

FIFTEENTH KERALA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**COMMITTEE
ON
PUBLIC ACCOUNTS
(2021-2023)**

THIRTY FOURTH REPORT
(Presented on 10th August, 2023)



**SECRETARIAT OF THE KERALA LEGISLATURE
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM
2023**

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on

**Paragraphs relating to Social Justice Department contained in the Report of
the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for the year ended
31st March, 2017 (General and Social Sector).**

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COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS
(2021-2023)

COMPOSITION

Chairman :

Shri Sunny Joseph.

Members :

Shri Manjalankuzhi Ali

Shri M. V. Govindan Master

DR. K. T. Jaleel

Shri C. H. Kunhambu

Shri Mathew T. Thomas

Shri M. Rajagopalan

Shri P. S. Supal

Shri Thomas K. Thomas

Shri K. N. Unnikrishnan

Shri M. Vincent.

Legislature Secretariat :

Shri A. M. Basheer, Secretary

Shri P. S. Selvarajan, Joint Secretary

Shri. Jomy K. Joseph, Deputy Secretary

Smt. Mable Antony, 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 34th Report on paragraphs relating to Social Justice Department contained in the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for the year ended 31st March, 2017 (General and Social Sector).

The Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for the year ended 31st March, 2017 (General & Social Sector) was laid on the Table of the House on 18th June, 2018.

The Committee considered and finalised this Report at the meeting held on 12th July, 2023.

The Committee place on records their appreciation of the assistance rendered to them by the Accountant General in the examination of the Audit Report.

Thiruvananthapuram,
10th August, 2023.

SUNNY JOSEPH,
Chairman,
Committee on Public Accounts.

REPORT

SOCIAL JUSTICE DEPARTMENT

[Audit paragraphs 4.1 to 4.17 contained in the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for the year ended March 2017 (General and Social Sector)]

Functioning of Kerala Social Security Mission

Executive Summary

The Kerala Social Security Mission (KSSM), a registered society under the Travancore-Cochin Literary, Scientific and Charitable Societies Registration Act, 1955, was set up to formulate and implement social security schemes in the State. A Performance Audit was conducted on the functioning of KSSM covering the period 2012-17. The Performance Audit focused on assessing the effectiveness of various programmes/schemes implemented by KSSM, the efficiency of financial management and the status of internal control mechanism, and brought out the following audit findings.

The accounts of KSSM were audited only upto the financial year 2014-15. Accounts for the years 2015-17 were yet to be finalised. The systemic deficiencies pointed out by the auditors during the years 2012-13 to 2014-15 were persisting.

(Paragraph 4.8)

Order of Government of Kerala to transfer ₹20 crore from the Corpus fund of KSSM to Kudumbashree Mission led to premature closure of a Fixed Deposit and resultant loss of interest income of ₹0.59 crore to KSSM.

(Paragraph 4.8.3.1)

Under the scheme 'Sruthitharangam', 134 children in the Government Medical College, Kozhikode were awaiting (August 2017) mandatory testing and evaluation of hearing threshold, for assessing suitability for cochlear implantation.

(Paragraph 4.9)

Around 10,000 applications received by KSSM for obtaining assistance under Aswasakiranam, a scheme for rendering financial assistance to Caregivers of bed-ridden patients were found bundled and stacked at the office of the Mission, without registration and processing.

(Paragraph 4.10.2)

Failure of KSSM to follow-up and ensure receipt of duly signed and stamped computer generated lists of online applications from the Heads of Institutions resulted in denial of assistance to 57831 beneficiaries under Snehapoorvam, a scheme for providing financial assistance to children who lost either or both of their parents.

(Paragraph 4.11)

Failure of Vayomithram Coordinators/Child Development Project Officers (CDPOs) to identify tribal unwed mothers resulted in inability to render financial assistance to all potential beneficiaries, as envisaged under Snehasparsham scheme.

(Paragraph 4.12.1)

4.1 Introduction

Kerala Social Security Mission (KSSM) was registered in 2008, under the Travancore-Cochin Literary, Scientific and Charitable Societies Registration Act, 1955, to formulate and implement social security programmes/schemes in the State. KSSM was responsible for extending services and support to the destitute, poor, aged, children, women, the chronically ill cancer patients and other sections of the society who were in need of care and protection. The objectives of the KSSM included conduct of research on various social issues, besides acting as an information hub for the social welfare programmes in the State.

4.2 Organisational set up

A Governing Body consisting of 15 members including the Minister for Health and Social Justice as Chairman, Secretary, Social Justice Department as Vice- Chairman and Executive Director (ED), KSSM as Member Secretary was constituted to oversee the control, administration and management of the Mission

while an Executive Committee headed by the Secretary to Government consisting of five members was responsible for the day-to-day administration and implementation of the programmes/schemes. There were three Regional Directors, two at Thiruvananthapuram and one at Kozhikode. Only 12 District Co-ordinators were in place against the sanctioned 14, for the implementation of State Initiative on Disabilities (SID) schemes. While Care Providers were posted in institutions like Old age homes, Children's Homes etc., 40 Junior Public Health Nurses (JPHN) were posted at 38 hospitals across the State. The organisational setup is shown in the organogram given in Appendix III.

4.3 Audit Objectives

The Performance Audit was conducted to assess whether:

- the objectives behind setting up the Mission of extending services and support to the destitute, poor, aged, children, women and others were met and programmes/schemes were implemented efficiently and effectively;
- the system of financial management was efficient and effective;
- an internal control mechanism was in place and effective; and
- the programmes/schemes implemented by the Mission could achieve the Sustainable Development Goals of ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages and achieving gender equality by empowering all women and girls.

4.4 Audit Criteria

The Audit criteria for evaluation of performance of KSSM were derived from the following:

- Memorandum of Association;
- Decisions of the Governing Body and Executive Committee;
- Policy documents of GoI and State including National Policy on Senior Citizens, 2011 and National Policy for Persons with Disabilities, 2006;
- Operational Guidelines of related social security schemes issued by the Central/State Governments and concerned Directorates;

- Rights of persons with Disabilities Act, 2016;
- Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full participation) Rules, 1996 and amended Rules for Persons with Disabilities; and
- Kerala Service Rules (KSR), Kerala Financial Code (KFC), Kerala Treasury Code (KTC), Kerala Budget Manual, etc.

4.5 Scope of Audit

The Performance Audit was conducted between May and August 2017 covering the period 2012-17. For test-check, out of the 14 districts in the State, Audit selected five districts viz., Thiruvananthapuram, Palakkad, Malappuram, Kozhikode and Kasaragod by two-tier stratification sampling method using Probability Proportional to Size without Replacement (PPSWOR). The Performance Audit examined the implementation of all the 14 schemes¹ by KSSM. Significant audit findings on nine schemes are included in this Report.

4.6 Audit Methodology

An Entry Conference was held with the Special Secretary, Social Justice Department on 17th May, 2017 wherein the scope, objectives and methodology were discussed. Relevant records of Social Justice Department, KSSM office at Thiruvananthapuram and Regional Office at Kozhikode were scrutinised during the course of audit. The programme implementation offices in the Corporation/Municipal areas including block level Integrated Child Development Service offices of the Social Justice Department and empanelled hospitals that run the KSSM schemes in the selected districts were also covered during the course of audit. Audit methodology included joint inspection to assess whether the beneficiaries of various schemes for development of education and skill development actually derived the intended benefits. An Exit Conference was conducted on 8th December, 2017 with the Special Secretary to Government, Social Justice Department wherein the findings of the Performance Audit were discussed and response of Government obtained. Government replies were obtained and incorporated while finalising the report.

¹ Aswasakiranam, Cancer Suraksha, Caregivers, Hunger Free City, Karunya Deposit Scheme, Samaswasam, Snehapoorvam, Snehasparsham, Snehasanthwanam, Sruthitharangam, State Initiative on Disabilities, Thalolam, Vayomithram and We Care.

Audit Findings

4.7 Financial Management

Government of Kerala (GOK) released ₹65 crore² to the Director, Social Welfare for setting up a Social Security Fund as a mechanism to help the poor in times of hardship. As the amount could not be utilised in the absence of specific proposals, GOK proposed (October 2008) setting up of KSSM and transferring the amount of ₹65 crore to KSSM as its Corpus Fund. KSSM deposited (March 2009) the corpus fund of ₹65 crore granted by the GOK in three separate Fixed Deposit (FD) accounts viz. ₹25 crore, ₹25 crore and ₹8 crore and the balance amount of ₹ 7 crore was credited into the Treasury Savings Bank (TSB) account. Besides Government grants, KSSM could raise funds through grants/contributions from national and international agencies, corporate bodies, institutions and individuals in India and abroad.

Details of funds provided in the budget, contributions received from the Local Self Government Institutions (LSGI), other receipts including donations, bank interest, etc., and expenditure on the Social Security Schemes including administrative charges, during the period from 2012-13 to 2016-17, are given in Table.

Table 4.1: Details of receipts and expenditure for period 2012-13 to 2016-17
(₹ in crore)

Year	OB	Budget Allocation	GOK release	Contribution from LSGIs	Other receipts	Total Fund available	Expenditure	CB
1	2	3	4	5	6	7=2+4+5+6	8	9=8-7
2012-13	39.74	95.25	66.28	13.74	2.19	121.95	77.16	44.79
2013-14	44.79	110.65	141.06	22.76	0.35	208.96	120.10	88.86
2014-15	88.86	116.45	120.90	14.93	0.55	225.24	117.06	108.18
2015-16	108.18	139.35	130.73	16.24	7.04	262.19	137.78	124.41
2016-17	124.41	136.07	132.66	14.00	16.52	287.59	181.13	106.46
TOTAL		597.77	591.63	81.67	26.65		633.23	

(Source: Data collected from KSSM)

2. ₹25 crore in March 2003 and ₹40 crore in March 2005.

Audit examined the scheme wise receipts and expenditure of GOK funds for the years 2012-2017 (Appendix III) and observed that while ₹107.37 crore was expended in excess under eight schemes, expenditure fell short of receipts by ₹ 82.53 crore in five schemes. KSSM stated (December 2017) that the excess expenditure over budget release was met from the Corpus Fund, receipts from LSGI contributions, interest, fund raised from sale of stamps, etc.

Audit also analysed the large quantum of cash balance held by KSSM. It was seen that the unutilised balance of ₹106.46 crore as at the end of March 2017 included ₹45 crore of corpus funds kept as FDs³. Besides, ₹36.20 crore received from GOK during 2012-2017 for SID out of total receipt of ₹96.21 crore, remained unspent. The unspent amount included ₹11.61 crore received during 2013-2016 and ₹24.59 crore received in 2016-2017. Having accounted for ₹ 81.20 crore of unutilised balance, the remaining ₹25.26 crore could be accounted by unspent LSGI contribution and other income by way of Interest, etc. Audit observed that the retention in Fixed Deposits (FD) of funds meant for implementation of schemes, was irregular.

The audit findings are given below.

4.8 Non-adherence to financial standards/persistent irregularities

The Memorandum of Association of KSSM stipulated that the Chartered Accountants, appointed for the purpose by the Governing Body, audit the accounts of the Mission every year. Audit noticed that the accounts of the Mission were audited only upto the financial year 2014-15. Thus, audit from the year 2015-16 onwards was due (status as on October 2017). Scrutiny of the accounts for the years 2012-13 to 2014-15 revealed that the Chartered Accountants had qualified their opinion on the financial statements by pointing out significant deficiencies viz., booking of expenditure on the basis of self-certified and unaudited statements given by hospitals, agencies, etc., non-confirmation of closing balances, inability to correctly account the sale of stamps by the KSSM, etc. It was seen that the concerns expressed by the Chartered Accountants as early as in 2012-13, were persisting (October 2017).

3. ₹25 crore from the original corpus of ₹65 crore and a further ₹20 crore of funds set aside for the State Initiative on Disabilities to provide Special Initiative to Persons with Disabilities.

Guidelines for implementation of 'Thalolam' and 'Cancer Suraksha' schemes required empanelled hospitals to furnish to KSSM, monthly statements on utilisation of funds signed by Nodal Officer and yearly Receipts and Payments statements certified by a Chartered Accountant. Of the two Government Medical Colleges⁴ test-checked, records at the Government Medical College Hospital, Thiruvananthapuram revealed that during 2015-16, there was a difference of ₹0.83 lakh between the monthly and yearly statements of expenditure on 'Thalolam' scheme. The Hospital admitted that it failed to appoint Chartered Accountants for the Scheme and therefore did not furnish certified Receipt and Payment Statements to KSSM. The Hospital also admitted (June 2017) that the monthly statements of expenditure furnished to KSSM on utilisation of funds were not correct and that the mistakes occurred due to oversight. In the Regional Cancer Centre, Thiruvananthapuram, an empanelled hospital under the Cancer Suraksha Scheme, it was seen that no separate accounts were maintained for the funds released under the scheme.

During the Exit Conference (December 2017), GOK admitted the audit observations and replied that measures were being taken to rectify the systemic deficiencies in the accounts for the years 2012-2015.

[Note received from the Government based on the above audit paragraphs is included as Appendix II]

Excerpts from Committee's discussion with departmental officials

1. Regarding the audit paragraph, the Committee enquired about the present status of the audit of accounts of Kerala Social Security Mission (KSSM). The Director, Social Justice Department informed the Committee that the accounts of KSSM were audited by AG upto the financial year 2020-21 but internal audit was only done up to the financial year 2017-18. She further submitted that the internal audit for the Financial year 2018-19 would be completed within 10 days and also promised to complete the audit for the financial year 2020-21 in six months.

2. To a query of the Committee whether empanelled hospitals were furnishing the audited statements to KSSM on time, the Director, SJD replied that

4. Government Medical Colleges Thiruvananthapuram and Kozhikode

only RCC was showing reluctance in submitting audited statements and expenditure statements. Although, this issue had been raised several times during meetings and many reminders were forwarded, the delay on the part of RCC still persisted. She further added that earlier there was a delay from Malabar Cancer Centre in the submission of audited statements, but now they are submitting them on time.

3. The Committee expressed its strong displeasure over the inaction of an empanelled hospital like Regional Cancer Centre, Thiruvananthapuram in furnishing the audited statements and expenditure statements pertaining to the 'Cancer Suraksha' Scheme to the Kerala Social Security Mission (KSSM) on time. The Committee noticed that the Regional Cancer Centre, which comes under the 'Cancer Suraksha Scheme', was not maintained separate accounts for the funds released under the scheme.

4. The Committee noted with grave concern that the empanelled hospitals had failed to submit the audited statements of accounts promptly. The Committee directed the department to give strict instructions to RCC for the completion of auditing on time and the duly furnishing of statements to the KSSM. The director, Social Justice Department (executive director to KSSM) agreed to do so.

Conclusion/Recommendation

5. The Committee observes that certain empanelled hospitals, mainly Regional Cancer Centre, Thiruvananthapuram are showing reluctance in submitting audited / expenditure statements to KSSM on time, and expresses its strong displeasure at the inaction on the part of Regional Cancer Centre. The Committee directs the department to give strict instructions to RCC for the time- bound completion of auditing and the duly furnishing of expenditure statements and audited statements to KSSM.

4.8.1 Non-maintenance of cash book

Rule 92 (a) of Kerala Treasury Code (KTC) laid down the procedure for the maintenance of cash book and the duties of the Head of Office in that regard. It required all Government officers receiving and handling cash to maintain a cash book in Form TR 7A. All monetary transactions should be entered in the cash

book as soon as they occur and attested by the Head of Office in token of check. The Head of Office was also required to verify the cash book at the end of each month and record a signed and dated certificate to that effect. Article 102 of the Kerala Financial Code (KFC) also referred to the provisions of the KTC.

It was observed that though KSSM maintained two TSB accounts⁵ and nine Savings Bank (SB) accounts with nationalised banks (status as of March 2017), cash book was maintained only in respect of transactions pertaining to TSB Account No. 134. All transactions relating to budgetary receipts, LSGI contributions, scheme and administrative expenditures were entered in TSB Account No. 134 maintained by KSSM in the District Treasury, Thiruvananthapuram. Amounts for expenditure were transferred in lumpsum by issuing cheques from this TSB Account into the SB Accounts of nationalised banks for booking of final expenditure. None of the other transactions dealt with through the other TSB and bank accounts were recorded in the cash book. In the absence of cash book, KSSM was not aware of the funds available on any particular day and instead had to depend on bank statements to reckon the status of balance available with the banks. KSSM could not also follow-up on remittances⁶ due from LSGIs since the bank statements did not contain the names of LSGIs that remitted money into its TSB account. The failure to maintain cash book led to failure to record transactions as and when they occurred and their resultant inability to verify the correctness of transactions and accuracy of accounts.

The records maintained in KSSM revealed that the closing balance as on 31st March, 2017 was ₹106.46 Crore whereas the actual cash balance lying in nine bank accounts, two TSB Accounts and two FDs was ₹205.96 crore. The difference in amount of ₹99.50 crore was yet to be reconciled (December 2017) by KSSM. In the absence of cash book, Audit examined Cheque Issue Register, Bank statements and statements generated from SULEKHA software maintained by LSGIs. It was observed from the year-wise statement of expenditure on 'Aswasakiranam' scheme furnished by KSSM that against the financial

5. TSB Account No.103 for operating the accounts of SID office and TSB Account No.134.

6. Contributions of ₹10 lakh by Corporations and District Panchayats, ₹5 lakh by Municipalities and Block Panchayats and ₹1 lakh by Grama Panchayats.

assistance of ₹196.02 Crore provided under 'Aswasakiranam' to the beneficiaries during 2012-2017, the expenditure booked by KSSM was inflated by ₹10.69 Crore. Similarly, against receipts of ₹23.95 Crore from LSGIs into bank during 2016-17, KSSM accounted for only ₹14 Crore. It was also observed that 125 cheques, valued at ₹57.74 Crore, drawn during 29th March, 2017 to 31st March 2017 were encashed only in 2017-18. These three items together accounted for ₹78.38 Crore of the unreconciled balance of ₹99.50 Crore. Violation of provisions contained in KTC/KFC on maintenance of cash book and resultant inability to verify the correctness of transactions was indicative of poor financial management. The inflating of scheme expenditure on Aswasakiranam scheme by ₹10.69 Crore was not justifiable and required investigation.

