FIFTEENTH KERALA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

COMMITTEE
ON
PUBLIC ACCOUNTS
(2021-2023)

TWENTY SEVENTH REPORT

(Presented on 8th December, 2022)

SECRETARIAT OF THE KERALA LEGISLATURE
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM
2022

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On

Action Taken by Government on the Recommendations contained in the Seventh Report of the Committee on Public Accounts (2016-19)

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COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS (2021-2023)

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Shri Sunny Joseph.

Members :

Shri Manjalamkuzhi Ali

Shri M.V. Govindan Master

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Shri C. H. Kunhambu

Shri Mathew T. Thomas

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Shri M. Vincent.

Legislature Secretariat :

Shri. A. M. Basheer, Secretary

Shri B. Reji , Additional Secretary

Shri P.S. Selvarajan , Deputy Secretary

Smt. Shamy J., Under Secretary.

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman, Committee on Public Accounts, having been authorised by the Committee to present this Report, on their behalf present the Twenty Seventh Report on Action Taken by Government on the Recommendations contained in the Seventh Report of the Committee on Public Accounts (2016-19)

The Committee considered and finalised this Report at the meeting held on 21st November, 2022.

SUNNY JOSEPH,
Thiruvananthapuram,   *Chairman,*
8th December, 2022.   *Committee on Public Accounts.*

REPORT

This Report deals with the Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the 7th Report of the Committee on Public Accounts (2016-19).

The 7th Report of the Committee on Public Accounts (2016-2019) was presented to the House on 22nd August 2017. The Report contained 7 recommendations relating to Transport Department.

Government was addressed on 25th September 2017 to furnish the Statements of Action Taken on the recommendations contained in the report and the final reply was received on 17th November 2018.

The Committee examined the Statements of Action Taken in its meeting held on 18-9-2019 and 4-8-2021. The Committee was not satisfied with the Action Taken by the department on the recommendation contained in paragraph 7 and decided to pursue further. This recommendation, reply furnished thereon and further recommendation of the Committee is included in Chapter I of this Report. The Committee decided not to pursue action on the remaining recommendations, in the light of the replies furnished by the Government. Such recommendations/ comments and their replies are incorporated in Chapter II of this Report.

CHAPTER I

RECOMMENDATION IN RESPECT OF WHICH ACTION TAKEN
BY GOVERNMENT IS NOT SATISFACTORY AND
WHICH REQUIRES REITERATION.

TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT

Recommendation

(Sl. No : 2, Para No: 7)

1.1   While commenting on the Audit objection regarding computerization, the Committee observed that the collection of revenue was not properly carried out by the department and hoped the problem regarding tax collection could be

solved to an extent through computerization. The Committee understands the need of an independent IT wing with technical experts for hastening the modernization of the department. Therefore the Committee recommends that the department should take effective steps to establish an independent and dedicated IT wing.

Action Taken

1.2 Smart Move is developed in visual basic-6 and SQL Server. The project started in the year 2001. The software comprises all the works related to vehicle registration, vehicle taxation, vehicle permit, Driving Licenses, Conductor Licenses, Driving School Licenses, Trade Certificates to vehicle Dealers etc. 100s of screen were developed to achieve this huge task. Software is mainly based on the Motor Vehicles Act, Central Motor Vehicles Rules, Kerala Motor Vehicles Rules and the Kerala Motor Vehicles Taxation Act. Software modifications were done on every change in these laws. An elaborated user manual has been prepared on the roll out of the project in all offices in the year 2006. The software code related technical documentation is available in the code section itself. Now the department is moving to Centralized National Software Vahan & Sarathi. In this circumstances no further action is necessary and the paragraph may be dropped.

1. The Smart Move is made as a client server model software architecture. The B register table of the database have a unique constraint of Registration Number field. Hence the database never accept more than one record of the same registration number in an office. But the same number may be available in multiple offices consequent on change of address, transfer of ownership etc. When we started the central database in the State Data centre in postegre SQL database, all the data from each office is synchronized to the central server. Multiple record of the same vehicle may have been included in the central server even though it can be distinguished with its originating office code. While we migrate to the 'Vahan' we are able to isolate the last record of a particular vehicle and all other records will be moved to history tables. Data structure and the Registration number format used in the Smart Move are more reliable than any other format used in the country. This can be evidenced from the data analysation of Insurance Companies, Friends software prior to FREES, etc.

