

CHAPTER-VIII: FOREST EXPENDITURE

8.1 Tax administration

The Forest Department incurs expenditure mainly on the protection, conservation, development and regeneration of forests, exploitation of timber and other forest produce and sustained growth of the forests.

The Forest Department functions under the Principal Secretary (Forests). The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF), Chhattisgarh at Raipur is responsible for overall administration of the Department. PCCF is assisted by Additional PCCFs (APCCF) and CCFs at Headquarters.

The forest area in the State is supervised by six Conservators of Forests (CF) stationed at Raipur, Bilaspur, Surguja, Jagdalpur, Kanker and Durg. The forest area of the State is divided into 32 divisions. The administration of forest divisions, sale of forest produce, realisation of revenue as well as expenditure on protection, conservation, exploitation of timber and sustained growth of the forest is the responsibility of Divisional Forest Officer (DFO). The DFO is assisted by Sub Divisional Forest Officers (SDO). Besides protection of forest, the Range Officers (RO) are responsible for carrying out the work of plantation, marking and felling of trees, transportation of timber and fuel wood from coupes¹ to depots, etc. The Working Plan (WP) Circle (Bilaspur) and divisions are responsible for timely preparation of the WPs. The Department follows the under mentioned Acts, Rules and orders:

The Indian Forest Act (IF) Act, 1927 and rules made thereunder;

The Forest Conservation (FC) Act, 1980 and rules made thereunder;

Chhattisgarh *Van upaj (Vyapar Viniyaman) Adhiniyam*, 1960 and rules made thereunder;

Forest Financial Rules;

National Working Plan Code (NWPC) 2004;

Forest Manual; and

Instructions/Orders issued by the Government/Department from time to time regarding assessment and collection of revenue.

8.2 Trend of expenditure in the Forest Department

The expenditure in the Forest Department during the years 2007-08 to 2011-12 was as shown in the following table:

¹ The Working Plan divides the forest area into various Working Circles (WC), WC into compartments and compartments into coupes.

(₹ in crore)

Year	Budget Estimates (BEs)	Allotment	Actual Expenditure	Actual expenditure as percentage of allotment
2007-08	556.88	501.30	467.54	93.27
2008-09	649.20	614.62	566.43	92.16
2009-10	716.37	659.53	647.14	98.12
2010-11	852.02	665.86	676.31	101.57
2011-12	1065.13	772.03	763.98	98.96

(Source: Information furnished by the Department)

The above table indicates that in 2010-11 and 2011-12, the actual expenditure was 21 and 28 *per cent* less than the BEs respectively. The actual expenditure was less than the budget allotted during the period except in 2010-11 where the expenditure exceeded the allotment due to increase in non-plan expenditure of the Department.

8.3 Impact of audit

During the period 2007-08 to 2010-11, we had pointed out through our Inspection Reports irregular, wasteful, doubtful expenditure etc. with financial implication of ₹ 219.52 crore in 310 cases. The details are shown in the following table:

(₹ in crore)

Year of IR	No. of units audited	Cases	Amount objected
2007-08	1	10	1.11
2008-09	12	82	63.82
2009-10	7	39	12.93
2010-11	19	179	141.66
Total	39	310	219.52

8.4 Results of audit

We conducted test check of the records of 15 units relating to Forest Department during the year 2011-12 and found 143 cases of irregular, wasteful, doubtful expenditure etc. with financial effect of ₹ 59.33 crore as detailed below:

(₹ in crore)

Sl. No.	Category	Number of cases	Amount
1	Irregular expenditure	35	14.37
2	Avoidable expenditure	22	4.65
3	Unfruitful expenditure	17	11.16
4	Excess expenditure	18	4.95
5	Other irregularities	51	24.20
	Total	143	59.33

A few illustrative cases of irregular, wasteful, unfruitful, doubtful expenditure, short recovery of cost of Compensatory Afforestation etc. amounting to ₹ 14.48 crore are mentioned in the succeeding paragraphs.

