



Government of Kerala

**Report
of the
XI Pay Revision
Commission**

**PART VII
AUGUST 2021**

REPORT OF THE XI PAY REVISION COMMISSION, KERALA

PART- VII

ADMINISTRATIVE EFFICIENCY, SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY, PEOPLE FRIENDLINESS AND GENDER SENSITIVITY

CHAIRMAN : K. MOHANDAS, IAS (RTD.)
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MEMBER : ADV. ASHOK MAMEN CHERIAN

AUGUST 2021

PREFACE

This is the seventh and final Part of the Report of the XI Pay Revision Commission. The first six Parts dealt primarily with the revision of salaries and allowances and pensions of the employees of the State Government, the High Court, the Universities, the Kerala Water Authority, Municipal Contingent Worker category and Grant in aid institutions. In the final Part, the Commission discusses matters related to the efficiency of the civil service, social accountability, people friendliness and gender sensitivity.

Ideally, the Commission would have liked to submit the reports on pay revision together with the reports on administrative efficiency. Although the reports are presented at different points of time, they constitute one single package. A fairly liberal pay revision has to be accompanied by measures to increase the quality of the service to the people.

Ensuring efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, probity, accountability, people-friendliness, and similar attributes in public service delivery is no easy task. Perhaps the single tool that can make a marked difference is the use of technology. Almost every aspect of public administration is amenable for digitalization; any work requiring interaction with the public should ideally be capable of being done online. The government departments have been moving in this direction, but the pace is slow. And this is not a one-time exercise; there should be continuous improvement in the systems. This is possible within the existing budget by diverting funds from other programmes and by appointing suitable technical personnel in vacancies arising in posts that have become functionally irrelevant.

The common person – call him the petitioner, beneficiary, taxpayer or by whatever name – should be the most important person in the civil servant's scheme of things. Empathy, polite conversing, making a genuine effort to understand the person's problem, communicating the reasons for any unfavourable decision etc. will go a long way in building the image of the civil service.

These two – digitalization and courteous service – are the biggest reforms required in administration.

The Fourth Kerala Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC) worked from 2016 to 2021 and produced fourteen reports. These reports cover reforms in the vigilance system, capacity development of civil servants, welfare to

rights, personnel reforms, people-centric service delivery, infrastructure development and management, sustainable development, accountability and public grievance redress mechanism, e-governance, finance and planning and Secretariat reforms. This Commission's terms of reference and areas of focus overlap in some respects with the ARC's work. This Commission has tried to avoid duplication of work, as most of their recommendations are in the right direction, even where we may not fully endorse the full details in the recommendations of the ARC.

This Commission had the unenviable task of performing its entire work during the pandemic. Our office was set up in February 2020; the first of the lockdowns commenced in March 2020. Covid 19 has remained with us during this whole period, and is continuing to stay. The unprecedented constraints created by the spread of the pandemic have considerably affected the work of the Commission. We also had two elections during this period - one to the local bodies in December 2020, and the other to the State Legislative Assembly in April 2021. The State administration had to go through the restrictions imposed by the Election Commission's code of conduct. Most of the Commission's meetings had to be online rather than physical; online meetings generally help in effective direct communication, but sometimes, detailed exploratory discussions need physical presence of the participants. The Commission would have liked to conduct some field visits for a clear understanding of the working of the field offices and to interact with the officials at the cutting edge levels as also with the public visiting these offices. While these limitations did generate disadvantages, the Commission was able to apply itself to the task on hand, and finalise the report in time.

As we have witnessed during the ongoing Covid Pandemic period, the State administration has been facing the challenges with determination and appropriate policy measures and innovative action plans where the officialdom played a pivotal role which clearly indicates that should the need arise, the bureaucracy can shake off its lethargy and push the envelope. Covid 19 is a killer, but the number of deaths in Kerala has been much lower than that in the rest of India or even in most other countries. It spreads fast, but the seroprevalence rate in Kerala has been only about two-thirds of the national average, indicating the efficacy of control measures. Even slight loosening of controls has led to spike in numbers. At the time of writing this report, the biggest concerns have been about the large number of cases detected, the high test positivity rate and the high R factor. The loss of income

for most of the population added to the general misery, but the government intervention by giving free ration kits to all sections of society was extremely helpful. Education had to turn online; even that too was a huge challenge. The crisis was and still is all round, impacting health, education, employment, entertainment, business, social life and actually every conceivable human activity.

The Government had a critical role to play, in spite of the severe resources crunch of the State. The Chief Minister led from the front, the Health, Disaster Management, Police and Local Self Government and other concerned Departments performed their roles with commitment and the District Collectors efficiently provided the leadership required at the District level. Overall, the message again is that the State administration is capable of facing any challenge in the event of a calamity. The desire is that the State administration should live up to its potential even in normal times.

In the earlier Parts of the Reports, the Commission's approach has been that the employees have to be compensated well so that the value of their contribution is recognized. The feedback from the public about the pay revision has not been very positive; there is a feeling that majority of the government employees gets enhanced benefits sitting at home, while the rest of the society is suffering. However, the Commission cannot confine its perspective to the period of the pandemic, and has to look forward. In this Part of the Report, the Commission's approach has been that the State and its people stand on a higher pedestal than the employees and that the interests of the former outweigh those of the latter. We presume that the employees will appreciate the spirit in which these proposals have been formulated.

