

CHAPTER VI: GENERAL SECTOR

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6.1 Introduction

This Chapter of the Audit Report presents the findings from the audit of Government units under the General Sector.

The total budget allocation and expenditure of the departments under General Sector during the years 2023-24 are given in **Table 6.1.1**.

Table: 6.1.1: Details of allocation and expenditure under General Sector
(₹ in crore)

Name of the Department	Budget allocation	Expenditure
Parliamentary Affairs	36.65	33.40
Governor's Secretariat	8.21	7.06
General Administration (SA) Department	179.17	112.89
Election Department	134.48	118.95
Law Department	195.92	171.27
General Administration (AR) Department	3.91	3.09
General Administration (P & T) Department	13.15	9.50
Economic and Statistics Department	15.63	6.76
Home (Police) Department	2,177.23	1,836.71
General Administration (Political) Department	9.42	7.58
Planning and Co-ordination Department	47.55	32.60
Home (Jail) Department	59.67	45.97
General Administration (Printing and Stationary) Department	19.49	12.18
Finance Department	5,932.76	5,418.92
Institutional Finance	5.60	3.94
Treasuries	11.79	8.12
High Court	50.38	36.56
Fire Service Organisation	178.65	141.64
Civil Defence	1.89	0.66
Employment and Manpower	9.19	7.33
Home (FSL, PAC, Prosecution & Co-ordination Cell) Department	9.32	6.86
Total number of departments = 21	9,100.06	8,021.99

Source: Appropriation Accounts 2023-24

During 2023-24, we audited three units under the General Sector, covering expenditure of ₹ 228.91 crore (including expenditures of the previous years).

This Chapter contains two Compliance Audit Paragraphs titled “Suspected excess payment” and “Suspected and excess payment” under the Finance Department and Home (Police) Department involving money value of ₹ 4.26 crore.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

6.2 Suspected excess payments

Lack of integration between the Computerised Treasury Operating System and the Human Resource Management System, along with gaps in oversight by Drawing and Disbursing Officers and Treasury Officers, resulted in excess payments of ₹ 3.97 crore towards salaries.

The Integrated Financial Management System (IFMS), launched in 2010 under the National e-Governance Plan, was an extension of the treasury computerisation project aimed at modernising State financial operations. Funded by the Government of India, it was part of the Mission Mode Project for the “Computerisation of State Treasuries”. IFMS was envisioned as a comprehensive, web-based financial accounting system to enable real-time management, monitoring, and control of fund allocations and transactions across State Government departments-focusing on efficiency, cost reduction, and the adoption of modern public expenditure practices.

In Tripura, IFMS was not implemented as an integrated software solution. Instead, standalone applications were developed: Centralised Treasury Operation System (CTOS) (December 2010) for budgeting and payments and Human Resource Management System (HRMS) (May 2014) for payroll and personnel management. An attempt to integrate CTOS and HRMS (payroll and e-service book) in Tripura was initiated in October 2016. The State Government engaged RITES Ltd. to undertake the integration, focusing on payroll and e-service book functionalities. However, the project remained incomplete due to technical challenges, including compatibility issues between different DOT NET Framework versions, lack of a feasibility study and inadequate project oversight.

The Design Report prepared by RITES Ltd. outlined plan for integrating CTOS with HRMS, particularly for payroll data. However, as of now, these systems operate independently without full integration. Integration of HRMS and CTOS streamlines payroll by automating data transfer, ensuring real time consistency and reducing manual errors. This enhances transparency through audit trails and accelerates processing times. The integration of the CTOS and the HRMS is essential for ensuring accurate, efficient, and transparent management of government payroll and fund disbursement.

Due to non-integration, automated data transfer between HRMS and CTOS for salary processing was not feasible. Consequently, the workflow necessitated manual intervention. Drawing and Disbursing Officers (DDOs) had to manually select employee beneficiaries from CTOS and input their net salary amounts based on salary slips generated in HRMS. These digitally signed PDF slips were then uploaded into CTOS as e-vouchers. Salary disbursement occurred only after approval and processing by the respective Treasury, resulting in a fragmented and inefficient payroll system. The lack of integration, as observed in Tripura resulted in significant systemic weaknesses, including manual duplication of work, inflated salary payments and

potential fraud.

An analysis of data dump of CTOS and HRMS provided (May 2023) by the Tripura State Data Centre of the Finance Department for the period from 2017-18 to 2022-23 revealed several cases of suspected excess payments of ₹ 3.97 crore through salary bills as discussed in the succeeding paragraphs.

