

**PARLIAMENT OF INDIA
RAJYA SABHA**

**COMMITTEE
ON
PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE
HUNDRED THIRTY FIFTH REPORT**

Regarding

Laying of Annual Reports and Audited Accounts
of
Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development
(RGNIYD), Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu; All India
Council for Technical Education (AICTE), New Delhi;
and Central Information Commission, New Delhi

(Presented to the House on 7th September, 2011)

**RAJYA SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

September, 2011 /Bhadrapada, 1933 (Saka)

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** To be appended at printing stage.*

COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE

1. Shri Tariq Anwar - *Chairman*

Members

2. Shri G. Sanjeeva Reddy
3. Dr. E. M. Sudarsana Natchiappan
4. Dr. Vijaylaxmi Sadho
5. Shri Vijaykumar Rupani
6. Shri K. B. Shanappa
7. Shrimati Gundu Sudharani
8. Shri Mahmood A. Madani
9. Dr. Barun Mukherji
10. Dr. Ashok S. Ganguly

Secretariat

1. Shri Surinder Kumar Watts, *Joint Secretary*
2. Shri M. K. Khan, *Director*
3. Ms. S. Pankajavalli, *Deputy Director*
4. Shri Ranjan Chaturvedi, *Assistant Director*
5. Shri Rishi Parkash Sharma, *Committee Officer*

PREFACE

I, the Chairman of the Committee on Papers Laid on the Table (COPLLOT), Rajya Sabha, having been authorized by the Committee to present the report on its behalf, do present this 135th Report to Rajya Sabha.

2. The Committee considered the laying of the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development (RGNIYD), Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu during its study visit on 26th June, 2010. Regarding the delayed laying of the Reports of All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), New Delhi and Central Information Commission (CIC), New Delhi, it sought clarifications from the administrative Ministries and the respective institutions.

3. The Committee considered and adopted the report in its meeting held on the 5th September, 2011.

4. The recommendations/observations of the Committee are set out in bold letters at appropriate places in the report.

New Delhi ;
7th September, 2011
Bhadrapada 16, 1933 (*Saka*)

TARIQ ANWAR
Chairman,
Committee on Papers Laid on the Table (COPLLOT),
Rajya Sabha

PART-I

RAJIV GANDHI NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT (RGNIYD), SRIPERUMBUDUR, TAMIL NADU

The Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development (RGNIYD) is a premier institution for youth research, and an advocacy body of the Government of India, promoting youth in panchayati raj and training them in governance. The mandate of the Panchayati Raj Institutions and Youth Affairs (PRIYA) Division of RGNIYD has been to foster youth development through the promotion of youth participation in government at the grassroots. Youth Empowerment has been the driving force behind RGNIYD's activities.

2. As per the recommendations of the Committee on Papers Laid on the Table, Rajya Sabha, the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development (RGNIYD) are to be laid on the Table of the House within nine months from the date of closure of the accounts. The accounts of the Institute close on the 31st of March every year. Hence, the papers are required to be laid on the Table of Rajya Sabha by the 31st December, every year.
3. The laying position of the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development (RGNIYD), Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu, along with the delay caused over the last few years is as under: -

Year	Due Date	Date of Laying	Period of Delay		
			Y	M	D
2001-02	31.12.2002	09.05.2003	00	02	01
2002-03	31.12.2003	19.12.2003	In time		
2003-04	31.12.2004	22.12.2004	In time		
2004-05	31.12.2005	20.03.2006	00	02	19
2005-06	31.12.2006	17.05.2007	00	04	16
2006-07	31.12.2007	23.10.2008	00	09	22
2007-08	31.12.2008	26.02.2009	00	01	25
2008-09	31.12.2009	26.08.2010	00	07	25
2009-10	31.12.2010	Not yet laid			

4. It was evident that there was consistent delay in the laying of the papers of the Institute on the Table of the House by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.

5. In the backdrop of persistent delay in laying the Annual Reports/Audited Accounts, the Committee heard the representatives in the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports and Director, Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development during the course of its visit to Chennai on 26th June, 2010.

6. The Committee drew the attention of the Director, RGNIYD and Ministry to the persistent delay in laying the papers of the Institute. The Committee observed that similar reasons of the delay were added, i.e. in the approval by the Executive Council, which is headed by the Minister. The Committee wondered if any, effect was made to solve the issue of delayed approval, by changing the rules or by obtaining approval by circulation.