Acknowledgements

We are extremely grateful to the Government of Kerala, to Hon Chief Minister Sri Pinarayi Vijayan in particular, for entrusting us with this great responsibility. We are also grateful to the former Finance Minister Dr Thomas Isaac and the present Finance Minister Sri K N Balagopal for all their support. Our thanks are also due to the Additional Chief Secretary (Finance) Sri Rajesh Kumar Singh, and his predecessor Sri Manoj Joshi. The concerned officers and staff of the Finance Department were of immense help; the Commission acknowledges the value of their support. We have received inputs from several experts and other persons interested in the affairs of the State; the Heads of various departments and organisations have given very useful

details which helped the Commission to formulate its views; the Commission is indebted to them. We also acknowledge the contribution made by the consultants engaged by us – the Centre for Management Development at Thiruvananthapuram, the Centre for Budget Studies in the Cochin University of Science and Technology, Dr D Narayana, former Director of the Gulati Institute of Finance and Taxation, and Sri P M George, ICAS (Retired). The contribution made by our small team of staff has been invaluable; several of them have sacrificed time and even career development opportunities to complete their work in time. The Commission is very happy to place on record the contribution made and the hard work put in by each member of our staff, starting with Sri G Asok Kumar, Secretary and Sri K S Ajayakumar, Additional Secretary.

Prof. M K Sukumaran Nair

Member

Adv. Ashok Mamen Cherian

Member

K Mohandas, IAS (Rtd)

Chairman

Thiruvananthapuram
31-08-2021

ORGANISATION

COMMISSION

1	Sri K. Mohandas, IAS (Rtd)	Chairman
2	Prof M.K.Sukumaran Nair	Member
3	Adv Ashok Mamen Cherian	Member

SECRETARIAT

1	Sri G. Asok Kumar	Secretary
2	Sri K.S. Ajayakumar	Additional Secretary
3	Sri Madhusoodanan Nair T.S.	Under Secretary
4	Smt. Ajikala K.P.	Accounts Officer
5	Sri Anilkumar A.	Section Officer
6	Smt Soja S.	Section Officer
7	Smt Sandhya G. Nair	Assistant Section Officer
8	Smt Saranya Krishnan J.B.	Assistant Section Officer
9	Sri Arun V.S.	Senior Grade Assistant
10	Sri Sajesh Kumar T.	Assistant
11	Sri V.M. Anantha Nath	Executive Assistant to Chairman
12	Smt Chithra C.A.	Computer Assistant
13	Sri Shaji M.	Confidential Assistant
14	Sri A.K.Gopalakrishnan	Confidential Assistant to Chairman
15	Sri Binod R.	Clerical Assistant
16	Sri Shine K.M.	Office Attendant
17	Smt Asha Thankachi U.S.	Office Attendant
18	Sri Anandu Kalesan	Driver

INDEX

Sl. No.	Contents	Page No.
	Preface	i
	Organisation	v
1.	Introduction	1
	PERSONNEL	
2.	Recruitment	6
	A. Public Employment – Constitutional Provisions	6
	B. Regular Recruitment through the Public Service Commission	7
	C. Kerala Administrative Service	9
	D. Reservation for Economically Weakest in Reserved Categories	12
	E. Compassionate Appointment	15
	F. Sports Quota	23
	G. Appointments in Aided Educational Institutions	24
	H. Ombudsman for Academic Appointments	27
3.	Training	32
	A. Capacity Building	32
	B. Induction Training	35
	C. In-service Training	36
	D. Re-skilling	37
4.	Transfers	39
5.	Promotions	42
6.	Ethical Conduct	46
7.	Working Days, Leave and Working from Home	56
	A. Working Days and Hours	56
	B. Holidays	58
	C. Leave	60
	D. Work from Home	61
8.	Retirement and Death while in Service	62
	A. Age of Retirement	62
	B. Death while in Service	64
9.	Simplification of Service Matters	68
	A. Online Availability of Personnel Data	68
	B. Time Bound Higher Grades	68
	C. Staff Loans	70
	D. Pension Disbursement	71

Sl. No.	Contents	Page No.
	PROCESSES	
10.	Digital Governance	72
11.	Right to Services	80
12.	Social Accountability	83
13.	People-friendliness	87
14.	Investor-friendliness	91
15.	Public Grievances	96
16.	Service of Kudumbashree	99
17.	Establishment of a Civil Service Review Mission	102
18.	Formation of State Good Governance Board	107
19.	Department-wise Suggestions	115
	Agricultural Development and Farmers' Welfare	115
	Cooperation	117
	Dairy Development	120
	Fire and Rescue Services	121
	Food Safety	121
	General Education	122
	Health Services	125
	Housing Technical Cell	126
	Industrial Tribunals	126
	Insurance Medical Services	127
	Irrigation	133
	Kerala Public Service Commission	134
	Labour	138
	Labour Courts	140
	Land Use Board	141
	Motor Vehicles	141
	Panchayat	144
	Printing	145
	Prisons and Correctional Services	146
	Public Works	146
	Soil Survey and Soil Conservation	147
	State Insurance	148
	Stationery	148
	Survey and Land Records	149
	Tourism	153
	Women and Child Development	154
	Government Secretariat	155

