

CHAPTER XIV : MINISTRY OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT, ENTREPRENEURSHIP, YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS

Sports Authority of India

14.1 Idling of expenditure

Construction of sports infrastructure without giving due cognizance to the security issues resulted in idling of infrastructure worth ₹ 14.15 crore and unfruitful expenditure of ₹ 1.28 crore. Besides the purpose of imparting sports training to tribal youth was not fulfilled.

The Sports Authority of India (SAI) decided (December 2001) to set up a Sub-Centre at Hazaribagh, Jharkhand for imparting training in different disciplines of sports to tribal youths from adjoining¹ districts. Indoor and outdoor sports facilities² were sought to be created at the Sub-Centre. Though Hazaribagh was a left wing extremism affected area, SAI did not give due cognizance to aspect of security (to sportspersons/coaches/ during construction) while selecting the location of the Sub-Centre. A Union Minister of State highlighted (August 2004) that Hazaribagh was a disturbed area and urged to shift the location of the Sub-centre to a different place.

A piece of land measuring 47.5 acre at Padma Village in Hazaribagh was allotted (June 2003) by the State Government of Jharkhand, free of cost with the stipulation that it would be transferred back to State Government of Jharkhand in case of non-utilisation for intended purpose. SAI approved (July-August 2003) the preliminary estimate for ₹ 15.66 crore and accorded administrative approval and expenditure sanction for the project. In September 2003, SAI awarded the work for construction of the project to National Building Construction Company Limited (NBCC), a Government of India enterprise. Although, as per

¹ Bokaro, Dhanbad, Giridih, Koderma, Deogarh, Dumka, Godda, Pakur and Sahebganj.

² Football and hockey grounds, basketball, volleyball, kabaddi court, athletic tracks, boys and girls hostels, administrative building, multipurpose hall and residential quarters.

agreement, the schedule date of completion was December 2004, NBCC started the work in December 2003 and completed in May 2008 *i.e.* after delay of about four years. The delay was attributed to security concern of the workers. After spending ₹ 14.15 crore, SAI took over the infrastructure in June 2010.

Audit Scrutiny revealed (March 2014) that the sub-centre could not be made operational for want of security clearance from the State Government. Meanwhile, the Border Security Force, South Bengal Frontier, Kolkata (BSF) evinced (November 2012) interest in the infrastructure of SAI at Hazaribagh and proposed for wholesale transfer of the entire premises to them. Considering the proposal, the Director General of SAI in January 2013 requested the Chief Secretary, Government of Jharkhand for issuance of 'No Objection' for entering into an agreement with the BSF for this purpose. The State Government was yet to respond in the Matter (December 2014). Audit scrutiny further revealed that ₹ 1.28 crore³ was further expended on upkeep of centre which was also rendered unfruitful.

The SAI-NSEC stated (December 2014) that the Regional Office as well as their Director General were pursuing vigorously with the State Government authorities to resolve the issue. However, outcome of such initiative was still awaited and the infrastructure remained unutilised as of December 2014.

Thus, creation of infrastructure without giving due cognizance to the security issues, resulted in idling of the investment ₹ 14.15 crore and unfruitful expenditure of ₹ 1.28 crore (December 2014).

The matter was reported to the Ministry in October 2014, their reply was awaited as of February 2015.

³ Pay and allowances of coaches/staff posted : ₹ 89.28 lakh: Electricity bill ₹ 38.93 lakh (as of March 2014)

14.2 Unfruitful expenditure

Approval for establishment of astro turf hockey field at North Eastern Hill University, Shillong by the SAI without ascertaining the feasibility of utilisation of the intended facility, led to cancellation of the work. Consequently the expenditure of ₹ 82 lakh incurred on the site was rendered unfruitful.

The Finance Committee of Sports Authority of India (SAI) approved (August 2008) establishment of Special Area Games Centre (SAG) at North Eastern Hill University, Shillong. It involved creation of astro-turf hockey field with two works viz. 'development of sites for playfields for hockey' and 'laying of synthetic surface for hockey' at a cost of ₹ 158.09 lakh and ₹ 358.11 lakh respectively. The work was estimated to be completed by August 2012 for which SAI released funds of ₹ 440.11 lakh to Central Public Works Department (CPWD) during December 2008 to August 2012.

Audit observed that the SAI had approved the project without ascertaining the feasibility of the use of the facility for the intended objective, as the Director General, SAI after reviewing the progress of work, cancelled (October 2012) the work on the grounds that hockey was neither an approved sports discipline at SAG Shillong nor was hockey a popular sport in the State of Meghalaya and Assam. It was also decided that the infrastructure so created could be utilised for laying of synthetic turf for other sports or for other purposes.

Audit further observed that at the time of closure of the project, CPWD had incurred an amount of ₹ 82 lakh on 'development of field' but the amount of ₹ 358.11 lakh released for 'synthetic surface' remained unutilised. Accordingly SAI conveyed to CPWD (October 2012) that the unspent amount may be utilised for other ongoing projects. However, the field could not be further developed (January 2015) for other sports as envisaged during closure of the project.

Thus the decision of the SAI to implement the project without ascertaining its feasibility led to unfruitful expenditure of ₹ 82 lakh. Further, out of ₹ 3.58 crore released to CPWD for creating synthetic surface, ₹ 1.10 crore (released in December 2008) remained blocked

with the CPWD for more than four years until the decision was taken in October 2012 to utilise the amount for other projects.

SAI stated (January 2015) that due to budget constraint, the planning was reviewed by the then DG, SAI and the work of laying synthetic surface being related to hockey, which was a least popular sport in the area, was cancelled. However, the black top surface prepared for laying synthetic surface would be utilised for other miscellaneous sports activity.

The reply establishes that SAI failed to exercise due diligence at the outset of the project leading to its cancellation midway; on the grounds that hockey was not popular sport in the area, which is indicative of poor planning. Further, SAI was yet to come up with a concrete plan for putting the money already spent to gainful utilisation.

The matter was reported to Ministry (December 2014); their reply was awaited as of February 2015.