8.5 Audit observations

We scrutinised the records of various Divisional Forest Offices (DFOs) and found several cases of non-observance of the provisions of the Acts/Rules/Government notifications/ instructions leading to short realisation of cost of Compensatory Afforestation, irregular, wasteful, doubtful expenditure in plantations, construction of roads, execution of other forestry activities etc. as mentioned in the succeeding paragraphs in this chapter. These cases are illustrative and are based on a test check carried out by us. Such omissions on the part of the DFOs are pointed out by us each year, but not only do the irregularities persist, these remain undetected till audit is conducted. There is need for the Government to improve the internal control system so that such omissions can be avoided.

8.6 Irregular expenditure from Calamity Relief Fund on ineligible items

Government of India (GoI), Ministry of Finance had directed (June 2005) that Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) shall be used only for meeting expenditure for providing immediate relief to the victims of cyclone, drought, earthquake, fire, flood, tsunami, hailstorm, landslide, avalanche, cloud burst and pest attack. The expenditure on restoration of damaged infrastructure and capital assets should be met from the normal budgetary heads, except when it is to be incurred as part of providing immediate relief. Also, the provision for disaster preparedness and mitigation needs to be built into the State plans and not as a part of calamity relief. Further, Ministry of Home Affairs, GoI, vide its letter dated 27 June 2007, again directed the State Governments to ensure that the expenditure from CRF is incurred as per the approved items and norms only.

Four ² Divisional Forest Officers (DFO) submitted proposals ³ for 627 works amounting to ₹ 20.74 crore to the respective Collectors. During test check of the proposals, cash book, payment vouchers and project reports of these DFOs, we noticed between August 2011 and February 2012 that the proposals submitted by the DFOs included works which were neither in the approved list of CRF (277 works) nor were they of immediate nature (48 works). However, the Collectors sanctioned the amount against the above proposals. Accordingly, the DFOs executed the works (as shown in *Appendix-8.1*) and incurred expenditure of ₹ 10.76 crore ⁴ on 325 works.

The above works were of the nature of regular works of the Department for which budget is sanctioned annually by the State Government. Also, these works had neither appeared in the approved list of items nor were they of immediate nature which were to be carried out from CRF nor were they meant for providing immediate relief to the victims of natural calamities. Hence, expenditure of ₹ 10.76 crore incurred from CRF in violation of the instructions of GoI was irregular.

After this was pointed out in audit (August 2011, October 2011 and January 2012), DFO, Raipur and East Bhanupratappur replied that the works were carried out after obtaining administrative approval and sanction from the Government. DFO, West Bhanupratappur replied that the works were taken up for water collection in summer season, supply of drinking water to animals and for preventing the widening of *nalas*. In case of Dhamtari, the Government replied in response to the Factual Statement that works were

² Dhamtari, East Bhanupratappur, Raipur and West Bhanupratappur

³ East Bhanupratappur and West Bhanupratappur in 2008-09; Dhamtari and Raipur in 2010-11.

⁴ Not in approved list- ₹ 920.33 lakh and Not covered in immediate nature of work- ₹ 156.31 lakh

carried out as per the norms of the GoI and the State Government and after approval from the Collector.

The fact remains that all these works are regular works of the Department and were not meant to provide immediate relief to the victims of any calamity. Further, only those damaged works come under immediate relief, which are required to be restored within a period of 30 to 60 days after occurrence of the natural calamity but in these cases the Department executed the works after a gap of one year.

The matter was reported to the Government (June 2012), we have not received their replies (December 2012).

8.7 Short realisation of cost of Compensatory Afforestation

Under Section 2 of the Forest Conservation Act, 1980, permission for the diversion of forest area for non-forestry purposes is given by Government of India (GoI). Government of Chhattisgarh, Forest Department instructed (March 2002) that the cost of Compensatory Afforestation (CA) shall be recovered from the user agencies at the rate of ₹ 29,725 per hectare for non-irrigated plantation in the year 2001-02. The rates shall be increased by 10 *per cent* annually on account of inflation in wages and the project cost shall include 25 *per cent* for Contingent expenditure, Entry point activities and Research and Development (R & D).

During test check of case files of diversion of forest lands for non-forestry purposes in Koriya and Manendragarh Divisions (February 2011), we found that between 2005-06 and 2008-09, forest land admeasuring 420.975 hectares was diverted in four cases for non-forestry purposes with the condition that the user agency shall bear the cost of Compensatory Afforestation (CA) over the double degraded⁵ forest land. In lieu of diversion of the forest land, cost of CA over 843.658 hectares of degraded forest land amounting to ₹ 4.70 crore was recoverable from the user agencies. The rate of CA for the year 2001-02 was

₹ 29,725 per hectare. However, while raising the demands, the Department calculated the cost of CA adopting ₹ 29,725 as the rate for the year 2002-03 without increasing it by 10 *per cent* over the rates of 2001-02. This resulted in short realisation of cost of CA amounting to ₹ 85.98 lakh (as shown in *Appendix-8.2*).

