides, the bidding process for selection of the executing agency due to be completed by September 2008 was still pending.

Reasons for non-adherence to the time-schedule of the programme, though called for, were not furnished (January 2010).

### **Capacity Building**

Besides, another sub-scheme viz. Capacity Building (CB) under NeGP envisaged development of institutional mechanism, capacity requirements etc in line with the e-Governance Roadmaps. A fund of Rs. 4.07 crore had been received from GOI for the purpose. However, till date (August 2009) no progress had been reported.

Reasons for non implementation of the scheme even after four years, though called for, were not furnished (January 2010).

### **(iii) Common Service Centres (CSC)**

Another sub-scheme under NeGP was to set up Common Service Centres (CSC) as the physical front ends for delivery of services to the citizens. The State Government approved a Scheme for facilitating the establishment of broadband Internet enabled Common Service Centres for the rural citizens to have access to the various e-Government and private e-services at their doorstep. The scheme has been decided to be implemented through a Public Private Partnership (PPP) in respect of which no agreement was however, signed as yet (January 2010).

Audit scrutiny revealed that Rs 57.75 lakh had been received by the TSCA (from GOI Rs.28.75 lakh in November 2006 and from the State Rs.29.00 lakh in March 2007) for

implementation of the project. Rs. 2.91 lakh was earned as Bank interest. Till date, an expenditure of Rs. 7,845/- only was incurred (0.13 *per cent*) and the project remained unimplemented.

Reasons for non implementation of the scheme even after 32 months from the receipt from GOI were not on record.

## 7.2 Agartala City Area Network (ACAN)

### i) Introduction

ACAN was to cover 17 buildings in Agartala city with service of voice data and video by laying OFC<sup>28</sup> based network. An agreement signed on 04 February 2005, with TCIL<sup>29</sup> for SWAN prior to its inclusion in NeGP was replaced by another agreement with the same firm signed after about nine months (14 November 2005), wherein the scope of work agreed previously covering the entire State was narrowed down to cover only 17 buildings in Agartala city. The reasons for reducing the scope of the work and the competent authority which approved such a decision, though called for, were not furnished.

After finalising another agreement (August 2006) with M/s HCL Commet Ltd selected by TCIL for actual execution of the project, the project cost stood at Rs. 6.43 crore excluding the consultancy fee of Rs. 2.75 lakh already paid to TCIL in February 2006. There was delay by TCIL to discharge its role as Consultant and Project Manager by at least eight months delaying the completion of the project (June 2008).

Against receipt of Rs.0.05 crore from the State Industries and Commerce Department, expenditure on ACAN was Rs. 5.30 crore (paid to TCIL between February 2006 and July 2009). The balance expenditure was incurred from other sources *viz* (i) Rs. 2.50 crore diverted from pre-NeGP SWAN (ii) Rs. 0.21 crore diverted from the funds received from the Forest Department in January 2003 for establishment of Wide Area Network (WAN) for different field offices of the Forest Department and (iii) Rs. 2.54 crore from the funds available with TSCA as general Grants-in-Aid received from the State Government.

Thus, the funding for ACAN was not properly planned. No documents in support of approval of the Competent Authority for spending funds for ACAN from other funds could be shown to Audit.

### ii) Utility

IT Department is yet to assess the value addition, if any, to the betterment of services through the network. Audit observed an inherent deficiency in the network as the system was operational through a chain of server placed at different locations and that the complete system in the chain shut down even if one of the servers was put off. Therefore, the network frequently shut down and the IT Department was yet to resolve the matter.

<sup>28</sup> Optical Fibre Cable

<sup>29</sup> Telecommunications Consultants India Limited

Information received from 4<sup>30</sup> out of 13 Offices of the West Tripura District, which were reportedly provided ACAN connectivity by the DIT when asked by Audit about its use and utility by them, revealed that there were no such facility as claimed to have been provided by the DIT. The said four Offices further stated that they had neither requisitioned nor sent willingness for such connection, while nine others did not reply.

