

**FIFTEENTH KERALA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS**

**(2021-23)**

**TWENTIETH REPORT**

**(Presented on ...7...<sup>th</sup> July, 2022)**



**SECRETARIAT OF THE KERALA LEGISLATURE**

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM**

**2022**

**FIFTEENTH KERALA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**COMMITTEE  
ON  
PUBLIC ACCOUNTS  
(2021-23)**

**TWENTIETH REPORT**

**on**

**Action Taken by Government on the Recommendations contained in the One  
Sixty Forth Report of the Committee on Public Accounts (2008-11)**

**COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS**

**(2021-2023)**

**COMPOSITION**

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## INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman, Committee on Public Accounts, having been authorised by the Committee to present this Report, on their behalf present the Twentieth Report on Action Taken by Government on the Recommendations contained in the One sixty Forth Report of the Committee on Public Accounts (2008-11).

The Committee considered and finalised this Report at the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> June, 2022.

Thiruvananthapuram  
7<sup>th</sup> July 2022.

**SUNNY JOSEPH,**  
*Chairman,*  
*Committee on Public Accounts.*

## **REPORT**

**This Report deals with the Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the 164<sup>th</sup> Report of the Committee on Public Accounts (2008-2011)**

The 164<sup>th</sup> Report of the Committee on Public Accounts (2008-2011) was presented to the House on 23<sup>th</sup> February 2011. The Report contained 17 recommendations relating to Water Resource, Finance, Health and Family Welfare, Fisheries and Ports Departments.

Government was addressed on 03.03.2011 to furnish the statements of Action Taken on the recommendations contained in the Report and the final reply was received on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2019.

The Committee Considered and approved the Action Taken Statements at its meeting held on 26.09.2012, 18.12.2013, and 06.01.2016. The recommendations contained in the 164<sup>th</sup> Report and the action taken by the Government are included in this Report.

### **WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT**

#### **Recommendation**

#### **(Sl. no.1, para no.25)**

**1.1** The Committee observes that out of 14 Water Supply Schemes under execution by Kerala Water Authority in Kollam District, only 5 were commissioned. In some cases, the work could not be started due to the non availability of land. The Committee wonders as to how the Department had given administrative

Sanction and availed loan for implementing the schemes without ensuring the availability of land for various components like water source, water treatment plant, reservoirs etc. which resulted in non commencement of execution and delay in completion of schemes. The Committee finds that severe lapses were occurred by following unscientific procedure at various stages from tender which caused rate revision and tender excess. The Committee understands that in most of the cases the main reason for delay is the lack of planning in arranging works simultaneously. Further the Committee criticises the Department for delaying works for the reason for the non availability of land where land would be easily available either by negotiated purchase or land acquisition procedure. The Committee expresses dissatisfaction over the inordinate delay in accomplishing the schemes in reality and asks the department to furnish the number of cases in which land was purchased or availed from Panchayath free of cost for the purpose. The Committee opines that the modus operandi of the department in carrying out the schemes was not fair and underscores that there should be preliminary investigation followed by identification, valuation, relinquishment and possession of land. The Committee recommends that land required for implementation of components of water Supply Schemes should be ensured before sanctioning the scheme and raising fund. The Committee recommends to adopt the policy that land acquisition is not necessary for project approval, but it should be possessed before giving Administrative Sanction. Further the Committee opines that works should be awarded only if the departments other than Kerala Water Authority possess land.

### **Action Taken**

1.2 Kerala Water Authority had been following a practice of giving AS and TS for execution of work in anticipation of availability of land. However in many cases land possession could be ensured before execution. In some cases land acquisition was a problem in completing the scheme. So in future every efforts would be taken to ensure availability of land before giving AS and TS.

**Recommendation**

**(Sl. No.2, Para No.26)**

1.3 As it was revealed that in spite of sufficient funds available, the schemes were not commenced due to non-availability of land, the Committee strongly recommends to chalk out a concrete proposal for every project before giving Technical Sanction in order to avoid stoppage of works.