After this was pointed out in audit (March 2012), the Government stated (July 2012) that the rates were fixed for 2002-03 and further years as per the above instructions by adding 25 *per cent* in the rates fixed for 2001-02. The inflation rate of 10 *per cent* was added above the rates so fixed. The reply is factually incorrect as the instructions issued in March 2002 fixed the rate of ₹ 29,725 per hectare for non-irrigated plantation for the year 2001-02 while the

⁵ Compensatory Afforestation over degraded forest land of twice the area of land being diverted.

calculations were made by the Department by taking this rate for the year 2002-03. The faulty calculation by the Department led to short realisation of the cost of CA.

The matter was reported to the Department and the Government (June 2012). The Government did not furnish specific reply to the observation raised in audit. Further reply has not been received (December 2012).

8.8 Doubtful expenditure in vouchers

Forest Department in Chhattisgarh executes departmental work by engaging labourers on job rates and the payment is made on vouchers supported by labour sheets indicating the particulars of labourers such as name, father's name, village, work done, period of work, amount paid and signature/ thumb impression.

8.8.1 During test check of the vouchers and cash copies of different ranges of Kanker Division (September 2011), we found the following:

Sl. No.	Vr. No.	Place of work	Work	Date of work	No. of labourers	Amount paid
1	KK/76	Comp 85	Pit digging	12.02.11 to 23.02.11	38	46, 873
	KK/99	Comp 85	Dressing of stumps	04.02.11 to 13.02.11	42	50,000
The Labour sheets attached with the vouchers contained the names of the same 18 labourers being engaged in the same period at both the works which is not possible.						
2	NP/153	OA kh. No. 590	Pit digging	11.03.11 to 14.03.11	30	31,390
	NP/160	OA kh. No. 590	Pit filling with soil	11.03.11 to 14.03.11	40	38,500
The Labour sheets attached with the vouchers contained the names of the same eight labourers being engaged in the same period at both the works which is not possible.						
3	KK/213	Comp. 11	Boulder collection	13.03.11 to 21.03.11	28	28,615
	KK/221	Comp. 11	Construction of check dam	06.03.11 to 14.03.11	28	37,372
The Labour sheets attached with the vouchers contained the names of the same 26 labourers being engaged in the same period at both the works which is not possible.						
4	KK/214	Comp. 11	Construction of check dam	06.03.11 to 13.03.11	30	36,456
	KK/223	Comp. 11	Fixing of barbed wires	06.03.11 to 12.03.11	30	31,500
The Labour sheets attached with the vouchers contained 29 same labourers being engaged in the same period at both the works which is not possible (as shown in <i>Appendix 8.3</i>)						
Total						3,00,706

This resulted in doubtful payment of ₹ 3.01 lakh in the above four cases as the same labourers cannot be engaged in different works at different places at the same time.

After this was pointed out in audit (September 2011), the DFO stated that works had been executed at job rates and the same names appeared in the

labour sheets by mistake. He further stated that the works have been verified by the SDO. We do not agree with the DFO's reply as engagement of the same labourers simultaneously in different works at different places is not possible.

The matter was reported to the Department and the Government (April and June 2012). We have not received their replies (December 2012).

8.8.2 During the test check of the vouchers and cash copies of different ranges of Koriya Division (February 2011), we found that particulars like name and date of work, quantity of work executed etc. were not properly indicated in the labour sheets. Further scrutiny of vouchers and cash copies revealed the following:

