

# OVERVIEW



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This Report contains five chapters. The first and third chapters contain an overview of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) respectively. The second chapter contains results of Compliance Audit of PRIs. The fourth chapter contains a Performance Audit on the “Solid Waste Management in Urban Areas” relating to ULBs. The fifth chapter contains results of Compliance Audit of ULBs.

A synopsis of the findings contained in the Performance Audit on “Solid Waste Management in Urban Areas” and Compliance Audit on PRIs and ULBs is presented in this overview.

### CHAPTER – I

#### An overview of Panchayati Raj Institutions

The devolution of fund, functions and functionaries to the PRIs were still not complete. Activity mapping of 23 out of the 29 subjects was done but orders for devolution of only seven subjects were issued to the PRIs. However, no function has been transferred to Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) till October 2023.

*(Paragraph 1.3.3)*

There was shortfall in audit of PRIs by the Primary Auditor of PRIs in the State, Director of Audit, Local Fund, during the period 2018-19 to 2022-23, ranging between 50.68 and 58.73 *per cent*.

*(Paragraph 1.5.1.1)*

One thousand six hundred eighty four audit paragraphs pertaining to the period 2018-2023, with a monetary value of ₹1,660.80 crore, were pending for settlement (March 2023) for want of replies/ compliance.

*(Paragraph 1.5.3)*

During the period 2018-23, only 7 to 50 *per cent* of the ZPs submitted their budget to Commissioner of Panchayat and Rural Development for approval but none of the budget was approved due to non-adherence of the prescribed procedure. However, funds were regularly released and utilised by the PRIs irrespective of submission and approval of budget indicating that rigour and discipline in the financial and budgeting process in the PRI ecosystem was yet to be firmly established.

*(Paragraph 1.7.2)*

Own sources of revenue of PRIs showed a declining trend during the last five years indicating lack of initiative by PRIs to increase their own sources of revenue and reduce their dependence on Government Grants.

*(Paragraph 1.8.1)*

As of March 2023, there were 456 Utilisation Certificates (UCs) amounting to ₹3,971.52 crore outstanding for grants paid from 2001-02 to 2021-22 to the Panchayat and Rural Development (P&RD) Department. In absence of the UCs, it could not be

ascertained whether the recipients had utilised the grants for the purposes for which those were given.

*(Paragraph 1.8.2)*

As of 31 March 2023, the P&RD had not submitted 122 Detailed Countersigned Contingent (DCC) bills amounting to ₹102.55 crore for Abstract Contingent (AC) Bills drawn during 2001-02 to 2022-23. Non-adjustment of AC bills for long periods is fraught with the risk of misappropriation and therefore, requires close monitoring by the respective DDOs for ensuring submission of DCC bills.

*(Paragraph 1.8.3)*

Though there is a provision in the *eGramSwaraj* for generating reports related to creation of assets, the same was not generated. As the Asset Registers were not maintained, the assets of the PRIs could not be monitored, thereby leaving possibility for mis-utilisation/ mis-management of assets.

*(Paragraph 1.9.1)*

## CHAPTER II

### Compliance Audit of PRIs

Expenditure of ₹11.79 lakh incurred by Chief Executive Officer, Dhubri Zilla Parishad (ZP), on installation of Solar Street Lights through Junior Engineer, Dhubri ZP, was doubtful, as the expenditure was not supported by documentary evidence of actual execution.

*(Paragraph 2.1)*

The Executive Engineer, District Rural Development Authority (DRDA), Udalguri paid ₹4.29 lakh to the contractor for works not executed though recorded in Measurement Book, and thus the expenditure shown to have been incurred for the works was doubtful.

*(Paragraph 2.2)*

The Chief Executive Officer, Sonitpur ZP leased out markets to the bidders other than the higher bidder without sufficient justifications in violation of the Assam Panchayat (Financial) Rules, 2002. No prior approval of the Government, though stipulated in the Act, was obtained. This led to loss of revenue of ₹43.45 lakh for Sonitpur ZP.

*(Paragraph 2.3)*

## CHAPTER – III

### An Overview of Urban Local Bodies (ULBs)

As per Article 243ZE of the Constitution of India, it is mandatory for the States to set up Metropolitan Planning Committees (MPCs) in the metropolitan areas of the country. However, MPCs are yet to be constituted in the State.

*(Paragraph 3.4.3)*

There was continuous shortfall in coverage of audit by Director of Audit, Local Fund (DALF) during 2018-19 to 2022-23 ranging from 41 per cent to 74 per cent.

