TAMIL NADU LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

(2011-2012)

(FOURTEENTH ASSEMBLY)

THIRTY EIGHTH REPORT

(Presented to the Assembly on 7-5-2012)

Legislative Assembly Secretariat,
Chennai-600 009.

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REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS ON THE PARAGRAPHS INCLUDED IN THE REPORT OF THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL OF INDIA (Civil) FOR THE YEAR 2001-2002 RELATING TO HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE DEPARTMENT

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REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS ON THE PARAGRAPHS INCLUDED IN THE REPORT OF THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL OF INDIA (Civil) FOR THE YEAR 2001-2002 RELATING TO HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE DEPARTMENT

HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE DEPARTMENT

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TAMIL NADU LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Composition of the Committee on Public Accounts (2011-2012)

(Constituted on 10th June 2011)

CHAIRMAN

1. Thiru S.Ramachandran

MEMBERS

2. Hon.Thiru O.Panneerselvam,
Minister for Finance (*Ex-Officio*)

3. Thiru P.G.Narayanan,
Chairman, Committee on Estimates (*Ex-Officio*)

4. Thiru V.Somasundaram
Chairman, Committee on Public Undertakings (*Ex-Officio*)

5. Thiru K.P.Anbalagan

*6. Thiru M.S.M.Anandan

7. Thiru P.V.Kathiravan

8. Thiru Kadambur Raju

9. Thiru V.P.Kalairajan

10. Vacant

11. Thiru M.Gunasekaran

12. Thiru O.K.Chinnaraj

13. Dr.Kovi.Chezhian

14. Thiru R.Duraikkannu

15. Thiru K.Pandiarajan

16. Thiru K.V.Markendeyan

17. Thiru R.Ramamoorthy

18. Tmt R.Rajalakshmi

19. Thiru S.John Jacab

SECRETARIAT

Thiru A.M.P.Jamaludeen	..	Secretary
Tmt G. Gayathiri	..	Joint Secretary
Selvi S. Philomena	..	Deputy Secretary
Thiru Rm. S.Giridharan	..	Under Secretary

* Upto 11-12-2011

INTRODUCTION

1. I, Chairman, Committee on Public Accounts having been authorised by the Committee (2011-2012) to submit the Report on its behalf present this Thirty Eighth Report on the paragraphs pertaining to Health and Family Welfare Department included in the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (Civil) for the year 2001-2002.

2. The Report of the Comptrolier and Auditor General of India for the year 2001-2002 was laid on the Table of the House on 10.5.2003.

3. The Committee at its meeting held on 28-2-2007 examined the Secretary to Government, Health and Family Welfare Department in connection with the important paras pertaining to that Department.

4. The Committee records its appreciation of the valuable assistance rendered by the Secretary, Legislative Assembly, Principal Accountant General (Civil Audit) and Deputy Secretary, Finance Department. The Committee is also thankful to the Secretary to Government, Health and Family Welfare Department for the co-operation extended to the Committee in its' deliberations.

5. The original notes submitted by the department and the particulars, clarifications etc., made available during evidence have been taken into account by the Committee in finalising this Report.

6. The Committee approved this Report at its meeting held on 22nd November 2011.

Chennai-600 009,
22nd November 2011,
Karthigai 6,
Thiruvalluvar Aandu-2042.

S.RAMACHANDRAN,
Chairman,
Committee on Public Accounts.

TRUTH ALONE TRIUMPHS

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS ON THE PARAGRAPHS INCLUDED IN THE REPORT OF THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL OF INDIA FOR THE YEAR 2001-2002 (CIVIL) RELATING TO HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE DEPARTMENT

HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE DEPARTMENT

1. Unfruitful expenditure due to non-commissioning of stream laundries (Para 3.5 of Audit Report State Civil 2001-2002)

1.1 The Committee notes that mention was made in para 3.11 (i) of the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (civil) - Government of Tamil Nadu for 1995-96 on the failure to commission steam laundry installed in the District Headquarters Hospital (DHH), Virudhunagar at a cost Rs 55 lakh, due to piecemeal submission of proposals and delay in sanctioning of staff.