Sl. No.	Vr. No.	Place of work	Work	Date of work	No. of labourers	Amount paid
Division: Koriya						
1	KH/39	Comp. 664	Construction of check dam	06.02.10 to 20.02.10	34	48,002
	Mar, 10					
	KH/40	Comp. 664	Construction of check dam	04.02.10 to 20.02.10	26	45,826
	Mar, 10					
The Labour sheets attached with the vouchers contained the names of the same 16 labourers being engaged in the same period at both the works which is not possible.						
2	KH/74	Comp. 657	Grass and Lantana clearing	03.09.09 to 11.09.09	30	23,390
	Feb, 10					
	KH/76	Comp. 651	Grass and Lantana clearing	02.09.09 to 16.09.09	30	42,961
	Feb, 10					
The Labour sheets attached with the vouchers contained the names of the same 21 labourers being engaged in the same period at both the works which is not possible.						
3	CH/84	Comp. 533	Construction of Contour trenches	21.12.09 to 28.12.09	35	14,278
	Mar, 10					
	CH/85	Comp. 533	Construction of Contour trenches	25.12.09 to 31.12.09	38	18,373
	Mar, 10					
The Labour sheets attached with the vouchers contained the names of the same 12 labourers being engaged in the same period at both the works which is not possible.						
Total						1,92,830

This resulted in doubtful payment of ₹ 1.93 lakh in the above three cases as the same labourers cannot work at different places at the same time.

After this was pointed out in audit (April 2012), the Government stated (June 2012) in reply to the Factual statement that on the basis of the audit objection, an enquiry was made by the Department. As per the preliminary enquiry report (May 2012), payment of ₹ 1.14 lakh was found doubtful and disciplinary action has been initiated against the responsible officials.

The matter was reported to the Government (June 2012). We have not received their replies to the draft paragraph (December 2012).

8.9 Doubtful expenditure on plantation

Working Plan (WP) of a division provides the compartment-wise details of forest land including the status of vegetation, type and density of forest as well as availability of area for plantation. On its basis, the coupes are decided for plantation and other forestry works.

During scrutiny of WP (2005-06 to 2014-15), Compartment Histories, cash book and payment vouchers of Manendragarh and Koriya divisions (February 2011), we found cases where plantations were carried out in the compartments despite non-availability of land as discussed in the succeeding paragraphs.

8.9.1 The Conservator of Forests (CF), Ambikapur sanctioned (January 2009) the work of plantation on 2000 hectares in Rehabilitation of Degraded Forest (RDF) area to the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO), Manendragarh. The DFO allotted (January 2009) the amount for plantation over 2000 hectares in 16 compartments of RDF area spread in three ranges. Of these compartments, there was a compartment (P-1296) where 80,000 plants were planted on 200 hectares and expenditure of ₹ 25.80 lakh was incurred on this in three years (2009-10 to 2011-12).

During test check of plantation records including plantation project report of Manendragarh Division (February 2011), we found that the project of plantation in the above mentioned compartment was not approved by the DFO. Further, it was also seen from the project report that on the basis of survey of the compartment, the project was prepared for plantation on 60 hectares while the work was reported to have been taken up on 200 hectares area by the division. As per the approved WP, details of the compartment are as follows:

Compartment No.	Total area	Unworkable Area				Workable area
		Existing plantation (before commencement of WP)	Encroachment	River, nala	Total	
1	2	3	4	5	6(3+4+5)	7(2-6)
P/1296	230.60	40.00	5.658	7.425	53.08	177.52

It is evident from the above table that 177.52 ha was available for plantation. Further scrutiny revealed that plantation work had been done in 2006-07 and 2007-08 on 50 and 36 hectares respectively in the same compartment. Hence, maximum area available for plantation was only 91.52⁶ hectares in 2009-10. However, as per records of the Department, plantation was carried out in 200 hectares which is not possible. Evidently, plantation in area admeasuring 108.48⁷ hectares was in excess of availability of land and expenditure of ₹ 13.99 lakh⁸ thereon is doubtful.

After this was pointed out in audit (June 2012), the Government replied (October 2012) that an enquiry was made by the Conservator of Forest in the case and it was found that treatment was carried out in 91.52 hectares area

⁶ $177.52 - (50 + 36) = 91.52$

⁷ $200 - 91.52 = 108.48$

⁸ $(25,79,907 \div 200) = ₹ 12,899 \times 108.48 = ₹ 13,99,283$

only and 80,000 plants had been planted. Disciplinary action has been initiated against the officials responsible for showing work in 108 hectares excess area in the compartment and expenditure incurred thereon.

