

**TWELFTH KERALA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**COMMITTEE  
ON  
PUBLIC ACCOUNTS  
(2008-2011)**

**NINETY EIGHTH REPORT**

(Presented on 29th June, 2009)



SECRETARIAT OF THE KERALA LEGISLATURE  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM  
2009

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**COMMITTEE  
ON  
PUBLIC ACCOUNTS  
(2008-2011)**

**NINETY EIGHTH REPORT**

**On**

**Action taken by Government on Recommendations Contained  
in the Seventeenth Report of the Committee on  
Public Accounts 1987-1989**

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## INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman, Committee on Public Accounts, having been authorised by the Committee to present this Report on their behalf, present the Ninety Eighth Report on Action Taken by Government on the Recommendations contained in the Seventeenth Report of the Committee on Public Accounts 1996-1998

The Committee considered and finalised this Report at the meeting held on 10th June, 2009.

Thiruvananthapuram,  
29th June, 2009.

ARYADAN MUHAMMED,  
*Chairman,*  
*Committee on Public Accounts.*

## **REPORT**

This Report deals with the action taken by Government on the recommendation contained in the 17<sup>th</sup> Report of the Committee on Public Accounts (1987-89).

The 17<sup>th</sup> Report of the Committee on Public Accounts (1987-89) was presented to the House on 28<sup>th</sup> March, 1988. The Report contained 10 recommendations relating to Water Resources Department. Government were addressed on 11<sup>th</sup> April, 1988 to furnish the Statements of Action Taken on the recommendations contained in the Report and final replies were received on 14<sup>th</sup> August, 2008.

The Committee examined the replies at its meeting held on 22-9-2008 and accepted all the replies furnished by Government on the recommendations. The recommendations of the Committee and Statements of Action Taken furnished by Government are incorporated in this Report.

### **Recommendations of the Committee and the Replies Furnished by Government**

#### **WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT**

##### **Recommendation**

*(Sl. No.1, Para No.32)*

The aim of the “International decade for drinking water supply and sanitation (1981-90)” is to cover the entire rural population through Water Supply Schemes by the end of 1990. The original, revised and restructured 20 Point Programmes announced in 1976, 1982, 1986 have also adopted provision of drinking water to problem villages as one of the objectives. In these circumstances it is imperative on the part of the Department that they should make 100% achievement and coverage in rural water supply. Hence the Committee recommend that every effort should be made by the Department to achieve this goal.

##### **Action Taken**

Based on the 1971 census there were 1164 problem villages as on 1980. The objective of the 20 point programmes announced in 1976, 1982 & 1986 was to provide protected water supply to these 1164 problem villages. Later in 1992 a survey of the status of water supply was conducted with rural habitations (wards) as a unit by the Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission of

Government of India based on 1991 census. Based on the survey there were 9763 habitations in the state, out of which 2289 were not covered, 7422 were partially covered and 52 habitations were fully covered.

Coverage of water supply has been extended to all habitation in the state by 2004 and the number of fully covered habitations increased from 52 in 1992 to 4745 in 2007.

**Recommendation**

*(Sl. No. 2, Para No.33)*

The Committee understand that paucity of funds is a major hindrance to the proper implementation of the scheme. Hence, the Committee recommend that Government should somehow or other mobilise necessary funds for these schemes since this is the prime and utmost need of the people.

**Action Taken**

It is proposed to complete the 37 identified Water Supply Scheme during the XII<sup>th</sup> Plan period with NABARD assistance. Administrative Sanction and Technical Sanction have been issued to the projects and the projects are under consideration in NABARD for loan assistance under RIDF XIV (2008-2009)

**Recommendation**

*(Sl. No.3, Para No.34)*

The Committee understand that only 11 out of 35 delayed schemes had been completed and commissioned, although the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme sponsored by Government of India envisages quick implementation of schemes to make potable water available to the masses within the shortest time possible. The remaining schemes could not be completed. The Committee urge that the department should take immediate steps to overcome the problems faced in these cases and the schemes commissioned without further delay. The progress of action taken in this regard may be furnished to the Committee.

**Action Taken**

All the 35 schemes are already completed and commissioned and water is being supplied to the public.

**Recommendation**

*(Sl. No. 4, Para No.35)*

The Committee find that in many of the cases where bore wells have been sunk, the water source was inadequate. The Committee doubt that this was due

to inadequate/defective planning and preliminary investigations. Hence, the Committee recommend that this should be enquired into and the details in this regard should be furnished to the Committee. It should be ensured that in future proper and detailed investigation is done before bore wells are sunk. So also immediate steps should be taken to find an alternate source and distribution of water should be done properly to the affected villages.

#### **Action Taken**

Geographical investigation for identification of bore wells are carried out by field officers before selecting any source though not always through Ground Water Department. However, it is pertinent to confirm that the reliability of such investigations are of the order of 60% to 70% only, in which case many of the failures may have to be attributed to this fact, Nevertheless, in order to ensure adequacy of water sources, directions are issued to the officers concerned that in future proper and detailed preliminary investigation shall be got done by Ground Water Department for ensuring an adequate yield (1000 litres/hour for installation of hand pump) before bore wells are sunk, and also to take immediate steps to find an alternate source and ensure proper distribution of water to the affected villages.