A comprehensive review of the installation of all the 16 steam laundries sanctioned in November 1991 including Virudhunagar was conducted in November 2001 and the following observations are made.

(i) Government had sanctioned (November 1991) the establishment of steam laundries (cost:Rs50 lakh each) in 16 DHH due to increase in number of soiled linen pieces which could not be washed in time by the limited number of dhobies available. However, except in Nagercoil, none of the remaining 15 steam laundries was commissioned as of April 2002. In DHHs Dharmapuri, Erode and Nagercoil, the installation of the equipment was completed between January 2001 and July 2001. Though Government had sanctioned (January 1997) one post each of Mechanical Chargeman, Engine Driver (boiler operator), fitter and cleaner, these posts were not filled up. The steam laundry at Nagercoil was functioning with the staff deputed from Tirunelveli Medical College Hospital. The Joint Director of Health Services (JDHS) of the two hospitals, Dharmapuri and Erode addressed the Director of Medical and Rural Health Services (DMRHS) in February 2002 to revive the sanction of the technical posts, but this has not been done as of July 2002.

(ii) In DHHs, Kumbakonam and Nagapattinam, the buildings to house the laundry were completed at a cost of Rs 70.91 lakh as of April 2002. Government gave revised administrative sanction for Rs 62.65 lakh and Rs 82 lakh respectively for installation of steam laundries at Kumbakonam and Nagapattinam in March 2001. However, the Chief Engineer (Buildings) stated that Letter of Credit (LOC) from Government had not been received as of July 2002 and, therefore no action was taken to procure the equipment.

(iii) Building works were completed in DHHs, "Kancheepuram, Cuddalore, Thiruppur, Tiruvannamalai and Tenkasi at a cost of Rs 1.50 crore as of April 2002. However, boiler and other equipments were not supplied to these hospitals. When administrative sanction was sought from Government, the Secretary to Government asked (February 2001) DMRHS to explore the possibility of utilizing the buildings for other purposes. But, only after Audit enquiry (November 2001) DMRHS addressed the JDHS of these 5 hospitals and sought (July 2002) proposals for alternative uses of the buildings already constructed.

(iv) In respect of DHHS at Ramanathapuram, Sivaganga, Periyakulam, Asaripallam, Tuticorin and Virudhunagar, building works were completed and machinery were partly supplied. DMRHS asked (July 2002) the JDHS of 6 hospitals to re-examine the economics of washing linen through private agencies.

(v) Out of Rs 265.93 lakh given as advance for supply and erection of steam laundries in 10 hospitals to 7 industrial cooperative Societies, Rs 93.92 lakh was pending adjustment due to non-supply and part-supply.

Thus there was inordinate delay in procuring equipment, although buildings were ready. In June 2001, Government reviewed the setting up of steam laundry as it was much more expensive than engaging private contractors for washing linen. The expenditure on buildings and equipment already incurred on the ill-considered project of establishing 16 steam laundries was Rs.6.81 crore, which was unfruitful. Only one steam laundry at Nagercoil was put to use as of July 2002.

1.2 The Department in their Explanatory Notes stated that attempts made to recruit the staff through Tamil Nadu Medical Services Corporation failed as no agency came forward for recruitment. Therefore filling up of the posts by transfer was under consideration.

The Department furnished the detailed status of the steam laundries as follows:

Sl. No.	GHH located at	Present status of the steam laundries
1	Nagercoil	GHH at Nagercoil has been converted as Government Medical College Hospital and functions under the control of Director of Medical Education and Dean of the Medical College Hospital is taking action to transfer the steam laundry equipments to Kanyakumari Medical College Hospital, Asaripallam.
2	Virudhunagar	Yet to take over the completed building from the CE (Buildings), PWD.
3	Sivaganga	Building works completed. PWD is taking action to change the boiler of the steam laundry.
4	Dharmapuri	Building works completed. Action is being taken for filling up of the post.
5	Erode	Building completed and handed over by the PWD. After filling up of the posts. the stem laundry would commence functioning