2. We are the first among the States to give data to the National Register of Driving Licenses and national register of vehicles. But there is some delay in moving data from office server to MVD central server, then to NIC server at Trivandrum lastly to the NIC National Register. If a vehicle or license data is available in more than one office, the national register will also contains more number of records of that vehicle or license. That is the only problem we are facing. This problem will be solved on moving to the Vahan and Sarathi.

3. When online services are introduced by the MVD, the online applications are downloaded to the client server model SMART MOVE. The applications are processed in Smart Move and uploaded back to the online pages automatically through web services. Even then we gave some fully online services such as online temporary registration, tax payment, fine-remittance etc. But when we moved to the Vahan & Sarathi, we would be able to give more and more fully online services.

4. As the Servers are maintained in each office, there may be some security problems. We have taken maximum care against a security threat and therefore our servers are not affected by any severe malwares from 2006 to 2019 October or the MVD website has not been intruded so far. However, the presumed security problem to the database due to the client server will be completely solved on the introduction of the centralized Vahan & Sarathi.

5. Smart Card is not implemented because there are some court cases yet to be finalized.

General

1.3 The State has implemented 'Vahan Sarathi' in all the offices of MVD in the year 2019. From 1-1-2019 onwards fresh licenses are issued through 'Sarathi'. From 1-4-2019 onwards all the new vehicles are registered through Vahan. Existing Driving license data of Wayanad office has been moved to Sarathi. 10% of vehicle data of entire state (from 0001 to 1000) have been moved to Vahan. We expect that all the existing data of licenses and vehicles can be moved to the Vahan & Sarathi within three months and made the Vahan Sarathi project fully operational by giving good bye to the client server model SMART Move. In the

SMART MOVE era; the department, the number of vehicle registration, number of Driving Licenses, Revenue collection are increased by year from 2006 to 2018. The report submitted by SSG cell showing the performance through SMART MOVE is attached herewith. (Annexure)

1.4 Considering that the SMART MOVE is about to stop and Vahan & Sarathi will be fully operational within three months, further action in all the paragraph may be dropped.

Further Recommendation

1.5 The Committee directs the department to furnish details as to whether an independent and dedicated I.T. wing has been established in the department as recommended by the Committee.

CHAPTER II

RECOMMENDATIONS ON WHICH THE COMMITTEE DOES NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN THE LIGHT OF THE REPLIES FURNISHED BY THE GOVERNMENT.

TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT

Recommendation

(Sl.No : 1, Para No: 2)

2.1 The Committee astonished at the fact that though the officials agreed to submit a report before the Committee on levy and collection of tax and fee within three months after conducting an adalath to settle the pending short levy collection, the same was not yet complied with. The Committee expresses it's strong displeasure over the negligence from the part of the department and opined that this would make a hurdle to the Committee for decision making. Therefore the Committee recommends that the government should ensure necessary steps to avoid such serious lapse in future. The Committee also directs the department to submit a detailed report on the measures adopted by government for setting the pending short levy cases and the current status of levy and collection of tax and fee at the earliest.

Action Taken

2.2   Adalath on pending Audit Reports were conducted at district level during May 2018 to January 2019 and successfully completed in eleven districts. These Adalaths were a grand success resulting in closure of 84 audit reports, 2432 pending paras and realization of 71.30 lakhs. Despite severe staff shortage and other odds, many officers of Motor Vehicles Department utilized the opportunity to reduce the pendency of their audit reports to significant proportion. LAR Adalaths in Idukki district were conducted on 14-2-2018 and 15-2-2018 and that of Ernakulam district were conducted on 25-7-2018 to 26-7-2018. LAR Adalaths pertaining to Kollam district were conducted on 17-10-2019 & 18-10-2019 and reply from AG awaited.

Recommendation

(Sl. No : 3, Para No: 16)

2.3   The Committee finds that due to lack of interconnection in Motor Vehicles Department it was not possible to verify datas of different offices. Hence the Committee directed the department to take up the matter with Commercial Taxes Department for getting assistance from their part to establish total network connectivity through KSWAN between all the offices of the department.

Action Taken

2.4 KSWAN connectivity has been established in all the offices of Motor Vehicles Department and is also upgrading the connectivity by providing OFC connectivity in all the offices and to ensure uninterrupted connectivity by increasing bandwidth.

Recommendation

(Sl. No : 4, Para No: 17)

2.5 The Committee understands that the department had an annual maintenance contract with C-Dit for power supply. But connectivity problem always arises due to interruption in power supply. RT offices couldn't function properly due to lack of sufficient power supply. Therefore the Committee directs the department to initiate legal proceedings against C-Dit if they fail to provide arrangements for ensuring uninterrupted power supply.

