

**FIFTEENTH KERALA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**COMMITTEE  
ON  
PUBLIC ACCOUNTS  
(2023-2026)**

**SIXTY EIGHTH REPORT**  
(Presented on 8<sup>th</sup> October, 2024)



**SECRETARIAT OF THE KERALA LEGISLATURE  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM**

**2024**

FIFTEENTH KERALA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**COMMITTEE  
ON  
PUBLIC ACCOUNTS  
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**SIXTY EIGHTH REPORT**

**On**

**Action Taken by Government on the Recommendations contained in the  
Seventy Third Report of the Committee on Public Accounts (2006-08)**

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COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS  
(2023-2026)

**COMPOSITION**

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Shri Selvarajan P. S., Joint Secretary

Shri Jomy K. Joseph, Deputy Secretary

Smt. Beena O. M., Under Secretary.

## INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson, Committee on Public Accounts, having been authorised by the Committee to present this Report, on their behalf present the Sixty Eighth Report on Action Taken by Government on the Recommendations contained in the Seventy Third Report of the Committee on Public Accounts (2006-2008).

The Committee considered and finalised this Report at the meeting held on 4th September, 2024.

Thiruvananthapuram,  
8th October, 2024.

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

## **REPORT**

This Report deals with the Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Seventy Third Report of the Committee on Public Accounts (2006-2008).

The Seventy Third Report of the Committee on Public Accounts (2006-2008) was presented in the House on 17<sup>th</sup> December, 2008. The Report contained 8 recommendations relating to Water Resources Department. The Report was forwarded to Government on 19-12-2008 to furnish the Statements of Action Taken on the recommendations contained in the Report and the final reply was received on 13-1-2024.

The Committee examined the statements of Action Taken received from the Government at its meetings held on 1-8-2012, 15-5-2013, 17-10-2013, 12-1-2022 and 17-1-2024. The Committee decided not to pursue further action on the recommendations in the light of the replies furnished by the Government. The recommendations and Government replies are incorporated in this Report.

### **WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT**

#### **Recommendation**

[Sl. No. 1, Paragraph No. 18]

The Committee is distressed to note that many of the Irrigation Projects conceived for the benefit of the farmers under AIBP are only half way through even after the lapse of decades and spending crores of rupees. It is also pitful that the departmental officers have no idea about the actual state of affairs regarding these projects. Therefore the Committee suggests that the details of the projects completed and the ones yet to be completed under the AIBP programme, should be submitted to the Committee.

#### **Action Taken**

No AIBP Projects have been completed. The ongoing AIBP projects are Karappuzha Irrigation Project, Malampuzha Irrigation Project, Chitturpuzha Irrigation Project and Kanjirappuzha Irrigation Project. Muvattupuzha Valley Irrigation Project (AIBP) is also not completed.

[Ref No. Report (Civil/PAC)53-39/2006-08/LXXIII/279, Dated 3-8-2011]

[Considered on 1-8-2012]

### **Recommendation**

#### **[Sl. No. 2, Paragraph No. 19]**

The Committee comes to know that the additional works in Paravoor distributory related to KIP was done without obtaining Government sanction while there was specific Government order in 1994 itself not to take additional works without special sanction. The department authorities wilfully neglected the Government direction and have done the work, which is not admissible. Therefore the Committee recommends to take disciplinary action against the officers who were involved in this insubmissive act and the details of such action taken should be submitted to the Committee. The details of non sanctioned works done and the reason for not obtaining sanction should also be submitted to the Committee.

### **Recommendation**

#### **[Sl. No. 3, Paragraph No. 20]**

In Kallada Branch Canal 21760 Metres of Canal Works were done without obtaining required sanction. Departmental officers responsible for this unruly act should be directed to submit it the reason for this along with departmental enquiry to ascertain whether there was any emergency to do the work.

