

CHAPTER XXIII : FOLLOW-UP ON AUDIT REPORTS

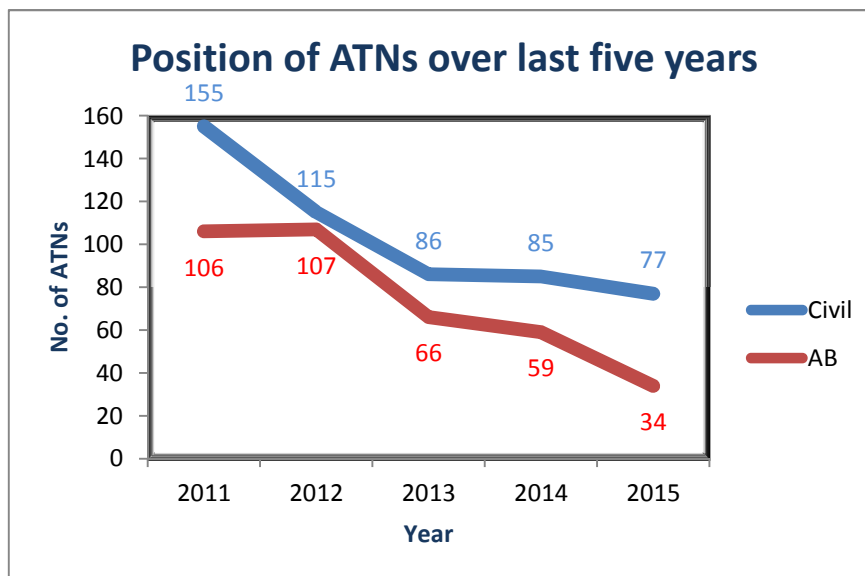
23.1 Status of pending ATNs

Despite repeated instructions/recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee, various Ministries/Departments did not submit remedial/corrective Action Taken Notes on 44 audit paragraphs even after the lapse of the time limit prescribed by the Public Accounts Committee. However, there was perceptible improvement in the position of pending ATNs over the last five years.

The Lok Sabha Secretariat issued instructions in April 1982 to all Ministries to furnish notes to the Ministry of Finance (Department of Expenditure), indicating remedial/ corrective action taken on various paragraphs contained in the Audit Reports, soon after these were laid on the Table of the House.

In their Ninth Report (Eleventh Lok Sabha) presented to the Parliament on 22 April 1997, the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) desired that submission of pending Action Taken Notes (ATNs) pertaining to Audit Reports for the years ended March 1994 and 1995 should be completed within a period of three months and recommended that ATNs on all paragraphs pertaining to the Audit Reports for the year ended March 1996 onwards be submitted to them duly vetted by Audit, within four months from the laying of the Reports in Parliament.

Audit observed that with the constant advice and direction of PAC the position of pending ATNs continued on a declining trend as reflected in the following chart:



There was a 57 per cent decline in the number of pending ATNs from 261 in 2011 to 111 in 2015. The Ministry-wise position of the pending ATNs up to the period ended 31 December 2015 is given in the **Appendix-XIII**. Out of 111 Paragraphs on which ATNs were required to be sent, ATNs in respect of 44 paragraphs were not received at all.

A Specific case related to National Library, Kolkata, Ministry of Culture is reported below:

23.1.1 Report on Follow-up Audit on Accepted Recommendations of Audit in Respect of “Activities of National Library, Kolkata” (C & AG’s Report No. 3 of 2010-11 Chapter-I)

The Library as well as the Ministry had not taken adequate steps during 2010-15 in implementing the accepted recommendations of the performance audit pertaining mainly to creation of database of books published in India, faster processing of books, conducting of stock verification of all the divisions, strengthening the security, providing various value added services to the readers and retro conversion of all the bibliographic records.

23.1.1.1 Introduction

National Library, Kolkata (Library), the largest Library in India, functioning under the Ministry of Culture (MoC), Government of India is a depository Library for receipt of published materials under the Delivery of Books Act, 1954. A performance audit in respect of the ‘Activities of National Library, Kolkata’ was conducted for the period 2004-05 to 2009-10. The report was featured in the C&AGs Report No.3 of 2010-11 with 30 accepted recommendations. The follow-up audit on the accepted recommendations was conducted during May and June 2015, to ascertain the extent of corrective measures taken by the Library in implementation of the accepted recommendations during the period from 2010-11 to 2014-15.