The reply confirms that treatment was carried out in 91.52 hectares area as against the sanctioned area of 200 hectares. As such, the expenditure of ₹ 11.81 lakh⁹ was to be incurred on plantation, against which total sanctioned amount of ₹ 25.80 lakh was shown as spent in the treatment. This resulted in doubtful expenditure of ₹ 13.99 lakh on the work.

8.9.2 The Conservator of Forests (CF), Ambikapur sanctioned (August 2008 and May 2009) ₹ 32.70 lakh (₹ 19.54 lakh for first year work and ₹ 13.16 lakh for second year work) to Koriya Division for Bamboo plantation in 280 hectares area. The Divisional Forest Officer (DFO), Koriya allotted (September 2008) the amount for Bamboo plantation over 280 hectares in five¹⁰ compartments of Rehabilitation of Degraded Bamboo Forest (RDBF) area spread in three ranges.

During test check of plantation records of Koriya Division (February 2011), we found that in four¹¹ compartments, plantations were carried out on 200 hectares. As per the approved WP of Koriya Division (for the period 2005-06 to 2014-15), total area of those four compartments was 1249.43 hectare of which 1170.580 hectare was covered by forest, 26.670 hectare was covered by river/*nala* etc. and only 35.52 hectare was rare forest/blank area¹² where plantation was possible. As against this, plantation was reported to have been taken up in 200 hectares as per the plantation register. Hence, 164.48 hectares¹³ of forest area was planted with 65,792 bamboo plants without availability of land in those compartments. Thus, expenditure of ₹ 18.48 lakh incurred on such plantation was doubtful (as shown in *Appendix-8.4*).

After this was pointed out in audit (June 2012), the Government replied (October 2012) that after being objected by the audit, the DFO inspected the sites again and according to his report, sufficient open forest was available in those coupes for bamboo plantation. Also, bamboo is an understory¹⁴ plant which can be planted with other trees.

We do not agree as only 35.52 hectares degraded forest/blank area was available in these compartments as per the approved WP. Further, the plantation was taken up (2008-09) just after three years of inception of WP (2005-06). However, nothing was found recorded regarding increase of open forest/blank area from 35.52 hectares to 200 hectares in those compartments in just three years.

⁹ ₹ 12,899 x 91.52 = ₹ 11,80,516

¹⁰ P-300, P-295, P-74, P-197 and P-56,64

¹¹ P-300, P-295, P-74, P-197

¹² Blank area in the forest is the area having null vegetation.

¹³ 200 ha. – 35.52 ha. = 164.48 ha.

¹⁴ Understory plants are those plants which can be planted under top canopy

8.10 Wasteful expenditure on bamboo plantation

The Conservator of Forests (CF), Ambikapur sanctioned (December 2008) an amount of ₹ 1.40 crore to Manendragarh Division for Bamboo plantation in 2005 hectares area of RDBF circle under the Rehabilitation of Degraded Forests Scheme (6724). During test check of the plantation records of the Division (February 2011), we found that DFO, Manendragarh allotted (January 2009) the amount for Bamboo plantation over 2005 hectares in 14 compartments of RDBF area. Among these 14 compartments, there was one compartment namely P/1043 in which bamboo plantation work was carried out in 100 hectares and expenditure of ₹ 13.05 lakh was incurred.

From scrutiny of the WP and Compartment Histories, we observed that as per the approved WP of the division, compartment no. P/1043 of RDBF area had an area of 224.24 hectares. Plantation records of the division revealed that plantations were carried out in 300 hectares between 2004-05 and 2010-11 as detailed below:

Comp. No.	Total Area (ha)	Year	Plantation work				Excess area taken in plantation (ha)
			Area (ha)	No. of Plants	Amount received	Amount spent	
P 1043	224.24	2004-05 to 07-08	200	80000	1267500	1221943	
		2008-09 to 10-11	100	40000	1318500	1305234	
	224.24	Total	300	120000	2586000	2527177	75.76

Similarly, in 2009-10, under the same scheme, the CF sanctioned an amount of ₹ 76.81 lakh for rehabilitation of bamboo forest (without plantation) work in 2793 hectares of RDBF circle. The DFO carried out the plantation work from this in 972.27 hectares of eight compartments. Of these compartments, there was one compartment namely P/1006 in which bamboo plantation work was carried out in 120 hectares and expenditure of ₹ 16.13 lakh was incurred.

