

Press Brief for media

The Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India on General and Social Sector for the year ended 31 March 2018, Government of Kerala, Report No. 4 of 2019 has been laid on the table of Kerala Legislative Assembly on 12 February 2020. Audit Reports, upon their presentation to the Legislature are public documents.

The summary of the most important points highlighted in the Report is given below:

Performance Audit on ‘Modernisation and strengthening of Police force’

- Joint verification conducted by Audit in the Bell-of-Arms of Special Armed Police Battalion, Thiruvananthapuram along with the Assistant Commandant revealed shortage of 25 Nos. of 5.56 mm INSAS rifles and 12,061 live cartridges. Consequent to the audit finding, a separate verification was conducted by DIG (Armed Police Battalion). Audit was informed that the 25 missing rifles reported by Audit were issued to Armed Reserve (AR) Camp, Thiruvananthapuram. Besides discrepancies noticed in the Verification report of DIG (APB), further Audit scrutiny of records at AR Camp, Thiruvananthapuram revealed that there was no entry regarding receipt of these 25 rifles. Audit is therefore unable to obtain assurance that all arms with the Kerala Police have been properly accounted for and that there is no loss of arms. Regarding shortage of 12,061 live cartridges, Audit was informed that a Preliminary Enquiry has been ordered to be conducted by the Crime Branch. **(Para 2.10.3)**
- Shortage of 250 Nos. 9 mm Drill Cartridges was sought to be covered up by replacing the same with 250 Nos. of dummy cartridges. Audit also noticed that an earlier shortage of 7.62 mm M80 bullets for Self-Loading Rifles was sought to be covered up by an Investigation Board. **(Para 2.10.3.1)**

- Audit observed that the State Police Chief violated MOPF scheme guidelines which prohibited procurement of vehicles for VIP/VVIP security utilising MOPF funds. The Police Department procured two Bullet Resistant vehicles to ensure security of VIPs, VVIPs and Z+ category visitors to the State at a total cost of ₹1.10 crore without inviting tenders as required under the Stores Purchase Manual. The objective of providing increased mobility to the police forces as envisaged under the MOPF scheme would have been achieved had the Police Department procured bullet proof/mine proof vehicles for deployment in Naxalite infested areas rather than acquire bullet proof cars for VIP security. **(Para 2.9.2.3)**
- The Police Department violated Stores Purchase Manual and CVC guidelines in the procurement of equipment. Audit observed that in at least four instances, there was clear nexus between officers of the Police Department, Vendors and Keltron in fixation of prices resulting in pecuniary loss to the Scheme. **(Para 2.14)**
- State Police Chief diverted ₹2.81 crore meant for construction of Upper Subordinate Staff Quarters, for construction of Villas for SPC/ADGPs. **(Para 2.18.2)**
- The Police Department violated MOPF scheme guidelines during 2013-18 which prohibited procurement of cars. Instead of making good the shortfall of vehicles in Police Stations, 15 *per cent* of the 269 Light Motor Vehicles procured by the Police Department were luxury cars which were deployed for use of high-level officers and non-operational units like CBCID. **(Para 2.9.1)**
- Anti-Maoists operations in the dense forests of Palakkad, Malappuram, Idukki and Wayanad suffered due to dependence of Police forces on analog communication equipment. GOK failed to make timely payment of spectrum charges and obtain license from GOI for procuring Digital Mobile Radios. **(Para 2.11.2)**

- In the Forensic Science Laboratories, Audit noticed delay in disposal of cases. During 2013-18, the pendency of cases increased to 9,265 including 1,755 (19 *per cent*) grave crime cases charged under Sections 302, 307 and 376 of IPC, POCSO Act 2012 and SC and ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act. Audit observed that vacancies in technical posts for long periods was one of the main reasons for the large pendency of cases. **(Para 2.13.1)**

Performance Audit on ‘Functioning of Kerala State Housing Board’

- KSHB sought approval from Government of Kerala for schemes without ensuring availability of land, financial viability of the projects, obtaining assurance on project financing, etc., resulting in failure to implement the schemes. **(Para 3.7.1)**
- GOK accorded (December 2014) Administrative Sanction for construction of a Working Women’s Hostel in KSHB’s own land in Jagathy, Thiruvananthapuram. An application for building permit submitted (March 2015) by KSHB to the Thiruvananthapuram Corporation was rejected (March 2015) on the ground that the land proposed for the scheme was identified as green strip under Sanctioned Master Plan. Audit observed that KSHB proposed (February 2017) the same 35.76 cents land in Jagathy, Thiruvananthapuram for construction of quarters for All India Service (AIS) Officers. The project has not commenced so far (September 2018) due to failure to obtain building permit from Thiruvananthapuram Corporation. **(Para 3.7.2)**
- Against establishment expenditure of ₹289.96 crore incurred by KSHB during 2013-18, the value of works executed during the period was only ₹96.77 crore which raises serious concerns on the viability of functioning of KSHB. **(Para 3.8)**
- As against 3,16,396 houses constructed by Local Self Government Department, only 2,999 housing units were constructed by KSHB during the period 2013-18. Interestingly, the units constructed by KSHB was even lesser than the number of houses constructed by the Scheduled Tribes Development Department (9,527) and the Scheduled

Castes Development Department (26,608) during the period. **(Para 3.8)**

- Under Saphalyam scheme to provide flats to houseless Economically Weaker Sections, against the target of 1,032 housing units, KSHB could complete only 72 Housing Units (seven *per cent*) during the period 2012-18. **(Para 3.9.2.1)**

Compliance Audit on ‘Modernisation and upgradation of Government Industrial Training Institutes’

- None of the 32 ITIs test-checked complied with all the stipulated NCVT requirements. Even such ITIs which were affiliated to NCVT did not possess the requisite facilities. **(Para 4.1.3)**
- Deficiency in tools and equipment was noticed in the ITIs including six ITIs identified for being upgraded into Centres of Excellence. **(Para 4.1.12.2)**
- The upgradation of ITIs was hampered due to inefficiencies in execution of civil works and idling of assets. **(Para 4.1.10)**

Non-adherence to codal provisions led to misappropriation of ₹0.28 lakh

Non-adherence to codal provisions facilitated misappropriation of ₹28,202 by the Inspector, Legal Metrology, Circle II, Neyyattinkara. **(Para 4.2)**

Unfruitful expenditure of ₹8.91 crore due to abandonment of construction of buildings for a proposed engineering college

Failure of the Co-operative Academy of Professional Education to correctly assess the funding pattern for construction of an engineering college in Thrissur district resulted in avoidable, infructuous expenditure of at least ₹8.91 crore. **(Para 4.3)**

Infructuous expenditure of ₹2.35 crore on construction of a temporary additional floor at Pareeksha Bhavan

The injudicious decision of the Director of Public Instructions to construct a temporary additional floor on the six-storeyed building of Pareeksha Bhavan,

and failure of the Public Works Department to rightly assess the structural soundness of the work led to partial collapse of the structure and resultant infructuous expenditure of ₹2.35 crore. **(Para 4.5)**

Deficiencies in implementation of a Water Supply Scheme led to infructuous expenditure of ₹8.50 crore

Kerala Water Authority commenced the work of laying pipelines for a Water Supply Scheme without complying with conditions stipulated by Government of Kerala. The work was subsequently stopped resulting in infructuous expenditure of ₹8.50 crore, besides inability to provide an additional water source to the Kollam Water Supply Scheme. **(Para 4.6)**