**Action Taken**

1.4 In future, every effort would be taken to ensure availability of possession of land before giving AS and TS.

**Recommendation**

**(Sl. No.3, Para No.27)**

1.5 The Committee learns that out of the loan amount of Rs.9.49 crore availed from LIC for implementation of various schemes, Rs.6.99 crore was diverted for other activities of Kerala Water Authority. Hence the Committee specifies the clear violation of Financial Rules in this case.

**Action Taken**

1.6 Rs. 6.99 crore availed from LIC of India was used only for the LIC aided RWSS . Major portion of the amount had been utilized for the completion of the ongoing LIC aided WSS and balance amount for the



repayment of principal amount of the loan availed from LIC interest thereon. After 2003 Kerala Water Authority has not availed loan from LIC of India.

### **Recommendation**

#### **(Sl. No. 4, Para No.28)**

1.7 As regards the work of over head tank at Thevalakkara, the Committee surprises to not the controversial statement of the Department that the entire work would be completed within the ensuing monsoon, even though the land was not taken into possession. Further, the Committee views that Rural Water Supply Scheme at Chavara, Panmana, Thevalakkara and Thekkumbhagom were proposed to be completed within a span of 3 years: but the same was not completed after a lapse of 21 years even though the Committee take into account the main reason of non-allotment of matching grant from the State Government for Government of India Assisted projects.

### **Action Taken**

In future every effort would be taken to ensure availability of possession of land before giving AS and TS.

### **Recommendation**

#### **(Sl. No. 5, Para No.29)**

Regarding the work of Accelerated Rural Water Supply Schemes to Kulathupuzha and adjoining villages, it is pointed out in audit that the Department had tendered work and purchased pipes worth ₹0.98 crores even without getting allotment of land The Committee desires to intimate the date on which pipes were purchased. The Committee expresses dissatisfaction over the action of the Department and comments that the Department had failed to exhibit the alertness for executing works rather

than purchasing pipes.

### **Action Taken**

As the purchase of pipes is a time consuming process, in order to avoid delay in execution of the scheme the pipes were purchased in anticipation of getting possession of land. Now the land required for the construction of treatment plant and reservoir are in possession with KWA . The work of design, construction and commissioning of 10.53 Mld Water Treatment Plant, 9.60 lakhs litre capacity sump and chlorination unit at Kanjirottukunnu, ARWSS to Kulathupuzha and adjoining villages was completed on 06.03.2012. The estimated amount for the work is ₹291.85 lakhs. Accepted PAC of the work is ₹393.997 lakhs. Expenditure incurred as on 31.03.2012 is ₹393.98 lakhs.

Application for power connection is forwarded to KSEB and power connection sanction is awaited.

### **Recommendation**

**(Sl. No.6, Para No.30)**

The Committee realizes that the Pathanapuram project was delayed due to the obstruction of rock formation while proceeding construction of well . The Committee criticises the Department for not conducting realistic investigation to check the nature of the soil before the commencement of work. The committee observes that the department had not taken any action against the delinquent officer on the basis of audit report. Hence, the Committee directs the department to seek explanation , fix responsibility and take action against the delinquent officer, as the loss sustained to the public exchequer due to negligence of the responsible officer was very high. The Committee further desires that the department should charge a punishment to the concerned officer in order to handle public money with

care and caution. The Committee remarks that as per the Honb'le Supreme Court's order if the convict is not in service, the liability should be realised from his legal heirs.

#### **Action Taken**

It is earlier reported that there was provision in the accepted schedule of contract for rock blasting. But during execution underwater blasting of hard rock with the help of air compressor and divers was done. The data for provision of this type of work can be arrived only through observation during execution. Hence delay occurred in sanctioning of the observed data rate and revised estimate. Now the work was completed. So it is requested that the PAC may reconsider the recommendation and para may be dropped.