7. The representatives of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports expressed regrets over delay and submitted that the delay in laying of papers occurred due to lack of monitoring mechanism address such lapses and that appropriate steps were being taken to ensure that meetings of the Executive Council were convened on time. The Committee was assured of timely laying of the papers of the Institute in future.

8. In its written reply, the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports submitted that the Annual Report for the year 2008-09 was approved by the Executive Committee on 3rd February, 2010, but the Ministry was unable to lay the same due to the Non-Audit by the AG. The accounts have been audited as a special case from the year 2005-06 to 2008-09. It was also submitted that 23rd Executive Committee meeting decided that it was mandatory to get AG's, Report and in future that will be strictly followed. The Ministry have also worked out a time schedule for preparing the Annual Report of the Institute and, as decided, the position will be monitored periodically. All efforts, will be made to present the report in executive Committee meeting and laid in Parliament in time.

9. As regards computerization of accounts in the Institute, it was submitted that the Accounts have been computerized under latest technology, i.e, Tally package, a Computer based Accounting, the latest version ERP Package. Thus, they were able to get all the day to day income and Expenditure vouchers fed with the Tally package. They get management reports, i.e.,

income and Expenditure report, Balance Sheet, Receipts and payment Reports and other reports required, Division-wise.

10. After the Committee's study visit on 26th June, 2010, the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports laid the Annual Report/Audited accounts for year 2008-09 on 26th August, 2010. It sought extension of time upto Monsoon Session, 2011 for laying the Annual Report and Audited Accounts of the Institute for the year 2009-10. The reason for extension given was that the audit by the office of the Principal Accountant General, Tamil Nadu, would take some more time.

Recommendations of the Committee

11. **The Committee expresses its displeasure over the fact that the Ministry has not addressed the reasons causing of the delay in laying the papers. It recommends that Ministry/ Department must ensure timely approval of Annual Reports/Audited Accounts by the Executive Council. The Ministry could also consider to get approval through circulation.**

12. **The Committee also recommends that in case of delay, the Ministry should furnish the statement containing the reasons for the delay, which should invariably contain information, in chronological order, about the date of finalisation of annual accounts, appointment of auditors, forwarding the accounts to the auditor, completion of audit, submission to C&AG, adoption of report by AGM, completion of translation and printing and forwarding the papers to the Ministry. Such a statement should necessarily be laid along with the delayed laying papers on the Table of the House, so as to enable the Committee to identify the stages, causes and extent of delay and suggest remedial measures, wherever required.**

13. **The Committee further recommends that the Government Review laid on the Table of the House along with the Annual Report and Audited Accounts of the Institute should be comprehensive. In addition to broad annual performance of the Institute, the Government's Review must have separate para on financial performance of the organisation detailing the utilization of grants, achievement of objectives for which grants were given, internal revenue generation by the organisation etc. A separate para in the**

Review should deal with the audit observations and if the Government agreed with the response given by the organisation to audit observations.

14. The Committee recommended that rules must prescribe timely approval of Annual Reports/Audited Accounts by the Executive Council.

PART-II

ALL INDIA COUNCIL FOR TECHNICAL EDUCATION (AICTE), NEW DELHI

The AICTE was set up under the AICTE Act, 1987, to “provide for the establishment of an All India Council for Technical Education for proper planning and co-ordinated development of the technical education system throughout the country, the promotion of qualitative improvements of such education in relation to planned quantitative growth and the regulation and proper maintenance of norms and standards in the technical education system and for matters connected therewith.”

2. The AICTE, in consultation with the agencies concerned, grants approval for starting new technical institutions and for introducing new courses or programmes in the institutions. For promotion, innovation, research and development in established and new technologies, generation, adoption and adaptation of new technologies to meet developmental requirements and for overall improvement of educational process, the AICTE operates various schemes, namely, Modernisation and Removal of Obsolescence Scheme (MODROBS), Research Promotion Scheme (RPS) and Notionally Coordinated projects (NCPs).