Sl. No.	Contents	Page No.
20.	Universities	156
21.	General Issues	165
	A. Pay Revision	165
	B. Inclusion of Mobile Phone Numbers in Service Books	166
	GENDER SENSITIVITY	
22.	Problems of Women Employees and Interventions	167
	RECOMMENDATIONS	
23.	Summary of Recommendations	172
	Appendix	
1.	Government Orders on the Constitution and Functions of the Commission	
	A. G.O.(Ms) No.414/2019/Fin Dated: 06-11-2019	190
	B. G.O.(Ms) No.40 /2020/Fin Dated: 17-03-2020	193
	C. G.O.(Ms) No.78/2021/Fin Dated: 13-07-2021	194

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Constitution of the Commission & Terms of Reference

1.1 The Government of Kerala appointed this (XI) Pay Revision Commission by G.O (Ms) No. 414/2019/Fin dated 06.11.2019. (Appendix 1-A). The constitution of the Commission is:

- (1) Sri. K. Mohandas, IAS (Retd.) - (Chairman);
- (2) Prof. M. K. Sukumaran Nair, Honorary Director, Centre for Budgetary Studies, Cochin University of Science and Technology - (Member); and
- (3) Adv. Ashok Mamen Cherian, Advocate, High Court of Kerala - (Member).

1.2 The Terms of Reference of the Commission are:

- (i) To suggest modifications, if found necessary, for the pay and allowances of: (a) Posts under Government Service, including Part-time Contingent Service and Casual Sweepers (b) Posts under Education Institutions of the Government, Aided Schools and Colleges and also such institutions covered by Direct Payment Scheme, including employees in Part-time posts and Casual Sweepers and excluding those posts covered by UGC/AICTE schemes of Scales of Pay and also posts for which, Central Scale of Pay have already been allowed such as Teaching Staff in Medical Colleges and Judicial Officers etc. and (c) Posts under Local Bodies and Universities except those covered by AICTE/ UGC / Central Schemes.
- (ii) To examine the present structure of Pay and Allowances and Other Emoluments and Service conditions including, promotional avenues and fringe benefits available to the above categories of employees and suggest changes, if any required.
- (iii) The commission shall also examine the scope of introducing non-cadre promotion to various categories of both gazetted and non- gazetted posts who continue in the entry cadres for long periods of service.

- (iv) To examine and suggest changes, if any, to the benefits available to Service Pensioners.
- (v) To consider the scope of extending the benefits which are available to Central Government employees at present, but not available to the State Government employees.
- (vi) To look into the cases of anomalies in the last Pay Revision specifically referred to the commission by Government and suggest remedial measures.
- (vii) To examine the present Civil Service set up as a whole and make suggestions to increase efficiency, social accountability and making Civil Service more people friendly.
- (viii) To consider the need for a gender sensitive service structure especially multifaceted issues faced by women employees and make suggestions for remedial measures.
- (ix) To review the existing rules and procedures for fixation of pay and suggest methods for simplification thereof with a view to reduce cost and time spent on such exercises.
- (x) To assess and indicate the additional financial commitment on account of implementation of its recommendations, including the methodology/ assumptions adopted for such assessment.

1.3 As per G.O. (Ms) No.425/2019/ Fin dated 12.11.2019, Government entrusted with the Commission the task of examining and making recommendations on the revision of pay and allowances and other benefits of High Court employees confining to the above Terms of Reference. The Government issued further orders in G.O. (Ms.) No. 40/ 2020/ Fin, dated 17.03.2020 (Appendix 1-B) entrusting the Commission with the job of examining and making recommendations on the revision of pay and allowances and other benefits of officers and staff of the Kerala Water Authority, Municipal/ Corporation contingent employees and employees of various grant in aid institutions in Kerala, confining to the terms of reference in the original order constituting the Commission.

The Working of the Commission

1.4 The Commission commenced functioning soon after its formation, with secretarial, logistical and organizational support from the Finance

Department, Government of Kerala. The posts initially required were sanctioned as per G.O. (Ms.) No. 439/ 2019/ Fin, dated 21.12.2019 and the staff posted soon after. Sri G Asok Kumar, Additional Secretary, Finance Department was appointed as the Secretary of the Commission, as per G.O. (Rt) No. 123/2020/ Fin dated 04.01.2020. The office of the Commission started functioning in the upper ground floor of Trans Towers, Vazhuthacaud, Thiruvananthapuram on 10 February, 2020 in the space leased out by the Finance Department from the Kerala Transport Development Finance Corporation. The Commission launched its website www.prc.kerala.gov.in on the same day.

1.5 The Commission had prepared a detailed questionnaire, in English and in Malayalam, eliciting views from the public as well as from Government Departments and Service Organisations. The questionnaire is given in Appendix 2 of Part I. The Commission has examined and considered all the representations received by it, although the finding on each is not discussed in the reports.

