

പതിനഞ്ചാം കേരള നിയമസഭ

പതിനാറാം സമ്മേളനം

നക്ഷത്രചിഹ്നമിടാത്ത ചോദ്യം നമ്പർ: 2201

05-02-2026-ൽ മറുപടിയ്ക്ക്

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മറുപടി നൽകിയ മന്ത്രി

ശ്രീ. കെ. മുരളീധരൻ

(ആരോഗ്യ - ദേവസ്വം വകുപ്പ് മന്ത്രി)

(എ) 2016-17 മുതൽ നാളിതുവരെയുള്ള കാലഘട്ടങ്ങളിൽ സംസ്ഥാനത്തെ സർക്കാർ ആശുപത്രികളിൽ സി. എ. ജി. നടത്തിയ ഓഡിറ്റിന്റെ കണ്ടെത്തലുകൾ സർക്കാരിന് നൽകിയിട്ടുണ്ടോ; ഉണ്ടെങ്കിൽ അതിന്റെ പകർപ്പ് ലഭ്യമാക്കാമോ?

മറുപടി: 2016-17 മുതൽ നാളിതുവരെയുള്ള കാലഘട്ടങ്ങളിൽ സംസ്ഥാനത്തെ സർക്കാർ ആശുപത്രികളിൽ സി. എ. ജി. നടത്തിയ ഓഡിറ്റിന്റെ കണ്ടെത്തലുകൾ അടങ്ങുന്ന വിവിധ സി.എ.ജി റിപ്പോർട്ടുകളിലെ ബന്ധപ്പെട്ട ഖണ്ഡികകളുടെയും അപ്പന്റീക്സുകളുടെയും പകർപ്പുകൾ അനുബന്ധമായി ചേർക്കുന്നു.

സെക്ഷൻ ഓഫീസർ

ക്രമ നമ്പർ	റിപ്പോർട്ട് വർഷം	റിപ്പോർട്ടിലെ ശിപാർശ ഖണ്ഡികകൾ	അപ്പന്റീക്സ് നമ്പർ
1	സി.&എ.ജി.-യുടെ 2016 മാർച്ചിൽ അവസാനിച്ച വർഷത്തെ സംസ്ഥാനത്തെ ജനറൽ & സോഷ്യൽ സെക്ടറുകളെക്കുറിച്ചുള്ള ഓഡിറ്റ് റിപ്പോർട്ട് (Report No. 5 of the year, 2017)	5.2	NIL
2	സി.&എ.ജി.-യുടെ 2017 മാർച്ചിലവസാനിച്ച വർഷത്തെ സംസ്ഥാനത്തെ ജനറൽ & സോഷ്യൽ സെക്ടറുകളെക്കുറിച്ചുള്ള ഓഡിറ്റ് റിപ്പോർട്ട് (Report No. 4 of the year, 2018)	2.6 മുതൽ 2.15 വരെ	2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 2.8, 2.9, 2.10
3	സി.&എ.ജി.-യുടെ 2019 മാർച്ചിലവസാനിച്ച വർഷത്തെ സംസ്ഥാനത്തെ ജനറൽ & സോഷ്യൽ സെക്ടറുകളെക്കുറിച്ചുള്ള ഓഡിറ്റ് റിപ്പോർട്ട് (Report No. 1 of the year, 2021)	2.2, 2.3	NIL
4	Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India on Public Health Infrastructure and Management of Health Services (Report No. 6 of the year 2024 - Performance Audit – Civil)	All paras	All Appendices

28/4/26

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absence of Fire Prevention wing in the Department had delayed implementation of instructions issued during inspections.

5.1.10 Conclusion

As the new Kerala Fire Force Act was not enacted as per NDMA guidelines, there were no enabling provisions empowering the Fire and Rescue Department to proceed legally and impose penalty on perpetrators of fire safety violations. In the absence of Rules, the activities of the Fire and Rescue Department were regulated by standing orders issued by the DG which did not possess statutory backing.

GOK did not issue appropriate notifications resulting in inability of officers of the Fire and Rescue Department to conduct inspections legally, to discharge their duties effectively and to ensure the availability of fire safety arrangements. Joint verification by us revealed deficiencies in compliance to fire safety standards, thereby exposing the buildings to grave threat of fire accidents. Failure of GOK to adopt good practices as prescribed in National Building Code led to non-inclusion of such provisions in the KMBR, to ensure safety of life and property of people.

Fire fighters were also exposed to risk due to shortage of safety equipment like breathing apparatus, fire fighting suits and walkie talkies. In the absence of equipment like APL and TTL, the Fire and Rescue Department was not capable of conducting rescue operations beyond the fourth floor of high rise buildings in the State.

The failure of GOK in ensuring the above aspects of fire protection and prevention has put the life and property of people at risk.

FAILURE OF OVERSIGHT/ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROLS

HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE DEPARTMENT

✓ 5.2 Misappropriation of funds in Government TD Medical College, Alappuzha

Failure of supervisory authorities to exercise stipulated checks and laxity of the Drawing and Disbursing Officer in complying with the codal provisions relating to maintenance of Cash Book resulted in misappropriation of ₹17.20 lakh in Government TD Medical College, Alappuzha.

Rule 92 (a) (ii) of Kerala Treasury Code (KTC) Volume I stipulates that all monetary transactions should be entered in the Cash Book as soon as they occur and attested by the Head of the Office in token of check. While Rule 92 (a) (iv) of the KTC requires the Head of the Office to verify the Cash Book at the end of each month and record a signed and dated certificate to that effect, Rule 131 (a) also stipulates that the contents of cash chest shall be counted by the Head of the Office or under his orders by the subordinate Gazetted Officer at the close of business on each working day and verified with book balance. A memorandum of

verification shall be signed and dated by the Government servant who counted the cash and abstracts of cash balances with denominations recorded. The Director of Medical Education (DME) being the Head of the Department, was bound to follow the directions (June 2005) issued by the Government of Kerala (GOK) for ensuring that the internal audit wing functioned systematically, effectively and promptly.

In the Government Tirumala Devaswom Medical College, Alappuzha (TD Medical College), while the Principal was the Head of the Office, the Senior Administrative Officer was the Drawing and Disbursing Officer (DDO). Besides other responsibilities, the DDO was also entrusted with the responsibility to verify and attest the entries in the Cash Book, subsidiary registers, acquittance rolls, contingent registers, vouchers, etc., including verification of cash.

During the course of audit (November 2015), it was noticed that the total of the entries in the payments side of the Cash Book was overstated on 10 June 2015 by ₹1000 and the cash balance was short accounted to that extent and carried forward. It was also noticed that the Senior Clerk, Junior Superintendent and the DDO had certified in the Cash Book that the balance in the cash chest as on the day, agreed with the balance as per the Cash Book, leaving no excess cash. A detailed examination of the entries made in the Cash Book for the period April 2014 to October 2015, revealed the following lapses.

- entries in the Cash Book were erased/scored off and rewritten entries were not attested by the DDO with dated initials;
- entries were originally made and daily totals and cash balance recorded and subsequently, entries were scored off thereby causing mismatch between recorded daily totals and actual totals;
- cash balances were certified by the DDO without ensuring correctness of individual daily entries with supporting original vouchers, which resulted in failure to detect the misappropriation;
- variations in receipt and payment totals ranging from ₹200 to ₹56,049 were noticed during the period from April 2014 to October 2015;
- though individual transactions were entered correctly, the receipt and payment totals respectively were understated or overstated and the deficit amount was not available in the cash chest in order to tally with the incorrect cash balance as recorded in the cash book. While the total figures on the receipts side were understated on six occasions, expenditure totals were overstated on 16 occasions thereby reducing the progressive cash balance by ₹1.79 lakh (Appendix 5.2);
- a joint physical verification of cash conducted on 23 November 2015 confirmed no surplus cash in the cash chest, establishing the misappropriation of ₹1.79 lakh;

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- Internal Audit of DME conducted in May 2015 failed to notice the misappropriation.

After the matter was pointed out during audit, the Principal of the TD Medical College suspended (November 2015) the Junior Superintendent and Senior Clerk dealing with cash. Besides, the DME ordered (December 2015) a departmental inquiry into the alleged misappropriation of Government money. The inquiry, covering the period from March 2012 to November 2015, revealed misappropriation of ₹17.20 lakh. We, however, observed that no action was initiated against the DDO despite his failure to discharge his mandated supervisory responsibilities.

Thus, non-observance of codal provisions and supervisory lapses in ensuring periodical checks and controls resulted in misappropriation of ₹17.20 lakh in TD Medical College. Had the DDO ensured the correctness of individual entries by cross verifying them with the vouchers of daily receipts and payments and checked arithmetical accuracy of cash balance by totalling of daily entries, the misappropriation could have been avoided.

GOK, while responding (November 2016) to the audit observations stated that it had directed DME to reassess the loss sustained by the Department on account of the misappropriation and that further action would be taken on receipt of the report of DME. GOK also informed that the suspended officers had admitted to inadvertent omission in entering certain amounts in the cash book.

The response of the GOK was not tenable as the misappropriation of Government funds has taken place due to systematic and intentional efforts of the officials at fault which cannot be termed as inadvertent. Moreover, the GOK's reply has also failed to explain the delay of more than one year in taking appropriate action against the delinquent officials. As such, we recommend the GOK to take disciplinary action against all the defaulting officials including the DDO, as per relevant conduct rules governing their service, for their failure to perform their assigned duties. Further, the GOK may also ensure that the system and procedures are followed strictly to guard against the occurrence of such happenings in future.

HIGHER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

5.3 Fraudulent drawal of remuneration for valuation

Violation of prescribed procedure by the Finance Officer, Mahatma Gandhi University in payment of remuneration to examiners for valuation of answer scripts led to a fraudulent drawal of ₹11.26 lakh.

Examiners of the Mahatma Gandhi University (MGU) were paid remuneration for valuation of answer scripts done by them. As per MGU Circular (July 2013), the Camp Officers of valuation camps had to submit claims of examiners along with their State Bank of Travancore (SBT)

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wherein the audit findings were discussed and responses of Government obtained.

2.4 Audit Objectives

The Performance Audit was conducted to assess whether:

- the interventions of National Health Mission (NHM) in the areas of Maternal health, Child health, Family planning and Immunisation were effective in improving health standards of women and children in the State and were targeted to achieve UN Sustainable Development Goal of 'Good Health and Well-being' as adopted by the Government of India;
- the physical and human resources were adequate and procurement of equipment and drugs were efficient and economical in providing improved health care service; and
- the overall financial management including release and utilisation of funds earmarked under various schemes was efficient and effective.

2.5 Audit criteria

Audit findings were benchmarked against the criteria derived from the following documents:

- NRHM Framework for Implementation, 2005-12 and 2012-17;
- Operational Guidelines for Financial Management;
- Indian Public Health Standards, 2012 for Sub-Centres, Primary Health Centres, Community Health Centres, Sub-Divisional Hospitals and District Hospitals;
- Operational Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Public Health Facilities, 2013;
- Audited Annual Financial Statements of State Health Society;
- Guidelines of various GOI schemes under NHM;
- World Health Organisation (WHO) standards; and
- State/Central Public Works Department Manuals.

Audit Findings

2.6 Attainment of demographic goals

Improving maternal and child health and their survival are central to the achievement of national health goals. NHM aimed to reduce Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) and Total Fertility Rate (TFR). In this process, NHM was expected to help achieve related goals set under the UN Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. The performance of the State was impressive and exceeded the targets set under the UN Sustainable Development Goals as indicated in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Status of target and achievement of IMR, MMR and TFR

Performance indicators	NHM framework for implementation (2012-17)		UN Sustainable Development Goals (2030)	
	Target	Achievement as on 31.03.2017	Target	Achievement as on 31.03.2017
IMR (Infant Mortality Rate)	25 per 1000 live births	6	12 per 1000 live births	6
MMR (Maternal Mortality Rate)	100 per 100000 live births	29	70 per 100000 live births	29
TFR (Total Fertility Rate)	Reduce to 2.1	1.6 ⁶	No target	

(Source: Directorate of Health Services)

2.7 Non-allotment of State share of funds

The State NHM received funds directly from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India (GOI) upto the year 2013-14. From the year 2014-15 onwards, GOI released funds to Government of Kerala (GOK), which, in turn released the same to State Health Society through the DHS. The funding pattern from 2012-13 to 2014-15 between GOI and State was in the ratio 75:25 which shifted to 60:40 from 2015-16. Year-wise details of receipt of funds and expenditure of SHM, Kerala during 2012-17 were as shown in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2: Grants received and expended under NHM during 2012-17

(₹ in crore)

Period	Opening Balance	Central Grant received	State share released	Interest earned during the year	Total fund available	Total fund expended by NHM	Closing Balance ⁷
1	2	3	4	5	6 = 2+3+4+5	7	8 = 6-7
2012-13	46.56	490.55	30.00	5.14	572.25	626.98	-54.73
2013-14	-54.73	360.98	76.94	5.08	388.27	632.30	-244.03
2014-15	-244.03	521.99	112.24	5.89	396.09	628.71	-232.62
2015-16	-232.62	315.35	70.00	4.62	157.35	682.64	-525.29
2016-17	-525.29	455.25	302.80	1.15	233.91	744.78	-510.87
TOTAL		2144.12	591.98	21.88	1747.87	3315.41	

(Source: GOI correspondence and data obtained from NHM/Directorate of Health Services)

The NHM Framework for Implementation, 2005-12 (Guidelines), while referring to the finances of the Mission specifically stated that the aim of NHM was to increase the share of Central and State Governments on health care. The Guidelines stipulated that it must be ensured that the State expenditure on health increased in real terms and there was no substitution of the State expenditure by Central expenditure.

⁶ Data as per National Family Health Survey - 04/2015-16.

⁷ The additional expenditure over and above the total fund available was met from the State Plan fund.

Audit observed that as per letter forwarded (April 2017) from GOI to NHM, against the release of ₹2144.12 crore by GOI during 2012-17, GOK should have contributed ₹915.20 crore. However, the actual release was only ₹591.98 crore resulting in a short release of ₹323.22 crore. It was noticed that even though GOK contribution was less to the extent of ₹323.22 crore during 2012-17, GOK reported its contribution to GOI as ₹901.74 crore. Audit scrutinised the accounts of GOK/NHM for the period 2012-17, which revealed that GOK released from the State Plan fund, ₹249.01 crore in 2012-13 and ₹60.73 crore in 2014-15 to NHM, for execution of various plan schemes. Thus, ₹309.74 crore, which was released from the State Plan Fund was intimated to GOI as State share of contribution to NHM. The booking of State plan funds as State share of funds under various heads of account, which were not related to NHM activities, was contrary to the guidelines, which required the State expenditure on health to increase in real terms. The statement of the Government during the Exit Conference (November 2017) that the matter was discussed with GOI and settled was not accepted by Audit in the absence of records to substantiate the claim.