6.2.1 Excess payment of salary/ inflation of salary figures of ₹ 2.93 crore

An analysis of data furnished by the Finance Department revealed that 3,920 employees under 634 DDOs received salary payments exceeding their entitled amounts over periods ranging from a few months to several years. These 6,011 excess payments resulted from manual entries of inflated salary amounts into the CTOS during the period from April 2017 to February 2023, varying from ₹ one per month to ₹ 8.72 lakh per month. An illustrative list of cases involving employees who received excess salary payments exceeding ₹ 20,000 per month, totalling ₹ 1.27 crore, is provided in **Appendix 6.2.1**. The remaining smaller cases are included in summary **Table 6.2.1**

Table 6.2.1: Range wise details of excess salary drawn

Excess range	Distinct count of DDO	Number of cases	Distinct count of employees	Excess salary (in ₹)
Above ₹ 5,00,000	1	6	1	48,32,000
₹ 2,00,001 to ₹ 5,00,000	1	3	1	11,16,000
₹ 1,00,001 to ₹ 2,00,000	1	3	1	3,34,225
₹ 20,001 to ₹ 1,00,000	64	182	97	64,62,535
				1,27,44,760
₹ 10,001 to ₹ 20,000	111	357	214	52,67,545
₹ 1,001 to ₹ 10,000	398	2,457	1,363	1,01,15,396
₹ 1 to ₹ 1,000	445	3,003	2,488	11,89,416
Grand total	634	6,011	3,920	2,93,17,117

Source: Data provided by the Finance Department, Government of Tripura

6.2.2. Inadmissible payment of ₹ 95.26 lakh in “Other allowances”

Audit noticed that ₹ 95.26 lakh was disbursed as salary through the unauthorised insertion of fictitious, non-sanctioned, or inflated allowances in the “Other Allowances” field of the HRMS under two DDOs. These entries were neither approved by the Finance Department nor reflected in the employees’ official entitlements. The deliberate manipulation of this field aimed to inflate the gross salary escaped detection, as HRMS lacked internal validation rules or audit trails for verifying the legitimacy of “Other Allowances” field. Details of these cases are provided in **Appendix 6.2.2**.

A physical verification conducted at Twikorma High School, Gomati District, confirmed the audit findings of suspected salary withdrawals. The cashier of the school exploited system vulnerabilities over a period of 48 months (January 2019 to February 2023) by manipulating entries in both the CTOS and HRMS to withdraw a total of ₹ 1.53 crore, comprising of (i) ₹ 77.28 lakh withdrawn by inflating salary figures in CTOS and (ii) ₹ 75.21 lakh withdrawn by inserting unauthorised allowances under the “Other Allowances” field in HRMS.

The breakdown of the suspected withdrawals is detailed in **Appendix 6.2.3**.

6.2.3 Suspected salary payment of ₹ 8.82 lakh in the name of terminated employees

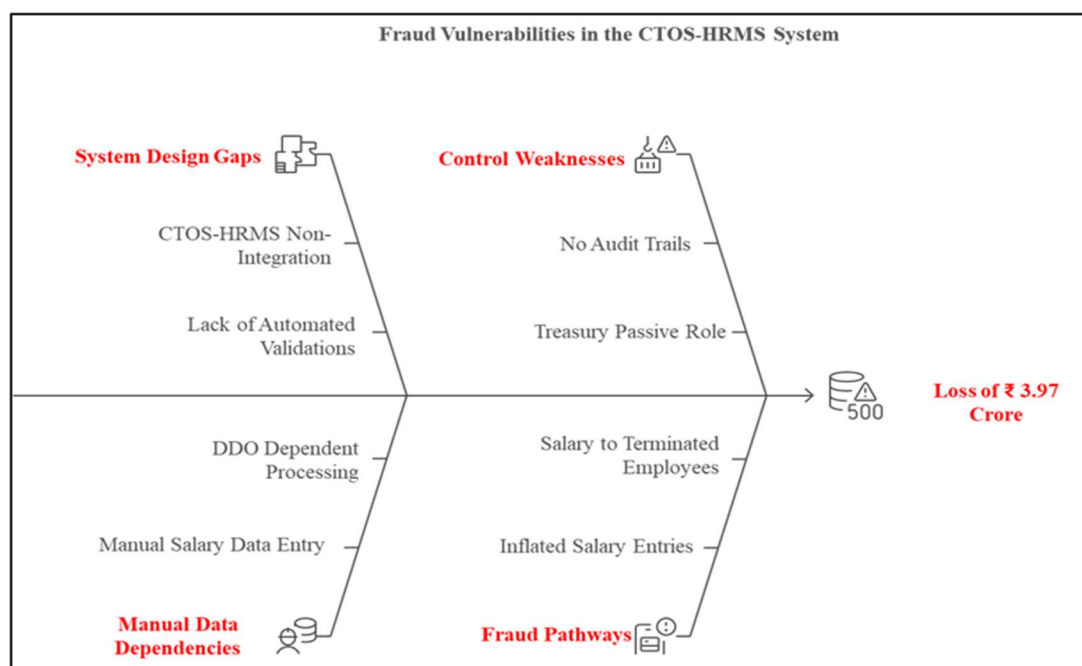
Audit noticed that between May 2020 and July 2023, a total of ₹ 8.82 lakh was fraudulently disbursed as salary under a single DDO by preparing salary bills in the names of two terminated employees and withdrawing the corresponding amounts through another employee's bank account, as detailed in **Appendix 6.2.4**.