1.6 The Commission felt that well-studied expert inputs were required for a proper analysis of the issues to be covered according to the Terms of Reference. We, therefore, commissioned studies in the following areas by the institutions / individuals mentioned against each:

- (i) Growth Challenges, Deficits and Debt, and Salaries of Government Employees in Kerala - Dr. D Narayana, Former Director, Gulati Institute of Finance and Taxation, Thiruvananthapuram
- (ii) Salaries, Pension Payment and Fiscal Management in South Indian States: A Comparative Perspective - Centre for Budget Studies, Cochin University of Science and Technology.
- (iii) Efficiency, Transparency and Accountability of Civil Service and Linking Emoluments with Performance - Centre for Management Development, Thiruvananthapuram.
- (iv) Comparison of the service conditions and employee benefits under the Central Government and the Government of Kerala - Shri P M George, ICAS (Rtd).

1.7 The Commission held discussions with the representatives of service organisations and with the Heads of Departments and with others who had responded to the questionnaire. Most of the discussions were online.

The Commission has already submitted to Government six Parts of its Report. These are:

- Part I : Salaries & Allowances and Pension of State Government employees
- Part II : Salaries & Allowances and Pension of employees of the High Court
- Part III : Salaries & Allowances and Pension of University employees
- Part IV : Salaries & Allowances and Pension of employees of the Kerala Water Authority
- Part V : Salaries & Allowances and Pension of Municipal Contingent employees
- Part VI : Salaries & Allowances and Pension of employees of grant in aid institutions.

Part VII deals with Administrative Efficiency, Social Accountability and People-friendliness, and Gender related issues, covering the topics specified in paras (vii) and (viii) and partly of (ix) of the Terms of Reference extracted in para 1.2.

1.8 Every society aspires for good governance. Among other things, the level of satisfaction of the citizen about the efficiency, social accountability and people-friendliness of the civil service is an important index of the quality of governance. The primacy of stakeholder satisfaction has not been fully acknowledged or assimilated by majority of the civil servants. Several civil servants do not realise that the *raison d'être* for the very existence of the civil service is to serve the people, and that the people are the masters in a democracy, creating governments through the electoral process and sustaining them through the payment of taxes. Each position in government has a defined task to perform, and it could be a combination of powers, duties and responsibilities. And this job has to be performed without fear or favour, affection or ill-will. Time is also a crucial factor; delay is a sign of both inefficiency and ulterior motives.

1.9 The Administrative Reforms Commissions, and the Pay Revision Commissions, both in the Centre and the States, the Finance Commissions and ad hoc Committees and Commissions have made recommendations or suggestions for improving efficiency, transparency and accountability of the civil service. The Commission had engaged the Centre for Management Development (CMD), Thiruvananthapuram to examine the Reports of the earlier Pay Revision Commissions and Administrative Reforms Commissions with a view to identifying recommendations on improving the efficiency of the civil service and linking the pay with the performance of the employees. The following were the specific objectives of the assignment to CMD:

- (i) To attempt a comprehensive review of the reports of the previous PRCs in Kerala and ARCs so as to identify and consolidate the recommendations made therein regarding improving efficiency, transparency and accountability of the civil service in the State,
- (ii) To examine and consolidate recommendations of the earlier Kerala PRCs and ARCs on the subject of linking performance of employees with their pay and allowances, and
- (iii) To scan the suggestions on the above subjects made in the above documents which have not been implemented but are of contemporary relevance and could be considered for implementation with modifications, if required.

1.10 The Commission has benefitted from this Report of the CMD. We have also considered a lot of other relevant materials to enable the Commission to make pragmatic recommendations capable of being implemented by the government. Our focus has been on simplifying and improving the systems, removing complexities both in administration and in the delivery of services, introducing fairness and equity where it is found inadequate and fortifying the principle that the citizen comes first.

1.11 The Commission proposes that a Committee of Secretaries headed by the Chief Secretary may consider the recommendations made in this Report, and monitor the action taken by the concerned Departments.

CHAPTER 2

RECRUITMENT

A. Public employment - Constitutional Provisions

2.1 The crucial constitutional provision relating to public employment is the fundamental right under **Article 16 (1)**: *There shall be equality of opportunity for all citizens in matters relating to employment or appointment to any office under the State.*

2.2 This has to be read with **Article 16(4)**: *Nothing in this article shall prevent the State from making any provision for the reservation of appointments or posts in favour of any backward class of citizens which, in the opinion of the State, is not adequately represented in the services under the State, 16(6) Nothing in this article shall prevent the State from making any provision for the reservation of appointments or posts in favour of any economically weaker sections of citizens other than the classes mentioned in clause (4), in addition to the existing reservation and subject to a maximum of ten per cent. of the posts in each category and Article 335: The claims of the members of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes shall be taken into consideration, consistently with the maintenance of efficiency of administration, in the making of appointments to services and posts in connection with the affairs of the Union or of a State:*

Provided that nothing in this article shall prevent in making of any provision in favour of the members of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes for relaxation in qualifying marks in any examination or lowering the standards of evaluation, for reservation in matters or promotion to any class or classes of services or posts in connection with the affairs of the Union or of a State.

2.3 **Article 315(1)** of the Constitution of India stipulates that *there shall be a Public Service Commission for the Union and a Public Service Commission for each State. According to Article 320(1), it shall be the duty of the Union and the State Public Service Commissions to conduct examinations for appointments to the services of the Union and the services of the State respectively.*

2.4 All public authorities empowered to make regular appointments to public service should remember the fundamental principle enshrined in Article 16(1).

