

CAG Report Summary

Schemes for Flood Control and Flood Forecasting

- The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India submitted a report on ‘Schemes for Flood Control and Flood Forecasting’ on July 21, 2017. The performance audit conducted by CAG examined: (i) whether schemes for flood control and flood forecasting were effective, and (ii) whether the review and oversight mechanisms were effective. The audit covered flood management projects, and river management activities, including dams in 17 states and union territories from 2007-08 to 2015-16. The salient observations and recommendations of the CAG include:
 - **Financial management of flood management programmes:** Delays in release of first instalment of central assistance to state governments was observed in 48 projects. The central government was unable to recover a loan of Rs 600 crore, with an interest of Rs 18 crore from state governments. This was on account of not releasing the central assistance received by state governments to the programme implementing agencies in the first 15 days. Rs 171 crore of funds were not utilised, and Rs 37 crore were diverted by implementing agencies towards unapproved projects.
 - The CAG recommended that funds should be released by the Ministry of Water Resources in a timely manner as per the programme guidelines. The Ministry should also ensure that state governments release funds to implementing agencies in a time bound manner. Proper utilisation of funds should be ensured through strict vigilance. In addition, funds should be released by the Ministry only after receiving receipts of audited statements of expenditure, utilization certificates and other requisite documents.
 - **Execution of flood management programmes:** Flood management was not taken up in an integrated manner, i.e., covering the entire river or a tributary or a major segment of it and Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) were not prepared in eight states. Delay in approval of DPRs leads to delays in completion of projects. This in turn results in technical designs becoming irrelevant at the time of actual funding of the project.
- CAG recommended that the Ministry of Water Resources should ensure that all projects approved by it are formulated in an integrated manner. The benefit-cost ratio for such projects should be correctly worked out as per the scheme guidelines.
- **Monitoring and evaluation:** CAG recommended that the Ministry should conduct performance evaluation of all flood management programmes. Additionally, CWC should conduct quality tests to ensure quality construction materials are used.
- **Flood forecasting:** Against a target of installing 219 telemetry stations (recording and transmitting readings of the flood forecasting instrument) between 2012 and 2017, only 56 had been installed as of August 2016. 59% of the existing telemetry stations were non-functional, resulting in non-availability of real-time data for the corresponding periods.
- CAG recommended that the Central Water Commission (CWC) should devise a time bound action plan to forecast floods on real time data by: (i) making all telemetry stations operational, and (ii) installing the targeted number of telemetry stations. The CWC should also ensure that the warning and danger levels are fixed at the appropriate level. This will help to ensure that forecasting for floods is undertaken in a correct and timely manner.
- **Other schemes for flood control:** Discrepancies in execution of projects, like irregular award of work, splitting of tenders, and payment at higher rates were noted in border areas projects of Assam, North-Bihar and Eastern Uttar Pradesh. Disaster management plans for only 7% of states have been prepared. Only two out of the seventeen states have carried out a pre and post monsoon inspection of dams.
- CAG recommended that projects to facilitate long term solution to the flood problem of Assam, North-Bihar and Eastern Uttar Pradesh from annual floods should be accelerated. The Ministry should devise a time bound action plan for preparation and implementation of disaster management plans for all the large dams.

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