KSSM admitted (October 2017) that there was practical difficulty in maintaining cash book and subsidiary cash books incorporating all transactions of nine SB accounts and two TSB accounts maintained by it. KSSM further stated that it did not have sufficient staff to monitor the bank statements on a daily basis. The reply of KSSM was not acceptable as large volume of transactions should not be a bar for making entries in the cash book, either in physical or in electronic form and there was laxity on the part of KSSM in not complying with the norms prescribed in the KTC. During the Exit Conference (December 2017), GOK assured that measures would be taken to reconcile the difference while finalising the accounts.

[Notes received from the Government based on the above audit paragraph are included as Appendix II]

Excerpts from Committee's discussion with departmental officials

6. To the query in the audit para on non-maintenance of Cash book, the Director, Social Justice Department informed the Committee that at present, Cash book and Tally Accounts are being maintained accurately. There are three accounts for KSSM maintained, one each in SBI, Federal Bank and Treasury. Earlier, only the main account was maintained properly, but now both the main and sub accounts are accurately maintained and updated.

7. When asked about the possibility of malpractice, the Senior Audit Officer pointed out that cash transactions were carried out without maintaining a cash book against KFC rules, providing scope for malpractice.

8. The Committee enquired whether any investigation was carried out regarding the inflation of expenditure by ₹10.69 Crore on “Aswasakiranam Scheme” and short accounting of receipts from LSGIs.

9. Committee observed that a cash book should be maintained in all Government offices for receiving and handling cash, as stipulated in Rule 92 (a) of KTC. The failure to maintain a cash book led to failure to record transactions. Transactions solely based on Bank-Statements would result in malpractice.

10. The Director, SJD enlightened the Committee that the inflated amount was in addition to the budget allocation and that every year it was going beyond expectations.

11. The Committee recommended that efforts should be made to maintain the cash book and tally accounts properly and take step to maintain the KSSM account statements effectively by using latest technology and software system.

Conclusions/Recommendations

12. **The Committee understands that all Government officers who receive and handle money are required to keep a cash book in Form TR 7A as stipulated in K.T.C. and should enter all monetary transactions in cash book as soon as they occur and should be attested by the Head of Office. The Committee opines that non-maintenance of cash book is a clear violation of Rule 92(a) of the Kerala Treasury Code and it also resulted in an unreconciled balance of ₹ 99.50 Crore.**

13. **The Committee directs the department to issue strict instructions for the proper maintenance of the cash book and accounts. The Committee also urges the department to make use of information technology – enabled services for the proper maintenance of cash book to avoid future failures.**

4.8.2 Avoidable tax deduction of ₹40.27 lakh

Kerala Social Security Mission is a trust registered under Travancore-Cochin Literary, Scientific and Charitable Societies Registration Act, 1955 and filed (December 2009) an application as a charitable institution under the Income Tax Act, 1961 for registration under Section 12 A of the Income Tax Act so as to obtain exemption from payment of income tax. Under Section 139 (4A) of Income Tax (IT) Act, KSSM, being a charitable trust, was mandatorily required to file a return of income if its income exceeded the maximum amount not chargeable to income tax. As per Section 237 of IT Act, if any person satisfies the Assessing Officer that the amount of tax paid by him or on his behalf or treated as paid by him or on his behalf for any year exceeds the amount of tax payable by him, he shall be entitled to a refund of the excess tax paid by him. Further, as per Section 239 of IT Act, no such claim shall be allowed, unless it is made within one year from the last day of the assessment year. It was seen that an amount of ₹40.27 lakh⁷ was deducted by the District Treasury as Tax Deducted at Source (TDS) on interest accrued on FD during the period 2009-10 to 2011-12. Audit observed that KSSM did not claim refund of the TDS by filing income tax returns for the relevant years resulting in loss of ₹40.27 lakh to KSSM.

KSSM while admitting (October 2017) that it did not file returns for the period from 2008-09 to 2016-17, stated that it would file income tax returns for those years to get refund of the same. The reply of KSSM was not correct since any claim for refund of TDS made during 2009-10 to 2011-12 would be rejected by the Income Tax Department as KSSM failed to submit income tax returns within one year from the last day of the assessment year. During the Exit Conference (December 2017), Special Secretary to Government admitted that failure of KSSM to submit refund claim within the time limit could lead to rejection of such claim by the IT Department.

7. 2009-10: ₹13.41 lakh, 2010-11: ₹13.43 lakh, 2011-12: ₹13.43 lakh

[Note received from the Government based on the above audit paragraph is included as Appendix II]

Excerpts from Committee's discussion with departmental officials

14. Regarding the audit query on avoidable tax deduction of ₹ 40.27 lakh, the Director, Social Justice Department informed that the District Treasury had deducted the Fixed Deposit interest of ₹ 40.27 lakh as TDS. Director, Social Justice Department further added that though KSSM had requested the District Treasury Officer to report whether ₹ 40.27 lakh deducted as TDS from the deposit of Kerala Social Security Mission during the Financial years 2009-2010 to 2011-2012 had been remitted to Income Tax Department, there was no response.

15. In continuation, the Committee enquired whether tax return was submitted properly, the Director informed that since KSSM has registered as per Travancore - Cochin Literary, Scientific and Charitable Societies Act there is no need for TDS payment. She further added that it is also understood unofficially that this amount has not been received at Income Tax Department.

16. The Principal Secretary clarified that being a ten year old case, it should be examined why TDS was done at that time. The Senior Deputy Accountant General pointed out that to avoid such mistakes in future primary training regarding Income Tax return filing should be conducted for newly appointed employees. The Committee accepted the Accountant General's remarks and recommended the department to do so.

17. The Committee pointed out that if return was filed correctly, amount could be refunded. The Committee directed the department to identify the person who has failed to file an IT return on time and should take stringent action against that person and also inform whether the TDS amount was remitted to the Income Tax Department. The Director agreed to inform the details after consultation with Treasury Director. The Committee directed the department to furnish the detailed reports at the earliest and observing that procedural ignorance might be the reason for such lapses, the Committee recommended that proper preliminary and refresher training should be imparted to the staff members who are dealing with returns, e-filing and related matters.

Conclusions/Recommendations

18. The Committee observes that an amount of ₹40.27 lakh deducted as TDS on interest accrued on FD during the period 2009-10 to 2011-12 of Kerala Social Security Mission could have been refunded if the income tax return had been filed properly on time.

19. The Committee directs the department to identify the officers who failed to file the income tax returns on time and also directs to take stringent action against the officers responsible for the lapses. The Committee directs the department to inform whether the TDS amount had been remitted to the income tax department.

20. The Committee also recommends that appropriate training and awareness should be provided to the officers who are dealing with IT returns, e-filing related matters in order to avoid such lapses in future.

4.8.3 Diversion of funds

As mentioned in paragraph 4.7 of this Report, KSSM deposited the corpus fund of ₹65 Crore granted by the GOK in three separate FD accounts viz. ₹25 Crore, ₹25 Crore and ₹8 Crore and the balance amount of ₹7 crore was credited into the TSB account. Audit noticed instances wherein funds were transferred to other institutions from the corpus fund even when the cash balance of KSSM was very low as discussed below.

4.8.3.1 Loss due to premature closure of Fixed Deposit

GOK ordered KSSM (2) November 2010) to transfer ₹20 crore from its corpus to Kudumbashree Mission for the implementation of 'Asraya⁸' scheme, which was announced in the Budget Speech 2008-09. The Government Order (GO) also required the Kudumbashree Mission to produce Utilisation Certificate as on 31st March 2011. Consequent to the GO, ED, KSSM informed GOK (November 2010) that ₹58 crore of its Corpus Fund was kept in three separate FDs of ₹25 Crore, ₹25 Crore and ₹ 8 crore with dates of maturity of 23rd April 2011, 23rd April 2011 and 18th March 2011 respectively. The ED, KSSM further

8. A community based initiative by Kudumbashree to identify, rehabilitate and accord social security to the poorest of the poor.

informed that immediate withdrawal of ₹25 crore would cause a loss of interest to the extent of ₹1.07 crore and suggested that it would be judicious to wait for withdrawal of FD at maturity. However, GOK turned down the request of the ED, KSSM and ordered (November 2010) closure of the FD and transfer of the amount to Kudumbashree Mission. Audit observed that in order to comply with the order, KSSM made a premature closure of one of its FDs of ₹25 crore on 16th March 2011 (maturity date 23rd April 2011). It transferred ₹20 crore to Kudumbashree Mission (31st March, 2011) and credited the balance amount of ₹ 5 crore into its TSB account.

Audit observed that the direction of GOK to use the Corpus fund of KSSM for the 'Asraya' scheme implemented by Kudumbashree Mission was against its own direction issued in October 2008, which required utilisation of Corpus fund for implementation of schemes only with the approval of Governing Body/Executive Committee of KSSM. Audit further noticed that the insistence of GOK to release the amount immediately (22nd November 2010) to Kudumbashree forced KSSM to prematurely close its FD account by 39 days, resulting in avoidable loss of interest of ₹0.59 Crore to KSSM. It was further observed that the orders of GOK to transfer ₹20 Crore immediately to Kudumbashree was injudicious since Kudumbashree had a balance of ₹130 Crore in its accounts on the day of transfer and as such was not in any urgent need of money. A scrutiny of the records of the Kudumbashree Mission also revealed that expenditure on 'Asraya' scheme during the years 2011-2015 was only ₹7.79 Crore, ₹1.41 Crore, ₹6.40 Crore and ₹1.12 Crore respectively. Thus, the injudicious decision of GOK to transfer ₹20 Crore to Kudumbashree led to premature closing of the FD account by 39 days and consequent avoidable loss of interest of ₹0.59 crore to the KSSM. KSSM confirmed (October 2017) the loss of interest due to premature closure of FD.

Kudumbashree stated (September 2017) that since KSSM released ₹20 Crore only on the last day of March 2011, the expenditure of ₹19.77 Crore on 'Asraya' scheme for the year 2009-10 was met from its plan funds. Kudumbashree also stated that the amount received from KSSM was actually the committed expenditure and that the balance of plan fund of Kudumbashree on the day of receipt of ₹ 20 crore was only ₹ 13 Crore and not ₹ 130 Crore as stated by Audit.

The reply of Kudumbashree was not correct in view of the fact that the balance of ₹130 Crore cited by Audit as available with Kudumbashree was as per the audited statement of accounts of Kudumbashree for the year 2010-11 and its expenditure on 'Asraya' scheme during these years was meagre.

[Notes received from the Government based on the above audit paragraphs are included as Appendix II]

Excerpts from Committee's discussion with departmental officials

21. The Committee wanted to know why ₹ 20 Crore Fixed Deposit account of KSSM had to be closed prematurely and in which bank the FD was deposited. The Director, SJD apprised that FD was kept in Treasury and was closed prematurely as per the direction of the Government in 2010.

22. The Senior DAG pointed out that although premature closure was done as per orders of Government, Kudumbasree had a balance of ₹130 Crore in its accounts on the day of transfer of ₹ 20 Crore to its account.

23. Therefore the Committee strongly criticized the injudicious decision of Government of Kerala to transfer ₹ 20 Crore to Kudumbasree leading to premature closing of its treasury FD by 39 days and consequent loss of interest of almost ₹0.59 Crore to Kerala Social Security Mission.

Conclusion/Recommendation

24. The Committee expresses its displeasure at the injudicious decision of the Government to transfer to the tune of ₹ 20 Crore from the corpus fund of KSSM to the Kudumbasree Mission which led to a premature ₹25 crore Fixed Deposit closure and a consequent loss of interest of ₹ 0.59 Crore to the KSSM.

4.8.3.2 Diversion of KSSM funds for extending insurance coverage to representatives of LSGIs

GOK instructed KSSM (March 2012), to extend coverage of medical insurance to elected representatives of Local Self Government Institutions (LSGI). GOK extended (November 2014) the benefits of the scheme to include former elected representatives of LSGIs. KSSM spent ₹82.84 lakh during 2013-2016 for

providing insurance coverage to 10,955 such LSGI representatives who did not fall under the category of destitute, poor and other weaker sections of population whom KSSM was meant to help. Besides, KSSM had to incur recurring expenditure of ₹29 lakh for annual renewal of the insurance for an average number of 3904 LSGI representatives.

The ED, KSSM admitted (August 2017) that the representatives of LSGIs did not fall under the category of destitute, poor and other weaker sections and that the issue would be taken up with Government. During the Exit Conference (December 2017), the Special Secretary to Government agreed with the audit observation and informed that the matter was being looked into.

[Notes received from the Government based on the above audit paragraph is included as Appendix II]

Excerpts from Committee's discussion with departmental officials

25. The Committee urged explanation on extended coverage of medical insurance to former elected representatives of LSGIs. The Director, Social Justice Department enlightened the Committee that KSSM fund was spent for providing insurance coverage to former elected representatives of LSGIs as per a Government Order in 2012, which amounts to almost 80 lakh but later it was not repeated. The Committee observed that Government diverted the KSSM funds to extend the benefits of scheme to former elected representatives of LSGIs who did not come under the limits of the scheme.

26. The Principal Secretary, Social Justice Department informed the Committee that Local Self Government Department had issued an order in 2012 to provide ₹50 lakh from Plan fund-general section of Ernakulam district plan for projects conducted by KSSM. It is also stated in the above mentioned Government Order that insurance coverage of elected representatives of LSGIs is to be met from KSSM fund. The Director, Social Justice Department added that some projects under KSSM received Panchayat fund.

27. The Committee came to know from the reply that ₹25 lakh in 2013, ₹29 lakh in 2014, ₹29 lakh in 2016 with a total of ₹83 lakh had been spent for insurance premium of 9955 elected representatives during the period 2013-2016.

The Committee also wanted to be informed whether ₹80 lakh from Ernakulam district plan fund was included in the ₹83 lakh spent. The Principal Secretary, Social Justice Department explained that insurance premium might have been paid from the fund received from Local bodies for social security programs of KSSM. The Principal Secretary, Social Justice Department further agreed to submit a clarified report regarding this to the Committee after examination.

28. The Committee directed the department to clarify whether the amount spent for insurance coverage for elected representatives of Local Self Government Institutions against the objectives of the Kerala Social Security Mission had been received back from the Government or else the Government should reimburse the amount of KSSM, and to furnish a detailed report in this regard. The Principal Secretary agreed to do so.

Conclusion/Recommendation

29. The Committee enquires whether the amount spent for extending insurance coverage for elected representatives of LSGIs, against the objectives of the KSSM, has been received back from the Government. The Committee directs the department to reimburse the amount to KSSM on an urgent basis if this has not been done so far. The Committee also urges the department to furnish a comprehensive report in this regard to the Committee at the earliest.

4.8.4 Fund generation through printing of stamps and sales thereof

GOK ordered KSSM (October 2011) to mobilise ₹1,100 lakh through sale of 25 lakh stamps of various denominations⁹ for implementation of schemes like Cancer Suraksha, Cochlear Implantation, Heart surgeries, etc. The initial target date set for sale of stamps was 31st December, 2011, which was extended three times with the last date fixed as 31st December, 2012. The ED, KSSM entrusted the overall responsibility of conducting the sale of stamps to the Administrative cum Accounts Officer of KSSM. The stamps were sold through Vayomithram Coordinators who held road shows targeting school and college students and through Kudumbashree Units.

9. Ten lakh stamps each of denominations ₹10 and ₹50; five lakh stamps of denomination of ₹100 each.

It was observed that no accounts were maintained by the KSSM on the printing, distribution and collection of proceeds on sale of stamps. Minutes of 38th Executive Committee meeting (May 2016) revealed that ₹263.53 lakh was received through sale of stamps. Joint verification conducted by Audit, at KSSM Headquarters (October 2017) revealed unsold stock of stamps worth ₹828.46 lakh. KSSM, therefore, accounted for stamps worth ₹1091.99 lakh only out of stamps worth ₹1,100 lakh printed. There was thus short receipt on sale of stamps amounting to ₹8.01 lakh.

KSSM admitted (October 2017) that since persons dealing with stamps changed frequently, proper accounts on printing, distribution and collection of net proceeds on sale of stamps could not be maintained. The reply was not acceptable and responsibility for the loss of funds to the extent of ₹8.01 lakh needs to be fixed and recoveries effected. GOK, while accepting the short receipt of ₹8.01 lakh on sale of stamps, agreed (December 2017) to the suggestion of Audit to fix responsibility and effect recovery of loss incurred by KSSM.

Recommendation 4.1: KSSM may ensure that financial discipline is maintained, diversion of funds avoided and internal control mechanism strengthened in order to effectively implement its social security schemes.

[Notes received from the Government based on the above audit paragraphs is included as Appendix II]

Excerpts from Committee's discussion with departmental officials

30. Regarding the audit query that printing and distributing stamp worth ₹11 Crore for additional income generation to KSSM resulted in short receipt of ₹8.01 lakh on sale of stamps. The Principal Secretary, Social Justice Department informed the Committee that such a loss might have incurred due to reasons like hasty printing of stamps, improper transportation, non-maintenance of accounts etc. When Committee enquired how the loss was calculated, Senior Audit Officer informed the Committee that the amount was found after joint verification done by the audit team and KSSM. Neither the details of stamp worth ₹8.01 lakh nor the amount was mentioned anywhere.

31. The Committee further understood from Principal Secretary that ₹ 2.63 Crore was collected through sale of stamps having denominations 50 and 100 and that they were sold through “ Vayomitram ” co-ordinators. The Committee wanted to know whether ₹8.01 lakh was the deficit amount after adding the sale amount.

