

CHAPTER XIV : MINISTRY OF POWER

Bhakra Beas Management Board

14.1 Irregular Payment of Hydel Allowance

The Bhakra Beas Management Board in contravention of Punjab State Electricity Board terms and conditions, paid Hydel Allowance in addition to Hardship Allowance to its employees, which resulted in irregular payment of ₹ 4.95 crore during the period October 2006 to December 2012.

As per Section 97 of the Punjab Reorganisation Act 1966, the Central Government made the Bhakra Beas Management Board Rules notified by the Ministry of Energy (Department of Power), New Delhi on 11 December 1974.

The Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB) in its 143rd meeting held on 19 July 1991 decided to adopt the Punjab State Electricity Board (PSEB) pay scales as revised from time to time by PSEB as BBMB Pay Scales for all the employees working in the BBMB on the same terms and conditions on which these pay scales have been revised by the PSEB. The BBMB also decided that, in future, allowances/concession sanctioned by PSEB from time to time should be adopted in BBMB.

PSEB sanctioned "Hydel Allowance" equivalent to two increments to its staff with effect from 18 October 2006 at Hydel Projects of Shahpur Kandi, Anandpur Sahib Hydel project, UBDC Madhopur & MHP Talwara under Hydel Organization. This allowance was not sanctioned for Joginder Nager Hydel Project because the staff of PSEB were already getting Hardship Allowance. Thus, the Hydel Allowance was not admissible to the employees who were getting Hardship Allowance in PSEB as clarified by Punjab State Power Corporation Limited (PSPCL)¹.

¹ PSEB was reconstituted as PSPCL in April 2010.

During the course of audit of six offices of BBMB², it was noticed that the BBMB in its 194th meeting held on 16 April 2007 decided to grant Hydel Allowance equivalent to two increments on the pattern of PSEB. It was also decided that the Hydel Allowance shall not be adjusted against Hardship/any other allowances, which was in vogue in Projects. Thus, the BBMB Employees, who were already getting Hardship Allowance equivalent to six increments prior to 18 October 2006 were also granted Hydel Allowance equivalent to two increments.

Audit is of the view that the decision of the BBMB to grant Hardship allowance along-with Hydel allowance was not justified, as there was no provision in the PSEB (now PSPCL) to allow for Hardship Allowance in addition of the Hydel Allowance to the employees posted at any hydel station under the jurisdiction of BBMB. This was in complete disregard to the decision of the BBMB taken in its 143rd meeting held on 19 July 1991 and PSPCL clarification.

The matter had been pointed out through Local Audit Reports³ during 2008-12, but no remedial action was taken by the BBMB.

Thus, the BBMB irregularly paid Hydel Allowance amounting to ₹ 4.95 crore to its employees from 18 October 2006 to 31 December 2012 (**Annex-XIII**).

The matter was brought to the notice of the Chairman BBMB, Chandigarh and the Ministry in June 2013; however, their reply was awaited (May 2014).

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