

CHAPTER-VI: INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

6.1 Was computerisation effective?

6.1.1 Was computerisation by M/s Keltron effective?

The Department started computerisation in 2002-03 by purchasing from M/s Keltron 18 computers, of which four were installed in the Commissionerate and the other 14 issued to the 14 divisions. Work was awarded (April 2004) to M/s Keltron for development of six software modules¹. As per records, M/s Keltron completed the work (April 2005) and the software was demonstrated (May 2005) to the officials of the Department. Further details regarding utilisation of the software were not available in the records provided to us. However, we noticed from the letter (26 October 2007) sent by the Excise Commissioner to the Government that the Department did not have any software except SPARK system, for preparing the pay rolls. The Government sanctioned (March 2011) purchase of a web based solution from M/s Keltron at a cost of ₹ 11 lakh for issuing No Objection Certificates, permits for ENA, approving labels, etc. We noticed that during 2002-03 to 2010-11 the Department purchased 277 computers and peripherals for ₹ 1.22 crore. As the Department did not maintain stock register of computers, we could not comment on the issue and usage of the computers.

In reply to our audit query, the Department agreed (May 2011) that no software other than SPARK was being used in the Department and that discussion was being held with NIC for development of various softwares. Regarding non-maintenance of stock register, the Department replied that absence of stock register of computers was already noticed and that urgent steps will be taken to verify the stock.

6.1.2 Was computerisation of issue of transport/import permit system put to effective use?

We noticed that on an average the Assistant Excise Commissioner, attached to KSBC, issued 1,750 transport permits and 110 import permits every month. The Department proposed (2005) and the Government sanctioned (April 2007) computerisation of the permit issue system. The work was entrusted to C-DIT and funds were provided by KSBC. The software was prepared by C-DIT and handed over (June 2008) to KSBC. However, as final approval of the software has not been given by the Commissioner of Excise so far, the software could not be put to use.

We are of the view that despite the high volume of work and even eight years after initiation of computerisation, the Department has been unable to computerise any of its core functions.

The work of computerisation of issue of permits for import/ export/ transportation of spirit/ liquor started 6 years back was not yet completed

¹ Crime monitoring, Abkari arrears & Licence Managing system, Court cases tracking & monitoring system, Establishment Management System, Old arrears and reconciliation system, and audit system

6.2 Was the Department publishing its administrative report timely?

The annual administrative report published by the Department is the document that highlights the functions and achievements of the Department. It is thus an important information tool to reach the public. We noticed that the administrative reports of the Department were pending from 2001-02 onwards.

6.3 Does the Department have an informative website?

We noticed that though hosting of the website of the Department was included in the modernisation programme statement of 2003-04 and recommended in various study reports it has not been done so far. We are of the view that as the Department's functions necessitates constant interaction with the general public and stake holders like the licensees, a comprehensive website would have helped in speedy dissemination of information.