MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND LANDS

21.1 Introduction

The services of the Ministry of Housing and Lands (MHL) were resorted to by various Ministries and Government Departments for the acquisition of privately owned land whether compulsorily or by private agreement for implementation of Government projects.

For the period July 2008 to December 2009, the Government disbursed some Rs 130.4 million for the acquisition of privately owned lands.

21.2 Land Vested and not Developed

A complete database on status of land vested in different Ministries was not available. As a result, it could not be ascertained to what extent acquired lands have been utilised.

During the fiscal year 2007-08, NAO carried out an exercise on status of land vested in some Ministries. Some 49 undeveloped lands were identified. According to a follow up report maintained by the Ministry on those 49 projects, 30 of them covering an extent of 67A of land were still kept in abeyance as of March 2010. Some portions of land were acquired as far back as in the year 2001.

However, that list of projects was taken on a sample basis from a few Ministries and it did not preclude the existence of other undeveloped lands.

Some examples of undeveloped lands are as follows:

➢ Fire Station and Secondary School Projects - Montagne Blanche

A plot of land of 5A was acquired in May 1998 for the construction of a new Secondary School and a Fire Station. Land of an extent of 4A05 was to be used for the construction of the school. Ultimately, the school project was not implemented and the Fire Station has not yet been constructed.

The land has remained idle for the past 12 years.

➢ State Secondary School Project - Beau Climat

In July 2000, Government acquired a plot of land to the extent of 3A situated at Beau Climat, for the construction of a new secondary school.

The Ministry of Education did not go ahead with the project and the land was released in 2004. The land has remained idle for the past 10 years.

➢ Football Ground-Poudre D’Or Hamlet

A portion of land of an extent of 2A52 was acquired in June 2004 for the construction of a football ground at Poudre D’Or Hamlet. The project has been kept in abeyance. After some six years, the land was still undeveloped.
➢ **Swimming Pool - Camp Garreau**

Government acquired land to the extent of 2A36 for the construction of a swimming pool at Camp Garreau. The plot of land was vested in the Ministry of Youth and Sports since 2002. The project has not yet started.

➢ **Fire Station - Goodlands**

Government acquired land to an extent of 1A for the construction of a Fire Station. The plot of land was vested in the Ministry of Local Government since May 2003. The project has been kept in abeyance.

**Conclusion**

A database of lands acquired is not enough to exercise proper control over land utilisation. A complete database on status of all lands vested in Ministries/Departments should be built up.

Ministries should then be requested to submit regular feedback on implementation of projects for which land were acquired.

To ensure that Government funds are used effectively and efficiently, it is vital that the Ministry maintains control on all state lands.

**Ministry’s Replies**

Government has approved that Ministries which need to implement major projects should submit their requirements two or three years in advance as per Programme Based Budget. With the coming into force of the Project Plan Committee, the implementation of projects is scrutinized and accordingly, acquisition of land is made only for approved projects having financial clearance.

In respect of all lands vested in different Ministries, the Ministry of Housing and Lands is monitoring as to whether projects are being implemented and the Management Audit Bureau is being kept informed accordingly.