

**Press Release**  
**Planning Commission, Government of India**

Expenditure on Public Toilets in the Planning Commission

July 5, 2012 (updated):

Reports have appeared in various sections of the media about the expenditure on renovation of public toilets in the Planning Commission. The reports are based on responses given by the Planning Commission under the RTI.

It is unfortunate that what is routine maintenance and upgradation is being projected as wasteful expenditure. The toilets being repaired or renovated are public toilet blocks, and not individual or private toilets for Senior Officials or Members. Each of these toilet blocks have multiple seats in addition to a separate facility for the differently-abled. Each of these toilet blocks can be simultaneously used by approximately ten people.

Every day large number of people visit and work at Yojana Bhawan. More than 1,500 meetings are held every year and thousands of people use these public conveniences. A common complaint over the years was the poor quality of the toilets in the building—a complaint made not just by the ministers and foreign dignitaries who visit, but also by the staff and the journalists.

Yojana Bhawan is more than fifty years old. The plumbing and sewerage systems have deteriorated causing leakages that tend to damage the structure itself. The CPWD, which is responsible for maintaining the government buildings, was asked to renovate at least one toilet block on every floor.

The first two toilet blocks (on the first and second floors) were completed earlier this year by the CPWD. The remaining three toilet blocks are expected to be complete later this year. While renovating the toilets, it was found that old plumbing and sewerage systems had deteriorated and needed almost complete replacement. Fire control systems also had to be added, in accordance with the regulatory requirements.

Since these toilet blocks are meant for shared use, they are all being renovated to the same standard. Because there have been instances of pilferages of newly constructed toilets, an access-control system was initially tried, but not found feasible in practice. Yojana Bhavan is an important public building and must have the essential public facilities. The costing and execution of works is not done by the Planning Commission, but by the CPWD which is the authorized government agency to do the same. The entire work is being done within the budgetary allocation and following the prescribed procedure. The cost estimates submitted by the CPWD and actual expenditure against it are as follows :

Nature of Work	Cost Estimate	Actual Expenditure
Civil Work	Rs. 28,27,100/-	Rs. 14,57,000/-
Electrical Work	Rs. 1,73,250/-	Rs. 1,90,000/-

The Planning Commission strongly supports public's access to information under the RTI. From time to time, we also put answers under RTI on our website. However, answers given under RTI are naturally limited to the specific issue or query being raised. It is unfortunate that the Press has publicized motivated allegations, advanced on the basis of limited queries, without bothering to check the full facts. The media are requested to contact the Press Information Officer for comments or clarifications on any RTI based story, which will be promptly supplied. Contact number of PIO is available on our website.

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