

CHAPTER V : MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Department of Higher Education

School of Planning and Architecture

5.1 Blocking of funds on purchase of land

The School of Planning and Architecture incurred an expenditure of ₹ 1.95 crore during January 1988 to March 1992 for acquiring land for its new campus. However, even demarcation of land was not done resulting in blocking of funds for more than 20 years.

The School of Planning and Architecture (SPA), declared a deemed University in 1979, functions from three different locations¹ in Delhi covering an area of 8.8 acre.

SPA approached (February 1983) the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) with a land requirement of 50 acre. DDA decided (November 1987) to allot a plot of land measuring 20 acre to SPA for construction of new campus at Vasant Kunj on perpetual lease hold basis for ₹ 1.64 crore including one year's ground rent. The proposal was accepted by the Ministry in December 1987.

SPA made a payment of ₹ 1.64 crore to DDA in January 1988. However, on account of change in site by DDA, SPA made additional payment of ₹ 30.75 lakh to DDA in March 1992 towards difference in premium of the plot of land and took possession (June 1992) of the plot as per drawings only.

It was stipulated in the allotment letter that SPA should complete fencing of the plot immediately on possession to avoid encroachment and further complete the construction within a period of two years from the date of handing over of possession. However, in the absence of demarcation and fencing M/s Unison Hotels Limited trespassed upon the plot by dumping excavated earth during construction of their hotel. SPA claimed (1998) damages on this account from M/s Unison and the matter is under litigation.

A meeting was held (April 2003) with DDA to resolve the issue arising out of re-demarcation of the plot allotted wherein it was decided that SPA will carry out the survey of actual boundaries and submit the same to DDA. SPA got the

¹ Academic, teaching and hostel at two buildings in Indraprastha campus area of 3.7 acre and hostel and residential accommodation at New Friend's colony with area of 5.1 acre.

survey conducted by a consultant and sent the survey report to DDA on 29 March 2004 along with a request to resolve the issue of land on priority basis.

Thereafter, DDA raised (May 2010) further demand of ₹ 1.47 lakh for getting the re-demarcation of the allotted land as a deposit work and the amount was paid by SPA. The re-demarcation of plot could not be done as there were variations in area of land which are yet to be resolved by the DDA.

Thus delay in taking action for fencing and inadequate pursuance for re-demarcation of the plot resulted in blocking of ₹ 1.95 crore released to DDA during the period January 1988 to March 1992 for over 20 years. Audit also noted that SPA's expansion plan has been adversely affected.

The Ministry stated (May 2013) that the delays in the construction activities were only due to the re-demarcation of the dimensions of the plot. As a result it could not fence the plot. SPA was pursuing the matter with DDA for demarcation of the plot.

5.2 Unplanned procurement leading to idling of IT equipment

School of Planning and Architecture procured computers and IT equipment worth ₹ 66.21 lakh in an unplanned manner leading to their idling.

The Head of department of the Centre for Analysis and Systems (CASS), School of Planning and Architecture (SPA) proposed (September 2009) the procurement of 385 computers, peripherals and servers for various departments of the Institute². The proposal of bulk procurement was made to strengthen the computational power in studios. Subsequently, on the recommendation of the purchase committee, the Director, SPA approved (January 2010) procurement of 385 computers, peripherals and servers.

The procurement was made through DGS&D³ for which ₹ 3.17 crore was paid during February 2010 and March 2010. The equipment and the software were received during March 2010 to June 2010.

Audit noted that the SPA failed to provide the required infrastructure for the installation of these equipment, as a result significant delays occurred in installation of 286 equipment.

² Architecture Department -245; Planning Department -90; Centre for Analysis and Systems -30 and GIS-20.

³ Directorate General of Supplies and Disposals - A Central Purchase & Quality Assurance Organisation of Government of India, Department of Supply, Ministry of Commerce.

Delays in installation	Number of computers
12 to 18 months	153
18 to 24 months	25
More than 24 months	87
Uninstalled (as on March 2013)	21

On being pointed during audit, SPA installed (October 2012) 87 computers after a delay of 28 months. However, 21 machines costing ₹ 18.08 lakh remained uninstalled as on March 2013. Audit further noted that SPA diverted 70 computers costing ₹ 51.05 lakh to locations other than studios viz. office, library, other departments/sections, etc. The idling of the IT equipment for more than two years has also resulted in the lapse of the warranty period of one year, provided with the equipment.

Audit also noted that SPA failed to avail the discount of five *per cent* i.e. ₹ 10.52 lakh as custom duty exemption allowable to Education Customer on procurements made through DGS&D. SPA had not registered itself with the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, GoI which was mandatory condition for availing the discount.

SPA replied (October 2012) that the computers and the related equipment could not be installed due to unavailability of installation site and proper electrical connection. Further, SPA stated that the preparation of the site to install computers was delayed because the work of the computer lab could not be started during the mid session and to avoid inconvenience to the students in their academic activities. The Ministry endorsed (March 2013) the reply of the Institute.

The reply of SPA confirms that the procurement was not planned effectively, which led to the idling of the IT equipment for over two years.

5.3 Irregular utilisation of Cumulative Professional Development Allowance for reimbursement of purchase of computers and peripherals by faculty members – ₹ 1.52 crore

MANIT, Bhopal reimbursed of ₹ 1.52 during 2009-12 to its faculty members for procurement of computers/ peripherals under Cumulative Professional Development Allowance (CPDA) which was irregular as the expenses of this nature were not covered under CPDA.

