

## CHAPTER V: BORDER ROADS ORGANISATION

### 5.1 Unauthorised utilization of funds for construction of a Multipurpose Hall

**Director General Border Roads sanctioned two works worth ₹ 0.90 crore for creation of two storage accommodation. These funds were actually utilized to create a Multipurpose Hall with an area of 1,556 sqm defeating the objective of storage accommodation.**

Rule 566 (C) of Border Roads regulation stipulates that funds should be expended only on authorized items of work for which they are allotted. However, Chief Engineer (Project) Beacon (CE) utilized the funds amounting to ₹ 0.93 crore for the purpose other than which they were allotted.

Border Road Development Board (BRDB) New Delhi accorded sanction in August 2008 for construction of a Multipurpose Hall with an area of 489 square meter (sqm) for indoor games and seminars at an estimated cost of ₹ 0.88 crore in Headquarters Chief Engineer (Project) Beacon (CE) Complex at Srinagar. In April 2009, a Task force<sup>62</sup> under the CE engaged a consultancy firm to design the Multipurpose Hall with an area of 1,500 sqm. In March 2009 and July 2010 Director General Border Roads (DGBR) sanctioned two storage accommodations with an area of 505.30 sqm each for two Task Forces<sup>63</sup> under the CE at an estimated cost of ₹ 0.42 crore and ₹ 0.48 crore respectively. The storage accommodation was planned for construction alongside the Multipurpose Hall at Headquarters CE complex. As per completion report part 'A' and 'B' all the three works were reported to have been completed by TF between June 2010 and January 2011 with an expenditure of ₹ 1.88 crore<sup>64</sup>.

Audit scrutiny (August 2012) of documents related to three works however, revealed that all the three jobs were combined for construction of a bigger Multipurpose Hall with an area of 1,556 sqm violating Border Roads Regulations<sup>65</sup>.

HQ 32 BRTF agreed (October 2012) with the audit findings and stated that the funds totaling ₹ 0.93 crore<sup>66</sup> meant for construction of storage

<sup>62</sup> 32 Border Road Task Force

<sup>63</sup> 32 BRTF and 760 BRTF

<sup>64</sup> ₹ 0.95 crore (Multipurpose Hall) + ₹ 0.47 crore (storage Accommodation for 32 BRTF) + ₹ 0.46 crore (storage accommodation for 760 BRTF)

<sup>65</sup> Rule 566 (C) of Section 3 of Border Roads Regulation – The Funds are expended only on authorized items of work for which they are allotted.

<sup>66</sup> ₹ 0.47 crore (storage Accommodation for 32 BRTF) + ₹ 0.46 crore (storage accommodation for 760 BRTF)

accommodations were actually used for completion of a Multipurpose Hall with bigger area as against Multipurpose Hall with an area of 489 sqm sanctioned by BRDB in August 2008. Construction of bigger Multipurpose Hall was justified on the ground of extreme cold and insurgency. Further, HQ DGBR also accepted the facts and stated (July 2014) that all three jobs were combined for construction of bigger multipurpose hall with a thought process that a bigger Multipurpose Hall can provide more storage and shall also be utilized by troops for indoor games and recreational activities. Moreover, the documents also reveal that the consultancy agency which was given the task for designing the Multipurpose Hall in April 2009 itself with an area of 1,500 sqm. whereas remaining works were to be constructed subsequently. Further storage as well as recreational activities in same hall if done together are not likely to be as professional as they are done separately.

While the reply confirmed that though the documents related to the construction show that the three separate buildings had been constructed, in fact CE(P) Beacon and TF were predetermined to construct only one multipurpose hall with a total area of 1,556 sqm and funds amounting to ₹ 0.93 crore allotted for the construction of storage accommodations were unauthorisedly utilized for construction of one multipurpose hall. This tantamount to mis-representation of facts and the requirement of storage accommodations projected for two Task Forces<sup>67</sup> remained unfulfilled.