These instances highlight serious lapses in financial oversight, indicate weaknesses in internal controls and highlight the need for system integration. These manipulations were possible due to the lack of automated cross-verification between CTOS and HRMS and thus remained undetected.

In reply, the Government stated (July 2024) that the efficiency of the CTOS system was dependent on manual data entry, submission of relevant documents by the DDO and further manual checks at the approver or treasury level. The system functionality checked the availability of the budget, correctness of the head of account, correctness of payment mandate file formats, *etc.* which were required for payment through RBI e-Kuber. The Government further stated that it would implement a new version of IFMS (Ver. 2.0) and the proposed system would have cohesive HRMS and Treasury systems which would ensure seamless data transfer and automated checks thereby minimising the manual involvement.

The Government further stated that CTOS and HRMS were not integrated for pay roll data sharing and the onus lay with the individual treasuries/ sub-treasuries to check the data manually and that most of the discrepancies occurred due to manual interventions with ill motives and subsequent oversights.

However, the fact remains that the Government failed to ensure the integration of CTOS and HRMS data outlined in the scope of work contained in the design report of CTOS, thereby creating financial system vulnerabilities and opportunities for manipulation of the systems. Additionally, the DDOs and Treasury/ Sub-Treasury officers did not diligently perform their duties in ensuring correctness of facts and figures in bills, resulting in suspected excess payment of government money.



Thus, the non-integration of the Computerised Treasury Operating System (CTOS) with the Human Resource Management System (HRMS) led to systemic failures in financial governance, marked by weak internal controls over payroll and fund disbursement processes. The lack of integration enabled manual data entry and bypassing of validation checks, which facilitated fraudulent activities such as inflated salary entries, unauthorised payments under “Other Allowances” and payment of salary to terminated employees. Further, the Treasury also did not have access to employee service status record in the HRMS. These lapses culminated in fraudulent excess payments amounting to ₹ 3.97 crore over a period of six years.

The Government stated (July 2025) that the Finance Department had already taken various initiatives to recover the unauthorised excess amount drawn by the Government employees and ₹ 1.41 lakh relating to excess salary had been recovered. The concerned offices had also been requested to initiate disciplinary actions as per CCS (CCA) Rules against the errant officials responsible for such excess drawal.

The Government further stated that, to prevent recurrence of such irregularities, it had taken some interim measures and also long term strategies. As a part of interim measures, the Finance Department had already procured IDEA Software to detect unusual transactions. The State Government had also asked NIC, Tripura to develop a next Gen. HRMS. This system would be integrated with existing CTOS and subsequently with the proposed IFMS 2.0 to ensure flawless salary bill processing framework.

As a part of long term strategy, the State Government had planned to develop an IFMS 2.0 to enhance efficiency and transparency in Financial Administration. Consultants had been engaged to prepare System Requirement Specification.

HOME (POLICE) DEPARTMENT

6.3 Suspected and excess payments

Failure of the Drawing and Disbursing Officer (DDO) to detect non-compliance with the rules resulted in suspected and excess payment of ₹ 28.96 lakh indicating inadequate internal control, monitoring and accountability mechanisms in the office of the Superintendent of Police, Sepahijala.

Rule 21 of General Financial Rules, 2017 provides that, every officer incurring or authorising expenditure from public moneys should be guided by high standards of financial propriety. Every officer should also enforce financial order and strict economy and see that all relevant financial rules and regulations are observed, by his own office and by subordinate disbursing officers.

Rule 71 (2) (b) of Travelling Allowance (TA) Rules provides that TA for a local journey shall be admissible if the temporary place of duty is beyond eight km from the official's residence or from the place of duty.