Action Taken

2.6 Agreement has been entered with C-Dit with effect from 1-2-2018 who is responsible to ensure uninterruptible power supply (UPS) and generator. In cases of any failure to provide the same, down time penalty is being imposed on the service provider as per terms of the agreement.

Recommendation

(Sl. No : 5, Para No: 27)

2.7 The Committee realized that the department had submitted incorrect DCB statement. It directs the department to rectify errors occured in the statement and to submit the same to the Accountant General without delay.

Action Taken

2.8 Work is going on at the department software to rectify the mistakes in the DCB statement.

Recommendation

(Sl. No : 6, Para No: 28)

2.9 The Committee comments that even though the computerizaion in the department was completed before five years, the department was not capable to function properly using modern technologies. The Committee understands that the inefficiency of the department is mainly due to inadequate staff strength. Taking into account of the growing vehicle population and technological changes, the present staff strength in the department are scarce to satisfy the required workforce. The Committee strongly recommends that the department should take necessary steps to create required additional posts in the Motor Vehicles Department.

Action Taken

2.10 For the implementation of Safe Kerala Project, Government have created 262 additional posts which include 10 posts of Regional Transport Officers, 65 posts of Motor Vehicle Inspectors and 187 posts of Assistant Motor Vehicle Inspectors. Also the study report on the workload of ministerial staff is under the consideration of Government.

Recommendation

(Sl. No : 7, Para No: 29)

2.11   The Committee understands that the enforcement officers of the department are facing many life threatening situations during their duty.   The Committee recommends that the enforcement officers of the Motor Vehicle Department should be equipped with necessary arms for their safety and special training to use the arms.

Action Taken

2.12   No such proposal is under the consideration of Government at present.

SUNNY JOSEPH,

Thiruvananthapuram,   *Chairman,*
8th December, 2022.   *Committee on Public Accounts*

APPENDIX

Summary of Main Conclusions / Recommendations

Sl. No.	Para No.	Department concerned	Conclusions / Recommendations
1	1.5	Transport	The Committee directs the department to furnish details as to whether an independent and dedicated I.T. wing has been established in the department as recommended by the Committee.

Annexure

Annexure

All India Review on Motor Vehicles Departments-remarks

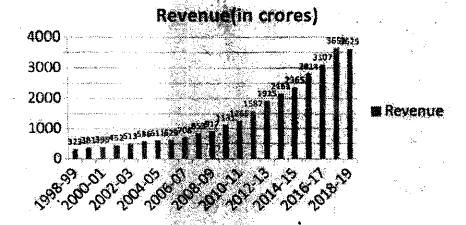Adequate documentation was not maintained for the development of the application.

Smart Move is developed in Visual basic -6 and SQL Server. The project started in the year 2001. The software comprises all the works related to Vehicle Registration, Vehicle taxation, vehicle permit, Driving licences, Conductor Licences, Driving school Licences, Trade certificates to Vehicle dealers etc. 100s of screens were developed to achieve this huge task. Software is mainly based on the Motor Vehicles Act, Central Motor vehicles Rules, Kerala Motor Vehicles Rules and the Kerala Motor Vehicles Taxation Act. Software modifications were done on every change in these laws. An elaborated usermanual has been prepared on the roll out of the project in all offices in the year 2006. The software code related technical documentation is available in the code section itself. Now the department is moving to Centralilsed National software Vahan & Sarathi. In this circumstances no further action is necessary and the paragraph may be dropped.

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General

The state has implemented vahan Sarathi in all of MVD offices in the year 2019 From 01/01/2019 onwards Fresh licences are issued through Sarathi. From 01/04/2019 onwards all the new vehicles are registered through vahan. Existing driving licence data of wayanad office has been moved to sarathi . 10 percentatge of vehicle data of entire state (from 0001 to 1000) have been moved to Vahan. We expect that all the existing data of licences and vehicles can be moved to the Vahan&sarathi within three months

Revenue(in crores)

and made the VahanSarathi project fully operational by giving good-bye to the Client server model SMART Move. In the SMART Move era, the department, the number of vehicle registration, number of driving licences, Revenue collection are increased year by year from 2006 to 2018. The above graph will show the performance through SMART Move.

Considering that the SMART Move is about to stop and Vahan&Sarathi will fully operational within three months, further action in all the paragraphs may be dropped.

Transport Commissioner