#### **Action Taken on Paragraph Nos. 19 & 20**

'Kallada branch canal' referred in para 20 is assumed to be 'Kulakkada branch canal' as there is no canal by name 'Kallada branch canal'. Details of works in Paravoor and Kulakkada distributories done without obtaining government sanction is shown in the Annexure attached (**Annexure I**). Various vigilance and departmental enquiries in litigations that arose in the works of Paravoor distributory and Kulakkada branch canal are in progress. Identifying irregularities and taking disciplinary actions against the officials involved is possible only on termination of the said enquiries.

[Ref No. Report (Civil/PAC)53-39/2006-08/LXXIII/279, Dated 3-8-2011]

[Considered on 1-8-2012]

### **Recommendation**

#### **[Sl. No. 4, Paragraph No. 21]**

The Committee should be informed of the reason for not keeping separate budget provision for AIBP Components under MVIP, eventhough there are specific guidelines issued by Government of India in this regard. The department also failed in keeping separate accounts for the expenditure on works done in MVIP, under AIB Programme. Eventhough the Central Loan Assistance of Rs. 29 Crore was utilized fully, the department wilfully reported inflated figures of work to Central Water Commission. The reason for the occurrence of such error should be submitted to the Committee. The Committee opined that the problem of land acquisition for constructing a railway overbridge in Poovattoor Distributory could be overcome by taking up the matter with the District Collector. The laxity on the part of the department resulted in non-utilisation of an amount of Rs. 2.25 lakh sanctioned earlier and received as CLA. Such a lazy attitude of the department will forbade future loan sanction from the centre. In many cases the department failed to adhere to the ratio of sharing the expense fixed during the course of the work, which should be curbed.

### **Action Taken**

Separate provision had been made for AIBP in the budget from the year 2008-2009 under 4700-22-800-other expenditure -87-AIBP assistance for MVIP and Expenditure is booked under AIBP Head of Account.

During 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 only certain stretches of canals were included under AIBP and other works were funded by the state Government. In the proposal for 2002-2003 all the major schemes under the project were brought under AIBP. So when the 3 years are considered enbloc, the overall expenditure incurred for the project is comparatively more than the amount of Letter of Credit. The departmental materials (Cement, Steel, Bitumen etc) required for the works were procured utilizing the state funds under "stock". The expenditure on account



of the same in AIBP components is included in the Expenditure of AIBP works reported for which no separate Letter of Credit is required. This had also caused increased expenditure on works as against 'Letter of Credit' released under AIBP.

[Ref No. Report (Civil/PAC)53-39/2006-08/LXXIII/279, Dated 3-8-2011]

[Considered on 1-8-2012]

### **Recommendation**

#### **[Sl. No. 5, Paragraph No. 22]**

The Committee find no logic in including the administrative expenses in the total expenditure of project implementation and suggest that the tendency of the department to utilize the project amount for administrative expenses should be stopped forthwith. In MVIP, Canal Works were included for overcoming the water scarcity problem in agriculture prone areas. But the department had diverted the loan amount provided for canal works to construct roads in the surrounding areas. Such unauthorised diversions cannot be taken for granted. Therefore the Committee recommends that action should be taken against the officers who were involved in this and that they should be directed to submit detailed explanation in this matter.

### **Action Taken**

As per the check list furnished by the Central Water Commission vide letter No. 23/08/2004 dated 14-10-2004, CLA inclusive of 15% or actual expenditure of establishment. Therefore 15% of CLA or actual expenditure was included in the AIBP expenditure. If establishment expenditure is not be included in AIBP expenditure, necessary direction may be issued in this respect. Road works are taken up in the project as bund roads, inspection roads, and approach roads to the canals. All the road works undertaken in the Project were included in the action plan approved by the Government. Some of these works included in the action plan under AIBP component - Communication link roads are approved by the Government. As directed by the CWC team, no road works were included in the action plan under AIBP from 2005-2006. But works already arranged during

2003-2004 and 2004-2005 were completed and payment made during the succeeding years. These payments were not admitted by the Accountant General under AIBP expenditure. From 2005-2006 no road works were arranged under AIBP.