2.8 Health care for Women

The maternal health care package with its focus on the health of women during pregnancy, childbirth and post-partum period was a vital component of NHM due to its profound effects on the health of women, immediate survival of the newborn and long-term well-being of children. Key strategies to improve maternal health included improved access to skilled obstetric care through facility development, increased coverage and quality of antenatal and postnatal care, increased access to skilled birth attendance, institutional delivery, etc. The important services for ensuring maternal health care included antenatal care, delivery care and postnatal care. As per Indian Public Health Standards (IPHS) 2012, health institutions of the status of PHCs and above shall be equipped with the Minimum Assured Services of Ante Natal Care (ANC), Intra Natal Care (INC) and Post Natal Care (PNC). Audit examined whether there were adequate institutions for providing services to pregnant women and whether these institutions were equipped in terms of skilled manpower and equipment for providing delivery services to expectant mothers. Deficiencies noticed are discussed in the succeeding paragraphs.

2.8.1 Ante Natal Care (ANC)

Government of India, recognising that reproductive, maternal and child health cannot be addressed in isolation and that the health of adolescent girls and pregnant women impacted on the health of the newborn and the child, adopted (January 2013) a strategy of expanding the scope of Reproductive and Child Health (RCH) to Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child plus Adolescent Health (RMNCH+A). The guidelines provided for interventions to be made at various stages of life cycle, which should be mutually linked.

The RMNCH+A guidelines identified delivery of antenatal care package and tracking of high-risk pregnancies as a priority intervention to monitor the progress of foetal growth and to ascertain the well-being of the mother. The women who reach the Health Centre for the first time only during labour carry

transferred to them. Thus, ₹11.88 crore was retained by KMSCL since March 2013. It was also noticed that NHM submitted Utilisation Certificate (UC) for 2012-13 to GOI certifying that all amount received during 2012-13 was utilised.

Audit observed that besides parking ₹11.88 crore with the KMSCL since March 2013, an amount of ₹3.23 crore¹⁹ was paid as cash assistance to the beneficiaries in test-checked institutions thereby violating the scheme guidelines.

GOK stated (November 2017) that though ₹11.88 crore was released to KMSCL for patient transport ambulance, formal directions for purchase of vehicles and implementation of the project were yet to be issued resulting in the idling of funds. The reply was not acceptable since NHM and GOK were bound to utilise the funds approved by GOI for setting up of patient transport ambulance system under JSSK. The reply also failed to explain why NHM misled GOI by forwarding UC certifying that all amounts received during 2012-13 were expended, when ₹11.88 crore was parked unspent with KMSCL. Government stated in the Exit Conference (November 2017) that the matter would be looked into. Failure to utilise funds for the intended purpose and submission of wrong UCs calls for fixation of responsibility.

- **Free Drugs and Consumables/Diagnostics/Blood**

The scheme envisages cashless service to women on account of free supply of drugs and consumables, diagnostic services and blood transfusion. Visits to hospitals during the course of Audit revealed that in three out of 15 delivery points, pregnant women were compelled to purchase medicines and blood from outside sources (Appendix 2.4). GOK stated (November 2017) that consequent to observations of Audit steps were taken to ensure that the entitlements envisaged under the scheme would be made available to all mothers. However, the steps taken were not intimated to Audit, despite being asked.

2.9 Health care of children

2.9.1 Setting up of facilities for newborn at delivery points

The IPHS 2012 and the Operational guidelines for Facility Based Newborn Care mandated all facilities where deliveries were conducted, to set up Newborn Care Corner (NBCC)²⁰. Similarly, all FRUs/CHCs needed to have a Newborn Stabilisation Unit (NBSU)²¹, in addition to NBCC, with a Paediatrician in charge. It was also stipulated that any facility with more than 3,000 deliveries per year should have a Special Newborn Care Unit (SNCU), which would

¹⁹ At the rate of ₹500 per beneficiary.

²⁰ Newborn Care Corner (NBCC) – a space within the delivery room in any health facility, where immediate care is provided to all newborns at birth. This is mandatory for all health facilities where deliveries are conducted.

²¹ Newborn Stabilization Unit (NBSU) – a facility within or in close proximity of the maternity ward where sick and low birth weight newborns can be cared for during short periods. All FRUs/CHCs need to have a Neonatal Stabilization Unit, in addition to the Newborn Care Corner.

included one Women and Children (W&C) hospital, three GHs, four DHs, six THs and one CHC provided diet as specified in JSSK guidelines. The details of two institutions, which failed to provide any diet to the mothers and that of the remaining seven institutions where diet as supplied did not conform to the Guidelines, are given in Appendix 2.3. It was also observed that in four¹⁷ institutions, the mothers were discharged from the institutions prior to the days prescribed (three days for normal and seven days for LSCS¹⁸) in the Guidelines resulting in mothers not receiving the stipulated diet.

Lack of sufficient intake of calorific food by mothers in post-partum period could hamper adequate care of the mothers and neonates. GOK stated (November 2017) that strict instructions were issued to the districts to ensure free diet for pregnant women in all institutions. GOK further stated that though Post-Partum duration of hospital stay varied from individual to individual and was the choice of the patient as well, institutions were since instructed not to discharge mothers prior to acquiring fitness.

- *Non-implementation of patient transport ambulance under JSSK and resultant parking of ₹11.88 crore with KMSCL*

The JSSK launched by GOI (June 2011) provided for free and cashless services to pregnant women including normal deliveries and caesarean section deliveries and also treatment of sick newborn (upto 30 days after birth) in all Government health institutions across State/UT. As per the initiative, all pregnant women shall be provided with free transportation from residence to the health centre, from there to the referral points, if needed and back to residence. Patient Transport Ambulance (102) services essentially consisted of basic patient transport aimed to cater to the needs of pregnant women and sick infants under JSSK. It was observed that the patient transport ambulance system was not set up (November 2017) and instead the State Mission Director, NHM accorded sanction (August 2012) to disburse cash assistance of ₹500 each to the mothers until GOK established transport system for the pregnant women under JSSK.

Audit examined the reasons for not setting up the patient transport ambulance system as envisaged under the JSSK guidelines. It was observed that an amount of ₹27.45 crore (₹15.57 crore for purchase of 283 Patient transport ambulances, ₹5.09 crore for setting up a control room and ₹6.79 crore for its operational cost) was earmarked in the approved Programme Implementation Plan (PIP) for 2012-13 for the purchase and operation of patient transport ambulance. NHM transferred (March 2013) ₹11.88 crore to M/s. Kerala Medical Services Corporation Ltd (KMSCL), which included ₹5.09 crore for setting up of a control room and ₹6.79 crore to meet operational costs. However, the cost of purchase of ambulances (₹15.57 crore) was not transferred to KMSCL. Audit noticed that KMSCL neither set up the call centre nor purchased ambulances as the cost of ambulances (₹15.57 crore) was not

¹⁷ TH Sultan Bathery, DH Tirur, TH Ponnani and THQH Tirurangadi.

¹⁸ Lower Segment Caesarean Section.

section among the Primipara should be limited to less than 15 *per cent*, observed that the average proportion of C-sections in Kerala was higher than the national average and that high risk of complications in second C-section warranted reduction of primary C-section to as minimum as possible. Against the national average of 17.20 *per cent*¹⁵ C-sections, data obtained from the Directorate of Health Services (DHS), Kerala indicated that 40 to 42 *per cent* of the deliveries in the State during 2012-17 were C-sections. Audit noticed an increase in percentage of C-section deliveries in 2016-17 over 2012-13, in respect of nine out of 15 institutions test-checked as detailed in **Appendix 2.2**. Though the remaining six institutions did not show a similar increase in 2016-17, it was observed that the percentage of C-section deliveries was still high and ranged between 20.58 and 49.01 *per cent*. During the Exit Conference (November 2017), Government accepted that the State average of C-section deliveries was high as compared to the national average and admitted that it was a shameful situation. Government also admitted its failure to bring down the percentage of C-section in spite of concerted efforts.

2.8.8 Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram (JSSK)

Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram (JSSK) launched on 01 June 2011, was an initiative to assure cashless services to all pregnant women including normal deliveries, C-sections, and treatment of sick newborn (upto 30 days after birth) in all Government health institutions across the State. In order to reduce MMR and IMR, JSSK under NHM stressed upon promotion of institutional deliveries and proper care of newborn. The entitlements for pregnant women under JSSK included free and zero expense delivery and C-section, free Drugs and Consumables, free Diagnostics (Blood, Urine tests, Ultrasonography, etc.), free diet during stay in the health institutions (upto three days for normal deliveries and upto seven days for caesarean deliveries), free provision of blood, free transport from home to health institutions, between facilities in case of referrals and drop back from institution to home.

2.8.8.1 Deficiencies in providing free diet and other facilities to pregnant women under Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram (JSSK)

- **Supply of diet**

JSSK guidelines envisaged that extra calorific diet was to be provided to mothers upto three days for normal deliveries and upto seven days for caesarean deliveries. Further, GOI while launching the scheme stated that non-availability of diet at the health facilities demotivates the delivered mothers from staying at the health facilities and consequently, most of the mothers prefer returning home after delivery, at the earliest.

The JSSK guidelines envisaged to provide cooked food, local seasonal fruits, vegetables, milk and eggs. The NHM, in its Circular (August 2012) suggested supply of bed coffee, breakfast, seasonal fruits, lunch, tea and snacks and dinner to the beneficiaries under the scheme. Audit observed that only six¹⁶ of the 15 delivery points test-checked, which

¹⁵ Data obtained from National Family Health Survey – 4 as average of last five years before 2015-16.

¹⁶ CHC Meenangadi, W&C Alappuzha, GH Manjeri, General Hospital Thrissur, District Hospital Wadakkancherry and TH Kodungallur.

the Principal, GM College Manjeri was given overall control of the hospital for the purpose of running the Medical College.

Joint physical verification (24 May 2017) of the antenatal and postnatal wards in the GM College, Manjeri, revealed that 88 patients were allowed to be admitted though the sanctioned bed strength was 78. Patients were lying on the floor or sharing beds with other patients. The normal delivery patients along with the newborn were accommodated on the floor in the corridor, as seen in Picture 2.2. Two instances of pregnant women giving birth to children in the toilet at ANC ward occurred in 2016 and 2017. The Hospital stated (August 2017) that lack of vacant beds in the labour room forced the patients to be retained in ANC wards. In these circumstances, it is felt that there was need for increasing the bed strength to accommodate the increasing number of patients.

The Superintendent (Administration) of the GM College, Manjeri stated (November 2017) that the existing hospital buildings were converted into Medical College Education Unit for housing the academic blocks and Clinical Academic areas. He also confirmed that a building originally constructed for the Women and Child (W&C) block was converted into an academic block for the GM College, Manjeri. Audit was further informed by the Government in its reply that despite the need for more beds, no proposal seeking increase of bed strength was forwarded by GM College, Manjeri due to lack of space for constructing new buildings.

The reply of the Superintendent (Administration) was not justifiable as GM College, Manjeri despite facing shortage of beds converted the building constructed for accommodating women and children into an academic block. The upgradation of the GH Manjeri into the GM College, Manjeri without enhancing the existing limited facilities adversely impacted on the delivery of services for maternal care.

2.8.6 Shortage of drugs and consumables in Post-Partum Units

All services relating to Reproductive and Child health programme, immunisation sessions, monthly clinics, etc., are conducted through Post-Partum Unit (PPU). The Guidelines for Control of Iron Deficiency Anaemia issued by the GOI emphasises IFA supplementation among pregnant women and lactating mothers. Stock-out of drugs and consumables was noticed in 47 of the 65 test-checked institutions with period of stock-outs ranging from two to 74 months as detailed in Appendix 2.1. The stipulations contained in the National Health Mission Framework for Implementation 2012-17 requiring hospitals to provide for appropriate increase in drugs and supplies commensurate with caseloads was not achieved.

2.8.7 Deliveries through Caesarean sections

Government of Kerala recognising that the percentage of Caesarean section (C-section) among the total number of deliveries was on the increase, issued guidelines (May 2011) for reduction of C-sections and promotion of safe vaginal delivery. GOK, while emphasising the WHO recommendation that C-

maintained by the Hospital revealed that the number of primipara¹⁴ cases attended to by the hospital during 2015-17 was only seven out of 635 deliveries. The Hospital stated (August 2017) that patients were aware of risk factors like there being no Paediatrician on call and no facility for emergency intervention and therefore requested for reference to higher centres during the course of antenatal checkup. Similarly, in THQH Vythiri, delivery facilities were not made available to the patients from August 2015 to June 2017 due to the transfer of the lone Gynaecologist to another hospital. GOK stated (November 2017) that measures were being taken to fill all the sanctioned posts of Gynaecologists in different hospitals in the State. However, the fact remains that had the risk factors been minimised, these ANC patients could have claimed delivery service from PHCs/CHCs and not sought reference to higher centres as stated above. Thus, the objective of NHM to provide health to all in an equitable manner was not achieved.

- Audit noticed in District Hospital (DH), Mananthavady that GOK accorded sanction (November 2005) to increase the bed strength from 274 to 500 since the average number of inpatients was between 475 and 500 per day. Similarly, in respect of GH, Kalpetta GOK accorded sanction (November 2005) to increase the bed strength from 43 to 250. However, neither the number of beds was increased nor the infrastructure developed to cater to the demand, citing paucity of funds. Audit observed that the constraints in space and bed strength led to situations like patients sharing beds and even resting on floors as shown in Picture 2.1 below.



Picture 2.1: Patients sharing beds at DH Mananthavady in Wayanad District (28 June 2017)



Picture 2.2: Delivery patients resting in corridors and floors at GH Manjeri in Malappuram District (24 May 2017)

- GOK attached (January 2014) General Hospital (GH) Manjeri, including its staff and equipment to Government Medical (GM) College, Manjeri for the purpose of medical education. GOK also renamed (June 2014) the GH Manjeri as GM College, Manjeri. While the Superintendent, GH was designated as Superintendent (Administration),

¹⁴ Primipara cases relate to women who are pregnant for the first time.