On scrutiny of the records (February 2011), we observed that as per the approved WP of the division, compartment no. P/1006 of RDBF area had an area of 234.92 hectares. Plantation records of the division however revealed that plantations were carried out in 320 hectares between 2003-04 and 2010-11 as detailed below:

Comp. No.	Total Area (ha)	Year	Plantation work				Excess area taken in plantation (ha)
			Area (ha)	No. of Plants	Amount received	Amount spent	
P 1006	234.92	2003-04 to 06-07	200	80000	1900000	1899996	
		2009-10 to 10-11	120	48000	1692000	1612756	
	234.92	Total	320	128000	3592000	3512752	85.08

The above details show that plantations were carried out in compartments P/1043 and P/1006 on 75.76 hectares and 85.08 hectares area respectively which was more than that available in the compartments, which is not

possible. Hence, the expenditure of ₹ 21.32 lakh¹⁵ incurred on plantation on excess areas in 2008-09 and 2009-10 appears to be doubtful.

After this was pointed out in the audit (June 2012), the Government stated (October 2012) that a committee of SDOs was deputed for verifying the facts through inspection of plantation sites. The committee reported that plants pertaining to earlier plantations were not found at both the sites. However, the later plantations were found there. Also, action has been proposed against the concerned officials for selecting these sites in plantation projects again without writing off the expenditure incurred/loss occurred on the earlier plantations. Further report of recovery of ₹ 21.32 lakh has not been received (December 2012).

8.11 Irregular and doubtful expenditure on two WBM roads

As per Rule 4 of Chhattisgarh Store Purchase Rules, 2002, commodities whose rates are not specified by the Chhattisgarh State Industrial Development Corporation (CSIDC) shall be purchased through quotations/tenders. If the value of annual purchase of such commodity is more than ₹ 50,000, the purchase shall be made through open tender only. After sanction of tender from the Purchase Committee, the purchase order shall be issued to the supplier for that commodity. As per the order of Chhattisgarh Government (December 2002), royalty is payable on the minor minerals used in the departmental works. No payment shall be made to the contractor before obtaining royalty clearance certificate from the Collector.

The Collector (Budget section), Raipur accorded administrative approval (June 2010) of ₹ 6.98 crore for repairing of 251 damaged infrastructure to Divisional Forest Office (DFO), Raipur. Out of this sanctioned amount, ₹ 55.67 lakh and ₹ 17.58 lakh were sanctioned for repairing of Water Bound Macadam (WBM) roads viz “Bar to Ghirghol 19km” and “Turturia to Thakurdia 6 km” respectively.

During scrutiny of allotments, projects, Cash Book, vouchers etc. (January 2012) at DFO, Raipur (Territorial), the following irregularities were found:

1. The material had been procured without following the Store Purchase Rules.
2. Neither was royalty deducted nor was any royalty clearance certificate found in the vouchers.
3. Scrutiny of vouchers also revealed that two vehicles¹⁶ were used for excavating and four vehicles¹⁷ were used for transportation of materials for the above roads. The details are as follows:

¹⁵ P/ 1043 >> (₹ 13,05,234/ 100 ha) = ₹ 13,052 X 75.76 = ₹ 9,88,845
P/ 1006 >> (₹ 16,12,756/ 120 ha) = ₹ 13,439 X 85.08 = ₹ 11,43,344
Total = ₹ 21,32,189

¹⁶ CG/04/DN/3989 and CG/04/DN/1327

¹⁷ CG/04/DM/1478, CG/04/DR/5084, CG/04/DM/1254 and CG/06/1135

Name of Road	Material	Qty. (cum)	As per Vouchers	Expenditure incurred (₹ in lakh)
			Reg. No. of vehicle	
Turturia to Thakurdia 6 km	Soil	4500.00	CG/04/DN/3989 (JCB), CG/04/DM/1478 (Tractor)	17.44
	Moorum	3599.86	CG/04/DN/3989 (JCB), CG/04/DN/1327 (JCB), CG/04/DM/1478 (Tractor)	
Bar to Ghirghol 19 km	Soil	7500.00	CG/04/DN/1327(JCB), CG/04/DR/5084(Tractor), CG/04/DM/1254(Tractor) and CG/06/1135(Tractor)	54.58
	Moorum	5632.00	CG/04/DN/1327(JCB),CG/04/DR/5084(Tractor), CG/04/DM/1254(Tractor) and CG/06/1135(Tractor)	
Total				72.02

After cross-verification of the details of these vehicles with the Transport Department, it was found that three vehicles (CG/04/DN/1327, CG/04/DN/3989 and CG/04/DR/5084) were two-wheelers (Motorcycle and Scooter). It is clear that these vehicles could not have been used for excavating and transportation work. Hence, the expenditure of ₹ 72.02 lakh on construction of roads appears to be doubtful.