32. The Senior Deputy Accountant General apprised that out of stamps worth ₹11 Crore printed, stamps worth ₹2.03 Crore was sold and stamps worth ₹ 8.28 Crore remained unsold. But there was short receipt on sale of stamp amounting to ₹8.01 lakh, which may be due to improper maintenance of accounts on printing, distribution and collection of net proceeds on sale of stamps.

33. The Committee understood that the unsold stamps were kept in the head office of KSSM and that they had not been checked for damage. The Committee opined that the viability on sale of stamp for such a huge amount should have been assessed by the concerned officers in the department. The Director, Social Justice Department stated that although inspection was conducted by Finance Department regarding this, liability was not fixed on anyone. However, instructions were given later not to repeat these mistakes again.

34. When the Senior Audit Officer criticized that eventhough KSSM had agreed to the observations of the Accountant General in fixing the liability on concerned officers, no further action was taken in this regard. The Principal Secretary, Social Justice department explained that such a loss had occurred because of the lethargic attitude of the officers involved who did not keep accounts properly. Moreover, the staff who functioned at that time were employed on a contract basis, and they were terminated after the contract period. Hence, there was practical difficulty in fixing responsibility on them.

35. The Committee opined that the repetition of such lapses could be avoided in the future only if the responsibility was fixed. The Committee expressed its dissatisfaction in not taking action against the wrongdoer after fixing responsibility inspite of Accountant General's audit objection.

36. The Committee also directed the department to take necessary decision regarding the disposal of unsold stamps kept in the head office of KSSM. The Committee understand from the minutes of the meeting of KSSM that printing of

stamps, distribution and decision to conduct road show through “vayomitram” scheme for stamp distribution were all planned and implemented by Dr. R. Ashok, who then had the additional charge of Executive Director. It is also quoted in minutes that the complete responsibility of stamps was handed to Administrative cum Accounts Officer through a circular issued by him.

37. The Committee opined that no accounts were maintained by the KSSM on the printing, distribution and collection of proceeds on sale of stamps. Committee expressed strong dissatisfaction in this matter for not taking any action by KSSM for the loss of ₹8.01 Lakh according to the objection of Accountant General.

Conclusions/Recommendations

38. The Committee notes with grave concern that no accounts were maintained properly by the KSSM on printing, distribution and collection of proceeds on sale of stamps and expresses its displeasure at the irresponsible attitude of KSSM in not taking any action against the loss of fund of ₹8.01 lakh.

39. The Committee notices that such a loss had occurred because of the lethargy of the officers involved who did not keep accounts properly. The Committee expresses deep dissatisfaction in the failure to take action against officers who commit errors or to find out who is responsible for the act of omission. The Committee opines that responsibility should be fixed against the erring officials in order to avoid the repetition of such lapses in the future.

40. The Committee directs the department to take adequate measures for the disposal of unsold stock of stamps which are maintained in the office.

4.9 Sruthitharangam

GOK designated KSSM (December, 2011) as the nodal agency to implement “Sruthitharangam”, a scheme conceived to provide cochlear implants free of cost to children below three years and also to provide financial support for Auditory

Verbal Habilitation (AVH) to operated children through 11 empanelled hospitals¹⁰ where the annual family income of the applicant was below ₹2 lakh. The Screening Committee would be empowered to make exception to children beyond 3 years upto 5 years of age on a case-to-case basis. The revised guidelines of GOK (May 2014) required KSSM to provide cochlear implants for surgeries for children above five years of age in empanelled hospitals if the cost of the implant was met by a sponsor/organisation/ individual/family.

The guidelines of the scheme required parents/guardians of the child detected by the Audiological Centre with hearing impairment, with a high chance of success after implantation, to apply to KSSM for cochlear implantation in the prescribed format. KSSM would then forward such applications to the respective Regional Technical Screening Committee for sanction of surgery after adequate scrutiny on the basis of preoperative assessments and the protocol laid down by the State Level Technical Committee.

The Health and Family Welfare Department constituted (December 2011) three Regional Technical Committees¹¹ (South, Central and North) to scrutinise the applications for Cochlear implantation. Further, a State Level Monitoring Committee¹² was to monitor and conduct review of implementation and to function as a grievance redressal forum.

During 2012-13 to 2016-17, an amount of ₹34.18 Crore was spent for 733 children out of ₹46 Crore received. The year-wise details of total number of applications received for screening, sanctioned, rejected and withheld during the period 2012-13 to 2016-17 were as given in Table.

10 Government Medical College Hospital Thiruvananthapuram, Santhwanam Hospital Thiruvananthapuram, KIMS Hospital, Thiruvananthapuram, Government Medical College Hospital Kottayam, Dr. Noushad ENT Hospital, Ernakulam, Medical Trust Hospital, Ernakulam, West Fort Hospital, Thrissur, Ascent ENT Hospital, Perinthalmanna, Government Medical College Hospital, Kozhikode, Dr. Manoj ENT Super Speciality Institute and Research Centre, Kozhikode and Malabar Institute of Medical Sciences Ltd. Hospital, Kozhikode.

11 The District Medical Officers of Thiruvananthapuram, Ernakulam and Kozhikode were the convenors of the Committees.

12 Comprising of eight members including four Government Secretaries, Director of Health Services, Director of Medical Education, the Executive Director, NISH and Executive Director, KSSM.

Table : Details of applications received, sanctioned, rejected and withheld for the period 2012-13 to 2016-17

Table

Year	Number of application received and scrutinised by screening committee	Total number of applications sanctioned/ selected	Number of implantation surgeries conducted	Number of children not undergone implantation	Total number of application rejected	Number of withheld applications (Balance)
2012-13	295	180	180	0	85	30
2013-14	253	210	210	0	35	8
2014-15	147	128	125	3	13	6
2015-16	113	105	101	4	3	5
2016-17	121	117	117	0	4	0
Total	929	740	733	7	140	49

(Source: Data collected from KSSM)

Audit noticed that 49 applications were withheld due to reasons such as failure to conduct various mandatory tests like Auditory Study State Response (ASSR), Intelligence Quotient assessment and Speech and Language Evaluation by empanelled hospitals. It was further seen that 134 children in the Government Medical College Kozhikode were awaiting (August 2017) testing and evaluation of their hearing threshold and diagnosis of retro cochlear lesions through ASSR and Brainstem Evoked Responsive Audiometry (BERA) tests, which were mandatory for patients for assessing suitability for cochlear implant. Audit observed that the number of applications for cochlear implantation to be approved by Technical Committees could have been much higher had the tests on these 183 applicants been completed for assessing their suitability for cochlear implantation.

The Government Medical College, Kozhikode cited (August 2017) the fact that the sole BERA/ASSR instrument available at the Hospital was being utilised for multiple purposes apart from cochlear implantation candidacy evaluation, as the reason for delay in candidacy evaluation. The Hospital, further suggested that

supply of an additional BERA/ASSR instrument by KSSM for the sole purpose of candidacy evaluation under the Scheme would speed up the process. The ED, KSSM stated during the Exit Conference (December 2017) that supply order would be placed with the Kerala Medical Supplies Corporation Ltd. and the issue would be resolved by the end of this financial year.

[Notes received from the Government based on the above audit paragraph are included as Appendix II]

Excerpts from Committee's discussion with departmental officials

41. Regarding the audit paragraph that large number of applications are pending in GMC, Kozhikode with respect to Cochlear implants, the Director, Social Justice Department replied that earlier BERA machines were available only in GMC, Kozhikode, but now since this facility is available in all districts, it is confirmed that there are no pending applications.

42. The Committee is delighted to note the successful implementation of 'Sruthitharangam', and further wanted to know whether the scheme is still being implemented through 11 empanelled hospitals and also whether every district has one hospital each. The Director, Social Justice Department explained that "Sruthitharangam" scheme for cochlear implantation is being implemented through "Kathoram" which is a universal scanning project. At present there are 64 empanelled hospitals under "Kathoram" scheme and 16 empanelled hospitals under "Sruthitharangam" scheme.

43. She further added that in all other districts except Wayanad, private hospitals have been included in the list of empanelled hospital. The Committee directed to furnish the list of empanelled hospitals in each district.

44. The Senior Deputy Accountant General pointed out whether additional BERA instrument was supplied to GMC, Kozhikode. To which the Director, Social Justice Department replied that at that time, BERA machines were only available in GMC, Kozhikode. Hence, there was need for additional machines. However, as it was now available in all districts, additional machines were no longer required.

Conclusion/Recommendation

45. The Committee directs the department to furnish the list of empanelled hospitals under the Schemes of Kathoram and Shruthitharangam in each district.

4.10 Aswasakiranam

GOK accorded sanction (August 2010) for implementation of the scheme 'Aswasakiranam', which envisages assistance @ ₹250 per month to full time Caregivers of all bed-ridden patients who either belonged to BPL category or whose annual family income was below ₹20,000 in Panchayat areas and below ₹22,375 in cities. The rates of financial assistance were enhanced periodically and the current financial assistance is ₹600 per month (from October 2016). The financial assistance was given to the Caregivers of bedridden patients as compensation for their inability to work and earn their livelihood. The scope of the scheme was further enlarged (October 2012) to include Physically/Mentally challenged (due to Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental retardation, Mental illness), 100 per cent blind and patients bed-ridden due to old age, cancer and other diseases and in need of support for day to day activities. There were 3,23,616 beneficiaries under the Scheme during the period 2012-17.

[Note received from the Government based on the above audit paragraph is included as Appendix II]

Excerpts from Committee's discussion with departmental officials

46. When enquired about the present status of 'Aswasakiranam Scheme', the Director, Social Justice Department informed that all beneficiaries under this scheme in every district has been given financial assistance as per Aswasakiranam till May 2020. Required steps were being taken to furnish the amount for the beneficiaries till August 2020. He further informed the Committee that there were no pending applications under special Aswasakiranam project so far.

47. The Committee wanted the department to solve all the complaints coming up against the scheme.

48. The Director, Social Justice Department informed that all the beneficiaries would be given financial assistances as and when the fund released.

Conclusion/Recommendation

49. No Comments

4.10.1 Payments made through Money Orders

As per the guidelines, the Anganwadi worker concerned was to forward the applications along with the copies of Ration Card/Income Certificate and Disability Certificate/Identity Card issued by KSSM to the concerned Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Supervisor. A savings bank account in the name of the Caregiver of the patient was to be opened in the nearest Post Office and the details of the account were to be mentioned in the application. Duly recommended applications were to be forwarded to KSSM through the concerned Child Development Project Officer (CDPO) along with a certificate stating that the said Caregiver was taking care of the bed-ridden patient. The financial assistance was to be credited by the KSSM to the Post Office Savings Bank accounts of the Caregivers.

Scrutiny of the audited financial statements of accounts of KSSM for the years 2012-15 revealed that contrary to the provisions contained in the guidelines requiring the KSSM to remit the financial assistance due to Caregivers in their Post Office Savings Bank accounts, benefits were disbursed to all 3,23,616 beneficiaries through Money Orders. It was further noticed that ₹2.46 crore out of the total amount of ₹105.51 crore disbursed during the period 2012-15¹³ were returned due to various reasons such as 'mis-sent', 'addressee not found', etc., resulting in non-receipt of eligible financial assistance by the beneficiaries. Details of the number of Caregivers who did not receive the Money Orders and steps taken to ensure payment to such Caregivers was awaited from KSSM (December 2017). Audit observed that disbursement of financial assistance by KSSM through money orders instead of through Post Office Saving Bank accounts as proposed in the scheme guidelines, resulted in an avoidable expenditure of ₹5.10 crore on money order commission during the period 2012-15. Besides, proper and timely delivery of the financial assistance to the eligible Caregivers was not ensured. During the Exit Conference (December 2017), Audit requested GOK to explore

13. Figures obtained from the certified financial accounts of KSSM for the years 2012-15. Accounts for later years still not finalised.

the possibility of direct transfer of money to beneficiary accounts. GOK informed that the 41st Executive Committee decided (November 2017) to change the mode of disbursement of payment from Money Order to Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) via Banks.

[Note received from the Government based on the above audit paragraph is included as Appendix II]

Excerpts from Committee's discussion with departmental officials

50. The Committee sought explanation regarding the audit query that ₹ 2.46 Crore out of the total amount of ₹ 105.51 Crore disbursed during the period 2012-2015 were returned due to various reasons such as mis-sent, addressee not found etc resulting in non-receipt of eligible financial assistance by the beneficiaries. The Director, Social Justice Department enlightened the Committee that details of the beneficiaries are regularly updated by removing the names of the deceased beneficiaries. At present the total number of beneficiaries are 95152. She further stated that as pointed out by Accountant General, amount is still being sent through money orders, 5% of which is postal commission. For changing this into direct transfer, account and aadhar details of beneficiaries are being collected and consolidated through an agency. The Committee recommended to disburse financial assistance to these beneficiaries without delay.

51. Committee directed the department to clear the pendency in the financial assistance to the full time caregivers because that group deserved the most sympathetic consideration from Society and for that purpose time bound action should be taken at the earliest. Steps should also be taken to change the mode of disbursement of payment for money order to Direct Benefit transfer (DBT) via Bank.

Conclusions/Recommendations

52. **The Committee points out that caregivers of patients deserve the most sympathetic consideration from society and directs the department to clear the pendency in disbursing financial assistance to them at the earliest.**

53. The Committee understands that the financial assistance to some of the beneficiaries under the scheme which was sent through money order have not received the beneficiaries such as mis-sent, address not found etc and also causes 5% loss as postal commission. As per the guideline, the financial assistance must be sent through the SB account in the name of the caregiver of the patient. In this situation, the Committee urges the department to take measures to change the mode of disbursement of payments from Money Order to Direct Benefit Transfer via banks.

4.10.2 Non-processing of applications under Aswasakiranam and resultant denial of benefits to Caregivers

Audit observed, consequent to a joint verification conducted (March 2017) along with the Regional Director, KSSM in the data entry room of KSSM Headquarters that, around 10,000 applications from Caregivers for financial assistance under Aswasakiranam scheme received from the year 2013, were bundled together and stacked in shelves without registering and verification. Audit observed that there was no system in place at KSSM to watch the number of applications received/objected/rejected/disposed under the scheme and hence the total number of applications pending as on date was not available. Audit selected, at random, 50 applications pertaining to five selected districts from the bundles and conducted a survey (August/September 2017) to verify the current status of the applicants.

Verification of 50 applications of Caregivers revealed that in respect of seven Caregivers, the bed-ridden patients being looked after by them expired within one to nine months of submission of application for receipt of financial assistance under the scheme as shown in Table.

Table: Details of delay in processing Aswasakiranam applications

Sl. No.	Name of District	Name of Patient	Date of application	Date of death of the patient	Delay (in months)
1.	Palakkad	Devu	10-3-2016	13-4-2016	1
2.	Thiruvananthapuram	Alies	Not recorded	26-6-2016	-
3.	Kozhikode	Kalmabi	30-9-2016	24-6-2017	9
4.	Kozhikode	Sarojini M	10-3-2016	4-9-2016	6
5.	Kasaragod	Kaveri	4-8-2016	26-12-2016	4
6.	Palakkad	Ramakrishnan V	31-8-2016	13-2-2017	6
7.	Palakkad	Nabeesa	Not recorded	4-4-2014	-

(Source: Data collected from KSSM)

The failure of KSSM to monitor the applications received and ensure prompt processing and payment of benefits under the Scheme resulted in denial of benefits to the Caregivers of intended patients. As failure to make payment to Caregivers could result in laxity in delivery of care and attention to the needy, the unjustified delay in the processing of applications by KSSM is a cause of concern and merits serious attention.

[Note received from the Government based on the above audit paragraph is included as Appendix II]

Excerpts from Committee's discussion with departmental officials

54. When enquired about the status of pending applications pointed out by Accountant General, the Director, Social Justice Department informed that the 10,000 applications mentioned in the audit report had been given financial assistance. Financial assistance has also been given to eligible applicants upto August 2020. Due to the large number of applications received for the scheme, there was delay in processing the applications. Budget allocation was insufficient to meet the increased expenses, he added.

55. The Director, Social Justice Department further added that over 40,000 applications were received, since the guidelines of scheme was relaxed to provide assistance to caregivers with cerebral palsy, Autism, Cancer, 100% blindness and the aged as per Government Order in 2018. Almost ₹28 Cr would be required to settle the claim each year. Fund was made available for disbursement only till August 2020 even for the existing 95152 beneficiaries.

56. The Committee wanted to know whether Social security pension recipients were included among the applicants. The Director, Social Justice Department answered that pension recipients were not filtered since application under 'Aswasakiranam' could only be settled till August 2020 and that pension recipients also comes under the purview of the scheme. The Committee opined that Government allocation could be increased to settle the pending cases. The Committee asked about the possibility of pension payment through co-operative institutions. On Committee's desire to change the mode of pension payment to beneficiaries from money order, the Principal Secretary, Social Justice Department said that measures had been taken to opt for Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) for Government financial assistance payments. The Committee directed the department to speed up the process.

57. To the Committee's enquiry whether treatment of children below 20 years was included in the scheme, the Principal Secretary, Social Justice Department informed that this scheme was exclusively for caregivers of bed ridden patients with a financial assistance of ₹ 600 per month, and that if strict limits were not prescribed, more applications would be received.

58. The Committee wanted to know why there was no required fund for this scheme eventhough department had an accountable cash balance. The Principal Secretary, Social Justice Department replied that fund allotted for Aswasakiranam, could only be utilized for this purpose.

59. The Committee enquired whether applications were received online. The Director, Social Justice Department informed that applications were received through Child Development Project Officers (CDPO's), hence committee directed to change to online method. The Director, Social Justice Department informed that an agency had been selected through start up mission for this purpose.

60. The Committee directed the department to replace the mode of disbursement of payment from money order to Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) via Banks account and speed up the procedure.