Audit observed that despite GOK sanctioning posts of Gynaecologists in four out of 16 test-checked CHCs, a Gynaecologist was posted only in CHC Meenangadi in Wayanad district. In respect of another hospital viz., CHC Pulpally in Wayanad district, even though the hospital had a six-bedded maternity ward, a well-equipped operation theatre and labour room with adequate facility, there was no Gynaecologist and the hospital generally provided only ANC. However, the hospital provided delivery services in instances where patients were not in a position to be transferred to other hospitals. Significantly, while it is to be appreciated that the CHC, Pulpally provided normal delivery services to 35 pregnant women during 2012-17 even without the services of a Gynaecologist, Anaesthetist and Paediatrician and without essential facilities like Blood storage unit and Newborn care corner, it needed to be emphasised that both mothers and babies were exposed to avoidable risks.

2.8.5 Impact of inadequate manpower and infrastructure on maternal care

The IPHS guidelines recognised that Sub-divisional hospitals (Taluk Hospitals in Kerala) were below the district level and above the block level (CHC) hospitals and acted as First Referral Units (FRU) for the Tehsil/Taluk/Block population in which they were geographically located. These guidelines also recognised that THs had an important role to play as FRUs in providing emergency obstetric and neonatal care and helped in bringing down MMR and IMR. As per IPHS, TH/THQHs were classified as those with bed strength from 31 to 100. Audit test-checked the availability of Gynaecologists in eight out of 20 THs/THQHs in the selected districts. It was noticed that Gynaecologists were not available in one out of the eight test-checked THs/THQHs. There was shortage of one Gynaecologist in one hospital as detailed in Table 2.7.

Table 2.7: Shortage of Gynaecologists

Name of hospital	Bed strength	Sanctioned strength	Men in position	Requirement as per IPHS	Shortage
THQH Kayamkulam	125	2	2	2	Nil
THQH Kodungallur	176	2	2	2	Nil
TH Pudukkad	75	2	2	1	Nil
THQH Ponnani	125	2	2	2	Nil
THQH Tirurangadi	157	3	2	2	Nil
THQH Sulthan Bathery	127	2	1	2	1
THQH Vythiri	129	3	3	2	Nil
TH Thuravoor	24	1	0	1	1

(Source: Details collected from health institutions)

- Audit noticed number of deliveries in 10¹³ out of 15 hospitals coming down during the last three years due to shortage of Gynaecologists. Due to this the possibility of these hospitals turning away patients cannot be ruled out. In THQH Tirurangadi, Audit noticed that the number of deliveries was steadily declining over the years from 574 during 2012-13 to 284 during 2016-17. Analysis of the confinement register

¹³ GH Thrissur, DH Mananthavady, THQH Vythiri, CHC Meenangadi, DH Tirur, THQH Tirurangadi, THQH Kodungallur, W&C Alappuzha, DH Mavelikkara and THQH Kayamkulam.

2.8.4 Availability of delivery facility

The Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY) implemented by GOI since April 2005 as a 100 per cent Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) under the overall umbrella¹⁰ of NHM, targeted to reduce overall maternal and infant mortality ratios, besides aiming to increase institutional deliveries in Below Poverty Line (BPL) families. The strategy involved operationalisation of 24x7 delivery services to provide basic obstetric care at PHC level and First Referral Units (FRU) to provide emergency obstetric care, etc. Similarly, the Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram (JSSK) under NHM launched by GOI (June 2011), stressed upon entitlements and elimination of out of pocket expenses for pregnant women and sick neonates, promotion of institutional deliveries and proper care of newborn in all health institutions across the State. Audit noticed that out of the test-checked 65 health institutions in the selected districts of Wayanad, Malappuram, Thrissur and Alappuzha, delivery facility was not available in 50 institutions. These included 32 PHCs and 15 CHCs wherein the post of Gynaecologist was not created. Of the remaining three institutions, delivery service was not provided in General Hospital (GH), Alappuzha since the District already had a Women and Children hospital. Delivery was not conducted in Taluk Hospital (TH), Thuravoor due to lack of infrastructure and manpower. In TH Pudukkad delivery facility was not provided inspite of the availability of Gynaecologists, citing the reason of poor infrastructure. Government (November 2017) replied that specialist posts as per IPHS were not available in CHCs and PHCs. The Additional Chief Secretary, Health and Family Welfare Department also admitted in the Exit Conference (November 2017) that some THs were not having satisfactory facilities.

The IPHS also envisaged PHCs and CHCs to provide delivery services such as Ante Natal Care, Intra Natal Care¹¹, Post Natal Care, Newborn Care, etc., as part of Maternal and Child Health care. Audit observed that none of the 245 PHCs in the test-checked districts provided delivery services. In fact, even the CHCs were not equipped to handle delivery services in the four test-checked districts with only two¹² out of the 71 CHCs providing delivery services. Out of the 20 TH/Taluk Headquarters Hospitals (THQHs) in the test-checked four districts, delivery facility was being provided in 16 hospitals. The district wise details are shown in Table 2.6.

Table 2.6: Shortfall in PHC/CHC/THQH/TH providing delivery facility

Name of district	Total no. of PHCs	No. of PHCs where delivery facility is provided	Total no. of CHCs	No. of CHCs where delivery facility is provided	Total no. of TH/THQHs	No. of TH/THQHs where delivery facility is provided
Alappuzha	59	0	16	0	6	3
Thrissur	79	0	24	0	6	5
Malappuram	84	0	22	1	6	6
Wayanad	23	0	9	1	2	2
Total	245	0	71	2	20	16

(Source: Data received from DHS)

¹⁰ The assistance under JSY would form part of the overall release under NHM. The implementation of JSY would be as per the parameters indicated in the JSY guidelines.

¹¹ 24-hour delivery services, both normal and assisted.

¹² CHC Meehangadi in Wayanad district, CHC Edappal in Malappuram district.

Recommendation 2.1: Government may ensure that pregnant women who register for ANC are tested for HIV/STI and administered with the required doses of IFA tablets/TT vaccine.

2.8.3 Adequacy of health centres and manpower

The NHM, in its Framework for Implementation 2005-12, stipulated the norms for setting up of Sub-Centres, Primary Health Centres (PHCs) and Community Health Centres (CHCs) on the basis of population. It was envisaged therein that one Sub-Centre was to be set up for a population of 5000 (3000 in hilly and tribal areas), one PHC for 30,000 population (20,000 in hilly and tribal areas) and one CHC for 1,20,000 population (80,000 in hilly and tribal areas).

Audit noticed shortfall in setting up of Sub-Centres, PHCs and CHCs as per population norms (2011 census) in the State and selected districts. Under NHM, the CHCs were conceived as health service providers, capable of addressing 80 per cent of all ailments requiring out-patient services or hospitalisation. Considering their importance in delivery of health care services, the NHM attached great significance to strengthening existing CHCs and setting up new ones to bring them in conformity to the ratio of one per population of 1,20,000. The shortfall in setting up of CHCs was acute in Malappuram (54 per cent) and Thrissur (62 per cent), as shown in Table 2.5.

Table 2.5: Shortfall in setting up of Sub-Centres, PHCs and CHCs

State/District	Availability of								
	Sub-Centres			PHCs			CHCs		
	Required as per norms	Actual	Shortfall (per cent)	Required as per norms	Actual	Shortfall (per cent)	Required as per norms	Actual	Shortfall (per cent)
Kerala	9263	5408	3855 (42)	1293	848	445 (34)	366	232	134 (37)
Wayanad	278	204	74 (27)	32	23	9 (28)	9	9	0 (00)
Malappuram	959	589	370 (39)	160	84	76 (48)	48	22	26 (54)
Thrissur	636	472	164 (26)	106	79	27 (25)	63	24	39 (62)
Alappuzha	467	366	101 (22)	78	59	19 (24)	16	16	0 (00)

(Source: Data from DHS and DPMs)

Audit observed that GOK did not set up stipulated number of CHCs and also did not fill up vacancies of doctors and para medical staff to the extent of 48 per cent and 35 per cent, respectively in test-checked institutions. This resulted in patients not receiving envisaged benefits.

The need for filling up the vacancies in the cadre of doctors and para medical staff in CHCs and PHCs, as per IPHS norms, was also emphasised by the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) in its 56th report. Though, in the Action Taken Report, GOK stated (October 2015) that 564 posts were created in PHCs and CHCs, the problem of shortage of doctors and para medical staff in CHCs persisted.

Recommendation 2.2: Government may address the shortfall in health centres also, after the shortfall in availability of doctors, nurses and para medical staff is effectively addressed.

out of 2,31,587 pregnant women (19.72 per cent) who were registered for ANC were not given the stipulated 100 IFA tablets. Besides, 1,931 pregnant women in the test-checked institutions were detected with severe anaemia.

2.8.2 Testing of pregnant women for HIV and STI infections

The RMNCH+A Guidelines issued by GOI (January 2013) identified parent-to-child transmission of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) as a major route of new and emerging HIV infections in children and suggested universal confidential HIV screening of pregnant women to be included as an integral component of routine ANC checkup. Diagnostic and laboratory services for management of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) and Reproductive Tract Infections (RTI) were to be provided at all CHCs, First Referral Units and at 24x7 PHCs. Further, special focus was to be given to linking up with Integrated Counselling and Testing Centres (ICTCs) and establishing appropriate referrals for HIV testing and RTI/STI management.

Audit noticed that out of 24.95 lakh pregnant women who registered for ANC checkups during 2012-13 to 2016-17, 36.88 per cent and 55.86 per cent were not tested for HIV and STI respectively during 2012-17 as shown in Table 2.4.

Table 2.4: Status of conduct of HIV/STI tests in pregnant women

Year	Total pregnant women registered for ANC	No. of pregnant women tested for HIV	No. of pregnant women not tested for HIV	Per cent not tested	No. of positive cases in HIV tested cases	No. of pregnant women tested for STI	No. of pregnant women not tested for STI	Per cent not tested
2012-13	515226	260027	255199	49.53	413	182058	333168	64.66
2013-14	518811	303909	214902	41.42	60	214545	304266	58.65
2014-15	495640	318140	177500	35.81	94	223502	272138	54.91
2015-16	477820	329310	148510	31.08	67	223242	254578	53.28
2016-17	488095	363758	124337	25.47	376	258118	229977	47.12
TOTAL	2495592	1575144	920448		1010	1101465	1394127	
Percentage				36.88				55.86

(Source: HMIS data)

Data obtained from the four test-checked districts revealed that during 2012-17, 1.53 lakh cases of suspected RTI/STI were identified during testing. In addition, 69 instances of pregnant mothers afflicted with HIV were also detected during the period in the test-checked districts. The possibility of more such cases escaping detection due to non-testing of pregnant women could not be ruled out.

GOK stated (November 2017) that the reports received on HIV testing of pregnant women were low since the data captured was mainly the reports from Facility Integrated Counselling and Testing Centres (FICTC). GOK also stated that 60 per cent of the population accessed private hospitals for their medical care and that, only 50 per cent of FICTCs established in CHCs and PHCs were functional. The reply was not justifiable since the data on such pregnant women who were registered for ANC and not screened for HIV/RTI/STI was derived from the HMIS, which was a fully functional health information system and included data from multiple information systems in various health programmes.

more risk of complications during childbirth. The NRHM Framework for Implementation issued by GOI as well as the IPHS stipulated the first antenatal checkup within the first 12 weeks of pregnancy and three checkups thereafter. The Guidelines also prescribed Iron and Folic Acid (IFA) supplementation of 100 milligram of elemental iron and 500 microgram of folic acid daily for 100 days during pregnancy, followed by same dose for 100 days in post-partum period. The position of ANC registration and services provided in the State during 2012-17 are as detailed in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3: ANC registration and services provided

Year	Total pregnant women registered for ANC	Registered within first trimester (12 weeks)	Received three ANC checkups during pregnancy	Not received three ANC checkups	Pregnant women who received TT1	Pregnant women who received TT2	Pregnant women who received 100 IFA tablets
2012-13	515226	396933	461253	53973	438339	415089	441235
2013-14	518811	412737	486203	32608	452769	435913	511134
2014-15	495640	401565	456179	39461	417985	399293	497822
2015-16	477820	385274	434759	43061	411064	388412	404900
2016-17	488095	403137	440375	47720	415964	388420	326231
TOTAL	2495592	1999646	2278769	216823	2136121	2027127	2181322
Percentage		80.13	91.31		85.60	81.23	87.41

(Source: Health Management Information System (HMIS) data)

Thus, during 2012-17, 80 per cent of 24.95 lakh pregnant women registered for ANC within the first trimester of pregnancy. Further, 2.17 lakh (nine per cent) did not receive three ANC checkups during the pregnancy period. There was also shortfall in the percentage of women who received Tetanus Toxoid (TT) shots. Against 85.60 per cent of women who received first dose of TT, 81.23 per cent received the second dose.

Audit observed that Government was not able to keep track of all pregnant women who were registered for ANC and ensure whether all of them received the stipulated quantum of ANC checkups, TT and IFA tablets at timely intervals. Government stated in the Exit Conference (November 2017) that due to ineffective data capturing, the sizeable share of pregnant women moving to private sector went unrecorded which was devoid of follow-up. Audit observed that unless those registered for ANC were tracked and followed up, the very purpose of registration was defeated.

Audit further noticed that over 12 per cent of 24.95 lakh pregnant women who had registered for ANC during 2012-17 did not receive 100 IFA tablets. Anaemia is a major cause of maternal mortality. Treatment against anaemia required⁸ administration of a daily dose of IFA tablets for a period of 100 days to a pregnant woman. In the selected districts of Malappuram, Wayanad, Alappuzha and Thrissur, 44 out of 65 institutions test-checked reported stock out of IFA tablets during various periods in 2012-17. These districts also reported 3,774, 1,215, 363 and 1,104 instances respectively of severe anaemic⁹ cases during 2012-17. In the 65 test-checked institutions, it was seen that 45,678

⁸ Paragraph 4.1 (Supplementation Interventions by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare) of Guidelines for Control of Iron Deficiency Anaemia specified a requirement of 100 mg of elemental iron and 500 mcg of folic acid daily for 100 days for pregnant women.

⁹ Severe anaemic cases – Cases where the haemoglobin level is below seven.

provide special care (all care except assisted ventilation and major surgery) for the sick newborn.

Data obtained from the DHS revealed that there were 107 delivery points in the State (March 2017). Though the DHS stated (October 2017) that NBCC was available at all delivery points, test-check revealed that three²² out of 15 delivery points did not have the facility. There was shortfall in setting up NBSUs also. Across the State, NBSUs were not available in 41 out of 107 delivery points. NBSUs were not available in five²³ out of 15 delivery points test-checked. Two delivery points viz., DH, Wadakkancherry and DH, Mananthavady neither had NBCC nor NBSU facilities. Thus, 10 delivery points out of 15 test-checked, failed to set up stipulated facilities for the newborn.