### **iii) Integration of Connectivity**

For a similar network already under implementation by the State Government on a much wider basis viz. SWAN<sup>31</sup>, BSNL was entrusted with the task of providing the connectivity. BSNL having adequate network facility had also offered their service to provide connectivity among all the 17 buildings at Agartala, which ACAN was to cover. Audit analysis revealed that the IT Directorate, however, did not respond positively and availed the connectivity from M/s HCL-Comnet Ltd. through TCIL. By accepting the offer of BSNL, the following benefits could have accrued:

- (i) The rates would have been cheaper
- (ii) As the network was readily available, implementation time would have been reduced
- (iii) Duplication of resources would be avoided.

The Joint Director, IT in his reply (November 2009) stated that BSNL connectivity was not considered at the advanced stage of implementation due to various technical reasons and the decision was vetted by the Secretary, IT in a meeting (February 2007).

Fact, however, remained that the ACAN which was claimed to be the backbone network for delivering various e-Governance applications, information to citizens and many citizen centric services etc. and for which Rs. 5.30 crore had been incurred, was yet to be fully functional thus, depriving the district population of e-services.

**In essence, there was very little progress towards the objectives of NeGP and other essential and correlated sub-schemes for setting up service delivery front-ends. Besides, Capacity Building under NeGP was also not yet implemented despite lapse of almost five years since GOI release thus, depriving the district population of the e-services intended.**

### ***Recommendation***

*Adequate planning including funding arrangement and internal capacity building should precede taking up of the schemes to avoid fund constraints, diversion of funds, and also to ensure timely completion of the project. To effect more economy and avoid duplication of resources, feasibility of availing already existing connectivity/ offer of similar nature, if any, should be suitably explored.*

<sup>30</sup> O/o the Sr. Managers, Electrical Sub-divisions No. II & III (TSECL), O/o the M/S, G.B.P. Hospital and O/o the Jt. Transport Commissioner, Agartala.

<sup>31</sup> State Wide Area Networks

### **7.3 Management of Municipal Solid Waste (MMSW)**

#### **i) Introduction**

Management of Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) has become a daunting task for all municipal/local bodies. On one hand rapid urbanization has increased the population density of cities and towns at a very fast pace and on the other hand due to the changing life style and consumption pattern more waste is generated.

#### **ii) Targeted tasks and time schedule**

To regulate the management and handling of the Municipal Solid Wastes in the country, the Municipal Solid Wastes (Management and Handling) Rules 2000 were framed by the GOI, MoEF, and the same was notified on 25 September 2000.

The said Rules were applicable to every Municipal Authority responsible for collection, segregation, storage, transportation, processing and disposal of the Municipal Solid Waste generated in its territorial area. The Municipal Authority was bound to implement the provisions of these Rules in accordance with the compliance criteria and the procedure laid down in Schedule II thereof mainly in respect of the aforesaid six parameters, and was also responsible for any infrastructure development required for this purpose. A time bound implementation programme was also prescribed therein, according to which three important tasks viz. (1) Improvement of existing landfill sites (2) Identification of landfill sites for future use and making site(s) ready for operation and (3) Setting up of waste processing and disposal facilities were to be accomplished by the end of 2001, 2002 and 2003 respectively. The Municipal Authority was to apply for grant of authorization for all these programmes to the State Pollution Control Board.

#### **iii) Status in respect of Agartala Municipal Corporation (April 2004)**

Audit scrutiny revealed that the Agartala Municipal Council (AMC) had not yet created any separate Solid Waste Management (SWM) wing. The work of SWM was being carried out with other cleaning works by its Public Health and Engineering Section with very limited technical infrastructure and manpower. In mid-2004, when there was an initiative to re-arrange the existing 17 Wards of the AMC to 35 Wards through inclusion of additional areas, the city suffered from acute problem of MSW and inadequacy in collection, segregation, transportation and disposal system. No systematic method was employed for storage of MSW. Only 40 *per cent* household of the old 17 Wards were brought under Door-to-Door collection system and segregation of MSW was not at all undertaken. The newly included areas in the extended AMC has no system of collection and organized storage system.