B. Regular Recruitment through the Public Service Commission

2.5 Unlike many other State Public Service Commissions, the Kerala Public Service Commission has been able to maintain reasonable levels of credibility in the discharge of its functions, although there could be inadequacies in the processes, primarily caused by

- (i) the large number of categories of posts in the government, public sector undertakings and in semi government institutions to which recruitment has to be made and
- (ii) the huge number of applicants.

2.6 The main drawbacks perceived are

- (i) the delays that may occur in notifying vacancies, conducting examinations and publishing the rank lists,
- (ii) the multiplicity of examinations that a generalist aspirant has to take,
- (iii) the unsuitability of multiple-choice tests for selection to posts requiring writing and analytical skills,
- (iv) occasional extension of rank lists for long periods and
- (v) the frustration of the candidates in the rank lists, who may not finally get appointed.

2.7 There have been several effective steps to improve the quality of service to the job aspirants, including the introduction of a one-time registration scheme, qualification-based common examinations and use of the e-vacancy software for reporting vacancies etc.

2.8 **The Commission recommends the adoption of identified measures to enhance the credibility and efficiency of the Public Service Commission.** The following measures are proposed.

- (i) The entire process of registration, conduct of examinations and valuation, publication of rank lists and advice for appointment must

be made technology-driven to the maximum extent possible; already, there is substantial adoption and use of technology and online processes, but more could be done.

- (ii) Members of the Commission must be senior and experienced persons with high qualifications and personal integrity.
- (iii) The number of Members could be reduced, in the interest of economy.
- (iv) The Commission can be divested of the task of selection to some of the lowest posts and some of the technical posts in public sector undertakings and autonomous bodies, for which simpler alternate arrangements can be made, without compromising on transparency, merit and social justice.
- (v) The number of examinations should be reduced. There can be greater clubbing of similar posts for recruitment where the minimum qualifications are the same; even when the pay scales are different, common selection can be made and separate rank lists published. Where there are marginal differences in the minimum qualifications, it should be examined if they can be made uniform.
- (vi) There should be a regular time table for examinations; the selections to the general posts like Assistants, Clerks etc. in large numbers and to the technical posts like doctors and engineers could be made annually or once in two years, with a regular schedule on the UPSC pattern so that the aspirants have a fair idea about when to expect the examinations.
- (vii) The appointing authorities should assess realistically the number of possible vacancies arising in the next one year or two years as the case may be, and this number published in the KPSC notification should be final; From experience, the Commission would know the average number of persons in a rank list who do not join the service; the size of the rank list should be appropriately determined taking this factor into account. In any case, rank lists should not be extended beyond two years.
- (viii) Wherever possible, several candidates for appointment to a particular post may be advised and appointed together so that they can start with appropriate induction training in a training institution. This would necessitate creation of short term 'training posts' as discussed in the Chapter on Training.
- (ix) In the interest of the quality of service, the selection of candidates for appointment to posts for which comprehension and written and oral

communication skills are important and posts from which the employees would rise to senior administrative positions should not be exclusively on the basis of Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ). The MCQ test should be only a screening test and there should be a second main written examination. Posts like those of Assistants in the Government Secretariat would fall in this category.

- (x) As in the Central government, the State may dispense with interviews for all posts other than Group A posts, except for teachers for whom oral communication skills are also important.

C. Kerala Administrative Service

2.9 Kerala Administrative Service is a new premier service designed to bring under its fold the very talented and experienced candidates to man middle level positions in the administrative hierarchy in the State. The recruitment process for the first selection of candidates has not been completed; the written tests are over and the interviews are expected to take place soon. Although no appointment has taken place to this service, the Commission has studied the scope and prospects of the service to draw up the position of the KAS in relation to the Indian Administrative Service.

2.10 Kerala Administrative Service was constituted by the Kerala Administrative Service (KAS) Rules 2018 issued by notification in G.O (P) No.12/2017 P&ARD dt:29/12/2017 and later amended as per G.O.(P)No.4/2019/P&ARD dt.11.07.2019. The rules have taken effect from 01/01/2018.

2.11 The objectives behind the constitution of Kerala Administrative Service are the following: a) To build a cadre of public servants as a second line of managerial talent for Government for effective implementation of Government policies and programmes. b) To provide opportunities for growth for bright, talented, and committed officers in Government service and prepare them for senior level administrative and managerial positions in public service. c) To constitute the feeder category for the recruitment of Indian Administrative Service Officers in Kerala Cadre through appointment by promotion from State Civil Service category.

2.12 The Kerala Administrative Service consists of four categories of officers:-

1. KAS Officer (Junior Time Scale)
2. KAS Officer (Senior Time Scale)
3. KAS Officer (Selection Grade Scale)
4. KAS Officer (Super Time Scale)

2.13 There are three streams of recruitment to the KAS – Stream 1, Stream 2 and Stream 3. All the three streams prescribe the same educational qualification, namely, 'Must have obtained Bachelor Degree including professional course in any subject from a University recognized by a University established by Government of Kerala or UGC or awarded by National Institutes established by the Government of India'. All the Streams are to be filled through direct recruitment – Stream 1 is for direct recruitment from all degree holders in the age group 21-32 with usual relaxations for OBC/ SC/ ST candidates, Stream 2 is for direct recruitment from non-gazetted Government employees in the age group 21-40 and the candidate 'must be a full member or approved probationer in any Government Department, and must not be a 1st Gazetted officer or above in the Departments in Schedule I', and Stream 3 is for direct recruitment from among 1st Gazetted officers below the age of 50, and the candidate 'must have satisfactorily completed probation in any cadre in Government or probation has not been declared in the current post even after the period of probation, due to administrative delay'. For Streams 2 and 3, it is also provided that the candidates should have no major penalty imposed or no proceedings for a major penalty are in progress. The usual reservations applicable for direct recruitment have been extended to Streams 2 and 3; the case challenging this is now before the Supreme Court.