Audit also noticed in the 10 delivery points which were lacking either in NBCCs/NBSUs or both, shortfall in filling up of sanctioned posts of Paediatricians in four delivery points. While shortfall of one Paediatrician against two sanctioned posts was noticed in THQH, Kodungallur and TH, Kayamkulam, there was shortfall of one Paediatrician against three sanctioned posts in GH, Thrissur. In DH, Mananthavady, shortfall of two Paediatricians against the sanctioned four posts was observed.

As GOK neither set up the required number of NBCCs and NBSUs nor effectively addressed the problem of shortages of Paediatricians, the newborns were denied the envisaged special care. Government agreed in the Exit Conference (November 2017) that the non-availability of NBCC was a very serious issue. Government further stated that NBSUs were provided in 66 institutions and that NBSUs in remaining institutions would be proposed in the next programme implementation plan of NHM.

2.9.2 Low birth weight (LBW) babies

World Health Organisation (WHO) defined Low Birth Weight (LBW) babies as such infants with a birth weight of 2,499 grams or less. It estimated that LBW contributed to 60 to 80 per cent of all neonatal deaths. Audit observed that the percentage of LBW babies increased in 2016-17 compared to 2012-13 for the State as well as selected districts as detailed in Table 2.8.

Table 2.8: Percentage of LBW babies in the State and selected districts

State/District	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Kerala	10.90	11.21	10.83	11.72	12.36
Alappuzha	9.57	9.80	10.81	12.24	12.15
Thrissur	8.01	8.10	8.20	10.38	9.39
Malappuram	11.71	11.82	12.23	10.99	14.31
Wayanad	15.04	14.75	15.41	15.38	16.39

(Source: HMIS data)

The percentage of LBW babies in the test-checked 15 delivery points ranged from 2.60 to 30.61 during 2012-17 as detailed in Appendix 2.5. Operational Guidelines for Facility Based Newborn Care, 2011, stipulated setting up of NBSUs in every FRU and CHC. The expected services to be provided at NBSUs

²² THQH Kodungallur, TH Kayamkulam and THQH Ponnani.

²³ THQH Vythiri, GH Kalpetta, W&C Hospital Alappuzha, GH Thrissur and CHC Mecnangadi.

included management of LBW infants less than 1.8 kg²⁴ with no other complication. Only 10 of the 15 institutions test-checked offered records showing details of children weighing less than 1.8 kg at birth. Audit noticed that almost 7.82 per cent of the underweight children recorded weight of less than 1.8 kg. Audit observed that eight, 38 and 10 per cent of underweight children delivered in DH Mananthavady, W&C Alappuzha and GH Kalpetta respectively during 2012-17 were less than 1.8 kg in birth weight. Even though the percentage of LBW babies was increasing in the State, NBSUs and NBCCs which were required for stabilisation of such babies were not setup in the delivery points.

2.9.3 Child Health Screening and Early Intervention Services under NHM

2.9.3.1 District Early Intervention Centres (DEIC)

Government of India launched (February 2013) the Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK) targeted to deliver Child Health Screening and Early Intervention Services under NHM. The scheme envisaged to cover 30 identified health conditions for early detection, free treatment and management through dedicated mobile health teams placed in every block in the country. The operational guidelines of the scheme envisaged first level of screening²⁵ to be done at all delivery points through existing Medical Officers, Staff Nurses and Auxiliary Nurse Midwives (ANM). After 48 hours till six weeks, the screening of newborns were to be done by ASHA²⁶ at home as a part of Home Based Newborn Care (HBNC) package.

Dedicated Mobile Health Teams (MHT) were to be constituted to conduct outreach screening to children between six weeks and six years at Anganwadi Centres and to children aged between six and 18 years at schools. The scheme envisaged engagement of at least three MHTs in each block to conduct screening of children. Each MHT was to consist of four members viz., two Doctors (AYUSH), one male and one female, one ANM/Staff nurse and one pharmacist. The screening of children in the Anganwadi Centres was to be conducted at least twice a year and at least once a year for school children to begin with.

The RBSK also envisaged setting up of District Early Intervention Centres (DEIC) at the District Hospital level across the country. The DEICs were to be the first referral points for further investigation, treatment and management of children detected with health conditions during health screening. A team consisting of one Paediatrician, one Medical officer, one Dentist, two Staff Nurses, Paramedics and visiting specialists will be engaged to provide services.

Audit observed laxity in implementation of the scheme, as discussed below.

- Even though the State constituted DEICs, which were functional from 2013-14 onwards, it neither constituted dedicated MHTs nor proposed capital cost for setting up the same as required under the guidelines. The

²⁴ Infants with birth weight more than 1.2 kg and less than 1.8 kg have significant problems in neonatal period.

²⁵ Screening of visible defects like cleft lip, clubfoot, etc.

²⁶ Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA).

screening activities to be undertaken by the MHT were being done by Junior Public Health Nurses (JPHN) who were trained and posted for the purpose. The District Programme Managers (DPM) and the State Health Society confirmed that these nurses were being deployed for screening in Anganwadis and schools for which proposals were made and funds allotted. Thus, the action of NHM of deploying JPHNs instead of Doctors was not in order. The probability of JPHN failing to detect children with health condition cannot be ruled out.

Audit observed that the scheme guidelines provided for doctors to be part of the MHT and that a JPHN, however well trained, would still not be able to identify health conditions like Neural Tube defects, Down's Syndrome, Congenital cataract, Congenital deafness, Congenital Heart diseases, Thalassemia, etc. Thus, the screening activities done by JPHN were not in compliance with RBSK guidelines which clearly stipulated that there should be two doctors in each team to screen the children with the help of an ANM/Staff nurse.

- Audit observed that even though DEICs were formed in all the selected districts, they were working without the service of Paediatrician in Wayanad and Malappuram districts. DPMs of both districts replied that interviews were being arranged to fill the post.
- Scrutiny of records maintained at DEICs Alappuzha, Malappuram, Wayanad and Thrissur districts for the year 2016-17 revealed that out of 9,588 children referred to DEICs under the School Health programme, only 1,616 children reached DEICs for further treatment. Thus, almost 83 per cent of the children did not report for further treatment. There was no mechanism at the DEICs to ensure that all cases referred from various periphery level institutions reached DEICs for further investigation and treatment.

Thus, the objective of DEIC to intervene in the early stages of child health could not be achieved in the test-checked districts. Government stated in the Exit Conference (November 2017) that the issue of these children not being followed up was serious and directed NHM and DHS to initiate immediate action to track every child referred to DEIC.

Recommendation 2.3: GOK may direct DEICs to maintain database of children referred to them including follow-up activities to ensure that all cases referred from various periphery level institutions reached DEICs.

2.10 Family planning

2.10.1 Non-availability of Family planning activities

As per IPHS, 2012, all PHCs shall provide Education, Motivation and Counselling to adopt appropriate family planning methods and to provide for contraceptives such as condoms, oral pills, emergency contraceptives and Intra Uterine Contraceptive Device (IUCD) insertions. The standards also envisaged that CHCs would provide full range of family planning services including Information, Education and Communication (IEC), counselling, provision of

Contraceptives, Non-Scalpel Vasectomy (NSV), Laparoscopic Sterilisation Services and their follow-up.

It was observed that all the 32 PHCs test-checked provided all the family planning activities as envisaged in IPHS, except IUCD insertion. Of the test-checked 16 CHCs, only three CHCs²⁷ provided all the stipulated family planning activities. None of the remaining 13 test-checked CHCs provided Tubectomy, Vasectomy and Laparoscopy services. All family planning activities were being provided in all the TH/THQHs except TH Thuravoor²⁸. The details are as shown in Table 2.9.

Table 2.9: Details of institutions providing family planning activities

Family Planning Activities	Alappuzha		Thrissur		Malappuram		Wayanad	
	PHC	CHC	PHC	CHC	PHC	CHC	PHC	CHC
Vasectomy	Not required	1	Not required	Nil	Not required	Nil	Not required	2
Tubectomy	Not required	1	Not required	Nil	Not required	Nil	Not required	2
Laparoscopy	Not required	1	Not required	Nil	Not required	Nil	Not required	2
IUCD insertion	Nil	4	Nil	4	Nil	4	Nil	4
Oral pills/Mini lap sterilisation/Condom distribution	8	4	8	4	8	4	8	4

(Source: Data collected from test-checked institutions)

Government stated (November 2017) that since most of the sterilisation procedures were performed by Gynaecologists or Surgeons, family planning measures were provided through Taluk/District/General/W&C hospitals. The reply was not acceptable in view of the fact that the State was to equip CHCs with full range of family planning activities as per IPHS norm.

2.11 Immunisation

2.11.1 Poor progress in Immunisation

The NHM Immunisation Handbook for Medical Officers recognises a child as fully immunised with all basic vaccinations, if the child has received Bacille Calmette-Guerin (BCG) vaccine against tuberculosis at birth; three doses each of polio and pentavalent (diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, Hepatitis B (Hep) and Haemophilus influenza type B (Hib)) vaccines at 6, 10 and 14 weeks of age; and a vaccination against measles at nine months of age. Timely administration of vaccines has implications for the success of childhood immunisation programmes.

The details of immunisation in the selected districts from 2012-13 to 2016-17 are as shown in Table 2.10.

²⁷ CHCs Meenangadi, Pulpally and Ambalappuzha.

²⁸ Vasectomy and Tubectomy not available.

Table 2.10: Details of immunisation

District	Target	Fully immunised	Fully immunised (in per cent)	Partially immunised	Unimmunised
Wayanad ²⁹	72635	67669	93.16	5839	316
Malappuram	1275326	1148923	90.09	113604	12799
Thrissur	458992	454829	99.09	3908	255
Alappuzha	113745	112212	98.65	1440	93

(Source: Data from DPMs)

The reasons for the slow progress in immunisation in the districts of Malappuram and Wayanad as stated by the DPMs included reckoning of vaccination by some communities as anti-religious, impact of anti-vaccination lobby such as Naturopathy, propaganda against immunisation through social media and fear of immunisation. Audit observed that the failure of GOK to successfully overcome public resistance to vaccination resulted in a setback to the success of childhood immunisation programmes as envisaged under NHM.

Recommendation 2.4: GOK must strengthen dissemination activities to spread awareness of the necessity of immunisation amongst such communities.

2.12 Infrastructure and manpower

As per the Indian Public Health Standards, 2012 (IPHS) certain essential/ desirable services at Sub-Centres/PHCs/CHCs/THs/THQs and DHs are to be provided so as to ensure availability of uniform standards of services and infrastructure to the public. Deficiencies in manpower have been pointed out in paragraph 2.8.3 of this report. Audit also noticed deficiencies in service delivery by Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA), as discussed below.

2.12.1 Functioning of Accredited Social Health Activist

The NHM framework required Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs) to reinforce community action for universal immunisation, safe delivery, newborn care, prevention of water-borne and other communicable diseases, nutrition and sanitation. Each ASHA was to be equipped with a kit to provide the rural population with immediate and easy access to essential health supplies like Oral Rehydration Salts (ORS), contraceptives and a set of 10 basic drugs, besides a health communication kit and other IEC materials.

As per approved norms, one ASHA was to be provided for every 1,000 population at village level and all ASHAs were to undergo series of training sessions to acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and confidence for performing their spelt out roles.

- Audit observed that against the requirement of 32,854 ASHAs in the State, only 25,680 were available resulting in shortage of 7,174 ASHAs. In the test-checked districts, against the target of 9,924 ASHAs, there

²⁹ In respect of Wayanad, the District Medical Officer, Wayanad while confirming the figures stated that achievement exceeded target since children from neighbouring two States and districts availed immunisation service from that district.

was shortage of 1,683 ASHAs. The shortfall against target was highest in Thrissur (24 per cent) while in Wayanad, Malappuram and Alappuzha, it was 20, 17 and 7 per cent respectively.

Table 2.11: Availability of ASHAs and details of training imparted in selected districts

District	No. of ASHA			Training imparted		
	Target	Available	Shortage	Available	Trained	Shortage
Wayanad	835	669	166	669	666	3
Malappuram	3900	3228	672	3228	2478	750
Thrissur	2889	2209	680	2209	1800	409
Alappuzha	2300	2135	165	2135	2035	100

(Source: Data from State Health Society)

NHM replied (September 2017) that revamping of the programme was going on with ward based redistribution of ASHAs and that new ASHAs would be nominated once the process was completed. The reply was not acceptable as the department was well aware of the shortage of ASHAs and as such, the process to nominate new ASHAs could have been initiated well in advance, to avoid further delay.

- Audit observed that the project for supply of ASHA kits was implemented by NHM in 2008-09 and in 2013-14 only. ASHA kits comprising of essential drugs and consumables, meant to be distributed free of cost to the beneficiaries in the field were not replenished from time to time. In the 32 test-checked Sub-Centres in four districts, no ASHA kits were replenished since 2013-14.

On enquiry it was stated (September 2017) by SHS that approval from GOI was not received to replenish ASHA kits since 2013 and that GOI directed in the Record of Proceedings (ROP) of 2016-17 to replenish them from existing health facilities.

2.12.2 Deficiencies in infrastructure in health centres

2.12.2.1 Non-conducting of baseline survey

As per paragraph 81 of the NHM Framework, in order to enable the District Health Mission to take up the exercise of comprehensive district planning, a household and facility survey of Sub-Centre/PHC/CHC/Sub-Divisional/DHs was to be conducted, which would act as the baseline for the Mission. This exercise was to be taken up at regular intervals to assess the progress under the Mission. Mention was also made in the C&AG's Audit Report, 2009 that though facility survey was conducted in all CHCs during September to December 2006, no such survey was conducted in any of the PHCs and Sub-Centres in the State.

NHM confirmed (October 2017) that it did not conduct any baseline survey after 2006. Audit observed that in the absence of baseline survey, NHM neither possessed inputs to monitor the progress in imparting health care nor placed itself in a position to access details of improvement, which came about due to the investments made under the scheme.

2.12.2.2 Status of Civil works

The physical status as on 31 March 2017, of 212 works relating to construction of health institutions, training centres and staff quarters sanctioned during 2012-15 is given in Table 2.12.

Table 2.12: Status of Civil Works

Year	No. of works sanctioned	No. of works completed	No. of works in progress	No. of works not started due to non-availability of land	No. of works not started due to other reasons
2012	84	83	Nil	Nil	1
2013	117	106	Nil	7	4
2014	4	Nil	3	Nil	1
2015	7	4	1	Nil	2
Total	212	193	4	7	8

(Source: Data from SHS)

Audit observed that 15 works could not be taken up for construction, out of which, seven works could not be taken up due to non-availability of land and eight due to other reasons.