23.1.1.2 Compliance on accepted recommendations

The details of status of compliance of accepted recommendations and audit findings are shown in Table-1

Table-1

Para No of PAR ¹	Accepted recommendation (Report No 3 of 2010-11)	Status of compliance	Audit findings
1.8.1 Acquisition 1.8.1.1 Acquisition of books published in India: under the Deposit legislation.	National Library must institute an effective system to closely monitor delivery of books by all major publishers in the country and initiate suitable penal action against the defaulting publisher under the provisions of the DB Act in the cases of non-delivery of books by the publishers to the National Library.	Insignificant progress	Neither the Library devised any effective mechanism to monitor the non-delivery of books or to initiate penal action against the defaulting publishers nor did the Ministry reformulate rules to enable effective implementation of provisions of the DB Act. Audit examination based on the data of books published in 2013 ² (available on internet) revealed that the receipt of books was 27 per cent only as of March 2015. The Ministry in Exit Conference stated (March 2016) that a Draft bill namely “Deposit of Books, Newspapers and Electronics Publication in Libraries Bill” has been prepared and placed on the website of MOC for obtaining public opinion before it is finalized and sent to Cabinet for approval and further introduction in Parliament.
	The Central Government must immediately examine and reformulate rules in exercise of its powers under Section 8 of the DB Act to enable effective implementation of provisions the said Act.		
	For the benefit of the readers and also for the effective implementation of the DB Act, the National Library should, on priority, create and regularly update the	No progress	The Library did not create a database of books published in India. The Ministry in Exit Conference stated (March 2016) that International Standard Book Number (ISBN) has been made mandatory in the above draft

¹ Para reference to the Performance Audit Report no. 3 of 2010-11 (Chapter-I) on “Activities of National Library, Kolkata”

² The data pertaining to the Indian language books published in the intervening period (2004-2013) not available.

	database of books published in India.		bill which will facilitate to create database of publishers.
1.8.1.2 Acquisition of foreign publication in English	The National Library should identify the gaps in its collection and purchase books accordingly.	Partially implemented	The Library failed to identify the gaps in existing collection and make the book selection/purchase procedure more transparent and competitive. Audit noted that out of 6779 books purchased the Library got a flat 15 <i>per cent</i> discount in 97.09 <i>per cent</i> books and the rest at a discount of 25-30 <i>per cent</i> . On being pointed out in follow up audit, the Library uploaded (August 2015) the list of enlisted vendors in the official website of the National Library and constituted two committees for monitoring the purchase of Foreign Publications. The Ministry in Exit Conference assured (March 2016) that directions would be given to National Library to submit the collection development policy.
	The book selection and purchase procedure should be made more transparent and competitive. In purchasing books, the Library must conduct a proper market survey and maintain close liaison with other libraries to ascertain current levels of discount offered by various publishers and accordingly factor in such inputs in the process of bidding and placement of order for procurement of books.		
1.8.1.4 Acquisition of Journals	On-line journals can be stored in the server of the Publisher and accessed at will through the terminal of the library or through laptops within the IP area. Existing IT infrastructure should be fully utilized for this purpose for providing online services to readers	Recommendation implemented.	
1.8.2 Processing activities	The National Library should review and rationalize its man power in various language divisions to	No progress	The Library failed to review and rationalize man power in various language divisions. It was found that six to nine posts of ALIOs ³ in the Indian

³ Assistant Library Information Officer.