Conclusion/Recommendation

61. The Committee directs the department to take urgent measures to change the mode of disbursement of payment from Money Order to Direct Benefit Transfer via Banks and to ensure prompt processing of applications received under the scheme.

4.10.3 Non-compliance to scheme guidelines resulted in disbursement of financial assistance even after death

Audit noticed instances of disbursement of financial assistance to Caregivers even after the death of patients. Records verified at the office of the Regional Director, Kozhikode revealed that, of the 66 death cases, financial assistance of ₹53,700 continued to be disbursed upto December 2015/March 2017 to the Caregivers of 15 deceased patients (Appendix III). Survey conducted in five selected districts (August/September 2017) confirmed that financial assistance amounting to ₹5,325 continued to be paid to two Caregivers even after the demise of the patients cared for.

The disbursement of financial assistance even after the demise of the patients indicated failure of internal control in KSSM, which needed to be urgently addressed, to avoid recurrence of such instances in future.

[Note received from the Government based on the above audit paragraph is included as Appendix II]

Excerpts from Committee's discussion with departmental officials

62. The Committee enquired whether financial assistance was disbursed to caregivers till the death of the patient. The Director, Social Justice department informed the Committee that financial assistance has to be given untill the death of the patient and if the care giver is deceased, the financial assistance including interest, if any will be given to the next care giver.

63. The Committee inquired whether the conditions of disbursement of Financial Assistance to Caregivers even after the demise of patients was prevailing. The Director, Social Justice Department replied in the negative.

Conclusion/Recommendation

64. The Committee recommends to the department that the internal control mechanism of Kerala Social Security Mission should be strengthened for the effective implementation of all the Social Security Schemes.

4.11 Snehapoorvam

GOK accorded sanction (June 2012) for the implementation of the scheme to provide financial assistance to those children who lost either or both of their parents, or in such cases where the surviving parent or guardians belonged to the Below Poverty Line (BPL) category. The scheme provided for grant of monthly financial assistance of ₹300 to the children in the age group of 0-5 years and children from classes I to V, ₹500 to children from classes VI to X, ₹750 to children from classes XI and XII. The scope of rendering assistance under the Scheme was revised by GOK (January 2013) to enable children studying for degree and professional degree courses to obtain financial assistance of ₹1,000. The financial assistance was to be credited to the joint savings bank account opened in the names of the child and the guardian.

As per the revised (October 2014) guidelines of GOK, the Head of the Educational Institution in which the child was studying was to submit application online to KSSM. The Guidelines also required the Head of the Institution to submit a signed, duly stamped computer generated list of such online applications to the KSSM. A Unique Identification Number was to be allotted by KSSM before 31st October every year. KSSM was to forward the same with the details of financial assistance sanctioned to the Heads of institutions, who in turn, were required to inform the students in time. Financial assistance of ₹76.91 crore was given to 1,26,039 beneficiaries under the scheme during 2014-17.

The details of applications received and action taken on the same is given in Table.

Table: Details of applications received/passed for payment/rejected/pending during 2014-17

Year	Number of applications received	Number of applications passed for payment	Number of applications rejected	Number of cases pending	Amount expended (₹ in crore)
2014-15	58737	41274	1841	15622	8.41
2015-16	70588	45233	1847	23508	40.03
2016-17	63397	39532	5164	18701	28.47
Total	192722	126039	8852	57831	76.91

(Source: Details collected from KSSM)

Scrutiny of the records by Audit revealed that 1,26,039 applications were passed for payment during 2014-17. However, 57,831 applications were pending for payment because after submitting applications online, the educational institution concerned did not submit signed and duly stamped computer generated lists to KSSM, as required in the guidelines. The fact was confirmed by Audit through test-check of records in 21 educational institutions which revealed that of the 1,057 applications submitted online during 2014-17, 677 applications were passed for payment and 380 applications were pending due to non-submission of computer generated lists. Thus, the failure of educational institutions to submit duly signed and stamped computer generated lists coupled with failure of the KSSM to ensure follow-up after receipt of online applications resulted in denial of financial assistance to 57,831 eligible children.

The Heads of educational institutions who did not submit duly signed and stamped computer generated lists in selected districts stated that they did not receive any Circulars/Guidelines/directions in this regard from KSSM. The replies offered by the Heads of Institutions were factually wrong as the same instructions requiring application to be submitted online also contained instructions for submitting signed, duly stamped computer generated lists to KSSM. This goes to prove that the Heads of Institutions did not act in a responsible manner in complying with GOK Guidelines.

GOK stated (December 2017) that specific instructions were given via email and registered mobile numbers, to each school whose printouts were pending. The reply was not acceptable in view of the fact that there were 57,831 pending applications, which led to deprivation of financial assistance to orphaned/needy children.

[Note received from the Government based on the above audit paragraph is included as Appendix II]

Excerpts from Committee's discussion with departmental officials

65. When enquired about the present status of the scheme, the Director explained that financial assistance had been given to the applicants pointed out by the Accountant General and that applications were being accepted through both online and offline methods. Financial aid is being given out in accordance with the availability of funds, despite waiting period from 2018-19. She said that in order to resolve the current backlog approximately ₹55.93 Crore would be required.

66. When asked about clearing the existing pendency, the Principal Secretary, Social Justice Department informed the Committee that Chief Minister had directed Finance Secretary to take necessary action for settling the pending cases, hence Social Justice Department would submit a proposal to provide enough financial assistance in settling pending cases to Finance Department soon.

67. The Director, Social Justice Department further informed the Committee that children below 5 years of age and children studying from I to V standard are given ₹300 per month, children from VI to X standard are given ₹500 per month, students of +1 and +2 are given ₹750 per month and students of degree/professional courses are given ₹1000 per month.

68. The Committee wanted to know about the current status of the Snehapoorvam project which was implemented to provide financial aid to those children who lost either or both of their parents and the steps taken to clear the pendency.

69. The Committee recommended that efforts be taken to ensure that the existing applications for financial assistance under the scheme are approved properly.

Conclusion/Recommendation

70. The Committee recommends that the department should ensure that effective measures are taken to clear the existing applications for financial assistance under the scheme Snehapoorvam without further delay.

4.11.1 Exclusion of students of Industrial Training Institutes from benefits of the scheme

As students of Class XI and XII were also eligible for assistance under the scheme, KSSM requested (January 2015) GOK to include students who joined Industrial Training Institutes (ITI) after Class X for receiving assistance under the scheme. Consequently, ITI was also included in the list of institutions in the application form to be submitted online by the Heads of Institutions. Audit observed that 409 applications were received from students of ITIs during 2014-16, claiming assistance under the scheme. However, KSSM later excluded (April 2016) ITIs from the list of courses. On being asked, KSSM stated (December 2017) that as favourable decision on the inclusion of ITIs was not received from GOK, the 409 applications from students of ITIs could not be considered for disbursement of financial assistance.

GOK stated (December 2017) that proposal for inclusion of ITIs was under active consideration of the Government. The fact, however remains that the action of KSSM in inviting applications from students of ITIs for financial assistance and subsequently rejecting financial assistance to these children was not in order. KSSM and GOK may initiate steps to bring ITIs also under the purview of the scheme, since ITIs are institutions offering vocational and apprenticeship training to the youths who have passed Class X, as is being done in other cases.

[Notes received from the Government based on the above audit paragraph are included as Appendix II]

Excerpts from Committee's discussion with departmental officials

71. When enquired about the audit para on exclusion of students of ITI from the scheme, the Director, Social Justice Department replied that the students of Government/aided ITI and polytechnics had been included under the

snehapoorvam scheme as per G.O.No.2/2018/SJD dated 3-2-2018. The Committee accepted the explanation furnished by the department on the audit para.

Conclusion/Recommendation

72. No Comments

4.12 Snehasparsham

GOK accorded sanction (June 2010) for providing financial assistance to unwed mothers from Scheduled Tribe Communities @ ₹300 per month which was further enhanced (June 2011) to ₹1,000 per month. The beneficiaries were to be under 65 years of age. The scheme was later extended (August 2011) to all destitute unwed mothers irrespective of the category. GOK ordered (December 2014) Vayomithram¹⁴ offices to work as referral centres for providing all services. They were to co-ordinate all other schemes implemented by KSSM within their jurisdiction by functioning as the lower level office of KSSM.

4.12.1 Financial assistance to unwed mothers

As per the guidelines approved (March 2011) by the Governing Body, Child Development Project Officers (CDPO) were to identify and obtain applications from the unwed mothers in their areas of jurisdiction and forward the same to KSSM for providing financial assistance under the scheme. It was seen that GOK ordered (December 2014) the Vayomithram project office under the KSSM to coordinate the various activities of the KSSM within their jurisdiction. Thus, Vayomithram Coordinators who were to administer Vayomithram camps, conduct of health camps for the aged, etc., were also required to coordinate the activities of this scheme. Audit observed that as of March 2017, KSSM identified 2,044 unwed mothers and provided them with financial assistance under the scheme.

Audit obtained data on tribal unwed mothers in the selected districts as of December 2017, from the Scheduled Tribes Development Department (STDD). It was observed that only 120 tribal unwed mothers were provided with financial assistance under the scheme by KSSM as against 521 tribal unwed mothers identified by STDD as shown in Table.

14. A scheme to ascertain the health conditions of people above 65 years of age.

Table: Details of shortfall in coverage of tribal unwed mothers

Sl. No.	District	Number of tribal unwed mothers identified by the STDD	Number of tribal unwed mothers provided with financial assistance by KSSM
1.	Thiruvananthapuram	75	20
2.	Palakkad	129	31
3.	Malappuram	44	9
4.	Kozhikode	60	15
5.	Kasaragod	213	45
	TOTAL	521	120

(Source: Details obtained from Director of STDD and KSSM)

Although the records of KSSM revealed that 2,044 unwed mothers were identified and provided with assistance under the scheme, Audit noticed that more beneficiaries could have been assisted under the scheme, if the data available with the STDD was used. Audit observed that the Vayomithram Coordinators and CDPOs who were entrusted with the responsibility of identifying the beneficiaries of the scheme failed in identifying all unwed mothers in their localities, which resulted in denial of assistance to the women from vulnerable sections of society who became unwed mothers. Further, failure of KSSM in obtaining and making use of data on unwed mothers available with various Departments/agencies¹⁵ adversely affected the implementation of the scheme.

GOK stated (December 2017) that even though KSSM had given proper directions to collect the applications from eligible beneficiaries, there was delay in identifying beneficiaries by the field staff due to competing priorities. The reply was not acceptable since after having launched the scheme, it was the responsibility of GOK/KSSM to ensure that all eligible beneficiaries were identified and provided with assistance under the scheme.

¹⁵ STDD, Police, NGOs, etc.

[Note received from the Government based on the above audit paragraph is included as Appendix II]

Excerpts from Committee's discussion with departmental officials

73. The Committee enquired why only 120 tribal unwed mothers were provided with financial assistance under Snehasparsham by KSSM as against the 521 beneficiaries identified by STDD. The Director, Social Justice Department informed the Committee that financial assistance was provided to nearly 2000 beneficiaries under this scheme upto the financial year 2020-21.

74. The Director, Social Justice Department informed the Committee that “ Snehasparsham” was implemented for the welfare of the unwed mothers of ST community who have been sexually exploited, but later non-tribal unwed mothers were also brought under the purview of the scheme. She further added that financial assistance would be provided accordingly once the revised guidelines are published.

75. The Committee asked whether the financial assistance was based on data collected in consultation with STDD.

76. The Director, Social Justice Department informed that although steps were taken to collect the details of beneficiaries identified by STDD through Child Development Project Officers (CDPOs), it was not successful since CDPOs came under Women and Child Development Department, as a result of department bifurcation. In this regard, the Committee directed the department to take strict measures to provide financial assistance to all beneficiaries.

77. The Committee opined that it was the responsibility of the authority/KSSM to ensure that all eligible beneficiaries were identified and provided with assistance under this scheme. Committee recommended that the concerned department and the Kerala Social Security Mission should take effective measures to provide financial aid to all eligible beneficiaries and speed up the official procedures.

Conclusion/Recommendation

78. The Committee recommends that effective measures should be taken by the department and KSSM to provide financial assistance to eligible beneficiaries under the Snehasparsham Scheme and urges to furnish a status report regarding this to the Committee urgently.

4.12.2 Release of financial assistance without ensuring compliance to guidelines

As per the guidelines, financial assistance was to be released based on the life certificate¹⁶ of the beneficiaries furnished by CDPOs to KSSM on 01 January and 01 June, every year. It was also stipulated that in cases where the beneficiary married or expired, it was the responsibility of the CDPO to report the fact promptly to the KSSM. Audit observed that the life certificates were obtained by KSSM only twice (October 2014 and November 2015) since inception of the scheme in 2010. Audit analysed the quantum of certificates received in November 2015 and noticed large discrepancy in the number of beneficiaries assisted under the scheme and the number of life certificates obtained as shown in Table 4.6

Table 4.6: Details of number of life certificates obtained and assistance provided

Sl.No.	District	No. of beneficiaries during October 2015	No. of beneficiaries for whom life certificates were received	No. of beneficiaries for whom life certificates were not obtained	No. of beneficiaries who were provided with assistance in November 2015
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1	Thiruvananthapuram	110	46	64	100
2	Kollam	50	29	21	47
3	Alappuzha	410	152	258	407

16 Certificate furnished by CDPOs after inspection stating whether the beneficiary is alive or not, marital status, age and whether the child is alive or not.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
4	Pathanamthitta	48	30	18	45
5	Kottayam	276	123	153	262
6	Idukki	85	74	11	81
7	Ernakulam	142	90	52	142
8	Thrissur	33	29	4	31
9	Palakkad	171	68	103	168
10	Malappuram	101	65	36	97
11	Kozhikode	218	74	144	213
12	Kannur	132	72	60	130
13	Kasargod	144	55	89	143
14	Wayanad	93	38	55	90
	Total	2013	945	1068	1956
	Per cent		46.94	53.05	97.17

(Source: Records of KSSM)

As revealed by the table, the CDPOs did not furnish life certificates in respect of 53.05 per cent of beneficiaries. Financial assistance was provided to these beneficiaries without ensuring whether they were eligible or not.

It was noticed that the life certificates submitted by the CDPOs were not subjected to scrutiny by the KSSM. Out of 2,013 beneficiaries in the State during October 2015, KSSM received life certificates for 945 beneficiaries. Scrutiny of these life certificates revealed that while one of them passed away on 23 July 2015, another beneficiary was married, resulting in change of status. Thus, a beneficiary in Pramadam Panchayat, Pathanamthitta district continued to receive financial assistance for at least 20 months (upto June 2017) even though the CDPO recorded a change in her marital status from 'unmarried' to 'married' in the life certificate furnished for November 2015.

It was also observed that CDPOs did not report the death of beneficiaries promptly to KSSM resulting in failure to stop payment of financial assistance.

Financial assistance was released to a beneficiary from Aikkaranadu Panchayat of Ernakulam district for five months from August 2015 to December 2015 even after the demise of the beneficiary in July 2015.

The KSSM stated (September 2017) that since the number of beneficiaries was huge, it was not practical to obtain life certificates from the beneficiaries every six months. The reply was not acceptable since the number of beneficiaries under this scheme was only 2,044 in 2016-17 and KSSM was bound to ensure that the beneficiaries were eligible before making payment of any financial assistance under the scheme.

Recommendation 4.2: KSSM may evolve a mechanism to ensure that payments are made only after ensuring receipt of life certificates from beneficiaries.

[Note received from the Government based on the above audit paragraph is included as Appendix II]

Excerpts from Committee's discussion with departmental officials

79. With respect to the audit para, the Committee wanted to know whether life certificates of all beneficiaries were obtained during 2019-20 and 2020-21. The Director, Social Justice Department replied that due to Covid scenario, life certificates with disability of the elderly could not be obtained in the last two years. The Principal Secretary, Social Justice Department brought to the notice of the Committee that Finance Department had given permission to release financial assistance without obtaining life certificate during the Covid-19 situations and also strict instructions were given to Executive Director, KSSM to obtain life certificates without delay through KSSM Co-ordinators.

Conclusion/Recommendation

80. No Comments.

4.12.3 Double payments

Audit observed that registers were not maintained at KSSM for recording the details of receipt of applications. There was no system in place to avoid making multiple payments to the same beneficiary based on duplicate copies of

applications furnished by the beneficiary. This resulted in KSSM making double payment of financial assistance to beneficiaries. For e.g. a beneficiary of Kadalundi panchayat, Kozhikode was provided assistance @ ₹1,000 per month from September 2013 onwards on the basis of an application furnished by her in August 2013. Subsequently, based on an additional application (January 2014) of the beneficiary forwarded by the CDPO to the KSSM, financial assistance of ₹17,000 was again provided to the same beneficiary for the period from February 2014 to June 2015. It was observed that since no records were maintained on the receipt/disposal/rejection of applications by CDPOs and KSSM, the possibility of more such instances of duplicate payments could not be ruled out.

GOK stated (December 2017) that since manual verification to identify duplication was tedious, KSSM was in the process of developing software for the same. The reply of GOK citing tediousness in conducting manual verification of applications was not justifiable since there were only 2,044 beneficiary applications as on 31 March 2017, which could have been easily verified even without developing software for the same.

Recommendation 4.3: KSSM may put in place a system/mechanism to guard against double payments.

[Note received from the Government based on the above audit paragraph is included as Appendix II]

Excerpts from Committee's discussion with departmental officials

81. The Committee wanted to know whether internal audit was conducted to examine instances of double payments. The Director, Social Justice Department replied that internal audit was being conducted by Finance Department to check the double payments, and that the last audit was done during 2018-19. Since the disbursement of financial assistances are done through BIMS, there are no chances for duplication.