#### **Further Recommendation**

The committee rejected the explanation submitted by the department and directed to implement the recommendation of the committee.

#### **Action Taken**

The construction of well cum-pump house, ARWSS to Pathanapuram and adjoining village work was delayed from 02.04.1997 to 12.07.2004 due to non sanctioning of the extra items of hard rock blasting using air compressor and divers and well sinking( which is an observed item) that had to be carried out by the contractor as per the direction of the then Superintending Engineer and Chief Engineer. The Revised Estimate for the above said work was placed before the 303<sup>rd</sup> board meeting on 30.11.2007 and the Authority had resolved to sanction the Revised Estimate and the same was issued vide Proceedings KWA/WS1/20188/05/Revised Estimate ,

dated 21.12.2007. The Authority also resolved to get the explanation of the officers responsible for the work in not preparing and getting necessary approvals for the Revised Estimate for the subject work as per relevant rules and codes in time and to proceed with disciplinary action. Incumbency details of the officers who were responsible for delay in preparation and sanction of the Revised Estimate had been obtained from delay in preparation and sanction of the Revised Estimate had been obtained from Superintending Engineer, PH Circle Kollam.

Copy one of the letters dated 23.05.2019 addressed to the 14 responsible officers seeking explanation for the delay in getting the Revised Estimate sanctioned and as to why the proportionate liability should not be recovered from them, is attached herewith. (Annexure - I)

### **Recommendation**

#### **(Sl. No.7, Para No.31)**

The Committee realises from witness examination that the Kottarakkara Project which is an extension of Kundara Project was intended for supplying drinking water to the public, failed to serve the purpose due to non-availability of water which caused a financial loss of Rs.4.23 crore. The committee reluctants to agree with the reasons put forth and urges the Department to furnish clarification for giving non-domestic water connection to Kundara Area without supplying drinking water to the public.

### **Action Taken**

The findings of the committee that ND water connection to Kundara area were given without supplying drinking water to the public is not true. Number of ND water connections given in Kundara area was only 14. The failure of Kottarakkara project was not due to giving non-domestic

connections to Kundara Area. It was due to breakage of premo pipes used for the scheme.

4196 numbers of domestic connections and 127 numbers of non-domestic connections were given till date in Kundara Scheme.

### **Recommendation**

#### **(Sl.No.8, Para No. 32)**

The committee perceived from the paragraph as well as through witness examination that even though Kerala Water Authority released 2.11 crore to the District Collector for implementing SC/ST components of the cent percent Centrally sponsored Accelerated Rural Water Supply Schemes, there was a delay up to 18 months in encashing cheque due to treasury restrictions imposed by the Government, thereby delaying supply of drinking water to the SC/ST population. Hence the Committee recommends that in the case of schemes assisted by Government of India and aimed exclusively for the benefit of SC/ST population, treasury restriction would not be imposed by the Finance Department to utilise the amount. The Committee further specifies that this should be kept in abeyance for future guidance at least in the case of Water Supply Scheme fully supported by Government of India and intended for the benefit of SC/ST population.

### **Action Taken**

At present Government of India funds for ARWSS are released directly to KWA through Bank and the treasury restriction would not affect the flow of funds.

### **Recommendation**

#### **(Sl. No.9, Para No. 33**

The Committee finds that the District Collector has given sanction for a general project by diverting funds earmarked for the benefit of SC/ST population. Further, the Committee observes that the Government reply in this regard has not been furnished. Even though the Department has assured to obtain and furnish reply from the responsible officer, the desired details were not yet furnished. The Committee stresses the lapse from the part of the Department in furnishing a reply to the audit objection after committing a serious mistake.