*(Paragraph 3.5.1.1)*

As of March 2023, settlement of 555 paragraphs were pending for want of replies from ULBs concerned indicating that compliance to the audit observation was not taken seriously.

*(Paragraph 3.5.3)*

ULBs as well as Government of Assam (GoA) failed to discharge their responsibility in relation to identification of gaps in service delivery and taking corrective measures to mitigate the gaps and improve the service delivery mechanism.

*(Paragraph 3.9)*

During the years 2018-19 to 2022-23, out of 103 ULBs, 39 to 62 ULBs did not submit their budget to the concerned authority.

*(Paragraph 3.10.2)*

There were persistent savings under Grant No.34 and 73 related to Urban Development during the years 2018-19 to 2022-23. The percentage of utilisation of budget provision in respect of the two Grants was significantly low ranging between 15 and 68 *per cent*.

*(Paragraph 3.11.3)*

Two hundred twenty Utilisation Certificates (UCs) for grants paid during 2003-04 to 2020-21 to the Guwahati Development Department amounting to ₹1,295.90 crore were outstanding. In the absence of UCs, it could not be ascertained whether the recipients had utilised the grants for the purposes for which those were given.

*(Paragraph 3.11.4)*

## CHAPTER IV

### Performance Audit on “Solid Waste Management in Urban Areas”

The Performance Audit on “Solid Waste Management in Urban Areas” revealed the following:

The “Draft Assam Urban Solid Waste Management (SWM) Policy, 2018” was yet to be approved by the Government till March 2023 even after three years of submission by Director of Municipal Administration (DMA) and six years after notification of the SWM Rules, 2016.

*(Paragraph 4.6.1)*

None of the 10 sampled ULBs had prepared long-term and contingency plans as of March 2022.

*(Paragraph 4.6.2.1 & 4.6.2.2)*

During the four-year period 2018-19 to 2021-22, against the total receipt of ₹144.14 crore, an amount of ₹41.47 crore (29 *per cent*) was utilised by the 10 selected ULBs. Wide variation was noticed, between 6 and 57 *per cent*, in the utilisation of funds by these ULBs.

*(Paragraph 4.7.3)*

Out of ₹27.87 crore released to 10 selected ULBs, UCs for ₹16.62 crore was submitted leaving a balance of ₹11.25 crore (40 *per cent*) outstanding as of March 2022.

*(Paragraph 4.7.3.2)*

All the selected ULBs fell short of the benchmark of 100 *per cent* in respect of segregation of waste and the performance of the majority of sampled ULBs was below 50 *per cent* of the Service Level Benchmarks. Unsegregated waste was being collected from the collection centres and transported directly to the dumpsite/landfills in mixed forms.

***(Paragraph 4.9.2)***

In all the 10 sampled ULBs, waste transportation was carried out by uncovered vehicles in mixed form causing littering of waste and polluting of the surroundings. Further, the sampled ULBs did not have Information and Communication Technology (ICT) based solution for tracking and monitoring of vehicles.

***(Paragraph 4.9.5)***

Expenditure of ₹3.04 crore remained unproductive due to non-utilisation of the Organic Waste Convertors (OWCs) after delivery of the machines to eight ULBs as of March 2022. Besides, the objective of procurement of the OWCs, to make use of waste and minimising burden on landfill also remained unachieved.

***(Paragraph 4.9.6.3.1)***

Except Dibrugarh MB, selected ULBs had neither set up landfill site as per prescribed guidelines nor had they obtained consent and authorisation from Pollution Control Board, Assam for processing and disposal of waste. There were several instances of non-compliance of the provisions of rules to regulate the manner dumpsites and landfills were to be located and maintained by the ULBs.

***(Paragraph 4.9.7.1)***

## **Chapter V**

### **Compliance Audit of ULBs**

The objective to provide adequate commercial facility to the citizen of Dabaka town by setting up a vendor market remained unachieved even after eight years of the target date of completion. It was attributable to prolonged inaction and lack of pursuance by the Municipal Board. This has rendered the expenditure of ₹3.66 crore on construction of the unfinished and unused market building unproductive besides potential loss of revenue.

***(Paragraph 5.1)***

Executive Officer, Udalguri MB, made payment of ₹0.35 crore for construction of *pucca* drain at Assam type Market Shed without actual execution of work by the contractor by falsely recording it in the Measurement Book.

***(Paragraph 5.2)***