2.14 While examining the proposals for the revision of pay of State Government employees, the Commission noticed grave anomalies in the pay structure. This has been discussed in Part I of the Commission's report, and we have given specific proposals for removal of the anomalies and for the revision of pay.

2.15 The Commission now desires to highlight a more substantive issue regarding the recruitment to the Service. The main objective behind the

formation of the service is the creation of a second line of managerial talent in Government just below the Indian Administrative Service. To achieve this objective, it would be necessary to ensure that the best talent among the State's youth is attracted to the Service and trained properly and that their careers are managed effectively. Without that, the creation of the service becomes meaningless.

2.16 The present system provides for direct recruitment to only one-third of the posts in the Service. Two-thirds of the posts are to be filled up from persons already in the service of the State Government. While the employees of the State Government have to be given adequate chances, the current system assigns majority of the posts to those who are already in State service, limiting the opportunities for talented and suitable young people from outside. Those in non-gazetted posts get little administrative experience and they will not bring much value to the KAS. True, there are several bright young persons in the State service selected through highly competitive examinations, but competition for the KAS is at a level higher than any other competitive examination conducted by the Kerala Public Service Commission. Selection to the majority of posts in the KAS as per the present scheme gets reduced to an in-house exercise with limited space for highly qualified outsiders who could bring in fresh thoughts and varied experiences. Further, the current year's selection from Streams 2 and 3 under the present rules with a relatively high intake will help to pick up the best, but selections in subsequent years will be from among the residuals and the few new entrants. Increasingly, the quality is bound to fall. Again there is not much logic in grouping the existing Government employees to gazetted and non-gazetted as separate categories to make the recruitment to KAS. It will be realistic to do away with the special quota for existing employees after 5 years. As the KAS has come to being only now, the talented who got into Government jobs earlier have been deprived of the opportunity to get recruited to it. By 5 years the really talented in the Government service would have got into KAS. If the quota system still continues, it will be an onslaught on merit.

2.17 The Commission recommends that (i) two-thirds of the posts in the KAS should be filled up by open direct recruitment from the next selection onwards (ii) The balance one-third may be by selection from among Government employees, gazetted or non-gazetted, through an examination

which is different from that for the direct recruits, and (iii) The quota for Government employees may be abolished after five years.

D. Reservation for Economically Weakest in Reserved Categories

Equity through reservation for the economically backward

2.18 The broad pattern for reservation in appointments under the Government of Kerala is: Open Merit 50%, OBCs 40% and SC/ST 10%. Reservation for the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) has been introduced earmarking a quota of 10% of the appointments made; in effect it is 20% out of the open merit quota of 50%.

2.19 The EWS quota was introduced by the 103rd amendment to the Constitution of India. The rationale for the quota was that poor citizens outside the SC, ST, and OBC categories are unable to compete with those who are better off, that such reservation benefits are in line with the Directive Principles of State Policy which call for extending help to the weaker sections and that providing jobs to the unemployed weaker sections will increase the employment rate for overall growth and inclusive development of the nation.

2.20 The Directive Principles provide that the State shall, in particular, strive to minimise the inequalities in income, and endeavour to eliminate inequalities in status, facilities and opportunities. Reservations for OBCs and SC/ ST form part of such endeavour of the State.

2.21 The reservation for OBCs is circumscribed by income limits and other definitions which determine the eligibility for reservation, by excluding those belonging to the 'creamy layer'. Broadly, the creamy layer covers persons holding specified constitutional posts, directly recruited Class I/ Group A officers, both parents directly recruited Class II/ Group B officers, those with comparable posts in PSUs and the private sector, those with land more than 5 hectares, and others with income below Rs 8 lakhs excluding the income from salaries and agricultural income. The definitions of the creamy layer are very liberal with the result that very small numbers get excluded; persons from even reasonably affluent families are able to enjoy the benefits of

reservation. The liberal approach has been adopted as the underlying principle behind the reservation is 'social backwardness'.

2.22 For SC/STs, there is no such limitation of a creamy layer, except for reservations in promotions. Several States have attempted to categorise SCs on the basis of the level of backwardness of different communities within the SCs, but the Supreme Court had declared such introduction of categories within the SC category as unconstitutional. In *E V Chinniah Vs State of Andhra Pradesh & Others*, a five Judge constitution Bench of the Supreme Court held that "the very fact that the members of the Scheduled Castes are most backward amongst the backward classes and the impugned legislation having already proceeded on the basis that they are not adequately represented both in terms of Clause (4) of Article 15 and Clause (4) of Article 16 of the Constitution of India, a further classification by way of micro classification is not permissible. Such classification of the members of different classes of people based on their respective castes would also be violative of the doctrine of reasonableness." However, in the judgment dated 27.02.2020 in *State of Punjab vs Davinder Singh*, another five Judges' Bench has disagreed with the findings in the Chinniah case and suggested that the matters may be considered by a larger Bench. The judgment observes that "the constitutional goal of social transformation cannot be achieved without taking into account changing social realities."