#### **Action Taken**

As per para 9-9 of the Frame work for implementation of National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP) The states are required to earmark at least 25% of the funds for drinking water supply to the SC dominated habitation. Habitation in which more than 40% of the population belongs to SC's are considered as SC dominated. 11.80 lakhs said to have been diverted was for implementation of the project " Drilling Bore Well in Mundakathara IHDP Colony" through Kerala Water Authority in 2003 under Accelerated Rural Water Supply Scheme in order to solve the scarcity of drinking water in the colony. The work was started in 2003 and completed in 2007. The Mundakathara IHDP Colony in Sooranadu South Panchayath consists of 74 families out of which 49 families are SC people (66.22%). The project was feasible and beneficial to the SC people as it is supplying drinking water to majority of the areas in the colony. The colony has other infrastructure facilities such as road, electricity, housing etc.

Since more than 66% of the population in the Mundakathara IHDP Colony were SC families, there was no diversion of funds sanctioned for SC/ST

**Recommendation****(Sl. No.10, Para No,34)**

The committee opines that the Kerala Water Authority failed in supplying safe drinking water to the targeted population though enough fund was available. The Committee understands from the audit report that nearly 40 per cent of the water supplied was found to be below the prescribed standards. Hence the Committee recommends that quality of drinking water supplies should be ensured by proper upkeep of facilities.

**Action Taken**

Necessary action in this regard such as washing of tanks, adequate chlorination and necessary leak rectification works were done and the water is made suitable for drinking purpose. Quality Control laboratories closely monitor the water quality to ensure that water is suitable for drinking purpose. No major quality related issue has been reported from this area during the period. It may also be noted that the pipe lines in this area are very old and should have been replaced much earlier. KWA could not carry out this replacement due to financial constraints. All efforts have been taken to ensure the quality of drinking water to maximum number of families in these areas, maintenance and replacement related issues are also being addressed on priority depending on the availability of funds.

**FINANCE DEPARTMENT****(Sl. No.8, Para No.32)**

The Committee perceives from the paragraph as well as through witness examination that even though Kerala Water Authority released ₹2.11 crore to the District Collector for implementing SC/ST components of the cent percent Centrally sponsored Accelerated Rural Water Supply

Schemes, there was a delay up to 18 months in encashing cheque due to treasury restrictions imposed by the Government, thereby delaying supply of drinking water to the SC/ST population. Hence the Committee recommends that in the case of schemes assisted by Government of India and aimed exclusively for the benefit of SC/ST population, treasury restrictions would not be imposed by the Finance Department to utilise the amount. The Committee further specifies that this should be kept in abeyance for future guidance at least in the case of Water Supply Scheme fully supported scheme fully supported by Government of India and intended for the benefit of Sc/ST population

#### **Action Taken**

The financial year 1999-2000 and the succeeding financial years were affected by financial crisis. Even then the government was very cautious that implementation of plan programmes, especially Central schemes were not deferred for want of funds. Relaxation to treasury restrictions were liberally allowed for drawal of funds for plan schemes. In issuing ways and means clearance also priority was given to plan schemes. In this particular case implementation was delayed not only due to the financial crisis prevailing then, but also due to some procedural laxatives like presentation of cheque without affixing office seal of KWA thereon, delay in re validation of lapsed cheques etc. Had the authorities moved for timely ways and means clearance it would have been given. Finance Department regret the delay that occurred in the implementation of drinking water scheme especially for the benefit of SC/ST population. Adequate care will be taken in future to ensure that implementation of centrally sponsored Schemes are not delayed due to treasury restrictions.

With the improvement in the financial situation of the Government,



treasury payment restrictions have been relaxed and even the implementing agencies are allowed to open bank accounts, if the guidelines of Central schemes stipulates so. In respect of ARWSP Scheme also, the Government of India funds are now released direct to the KWA and the funds so received are allowed to be parked in Nationalized bank account as per Government of India guidelines, and are released to implementing agencies through bank cheques by which smooth flow of funds takes place now.