[Ref No. Report (Civil/PAC)53-39/2006-08/LXXIII/279, Dated 3-8-2011]

[Considered on 1-8-2012]

### **Recommendation**

#### **[Sl. No. 6, Paragraph No. 23]**

The Committee understand that the Government direction for the joint inspection of the ayacut area of completed irrigation projects by the Water Resources and Revenue Department is not being done. The total ayacut area and the amount spent for this can be finalised only after joint verification. The Committee is surprised on the deposition of the Department that they had made some correspondence with the Revenue Authorities regarding this. The Committee direct the department to produce the copy of the letter reported to have been sent to the Revenue Department, to the Committee immediately.

### **Action Taken**

Muvattupuzha Valley Irrigation Project is partially commissioned during the year 94-95. Dam and appertants and main canals were already completed. This project is envisaged to irrigate a total ayacut of 37237 Ha. Out of which 20213 Ha. achieved upto 2009-2010. Joint verification of the ayacut with Revenue authorities and Agricultural Department can be done only after commissioning the project.

[Ref No. Report (Civil/PAC)53-39/2006-08/LXXIII/279, Dated 3-8-2011]

[Considered on 1-8-2012]

### **Recommendation**

#### **[Sl. No. 7, Paragraph No. 24]**

The Committee desires to be furnished with the details regarding the Water Cess collected from the beneficiary farmers and the steps taken by the Department

to collect the arrears of water cess. The Committee also suggests that the department should appeal to the Central Water Commission for bringing funds for Project under plan Head. Sufficient central assistance can be requested, only after that.

### **Action Taken**

Water cess can be collected only after completing the project and joint verification of ayacut.

[Ref No. Report (Civil/PAC)53-39/2006-08/LXXIII/279, Dated 3-8-2011]

[Considered on 1-8-2012]

### **Recommendation**

#### **[Sl. No. 8, Paragraph No. 27]**

The Committee see that by undertaking an unnecessary work of providing extra thickness to the Apron of the Regulator-cum-Bridge at Thrithala, the Water Resources Department made wasteful expenditure of Rs. 31.87 lakh. This work was not included in the approved design. Besides this, the work was started without the required approval of the Chief Engineer. Though the Chief Engineer expressed dissent at first, he ratified the executed work later on. Not only that, though the work was started on the ground of urgency the work had not been completed even after the lapse of seven years. The Committee see this as a secret agreement between the contractor and the officials of the department for plundering public money. The Committee wants to know the reason for doing the work with undue haste and recommends to take action against the Executive Engineer who had started the work without proper approval, investigation or discussions and fix responsibility against him for the loss to the department. The Superintending Engineer who gave direction to start the work and the Chief Engineer (IDRB) who ratified the work also should be brought to book. The names of the above 3 officials must be communicated to the Committee. The Committee further recommend that if they are not in service now, legal action should be taken against them for making good the loss sustained to Government. The Committee takes such a stand because they feel that the reply furnished by the Government is not satisfactory.

### **Action Taken**

The agreed work of RCB was started from September 1999 at Thrithala as per the original approved drawing of Chief Engineer, IDRB, Thiruvananthapuram in which the bed level of RCB was fixed at +9.500 m ie. Top level of Apron. During execution period, a raise in bed level of river was noticed due to the deposit of sand at the Regulator site. So it was proposed to raise the bed level of RCB also to +10.0m. In December 1999 the Executive Engineer, RCB Division, Thrithala submitted a proposal to raise the bed level of RCB from 9.50m to 10.000m and to provide a weir of 0.500m over the apron top of +10.000 m at the sill position for the gate to rest upon and to have a dead storage of 0.5 m water. The sitting MLA of Thrithala also stressed the necessity of providing a dead storage. This proposal of the Executive Engineer was accepted by the Chief Engineer, Projects - I, Kozhikode and addressed the Chief Engineer Design Thiruvananthapuram for approval on 15-1-2000. The Chief Engineer, Projects - I, Kozhikode in the best interest of progress of work directed the Superintending Engineer, Siruvani Project Circle, Palakkad to proceed with the construction work maintaining the bottom level of Apron at +7.350m by raising the apron bottom 0.5m from 6.85 to 7.35 and top level of Apron at +10.000m plus an additional weir of height of 0.50m over the apron to achieve the RCB sill level of 10.500m. Thus the bottom level of Apron fixed originally at +6.850m in the approved IDRB drawing also got shifted to +7.350m ( $6.850+0.50 = 7.350$ m). Accordingly the concreting of Apron was progressed keeping the Apron depth 2.65m plus the weir thickness of 0.50 m at sill portion for having a dead storage of 0.5m as per the original approved design itself.