2.23 During the Commission's deliberations on the topic, Member (Adv Ashok Mamen Cherian) advised that various decisions of Apex Court and High Courts have considered Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes as separate class by themselves and has warned against denying them concessions extended to them by making "in-house classification" based on any principle, "be it financial principles or source of recruitment". In *Ashoka Kumar Thakur (Supra)* as well as in *Avinash Singh Bagri [(2009) 8 SCC 220]* the Apex Court has categorically held that the creamy layer principle is not applicable to SCs and STs. He pointed out that the Preamble of Constitution of India is the cornerstone of the Constitution of India, which offers social, economic and political justice and equality of status and opportunity. Article 14 in Part III of the Constitution guarantees "equality before law", and is considered as the soul of the Constitution. The said Article has to be understood in conjuncture with Articles 15(4), 15(5), 16(4) and Article 46 of the Constitution, which recognize 'reservation' as one of many tools that are

used to preserve and promote the essence of equality, so that disadvantaged groups can be brought to the forefront of civil life. The famous quote of President Lyndon Johnson has been accepted by Supreme Court of India in its judgment in *Ashoka Kumar Thakur v. Union of India* reported in (2008) 6 SCC 1 to justify the reservation which reads as follows: “You do not take a person who, for years, have been hobbled by chains and liberate him, bring him up to the starting line and then say ‘you are free to compete with all others’.” It is a well founded dictum that ‘treating un-equals as equals is also violative of Article 14 of the Constitution of India’.

2.24 While no empirical data is available for immediate presentation, it is well known that the benefits of reservation would be appropriated substantially by the well-to-do sections among the OBCs/SCs/STs. They have the obvious advantage of greater resources for performing better than those belonging to the poorest sections from these groups. Competitions are uneven. Often, the benefits go to the same families repeatedly; the poorest are left behind.

2.25 All the arguments in favour of the reservation for the economically weaker sections in the general category are relevant for the economically weaker sections belonging to the reserved categories also. It is incumbent upon the government to provide opportunities for public employment to those from families which had no such opportunity in the past.

2.26 The basis of special protections for SCs is that all these castes suffered social inequity. There has been no attempt to identify and support the poorest among them. The Commission therefore anticipates legal challenges stating that the objective of reservation under Article 16 is not poverty alleviation. However, the governments cannot be mute spectators to socio-economic realities. The socio-economic realities in the India of 1947-49 and the social realities in the Kerala of 2021 are extremely different; it is the prime function of government to intervene when there is obvious injustice or inadequate justice to the weakest.

2.27 The Commission recommends that 20% of the posts reserved for OBCs may be reserved for the EWS belonging to these communities. Posts remaining unfilled for want of eligible candidates belonging to EWS may

go to that reserved category itself so that there is no reduction in total reservation for that group.

2.28 The SCs/ STs stand on a different constitutional footing, and in view of the legal advice, the Commission is unable to make a recommendation for a similar reservation of 20% out of the posts reserved for SCs/STs for the Economically Weakest Sections belonging to these groups, but suggest that Government may examine this further.

2.29 The income limit adopted for the reservation for the EWS in the general category can be adopted for the OBCs also, avoiding the exemptions. For determining the income for the benefit for reservation for EWS, the existing orders in G.O. (P) No.1/2020/ P&ARD dated 03.01.2020 provide for exempting the income from (i) Agricultural income from house plots in Municipality or Municipal Corporation of which the ceiling limit is specified, (ii) Amounts received as social security pension, (iii) Family pension, (iv) Unemployment wages, (v) Festival allowance, (vi) Terminal benefits and (vii) Travelling Allowance. Of these, travelling allowance is not considered as an income, and terminal benefits are special one- time receipts. The Commission feels that the other items need not be excluded as income from any source is income, and the benefits should be intended to be given to those with lower incomes.

2.30 The proposed change would bring in some administrative complexity, but it will definitely give a big boost to the government's efforts to support the weakest sections of society.

E. Compassionate Appointment

2.31 The Central and the State Governments have schemes for giving compassionate appointments in Government jobs to the dependants of persons dying while in service. This is an exception to the Constitutional provisions for equality before law under Article 14 and equality of opportunity in matters of public employment under Article 16. This has been considered in several cases before the Supreme Court and while the Supreme Court has not declared it as illegal, it has been stipulated that it should be only for the families in indigent circumstances, that appointments should be

made to the lower level entry posts and that it should be limited to small numbers.

2.32 The death of a person in Government service impacts the family in multiple ways. The biggest is the emotional shock caused by the death of a young person – anyone below the retirement age of 56 is young in a state where the average life expectancy at birth is now 74.9 years. Then there is the financial impact of the death of an earning member of the family, often the sole source of income for the family. Individual circumstances vary, but the families' budgets suddenly get deranged. The scheme of compassionate employment was intended to give financial relief to the families of employees dying in harness.