82. The Joint Secretary, Finance department apprised the Committee that Finance Department is conducting audit on seniority basis as numerous requests are being received from various departments and institutions for audit purposes. The Committee remarked that double payments could be completely avoided by computerisation, by linking the aadhar account to all state financial support schemes.

83. The Director, Social Justice Department replied that details of aadhar number and bank account linked with aadhar were being collected from the beneficiaries for processing applications and checking for double payments.

84. Committee observed that if the records were maintained on the receipt/disposal/rejection of applications by CDPOs and KSSM properly, the possibility of double payment could be avoided. Committee recommended to the department that the double payment of financial assistance to recipients could be ruled out through Computerisation. Therefore software should be developed to avoid such duplications and efforts should also be made to maintain the registers in this regard.

Conclusion/Recommendation

85. The Committee observes that if the records on the receipt, disposal or rejection of applications by the Child Development Project Officers and KSSM had been maintained properly, the possibility of double payment could have been avoided. Therefore, the Committee recommends that the department should implement a software system to avoid such duplications in the future and also urges the department to take adequate steps for the proper maintenance and updating of registers in this regard.

4.13 State Initiative on Disabilities (SID)

The State Initiative on Disabilities (SID) is a scheme launched (December 2014) to provide Special initiatives for persons with disabilities in the area of prevention, early screening/detection, early intervention, education, employment and rehabilitation, etc. The scheme was launched recognising that the initiatives of the State in the past did not have a significant impact either in prevention of disabilities or in early intervention and rehabilitation. A report of an Empowered Committee with the Chief Secretary as Chairman made recommendations on each of the initiatives. SID also undertakes MMR and Rubella vaccination, Hearing screening of newborn babies through hospitals and conduct of De-centralised Disability Certification Camps with the objective of reducing hardship in availing Disability Medical Certificates through hospitals.

4.13.1 Non-conduct of disability camps for clearance of large number of pending applications

GOK issued orders (July 2009) declaring KSSM as the implementing agency for conducting disability certification camps and for issue of disability certificates. KSSM organised Disability Certification Camps throughout the State for issue of Medical Certificates/Disability Certificates/Identity Cards. As per stipulated procedure, Disability Certification Camps were held on receipt of 250 to 300 applications in each ICDS project wherein the disabled persons were issued with medical certificates on the spot as a proof of their disability after examination by a medical board. People with disability above 40 per cent were also issued with disability certificates and identity cards.

Records available with KSSM revealed that 28,311 applications were pending with KSSM (status as of June 2017). These applicants were to be examined at Disability Certification Camps and issued with Medical Certificates/Disability Certificates/Identity Cards. Audit observed that of the 28,311 pending applications (June 2017), 818, 231, 750 and 5,000 number of applications were pending in Idukki, Ernakulam, Kozhikode and Kannur districts respectively, where no camps were conducted during 2017-18 (upto July 2017).

KSSM confirmed (July 2017) that the post of District Coordinator remained vacant in Kannur district and that the less number of camps conducted in the other districts was due to District Coordinators being engaged in other works. The reply was not acceptable since the KSSM should have recognised the large number of pending applications, especially in Kannur district and made alternate arrangements for early clearance of the pendency. Non-conduct of Disability Certification Camps even when large number of applications were pending indicated laxity of the KSSM in monitoring the implementation of the scheme.

GOK stated (December 2017) that based on the observations of Audit, special efforts were being made to organise Disability Certification Camps in all districts in a campaign mode under the leadership of the District Collectors for issuing maximum number of certificates and identity cards by March 2018. It was also stated that where District Coordinators were not in position, alternate arrangements would be made to organise the campaign.

[Note received from the Government based on the above audit paragraph is included as Appendix II]

Excerpts from Committee's discussion with departmental officials

86. When asked about the current status of pending applications for disposal, the Director, Social Justice Department explained that as per RBWD Act of 2016, certificates are issued by DMO's, but due to work load of DMO's during covid period KSSM provided assistance in issuing certificates. She also informed the Committee that it was decided to convene a meeting to formulate an action plan to convert the existing medical certificates into cards with the assistance of Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities and District Medical Officers.

87. Among the 262817 applications received, UDID have been generated for 148418 and 62200 remains pending. Therefore the Committee directed the department to give instructions to DMO's & Medical Board to conduct adalats and settle the pending cases without much delay.

88. When asked whether pending cases could be settled through adalats, the Director, Social Justice Department informed that as a part of taking action to settle the pending cases, discussion was held with Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities, for assuring assistance for KSSM as well as preparation of district plan in consultation with DMO was also considered. The Director, Social Justice Department explained that majority of the applications are with learning disabilities. For examination of learning disability, continuous sitting and help of co-ordinators is required.

89. During the time of SSLC exam, approximately 2000 applications were received, resulting in pendency of applications. Since only one officer was appointed to check learning disabilities in one district, chances of pendency were greater. A Special meeting was conducted to discuss to settle the pending cases in Kottayam district, which had a highest pendency rate. Therefore, the Committee recommended that pending applications be settled within a prescribed time frame as well as that a time limit be set for the settlement of new applications.

90. The Committee also directed the department to inform the committee on the disposition of outstanding cases and a status report. To which, the Principal Secretary, Social Justice Department agreed and confirmed to re-examine the issue with the district wise pending list.

91. The Committee enquired whether learning disability could be found out at school level itself. The Director, Social Justice Department replied that it is stated in the Central norms that teachers should identify and assess the children from Class IV, who needs assistance such as scribes.

Conclusions/Recommendations

92. **The Committee learns that the KSSM is the implementing agency for Statewide disability accreditation camps and for the issuance of disability certificates and identity cards. The failure to conduct the camps has resulted in huge pendency of applications and thus undermines the very objectives of the Scheme. The Committee therefore recommends the department that strict measures be taken to ensure that applications for disability certificates and identity cards are processed within a prescribed time frame.**

93. **The Committee also directs the department to conduct special drives to speed up disability certification process and increase the frequency of such drives for the speedy disposal of the pending cases within six months.**

94. **The Committee insists that the department submit a district wise status report as soon as possible on the disposition of outstanding cases.**

4.13.2 Non-recovery of advance given for conduct of Disability certification camps

Orders of GOK (October 2011) on drawal of temporary advance to SID Coordinators for conduct of Disability Certification Camps stipulated that advances not settled within three months were to be recovered in full with 18 per cent interest. In cases where temporary advance was not utilised fully but the adjustment bill submitted on time, interest at the rate of 18 per cent per annum was

to be charged on the unutilised portion of the advance from the date of drawal to the date of refund of advance. Further, a Circular issued (August 2016) by KSSM stipulated that advances paid to SID Coordinators for conduct of camps should be settled in full, ten days after the conduct of each camp.

Audit observed on a scrutiny of the accounts pertaining to 263 Disability Certification Camps conducted during 2012-17 that advances given to 12 SID Coordinators and 41 Vayomithram Coordinators amounting to ₹70.66 lakh were yet to be finally settled. It was further observed that 24 Coordinators (four SID Coordinators and 20 Vayomithram Coordinators) had quit their jobs, minimising the scope of recovery of ₹15.05 lakh advanced to them.

GOK stated (December 2017) that consequent to audit observations, 202 of the 263 unsettled advances were scrutinised and adjusted and the remaining cases were being followed up. Details of settlement of advances including interest on delayed refund of unspent advances were not produced to audit for verification. KSSM should ensure that advances made are adjusted/recovered in a timely manner so that there is no loss to the Government exchequer.

[Note received from the Government based on the above audit paragraph is included as Appendix II]

Excerpts from Committee's discussion with departmental officials

95. The Committee observed that scrutiny of accounts pertaining to 263 Disability certification camps conducted during 2012-17 shows that advances given to 12 SID co-ordinators and 41 Vayomitram co-ordinators amounting to ₹ 70.66 lakh were yet to be settled. It was further observed that 24 co-ordinators (4 SID and 20 Vayomitram) had quit their jobs, minimising the scope of recovery of ₹15.05 lakh advanced to them. The Director, Social Justice Department informed the Committee that only 10 cases are pending out of total 56. The Finance Officer, KSSM further informed the Committee that these 10 pending cases might be settled then, but remained unsettled in the records due to non-availability of concerned files. The Joint Secretary, Finance Department stated that an amount of less than ₹20 Lakh had to be settled in that case. He further

added that if the case was settled it should have been entered in the advance register. The Principal Secretary, Social Justice Department pointed out the laxity of the officers/Vayomitram co-ordinators, to which the Director, Social Justice Department responded that concerned officer was given memo followed by other procedures. The Committee recommended that KSSM should ensure that advances made are adjusted /recovered in a timely manner and directed the department to fix responsibility on the concerned officer and to furnish report on the action taken against him.

Conclusion/Recommendation

96. The Committee directs KSSM to ensure that advances made are adjusted/recovered in a timely manner in order to avoid loss to the State exchequer. The Committee urges the department to fix responsibility against the concerned officials and directs the department to furnish a report regarding the action taken against the erring officials to the Committee urgently.

4.13.3 Delay in supply of vaccines

The Empowered Committee decided (November 2012) to administer Rubella/MMR vaccines across the State through the existing network of Department of Health and Family Welfare. Accordingly, GOK accorded sanction (May 2013) to administer MMR vaccines to all babies in the age group of 15-18 months and Rubella vaccines to female children studying in the VIII, IX and X standards in Government/Aided schools. As per the Empowered Committee decision (December 2012), the Director of Health Services (DHS) was to forward to the Kerala Medical Supplies Corporation Ltd. (KMSCL), detailed estimate of vaccines to be procured after collecting details from the Government hospitals and Director of Public Instruction (DPI) and to forward a copy to KSSM for making payments. Details of funds routed to KMSCL for supply of vaccines during the period from 2012-13 to 2016-17 are as shown in Table.

Table 4.7: Details of funds obtained for supply of vaccines

(₹ in crore)

Year	Funds obtained from GOK	Funds released to KMSCL	Balance with KSSM
2012-13	7.00	7.00	0
2013-14	1.03	1.03	0
2014-15	5.77	5.52	0.25
2015-16	0	0	0
2016-17	7.00	0	7.00

(Source: Details collected from KSSM)

Audit observed that the DHS intimated (March 2015) KSSM about the non-availability of MMR Vaccines for more than six months in many hospitals and requested immediate intervention. It was seen that the KSSM failed to furnish proposals for implementing the scheme during 2015-16 resulting in lapse of ₹7.64 Crore allocated in the budget. Further, ₹ Seven Crore received from GOK during 2016-17 remained unutilised (October 2017) and parked in the TSB Account of KSSM.

GOK stated (December 2017) that supply order was placed in March 2015 for administering vaccines during 2015-16 and the same was supplied only in July/August 2016. It was further stated that these were enough for administering vaccines during 2016-17 and hence no proposals were made for drawal of funds in 2015-16. The reply was not acceptable since KSSM was aware of the stock-out of vaccines from September 2014 onwards and hence purchase orders should have been placed with KMSCL much earlier than March 2015. Thus, laxity of the KSSM resulted in non-availability of vaccines for almost two years. During Exit Conference (December 2017) ED, KSSM admitted the lapse on the part of KSSM. Further GOK stated in the Exit Conference that monitoring system for supply and utilisation of vaccines would be strengthened.

[Note received from the Government based on the above audit paragraph is included as Appendix II]

Excerpts from Committee's discussion with departmental officials

97. When asked about the status of administration of Rubella/MMR Vaccine, the Director, Social Justice Department replied that now Health Department is in charge of administration of Rubella/MMR vaccines. The Committee further observed that although DHS intimated about the non-availability of MMR Vaccines for more than six months in many hospitals and requested immediate intervention, KSSM failed to furnish proposals for implementing the scheme during 2015-16 resulting in lapse of ₹ 7.64 Crore allotted in budget. Further ₹ 7 Crore received from Government of Kerala during 2016-17 remained unutilised in TSB Account of KSSM. The Committee further commented that usually departments are unable to fully utilize the budget allocations since its fund allotment is received only at the fag end of a financial year. Committee directed the department to furnish the details of the present status of the delay in the supply of vaccination.

Conclusions/Recommendations

98. The Committee observes that there is laxity on the part of KSSM to furnish proposals for implementing the scheme of supplying vaccine even though DHS had intimated the non-availability of MMR vaccine for a long period which resulted lapse of ₹ 7.64 Crore allotted in the budget for the scheme and warns that such negligence should be avoided in future especially in such situations that demand cautious intervention of the authority.

99. The Committee directs the department to furnish a detailed report on the current status of the procurement & supply of Rubella/MMR vaccines.

4.14 Thalolam Scheme

Government accorded (February 2010) sanction to implement the scheme 'Thalolam' to provide free treatment to the children below 18 years of age with life threatening diseases such as Kidney diseases, Cardiovascular diseases, Cerebral Palsy, Brittle Bone disease, Haemophilia, Thalassemia, Sickle Cell Anaemia, Orthopaedic deformities and other Neuro-Developmental Disabilities,

Congenital anomalies (Endosulfan victims) as well as treatment and surgeries in emergency cases. The scheme was to be implemented through 18 Empanelled Hospitals. Audit observed that an amount of ₹38.39 crore was spent under the scheme during the period 2012-17.

4.14.1 Inadmissible payment of investigation charges

As per guidelines of the scheme issued (March 2010) by KSSM, whenever a beneficiary under the scheme was required to undergo investigation outside the hospital in the private sector due to non-availability of facility in the empanelled hospital, such charges were also to be reimbursed under the scheme. The Superintendent of each hospital along with the Head of the Department of a speciality concerned, was to prepare a panel of diagnostic centres and fix the rates of investigation charges through negotiation. The beneficiary was to be sent only to such centres where the rates for tests/investigations were pre-fixed. The payment for such tests was to be thereafter reimbursed to the diagnostic centres.

Contrary to the above instructions, Audit noticed that panel of investigation centres and negotiated rates for investigations outside the hospitals were not prepared and furnished to KSSM by the empanelled hospitals. Audit further observed that the expenditure incurred under Thalolam scheme during 2012-17 included the reimbursement of charges for various investigative tests of patients conducted outside the hospital. KSSM provided funds in advance for implementation of Thalolam scheme and the hospitals furnished Utilisation Certificates (UC) for the funds received. Audit observed that the claims of charges for investigations conducted outside the hospitals were admitted in full by the hospitals. It was, however, noticed that Statements of Expenditure with details of patients and investigation charges incurred from outside agencies were not forwarded to KSSM along with the UCs. The failure of the KSSM to insist upon panel of investigation centres and negotiated rates for investigations outside the hospitals resulted in reimbursement of entire amount claimed by the investigation centres outside the hospital. In the absence of negotiated rates, Audit could not verify the correctness of amount reimbursed to investigation centres.

GOK stated (December 2017) that similar empanelment was mandated under other schemes. Thus, it was taken as granted that such empanelment and renewal

would have been happening regularly at hospitals and admitted that no cross verification was done to ascertain this. Reply of the Government indicated that the scheme was implemented in a casual manner without following the prescribed guidelines issued by GOK.

[Notes received from the Government based on the above audit paragraph are included as Appendix II]

Excerpts from Committee's discussion with departmental officials

100. Regarding the audit para, the Committee enquired whether private hospitals are included among the 18 empanelled hospitals under Thalolam scheme and also directed to furnish the list of empanelled hospitals under each scheme. The Director, Social Justice Department informed that private hospitals are included in the empanelled hospitals and also agreed to furnish the details.

101. The Senior Deputy Accountant General pointed out instances of reimbursement by KSSM, when there was non availability of certain investigation facility in the empanelled hospitals for a beneficiary under the scheme.

102. Committee opined that reimbursement of investigation charges without verifying the correctness of the amount could not be endorsed and directed the department to ensure that investigation charge outside the empanelled hospitals were reimbursed at a negotiated rate and to furnish a status report in this regard.

Conclusions/Recommendations

103. **The Committee observes that the panel of investigation centres and negotiated rates for investigations outside the hospitals were not prepared and furnished to KSSM by the empanelled hospitals and the failure of KSSM to insist upon panel of investigation centres and negotiated rates for investigation outside the hospitals in the private sector resulted in reimbursement of entire amount claimed by the investigation centres outside the hospital. The Committee further observes that, in the absence of negotiated rates, the accuracy of the amount could not be verified at the time of reimbursement. Therefore, the Committee urges the department to ensure that the investigation charges outside the empanelled hospitals are reimbursed at a negotiated rate.**

104. The Committee also directs the department to provide the status report on this matter urgently.

4.14.2 Internal Control

As per the guidelines of the scheme Thalolam, a yearly Receipt and Payments statement as on 31 March should be furnished by the Hospital, duly certified by a Chartered Accountant to KSSM. Audit noticed that the certified accounts of Thalolam scheme were not obtained from two out of seven empanelled hospitals in three selected districts viz., Government Medical College Hospital, Thiruvananthapuram and Regional Cancer Centre (RCC), Thiruvananthapuram. During 2012-17, an amount of ₹30 lakh and ₹10 lakh was allotted to Government Medical College Hospital, Thiruvananthapuram and RCC, Thiruvananthapuram, respectively. The scheme was not even implemented in Government Medical College Hospital, Manjeri till date (August 2017), which was in the list of empanelled hospitals. As a result, KSSM failed to monitor the proper utilisation of fund for the intended beneficiaries.

GOK replied (December 2017) that directions were given to the authorities concerned at Government Medical College Hospital, Thiruvananthapuram and RCC, Thiruvananthapuram to submit yearly statements without delay. In the case of Government Medical College Hospital, Manjeri a detailed report on number of proposed beneficiaries and expected expenditure, called for by KSSM was awaited.

[Note received from the Government based on the above audit paragraph is included as Appendix II]

Excerpts from Committee's discussion with departmental officials

105. The Committee wanted to know whether pending yearly statements of accounts were received from Government Medical College Hospital, Trivandrum and RCC. The Principal Secretary, informed the Committee that all hospitals except RCC had submitted the yearly statement of accounts. However, inspite of repeated reminders, RCC did not submitted the same. To the Committee's opinion

that allotment and release of fund should be strictly blocked if yearly statement of accounts was not submitted on time, the Principal Secretary, Social Justice Department replied that allotment of fund was continuing with the expectation that they would furnish the statement shortly.