<p>1.8.2.1 Processing of books in Indian language.</p>	<p>facilitate faster processing of books and to address the issue of manpower shortage in some of its divisions.</p>		<p>Language division were deemed abolished due to non-filling up the posts. The Ministry in Exit Conference stated (March 2016) that they had sanctioned the engagement of professionals against the posts deemed abolished and assured that directions would be given to National Library to review the position and utilise the available manpower in the best optimised way.</p>
	<p>The entire process of purchase, acknowledgement, accessioning, cataloguing, and processing should be computerized in a timely manner with sharing of data through LAN.</p>	<p>Insignificant progress</p>	<p>The Library failed to computerize and share data through LAN. Audit noted that accessioning, acknowledgment and generation of shelf list catalog continued to be done manually leading to duplication/overlapping of work. The Library not only failed to clear the backlog of unprocessed books but also could not process all the books received during 2010-15. Audit noted that there were 4.86 lakh⁴ unprocessed books with the Library as on August 2015. The Ministry in Exit Conference assured (March 2016) that directions would be given to National Library to utilise the professionals already sanctioned.</p>
<p>1.8.2.2 Processing of books in foreign language</p>	<p>To clear the processing lag in the foreign language collection, the Library may explore the possibility of outsourcing the services of foreign language students and experts from Universities and other</p>	<p>No progress</p>	<p>The Library had not initiated any action to contact foreign consulate offices, cultural centres and different Universities. Though the Library attributed (January 2016) non-availability of the professionals particularly in the foreign language division, the Library had not taken any initiative to fill up these posts</p>

⁴ Include Indian language books.

	academic institutions.		and these posts were deemed abolished. Audit noted that 72233 books were lying unprocessed. The Ministry in Exit Conference assured (March 2016) that directions would be given to National Library to send the proposal for revival of the post and to explore the possibility of outsourcing meanwhile.
1.8.3 Preservation practices 1.8.3.1 Treatment of Rare Books	The definition of 'rare items' needs to be revisited. Immediate attention should be paid to prepare a single accession register for 'rare' printed material in the Library.	Partially implemented	The Library failed to finalise the criteria for identification of rare books. A committee formed by the Library prepared a list of known rare books along with a set of criteria prior to 2012. However, the base paper has not been finalised till date (January 2016). The Ministry in Exit Conference assured (March 2016) that directions would be given to National Library to identify rare books on the basis of physical condition and oldness of books out of copyright.
1.8.3.2 Digitizing the Collection	Sanctioned posts created for hiring IT experts may be filled up and the entire digitization exercise needs close monitoring at the highest level. Special attention of Ministry would be needed to avoid procedural delays.	Partially implemented	The Library did not take any initiative to fill up the posts of IT experts. Moreover, the Library as well as the Ministry failed to monitor the entire digitization exercise. Due to this inaction the post of ALIO Reprography/ Microphotography were deemed abolished. Till June 2015, the Library microfilmed only 10-15 per cent ⁵ of the century old newspapers and digitized one lakh pages of books/ manuscripts which they considered to be old & rare. The Ministry in Exit Conference stated (March 2016) that modification of the

⁵ 24 lakh impressions have been microfilmed i.e. 10-15 per cent of the 10000 bound volumes of old and rare newspapers

			Recruitment Rules (RR) was under process and direction would be given to National Library to explore the possibility of outsourcing in the meantime.
	Digitize the entire collection of rare books with due care of the originals and provide countrywide access to the electronic version.	No progress	The Library did not provide the countrywide access to the electronic versions of rare documents/ books. The Ministry in Exit Conference assured (March 2016) that directions would be given to National Library to float a tender for digitization and online access would be provided once the digitization gets completed.
1.8.3.3 Curative Preservation Binding	A clear conservation policy may be put in place immediately. The level of co-ordination between the divisions and the laboratory should be increased for identification of books requiring conservation. A preparatory unit should be constituted to guide the binding works. Binding works may be outsourced onsite to reputed firms.	Partially implemented	The Library had not framed a clear conservation policy. There was lack of coordination between the laboratory and different other divisions of the Library for identification of books requiring conservation. Further, the preparatory unit had been defunct since 2013 due to shortage of staff. Audit noted that more than 50 percent of the posts in these divisions were deemed abolished due to inaction in filling up the posts. The Library outsourced (December 2015) five personnel at laboratory division for binding work. The Ministry in Exit Conference assured (March