While revising pay and other service conditions of teaching and other staff in centrally funded technical institutions following pay revision of central government employees on recommendations of 6th Central Pay Commission, Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) had introduced a component called Cumulative Professional Development Allowance (CPDA) under ‘other service conditions’ vide letter dated 18-8-2009. The CDP allowance of ₹ 3 lakhs for every block period of three years (₹ one lakh per year) was available to every member of the faculty on reimbursement basis to meet the expenses for participating in both national and international conferences, paying the membership fee of various professional bodies and contingent expenses.

During scrutiny of records of Maulana Azad National Institute of Technology, Bhopal (MANIT), it was noticed that during August 2009 to March 2012, out of ₹ 2.94 crore spent by MANIT for CPDA, ₹ 1.52 crore (52 *per cent*) was reimbursed for purchase of computers and peripherals, by covering such reimbursement under ‘contingent expenses’ of CDPA.

On being pointed out, the MANIT justified (January 2013) the action by stating that laptop is an interactive media book which facilitated book writing, teaching and paper presentation electronically and hence it was taken under CDPA. It further stated that the matter was put up in the 29th meeting of Board of Governors (BOG) held on 9.11.2012 and the BOG instructed that all the assets items purchased under CPDA must be taken as assets of the Institute. It also stated that necessary entries shall be passed in current financial year and assets shown in the balance sheet.

Such distortion of the scheme meant for professional development of the faculty through attending national and international conferences, paying the membership fees of various professional bodies and contingent expenditure, for reimbursement of purchase of computers/ peripherals was irregular. Further in our opinion, component of contingent expenditure under a particular scheme meant contingent expenditure under overall framework of that scheme only and cannot be construed to distort the main scheme.

MHRD was informed of the issue in February 2013. The reply was awaited as of May 2013.

Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi and Jawaharlal Nehru University

5.4 Non claiming of rebate on water charges

Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi and Jawaharlal Nehru University failed to avail rebate of 10 per cent amounting to ₹ 1.44 crore on account of existing rain water harvesting systems.

Delhi Jal Board (DJB) in its notification (December 2009) for water tariffs in Delhi, effective from January 2010, specified that Government Institutions would be eligible for a 10 per cent rebate on the total amount of water bills, subject to existence of functional rain water harvesting structures.

- A. Indian Institute of Technology Delhi had 28 drain water harvesting pits, in its premises, since 2000. Audit observed (May 2012) that IIT, Delhi did not claim rebate of 10 per cent on monthly water bills during January 2010 to July 2012 resulting in over payment of ₹ 64.29 lakh to DJB. On being pointed out by audit, the Institute requested the DJB in May 2012 and June 2012 to refund the rebate on water bills paid. DJB accordingly, conducted (August 2012) a joint inspection of IIT Delhi premises and found that some of the rain water harvesting pits were not functional and asked (October 2012) the Institute to furnish the detailed drawings showing location of rain water harvesting structures before considering its claim for rebate. The management had requested the DJB to revisit IIT. Progress in the matter was awaited (January 2013).

The matter was referred to the Ministry in December 2012; their reply was awaited as of June 2013.

- B. Similarly, Jawahar Lal Nehru University (the University) had eight rain water harvesting systems functioning in its premises since 2005 and was eligible for availing 10 per cent discount on its monthly water bills. Audit observed (November 2011) that the University did not avail the rebate of 10 per cent on monthly water bills during January 2010 to September 2011 resulting in over payment of ₹ 80 lakh. The University took up the matter with DJB after issue of the audit observation in November 2011. DJB has agreed for rebate from June 2011 onwards and has advised the University to submit proof of actual date of installation of rain water harvesting systems for rebate relating to earlier period.

The Ministry stated (February 2013) that the University had taken up the matter with the DJB to seek the refund of the excess amount already paid.

Visva Bharati

5.5 Loss of interest

Visva Bharati neither refunded unspent grant nor invested the same in interest bearing term deposits thereby losing interest of ₹ 1.39 crore.

Visva Bharati (University) receives plan grants from University Grants Commission (UGC). As per conditions of the sanction of the Plan grant, Utilisation Certificate is to be furnished to the UGC at the close of the financial year in which the grant was disbursed. The University also invests the surplus/unspent grants, as per prudent financial propositions in interest bearing term deposits with Public Sector Banks.

The University received ₹ 11.68 crore as 9th Plan Development Grant during the period 1997-98 to 2001-02 from the UGC for various plan activities which were to be incurred upto 31-03-2002. Further, the University also received special grant of ₹ 1.00 crore from the UGC in March 1999 for renovation of different university buildings with great heritage value and for creation of better facilities conducive to study and research.

The UGC decided (May 2002) extension of time limit for the utilisation of the Development Grant released to the University during the 9th Plan Period up to March 2004. The period of utilisation of the special grant was, however, not extended.

Audit observed that the University, out of total Plan/Special grant of ₹ 12.68 crore, could utilise ₹ 10.01 crore up to March 2005. The remaining unspent amount of ₹ 2.67 crore was neither refunded to UGC nor invested in interest bearing term deposits, and was kept in current account from April 2005 to March 2012. The reasons for not investing the surplus amount in both the cases were neither found on record nor explained by the University.

Non investment of surplus funds arising on account of not being refunded to UGC resulted in probable loss of interest amounting to ₹ 1.39 crore had the same been invested in the term deposits with public sector bank at prevailing rates.

The University stated in November 2011 that though the University requested UGC in February 2004 to extend the period of utilisation of the unspent amount for a further period, no communication was received from UGC and

the fund was retained. The University also stated that they have now decided to refund the unspent balance.

The reply does not clarify the concern of the audit that the University had neither returned the unutilised grant nor invested in accordance with prudent financial proposition.

The matter was referred to the Ministry in August 2011; their reply was awaited as of June 2012.