106. The Committee pointed out that it is stated in the reply that detailed expenditure statement and expected number of beneficiaries for releasing advance amount under the scheme from GMC, Manjeri have not been submitted to KSSM as directed for the implementation of Thalolam Scheme in this hospital. To which the Principal Secretary, Social Justice Department clarified that it might be the status during the period of audit, but now Government Medical College, Manjeri has been included in the list of empanelled hospitals under Thalolam Scheme.

107. Committee suggested that the department should make efforts to obtain the yearly statement of accounts from the RCC, Thiruvananthapuram without delay and further directed the department to make follow up action in this regard.

Conclusions/Recommendations

108. **The Committee expresses its concern over the inertia on the part of the empanelled hospitals especially on the part of the Regional Cancer Centre, Thiruvananthapuram, in submitting the yearly statements on receipts and payments as per the guidelines of Thalolam Scheme. The Committee views that the lapses on the part of the Regional Cancer Centre are very serious and directs to submit a detailed report regarding this to the Committee urgently.**

109. **The Committee recommends that the department should make earnest efforts to obtain yearly statements of accounts from the empanelled hospitals without delay and also directs that the department should take strict follow up actions in this regard.**

4.14.3 KSSM failed to provide funds thereby affecting treatment

Audit noticed that the SAT Hospital, Thiruvananthapuram did not offer treatment under the scheme between 04 May 2016 and 14 November 2016 (more than six months), even though an average number of 27 new registrations and 39

review cases had benefitted per month during the preceding period from May 2015 to April 2016 under the scheme. The Hospital admitted (July 2017) that it lacked funds for taking care of patients under the Scheme. KSSM stated (September 2017) that the final instalment of ₹15 lakh out of ₹40 lakh due for 2015-16 was released to SAT Hospital in February 2016 and that ₹70 lakh was paid to the Hospital in 2016-17 in two instalments of ₹20 lakh and ₹50 lakh in October 2016 and March 2017 respectively. Audit observed that KSSM did not make any payments between February 2016 and October 2016, thereby affecting the implementation of the scheme during the period.

GOK stated (December 2017) that KSSM did not have sufficient funds to implement the scheme during 2016-17. The reply was not factually correct as the accounts of KSSM revealed a closing balance of ₹124.41 crore during 2015-16. Thus, despite availability of large cash balance, KSSM failed to provide sufficient funds to one of the major empanelled hospitals implementing the scheme.

[Note received from the Government based on the above audit paragraph is included as Appendix II]

Excerpts from Committee's discussion with departmental officials

110. Regarding the audit query, the Director, Social Justice Department informed the Committee that closing balance of ₹124.41 Crore during 2015-16 pointed out by Accountant General comprise the overall amount allotted to KSSM for various schemes. She also stated that details of all transactions including released and received amount between February 2016 and October 2016 had been submitted for audit and that in some months, amount had also been released in excess of receipt.

111. The Principal Secretary, Social Justice Department stated that payment can be made under a scheme only if it is allotted for that particular scheme in the Head of Account, and further, the amount can be utilised only for the purpose allotted to it. KSSM has a total budget allocation of ₹100 Crore, under various heads for various schemes. She informed the Committee that she should submit a report as to the fund and Balance amount on each scheme as pointed out by the Accountant General.

112. On Senior Deputy Accountant General's opinion, payment should have been done after re-appropriation. The Director, Social Justice Department replied that every year they recommended for re-appropriation after submitting the proposal, but fund could be released only if it was received from Government. The Joint Secretary, Finance Department clarified that proposal for re-appropriation should be submitted through Social Justice Department, with the concurrence of Planning Department. Finance Department would admit re-appropriation only after approval from Planning Department. To which the Director, Social Justice Department responded that in this case, proposal was submitted for re-appropriation, but there are some instances where Finance Department disallowed re-appropriation even if proposal was submitted. The Committee observed that despite the availability of a large cash balance, Kerala Social Security Mission failed to provide sufficient funds to major empanelled hospitals which implemented the scheme.

Conclusion/Recommendation

113. The Committee perceives from the audit observation that even though there exists a large cash balance in the accounts of KSSM, KSSM failed to provide sufficient funds to one of the major empanelled hospitals implementing the Thalolam Scheme. The Committee desires to point out this incident as a typical example of the callous attitude on the part of KSSM towards a matter that requires prime concern and opines that measures should be taken to avoid such flaws in future.

4.15 Vayomithram

GOK guidelines (September 2011) required Vayomithram scheme to be implemented in all Corporations/Municipalities in the State to ensure good health of elderly persons above 65 years of age. Audit noticed that against the requirement of a Vayomithram unit¹⁷ for each of the 93 Corporations/Municipalities¹⁸ in the State, there were only 74 Vayomithram units (in six Corporations and 68 Municipalities) as of August 2017.

17 A Vayomithram Unit comprises of a Coordinator, Doctor, Staff Nurse and Junior Public Health Nurse.

18 Six Corporations and 87 Municipalities.

Revised Guidelines of the scheme (December 2014) required the appointment of Vayomithram Coordinators in each of the Vayomithram units. The Vayomithram Coordinators were tasked with the administration of Vayomithram camps, conduct of health camps for the aged, detection of dropouts from registrants in mobile camps, conduct of at least two review meetings in a month, etc.

Audit noticed that out of the 74 Vayomithram units, 37 units were functioning without regular Vayomithram Coordinators. It was seen that 19 Vayomithram Coordinators and seven SID Coordinators were given additional responsibility of 25 and 12 units respectively. Six Vayomithram Coordinators were allotted additional charge of two clinics. It was also seen that while one SID Coordinator was allotted additional charge of three Vayomithram units, three SID Coordinators were allotted additional charge of two Vayomithram units.

As mentioned in paragraph 4.12, the Vayomithram Coordinators who were also responsible for overseeing the Snehasparsham scheme, failed to obtain the details of unwed mothers in their locality, which adversely affected the implementation of that scheme. Similarly, a mention was made in paragraph 4.13.1 of this report about the poor performance of SID Coordinators in the conduct of camps and clearance of pending applications for disability certificates. The overburdening of the SID Coordinators resulted in lesser number of camps conducted under the Scheme. The pendency of applications was 818, 1,433 and 7,610 applications respectively in Idukki, Kasaragod and Thrissur districts. Audit noticed that only four, 12 and 19 camps were conducted between 01 August 2016 and 30 June 2017 in the three districts respectively. Thus, these districts should have conducted at least 38¹⁹ more camps for clearance of 9861 pending applications. Audit observed that failure of KSSM to set up stipulated number of Vayomithram Units and shortfall in the number of Coordinators also led to failure to obtain details of unwed mothers in their locality under Snehasparsham, failure to conduct health camps for the aged, delay in issue of disability certificates and resultant hardships to the disabled, failure to detect dropouts from registrants in mobile camps, etc.

19 One camp for 250 applicants. Thus, Idukki, Kasaragod and Thrissur had to conduct three, five and 30 more camps respectively to clear the pendency in applications.

KSSM stated (October 2017) that steps were initiated to implement the project in all 93 Municipalities/Corporations in the State. GOK stated (December 2017) that steps were already taken to appoint required number of coordinators on contract basis. This was also reiterated by the ED, KSSM during the Exit Conference.

[Note received from the Government based on the above audit paragraph is included as Appendix II]

Excerpts from Committee's discussion with departmental officials

114. The Committee wanted to know whether the vayomitram project had been implemented in all municipalities/Corporations and how the Vayomitram Co-ordinators were appointed. The Director, Social Justice Department informed the Committee that there were a total of 106 units, except in two municipalities - Koduvally and Aluva. In most units, the district co-ordinators are working as vayomitram co-ordinators. To a specific query of the Committee, the Director replied that the ward level clinic was comprised of a Medical Officer, Staff nurse and Junior Public Health Nurse, and the selection was conducted at the district level.

Conclusion/Recommendation

115. The Committee recommends the department to take necessary steps to appoint the required numbers of Vayomithram co-ordinators for the effective implementation of Social Security Schemes.

4.16 Karunya Deposit Scheme

GOK accorded administrative sanction (March 2008) for implementing Karunya Deposit Scheme with the objective to raise resources for medical and educational support of mentally challenged children between the age of five and 18, attending special schools or who were inmates of orphanages/institutions. The scheme was subsequently extended (February 2009) to physically challenged children. GOK also proposed (March 2008) to release ₹ five Crore to the Director of Social Welfare Department for the purpose. The scheme provided for willing depositors to deposit in any treasury, multiples of ₹ one lakh. No interest was payable on these deposits. The money, thus, raised would be deposited in the State

treasury for one year and was renewable on annual basis. An incentive of ₹15,000 per deposit of ₹ one lakh, would be paid to the beneficiary by the KSSM which would be released to the beneficiary institution for meeting the special requirements of these children in the areas of medical care including surgery and special equipment, Tuition Fees including special tuition, nutritional supplement, clothes and computer.

Considering that the scheme was not being run effectively by the Social Welfare Department and to attract more contributions by way of providing income tax exemption on donations made to KSSM, GOK entrusted (January 2012) the implementation of the scheme to KSSM and released ₹10 lakh. Audit observed that the performance of the KSSM in implementation of the scheme was also very poor as shown below.

- Only ₹25 lakh was received as deposits during 2010-15 and ₹6.09 lakh as interest accrued on the deposits.

- There were 51,011 children in 1,164 orphanages run by the Government and in the private sector. There were also 33 mentally challenged and seven physically disabled children in institutions under the Social Justice Department who were eligible to obtain benefits under the scheme. However, it was seen that only ₹0.78 lakh was distributed as assistance to five beneficiaries during the period from February 2012 to June 2015.

- The assistance distributed to three of the five beneficiaries was in violation of GOK guidelines since the assistance was released directly to parents of children who were neither students of special schools nor residents of any orphanage. These children could have been assisted through other schemes such as 'We Care²⁰' run by KSSM.

- As per the scheme guidelines, KSSM was to design and implement the scheme as joint venture with the Corporates, PSUs, and Foundations, NGOs, individuals and LSGIs. However, only one PSU contributed ₹20 lakh in 2014 for implementation of the scheme.

20 A payment gateway of the Social Justice Department to mobilise funds for the KSSM to collect contributions to support/assist such individuals/groups who are in dire need of social Security.

Laxity of the KSSM in implementation resulted in the scheme failing to realise its intended objectives. KSSM, by not releasing assistance to the beneficiary institution, failed in ensuring the utilisation of assistance for the purpose envisaged, i.e., health care, nutrition, education of mentally and physically challenged children.

[Note received from the Government based on the above audit paragraph is included as Appendix II]

Excerpts from Committee's discussion with departmental officials

116. The Committee enquired whether Karunya Deposit Scheme was continuing, the Director, Social Justice Department replied that scheme was continuing and had provided financial assistance to 6 children including 3 children with special sanction. When asked about the acceptance of new applications, the Director, Social Justice Department said that right now there are no children who are eligible under the Government's guidelines.

117. When asked about the 51021 pending applications, the Administrator-cum-Accounts Officer, KSSM submitted that these applications were invited as per the decision taken to include children from BPL families since eligible beneficiaries under this scheme was not found. But Government sanction was not received as it was violation of Government of Kerala guidelines.

118. The Committee wished to know whether corporation/PSU's etc provide fund for this scheme. The Director, Social Justice Department enlightened the Committee that Social Justice Department deposited ₹10 lakh as Fixed Deposit and Malabar Cement with ₹ 20 lakh Fixed Deposit. The Principal Secretary, Social Justice Department further added that public contributions are being collected though 'We Care' scheme run by KSSM but there was no major investments in this scheme.

Conclusion/Recommendation

119. No Comments

4.17 Conclusion

KSSM was conceived to formulate and implement social security schemes in the State. While accounts for the years 2015-17 were yet to be finalised, the systemic deficiencies pointed out by auditors during the years 2012-15 were still persisting. Diversion of scheme funds was noticed. Applications received from potential beneficiaries were not efficiently processed in time, resulting in many of them being denied the benefits of the schemes. Internal control was weak leading to poor financial management and deficiencies in implementation of schemes. The performance of KSSM needed to be improved upon.

[Note received from the Government based on the above audit paragraph is included as Appendix II]

Excerpts from Committee's discussion with departmental officials

120. The Committee highlighted the audit objections in the conclusion paragraphs of the C & AG and directed the department that the lapses should not be repeated in future.

Conclusion/Recommendation

121. The Committee notices that many lapses have occurred on the part of KSSM in implementing Social Security Schemes and opines that utmost care should be given for avoiding such occurrences of flaws in future.

Thiruvananthapuram,
10th August, 2023.

SUNNY JOSEPH,
Chairman,
Committee on Public Accounts.

APPENDIX I**SUMMARY OF MAIN CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATION**

Sl. No.	Para No.	Department Concerned	Conclusion/Recommendation
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
1	5	Social Justice	The Committee observes that certain empanelled hospitals, mainly Regional Cancer Centre, Thiruvananthapuram are showing reluctance in submitting audited/expenditure statements to KSSM on time, and expresses its strong displeasure at the inaction on the part of Regional Cancer Centre. The Committee directs the department to give strict instructions to RCC for the time— bound completion of auditing and the duly furnishing of expenditure statements and audited statements to KSSM.
2	12	Social Justice	The Committee understands that all Government officers who receive and handle money are required to keep a cash book in Form TR 7A as stipulated in K.T.C. and should enter all monetary transactions in cash book as soon as they occur and should be attested by the Head of Office. The Committee opines that non-maintenance of cash book is a clear violation of Rule 92(a) of the Kerala Treasury Code and it also resulted in an unreconciled balance of ₹ 99.50 Crore.
3	13	Social Justice	The Committee directs the department to issue strict instructions for the proper maintenance of the cash book and accounts. The Committee also urges the department to make use of information technology—enabled services for the proper maintenance of cash book to avoid future failures.
4	18	Social Justice	The Committee observes that an amount of ₹40.27 lakh deducted as TDS on interest accrued on FD during the period 2009-10 to 2011-12 of Kerala Social Security Mission could have been refunded if the income tax return had been filed properly on time.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
5	19	Social Justice	The Committee directs the department to identify the officers who failed to file the income tax returns on time and also directed to take stringent action against the officers responsible for the lapses. The Committee directs the department to inform whether the TDS amount had been remitted to the income tax department.
6	20	Social Justice	The Committee also recommends that appropriate training and awareness should be provided to the officers who are dealing with IT returns, e-filing related matters in order to avoid such lapses in future.
7	24	Social Justice	The Committee expresses its displeasure at the injudicious decision of the Government to transfer to the tune of ₹ 20 Crore from the corpus fund of KSSM to the Kudumbasree Mission which led to a premature ₹25 crore Fixed Deposit closure and a consequent loss of interest of ₹ 0.59 Crore to the KSSM.
8	29	Social Justice	The Committee enquires whether the amount spent for extending insurance coverage for elected representatives of LSGIs, against the objectives of the KSSM, has been received back from the Government. The Committee directs the department to reimburse the amount to KSSM on an urgent basis if this has not been done so far. The Committee also urges the department to furnish a comprehensive report in this regard to the Committee at the earliest.
9	38	Social Justice	The Committee notes with grave concern that no accounts were maintained properly by the KSSM on printing, distribution and collection of proceeds on sale of stamps and expresses its displeasure at the irresponsible attitude of KSSM in not taking any action against the loss of fund of ₹8.01 lakh.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
10	39	Social Justice	The Committee notices that such a loss had occurred because of the lethargy of the officers involved who did not keep accounts properly. The Committee expresses deep dissatisfaction in the failure to take action against officers who commit errors or to find out who is responsible for the act of omission. The Committee opines that responsibility should be fixed against the erring officials in order to avoid the repetition of such lapses in the future.
11	40	Social Justice	The Committee directs the department to take adequate measures for the disposal of unsold stock of stamps which are maintained in the office.
12	45	Social Justice	The Committee directs the department to furnish the list of empanelled hospitals under the Schemes of Kathoram and Shruthitharangam in each district.
13	52	Social Justice	The Committee points out that caregivers of patients deserve the most sympathetic consideration from society and directs the department to clear the pendency in disbursing financial assistance to them at the earliest.
14	53	Social Justice	The Committee understands that the financial assistance to some of the beneficiaries under the scheme which was sent through money order have not received the beneficiaries such as mis-sent, address not found etc. and also causes 5% loss as postal commission. As per the guideline, the financial assistance must be sent through the SB account in the name of the caregiver of the patient. In this situation, the Committee urges the department to take measures to change the mode of disbursement of payments from Money Order to Direct Benefit Transfer via banks.
15	61	Social Justice	The Committee directs the department to take urgent measures to change the mode of disbursement of payment from Money Order to Direct Benefit Transfer via Banks and to ensure prompt processing of applications received under the scheme.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
16	64	Social Justice	The Committee recommends to the department that the internal control mechanism of Kerala Social Security Mission should be strengthened for the effective implementation of all the Social Security Schemes.
17	70	Social Justice	The Committee recommends that the department should ensure that effective measures are taken to clear the existing applications for financial assistance under the scheme Snehapoorvam without further delay.
18	78	Social Justice	The Committee recommends that effective measures should be taken by the department and KSSM to provide financial assistance to eligible beneficiaries under the Snehasparsham Scheme and urges to furnish a status report regarding this to the Committee urgently.
19	85	Social Justice	The Committee observes that if the records on the receipt, disposal or rejection of applications by the Child Development Project Officers and KSSM had been maintained properly, the possibility of double payment could have been avoided. Therefore, the Committee recommends that the department should implement a software system to avoid such duplications in the future and also urges the department to take adequate steps for the proper maintenance and updating of registers in this regard.
20	92	Social Justice	The Committee learns that the KSSM is the implementing agency for Statewide disability accreditation camps and for the issuance of disability certificates and identity cards. The failure to conduct the camps has resulted in huge pendency of applications and thus undermines the very objectives of the Scheme. The Committee therefore recommends the department that strict measures be taken to ensure that applications for disability certificates and identity cards are processed within a prescribed time frame.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
21	93	Social Justice	The Committee also directs the department to conduct special drives to speed up disability certification process and increase the frequency of such drives for the speedy disposal of the pending cases within six months.
22	94	Social Justice	The Committee insists that the department submit a district wise status report as soon as possible on the disposition of outstanding cases.
23	96	Social Justice	The Committee directs KSSM to ensure that advances made are adjusted/recovered in a timely manner in order to avoid loss to the State exchequer. The Committee urges the department to fix responsibility against the concerned officials and directs the department to furnish a report regarding the action taken against the erring officials to the Committee urgently.
24	98	Social Justice	The Committee observes that there is laxity on the part of KSSM to furnish proposals for implementing the scheme of supplying vaccine even though DHS had intimated the non-availability of MMR vaccine for a long period which resulted lapse of ₹ 7.64 Crore allotted in the budget for the scheme and warns that such negligence should be avoided in future especially in such situations that demand cautious intervention of the authority.
25	99	Social Justice	The Committee directs the department to furnish a detailed report on the current status of the procurement and supply of Rubella/MMR vaccines.
26	103	Social Justice	The Committee observes that the panel of investigation centres and negotiated rates for investigations outside the hospitals were not prepared and furnished to KSSM by the empanelled hospitals and the failure of KSSM to insist upon panel of investigation centres and negotiated rates for investigation outside the