The Chief Engineer (Design) in his meeting on 7-3-2000 approved the proposal to raise the bed level of RCB and to provide a weir of 0.50m over the Apron based on the proposal of Chief Engineer, Projects - I, Kozhikode vide his letter dated 15-1-2000. A modified drawing was also made available to the RCB Division in August 2000. According to this drawing foundation level of Apron was raised to 7.850 m from 7.350 m indicating that the weir portion was to be constructed within the Apron depth of 2.65m. By this time the concreting work of Apron progressed considerably (as per the direction of Chief Engineer, Projects - I, Kozhikode vide letter dated 15-1-2000 and IDRB meeting of 7-3-2000).

Providing non uniform depth of Apron was not advisable, the Executive Engineer in March 2001 sought permission to maintain a uniform depth of 2.65 m for the Apron plus a weir of height 0.5 MTR in between in piers at the sill position for the gate to rest upon. Also the Chief Engineer, Projects - I, Kozhikode addressed to Chief Engineer IDRB (vide letter dated 29-3-2001) showing the sketch and levels of Apron under execution in which he had specifically mentioned about the foundation level of Apron as +7.350 m already fixed on 15-1-2000 & 7-3-2000. But the Chief Engineer (Designs) observed vide letter dated, 16-5-2001 that a weir of 0.50 m thickness within the over all Apron depth of 2.65 m was quite sufficient to meet the requirement. This statement do not co-exist with the decisions taken already vide letter dated 15-1-2000 of Chief Engineer, Projets - I Kozhikkode and the meeting on 7-3-2000 of Chief Engineer, IDRB. Again the matter was taken up by the Chief Engineer, Projects - I, Kozhikode vide his letter No. WP5-5314/98 (Vol.II) dated 20-3-2002 to the Chief Engineer, Design and later in the Meeting of IDRB Chief Engineer in March 2002, with Chief Engineer, Irrigation & Administration, Chief Engineer, Projects - I, Kozhikode participated, approved the original proposal (as approved in 15-1-2000 and 7-3-2000) of providing a bottom level of Apron at +7.350 m vide letter No. IDRB/DD/DAM/R&G/ADI/2313/94 dated 23-4-2002 of Chief Engineer, Design addressed to Chief Engineer, Projects-I, Kozhikode and the matter was regularalized.

The work of Apron concreting was commenced fixing the bottom level of Aprons as +7.350 m in January 2000 as per the letter of Chief Engineer, Projects - I, Kozhikkode addressed to Chief Engineer, IDRB, Thiruvananthapuram specifically mentioning about the bed level, and proceeding of work based on that and also the minutes of the meeting of IDRB Chief Engineer on 7-3-2000 confirms that position. The minutes of the meeting of Chief Engineer, IDRB dated 7-3-2000 in which 9 officers attended, it was clearly decided that

1. The bed level of the RCB is fixed at +10.000m level
2. The crest of RCB is fixed at +10.500 m by providing a weir of 0.50 m height.
3. The shutter height is reduced from 5.50 m to 4.50 m by the above changed.

From the above decisions, it is clear that a weir of uniform thickness of 0.50 m is to be provided over the existing apron of 2.65 m to reach an RCB crest level of +10.500m. This itself is a written statement of sanction. As the additional weir of 0.50 m was of uniform thickness to be provided over the existing Apron of 2.65m, no revised drawing was mentioned in the meeting of 7-3-2000 and also it was as per the proposal of Chief Engineer, Projects - I, Kozhikode dated 15-1-2000. From the above it may be seen that the above work were done with necessary changes as per the direction of the higher authorities, who are competent to do so and for the best interest of Government.