3. Section 18 of the AICTE Act, 1987 requires the Central Government to lay the Annual Report of the Council, before both the Houses of Parliament. Similarly, Section 19(4) of the Act obliges the Central Government to cause to lay before both the Houses of Parliament the annual accounts of the Council, duly certified by the CAG or any person appointed by him.

4. The recommendations of the Committee on Papers Laid on the Table, Rajya Sabha require that the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the AICTE be laid on the Table of the House within nine months of closure of Accounts, i.e. by 31st December, every year.

5. The Committee, in its 120th Report presented to the Rajya Sabha on 29th November 2009, had made the following recommendations/observations -

“The Committee reemphasized on timely submission of Annual Reports and Audited Accounts and Audited Certificates and wherever delay was anticipated, AICTE should seek extension of time through its Ministry. In order to avoid any delay at various levels

in preparation and submission of Annual Reports with Annual Accounts and Audited Certificates, one officer of AICTE should be personally assigned the monitoring task.

The Committee further suggests that the Ministry should take up the matter of delay caused in the Office of DGACR in inspection and confirmation of audit certificate seriously and evolve an effective mechanism to streamline the process with the co-operation of the Office of the DGACR.

The Committee impresses upon the Ministry to lay a copy of the statement giving reasons for not laying the Annual Report and Audited Accounts within the stipulated time.”

6. The Committee notes that despite its earlier recommendations, the situation in respect of laying of Reports of All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), New Delhi did not improve, as is evident from the following statement, which indicates the year-wise details of laying of Annual Report and Audited Accounts of AICTE (2000-01 to 2009-10): -

Year	Due Date	Laid on	Delay		
			Year (s)	Month (s)	Day (s)
2000-01	31.12.2001	29.11.2002	00	10	28
2001-02	31.12.2002	22.08.2003	00	07	21
2002-03	31.12.2003	26.08.2004	00	07	25
2003-04	31.12.2004	22.03.2006	01	02	21
2004-05	31.12.2005	12.03.2007	01	02	11
2005-06	31.12.2006	15.12.2008	01	11	14
2006-07	31.12.2007	15.12.2008	00	11	14
2007-08	31.12.2008	26.11.2010	01	10	25
2008-09	31.12.2009	Yet to be laid			
2009-10	31.12.2010	Yet to be laid			

7. It is obvious from the above table that the Annual Report and Audited Accounts of the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), New Delhi for the year 2000-01 to 2007-08 have been laid belatedly. The delay ranges from 7 months 21 days to 1 year 11 months 14 days. Moreover, the Reports for the years 2008-09 and 2009-10 are yet to be laid. The Ministry failed to seek extension of time for laying the papers in spite of the recurring delay.

8. Against this backdrop, the Committee invited the Secretary, Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of Higher Education) and the Chairman, All India Council for

Technical Education (AICTE), New Delhi, in its meeting held on 01.11.2010 and sought clarifications from them on the delayed laying of the papers of the Council.

9. The Ministry submitted that in most of the cases, the office of DGACR took a long time in inspection and confirmation of the audited certificates. The Ministry apologized and regretted the delay in laying of the said papers on the Table of Rajya Sabha and assured the Committee that extreme care would be taken to lay the Reports on the Table of Rajya Sabha in time. The Ministry elaborated that the Annual Reports and Audited Statement of Accounts of All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), New Delhi for the year 2005-06 and 2006-07 could not be laid on the Table of the House in time as the printed copies of the Annual Reports and the Audit Report, both in English and Hindi versions, were received in the Ministry in the month of May, 2008. AICTE had submitted that it was mainly due to delay in completion of the audit process of the accounts.

10. The Secretary apologized for the lapse in seeking extension of time before expiry of stipulated time from the Committee for laying the Annual Report and Audited Accounts of AICTE and also for not laying the papers within the extended time in case of 2007-08 and 2008-09. She assured the Committee that in future, the Committee would be approached, well in advance, for seeking extension of time for laying of papers. She also informed the Committee about the steps being taken in the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), New Delhi for organizational reforms as under:-

“I can only bring before you snap shot of improvements in the systems of AICTE that have been attempted and the improvements in the systems in the Government in terms of follow up that have been effected which will, I expect, prevent such a recurrence in future. I would also inform the Hon. Committee that the AICTE has undergone various reforms, including organizational, procedural and facilitating the institutions that have to come to AICTE. The e-Governance has been a major part of these reforms and I expect that by computerization of the accounts by E-Governance initiatives, they will be in a position to not only keep their accounts up-to-date, which they are even at the moment, but to get them audited in time and to get their Annual Report well in time so that we can place before the Hon. House. I would, once again, request to be excused for this lapse on behalf of the Ministry.”