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
			Hospitals in the private sector resulted in reimbursement of entire amount claimed by the investigation centres outside the hospital. The Committee further observes that, in the absence of negotiated rates, the accuracy of the amount could not be verified at the time of reimbursement. Therefore, the Committee urges the department to ensure that the investigation charges outside of the empanelled hospitals are reimbursed at a negotiated rate.
27	104	Social Justice	The Committee also directs the department to provide the status report on this matter urgently.
28	108	Social Justice	The Committee expresses its concern over the inertia on the part of the empanelled hospitals especially on the part of the Regional Cancer Centre, Thiruvananthapuram, in submitting the yearly statements on receipts and payments as per the guidelines of Thalolam Scheme. The Committee views that the lapses on the part of the Regional Cancer Centre are very serious and directs to submit a detailed report regarding this to the Committee urgently.
29	109	Social Justice	The Committee recommends that the department should make earnest efforts to obtain yearly statements of accounts from the empanelled hospitals without delay and also directs that the department should take strict follow up actions in this regard.
30	113	Social Justice	The Committee perceives from the audit observation that even though there exists a large cash balance in the accounts of KSSM, KSSM failed to provide sufficient funds to one of the major empanelled hospitals implementing the Thalolam Scheme. The Committee desires to point out this incident as a typical example of the callous attitude on the part of KSSM towards a matter that requires prime concern and opines that measures should be taken to avoid such flaws in future.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
31	115	Social Justice	The Committee recommends the department to take necessary steps to appoint the required numbers of Vayomithram co-ordinators for the effective implementation of Social Security Schemes.
32	121	Social Justice	The Committee notices that many lapses have occurred on the part of KSSM in implementing Social Security Schemes and opines that utmost care should be given for avoiding such occurrences of flaws in future.

APPENDIX II
Notes Furnished By Government

No.375/C2/2018/SJD

Social Justice Department

STATEMENT OF ACTION TAKEN ON THE 113th REPORT OF PAC (2016-19), (GENERAL AND SOCIAL SECTOR) FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 2017.

Para No.	Audit Para	Action Taken
4.8	Non-Adherence to financial standards/persistent irregularities.	The Accounts of the Kerala Social Security Mission has been audited up to the financial year 2015-16 and approved by the Governing Body and that of financial year 2016-17 is expected to complete soon. Audited statements, yearly receipts & payments and monthly statement of expenditure are being obtained from the hospitals except Regional Cancer Centre, Trivandrum. Regional Cancer Centre, Trivandrum is submitting only monthly SOE. Regional Cancer Centre, Trivandrum has been reminded to forward the Audited statements & yearly receipts & payments. Malabar Cancer Centre has submitted the audited statements certified by a Chartered Accountant team. All the other hospitals have been reminded to submit the same. In the light of reply furnished the objection in the para may be dropped.
4.8.1	Non-maintenance of Cash Book.	Daily monetary transactions are recorded in Tally software. Kerala Social Security Mission is keeping and maintaining and detailed Bank books in Tally software for all the banks which KSSM

Rec
up to date

Charitable

		<p>is having account with and the same are properly maintained and ledgerised in electronic form. In addition to the above, a Cheque Issue Register is also maintained and Cash Book for the Treasury Account No. 134 which is the major account for receipt of grant and provision of scheme expenditures etc which consolidates all the transactions effected daily, keeping a watch on the balance in the Treasury account for better Fund management and subsequent reconciliation with the accounts in the Electronic form. It is also informed that in the case of non transactional bank account/ minimal transaction, cash book is maintained physically.</p> <p>Accounts section has been strengthened by posting one more Assistant. Reconciliation of funds for 2016-17 is being done. Delay occurred in this regard is due to the large volume of transactions and non cooperation of concerned bank authorities. Kerala Social Security Mission has taken steps to complete the updating of accounts on a war foot basis.</p>
4.8.2	Avoidable tax deduction of Rs.40.27 Lakhs	<p>Action has been initiated to refund the TDS amount of Rs. 40.27 Lakhs already remitted to Income Tax Department, Kerala. Social Security Mission has requested the District Treasury Officer, Trivandrum to report whether Rs.40.27 lakhs deducted as TDS from the deposit of Kerala Social Security Mission during the Financial Year 2009-2010 to 2011-12 have been remitted to the Income Tax Department. But no reply has yet been received from the Treasury</p>

→ give ~~basic training~~ ^{for} ~~to~~ ^{to} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~auditors~~ ^{auditors}
of ~~income tax~~ ^{income tax} ~~return~~ ^{return}

	take action to don't repeat in future.	Department. Action will be taken on receipt of reply from the District Treasury authorities. 9-10, 11-12
4.8.3.1	Order of Government of Kerala to transfer 20 Crore from the Corpus fund of KSSM to Kudumbashree Mission led to premature closure of a Fixed Deposit and resultant loss of interest income of 0.59 crore to KSSM	As observed in the Audit Para, the Executive Director -KSSM had informed the Govt. that immediate withdrawal of Rs. 25 crore would cause a loss of interest to the extent of Rs 1.07 crore and also suggested to continue the FD till maturity, But the FD had to be closed prematurely as per the orders of the Government. It was revealed in the audit that the amount of Rs 25 crore was transferred from KSSM to Kudumbasree at the time when the balance amount with Kudumbasree was Rs. 30 Crores vide G.O (Rt) No. 462/2010/SWD dated 2.11.2010. Requests has been given to LSGD to refund the amount of Rs. 20 Crores given to Kudumbasree Mission from KSSM (Vide file No.C2/22/2019/SJD). Hence the objections in the Para may be dropped.
4.8.3.2	Diversion of KSSM funds for extending insurance coverage to representatives of LSGIs	Kerala Social Security Mission has remitted insurance premium to CHIAK only up to the financial year 2015-16. The objectives of KSSM is to extend service & support to destitute, poor & other weaker sections of society who needs care & protection, The proposal is being examined. (C2/27/2019/SJD)
4.8.4	Fund generation through printing of stamps and sales thereof:	As per G.O (Rt.) No. 392/2011/SWD, dt. 24/12/2012 Govt. had accorded sanction to print and distribute stamps for worth of Rs. 11 Crore for additional income generation to KSSM for implementing

		<p>various welfare schemes in the name of 'KARUNYATHINTE KAINETTAM'. The Performance Audit conduct a joint verification with AO, KSSM and as per their report dt.10/11/2017, DO No. Report (Civil)/II/PA 2/2017- 18 A4/3804/18 reveals that there was a loss of 8.14 lakh occurred in issuing stamp and collection of money. As per KFC Vol.1 Art.308 it is necessary to inform such financial loss to Vigilance department with the consent of concerned government department. Action in this regard is being taken in file No.C2/15/2015/SJD on the basis of the inspection report dated 11/12/2014 submitted by the Finance Inspection Wing.</p>
4.9	Sruthitharagam	<p>The reason for the accumulation of the large number of application for Cochlear Implantation in GMC Kozhikode was that no BERA machines were available in the other districts. BERA machines have been provided all the districts in this year. It is also confirmed that there are no pending application in GMC Kozhikode.</p>
4.10.1	Aswasakiranam: Payments made through money order.	<p>The financial assistance is disbursed to the Aswasakiranam beneficiaries through post office money order. Financial assistance to the beneficiaries of Aswasakiranam were disbursed through money order in compliance of the guidelines issued vide G.O(Ms)No.9/2011/SWD dated 28.01.2011. To avoid loss of funds as money order commission, the aadhar number and bank details are being collected from the beneficiaries for disbursing money through banks. The details of 1,00,000 beneficiaries have been collected so</p>

	<p><i>Application to the online</i></p>	<p>far and applications of the said beneficiaries have been updated in e-Suraksha, software specially designed by IKM for the schemes implemented by KSSM. The financial assistance of these beneficiaries will be disbursed through Direct Money Transfer in this financial year itself. As per G.O(Rt)No.6413/2018/Fin dated 28.07.2018, the Executive Director, Kerala Social Security Mission has been appointed as the Drawing and Disbursement Officer for better monitoring and disbursement of the fund. The disbursement is made through online. Hence the objections in the para may be dropped.</p>
4.10.2	<p>Reply to Audit Enquiry -Failure to process applications under Aswasakiranam resultant denial of benefits:</p>	<p>The Financial assistance has already been given to the 10000 beneficiaries whose applications were showed pending in the Audit Report. Concerted efforts were also taken to clear up pendency, following which financial assistance up to July 2018 were disbursed to the eligible applicants whose applications were received in the office during the period up to 2017 March 15. Financial assistance to the eligible applicants whose applications were received in the office during the period from 2017 March 16 to 2018 March 15th has also been released. Due to the large number of applications being received for the scheme, there was some delay in processing the applications. For the financial year 2018-19 the budget allocation is 42 Crores and the same has been exhausted.</p>

As G.O (MS) No. 47/2010/SJD dated-2/8/2010 the scheme was implemented for giving the financial assistance to the caregivers of physically and mentally challenged bedridden patients. Later as per G.O (MS) No. 60/2012/SJD dated-11/10/2012 the conditions of the G.O dated-2/8/2010 and 28/1/2011 were relaxed and the people affected with Cerebral palsy/Autism, Cancer, 100% blindness and the aged were brought under the purview of the scheme. As a result the number beneficiaries have increased and the budget allocation of Rs.42, 00, 00,000/- is insufficient to meet the expenses which come to Rs.120, 00, 00,000/-.

The details of application are being digitised Steps are being taken to establish the online system and by now, over 1, 13, 00,000 applications have been updated in specially designed software, e-Suraksha software by Kudumbasree unit. Hence the objection in the Para may be dropped.

4.10.3	Non- compliance to scheme guidelines resulted in disbursement of financial assistant even after death.	As per the guidelines, issued vide G.O (Ms)No.60/2012/SJD dt.11.10.2012, the Care giver should report the death of the bedridden to KSSM. The report in prescribed form should be collected twice in a year. To ensure that financial assistance is not disbursed even after the death of the bedridden, the lists of beneficiaries have been forwarded to the Child Development Project
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Officers. The ICDS Supervisors will verify whether the bedridden is alive and whether the health condition has improved. The Child Development Project Officers will consolidate the list and submit to KSSM. The aadhar numbers of beneficiaries are being collected from the beneficiaries for the purpose of processing application online. Since the aadhar will be taken as the reference number there will be no duplication. Hence the objections in the para may be dropped.

4.11 SNEHAPOORVAM

As per the table 4.4 mentioned in the report of Comptroller and Auditor General of India, the number of applications approved and processed for the period 2014-17 was 1,26,039 among which 57,831 applications are pending for approval (under verification) as the online generated printout was not signed - sealed and submitted by the concerned institution heads.

But as per our statistics for the corresponding period of Audit report - the pendency due to non availability of signed printout from institutions are as given below:

Year	Pending
2014-15	11190
2015-16	12175
2016-17	6309
TOTAL	29674

Hence 57,831 are not pending for sanction but, only 29,674.

As per our current status as on date the number of approved applications are 1,42,605 and the number of applications pending for approval (under verification) is only 19,634. In order to expedite forwarding of pending applications to the mission by the institution heads, KSSM has given communications through email and also over phone for submitting signed printouts. Though guidelines were self speaking and clearly state the responsibility of the educational institutions, KSSM took action to collect the pending printouts from the institutions. The KSSM officials regularly contacted the institutions via SMS, Email and telephonic calls.

Emails were sent from KSSM through Programme Coordinator to Director of Public Instruction informing that the signed printouts should be submitted by the institutions and also issued Press releases with instructions for submitting the printouts promptly. Also with the support of District coordinators of KSSM institutions in all districts were made aware of online application process of Snehapoorvam. For the academic year 2018-19 using the call centre support of KSSM individually contacted each institution on flaws if any, found in the applications of students so that it ensures that maximum students are benefited by the scholarship scheme. KSSM has also provided a HELP FOR document in the Snehapoorvam web

portal in login page itself giving step by step instructions in pdf format on how to proceed on an online application and submission of the application.

There was no denial of the assistance due to the late submission of the printout. KSSM is still running the campaign to collect the pending print out, Programme coordinator (System management) heads the responsibility for collecting the print outs. Also Instructions are given to Schools through IT School portal for submitting the printout. Hence the objections in the para may be dropped.

4.11.1 Exclusion of Students of ITIs from Benefits of the Scheme.

As per GO (MS) No.6/2012 dtd.06.06.2012/SWD, up to 11,12 class students are included in Snehapoorvam scheme. As per GO (MS) No. 6/2013/SJD dtd 22.01.2013 and GO (MS) No. 83 /2014/SJD dated 10.10.2014, Degree/Professional courses are also included for the benefits of their scheme. As per GO (Ms) No 83/2014 dtd 10.10.2014, applications for Snehapoorvam scheme should be made through online web portal of KSSM by Govt/ Aided Head of institutions. But students of ITI/Polytechnic Diploma courses, certificate courses were not included in these orders.

At present the students of Government/aided, ITI and Polytechnics are included under Snehapoorvam Scheme as per G.O No. 2/2018/SJD dated 03/02/2018. Hence the objections in the

		para may be dropped.
4.12.1.	Snehapoorvam ^{Snehasparsham} Financial Assistance to unwed mothers.	As per G.O (MS) No. 34/2010/SWD dated-9/6/2010, the scheme Snehasparsham was implemented for the welfare of the unwed mothers of ST community who have been sexually exploited. But later as per G.O (MS) No. 38/2011/SJD dated-12/8/2011, non tribal destitute unwed mothers were also brought under the purview of the scheme. Earlier the number of tribal unwed mothers was only 521. As per the latest details obtained the number has increased to 922. After the list of beneficiaries is got verified from Child Development Project Officer, concerned financial assistance will be given to the eligible beneficiaries. Hence the objections in the para may be dropped.
4.12.2.	Release of financial assistance without ensuring compliance to guidelines.	Life Certificates are collected promptly and scrutinized by KSSM to ensure that financial assistance is not released after death. The details of application received/rejected/disposed is being maintained since 2017. The IKM has developed a software e-Suraksha for the processing of application. Hence the objections may be dropped.
4.12.3	Double payments	The Aadhar & Bank Account details are being collected from the beneficiaries for processing application on time. Double payments can be ruled out and the details of application, received/rejected/disposed can also be gathered.

As per G.O (Rt) No.6413/18/Fin. Dt.28/07/2018 ED KSSM has been made DDO. The disbursements of Financial Assistance are done through BIMS. Hence the objections may be dropped.

4.13.1 Non-conduct of disability camps for clearance of large number of pending applications. Disability Camps are being conducted for a group of 250 Applicants for assessing the disability and issuing Disability ID cards on the spot. Only the persons who have more than 40% disability are given the ID card.

With the introduction of DDO system there is a restriction in drawing advances from BIMS.

Details of applications processed during the period from June 2017 to December 2017 are given below.

Sl. No.	District	No. of Disability Camps	No. of ID cards Issued	No. of Applications disposed of	No. of Applications pending for disposal
1	Kollam	9	1223	1730	660
2	Malappuram	6	939	1770	
3	Wayanad	4	293	589	365
4	Kottayam	10	1513	2488	
5	Thiruvananthapuram	2	194	260	
6	Alappuzha	9	93	656	4800
7	Kannur	Nil	Nil	Nil	2283
8	Idukki	Nil	Nil	Nil	789
9	Pathanamthitta	2	280	370	

10	Kozhikode	12	1416	2439	28
11	Kasargode	5	2793	1509	
12	Palakkadu	9	1471	2265	
13	Ernakulam	5	590	1250	
14	Thrissur	12	1348	2154	
	Total	85	12153	17480	8925

Details of applications processed during the period from January 2018 to November 2018 is given below.