Further audit analysis revealed that in mid-2004, most of the people used to throw their Solid Waste on open drain, low-lying areas, and roadsides. Most of the containers were not in good condition, properly placed or covered, and were only half filled. Only about 50 *per cent* of the generated waste was stored into containers and removed engaging mainly 5 trucks, 12 Tippers, 10 Dumper Placers and 1 loader, all of which were very old. Each day, out of 180-200 tonnes of waste produced on an average, around 80 tonnes



were transported (40-50 *per cent*) and dumped on an open site at Hapania, the only available dumping yard 7 K.M away from the city with an area of 20 acres (approx.).



Open solid waste dumping yard at Hapania

#### **iv) Model Facilities for Demonstration of Management of MSW**

The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) in accordance with the Hon'ble Supreme Court's order dated 4 October 2004 launched (January 2005) a scheme to provide technical and financial assistance on 90:10 cost sharing basis to the Municipal Bodies to develop Model Facilities for Demonstration of Management of MSW towards implementation of MSW Rules 2000.

The Agartala Municipal Council (AMC) submitted a DPR to the CPCB under this scheme through Tripura State Pollution Control Board (TSPCB) in November 2005 for a total Project Cost of Rs. 7.00 crore. The CPCB, however, approved the project for Rs.3.00 crores only since funds would also be available from Twelfth Finance Commission (TFC), and sanctioned (February 2006) Rs.2.70 crore being 90 *per cent* share for the project. The remaining 10 *per cent* (Rs. 30 lakh) was to be borne by the AMC. A tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed in this regard on 6 February 2006 by the CPCB, the TSPCB and the AMC, in which it was agreed to complete the project within 3 years (36 months) from the date of release of the 1<sup>st</sup> instalment.

#### **v) Interim Evaluation by CPCB**

Meanwhile, one 30 tonne/ day capacity Compost Plant was set up at Hapania but the pitiable condition of MSW in the city did not change till mid-2007. A Visit Report (May 2007) of the CPCB team revealed that there was no approach road to enter the 'Solid Waste Disposal Site' at Hapania. The team had also referred the implementation of the MSW Rules 2000 in Agartala to be in 'very Bad Shape' and observed dumping of solid wastes in almost all areas on the roadside causing nuisance to the population. In pursuance of setting up of a number of Technical/ Medical/ Para Medical Institutions, the area around the Hapania site had become prime property and the AMC was in the process of developing another Landfill site and a Processing Unit at Nagicharra.

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Waste dumping at Hapania affecting the environment around the institutions in the vicinity

### vi) Financial Position

The CPCB had released their full share of Rs.2.70 crore, (1<sup>st</sup> instalment: Rs. 0.60 crore in February 2006, 2<sup>nd</sup> instalment: Rs. 1.05 crore in September 2007 and 3<sup>rd</sup> instalment: Rs. 1.05 crore in January 2010) and the AMC, against their share due of Rs. 30 lakh, had released Rs. 18.34 lakh only. The year-wise release of funds and the expenditure incurred by the AMC on MSW since 2004-05 onwards from own source and the CPCB placed funds for Model Facilities for Demonstration of Management of MSW (MFDMMSSW) are given in Table No. 23.

Table No. 23

(Rupees in crore)

Year	Opening Balance	Funds received from			Total i/c Opening Balance	Expenditure			Balance*	
		Own Source of AMC	MFDMMSSW			Own Source	MFDMMSSW	Total		
			AMC Share	Share of CPCB						
2004-05	--	1.18	--	--	1.18	1.18	--	1.18	--	
2005-06	--	1.69	--	--	1.69	1.69	--	1.69	--	
2006-07	--	1.50	0.06	0.60	2.16	2.16	1.50	0.04	1.54	0.62
2007-08	0.62	1.63	Nil	1.05	2.68	3.30	1.63	0.33	1.96	1.34
2008-09	1.34	1.85	Nil	Nil	1.85	3.19	1.85	0.66	2.51	0.68
2009-10 (up to January 2010)	0.68	2.22	0.12	1.05	3.39	4.07	2.22	0.79	3.01	1.07
<b>Total</b>		<b>10.07</b>	<b>0.18</b>	<b>2.70</b>	<b>12.95</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>10.07</b>	<b>1.82</b>	<b>11.89</b>	<b>--</b>

\*It excludes interest

Source: Records made available by the AMC, Agartala.