			2016) that directions would be given to National Library to frame a clear conservation policy within three months. The Ministry also assured that directions would be given to National Library to take steps for revival of deemed abolished posts.
	<p>The laboratory division was short of trained and efficient staff. This should be addressed by setting up a training division, regular training programmes, and workshops involving participation from other leading libraries. Modern technical know-how and advanced equipment should be employed for better conservation practices. The objective should be to ensure longer life of the books.</p> <p>The Library should consider sponsoring a University course on preservation, digitization and related subjects in association with other institutions.</p>	Partially implemented	<p>The Library had neither set up training division nor had conducted regular training programmes and workshops involving participation from other leading libraries. Moreover, the Library had not considered sponsoring a University course on preservation, digitization and related subjects in association with other institutions as on May 2015 for reasons not on record. The Ministry in Exit Conference assured (March 2016) that directions would be given to National Library to impart need based training to new recruits.</p>
1.8.3.4 Monitoring of macro environment	<p>Microenvironment of the collection stored at various locations needs to be maintained within the defined range and the Library itself should control the task of monitoring to ensure long life of the prized collection.</p>	Insignificant progress	<p>The Library had failed to control the task of monitoring to ensure long life of the prized collection through maintaining microenvironment within the defined range. The Ministry in Exit Conference assured (March 2016) that directions would be given to National Library to appoint one Officer to liaise</p>

			with CPWD regarding controlling of temperature and humidity.
	A fire response plan should be put in place and the staff involved in periodic mock drills.	No progress	The Library did not frame any fire response plan and impart fire- fighting training to the staff. Moreover, the Library had not obtained the mandatory fire safety certificate from West Bengal Fire Brigade. The Ministry in Exit Conference assured (March 2016) that directions would be given to National Library to take up the matter with CPWD to get the mandatory fire safety certificate from West Bengal Government.
1.8.4 Control Issues 1.8.4.1 Tracking movements of the books	Norms for various processing works like Stamping and sorting books in the books receiving division, sending acknowledgement, unbundling the books and entering relevant information in the registers, receiving and sending the books to the divisions responsible for accessioning may be implemented and followed up as a measure of internal control.	Partially implemented	The Library failed to expedite the various processing works. Test check of records for the month of March 2015, revealed that in all the cases the 'Central Sorting Section' took 14 to 47 days in sending the bundles of books to the concerned divisions. Further, audit examination of data for one month ⁶ pertaining to 7 divisions ⁷ revealed that 6 divisions (excluding Bengali ⁸) took around 2 to 15 months in sending the books to stack after the processing was completed. The Library attributed (January 2016) manpower shortage for delay in processing works. The Ministry in Exit Conference assured (March 2016) that directions would be given to National Library to fill up the

⁶ 10 books selected randomly out of the books sent to stack. Selection of the month in which the books were sent from these divisions to the stack (Sanskrit, Malayalam, Hindi & Bengali in March 2015) whereas April 2015 was selected for Odia and May 2015 was selected Assamese & Tamil since no books were sent to stack in March 2015 from these three divisions.

⁷ Sanskrit, Malayalam, Assamese, Tamil, Hindi, Bengali and Oriya.

⁸ Bengali division took 1 to 24 days.

			posts after making necessary amendments in Recruitment Rules wherever required.
1.8.4.2 Stock verification	The Library should prepare an annual action plan for stock verification to cover all the divisions, and the entire collection verified in a phased manner. Stock of each of the division must be verified as per prescribed periodicity. To expedite the verification process the Management should seek technical advice for introduction of procedures like 'RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) tagging.	Insignificant progress	The Library did not prepare any annual action plan for stock verification in phased manner to cover all the divisions. Moreover, the Library did not seek technical advice to introduce the 'RFID' (Radio Frequency Identification). The physical verification undertaken in May 2011 by a private firm ⁹ could cover only 25 divisions out of 42 divisions. On being pointed out in Follow up Audit the Library stated (January 2016) that a fresh tender notice for RFID project was in preparation. The Library did not initiate any action to adopt random bar coding system to deter the possibility of theft of materials. The Ministry in Exit Conference assured (March 2016) that directions would be given to National Library to reinstate the process of introduction of RFID
	Internal control mechanism of the Library should be strengthened.		
	Random bar coding system should be adopted to deter possibility of theft of materials.		
1.8.4.3 Security System/Arrangement	Security of the Library needs to be adequately strengthened.	Partially implemented	The Library failed to strengthen the security. Except the 69 CCTVs ¹⁰ , almost all other security equipment such as Walky Talkies, search lights, hand held metal detectors and door frame metal detectors were either not in working condition or beyond repair. The Ministry in Exit Conference assured (March 2016) that directions would be