Shortfall in setting up of Sub-Centres, PHCs and CHCs have been mentioned in paragraph 2.8.3 of this report. Many of the test-checked institutions lacked in essential facilities like electricity, drinking water facility, toilet, road accessibility, equipment like Cardiogram, X-Ray, Lab service, etc. (Appendix 2.6).

Details of buildings idling after completion/incomplete works are indicated below.

- **Training Centre in the premises of TB Hospital, Manjeri**

Even after the lapse of 48 months since handing over of the building (August 2013) to NHM, the building was idling due to lack of manpower and infrastructure. Training activities were being conducted in rented buildings and an amount of ₹1.86 lakh was incurred towards rent from 2013-14 to 2016-17 alone. Proposal submitted by District Medical Officer, Malappuram in April 2017 was for an additional post of a watchman, with no requisition for administrative staff. The proposal was not approved by GOK (September 2017).

- **Maternity Block at CHC, Edappal**

The Maternity Block building was idling for more than two years for want of sufficient equipment and furniture and posting of electrical and cleaning staff. GOK stated (November 2017) that proposal for supply of equipment would be included in the supplementary PIP for 2017-18.

- **Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Block in CHC Fort, Thiruvananthapuram**

The building could not be put to use due to objection raised (June 2016) by the Chief Town Planner, Thiruvananthapuram that the elevation of the building was not as per the norms prescribed under heritage zone. Besides, the building plan was not approved before commencement of work.

- **W&C Block at District Hospital, Tirur**

Deviation on civil works necessitated due to site condition. Lack of proper planning as per CPWD specifications and preparation of project estimate without studying the site condition resulted in the increase of project cost by more than 20 per cent. The work, which was scheduled for completion by November 2016 with a project cost of ₹ five crore, could not be completed till September 2017.

- **Construction of MCH Block at THQ Hospital Chengannur**

As the progress of work was very slow, the consultant terminated the contract on 27 May 2015 after forfeiting the Performance Guarantee of ₹40.42 lakh. Work was re-tendered and the lowest amount quoted by another contractor for an amount of ₹1,030.52 lakh was accepted by the Technical Committee in January 2016 with a time of completion of one year. The additional liability consequent on revision of estimate due to termination of work by the first contractor was avoidable, had the agreement included a conditional risk and cost clause to make good any loss, in case of termination of work.

- **Construction of Staff Quarters at DH Mananthavady**

During the course of execution of work, the Kerala Police raised objection stating that a part of the land belonged to their department. The dispute was yet to be resolved (September 2017). Failure of SHM in proper planning and ensuring hindrance free land led to inability to complete the staff quarters and infructuous payment of ₹36.89 lakh to the consultant.

2.12.3 Shortage in blood bank/blood storage

As per IPHS and report on Standardisation of Medical Institutions in Kerala, blood storage is an essential requirement in CHCs/TH/THQHs and blood banks, in District hospitals. Audit noticed 11 out of 33 medical institutions (CHC/TH/DH/GH/W&C) functioning without blood storage/blood bank, available blood storage facilities remaining non-functional due to failure to obtain licence, blood banks functioning without licence from the Drugs Controller and Licensing Authority and institutions offering blood storage facilities instead of the stipulated full-fledged blood bank (Appendix 2.7).

GOK stated (November 2017) that blood storage units were made available at THQHs Kodungallur and Vythiri. Audit was also informed that action was initiated in four hospitals³⁰ to obtain licence. In two hospitals³¹ it was stated that Blood storage units were functioning in place of Blood banks. In respect of GH, Alappuzha, it was stated that the nearby MCH had the facility of blood bank. The reply was not acceptable as IPHS stipulate that hospitals falling under the category DH and above, should invariably be equipped with blood banks. In respect of other two hospitals³² it was stated that they did not have delivery facility and hence blood storage units were not provided. The reply was not

³⁰ THQHs Tirurangadi and Sulthan Bathery, W&C Alappuzha and CHC Meehanangadi.

³¹ GH Kalpetta and DH Mavelikkara.

³² THs Pudukkad and Thuravoor.

acceptable as the provision of blood storage was not based solely on the availability of delivery facilities in the institution.

2.12.4 Ambulance service

As per IPHS guidelines, referral transport facility was to be made available at each PHC. However, ambulances were available only in 54 out of 848 PHCs and 58 out of 232 CHCs across the State. Thus, 94 per cent of PHCs and 75 per cent of CHCs did not possess ambulances. Status of availability of ambulances in the four test-checked districts to transport patients to referral centres is presented in Table 2.13.

Table 2.13: Availability of ambulances

Name of the district	Total number of PHCs	Number of PHCs provided with ambulances	Total number of CHCs	Number of CHCs provided with ambulances
Alappuzha	59	1	16	2
Malappuram	84	0	22	1
Wayanad	23	3	9	5
Thrissur	79	3	24	5

(Source: Data from DHS)

Government replied (November 2017) that 50 ambulances were procured for functioning as '108 Ambulances'. The reply was not acceptable as '108 Ambulances' were utilised for management of emergencies of serious concern like road accidents, health related problems, etc., and not to cater to the needs of PHCs/CHCs.

2.12.5 Idling of equipment

Audit observed that in 19 institutions in the test-checked districts, equipment worth ₹0.98 crore were idling for various reasons such as non-availability of infrastructure/space/manpower, non-requirement of equipment, etc., as shown in Appendix 2.8.

Government stated (November 2017) that action will be taken to utilise the equipment.

2.12.6 Non-availability of laboratory services

As per IPHS, the status (March 2017) of availability of laboratories in the test-checked health institutions and the services rendered by them are shown in Table 2.14.

Table 2.14: Availability of Laboratories

Health institution	Test-checked number of institutions	Non-availability of laboratory	Required number of laboratory tests	Non-availability of tests
PHC	32	17	11	2-9
CHC	16	Nil	36	9-27
TH/THQH	8	Nil	51	11-34
DH	4	Nil	97	51-66

(Source: Data collected from test-checked institutions)

Audit observed severe shortfall in laboratory services provided by TH/THQHs/CHCs/DHs in the test-checked four districts (Appendix 2.9).

The institutions cited inadequate infrastructure and shortage in space, manpower, reagents, etc., as reasons for the non-availability of laboratory and laboratory services. The reply was not acceptable as laboratory services were essential in the process of diagnosis and hence, adequate proposals were to be projected in the Programme Implementation Plans to overcome shortage of space, infrastructure and equipment.

2.12.7 Safety measures in X-ray centres

Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) guidelines (August 2004) on licensing of X-ray units provided for issuing licence for operating radiation installations after inspecting the working practices being followed, to ensure adherence to prescribed safety standards, availability of appropriate radiation monitors and dosimetry devices for purposes of radiation surveillance, etc. In Kerala, the Director of Radiation Safety (DRS) is the authorised agency to issue licences on behalf of AERB.

Audit noticed that 15 out of 32 hospitals test-checked offered X-ray services. However, in 10³³ out of 15 hospitals, X-ray machines were operated without obtaining Certificate of Safety from DRS and 10 equipment in seven³⁴ hospitals were being utilised without conducting the quality tests as shown in Appendix 2.10.

Audit noticed that the technicians manning the X-ray units in five³⁵ hospitals were not provided with Thermoluminescent Dosimeter (TLD) badges to indicate levels of exposure to radiation. In the absence of TLD badges and safety certification from the DRS, Audit could not obtain reasonable assurance that patients and technicians were not being exposed to more than permissible radiation levels.

DPMs, Thrissur, Malappuram and Wayanad replied (August 2017) that action was being taken to obtain AERB licences and necessary arrangements were made for conducting quality assurance test. District Medical Officer (DMO), Thrissur replied (August 2017) that necessary directions for obtaining AERB registration were forwarded to peripheral institutions.

NHM stated (September 2017) that AERB registration and purchase of TLD badges was to be done by the hospital authorities concerned and quality assurance tests of radiological equipment were being conducted by NHM as per request of hospitals. Unrestrained exposure of patients and technicians to more than permissible levels of radiation would pose serious health risks. GOK stated that NHM was preparing a proposal in supplementary PIP 2017-18 for obtaining funds for taking AERB licence for all radiological equipment at all the Government hospitals.

³³ GH Kaspatta, DH Mavelikkara, DH Wadakkancherry, DH Tirur, DH Mananthavady, THQH Kayamkulam, THQH Ponnani, THQH Tirurangadi, THQH Sulthan Bathery and CHC Muthukulam.

³⁴ DH Mavelikkara, DH Wadakkancherry, THQH Kayamkulam, THQH Kodungallur, THQH Tirurangadi, THQH Sulthan Bathery and CHC Muthukulam.

³⁵ DH Mavelikkara, THQH Kayamkulam, THQH Kodungallur, CHC Muthukulam and THQH Tirurangadi.

2.12.8 Compliance to Quality Assurance Guidelines

The Public Health Operational Guidelines for Quality Assurance, 2013 (Quality Assurance guidelines) envisaged that the health facilities were not only to provide full range of services which are committed in the National Health Programmes but also to ensure that the services meet verifiable and objective quality standards. The Quality Assurance guidelines recommended to create State Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC), District Quality Assurance Committee (DQAC), District Quality Assurance Teams (DQAT) at District Hospitals and Facility Level Quality teams for strengthening quality assurance activities at various levels.

Audit noticed that though SQAC and DQACs were formed, DQAT and Facility Level Quality teams were not constituted in all institutions. In the test-checked eight General/District Hospitals and eight Taluk Hospitals, QAT was not formed in three General/District Hospitals and four Taluk Hospitals. Further, Facility Level QATs were not formed in 11 CHCs and 24 PHCs. In the absence of such QATs, internal assessment of quality activities, preparation of key performance indicators, patient satisfaction surveys, identification of gaps and improvement, follow-up actions etc., were not being done.

2.13 Financial Management

2.13.1 Short release of funds to High Priority Districts

To ensure equitable health care and to bring about sharper improvements in health outcomes, the bottom 25 *per cent* of the districts in every State, on the basis of outcome indicators covering the three areas of Maternal health, Child health and family planning were identified as High Priority Districts (HPD). GOI identified (July 2013) three districts viz., Kasaragod, Malappuram and Palakkad as HPDs in the State. It was also conveyed to the States that HPDs must, within the overall State Resource Envelope³⁶ under NHM, receive at least 30 *per cent* more budget per capita as compared to the other districts. It was emphasised that diversion of this envelope to other districts would not be permitted.

Audit analysed the average annual assistance received by 11 non-HPDs during 2013-17. Audit noticed that there was short release of ₹86.40 crore to the three HPDs during 2013-17 as detailed in Table 2.15.

³⁶ Financial resources that are expected to be made available under various components.

Table 2.15: Shortage of funds allotted to High Priority Districts

(₹ in crore)

Year	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	Total
Total allotment to 11 non-high priority districts	181.59	181.53	305.50	209.59	
Average of 11 such districts	16.51	16.50	27.77	19.05	
Amount due adding 30 per cent of average to each HPD	21.46	21.45	36.10	24.77	
Amount allotted to Kasaragod	16.39	12.22	12.19	10.72	
Amount allotted to Malappuram	24.44	20.98	21.99	25.77	
Amount allotted to Palakkad	20.06	19.92	18.34	21.92	
Shortage of funds to Kasaragod	5.07	9.23	23.91	14.05	52.26
Shortage of funds to Malappuram	-2.98	0.47	14.11	-1.00	10.60
Shortage of funds to Palakkad	1.40	1.53	17.76	2.85	23.54
Total short release of funds					86.40

(Source: State Health Society data)

NHM stated (October 2017) that the activities approved in the ROP were those based on proposals forwarded by the districts and that the districts implemented the approved proposals. It was stated that since the demand from the districts were usually provided, the question of additional funds over and above their usual necessity did not arise. The reply was not correct since GOI during the years 2012-17 accorded approval to only 67 per cent of the PIPs forwarded by GOK. Thus, against the PIP of ₹4014.75 crore³⁷, approval was accorded by GOI for only ₹2673.07 crore. It was, therefore, clear that the districts did not obtain the amount sought for in their plan proposals. It was also mandatory for the GOK to comply with the GOI instructions and to allot additional resources to the three HPDs.

2.13.2 Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY)

Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY) is a safe motherhood intervention under the NHM being implemented (since 2005) with the objective of reducing maternal and neo-natal mortality by promoting institutional delivery among the pregnant women below poverty line. This scheme integrated cash assistance with delivery and post-delivery care. As per guidelines, the cash assistance of ₹700 under JSY was admissible only to mothers belonging to BPL families who hailed from rural areas and ₹600 to those from urban areas in Kerala, being a High Performing State. JSY guidelines required all payments including compensation amount for sterilisation wherever applicable, to be made in one instalment at the time of discharge from the hospital/health centre. The Auxiliary Nurse Midwives (ANM) and ASHA workers were to ensure disbursement of JSY cash assistance in time. The Guidelines recognised the district level Nodal Officer as the officer responsible for proper implementation of the JSY scheme.

- Audit observed that during 2012-17, 11.44 lakh beneficiaries across the State (47 per cent) and 33,782 (33 per cent) out of 1.01 lakh beneficiaries in the 15 selected institutions of the four selected districts were not paid the stipulated cash assistance as shown in Table 2.16.

³⁷ Including Supplementary proposal of ₹546.94 crore.

Table 2.16: Details of payment of cash assistance

Year	State			Selected institutions		
	Total number of institutional deliveries	Number of beneficiaries to whom cash assistance not paid	Percentage of non-disbursement	Total number of institutional deliveries	Number of beneficiaries to whom cash assistance not paid	Percentage of non-disbursement
2012-13	494504	236541	47.83	20501	11111	53.93
2013-14	496257	229922	46.33	23445	8572	36.56
2014-15	493636	231071	46.81	21959	4106	18.70
2015-16	480656	245295	51.03	18973	4696	24.75
2016-17	446123	201654	45.20	15937	5297	33.24
TOTAL	2411176	1144483	47.46	100915	33782	33.47

(Source: Data from State Health Society)

The reasons stated for non-disbursement of JSY assistance were patients not collecting money on discharge and non-furnishing of proper documents like JSY card, copy of bank pass book, ID proof, copy of discharge summary, etc. The reply was not acceptable since incentives were being paid to ASHA for assisting the beneficiaries. As such, availability of documents should have been ensured through ASHA.

