

Nu 2.76M wasted from poor quality works at Olakha workshop

May 11, 2020

RAA points out poor planning, execution and monitoring
Staff Reporter

If the Olakha automobile workshop is dusty, dirty and full of potholes and the Thimphu thromde is cash-strapped to carry out maintenance work, the Royal Audit Authority has some of the answers.

The RAA found that the thromde had wasted Nu 2.76 million (M) from the total amount of Nu 9.14M it has spent on a work it contracted out to develop the Olakha Workshop.

One work was the construction of 451-metre footpath along the Olarongchu, the small stream that runs parallel to the workshop area. The thromde management spent about Nu 2.33M. However, the RAA found that the footpaths were not used or only rarely used. Some portions of the footpaths were overgrown with bushes, an indication of missed priority.

RAA pointed out that the footpath was constructed without proper need assessment, as it was overgrown with bushes while some parts of it became dumping site for the workshop owners. It also pointed out that the thromde had failed to carry out proper maintenance of public infrastructure after spending huge expenses.

Thromde officials stated that a team from the works and human settlement ministry and the thromde decided to construct the footpath along the stream until the park area as a resting space for clients visiting the automobile workshops. “However, the park the thromde created didn’t work well and there were no pedestrians to use the footpath.”

The current state of the road to the workshop area is a result of poor execution of road, according to the RAA. The RAA pointed out that the rigid pavement work or concreting of the road, which was earlier blacktopped, worth Nu 908,026 was poorly executed. The contractor had not used a concrete mixer in repairing the road and manually mixed cement, sand and stone aggregates.

The thromde management had observed the quality and deducted Nu 791,673 from the claims and decided to rectify. However, as of the date of audit, January 2019, the road was not rectified.

A thromde official confirmed that the road has not been rectified until now. “With continuous flow of water, the road which was blacktopped worn out easily. It was decided to be replaced by concrete,” said the official. “The contractor was asked to repair it, but he had not.”

“The work was poorly executed without monitoring while no rectification work has been carried out even after finding the fault,” RAA stated.

The new granular sub base (GSB), a layer in road foundation, laid on the existing road and new drainage works constructed in 2018 did not last a year, going by audit observations. About Nu 432,632 was spent on the work.

While GSB had completely worn out during the time of the audit, auditors didn't "see" the drains as they were covered with workshop effluents or blocked with waste. Auditors also blamed those running the workshops for not taking care of the new infrastructure. Leakages from water supply pipes were blamed for the damages on the GSB.

Thromde officials stated that digging of building foundations by landowners and diverting water through the road together with continuous water on the road surface has damaged the road. But RAA blamed proper planning and monitoring.