### **Recommendation**

#### **(Sl. No.5, Para No.39)**

As regards the pending recovery of loan amounting to Rs.6.26 lakh sanctioned to poor fisherwomen, under the scheme intended to meet the credit needs of fisherwomen implemented through Society for Assistance to Fisherwomen (SAF) even though, years have passed since the commencement of the project and the loan amount disbursed were meagre i.e., up to Rs. 1,500/- per fisher women, the Committee recommends to write off Rs.6.26 lakh being the loan pending recovery from fisher women. The Committee specified that the write off procedure is applicable to this particular case only.

### **Action Taken**

The Administrative Department was advised to place the matter of write off before the council of Ministers and afterwards sanction was accorded to write off Rs.6.26 lakh being the loan pending recovery by society for Assistance to fisherwomen (SAF) vide G.O.(MS)No.01/12/F&PD. Dated 02.01.2012. The write off has been adjusted in the accounts by contra credit to the head of account '4000-01-105-99-Retirement of Capital/disinvestment of Co-operative societies/Bank's vide SDG, March 2011-12)Item(f) of page 78)

**HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE DEPARTMENT****Recommendation****(Sl.No.11, Para No.35)**

Regarding the disciplinary action against the staff nurse posted in the Public Health Centre Achancoil, who referred most of the cases requiring administration of injections to the local private hospital. The Committee insist to know the present position and directs the department to inform decision taken on the issue . The Committee strongly suggests that action should be taken against the then Medical Officer also. The Committee takes a serious view of the failure in achieving the purpose of the Purchase of Ambulance for Public Health Centre, Achancovil and opines that the Hospital Management Committee is not empowered to transfer the ambulance meant for Public Health Centre, Achancovil to another hospital.

**Action Taken**

Following an inspection conducted by the District Medical Officer of health, Kollam on 23.04.2004 at community Health Centre, Achancovil certain charges were framed against the then medical Officer in charge Dr.Krishnakumar, and staff nurse Smt. Mercy Jose. The prime allegation was that the staff Nurse is purposefully referring patients to a near by private hospital. The charge against the Medical Officer in charge was that there is supervisory lapse in monitoring the above habit of the Staff Nurse. Another charge against the Medical Officer in charge was that he was absent in the institution during inspection on 23.04.2004.

Smt. Mercy Jose, staff Nurse was charge sheeted by the District Medical officer of Health, Kollam and Dr. Krishna kumar, Assistant surgeon and medical officer in charge was charge sheeted at first by the

District Medical Officer of Health, Kollam and thereafter by the Director of Health Services being the appointing authority.

But during enquiry the charges leveled against both the offence could not be proved beyond doubt.

Another charge of absence of Dr. Krishna Kumar during inspection was also answered satisfactory, that he was present at the office of the District Medical Officer of Health Kollam on that date. Hence the disciplinary action initiated against both the officers were finalised by letting them off with a warning.

Both of them are continuing in service now and no further allegations/incidents are reported against them .

Both the PH Centre Achankovil and Aryankavu are in same Grama Panchayath, Aryankavu. The Chairman of the HMC's of both PH centres is the Panchayath President of the Aryankavu Grama Panchayath. Taking due advantage of this the ambulance allotted to Achankovil was used for the need of Aryankavu PHC also.

### **Recommendation**

#### **(Sl. No.12, Para No.36)**

The Committee learns that patient care in many Hospitals in Kollam District suffered due to idling of equipment and non-utilisation of hospital infrastructure. The Committee regrets to conclude that facilities in rural areas were inadequate when compared to that in urban areas. The Committee recommends that government may examine the possibility of increasing the bed strength of hospitals in rural areas.