- Government of India instructed (May 2013) that in Low Performing States (LPS), the financial assistance under JSY was to be made available to all women regardless of age and number of children, for delivery in Government/private accredited health facilities. Even though Kerala fell under the category of High Performing States where the facility could be extended only to BPL/SC/ST women, the State Mission Director (NHM) Kerala wrongly extended the facility (September 2013) to all women irrespective of age and number of children. Audit observed in the test-checked districts that the institutions were not maintaining separate records for APL and BPL women and JSY assistance was paid irrespective of the income factor.

Government (November 2017) replied that on the basis of the observation in C&AG's All India Review Report, 2016 on NHM regarding ratification of grant of JSY assistance to all women irrespective of being BPL/SC/ST, directions were issued (May 2017) by GOK to continue with the payment of JSY assistance to all women who deliver in Government hospitals except those availing payward facilities. The reply was not acceptable as the C&AG's report brought to light the irregularity in deviating from the guidelines of JSY, a 100 per cent Centrally Sponsored Scheme, without ratification from the State and Central Government. Government admitted the facts in the Exit Conference (November 2017). Thus, laxity of ASHA workers resulted in failure to ensure that eligible beneficiaries obtained stipulated financial assistance. Orders of GOI were also violated, resulting in JSY cash assistance meant for BPL/SC/ST being wrongly extended to APL women as well.

2.13.3 Non-maintenance of records at PHC, Chethalayam

The Operational Guidelines for Financial Management of the National Health Mission (NHM) stipulated³⁸ that records like Cash book, Cheque Issue Register, Allotment/fund register, Bank Pass book, reconciliation statement vouchers, etc., should be maintained. The cash book should be updated on daily basis in case of PHC/CHC etc., and authenticated by the drawing/disbursing officer or any responsible officer authorised for the purpose. It was also stipulated that cash transactions should be made only for petty expenses.

All receipts, payments/disbursements should be entered in the cash book on the day of the payment itself. Cheque Issue Register should be maintained properly in respect of issue of every cheque. Audit noticed violation of these guidelines in PHC Chethalayam situated in Wayanad district.

Audit observed that the PHC maintained two accounts in State Bank of India, Sulthan Bathery branch to effect transactions of NHM. While one account was in the joint name of the Medical officer and the Block Panchayat President for transactions like Untied fund, Maintenance grant, Ward Health Sanitation Fund, etc., the second account was maintained in the name of Medical officer for all other schemes of NHM.

An amount of ₹19.59 lakh was transferred by the District Project Manager (DPM) to the PHC for the period from 01 April 2012 to 29 November 2014. However, Cash Book was available in the PHC only from 30 November 2014 with an opening balance of ₹37,685. Other essential registers like Fund register, Cheque Issue register, Statements of Expenditure, supporting vouchers, etc., were also not maintained by the PHC. Audit noticed that contrary to guidelines, the Medical Officer of PHC issued Cash cheques³⁹ for large amounts. All these cheques were drawn on the account, operated by the Medical Officer solely in his name.

As the Cash book and connected records were not maintained and since the Medical Officer drew sizeable amounts by way of cash cheques, the possibility of misappropriation of Government funds could not be ruled out.

NHM stated (October 2017) that consequent to audit findings, the PHC was directed (September 2017) to prepare the books of accounts and produce the supporting documents. As these directions were not complied with, the matter was reported by the NHM to the DMO and the District Collector who was the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the District Health and Welfare Society. GOK stated (November 2017) that DHS was directed to take necessary action in this regard.

2.13.4 Advances pending settlement

As per Chapter 6.9.1 of Operational guidelines for Financial Management, all advances should be settled within a maximum period of 90 days. Audit observed that contrary to the above guidelines, ₹83.74 lakh released during the period from 2010-11 to 2016-17 to various organisations/individuals involving nine

³⁸ Chapter 6 (Internal Controls) of the Operational Guidelines for Financial Management of the National Health Mission (NHM).

³⁹ Cash cheque No. 578486 dated 04.10.13 for ₹87,040, Cash cheque No. 350698 dated 03.03.2015 for ₹29,100 and Cash cheque No. 350699 dated 10.03.2015 for ₹25,000.

cases were still pending settlement. The advances were pending since 2010. Details of advances pending settlement are shown in Appendix 2.11. The SHM needs to take action to adjust these advances without further delays and fix responsibility for lack of action in this regard.

2.14 Non-compliance to mandatory disclosures

The yearly approval to the State's PIP, accorded by GOI contained certain conditionalities to be adhered to by the States and which were to be treated as non-negotiable. Audit observed that the State NHM did not make disclosures of four of the nine mandatory stipulations required by GOI (07 October 2017) in its website www.arogyakeralam.gov.in as shown in Table 2.17.

Table 2.17: Mandatory Disclosures

Sl. No.	Mandatory requirement as per ROP	Status as on 07 October 2017
1.	Facility wise service delivery data particularly on Outpatient Department (OPD), Inpatient Department (IPD), Institutional delivery, C-section, Major and minor surgeries etc., on Health Management Information System (HMIS).	While the OPD data upto November 2015 only, was available on the website the HMIS data was protected by user name and password. Thus, the information was not generally available.
2.	Patient transport ambulance and emergency response ambulances - total number of vehicles, types of vehicle, registration number of vehicles, service delivery data including clients served and kilometre logged on a monthly basis.	A copy of the list of vehicles with registration number and category was available. However, the data does not contain service delivery data including clients served and kilometre logged on monthly basis.
3.	All procurements including details of equipment in specified format.	The website exhibited the details of availability of equipment only without giving the procurement details.
4.	Supportive supervision plan and reports shall be part of mandatory disclosures. Block wise supervisory plan and reports should be uploaded on the website.	Available for only 12 institutions.

(Source: Website of NHM)

The NHM stated (October 2017) that the data till 2016 was uploaded and that they were in the process of updating the data and making it live in the portal. Audit examined the webpage on 17 October 2017 and observed that data with respect to Sl. No. 1 only was updated upto November 2016, while the other requirements were yet to be complied with by NHM. Government stated (November 2017) that facility-wise service delivery data on OPD, IPD, Institutional delivery, C-section, major/minor surgeries etc., was updated upto March 2017 and that the remaining data would be updated shortly.

2.15 Conclusion

The performance audit brought out deficiencies in providing Ante Natal Care, failure to test all pregnant women for HIV, inadequate health centres, delivery facilities not available at all institutions and inadequacies in infrastructure. There was also shortage of manpower and a rising trend in Caesarean sections in the State, which was a matter of concern. Deficiencies in delivery services under the Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram and Janani Suraksha Yojana were also noticed. Facilities for newborns were not available in many test-checked institutions. Deficiencies in Child Health Screening and Early Intervention

Services were also observed. The State did not release stipulated additional financial assistance of ₹86.40 crore to identified High Priority Districts of Kasaragod, Malappuram and Palakkad during 2013-17. Despite these identified deficiencies, the performance of the State was impressive in terms of exceeding the targets set under the UN Sustainable Development Goals of reduction in Infant Mortality Rate and Maternal Mortality Rate.

Appendix 2.1

Shortage of drugs in post-partum units

(Reference: Paragraph 2.8.6; Page: 23)

Sl. No.	Name of drug/ vaccine	Purpose	Period of stock-out in the test-checked institutions during the period 04/2012 to 05/2017
1.	Iron folic Acid	Essential during ANC, INC and PNC (upto six weeks).	Intermittent shortage ranging from six to 70 months in 44 institutions
2.	IFA small	Required to be administered to children between the age group three to 12	From 2014, ranging from 17 to 74 months in 45 institutions
3.	Vitamin A	Required to be administered to the children between the age of nine months to five years	Intermittent shortage ranging from four to 15 months in five institutions
4.	Oral Rehydration Solution (ORS)	Essential during Diarrhoea infection	Intermittent shortage ranging from two to 21 months in four institutions
5.	Nishchay	Used for pregnancy test which is essential in the ASHA kits for Sub-Centres to be distributed among beneficiaries in the field	From November 2016 ranging from one to 22 months in 21 institutions
6.	Contraceptive pills/condom	Essential for family planning	Intermittent shortage ranging from nine to 60 months in eight institutions
7.	EC Pills	Essential for family planning	Intermittent shortage ranging from nine to 60 months in 11 institutions

Appendix 2.2

Caesarean Sections performed in test-checked delivery points

(Reference: Paragraph 2.8.7; Page: 24)

Sl. No.	Name of institution	2012-13			2013-14			2014-15			2015-16			2016-17		
		Total Delivery	LSCS	Percentage of LSCS	Total Delivery	LSCS	Percentage of LSCS	Total Delivery	LSCS	Percentage of LSCS	Total Delivery	LSCS	Percentage of LSCS	Total Delivery	LSCS	Percentage of LSCS
1.	GH Kaipetta	833	152	18.25	619	102	16.48	774	154	19.90	808	144	17.82	429	86	20.05
2.	GH Manjeri	3935	754	19.16	4553	879	19.31	4138	750	18.12	3763	692	18.39	3969	859	21.64
3.	GH Thrissur	1271	435	34.23	2435	724	29.73	2980	979	32.85	2804	704	25.11	2478	890	35.92
4.	W&C Alappuzha	3168	1536	48.48	2694	1373	50.97	2129	1148	53.92	1798	963	53.56	1251	602	48.12
5.	DH Mananthavady	2766	649	23.46	2544	471	18.51	1966	394	20.04	1757	426	24.25	1489	371	24.92
6.	DH Tirur	1796	836	46.55	2869	1212	42.24	2324	972	41.82	777	261	33.59	458	152	33.19
7.	DH Wadakkancherry	362	119	32.87	427	164	38.41	518	195	37.64	679	241	35.49	570	187	32.81
8.	DH Mavelikkam	492	328	66.67	679	388	57.14	498	200	40.16	341	190	55.72	137	104	75.91
9.	THQH Vythiri	454	104	22.91	801	157	19.60	672	142	21.13	204	44	21.57	2	1	50.00
10.	THQH Sulthan Bathery	1309	360	27.50	1145	266	23.23	808	217	26.86	1296	292	22.53	1074	221	20.58
11.	THQH Tirurangadi	574	150	26.13	461	110	23.86	363	54	14.88	351	53	15.10	284	62	21.83
12.	THQH Ponnani	1925	562	29.19	1373	484	35.25	1594	671	42.10	1780	755	42.42	1824	703	38.54
13.	THQH Kodungallur	908	467	51.43	1138	532	46.75	1221	615	50.37	1188	573	48.23	806	395	49.01
14.	THQH Kayamkulam	75	36	48.00	514	264	51.36	590	323	54.75	470	293	62.34	317	181	57.10
15.	CHC Meenangadi	733	202	27.56	1193	348	29.17	1384	449	32.44	1000	379	37.90	854	317	37.12

* LSCS - Lower Segment Caesarean Section

Appendix 2.3

Provision for free diet

(Reference: Paragraph 2.8.8.1; Page: 25)

Sl. No.	Name of the hospital	Audit observation
1.	DH Mananthavady	General diet of Raw egg and milk was provided
2.	GH Kalpetta	Only breakfast was provided to the mothers
3.	THQH Sulthan Bathery	Early discharge/three times diet
4.	THQH Vythiri	No Diet
5.	DH Tirur	Early Discharge/Diet provided for only three to four days
6.	TH Ponnani	Early discharge/Diet provided for only three to four days
7.	THQH Tirurangadi	Early Discharge/Diet provided for four to six days
8.	THQH Kayamkulam	No Diet
9.	DH Mavelikkara	Only breakfast and dinner were served to the mothers and there was no food on Sundays

Appendix 2.4

Free drugs and consumables

(Reference: Paragraph 2.8.8.1; Page: 26)

Sl. No.	Name of the hospital	Items on which expenditure incurred	Audit observation
1.	DH Wadakkancherry	Medicines, Lab investigation Blood, etc.	Shortage of drugs and consumables necessitated patients to purchase drugs and consumables from outside agencies. The hospital had a blood storage unit but instance of patients buying blood from outside noticed.
2.	THQH Sulthan Bathery	Caesarean, medicine, etc.	Patient survey report maintained by the hospital revealed instances of expenses incurred by them.
3.	THQH Vythiri	Blood	An ST patient requesting financial assistance to the Superintendent for procuring blood from THQH Sulthan Bathery for Caesarean. Instance of incurring expenditure to purchase medicine and to conduct test was noticed.

Appendix 2.5

Low Birth Weight babies

(Reference: Paragraph 2.9.2; Page: 27)

Sl. No.	Institution	Total cases of delivery during 2012-17	No. of babies with birth weight upto 1.8 kg	No. of babies with birth weight between 1.8 kg and less than 2.5 kg	Total no. of LBW babies	Percentage of LBW babies with birthweight upto 1.8 kg	Percentage of LBW babies out of total deliveries
1	2	3	4	5	6 = 4+5	7 = (4/6)*100	8
1.	GH Kaipetta	3463	68	635	703	9.57	20.30
2.	GH Manjeri	20358	-	2215	2215	-	10.88
3.	GH Thrissur	11968	-	311	311	-	2.60
4.	W&C Alappuzha	11040	166	271	437	37.99	3.96
5.	DH Mananthavady	10522	257	2964	3221	7.98	30.61
6.	DH Tirur	8224	58	447	505	11.49	6.14
7.	DH Wadakkancherry	2556	10	280	290	3.45	11.35
8.	DH Mavelikkara	2147	-	142	142	-	6.61
9.	TH Vythiri	2133	22	332	354	6.21	16.60
10.	TH Sulthan Bathery	5632	255	1284	1539	16.57	27.33
11.	TH Tirurangadi	2033	2	187	189	1.06	9.30
12.	TH Ponnani	8496	-	524	524	-	6.17
13.	TH Kodungallur	5261	-	500	500	-	9.50
14.	TH Kayamkulam	1966	19	253	272	6.99	13.84
15.	CHC Meeenangadi	5164	107	1018	1125	9.51	21.79
TOTAL		100963	964	11363	12327	7.82	12.21

Appendix 2.6

Shortage of essential facilities in test-checked institutions

(Reference: Paragraph 2.12.2.2: Page: 33)

Shortage of essential facilities in test-checked CHCs

Infrastructure facility		Test-checked CHCs	ECG	X ray	Generator	USS	IUD kit	Ambulance	Blood storage
No. of CHCs which do not have the facility	Alappuzha	4	3	3	3	4	1	4	4
	Thrissur	4	3	4	3	4	0	3	4
	Malappuram	4	2	4	0	4	1	3	4
	Wayanad	4	4	3	1	4	0	2	4
Total		16	12	14	7	16	2	12	16

Shortage of essential facilities in test-checked PHCs

Infrastructure facility		Test-checked PHCs	Own building	IP facility	Lab services	Generator	Separate toilet for M/F	IUD kit	Management of RTI/STI
No. of PHCs which do not have the facility	Alappuzha	8	0	8	6	8	6	0	3
	Thrissur	8	0	8	5	7	2	1	1
	Malappuram	8	0	8	4	4	3	2	3
	Wayanad	8	1	7	4	7	5	1	2
Total		32	1	31 ¹⁸⁰	19	26	16	4	9 ¹⁸¹

Sub-Centre data for the selected districts

Infrastructure facility		Total no. of Sub-Centres	Quarters for ANM	Electricity	Drinking water	Road access	Toilet	Telephone	Computer and internet
No. of Sub-Centres which do not have the facility	Alappuzha	366	321	48	220	18	126	366	366
	Thrissur	472	253	23	0	0	0	NA ¹⁸²	472
	Malappuram	589	95	18	109	17	44	622	NA ¹⁸²
	Wayanad	204	12	12	47	0	4	140	194
Total		1631	681	101	376	35	174	1128	1032

¹⁸⁰ Three PHCs viz., Pothukkal and Thirunavaya in Malappuram and Natika in Thrissur have the facility but do not provide IP service.¹⁸¹ PHC Pothukkal in Malappuram provide partial services only.¹⁸² Data not available.