6.	Ramanathapuram	Building works completed. Action is being taken by the CE (Buildings), PWD, to rectify the defects of the boiler.
7.	Periyakulam	Action is being taken by the CE (Buildings), PWD, to change the boiler and put it into functional.
8	Tiruppur	Revised estimate of the CE (Buildings), PWD for Rs.104.50 lakh will be processed by the Government after its receipt in the Government.
9.	Kancheepuram	Revised estimate of the CE (Buildings), PWD for Rs.94 lakh will be processed by the Government after its receipt in the Government
10	Tenkasi	A revised estimate for Rs.92.33 lakh has been prepared and is in the process of submission to Government.
11.	Thoothukudi	The steam laundry here is functioning well.
12	Govt, TB Hospital Asaripallam, Kanyakumari	The steam laundry here is functioning.
13	Tiruvannamalai	Action is being taken to complete the Building work by the CE (Buildings), PWD.
14	Cuddaore	Revised estimate of the CE (Buildings), PWD for Rs.102.60 lakh will be considered by the Government after its receipt in the Government
15	Kumbakonam	After posting of the required staff, the steam laundry would start functioning.
16	Nagapattinam	Government has approved the revised estimate of Rs.82 lakh and the works are on and it would be made functional.

1.3 The Secretary during evidence stated that Government of Tamil Nadu sanctioned Rs.8 crore for the scheme of providing steam laundries in 16 District Head quarters hospitals. Before the issue of orders, steam laundries are being functioning in Pudukottai and Ooty in a very good condition. Based on that, Government issued orders for provision of 16 steam laundries. In Virudhunagar Nagapattinam, kumbakonam, Dharmapuri and Erode, construction of buildings and installation of equipments were completed and in Nagercoil / Asasripallam and Tuticorin, steam laundries has started functioning well. Regarding appointment of staff, Government sanctioned one post each of Mechanical Chargeman, Engine Driver, Fitter and Cleaner in 1997. But these posts were not filled upto 2004 and the sanction for these posts lapsed. Subsequently there was a ban in filling up the vacancies. Regarding purchase of equipments for the rest of the stream laundries, 90% of the cost of equipment was given to co-operative societies, as advance and they did not supply the equipments. After vigilance enquiry, some of the equipments were received. The defaulters were arrested and the case is in progress. In Sivaganga, Cuddalur, Nagapattnam and Thiruvannamalai, the boilers were not in proper working condition because these were kept idle without any usage. The Secretary admitted that the scheme was implemented without any proper plan and there were no experts in this field.

1.4 The committee regrets to note that even after inordinate delay of 16 years the laundry units were not commissioned and the objective of the scheme was not achieved. The Department should take stringent action against those responsible for the lapses in the planning and execution of the scheme.

The Committee reiterates its earlier recommendation contained in its 33rd Report (VII Assembly) 1984-85 that the proposal submitted to Government for providing facilities in the Hospitals should cover all aspect like requirement of buildings, equipments and staff for operation and maintenance of machinery so that the equipments could be put to beneficial use right from their installation.

Committee desires to be informed of the latest position of functioning of steam laundries in these 16 hospitals and in other hospitals in the State.

2. Unfruitful expenditure on hospital building without staff / equipment (Para 3.6)

2.1 The committee notes that Government sanctioned in June 1997, construction of 23 bedded Neurosurgery blocks at Government Districts Headquarter Hospitals (GDHH), Ramanathapuram and Accident and Emergency Services (A&ES) block with 10 beds in GDHH, Tiruvarur with the objective of giving prompt and timely treatment to the accident victims.