11. The Ministry had been regularly following up with AICTE about the directions of Hon'ble Committee of the Rajya Sabha regarding the laying of papers on the Table of the House

within a period of nine months of closure of the Financial Year. The AICTE was also reminded, through personal discussions and telephonically, in the matter. As soon as complete papers were received from AICTE, immediate action was taken to get these authenticated by the Minister and send these to the Rajya Sabha Secretariat. The Ministry had been consistently impressing upon the AICTE to finalize its Annual Accounts within a period of three months and make them available for auditing. AICTE had also been asked to complete the other stages like translation, printing and finalization of Report, etc., within the next six months, so that the Annual Report and the Audited accounts could be laid on the table of the House within nine months of the close of the accounting year. The matter was consistently followed up with the AICTE.

12. The Committee also heard the views of the Secretary, Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of Higher Education) and the Chairman, All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), New Delhi in its meeting held on 9th May, 2011. The Secretary apologized on behalf of the Ministry for the delay in submission of the papers to Parliament. He informed that there was a very serious crisis in terms of manpower in AICTE. They have been able to improve their performance in the recent past. He assured the Committee that next year onwards, the Ministry will definitely lay the papers within the stipulated time. The Chairman, AICTE informed the Committee that there were atleast 50% vacancies in permanent staff at any given point of time. Most of the Officer cadre employees were on deputation. They have been making significant efforts in filling up some of the vacancies. The AICTE has put in place an Audit Cell in Internal Auditing Mechanism and ensured timely completion of accounts and to minimize audit queries. He assured the Committee that the suggestions of the Committee will certainly be taken into account.

Recommendations/Observations of the Committee

13. The Committee expresses displeasure over the fact that despite the recommendations contained in its 120th Report, there has been no improvement in the situation regarding laying of papers of AICTE. The Ministry failed even to seek extension of time from the Committee. The Committee is, therefore, apprehensive of the assurance given by the Ministry. However, it expects the Ministry and the AICTE to scrupulously adhere to the statutory obligations towards Parliament. The Committee accordingly,

directs the Ministry to effectively supervise the timely completion of all the stages involved in preparation and laying of the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of AICTE so that such delays in the laying of the papers are avoided in future.

14. The Committee reiterates its recommendations particularly the Ministry's taking up the matter of delay caused in the Office of DGACR in inspection and confirmation of audit certificate seriously, and evolve an effective mechanism, both to streamline and to monitor the process, with the co-operation of the Office of the DGACR.

15. The Committee notes that the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), New Delhi has already started computerization of its accounts in a phased manner under the policy of e-governance. This would certainly help in finalization of accounts in time. The Committee hopes that accounts would also be maintained on computer in regional offices of All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), New Delhi.

16. The Committee impresses upon the Ministry to seek extension of time in cases of delay and also to lay a copy of the statement, giving reasons for not laying the Annual Report and Audited Accounts within the stipulated time.

17. The Committee is of the view that persistent delays in laying the papers is a matter of serious concern for which the Ministry and the Council are accountable. The responsibility for the persistent non-compliance of statutory requirements and Committee's recommendations in this regard should be fixed.

PART- III

CENTRAL INFORMATION COMMISSION (CIC), NEW DELHI

The Right to Information Act was approved by the Parliament in May, 2005 and assented to by the President in June, 2005. Certain preliminary clauses went into effect immediately, but the entire Act came into force with effect from 12 October, 2005. The Act replaced the Freedom of Information Act, 2002, which was adopted in January, 2003, but never came into force.

2. Under the Act, all the Indian citizens have a right to seek information not only from the Central Government public authorities, but also from public authorities under the jurisdiction of the States. This includes local level bodies, viz. rural and urban panchayats. The Act also covers all public authorities set up by the Constitution or Statutes, as well as the bodies controlled or substantially financed by the Government or non-Government organizations, which are substantially funded by the Government. Citizens not only can request to inspect or seek copy for information, the Act allows them to make an application to inspect public works and take samples also.