Sl. No.	District	No. of Disability Camps	No. of ID cards Issued	No. of Applications disposed of	No. of Applications pending for disposal
1	Idukki	3	587	917	174
2	Alappuzha	13	1778	2524	1500
3	Kottayam	18	1802	4703	345
4	Malappuram	14	2204	4150	3200
5	Palakkadu	14	2217	3547	3076
6	Kannur	19	2427	2283	
7	Kollam	2	430	800	640
8	Pathanamthitta	2	280	380	
9	Kasargode	9	1310	599	
10	Thiruvananthapuram	4	800	686	
11	Wayanadu	4	230	499	121
12	Thrissur	16	1989	2991	6462
13	Kozhikode	In Kozhikode district, the District Collector, through the programme 'Kayyethum			

		Doorathu', conducted the Disability Camps and Issued Disability certificates. Therefore no such applications have been received from Kozhikode district and hence ID cards were not issued from KSSM.			
14	Ernakulam	As per the direction of District Collector, Ernakulam 7710 applications were handed over to Health Department.			
	Total	118	16054	24079	15,518

4.13.2 Non-recovery of advance given for conduct of disability certification camps.

Due to State Assembly Election held during 2016 April, May, the Issuance of ID card for the year 2016-17 started only on August 2016 and separate Register for giving advance amount for conducting camps are kept from August 2016. As per the accounts, 262 advances were settled out of 263 advances made. It is also informed that 56 advances pending for settlement during 2015 has also been settled. Thus, 318 advances have been settled during 2017.

The details of advance given and settled from 2016 August to 2017 December is given below.

Sl. NO	District	Number of advance sanctioned	Number of advance settled	Number of advances not settled
1	Thiruvananthapuram	22	21	01
2	Alappuzha	25	25	0
3	Kozhikode	19	19	0

4	Palakkadu	32	32	0
5	Kannur	05	05	0
6	Kottayam	22	22	0
7	Thirissur	30	30	0
8	Kasargode	21	21	0
9	Ernakulam	15	15	0
10	Wayanadu	17	17	0
11	Pathanamthitta	06	06	0
12	Kollam	18	18	0
13	Idikki	04	04	0
14	Malappuram	27	27	0
Total		263	262	1

More over 318 advances were settled including 56 advance pending in 2015-16 Financial Year. Hence the objections in the Para may be dropped.

4.13.3 Delay in supply of vaccines

As per the supply order dated 20/11/17 for 3,30,000 doses of MMR vaccines, KMSCL vide letter No.KMSCL/DRG/ED/960/2017 dated 19/5/2018 has informed that the 3,30,000 doses of MMR vaccines have supplied to District wearhouses. In addition to this supply order has been issued for 86810 vials as requested by DHS, as per letter No.266/SID/KMSCL- vaccines/2015 dated 21/5/2018.

KMSCL has informed vide letter No. KMSCL/ED/960/2017 dated 12/3/2019 that as per approved tender notice the maximum vials that can be procured as per the existing tender is 82,500 and it has

		<p>been supplied. The payment of this vaccines has also effected. Hence the Para may be dropped.</p>
4.14.1	Inadmissible payments of investigation charges	<p>As per the detailed guidelines of Cancer Suraksha/ Tralolan Scheme, it is mentioned that whenever a beneficiary under the scheme is required to do investigation outside the hospital in private sector because it is not available in the hospital, the cost should also be covered under the scheme. For this purpose, each Superintendent along with the Head of the Department should prepare a panel of diagnostic centres and fix the rates through negotiation. The beneficiary should be sent to only such centres where the rate is pre-fixed. The payment for such tests should be thereafter be reimbursed to the beneficiaries by the Superintendent or Nodal Officer from the scheme funds. It is also mentioned that the diagnostic centre with details of investigations and negotiated rates should be sent to the Executive Director, Kerala Social Security Mission for information.</p> <p>Each empanelled centre prepared the panel of diagnostic centres and they are doing such investigation as mentioned in the guidelines. KSSM has given direction to all empanelled centres to furnish the details to KSSM without any further delay. In the 24th Governing Body held on 27/3/2019, RCC and other Government Medical Colleges will maintaining a separate account for Mission.</p>

4.14.2	Internal Control	<p>Hence the objections may be dropped.</p> <p>Govt. Medical College Hospital, Trivandrum has submitted the yearly statement for the years 2010-11, 2011-12 and 2015-16. Directions were given to the Superintendent, Govt. Medical College Hospital, and Trivandrum to submit the yearly statement for the year 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2016-17. KSSM has also given a reminder to concerned hospitals to submit the details without any further delay.</p> <p>Regional Cancer Centre, Trivandrum has not submitted the yearly statement till date. Directions were given to the Director, Regional Cancer Centre to submit the details without any further delay. KSSM has also given a reminder to concerned hospital to submit the details without any further delay.</p> <p>As per G.O (M.S) No. 38/2015/SJD dated 8.6.2015, Government have issued orders to empanel Govt. Medical College, Manjeri under Thalolam scheme. KSSM has given directions to the Superintendent, Govt. Medical College, Manjeri to submit a detailed expenditure details and expected number of beneficiaries for releasing advance amount under the scheme. But till now they have not submitted the details. When the proposal is received, it will be placed in the next Executive Committee / Governing Body of KSSM and will release the advance amount for implementing the scheme. But the reply from the Superintendent, Govt. Medical College,</p>
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		Manjeri has not yet been received. Hence the objections may be dropped.																																				
4.14.3	KSSM failed to provide funds thereby affecting treatment.	<p>As per the monthly utilization certificate received from SAT Hospital, Trivandrum, the hospital had sufficient fund during that period. But during the financial year 2016-17, only an amount of Rs. 1,51,00,000/- was sanctioned to KSSM to meet the spill over expenditure and it was decided to merge the scheme in Arogyakiranam of Health Department. Hence KSSM didn't release further amounts to concerned hospital during that period. But later on an amount of Rs. 9,00,00,000/- (Rupees Nine Crore) was given by NHM (Health) to KSSM to implement the scheme without any interruption. After that KSSM had released funds as per the requirement of concerned hospitals.</p> <p>The details of fund released, utilized and balance amount available are shown below.</p> <table><tr><th>Sl. No.</th><th>Month & Year</th><th>Fund released</th><th>Amount spent</th><th>Balance</th><th>Balance including interest</th></tr><tr><td>1</td><td>February 2016</td><td>11100000</td><td>9970191</td><td>1129809</td><td>1272348</td></tr><tr><td>2</td><td>March 2016</td><td>11100000</td><td>10761306</td><td>338694</td><td>481233</td></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>April 2016</td><td>11100000</td><td>11152496</td><td>(-) 52496</td><td>90043</td></tr><tr><td>4</td><td>May 2016</td><td>11100000</td><td>11161596</td><td>(-) 61596</td><td>80943</td></tr><tr><td>5</td><td>June 2016</td><td>11100000</td><td>11178095</td><td>(-) 78095</td><td>74524</td></tr></table>	Sl. No.	Month & Year	Fund released	Amount spent	Balance	Balance including interest	1	February 2016	11100000	9970191	1129809	1272348	2	March 2016	11100000	10761306	338694	481233	3	April 2016	11100000	11152496	(-) 52496	90043	4	May 2016	11100000	11161596	(-) 61596	80943	5	June 2016	11100000	11178095	(-) 78095	74524
Sl. No.	Month & Year	Fund released	Amount spent	Balance	Balance including interest																																	
1	February 2016	11100000	9970191	1129809	1272348																																	
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4	May 2016	11100000	11161596	(-) 61596	80943																																	
5	June 2016	11100000	11178095	(-) 78095	74524																																	

6	July 2016	11100000	11190653	(-) 90653	61966
7	August 2016	11100000	11203220	(-) 103220	49399
8	September 2016	11100000	11216270	(-) 116270	36349
9	October 2016	13100000	11229210	1870790	1870790

4.15- Vayomithram

KSSM has taken steps to implement the scheme in all Municipalities in the State on war foot basis. KSSM has started 49 Vayomithram units since May 2016. KSSM has taken steps to start Vayomithram Scheme in Block Panchayaths. On a pilot basis, unit has been started in Kozhikode Rural Block Panchayath on 5-9-2018.

As per Audit Paragraph 4.12 and 4.15, it is stated that Vayomithram Coordinators are responsible for monitoring of Snehasparsham Scheme and had failed to obtain the results. It may please be noted that, KSSM has not entrusted monitoring of any other schemes (Other than Vayomithram) to Vayomithram Coordinators even though it is pointed out generally in G.O No: 103/2014/SJD dated 23-12-2014 that they will be in charge of Mission schemes in the District. As per decision taken in the meeting held in the office of KSSM dated 23-7-2015, the Co-ordinators were only entrusted to do a sample survey of 25% among the total Snehasparsham beneficiaries to check whether there is any ineligible

		<p>persons included in the scheme. It may be noted that the responsibility is entrusted to CDPO and District Social Justice Officers to identify the beneficiaries vide G.O No (MS) 34/2010/SWD dated 9-6-2010.</p> <p>As of now, 40 Vayomithram Coordinators, 13 District Coordinators and 2 SID Coordinators are put in charge of Vayomithram units in total. A Vayomithram unit has being started in Blocks also (Kozhikode Rural Block). KSSM has taken steps to appoint Co-ordinators in the vacant posts at Vayomithram units. KSSM has invited district wise applications through online from 14 districts and the same is under process. Hence the objections may be dropped.</p>
4.16	Karunya Deposit Scheme	<p>As per G.O (MS) No.23/2008/SWD dated 31/3/2008, the scheme is intended for mentally retarded children between the age of 5 and 18 from BPL families. The beneficiary should be a school going resident of an orphanage or a student of a special school. But based on Executive Committee decision financial assistance was given to three children of BPL families who are staying at their own homes.</p>
	Submission	<p>It is reiterated that during the audit process and after the same was completed, concerted efforts were taken to make administrative and structural reforms in line with Audit</p>

recommendations and it proved fruitful to the organisation. All the recommendations of the Audit have been complied with to a great extent. In the light of the above it is requested that the audit objections in the para may be dropped.

for G. Subudhan

NAZARUDEEN.A

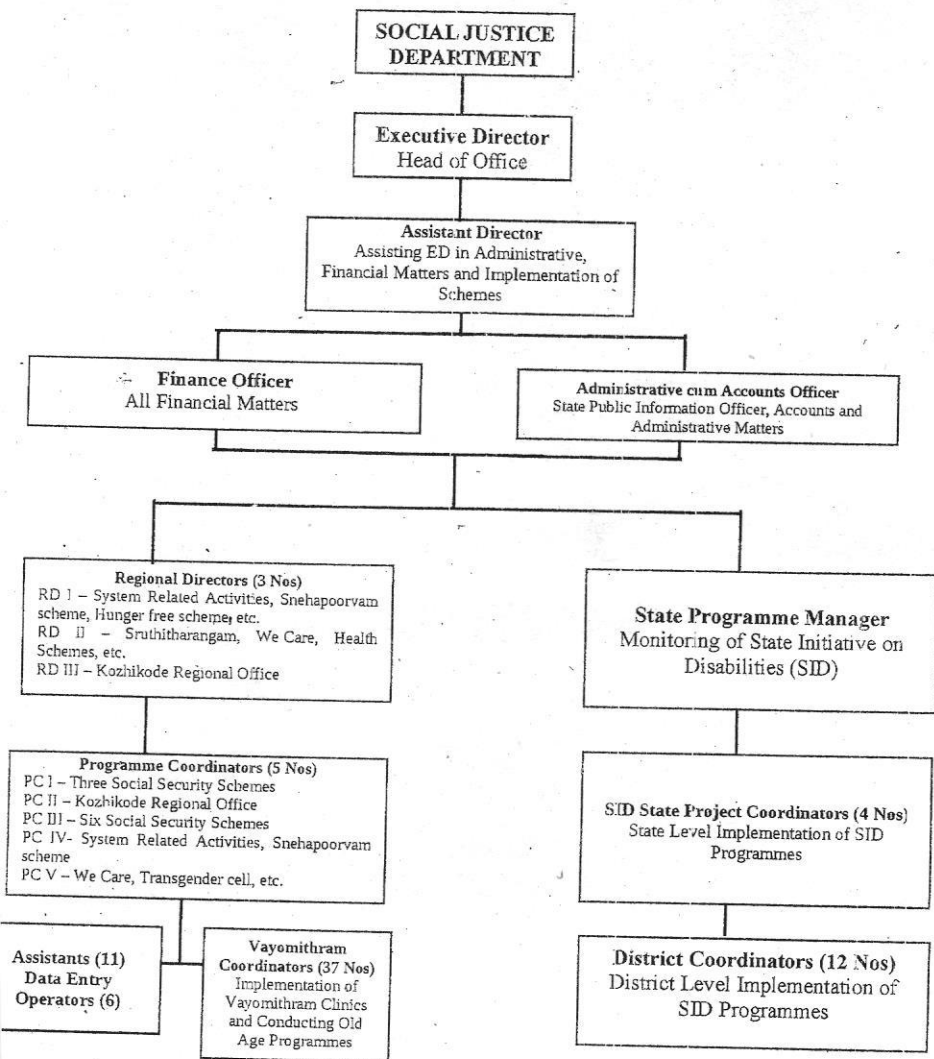
NAZARUDEEN.A
Joint Secretary to Govt.
Social Justice Department
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APPENDIX III
Appendices From Audit Report

Appendix 4.1

Organisational setup of Kerala Social Security Mission

(Reference: Paragraph 4.2; Page: 73)



Appendix 4.2

Scheme-wise receipts and expenditure of GOK funds for the period 2012-17

(Reference: Paragraph 4.7; Page: 75)

(₹ in crore)

Sl. No.	Scheme	2012-13		2013-14		2014-15		2015-16		2016-17		TOTAL	
		Receipt	Expenditure	Receipt	Expenditure	Receipt	Expenditure	Receipt	Expenditure	Receipt	Expenditure	Receipt	Expenditure
1.	Aswasakiranam	15.00	24.79	20.00	34.41	23.00	46.31	45.90	35.44	47.00	65.76	150.00	206.71
2.	Snehasparsham	1.00	0.95	1.00	1.88	1.50	2.39	2.30	2.63	2.50	2.16	8.30	10.06
3.	Snehasanthwanam	27.80	26.37	12.85	8.80	9.00	10.04	9.50	10.45	10.00	10.11	69.23	65.78
4.	Snehapoorvam	0.50	0.37	2.25	3.55	17.00	8.41	28.00	40.03	18.00	28.47	65.75	80.83
5.	Vayomithram	4.00	3.50	5.00	4.64	7.00	6.64	4.89	7.37	10.92	9.28	31.81	31.36
6.	Thalolam	5.00	5.64	6.00	7.44	7.00	7.13	7.00	7.63	1.51	10.51	26.51	30.38
7.	Cancer Suraksha	5.00	5.14	6.00	4.82	7.00	5.52	7.50	5.51	1.51	9.49	27.01	30.47
8.	Hunger free	0.60	0.90	1.40	2.29	1.80	2.74	1.90	2.44	2.54	1.91	8.24	10.20
9.	Sruthitharangam	6.00	6.77	10.00	9.99	10.00	6.32	10.00	7.53	10.00	3.60	46.00	34.18
10.	Caregivers	0.30	0.32	1.50	1.06	2.00	1.95	2.00	1.44	2.00	3.28	7.80	8.95
11.	Samaswasam	0.00	0.00	36.57	35.08	0.00	5.46	0.00	6.53	0.00	5.68	36.57	52.77
12.	State Initiative on Disabilities ¹⁸³	1.00	0.50	38.49	1.04	33.60	7.63	6.64	8.52	25.68	20.17	105.41	45.86
13.	Karunya Deposit Scheme ¹⁸⁴	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
14.	We Care	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.00	0.26	6.00	0.59	1.00	0.92	9.00	1.74
	TOTAL	66.20	75.23	141.06	115.00	120.90	119.80	130.73	136.07	132.66	179.31	591.63	616.46

(₹ in crore)

Details	Name of Schemes	No. of schemes	Amount of excess/shortage
Schemes with expenditure more than receipts	Aswasakiranam Snehasparsham Snehapoorvam Thalolam Cancer Suraksha Hunger Free Caregivers Samaswasam	8	107.37
Schemes with expenditure less than receipts	Snehasanthwanam Vayomithram Sruthitharangam State Initiative on Disabilities We Care	5	82.53

¹⁸³ Including receipt and expenditure for Disability Certification camp and Disability Survey.¹⁸⁴ Karunya Deposit Scheme is a scheme funded through donations from public and no Government funds are received for the scheme.

Appendix 4.3

Details of financial assistance irregularly disbursed under Aswasakiranam to
Caregivers of deceased patients

(Reference: Paragraph 4.10.3; Page: 84)

Sl. No.	Name of Patient	Name of Panchayat	Date of Death of the patient	Month upto which payment made	No. of months exceeded	Excess amount paid ¹⁸⁵ (₹)
1.	Mohammed AK	Kadalundi	21.03.2015	December 2015	9	4725
2.	Alavi C	Manjeri	24.01.2015	December 2015	11	5775
3.	Khadeeja BP	Narikkuni	12.09.2015	December 2015	3	1575
4.	Madhavi	Atholi	29.09.2016	March 2017	6	3525
5.	Parvathi Amma	Ulleri	12.08.2016	March 2017	7	4050
6.	Sivanya Biju	Pinarayi	25.08.2016	March 2017	7	4050
7.	Abdulla Koya	Nenmanda	07.09.2015	December 2015	3	1575
8.	Unniara	Kakkur	15.07.2016	March 2017	8	4575
9.	Balan P	Muzhappilangadi	01.04.2016	March 2017	11	6150
10.	Kalyani P	Panyaram	26.07.2016	March 2017	8	4575
11.	Manumma	Puthur	05.08.2015	December 2015	4	2100
12.	Ammed	Cheruvannur	06.09.2015	December 2015	3	1575
13.	Kunjirama	Cheruvannur	30.07.2015	December 2015	5	2625
14.	Narayani	Thiruvallur	07.08.2015	December 2015	4	2100
15.	Soumini	Kadalundi	01.03.2015	December 2015	9	4725
			Total			53700

¹⁸⁵ Payment made at the rate of ₹525 per month upto October 2016 and at the rate of ₹600 per month from November 2016.