The dates of taken over of the building and cost of construction are as follows:

	Neurosurgery block GDHH, Ramanathapuram	A&ES block, GDHH, Tiruvarur
Date of taking over	May 2001	November 2000
Total expenditure	Rs.64.85 lakh	Rs.33.21 lakh

The building had not been put to use as envisaged, in the absence of staff and equipment, as discussed below:

(a) Neurosurgery Block, GDHH, Ramanathapuram:

The Joint Director of Health Services (JDHS) addressed Director of Medical and Rural Health Services (DMRHS) for staff only in August 2000. DMRHS had not processed the proposal even as of May 2002. As regards, purchase of furniture and equipment, DMRHS sought revalidation of Government orders only in January 2002, which was given in March 2002. Further action has to be taken in this regard by DMRHS. No specific proposal for Neurosurgery equipment was made as of May 2002. Thus neither staff nor furniture or equipment was sanctioned to GDHH, Ramanathapuram till July2002, though buildings were ready by May 2001.

Government in their reply (August 2002) stated that new posts could not be created in view of ban on recruitment and the proposal for redeployment of existing staff was being sent by the Director. In the meantime, the Director has decided to utilize the block to look after emergency cases and accident victims with the available staff.

(b) A & ES Block, GDHH, Tiruvarur:

The JDHS requested (November 2000) DMRHS to take necessary action filling up the posts and purchase of furniture, equipment etc. DMRHS requested (March 2001) Government for revalidation of earlier sanction (June 1997) for equipment (X-Ray plant, furniture, equipment and ambulance) and for 14 posts. But, sanction for staff or purchase of furniture and equipment had not been revalidated, as of April 2002. Thus, the A&ES block at GDHH, Tiruvarur was yet to become operational.

2.2 The Department in its reply stated that due to ban on creation of new posts, the posts were not created and due to non-availability of the surplus posts, it was also not possible to redeploy the staff to the Neuro Block. After the lift of the ban order by the Government, necessary action would be taken to post the personnel.

For para (b) the Department in its Explanatory Notes has stated that due to dearth of posts, it was not possible to redeploy the posts to the accident and emergency ward at Tiruvarur and necessary instructions have already been given to JDHS, Thiruvarur to put the ward into use with the available existing staff and equipments.

2.3 During evidence, the Secretary stated that due to ban on recruitment for the past five years, the posts in the Neurosurgery block, Ramanathapuram and A & Es block, Thiruvarur were not filled up. The practice of re-deployment was in vogue. Whenever the Department redeploys staff from one particular place, problem of shortage of staff arose in that place. Out of 16000 vacancies 7000 posts were filled up and the remaining 9000 posts would be filled up very soon. If the posts of doctors are to be filled up through TNPSC, it would take time and hence the post of doctors have been appointed through Employment Exchange. The Secretary has also assured to fill up the post of Neuro specialist in District Headquarters Hospital, Ramanathapuram and post of doctors for accidents and Emergency Service Block in Government Head quarter Hospital, Tiruvarur, within one month.

2.4 The committee regrets to note that despite assurances given earlier to the committee, the Department continues to come up with defective proposals, belated proposals for staff etc in such scheme.

The committee would like to have a detailed report within two months regarding filling up the post of neuro surgeon doctors and provision of furniture / equipments in Ramanathapuram and Tiruvarur District Head quarters Hospitals as pointed out above.

3. Avoidable payment of water charges (Para 3.7)

3.1 The committee notes that Government Royapettah Hospital Chennai, functioning under these administrative control of the Director of Medical Education (DME) obtained water connection for two blocks from Chennai Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (Board) In addition, the hospital had one well in each block to supplement the water supply.

The water meters fixed at both the inlets went out of order and billing was made by the Board by adopting average monthly consumption at 44.29 lakh liters from July 1987 onwards. Though the defective meter was replaced in July 1997, the same was disconnected by the hospital authorities on the plea that it obstructed the free flow of water. However, the water supplied by the Board was reported to be meagre and nil from December 1999. In order to meet its requirement of 1.50 lakh liters of water per day, the hospital purchased water through tanker lorries. Between April 1998 and May 2002, Rs 45.59 lakh were spent on such purchase.

Inspite of meagre water supply, the Board charged for 44.29 lakh of water per month from October 1998 at the rate of Rs 20 per thousands liters in addition to sewerage charges at 25 per cent of water charges.