Examination (January 2024) of the records of the office of the Superintendent of Police (SP), Sepahijala, and analysis of the HRMS and CTOS showed instances of fraudulent payments of salary to fictitious employees, fraudulent payments of TA/DA and payments of excess salary to employees, as discussed below;

A Suspected payment of ₹ 14.37 lakh to fictitious beneficiary

A Beneficiary ID (523367) was created (May 2018) in the name of Shri Khanilal Debbarma in the office of the Superintendent of Police (SP), Sepahijala. He was assigned the constable ID 10406. It was noticed that the office of the SP, Sepahijala had drawn ₹ 14.37 lakh²⁵⁴ from Bishalgarh Treasury between May 2018 and January 2024 by submitting 83 bills (three pay bills and 80 TA bills) which were paid to Shri Khanilal Debbarma²⁵⁵ (details in **Appendix 6.3.1**). However, the name of Shri Khanilal Debbarma was not on the records of the office of the SP, Sepahijala. The creation of a fictitious beneficiary ID by the DDO led to a suspected payment of ₹ 14.37 lakh.

The SP, Sepahijala stated (August 2024) that Shri John Jamatia, UDC was responsible for the irregularities while he was working in Pay Cell and TA Section. He had admitted his involvement and was placed under suspension (February 2024) and Departmental proceedings initiated against him. The final outcome is awaited.

B Suspected payment of TA/ DA of ₹ 11.17 lakh

Examination of records of TA bills revealed instances of suspected payments made to the employees of the office of the SP, Sepahijala despite their not having performed any outside duty. Discrepancies were found between the treasury statement of bills and the office copies of the bills. Further, it was also observed that the bills were passed

²⁵⁴₹ 14,37,061

²⁵⁵Beneficiary Unique ID (523367)/ Payee was created by the DDO, SP Sepahijala office in May 2018

using different constable IDs for the same employee. The details are as given in **Table 6.3.1**.

Table 6.3.1: Fraudulent payment of TA/ DA

Sl. No.	Name of official (Beneficiary code)	Constable Number used	Total amount credited (in ₹)	Remarks
1	Shri John Jamatia, UDC, (191019)	Not Available	5,98,540	➤ Instances of payment received through bills, but name not included in the office copy of the treasury statement of bills.
2	Shri Suchitra Singha, LDC, (232638)	Not Available	96,545	➤ No outside duty was performed by them since their joining in 2012.
3	Shri Harinath Debbarma, Constable (140038)	C/10407 C/10521 C/10304 C/10306 C/10640 C/10602	3,47,085	➤ He was posted in canteen at SP office since January 2016 and had not performed outside duty. ➤ The Bills were passed using different Constable IDs in sanction orders.
4	Shri Khokan Dey, LDC (151973)	C/10606 C/10304 C/10301 C/10603	75,330	➤ No outside duty was performed since his joining in 2012. ➤ These Bills were passed by using different Constable IDs in sanction Orders.
Total			11,17,500	

The details of the suspected payment made to the four officials during the period from August 2020 to December 2023 are shown in **Appendix 6.3.2**.

The SP, Sepahijala stated (August 2024) that Shri John Jamatia, UDC was responsible for the irregularities. He had admitted his involvement and was placed under suspension (February 2024) and Departmental proceedings had been initiated against him.

C Excess drawal of salary of ₹ 3.42 lakh

Analysis of HRMS and CTOS data revealed excess payment of salary of ₹ 0.86 lakh to Shri Suchitra Singha, LDC during the months of November 2020, September 2021 and January 2022 which was offset by a deduction of the same amount from the salary of Shri Parimal Debbarma, Constable. It was seen that Shri Suchitra Singha used multiple Beneficiary Code and bank accounts in the CTOS data, although the employee number remained the same in the HRMS data. The details are given in **Appendix 6.3.3**.

It was also observed that Shri Harinath Debbarma, Constable was paid (October 2023) ₹ 2.56 lakh²⁵⁶ as pay arrears through Bill Number 939 dated 11 October 2023,

²⁵⁶ vide Bill Number 939 dated 11 October 2023 for ₹ 2,55,606

however, he was not entitled to such arrears.

Thus, the SP, Sepahijala stated (August 2024) that Shri Suchitra Singha, LDC and Shri John Jamatia UDC were responsible for the irregularities. They had admitted their involvement and were placed under suspension (February 2024) and Departmental proceedings had been initiated against them.

Failure of the DDO to maintain financial propriety resulted in suspected and excess payment of ₹ 28.96 lakh which is indicative of inadequate monitoring, lack of internal controls and poor accountability fixation in the office of the SP office, Sepahijala. Ineffective internal controls coupled with lack of accountability had thus led to suspected payments amounting to ₹ 28.96 lakh.

Recommendation:

- *It is recommended that the State Government establish a robust internal control system to strengthen financial oversight and ensure effective governance across field units in its jurisdiction.*
- *It is recommended that government rules meant to ensure fiscal prudence should be scrupulously followed and systemic accountability norms put in place.*
- *The State Government should consider continued monitoring and periodic rotation of staff performing DDO duties at regular intervals so as to reduce the possibility of fraudulent practices.*