3. As on date, almost all the states have constituted Information Commissions and appointed Information Commissioners, although actually setting up and providing adequate resources to the Information Commission offices has often been slow. The Act attempts to bar appeals to the courts, but as the right to information is a constitutional right, the citizens still can exercise their right to go to the High Court or Supreme Court, through a Writ petition, if they feel that their right has been infringed.

4. Under Section 25 (4) of the Act, the Government is expected to lay the Annual Reports of the Commission. However, it has been observed that there have been persistent delays in laying the Annual Reports. The Annual Reports for the years 2008-09 and 2009-10 have not been laid so far. The following statement indicates year-wise details of laying of Annual Reports of the Central Information Commission: -

Year (s)	Due Date	Date of Laying	DELAY		
			Y	M	D
2005-06	31.12.2006	10/9/2007	00	08	09
2006-07	31.12.2007	26/2/2009	01	01	25

2007-08	31.12.2008	9/12/2010	01	11	08
2008-09	31.12.2009	11/8/2011	01	07	10
2009-10	31.12.2010	11/8/2011	00	07	10

5. Considering the statutory provisions, the Committee decided to undertake an appraisal of the report laying position in respect of Central Information Commission, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions (Department of Personnel and Training). The replies of the Ministry on the issue, were obtained through a detailed questionnaire. The Committee also heard the views of Secretary, Department of Personnel and Training and the Secretary, CIC in its meeting held on 24th May, 2011.

6. Regarding the delays in laying of the Annual Report of CIC, the Ministry admitted that the delay had taken place in preparation of the reports and in laying them on the Table of the House in the past. The Annual Reports for the years 2008-09 and 2009-10 were yet to be laid. While explaining the reasons for the delays, the Secretary submitted before the Committee that CIC is a new organization, set up in 2005. It took some time to get its own systems in place and its people in position. Secondly, a large number of public authorities are involved and the Ministry has to collect information from various Ministries, Departments and also from the UTs Administrations. It took some more time to collect information from all the Ministries/Departments and from various organisations under them.

7. To improve the system of collecting information and to avoid delays, the Secretary, CIC, and the Chief Information Commissioner have been writing regularly to all the Ministries/Departments to submit the information at right time. They had also set up Annual Report information system on their website in 2006-07, and improved it in the year 2011. They allowed the public authorities to upload the data on quarterly basis through login and password given to them. The Ministry also issued guidelines for the CPIOs in February, 2008, and comprehensive guidelines in October, 2009. Further, the Ministry with the approval of Cabinet Secretary also directed all the Ministries that the Annual Reports which are placed on the Table of the House, must have a Chapter on implementation of the RTI Act.

8. As regards clearing of the backlog, the Secretary assured the Committee that reports for the years 2008-09 and 2009-10 will be laid on the Table of the House in the Monsoon Session,

2011. The report for the year 2010-11, whose work was in progress, will be laid during Winter Session, 2011. Subsequent to the meeting, the Ministry complied with its submission made before the Committee and laid the pending Reports of 2008-09 and 2009-10 before the House on 11th August 2011.

9. The Secretary further explained that Section 25 of the RTI Act, contains a provision that “The CIC shall, as soon as practicable, after the end of each year, prepare a report on implementation of the Act and forward it to the Government” meaning thereby that no time limit is fixed in the Act for laying of the Report, but they have decided to adopt a deadline of nine months, as was being done in case of all the other organisations. The Secretary assured the Committee that, in future, the Ministry will seek extension of time from the Committee in case of delay, by citing reasons for the delay.

Recommendations/Observations of the Committee

10. The Committee noted that in cases of delay, the Ministry never approached it to seek extension of time, which shows disregard to the statutory provisions and to the Committee’s recommendations in this regard.

11. The Committee takes note of delay in providing information to CIC by the Government Departments/public organisations and the delay in laying of papers in Parliament. Considering the persistent delays in laying Annual Reports before the Parliament, the Committee feels it is imperative that the Ministry and the Commission draw a time line for every stage of preparation of Annual Reports. Instead of waiting endlessly for the Ministries/Departments and State Governments/UTs to furnish their information on implementation of RTI Act, a deadline should be prescribed, for furnishing the information to the Commission. A senior officer should be personally assigned the task of monitoring.