As there was practically no water inflow from the Board's pipelines from December 1999 onwards, the Board should have levied only the minimum charge of Rs 201 per month. Instead, the Board continued to levy water charges for 44.29 lakh liters per month. The Superintendent of the hospital paid the bills without protest.

The Superintendent of the hospital, thus failed to get the water meter provided for more than 15 years, Rupees 31.84 lakh has been paid, when there was no water supply, between January 2000 and May 2002.

The DME, while generally accepting the facts, stated (May 2002) that Board had been addressed by the hospital in May 2002 to adjust the excess amount paid against future water supplies by the Board. However, the Board did not agree (July 20-02) citing a previous request made to the hospital for fixing the water meter at their cost, which would have recorded the actual consumption. It was reported in July 2002 that a water meter has since been fixed and the water charges were Rs 7950 for July 2002 and Rs1850 for August 2002. This proves that Rs 31.84 lakh paid up to May 2002 was avoidable.

3.2 The Department in its explanatory notes stated that the comptroller of Finance, Chennai water Supply and Sewerage Board had informed that the Board has decided to withdraw the period from June 2001 to December 2001 against the excess amount already paid for Rs.31.84 lakh for the period from January 2000 to May 2002 and the Superintendent, Government Royapettah Hospital is baking action to adjust the balance amount also.

3.3 During evidence, the Secretary has stated that then Superintendent of the hospital was responsible for the avoidable excess expenditure. An amount of Rs 8 lakh had been adjusted. As there was water scarcity at that time, the supply was very meagre. It was feared that the connection would be cut off for non payment of water charges and hence they paid full payment. But Chennai Metropolitan water supply and Sewerage Board had adjusted water charges of Rs 7.68 lakh for the period for which water supply was not made and refused to adjust the amount for the rest of the period. However action is being taken to adjust the balance amount also.

When the committee desired to know about the motivation of the removal of water meter, the Secretary during evidence stated that it seems that it would have been removed to get more flow of water.

3.4 The committee recommends that the Department should take action against the superintendent, who was responsible for the removal of water meter, which resulted in excess expenditure to the Government.

The Committee also recommends that the Department should take appropriate step to recover the excess amount already paid to metro water and remit the same to the Government Account.

4. Encroachment of departmental land due to lack of vigilance and care (Para 3.8)

4.1 The committee notes that Government established (1977) a Peripheral Hospital at K.K. Nagar, Chennai to reduce congestion at the teaching hospitals and to slowly develop it into a multi-specialty hospital to cater to the needs of public in the suburban area. Land measuring 11.70 acre was acquired by Government from Tamil Nadu Housing Board (TNHB) at a cost of Rs 21.30 lakh. While the main building of the hospital was constructed on the northern side, the southern side with an area of 120 grounds (2.88 lakh sq. ft) was kept vacant for future expansion.

The vacant land on the southern side was encroached by slum dwellers, due to non-construction of the compound wall and was reported to the Director of Medical Education in November 1988. Therefore, public Works Department (PWD) was requested for an estimate for construction of a compound wall, which is submitted in July 1995 for Rs 4.40 lakh Government approved the same in December 1995 and instructed PWD to meet the expenditure from within its over all budget.

In the meantime, the Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board (TNSCB) unauthorized by utilized a piece of the vacant land for accommodating 152 families as a temporary measure. In August 1996, The Chief Medical Officer (CMO), Peripheral Hospital K.K. Nagar requested the chairman, TNSCB to make arrangement for vacating the encroachment, as the Casualty Receiving Station constructed at a cost of Rs 30 lakh was likely to be commissioned in September 1996. In October 1996, PWD informed that unless the encroachments were removed, it would not be possible to take up construction. The Chairman, TNSCB in January 1997 stated that 152 families occupying the vacant land would be evicted only after constructing and allotting flats and assured action by April 1998. However, as of May 2002, no action has been taken. In addition, 300 families have erected huts on the vacant land, which was unauthorized; the total land thus encroached measured about 1.64 lakh sq.ft.