Besides, the AMC received Rs. 1.29 crore during the period 2006-07 to 2009-10 (upto November 2009) under SWM of TFC Award (Non Plan), out of which an expenditure of Rs. 0.64 crore was incurred mainly on transportation, leaving a balance of Rs. 0.65 crore.

### vii) Delay in release of funds

There was delay on the part of the TSPCB to issue cheques in favour of the AMC after release of the 1<sup>st</sup> as well as the 3<sup>rd</sup> instalment by the CPCB. There were also delay in release of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> instalment by the CPCB by 20 months and 27 months respectively, due to non-compliance of the agreed terms by the AMC regarding timely

submission of Utilisation Certificate and Progress Report to the former through the TSPCB.

#### **viii) Present Status**

The year-wise progress of the scheme could not be reviewed in the absence of relevant records. However, from the records made available it was seen that as of January 2010, about 180 tonnes of garbage were being produced per day in the AMC area of 61.74 sq Km comprising 35 Wards, and 32000 out of 52636 households. On an average, 51 Nos. of trips per day were lifting approximately 90 tonnes (50 %) of Wastes and these were being transported and dumped at the existing dumping yard at Hapania.

#### **ix) Item wise Achievement**

Comparison of the physical progress made so far vis-à-vis the item-wise targets as per CPCB's approval (**Appendix-VIII**) revealed that there was huge shortfall in developing the required infrastructure for proper handling of household wastes, right from Segregation and Collection to processing and disposal. While some equipment were not at all procured, some were procured partially and some, though procured, were not used as yet. Two items costing Rs. 14.80 lakh were not felt to be required after obtaining approval. There were deviations necessitating inclusion of three extra items and one modified item for which CPCB's approval was not obtained. Works for the Processing Unit and the Landfill site at Nagichara were yet to be started.

#### **x) Uncovered storage and transportation**

Further, MSW Rules, 2000 provided for creation of Storage facilities in such a manner that wastes stored were not exposed to open atmosphere and should be aesthetically acceptable and user-friendly. The Rules normally prohibited manual handling of Wastes, which could be done only under unavoidable circumstances and that too, with proper precaution. The said Rules also required that the vehicles used for transportation of Wastes should be covered preventing their scattering and visibility to public. In contravention of all these essential requirements, exposed storage and manual handling of wastes was still a common practice in the AMC area, and the Municipal vehicles carrying Wastes were seldom found covered.





Garbage being transported in open truck by AMC



Scattered polythene and plastic wastes, from open AMC container/ rickshaw van by the roadside at Kumartilla of northern Agartala



Waste dumped in a pond at a residential area at Dimsagar of central Agartala.

**In conclusion, despite enhancing the Capacity of AMC for better handling and management of MSW in comparison to the pre-2007 period, the objectives of the CPCB sponsored scheme for Management of MSW within the AMC area could not be fully achieved nor the intended benefits made available to the municipal population within the time schedule. Delay in preparing an Action Plan in a phased manner coupled with non-initiation of a well monitored implementation system and casual approach in the project implementation deprived the people of their right to live in a hygienic condition.**

***Recommendation***

*Attempts should be made to hasten the pace of implementation by setting up a separate dedicated cell with proper infrastructure for effective accomplishment of all the six stages of MSW management.*

*Monitoring and vigilance should be strengthened and a 24x7 hour helpline may be set up in the AMC with adequate publicity to help citizens in communicating the emergency requirements and also to ensure more community participation in the waste management of the city.*