⁹ M/s Data soft Computer private Ltd.,

¹⁰ Total 73 nos. of CCTVs installed at various locations such as in the main storage section, reading rooms etc., out of which 04 were not in working condition.

			given to National Library to take steps to strengthen the security.
1.8.5. Readership services 1.8.5.1 On-site services	The Library should offer various value added services to the readers and explore the scope of pricing such services.	Partially implemented	A new e-resource centre with a total capacity of 70 terminals (55 internet connected at present) has been made operational in May 2015 for accessing e-resources subscribed by the Library. No other value added services to the readers was extended. Moreover, the Library failed to take action to enable OPAC and to make available all catalogues centrally. Audit noted that readers' across the country have the access to only 33 per cent ¹¹ of the entire collection with the Library. The Library also did not initiate any action to provide any remote service to distant users except response to mails during 2010-15 for reasons not on record. The Ministry in Exit Conference assured (March 2016) that country-wide online access to subscribed e-resources would be provided to the authorised users of the National Library very soon. Ministry also assured that the National Library would expedite the process of feeding the entire library data in OPAC.
	Immediate action needs to be taken to enable Online Public Access Cataloging (OPAC) to facilitate access to the collection to readers across the country.		
1.8.5.2 Search services: Onsite and remote	The Library should make available all catalogues centrally.	Partially implemented	
	Readers may be categorized for better need based services. Searching of books to meet the request of a reader should be done more efficiently and closely monitored.		
1.8.6 Bibliographic services 1.8.6.1 Retrospective conversion (Retrocon) project (Para 1.8.6.1 of PAR)	No specific recommendation. The project conceptualized in September 2002 could convert only seven percent bibliographic records of the Library in to Machine Readable	Insignificant progress	The Library re-launched the retrocon project in January 2010. Audit noted that the Library had released ₹ 3.20 crore as of April 2014 to four agencies towards the retro conversion charges of 11 lakh data out of 25 lakh data which included 5.28 lakh non-

¹¹ out of 25.13 lakh data available, 16.5 lakh electronic data available with the Library through LAN and only 8.19 lakh records (July 2015) were made available through web.

	Cataloguing (MARC-21) format.		validated data involving payment of ₹ 1.59 crore. The Ministry in Exit Conference assured (March 2016) that directions would be given to National Library to take up a project of Retro-conversion of the remaining data.
1.8.6.2 Duplication of bibliographic activities	National Library should take immediate step towards increasing the level of synergy with the Central Reference Library for sharing of databases. This will help the former to address the problem of dearth of experts in various Indian languages.	No progress.	Audit noted that neither the Library nor the Ministry had taken effective steps towards increasing the level of synergy with Central Reference Library for sharing of database. The Ministry in Exit Conference stated (March 2016) that a committee to look into the issue has already been formed.
	The Library should play a nodal role in sharing the bibliographic activities with other designated public libraries across India.	No progress	The Library did not initiate any action in sharing the bibliographic activities with other designated public libraries across India for reasons not on record. The Ministry in Exit Conference assured (March 2016) that directions would be given to National Library to explore the possibility of sharing bibliographic activities with other designated public libraries across India.

23.1.1.3 Conclusion

The follow up audit revealed that the Library had not created database of books published in India, could not rationalize man power in various language divisions and did not fill up vacant posts to facilitate faster processing of books. Moreover, the Library did not conduct stock verification of all the divisions and did not adequately strengthen the security. The Library had failed to extend various value added services to the readers and could not complete the retro conversion of all the bibliographic records.

The Ministry in Exit Conference (March 2016) assured for issuing directions to National Library to utilise the available manpower in the best optimised way and initiate action to fill up the post for processing/ preservation/ digitisation of books and explore the possibility of outsourcing wherever necessary. The Ministry also assured that directions would be issued to the National Library to float tender for digitisation, frame a clear conservation policy within three months, strengthen the security and retro convert all the bibliographic records.



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