### **Action Taken**

There are 70 Hospitals in the rural areas of Kollam District. This includes 44 Primary Health Centres, 7(24x7) Primary Health centres and 15 community

Health Centres. Vide G.O.(Rt)No.568/08/H&FWD dated 06/11/2008, inpatient facility is not allowed in Primary Health Centre. The maximum Number of beds allotted to 24x7 Primary Health Centre are 30 and in Community Health Centres it is about 30-100. Among the 7(24x7) Primary Health Centres beds are not allowed in Kodyoor&Munrothuruthu Primary Health Centres. Out of 15 Community Health Centres, 11 have bed strength as detailed below

|   | <u>No.of beds</u> |
|---|-------------------|
| 1. Community Health Centre, Nedumankavu   | 16                |
| 2. Community Health Centre, Pathanapuram. | 12                |
| 3. Community Health Centre, Kalakkode     | 24                |
| 4. Community Health Centre, Kulathupuzha  | 12                |
| 5. Community Health Centre, Thekkumbhagam | 18                |
| 6. Community Health Centre, Sooranadu     | 16                |
| 7. Community Health Centre, Mynagappally  | 24                |
| 8. Community Health Centre, Kulakkada     | 24                |
| 9. Community Health Centre, Ochira        | 12                |
| 10. Community Health Centre, Nilamel      | 12                |
| 11. Community Health Centre, Velinalloor  | 24                |

It may be apprised that the District Medical Officer Kollam has been asked to furnish a detailed report regarding enhancement of bed strength in the above institutions & decision would be taken as on receipt of the said report.

### **Recommendation**

#### **(Sl.No.13, Para No.37)**

The committee's examination has revealed that 6 staff quarters constructed for Primary Health Centre, Nedumoncavu remained unutilised since 1974 for the reason, they are situated away from the hospital. The committee expresses deep dissatisfaction over the action of the department

in misappropriating Government money.

#### **Action Taken**

The six Staff Quarters at Primary Health Centre, Nedumoncavu were constructed far away from the PHC and in an isolated place, near a graveyard. Hence the allottees were not willing to occupy the quarters since 1975. At present these quarters are not fit for occupation. The feasibility of repairing these buildings and to use for some other useful purpose will be studied. If found feasible the same will be effectively utilized.

#### **Recommendation**

**(Sl No.14, Para No.38)**

Regarding the short comings in the hospital waste mangement system, the committee stresses the need for properly planned project for the management and disposal of hazardous waste to be implemented

#### **Action Taken**

Hazardous waste (Biomedical waste) are segregated properly and disposed off as per the guidelines of Pollution Control Board. This is done with the tie up with IMAGE(IMA Goes Eco-Friendly) in all hospitals with more than 100 bed strength. In smaller institutions hazardous waste is disposed off by deep burial. This procedure is approved by the Pollution Control Board.

### **FISHERIES AND PORTS (C) DEPARTMENT**

#### **Recommendation**

**(Sl.No.15, Para No.39)**

As regards the pending recovery of loan amounting to Rs.6.26 lakh

sanctioned to poor fisher women, under the scheme intended to meet the credit needs of fisher women implemented through Society for Assistance of Fisher women(SAF) even though years have passed since the commencement of the project and the loan amount disbursed was very meagre ie, upto Rs.1,500/- per fisher women, the Committee recommends to write off Rs.6.26 lakh being the loan pending recovery from the fisher women. The Committee specifies that the write-off procedure is applicable to this particular case only.

### **Action Taken**

As recommended by the Public Accounts Committee, sanction has been accorded to write off the loan amount of Rs.6.26 lakhs, vide G.O. (MS)No.01/12/F&PD dated 02/12/2012.

### **Recommendation**

**(Sl. No.16, Para No.40)**

The Committee learns that the amount released for executing work of construction of the building for aquaculture extension training centre at Thevally was not utilised after spending a portion of amount for the reason that the site identified was not suitable to construct a permanent structure and the amount was deposited in T.P. Account, which was frozen during the month of July 2003. In this connection, the Committee directs the Department to inform the correct date of freezing T.P. Account. The Committee also expresses deep dissatisfaction in the circumstances leading to the lapse of the Aqua Culture Training Centre at Thevally.

### **Action Taken**

Operation of all T.P Accounts of departmental officers/departments were frozen with effect from 05.01.2002 vide Government Circular No 2002/Fin. dated 05.10.2002.(Annexure - II)