Appendix 2.7

Shortage in blood bank

(Reference: Paragraph 2.12.3; Page: 34)

Sl. No.	Name of the institution	Requirement	Whether available and functioning	Remarks
1.	GH Kalpetta	Blood Bank	No	Blood storage unit was available
2.	GH Alappuzha	Blood Bank	No	
3.	W&C Alappuzha	Blood Bank	Yes	Functioning without licence
4.	DH Mavelikkara	Blood Bank	No	Delay in construction due to which equipment idling
5.	THQH Tirurangadi	Blood Storage	Yes, not functioning	No licence
6.	THQH Vythiri	Blood Storage	Yes, not functioning	Equipment were out of order and insufficient space
7.	THQH Sultan Bathery	Blood Storage	Yes	Functioning without licence
8.	CHC Meenangadi	Blood Storage	Yes, not functioning	No certificate of approval
9.	THQH Pudukkad	Blood Storage	No	
10.	THQH Kodungallur	Blood Storage	No	Not started; Equipment were idling due to absence of technician
11.	THQH Thuravoor	Blood Storage	No	

Appendix 2.8

Idling of equipment

(Reference: Paragraph 2.12.5; Page: 35)

District	Institution	Name of equipment	Numbers	Cost of equipment (in ₹)	Date from which idling	Remarks
Thrissur	GH Thrissur	Automatic film processor	Details not available	Details not available	01.04.2016	A/c not available
	THQH Kunnankulam	Centrifuge	Details not available	15540.00	21.04.2017	Site not ready
		Vertical Autoclave	Details not available	108150.00	10.07.2017	Site not ready
Malappuram	TH Arcacode	Neonatal Resuscitation unit	Details not available	125080.00	02.2016	No Delivery
		Electro Hydraulic OT Table	Details not available	895000.00	02.2016	No operation theatre
	GH Manjeri	Incubator	Details not available	47500.00	Details available	SNCU was not in paediatric ward
		Generator	Details not available	Details available	Details not available	Have another one
Wayanad	GH Kalpetta	X Ray Machine	Details not available	1597138.00	18.03.2016	High tension supply not available
		Deep Freezer (2 nos.)	Details not available	450000.00	02.04.2015	
		Plasma Thawing Bath	Details not available	100000.00	18.06.2015	Space for Blood component separation unit not available in the present building
	THQH Sukhan Balhery	Laminar Air Flow cabinet	Details not available	65374.00	07.07.2017	
		Platelet Agitator	Details not available	173949.49	07.07.2017	
		Cryo Centrifuge	Details not available	2900000.00	07.05.2015	
		Blood collection Monitor	3	271018.00		
		Blood donor couch	3	421024.00		
	DH Mavelikkara	VDRL Rotator	1	12781.00	10.2013	Infrastructure not ready
		Hot Air Oven	1	19223.00		
Alappuzha		Incubator	1	30819.00		
		Water Bath	1	141805.00		
		Semi Auto Analyser	1	67998.00		
		Colorimeter	1	9823.30		
		Centrifuge	1	5722.50		
	PHC Pathiyoor	Binocular Microscope	1	28825.40	08.2015	No lab technician
		Hot Air Oven	1	17685.50		
		Water Bath	1	8307.60		
		Needle Destroyer	1	5250.00		
		Micropipette	1	24496.50		
	CHC Muhamma	Generator	1	29500.00	06.03.2017	

Equipment idling for want of repair

Institutions	Equipment	Amount (in ₹)	Date from which idling
GENERAL HOSPITAL			
	Vacuum cleaner	4978	01.04.2017
	Nebulizing Machine	2507	01.02.2017
GH Manjeri	Dental Lathe	8000	01.02.2017
	Dental Chair	100000	10.04.2014
	Gas stove	3000	18.01.2016

Institutions	Equipment	Amount (in ₹)	Date from which idling
	ECG Machine (Magic R-2)	43000	20.03.2016
	C ARM	1145000	01.2016
	Pulse Oxymeter (2)	5277	23.05.2017
	Needle Burner	340	
	BP Apparatus	750	
	Phototherapy(4)	27532	05.06.2015
	Warmer	27500	10.10.2015
	C pap Ventilator	84040	
DISTRICT HOSPITALS			
Wadakkancherry	ECG	Details not available	Details not available
	Pulse Oxymeter	Details not available	Details not available
	Generator	Details not available	Details not available
Mananthavady	Foetal Doppler	7500	06.2017
	Steriliser	7000	01.2017
THQH			
Tirurangadi	C Pap	25000	01.01.2017
	Defibrillator	177000	01.01.2017
	Dermatology phototherapy	74500	10.03.2017
	Pulse Oxymeter	37225	01.2017
	BP apparatus	323	02.2017
	Operating Microscope	646000	12.2016
	Stimuplex nerve locator	Details not available	01.2017
	ENT microscope with endoscope	Details not available	01.12.2016
	BP apparatus	1502	05.04.2017
	Foetal Doppler	2500	16.05.2017
	Suction Apparatus	8726	03.04.2017
	Radiant warmer	23256	06.04.2017
Pudukkad	ECG Machine	Details not available	17.12.2016
CHC			
Puruhanore, Wayanad	Pulse Oximeter	Details not available	Details not available
	Generator	Details not available	Details not available
Mepphadi, Wayanad	ECG Machine	Details not available	03.10.2015
Vettom, Malappuram	Autoclave	Details not available	20.02.2017
	ECG Machine	Details not available	10.01.2017
Vengam, Malappuram	Radiant Heat Warmer 2	15000	01.2010
	Phototherapy	8000	01.2010
	ECG Machine	21814	01.2010
PHC			
Chethalayam, Wayanad	Fogging Machine	15000	30.03.2016

Equipment idling as unserviceable

Institutions	Equipment	Amount (in ₹)	Date from which idling
GENERAL HOSPITAL			
Manjeri	Dental Lathe	8000	06.2015
	ECG Machine Cardiant 108 (3 nos.)	27000	25.05.2012
	Medmarc CG42S	30000	10.11.2011
	Boyles Apparatus (3 nos.)	52990	01.2016
	Electronic Weighing Machine	4750	2016

Institutions	Equipment	Amount (in ₹)	Date from which idling
	Labour cot (2 nos.)	13250	20.04.2017
	Vacuum extractor (2 nos.)	4750	20.12.2014
	500MA X-Ray Machine	787500	20.10.2015
	BP Apparatus	750	15.05.2016
	Steriliser	1500	08.10.2010
	Refrigerator	12000	10.2014
	Deep Freezer	55244	06.2013

DISTRICT HOSPITAL

Mananthavady	Suction apparatus	10500	Details not available
	O2 flow metre	1300	Details not available
	Stethoscope	700	Details not available
	BP apparatus	1800	Details not available
	Foetal Doppler	15000	Details not available
	Cryo cautery	Details not available	Details not available
	Spot light	30000	Details not available
	Ambu bag (Adult)	2250	Details not available
	Needle Cutter	6500	Details not available
	Weighing machine	1000	Details not available
	Artery forceps	150	Details not available
	Scissors	140	Details not available
	Electric steriliser	7000	Details not available
	Nebuliser	2300	Details not available
	Electronic weighing machine	2000	Details not available
	X Ray viewer	10000	Details not available
	Needle destroyer	6500	Details not available
	Wheel chair	6500	Details not available
	Stretcher trolley	4000	Details not available
	Examination table	4000	Details not available

Equipment idling for want of manpower

Institutions		Equipment	Amount (in ₹)	Date from which Idling
General Hospital	Manjeri	Spot Welder	8000	27.05.2016
		Infusion pump	2700	Details not available
District Hospital	Mananthavady	Foetal Doppler	15000	Details not available
CHC	Pulpally	ECG Machine	2339	05.09.2013
		ECG Machine	21814	23.08.2012
		Anaesthesia Kit	Details not available	29.10.2008
		Vacuum-Extractor	Details not available	23.10.2008
THQH	Pudukkad	Diathermy	Details not available	01.04.2013

Appendix 2.9

Non-availability of laboratory/diagnostic services

(Reference: Paragraph 2.12.6; Page: 35)

(i) PHCs- Number of tests required to be conducted - 11

District	Test-checked number of institutions	Non-availability of lab	Non-availability of tests
Wayanad	8	4	2 – 8
Malappuram	8	4	5 – 8
Thrissur	8	5	6 – 8
Alappuzha	8	6	6 – 9

(ii) CHCs- Number of tests required to be conducted - 36

District	Test-checked number of institutions	Non-availability of tests
Wayanad	4	9 – 21
Malappuram	4	18 – 25
Thrissur	4	15 – 27
Alappuzha	4	15 – 25

(iii) TH/THQHs - Number of tests required to be conducted - 51

District	Test-checked number of institutions	Non-availability of tests
Wayanad	2	11 and 15
Malappuram	2	11 and 23
Thrissur	2	22 and 36
Alappuzha	2	20 and 21

(iv) DH - Number of tests required to be conducted-97

District	Test-checked number of institutions	Non-availability of tests
Wayanad	1	51
Malappuram	1	59
Thrissur	1	63
Alappuzha	1	60

(v) GH - Number of tests required to be conducted - 97

District	Test-checked number of institutions	Non-availability of tests
Wayanad	1	60
Malappuram	1	32
Thrissur	1	63
Alappuzha	1	54

Appendix 2.10

Non-availability of radiation equipment

(Reference: Paragraph 2.12.7; Page: 36)

Sl. No.	Name of the institution	Total number of radioactive equipment	No. of radioactive equipment operated without AERB Licence/Registration	No. of equipment for which QA test not conducted	Whether TLD badge given to workers
1.	DH Mavelikkara	2	2 (X ray and C Ann)	2	No
2.	CHC Muthukulam	1	1 (X ray)	1	No
3.	THQH Kayamkulam	1	1	1	No
4.	GH Alappuzha	8	0	0	Yes
5.	TH Thuravoor	1	0	0	Yes
6.	THQH Sultan Bathery	1	1	1	Yes
7.	THQH Vythiri	1	0	0	Yes
8.	DH Mananthavady	2	1	0	Yes
9.	GH Kalpetta	1	1	0	No (not installed)
10.	DH Tirur	3	2	0	Yes
11.	THQH Ponnani	3	3	0	Yes
12.	THQH Tirurangadi	3	3	3	No
13.	GH Thrissur	1	0	0	Yes
14.	DH Wadakkancherry	1	1	1	Yes
15.	THQH Kodungallur	1	0	1	No
Total		30	16	10	

2:2, 2:3

8007861/2024/FIN-PAC

File No. HEALTH-PS1/26/2024-HEALTH (Computer No. 2684230)

Presented to the Legislature on 01 June 2021

**REPORT OF THE
COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR
GENERAL OF INDIA**

**on
GENERAL AND SOCIAL SECTOR**

for the year ended March 2019

**GOVERNMENT OF KERALA
Report No. 1 of the year 2021**

Audit Report (General and Social Sector) for the year ended March 2019

Zone Management Authority were seen. The State lost GoI assistance of ₹195.82 crore during 2016-18 due to its failure to attain physical and financial progress prescribed by GoI. Monitoring was also deficient at various levels of Programme Management Units.

FAILURE OF OVERSIGHT/ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROLS**HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE DEPARTMENT**

2.2. Misappropriation of Government money in General Hospital, Neyyattinkara, District Hospital, Mavelikkara and suspected misappropriation in Taluk Hospital, Fort, Thiruvananthapuram

Failure to adhere to codal provisions and lax supervisory controls resulted in misappropriation of ₹1.84 lakh in the General Hospital, Neyyattinkara, ₹6.46 lakh in the District Hospital, Mavelikkara and suspected misappropriation of ₹0.83 lakh in Taluk Hospital, Fort, Thiruvananthapuram

Rule 92 (a) (ii) to (iv) of the Kerala Treasury Code (KTC) requires Government officers who handle cash to enter all monetary transactions in the cash book as soon as they occur and get these attested by the Head of Office in token of check. The Head of Office should verify the totalling of the cash book or have this done by some responsible subordinate other than the writer of the cash book and initial them as correct. At the end of each month, the Head of Office should verify the cash balance in the cash book and record a signed and dated certificate to that effect. The KTC further stipulates that a Government servant who receives money on behalf of the Government, shall remit it into the treasury or the Bank on the day of receipt or as soon afterwards, as is possible.

The Kerala Financial Code (KFC) also stipulates that if the Head of Office suspects defalcation or loss of public moneys which involved his office or in which a Government servant subordinate to him was involved, he should immediately send a preliminary report to the Accountant General and to the Head of the Department. After sending these preliminary reports, the Head of Office should investigate the matter fully without delay and take further action, including fixing and enforcing responsibility for losses. The KFC also requires the Head of Office to report instances of misappropriation to the Vigilance and Anti-Corruption Bureau (VACB) and simultaneously inform the District Collector, the Additional District Magistrate and the Head of the Department that the matter had been reported to the VACB.

In Government hospitals, Hospital Management Committees (HMC) are constituted to ensure development and better functioning and

improvement of hospitals. All receipts by way of charges for laboratory tests, X-ray, ambulance service, outpatient/inpatient fees, etc., are deposited into the bank account of the HMC, maintained for the purpose. All expenditure pertaining to the HMC is met by withdrawal from the bank account. While the Clerk in the HMC was responsible for recording all these transactions daily in the cash book, the Superintendent of the hospital was to ensure and attest correctness of recording of these transactions in the cash book.