12. The Committee also recommends that the Commission and the Ministry should work out a mechanism by which timely laying of Annual Reports and Audited Accounts is ensured. Whenever inordinate delay is made in laying the papers, responsibility should be fixed.

PART- IV

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE

Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development (RGNIYD), Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu

- 1. The Committee expresses its displeasure over the fact that the Ministry has not addressed the reasons causing of the delay in laying the papers. It recommends that Ministry/ Department must ensure timely approval of Annual Reports/Audited Accounts by the Executive Council. The Ministry could also consider to get approval through circulation.**

- 2. The Committee also recommends that in case of delay, the Ministry should furnish the statement containing the reasons for the delay, which should invariably contain information, in chronological order, about the date of finalisation of annual accounts, appointment of auditors, forwarding the accounts to the auditor, completion of audit, submission to C&AG, adoption of report by AGM, completion of translation and printing and forwarding the papers to the Ministry. Such a statement should necessarily be laid along with the delayed laying papers on the Table of the House, so as to enable the Committee to identify the stages, causes and extent of delay and suggest remedial measures, wherever required.**

- 3. The Committee further recommends that the Government Review laid on the Table of the House along with the Annual Report and Audited Accounts of the Institute should be comprehensive. In addition to broad annual performance of the Institute, the Government's Review must have separate para on financial performance of the organisation detailing the utilization of grants, achievement of objectives for which grants were given, internal revenue generation by the organisation etc. A separate para in the Review should deal with the audit observations and if the Government agreed with the response given by the organisation to audit observations.**

- 4. The Committee recommended that rules must prescribe timely approval of Annual Reports/Audited Accounts by the Executive Council.**

All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), New Delhi

5. The Committee expresses displeasure over the fact that despite the recommendations contained in its 120th Report, there has been no improvement in the situation regarding laying of papers of AICTE. The Ministry failed even to seek extension of time from the Committee. The Committee is, therefore, apprehensive of the assurance given by the Ministry. However, it expects the Ministry and the AICTE to scrupulously adhere to the statutory obligations towards Parliament. The Committee accordingly, directs the Ministry to effectively supervise the timely completion of all the stages involved in preparation and laying of the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of AICTE so that such delays in the laying of the papers are avoided in future.

6. The Committee reiterates its recommendations particularly the Ministry's taking up the matter of delay caused in the Office of DGACR in inspection and confirmation of audit certificate seriously, and evolve an effective mechanism, both to streamline and to monitor the process, with the co-operation of the Office of the DGACR.

7. The Committee notes that the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), New Delhi has already started computerization of its accounts in a phased manner under the policy of e-governance. This would certainly help in finalization of accounts in time. The Committee hopes that accounts would also be maintained on computer in regional offices of All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), New Delhi.

8. The Committee impresses upon the Ministry to seek extension of time in cases of delay and also to lay a copy of the statement, giving reasons for not laying the Annual Report and Audited Accounts within the stipulated time.

9. The Committee is of the view that persistent delays in laying the papers is a matter of serious concern for which the Ministry and the Council are accountable. The responsibility for the persistent non-compliance of statutory requirements and Committee's recommendations in this regard should be fixed.

Central Information Commission (CIC), New Delhi

10. The Committee noted that in cases of delay, the Ministry never approached it to seek extension of time, which shows disregard to the statutory provisions and to the Committee's recommendations in this regard.

11. The Committee takes note of delay in providing information to CIC by the Government Departments/public organisations and the delay in laying of papers in Parliament. Considering the persistent delays in laying Annual Reports before the Parliament, the Committee feels it is imperative that the Ministry and the Commission draw a time line for every stage of preparation of Annual Reports. Instead of waiting endlessly for the Ministries/Departments and State Governments/UTs to furnish their information on implementation of RTI Act, a deadline should be prescribed, for furnishing the information to the Commission. A senior officer should be personally assigned the task of monitoring.

12. The Committee also recommends that the Commission and the Ministry should work out a mechanism by which timely laying of Annual Reports and Audited Accounts is ensured. Whenever inordinate delay is made in laying the papers, responsibility should be fixed.