After this was pointed out in audit (January 2012), the DFO replied (January 2012) that no purchase order had been issued and payment of soil, moorum and metal were made as per the Current Schedule of Rates. Due to clerical mistake, registration numbers CG/04/DN/1327 and CG/04/DR/5084 were mentioned in the voucher and Vehicle no. CG/04/DN/3989 is not of a motor cycle, but of a JCB machine.

We do not agree because as per the vouchers, payment was being done directly by the office to the suppliers for collection of *moorum* and soil, whereby it seems that the payee was providing material in violation to the Chhattisgarh Store Purchase Rules. Before payment for material to the supplier, royalty should have been deducted from the bill which was not found to have been done. Clerical mistake may occur in one or two vouchers but more than two mistakes of the same nature is not possible. Further, it was replied that CG/04/DN/3989 is a JCB machine but as per the information of RTO, Raipur this registration number is also of a motorcycle.

The matter was reported to the Department and the Government (June 2012). We have not received their replies (December 2012).

8.12 Doubtful expenditure on construction of WBM road between Pathiyapali and Jhalpani

As per Rule 6 of Forest Financial Rules, no work should be taken up without getting approval of the competent authority. Further, Rule 11 of Chhattisgarh Financial Code states that the responsibility of the Controlling officer is not only limited to check that the expenditure is incurred within the allotment but also to see that the expenditure is incurred for the purpose for which funds have been provided.

Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (PCCF) had sanctioned ₹ 78.10 lakh for construction of 10 kms. of WBM road on forest road in December 2010. DFO Raipur allotted ₹ 31.24 lakh for construction of four kms. of WBM road

between “Nawagaon to Achanakpur” under Sonakhan area against the above allotment.

Scrutiny of allotment order, cash copies and payment vouchers of the above work (January 2012) revealed that the DFO, instead of executing the work on “Nawagaon to Achanakpur road”, executed the work (December 2011) on “Pathiyapali-Jhalpani road” and incurred expenditure amounting to ₹ 31.32 lakh. Thus, the above work was executed against the codal provision.

Besides this, the following irregularities were also noticed:

- (i) It was found from voucher nos. 179, 261, 293, 110, 269, 403, 389, 228, 7, 70, 21, 86, 122, 412, 177, 305 and 187 that 1371.60 cum *moorum* was transported after collecting the same by a tractor bearing registration no. CG-04-ZD-3655. However, information obtained from RTO, Raipur revealed that the said registration number was that of an omni bus. Similarly, it was also found from voucher nos 355, 356 and 357 that 180.35 cum *moorum* was transported after collecting the same by a tractor bearing registration no. CG-04-G-2119. Information obtained from RTO, Raipur revealed that the said registration number was that of a heavy goods vehicle and not that of a tractor.
- (ii) It was also observed that for construction of 4 kms. of road although 9,165 cum. *moorum* was purchased, only 3,095 cum. was used. Information regarding utilisation of the balance 6,070 cum *moorum* was not made available to audit. Similarly, 4,067 cum of metal was purchased for the above work but no metal had been used as per the vouchers. Hence, the purchase/transportation of materials appears to be doubtful.
- (iii) Apart from the above, the DFO purchased materials of ₹ 27.90 lakh directly from the suppliers in disregard of the Chhattisgarh Store Purchase Rules, 2002. Further, no royalty was also deducted in the payment vouchers for the minor minerals supplied.

After this was pointed out in audit (January 2012), the DFO replied (January 2012) that metals collected and transported were used in WBM road work. Further, due to clerical mistake the vehicle registration number was wrongly mentioned and all payments were made as per actual execution of work.