As a result, the hospital land of 1.64 lakh sq.ft. valued Rs 42.29 crore (based on the current market rate obtained (April 2001) from Sub-Registrar's office) remained either encroached by slum dwellers or was used by TNSCB to accommodate them.

Thus, due to non-construction of a compound wall on the southern side, Government property valued Rs 42.29 crore had fallen into the hands of encroachers. This showed lack of coordination between the hospital authorities, the TNSCB and the revenue authorities.

4.2 The Department in its explanatory notes stated that the Tahsildars, Mammbalam, Guindy along with the Slum Clearance Board officials and the Civil surgeon, Medical officer decided to evict the encroachers from the said land adjacent to the hospital on 30-7-2004 and requested the public Works Department authorities to put up barbed wire fence. When the work of eviction of encroachers started on 30-7-2004, the residents of the encroached area and human right activities objected the eviction work and the work was stopped around 1 p.m on 30-7-2004 and every possible steps was being taken to proceed further in the matter.

4.3 The Secretary during evidence stated the authorities of Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board (TNSCB) had provided accommodation for 128 families initially, who were affected in a fire accident, and they did not obtain our department's permission. Now there were 450 families occupying the land of four acres. Forced vacation of these families would create law and order problems. The Health Department is consulting TNSCB for providing alternative place to the encroachers. The Secretary assured that after providing alternative place to them action could be taken by the Health Department to construct compound wall and this would be done within six months.

4.4 The Committee recommends the following:-

i) TNSC Board should arrange to provide alternative place to encroachers and hand over the land to the hospital authorities at the earliest.

ii) The compound wall must be constructed around the recovered land.

A report in this regard may be sent to the Committee within six months Committee desires that the Department should take all precautions to avoid recurrence of such encroachment of Government land in future.

5. General

5.1 The Committee desires that expeditious action should be taken by the Government on all the recommendations in this report. Wherever specific time limits have been indicated in the recommendations, they should be adhered to. In other cases, a final report of action taken should be sent within six months.

Chennai-600 009,
22nd November 2011,
Karthigai 6,
Thiruvalluvar Aandu-2042.

S.RAMACHANDRAN,
Chairman,
Committee on Public Accounts.



ANNEXURE

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The committee regrets to note that even after inordinate delay of 16 years the laundry units were not commissioned and the objective of the scheme was not achieved. The Department should take stringent action against those responsible for the lapses in the planning and execution of the scheme. The Committee reiterates its earlier recommendation contained in its 33rd Report (VII Assembly) 1984-85 that the proposal submitted to Government for providing facilities in the Hospitals should cover all aspect like requirement of buildings, equipments and staff for operation and maintenance of machinery so that the equipments could be put to beneficial use right from their installation. Committee desires to be informed of the latest position of functioning of steam laundries in these 16 hospitals and in other hospitals in the State. (Paragraph No.1.4)

2. The committee regrets to note that despite assurances given earlier to the committee, the Department continues to come up with defective proposals, belated proposals for staff etc in such scheme. The committee would like to have a detailed report within two months regarding filling up the post of neuro surgeon doctors and provision of furniture / equipments in Ramanathapuram and Tiruvarur District Head quarters Hospitals as pointed out above. (Paragraph No.2.4)

3. The committee recommends that the Department should take action against the superintendent, who was responsible for the removal of water meter, which resulted in excess expenditure to the Government. The Committee also recommends that the Department should take appropriate step to recover the excess amount already paid to metro water and remit the same to the Government Account. (Paragraph No.3.4)

4. The Committee recommends the following: i) TNSC Board should arrange to provide alternative place to encroachers and hand over the land to the hospital authorities at the earliest. ii) The compound wall must be constructed around the recovered land. A report in this regard may be sent to the Committee within six months Committee desires that the Department should take all precautions to avoid recurrence of such encroachment of Government land in future. (Paragraph No.4.4)

5. The Committee desires that expeditious action should be taken by the Government on all the recommendations in this report. Wherever specific time limits have been indicated in the recommendations, they should be adhered to. In other cases, a final report of action taken should be sent within six months. (Paragraph No.5.1)

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