#### **Recommendation**

*(Sl. No.5, Para No.36)*

The Committee are displeased to note that some of the implementing Officers had failed to keep up the financial discipline. The Keerampara Scheme in Ernakulam North Division where an amount of Rs. 41.04 lakhs being the cost of pipes and specials was spent even before obtaining technical sanction and the Kazhakkuttom scheme in Trivandrum Division for which an amount of Rs. 12.87 lakhs was spent for similar purpose without obtaining administrative and technical sanctions are two glaring instances. Unauthorised expenditure is highly irregular and it should be ensured that such kind of expenditure is not repeated hereafter.

#### **Action Taken**

To ensure that unauthorised expenditure is not repeated, directions are issued to the officers that expenditure shall be made only after obtaining administrative and technical sanctions.

#### **Recommendation**

*(Sl. Nos. 6 & 7, Para Nos .37 & 38)*

The Committee find that there is no systematic quality testing of water supplied by the Rural Water Supply Schemes. Since most of the contagious

diseases like Cholera, Gastroenteritis etc., are transmitted through water, it is highly essential that periodical testing of water samples is done. Hence, the Committee recommend that the three existing Regional Laboratories in the State should be sufficiently developed with adequate staff and other facilities for sample collection and testing. Laboratories in the District Hospitals may also be provided with the facilities for water testing. The Committee understand that there is no specific order from Government with regard to the division of responsibilities between the Chief Government Analyst and Public Health Engineering Departmental Authorities. Hence, the Committee recommend that Government should issue specific orders in this regard.

The Committee feel that the Kerala Water Authority should be provided with a separate laboratory for testing water samples.

#### **Action Taken**

In Kerala Water Authority, quality testing labs are set up in all the treatment plants for testing the quality of the water treated and supplied. Apart from this district level labs are functioning in all the districts in the State.

Water samples were regularly collected at frequent intervals as shown below from Water Supply Schemes and are being tested at District labs.

No. of Consumers (Test)	Frequency of Quality Test
1) above one lakh	Once in a month
2) 50000 to 100000	Once in two months
3) 20000 to 50000	Once in three months.
4) 5000 to 20000	Once in six months.
5) upto 5000	Annually.

In case of any emergency such as water supplied by KWA reported to be contaminated or outbreak of epidemic due to contaminated water, samples are collected from such areas and quality test conducted at KWA labs and if necessary the facilities of Government analytical labs are also used to ensure the quality of drinking water.

Public can avail the service of KWA district labs for testing water samples from private sources on remitting the prescribed fee.

Test results of water samples will be forwarded to regular Divisions and other field offices for taking further necessary action. On an average 1000 samples per month are tested for physical, chemical & bacteriological analysis in KWA district labs.

**Recommendation**

*(Sl. No. 8, Para No. 39)*

The Committee find that there was shortfall in the coverage of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes under Rural Water Supply Schemes. The Committee recommend that the Department should strive to achieve 100% coverage in this respect also.

**Action Taken**

To make the scheme sustainable KWA mainly implements comprehensive or Regional Water Supply Scheme with reservoirs or perennial rivers as source. Hence the scheme covers a major area which may also include SC & ST area. Specific schemes for benefiting SC & ST are being implemented by the District Collector.

**Recommendation**

*(Sl. No. 9, Para No. 40)*

The Committee understand that there are huge arrears in collecting maintenance cost from Panchayats and that the Panchayat Finance Commission has recommended to the Government to write off 50% of these arrears. The Committee desire to be furnished with all the details such as total amount due from Panchayats, amount written off, amount pending collection etc. Further, the reasons for the undue delay in remitting maintenance charge should also be furnished to the Committee with all details. The Committee also recommend that Government should take effective measures so that the maintenance cost is remitted by the Panchayats regularly.

**Action Taken**

The Committee for decentralisation of Powers had recommended writing off the pre 1-4-1984 maintenance charges arrears from the local bodies due to the erstwhile PHED.

However, no action had been taken to put in force the recommendations regarding the writing off and the sharing of the water charges liability.

Later, in consideration of the mounting arrears of water charges due from the LSGs, Government issued orders to set apart a portion of the stamp duty due to the Panchayat and adjust the same against the water charges dues to Kerala Water Authority.

This procedure was stopped during 2004. Government then issued orders to pay the water charges from out of the general purpose grants by the respective local bodies. But the local bodies did not come forward to remit the water charges.

Later to avoid accumulation of the current dues of water charges, it was also decided that the issue of arrears will be dealt with later. Then onwards KWA is able to collect about 70% of the current water charges of the local bodies by way of grant adjustment.

KWA has been taking continuous efforts to recover the water charges from the LSGs. Due to various reasons this did not work out effectively. As on March 2007, the arrears due from Panchayaths are worked out to Rs. 314.85 crores. Government has initiated steps to adjust the water charges arrears due to KWA from local bodies towards the power charges arrears due from KWA to KSEB.

#### **Recommendation**

*(Sl. No. 10, Para No.41)*

The Committee want to be furnished with the details of all the schemes hitherto implemented, like the nature of coverage, total cost, time taken for completion, population benefited etc.

#### **Action Taken**

Total number of schemes implemented upto 31-3-2007 is 2037. Total population benefitted due to the above schemes is Rs. 223.09 lakhs. 65% of rural population and 84.50% of urban population is covered with piped water supply as on 31.03.2007.

For some of the schemes, the delay in getting land for various components of the schemes caused delay in completion of schemes.

Thiruvananthapuram,  
29th June, 2009.

ARYADAN MUHAMMED,  
*Chairman,*  
*Committee on Public Accounts.*