Audit observed that failure to adhere to codal provisions coupled with lax supervisory controls resulted in misappropriation of Government money in the General Hospital (GH) Neyyattinkara³³ and District Hospital (DH) Mavelikkara³⁴. An instance of suspected misappropriation was also noticed in the Taluk Hospital, Fort, Thiruvananthapuram³⁵ as detailed below.

- General Hospital, Neyyattinkara

A scrutiny of the HMC cash book in the GH Neyyattinkara revealed that daily cash collection of the HMC was not fully deposited into the bank account, contrary to provisions of the KTC requiring Government servants to make remittances, on the day of receipt or immediately afterwards. Audit noticed that the Hospital Superintendent had detected (31 July 2017) a shortfall of ₹83,519 in the closing cash balance in the HMC cash book. The shortfall in cash was recovered from the Senior Clerk responsible for maintenance of the cash book, who remitted (18 August 2017) the misappropriated amount into the HMC bank account.

In view of the single instance of misappropriation detected by the Hospital Superintendent on 31 July 2017 and the large cash balances retained by the HMC in violation of norms, Audit conducted a detailed examination of the cash book for the period 01 January 2017 to 31 August 2018, which revealed a further misappropriation of ₹ one lakh. It was observed that on 28 July 2017, the opening balance of cash was ₹3,26,970 and cash receipts on the day amounted to ₹35,321. Since ₹41,000 was deposited into the bank account the same day, the closing cash balance should have been ₹3,21,291. However, the closing balance was understated and wrongly recorded as ₹2,21,291 on 28 July 2017 which was also reckoned as the opening balance in the cash book on 29 July 2017. Subsequent daily cash balances were also seen to have been arrived at, based on the understatement of ₹ one lakh

³³ Audit conducted at General Hospital, Neyyattinkara in September 2018, covering the period 01 May 2017 to 31 August 2018.

³⁴ Audit conducted at District Hospital, Mavelikkara in December 2018, covering the period 01 October 2017 to 30 November 2018.

³⁵ Audit conducted at Taluk hospital, Fort, Thiruvananthapuram in November 2019 covering the period 01 December 2018 to 31 October 2019.

Audit Report (General and Social Sector) for the year ended March 2019

on 28 July 2017. Thus, the Senior Clerk in this instance, misappropriated ₹ one lakh from the HMC accounts.

- **District Hospital, Mavelikkara**

In DH, Mavelikkara, test check of the entries made in the HMC cash book revealed that the closing balance of cash on 31 March 2018 was ₹6,80,479 after reckoning the day's collection of ₹10,020. However, the HMC Clerk recorded the opening balance of cash on 01 April 2018 as ₹10,020 thereby understating the balance by ₹6,70,459. Audit observed that the Superintendent of the Hospital attested the understated opening balance in the cash book on 01 April 2018, without verifying the previous day's cash balance.

In view of the suspected embezzlement of cash, Audit undertook a detailed examination of the cash book for the period 01 January 2016 to 25 July 2018 which included the period when the said Clerk was in charge of the HMC cash book viz. 23 August 2016 to 24 July 2018. It was noticed that the cash book for the period was not properly maintained and contained many corrections, overwriting, cancellation of entries, etc. Daily cash collections were not deposited in the Bank regularly by the Clerk, resulting in retention of large cash balances. Audit examination of the daily cash collection and connected bank statements revealed that the closing balance of cash in the HMC cash book on 24 July 2018 (when the HMC Clerk was relieved of her duties and transferred to Primary Health Centre, Nooranadu) should have been ₹6,67,623. However, the HMC Clerk handed over only ₹21,799 to the new cashier resulting in short accounting of ₹6,45,824 in the cash book. Thus, the HMC Clerk committed embezzlement of ₹6,45,824 in the DH, Mavelikkara.

- **Taluk Hospital, Fort, Thiruvananthapuram**

In Taluk Hospital, Fort, Thiruvananthapuram, Audit noticed probable misappropriation of ₹83,226 from the HMC accounts. Audit examination of the HMC cash book for the month of August 2019 revealed that ₹8,377 received by way of dialysis charges, lab charges, OP charges and ECG charges on various dates were not accounted in the cash book.

Upon identification of the suspected misappropriation of ₹8,377, Audit sought to examine records for the period 01 April 2017 (the day the Section Clerk assumed charge) to 31 October 2019. However, the consolidated daily collection register and the Department wise collection registers for the period 01 April 2017 to 12 July 2017 were not made available to Audit for scrutiny, citing that these were not handed over to the present Superintendent. Audit examination was therefore confined to the period 13 July 2017 to 31 October 2019.

It was revealed during audit that entries were not made in the cash book on a daily basis and contained overwriting, cancellation of entries, etc. The cash book was changed twice (17 July 2019 and 09 September 2019) during the period under audit scrutiny. In both instances, the opening balance was shown as 'Nil' in the new cash book. In the first instance, against closing balance of ₹36,368 as on 16 July 2019, opening balance on 17 July 2019 was shown as 'Nil'. A note of the earlier Superintendent in the cash books indicated that the Section Clerk proceeded on unauthorised absence during various periods from 08 July 2019 and that the cash book was not shown to Superintendent from 01 May 2019. It was further recorded that entries upto 16 July 2019 were entered subsequently in the cash book by the Section Clerk on 25 August 2019.

In the second instance, a new cash book was opened by the present Superintendent from 09 September 2019 on the grounds that while taking over charge on 09 September 2019, the Section Clerk had not submitted vouchers for payment of ₹8,303 recorded in the cash book besides not handing over balance of cash in hand of ₹11,144.

Since the entries in the cash book were suspect, in order to rule out loss to the exchequer, Audit recast the cash book on the basis of daily collection registers/subsidiary registers. Audit thus observed that as on 31 October 2019, against the cash balance of ₹1,23,725 as reckoned by Audit, the cash balance shown in the cash book was only ₹40,499, resulting in suspected misappropriation of ₹83,226.

Consequent to communicating the findings of audit, Director of Health Services constituted a team under the supervision of the Finance Officer to verify the accounts and registers of HMC for the period from December 2018 to November 2019. The team detected short accounting of ₹1,49,747 in HMC accounts and recommended disciplinary action against the HMC Clerk and recovery of misappropriated amount along with 18 per cent interest.

Audit observed systemic deficiencies leading to the misappropriations. In GH, Neyyattinkara, the Hospital Superintendent, though aware of loss of public moneys, neither informed the Head of the Department and Accountant General nor initiated any action to investigate the matter fully as required under the KFC. In DH, Mavelikkara though the discrepancies noticed in the records were brought to the notice (September-November 2018) of District Medical Officer (Health), the Hospital Superintendent failed to initiate any action to investigate and quantify the loss to exchequer and fix responsibility for losses, as required under the KFC. In the Taluk Hospital, Fort, Thiruvananthapuram, the Hospital Superintendent did not follow up on the deficiencies in maintenance of the cash book and failed to identify and quantify the loss to the exchequer.

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It was also seen that the Superintendents of the two Hospitals viz., General Hospital, Neyyattinkara and District Hospital, Mavelikkara, did not comply with the stipulations in the KTC which required them to verify the daily totals in the cash book and at the end of each month, to verify the cash balances in the cash book and record a signed and dated certificate to that effect. In the case of Taluk Hospital, Fort, Thiruvananthapuram, the Superintendent affixed his signature to the daily closing in the cash book without adequate verification, resulting in the suspected misappropriation. Further, the failure of the Superintendents of all the three hospitals to investigate the issue thoroughly and take further action including fixing and enforcing responsibility for losses and instead, attempting to regularise the difference, was in gross violation of the provisions contained in the KFC in this regard. Thus, non-compliance to the stipulations contained in the KTC facilitated the suspected embezzlement of Government money.

Instances of misappropriation in GH, Neyyattinkara and DH, Mavelikkara were brought to the notice of Government (July 2019). Government of Kerala (GoK) replied (January 2020) that in GH, Neyyattinkara the misappropriated amount of ₹ one lakh detected by Audit, has since been recovered from the Death cum Retirement Gratuity (DCRG) of the Head Clerk and that, as punishment, the then Hospital Superintendent was transferred to District Hospital, Kanhangad. Further, with reference to DH, Mavelikkara, GoK replied (January 2020) that consequent to the audit observation, the Head Clerk was suspended (December 2018) from service. Besides, it was informed that a detailed special audit conducted by Directorate of Health Services revealed a total liability of ₹14.69 lakh due to non-production of vouchers and receipts, short accounting, etc. The suspected misappropriation in Taluk hospital, Fort, Thiruvananthapuram was referred to GoK in June 2020. Despite reminders issued to GoK in August and December 2020, no reply was received (December 2020).

Government may evaluate and strengthen the existing internal control mechanisms in HMCs to safeguard against misappropriation of Government money.

2.3. **Fraudulent drawal of salary of an employee on Leave Without Allowances at Primary Health Centre, Parambikulam, Palakkad**

Failure of Medical Officer to adhere to the provisions of KTC and to ensure prompt updation of leave details in SPARK led to fraudulent drawal of salary of an employee on Leave Without Allowances at Primary Health Centre, Parambikulam, Palakkad

Rule 432 (a) of the Kerala Treasury Code stipulates that the Head of an Office is personally responsible for all moneys drawn as pay, leave salary, allowances, etc., on an establishment bill signed by him or on his behalf, until he has paid them to the persons who are entitled to receive them and has obtained their dated acknowledgements, duly stamped when necessary.

Further, the Acquittance Roll in Form TR 95 (Treasury Receipts) requires a certificate by the Drawing and Disbursing Officer (DDO) to the effect that acquittance has been obtained in respect of each amount paid, from the persons entitled to receive it.

The Kerala Service Rules specify that an official on leave without allowances would not be entitled to any leave salary. While conducting (June 2019) the audit of Primary Health Centre (PHC), Parambikulam for the period January 2013 to May 2019, Audit noticed an instance of fraudulent drawal of salary of an employee who had proceeded on Leave Without Allowances (LWA)³⁶. The Director of Health Services sanctioned (December 2013) LWA for five years to the employee who was a Junior Health Inspector Grade II of PHC, Parambikulam for taking up employment abroad. Accordingly, the employee got relieved from the PHC, Parambikulam on 12 January 2014 and rejoined duty on 04 January 2019 at PHC, Akathethara in Palakkad district.

Audit observed that ₹78,575³⁷ was fraudulently drawn from the Consolidated Fund of the State during January, February and August 2014. The fraud was committed by irregularly including the name of the employee, who was on LWA, in the Detailed Pay Bill of PHC, Parambikulam generated through SPARK³⁸ for these months. A detailed scrutiny of the acquittance rolls for these months, prepared by the Senior Clerk of the PHC and duly certified by the Medical Officer revealed that after effecting deductions³⁹ of ₹10,481 from the salary of the employee, the net salary of ₹68,094 was misappropriated by forging the signature of the employee on two occasions (January and February 2014) and by recording the payment of salary for the month of August 2014 as 'remitted as per challan no:'. However, challans/particulars of challans in support of the remittance into treasury were not made available to Audit. Interestingly, the details of LWA availed by the employee were entered in SPARK only on 19 September 2019, even though LWA was availed during the period 12 January 2014 to 03 January 2019. Audit observed that failure of the Medical Officer who is also the DDO, to ensure that the details of LWA availed by the employee were entered promptly into SPARK, facilitated misappropriation of ₹68,094 by the Senior Clerk. Since the Medical Officer attested the correctness of entries made in the Acquittance roll, he is culpable in terms of Rule 432 (a) of the KTC. Thus, the failure of DDO to

³⁶ Leave Without Allowances is a kind of leave admissible to any officer in regular employment of Government of Kerala in special circumstances such as when no other leave is by rule admissible or when other leave is admissible, but the officer concerned applies in writing for the grant of leave without allowances. An officer on leave without allowances is not entitled to any leave salary.

³⁷ Salary for the months of January 2014 (₹25,679), February 2014 (₹25,679) and August 2014 (₹27,217) drawn on 10.02.2014, 13.03.2014 and 04.09.2014 respectively.

³⁸ From 2012-13 onwards, Government of Kerala made it mandatory for all Government departments to generate, Detailed Pay Bills of Government employees through a web-based application for automatic payroll processing viz., Service and Payroll Administrative Repository of Kerala (SPARK).

³⁹ Deductions like subscription to General Provident Fund (GPF), State Life Insurance (SLI), Group Insurance Scheme (GIS) and Life Insurance Corporation (LIC).

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adhere to the provisions of KTC and to ensure prompt updation of LWA details in SPARK resulted in misappropriation of Government money.

Following the audit findings, the Directorate of Health Services conducted a special audit at the PHC, Parambikulam. While confirming (September 2019) the fact of misappropriation, Audit was informed that the Senior Clerk had committed the criminal offence of misusing the Departmental User ID and Password and that recommendation has since been made to GoK for initiating disciplinary action against the Senior Clerk and the Medical Officer of the PHC.

Government of Kerala agreed to the findings of audit (April 2020) and informed that the Senior Clerk was suspended (October 2019) from service. However, the fact remains that the misappropriated amount has not been recovered.

Government may take steps to strengthen the internal control mechanism and ensure timely updation of leave details in SPARK to avoid irregular drawal of salary.

HIGHER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

- 2.4. Commencement of Master of Physical Education course by Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, Kalady without obtaining the approval of the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) and continuation of the course even after denial of recognition by the NCTE

Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, Kalady offered Master of Physical Education (M.P.Ed) course without obtaining the approval of the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) in 2013-14. During 2013-18, 115 students were awarded M.P.Ed Degree by the University and despite denial of recognition by the NCTE in 2017, 80 students were further admitted to the academic year 2018-20

The National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) is a statutory body of the Government of India set up under the National Council for Teacher Education Act, 1993 (NCTE Act) to formally oversee standards, procedures and processes in the teacher education programmes. The NCTE Act stipulates that any recognised institution intending to start any new course may apply to seek permission of the Regional Committee⁴⁰ concerned in such form and in such manner as may be determined by regulations. The Regional Committee may grant permission to the institution to offer the course if it is satisfied that such recognised institution has adequate financial resources, accommodation, library, qualified staff, laboratory and that it fulfils such other conditions required for proper conduct of the new course as may be determined by

⁴⁰ 'Regional Committee' means a committee established under Section 20 of the NCTE Act.