We do not agree as allotment was made for “Nawagaon to Achanakpur” WBM road. However the work was executed on “Pathiyapali-Jhalpani” road without obtaining prior approval of the higher authority for changing the place of work. Also, purchase rules were not followed as well as no deduction was made from the payment vouchers on account of royalty for the minor minerals (*moorum*, soil, metal etc.) purchased from the suppliers. Utilisation details of *moorum* and metal collected was also not on record.

The matter was reported to the Department and the Government (June 2012). We have not received their replies (December 2012).

8.13 Doubtful expenditure on construction of check dams and forest roads during rainy season

In the Working Plan of the Division, it is clearly stated that soil conservation work should be undertaken in the months of April and May only.

During test check of records of Divisional Forest Officer (DFO), Raipur (January 2012), we found that the Collector sanctioned (June 2010) ₹ 10.98 crore for repairing of infrastructure damaged due to floods which included soil and water conservation, tank deepening, raising forest roads, stop dam repairing etc. with the stipulation that the work should be taken up keeping the rainy season in mind. However, the DFO undertook construction of check dams and raising of forest roads in the months of July, August and September 2010 and expenditure of ₹ 86.55 lakh (₹ 29 lakh on construction of check dams and ₹ 57.55 lakh on raising of forest roads) was incurred. According to the information received from the Indian Meteorology Department, Raipur district witnessed rainfall of 462.4 mm, 225.0 mm and 273.8 mm in the months of July, August and September respectively. It is impossible to execute the above mentioned works in the midst of such rainfall. Hence, expenditure of ₹ 86.55 lakh on the above works appears to be doubtful.

After this was pointed out in audit (January 2012), the DFO replied (January 2012) that the forest areas in Raipur witnessed partial rainfalls in the rainy season of 2010-11. There are no written restrictions on execution of soil works in rainy season. Soil conservation/raising of forest roads were done as per favourability of season and requirement of work. We do not agree as in the sanction given by the Collector, it was reiterated that work should be executed keeping the rainy season in mind. In view of the rainfall in Raipur district during July-September 2010, construction of check dams and raising of forest roads was not possible in the forest areas.

The matter was reported to the Department and the Government (June 2012). We have not received their replies (December 2012).

8.14 Unfruitful expenditure on roadside plantation

As per WP only such sites should be selected for plantation where there is blank area. Also the site preparation for the plantation should be done before three months in advance to plantation (i.e. between October to March).

The Conservator of Forests, Jagdalpur Circle accorded (July 2008) technical sanction for the work of roadside plantation of 14,000 plants on seven km road

from Bijapur to Dhanora chowk to Divisional Forest Officer (DFO), Bijapur under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA) Scheme and allotted an amount of ₹ 37.10 lakh for the purpose. Collector, Bijapur accorded administrative approval for the above work in August 2008.

During the test check of records of DFO, Bijapur (April 2012), we noticed that expenditure of ₹ 37.10 lakh was incurred by the division on the above plantation between September 2008 to April 2009. During joint physical verification conducted by audit and the officials of the Division it was found

that 80 to 90 *per cent* plants had died and fencing done for the protection of plantation was dismantled. It was also observed that the seven km road where plantation was done was already covered by big trees and no plantation was required there. Further scrutiny of vouchers of the work revealed that works of preparation of land, plantation, weeding etc. were not executed as per time schedules prescribed in the WP. Thus, selection of ineligible site and execution of work at the wrong time led to unfruitful expenditure of ₹ 37.10 lakh.

After this was pointed out in audit (June 2012), the Government replied (October 2012) that second installment for watering, hoeing, other upkeep works and protection of plantation was not released which resulted in excess casualty of plants. Also, construction of Government buildings along the road, extension of 32 KV Electric transmission line from “Barsur to Bijapur” and expansion of Bijapur town on this road resulted in destruction of plantation.

The reply is silent regarding selection of the ineligible site as well as non-execution of works as per the prescriptions of the WP. Also, no demand was made by the Department regarding second installment of funds for upkeep and protection of plantation. Further, the reply itself shows the Department’s lack of planning and inability to properly formulate and execute the project which led to destruction of the assets created within a year.

**Raipur
The**

**(PURNA CHANDRA MAJHI)
Accountant General (Audit)
Chhattisgarh**

Countersigned

**New Delhi
The**

**(VINOD RAI)
Comptroller and Auditor General of India**