The case was referred to Ministry in May 2014; their reply was awaited (October 2014).

## **5.2 Construction of a bridge without sub-soil investigation resulted in loss of ₹ 0.75 crore**

**Construction of a bridge by a Border Roads Task Force without sub-soil investigation required as per the Codes of Indian Road Congress (IRC) resulted in loss of ₹ 0.75 crore. The work was commenced before the sanction was accorded by the competent financial authority.**

Technical Instructions (TI) No. 22 of Border Roads Organisation stipulates that no work should commence without a sanction by competent financial authority (CFA) except Immediate Restoration of Monsoon Damages (IRMD) works.

In April 2008, Chief Engineer, Project Pushpak (CE) recommended construction of a 30 metre span major permanent bridge with box girder superstructure along with its approaches at Km 194.450 on Jiribam Barak Road National Highway-53 in place of the existing 90 feet Bailey Bridge, 20 metres up stream of existing bridge. CE, Project Pushpak, submitted

<sup>67</sup> 32 BRTF and 760 BRTF

(December 2008) the Statement of Case (SOC) along with Approximate Estimates (AEs) for the above construction to Headquarters (HQ), Director General Border Roads (DGBR) for obtaining the required sanction.

Based on SOC of CE, Project Pushpak, HQ DGBR submitted (July 2009) a Detailed Project Report (DPR) and estimates of the work to the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRT&H), Government of India for approval. DGBR had proposed that sub-soil investigation was not required as the proposed bridge site was well defined and on soft rocky strata. MoRTH did not agree with the proposal and advised the DGBR (August 2009) to design the bridge as per design requirement laid down in various relevant IRC<sup>68</sup> Codes. MoRT&H accorded the Administrative Approval, technical approval and financial sanction for the work for ₹ 331.98 lakh (July 2010) subject to the conditions that sub-soil investigation be carried out at each foundation location followed by confirmatory borings during construction.

Audit scrutiny revealed (February 2012) that the work was sanctioned in July 2010 but Border Road Task Force (BRTF) had commenced work of the bridge in February 2009, without carrying out the sub soil investigation and before the sanction was accorded by the CFA. In March 2010 a land slide occurred from the top of the hill side and work was stopped. The Technical Board of Officers held in July 2012 declared the site as unsafe being land slide prone area. The findings of Technical Board of Officers contradicts the fact reported by HQ DGBR to the MoRTH that the site was well defined and on soft rocky strata. An expenditure of ₹ 0.75 crore had been incurred up to March 2010 which therefore became infructuous.

On this being pointed out (April 2012) in audit, BRTF admitted (July 2012) the fact that bridge work commenced in February 2009 before the same was sanctioned by MoRT&H in July 2010. BRTF also agreed that expenditure of ₹ 0.75 crore incurred on execution of formation/foundation work was a loss as the site for new bridge was changed to a different location since the existing location became unsafe.

Technical Board of Officers cum Court of Inquiry (COI) (April 2013) opined that the construction of the proposed bridge at old location was not safe and proposed for construction of permanent bridge at the existing Bailey Bridge site. However, the Board recommended sub-soil investigation before start of new construction work. Revised DPR for construction of bridge was yet to be approved by the Government as of August 2014. It is evident that, before execution of formation/foundation work of the bridge, the important requirement of sub-soil investigation was not carried out. The relevance of sub-soil investigation was paramount as was advised by MoRTH in July 2010 and again recommended by Technical Board in April 2013 for construction of bridge at new site.

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<sup>68</sup> Indian Road Congress

The case therefore reveals that;

- The finding of the Technical Board of Officers that the location of bridge was land slide prone area contradicts the assertion of DGBR that the site was well defined and on soft rocky strata and therefore sub-soil investigation was not required.
- Had sub-soil investigation been done, loss of public money worth ₹ 0.75 crore could have been avoided.

The case was referred to Ministry in May 2014; their reply was awaited (October 2014).