Shri. C. Albert, Sahayamata Bhavan, Melpuram, Pacode (P.O), Kanyakumari (District), 629168 (Pin) was the Executive Engineer during the period of work in question. Shri. S. Thomas was the Superintending Engineer at that time. Shri. T.K. Sasi was the Chief Engineer who ratified the work.

Since the three accused officers have already retired from service disciplinary proceedings cannot be initiated against them to make good the loss sustained to the Government. But, Public Accounts Committee recommended that if the accused officers were not in service, legal action had to be taken against them to realize the loss amount.

Legal proceeding has to be initiated by the Chief Engineer, Project - I, Kozhikode and the Agreement authority of the work, the Superintending Engineer, Siruvani Project Circle, Palakkad, as the work is under their jurisdiction.

Accordingly, the Chief Engineer, Project-I, Kozhikkode has been directed to take necessary steps to make good the loss sustained to the Government legally as recommended by the PAC with prior notices to the three officers to remit the loss amount. It was also directed to apportion the loss amount equally among the three accused officers.

The Committee decided to consider the above para in the presence of the Principal Secretary, Water Resources Department.

[Ref No. Report (Civil/PAC)53-39/2006-08/LXXIII/560, Dated 25-1-2013]

[Considered on 15-5-2013]

### **The Committee's decision on the meeting of 17-10-2013.**

The Additional Chief Secretary, Water Resources Department informed the Committee that due to the increase in the thickness of Regulator-cum-bridge, Thrithala, an amount of ₹31.87 lakh was incurred in excess. He assured to take necessary steps to recover the amount from the officers who were responsible for the loss within 3 months. The Committee urged to inform the action taken in its regard at the earliest.

### **Action Taken**

As recommended by the Committee, officers responsible for the irregularities in connection with the work “ Construction of Regulator Cum bridge at Thrithala” were identified and responsibilities were fixed. Total loss sustained to Government is Rs. 31,87,000 (Rupees Thirty one lakhs eighty seven thousand only). Four officers were identified as responsible for irregularity and the apportioned liability of each officer is fixed to Rs. 7,96,750 (Rupees Seven Lakhs Ninety Six Thousand Seven Hundred and Fifty only.) Sanction was accorded for the recovery of liability from the following four retired officers viz, i) Shri. C. Albert, ii) Shri. S.Thomas, iii) Shri. T.K.Sasi, iv) Shri. T.T. Karipananda Singh Vide G.O.(Rt.) No. 103/2021/WRD dated 12-2-2021. (copy enclosed) (Annexure II)

[Ref No. Report (Civil/PAC)53-39/2006-08/LXXIII/60, Dated 27-10-2021]

[Considered on 12-1-2022]

### **Further Recommendation**

The Committee directs the department to furnish the names of the officials who had delayed the procedure after 2013 and also to inform to the Committee the date of retirement of officials against whom actions were initiated and the present status of the case.

### **Action Taken**

73rd report was submitted to Government on 17-3-2009, though the incident in question occurred way back in 1999. The present cardinal point to be addressed is fixing responsibility on officials who caused delay in taking punitive measures against erring officials. The accused officers retired from service during the period

from 2008 to 2011. On a close examination of the case it can be found that the file for this purpose has been processed by various levels of officers in different sections in the department from the beginning of 2010 onwards till now. Scores of officers are seen to have handled this file during that period and it is also seen that several clarification were also taken in the meanwhile. The file processing system is a collective one where the hierarchy works as a team and not as an individual alone.

However in order to achieve the main objective in taking disciplinary action against the accused officers, notice has been served on them and Government issued orders for effecting recovery as per GO(Rt) No.103/2021/WRD dated 12-2-2021.

Considering the principles of natural justice, recovery from officials who handled the file at various levels of an incident which occurred nearly a quarter century ago appears remote and unfruitful.

Hence the Committee may kindly drop further action.

[Ref No. ഭൂജല 2/22/2022/ജവിവ., തീയതി 13-1-2024]

[Considered on 17-1-2024]

Thiruvananthapuram,  
8th October, 2024.

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



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