2.33 As this is an established practice, no real effort has been made to have a critical scrutiny of the scheme with reference to its original objectives and its impact on the civil service. The features of the scheme as it now operates in Kerala are:

- (i) Government introduced the scheme to provide employment assistance to the dependents of Government employees who die while in service vide G. O. (MS) No. 20/70/PD, dated 21.01.1970. The purpose of the scheme was to *provide immediate relief to the family of the deceased Government employee, who may suffer in the absence of such a relief.*
- (ii) Dependents of those Government employees who are regularly appointed and employed in Government shall be eligible for the benefit of the scheme and there is *no minimum service prescribed*; in other words, it is a service benefit available to the family of the employee after his death.
- (iii) The maximum income limit of the family of the deceased Government employees is now **₹ 8,00,000**. This income limit is equal to (and is revised in line with) the income limit for determining the creamy layer among Other Backward Classes in the State.
- (iv) Family income under the scheme is defined as the actual income available to all members of the family from all sources *other than family pension*. Income from the properties of the members of the family should also be reckoned. Income of the married sons and

- daughters and other members of the family living separately shall not be reckoned for calculating the family income.
- (v) Employment assistance is given to the *widow/widower, son, daughter (unmarried or married)* in the said order of priority. Son and daughter shall include adopted son and adopted daughter respectively and will rank after son and daughter.
 - (vi) If the employee is unmarried, *father/mother and unmarried sister/unmarried brother* are also eligible.
 - (vii) Appointment under the scheme will be limited to *Group C and Group D posts* in the Kerala Subordinates Services to which direct recruitment is one of the methods of appointment. In the case of posts for which different methods of appointment are prescribed, the appointment under the scheme shall be set off against the quota earmarked for direct recruitment.
 - (viii) The applicants under the scheme should possess all the qualifications prescribed for the direct recruitment to the post. *No relaxations in the qualification* will be allowed. In the case of appointment to the widow/widower and in the case of appointment to part-time contingent posts, there shall be no upper age restriction i.e. applicants shall be given appointment up to the age of retirement. In all other cases, the upper age limit prescribed for direct recruitment to the post shall apply under the scheme also.
 - (ix) The *time limit for preferring applications under the scheme will be 2 years from the date of death* of the Government employee. *If the dependent is a minor at the time of the death, the application will be submitted within 3 years after the minor dependent attains majority.*
 - (x) Appointment of dependents in general category posts such as Lower Division Clerk, Lower Division Typists, Office Attendant etc., will be made in the Department concerned itself *against an existing or arising vacancy.*
 - (xi) If there are no vacancies in the concerned Department, such cases are referred to the General Administration (C.E. Cell) Department, Government Secretariat for allotment of vacancies. The C.E. Cell maintains these cases as a seniority list of applicants waiting allotment.

For allotment of vacancies for this purpose, 5% of vacancies in the categories of Lower Division Clerk, Lower Division Typist and Office Attendant arising every year will be reported by all Heads of Departments/Appointing Authorities to the General Administration (C. E. Cell) Department. Five percent of vacancies of Assistant/Legal Assistant/Auditor in the Secretariat, office of the advocate General and Local Fund Audit Department will be reserved and reported to the General Administration (C.E. Cell) Department for allotment of vacancies to the candidates possessing graduation and post graduation qualifications. The dependents of deceased Government employees in these departments having the requisite qualification will be appointed as Assistant/Legal Assistant/Auditor in an existing or arising vacancy in the department concerned and such appointment shall not be set off against the 5% vacancies reserved and reported to the General Administration (C.E. Cell) Department.

5% of vacancies of Village Extension Officer and Lady Village Extension Officer in the Rural Development Department and 5% vacancies of Lower Division Compiler in Bureau of Economics and Statistics Department will be reserved and reported to the General Administration (C. E. Cell) Department for allotment to the registered and waiting applicants. *10% of vacancies of Police Constable, Excise Guard, Forests Guard and Jail Warder* will be reserved and reported to the General Administration (C. E. Cell) Department for allotment to the registered and waiting applicants.

The dependents of Government Servant in any of the Departments of Rural Development, Bureau of Economics and Statistics, Police, Excise, Forest and Jail applying for the posts of Village Extension Officer/Lady Village Extension Officer, Lower Division Compiler, Police Constable, Excise Guard, Forest Guard and Jail Warder respectively will be appointed in the department concerned in existing or arising vacancies, provided they possess the requisite qualifications, without consulting the General Administration (C. E. Cell) Department. Such appointment shall not be set off against the vacancies reserved and reported to the General Administration (C. E. Cell) Department.

- (xii) There are special considerations in cases when the Government employee dies while performing official duty (G. O. (P) No. 6/2012/P&ARD dated 03.02.2012). Such applicants will get *out of turn priority in appointments*.

2.34 In short, if a Government employee dies while in service, the dependant gets a Government job based on his qualification, if the family income is below ₹ 8,00,000 per year which is ₹ 66,667 per month *excluding family pension*.

2.35 The Commission understands that majority of the candidates appointed as Assistants through the PSC's competitive examination route have higher qualifications in the form of four year professional degrees or postgraduate degrees. Similarly, among clerks, the percentage of candidates with graduation and higher degrees is very high. The examinations for these posts are extremely competitive and the candidates go through extensive preparation for long periods. Thus, an average educated young person goes through a very competitive process for a regular job under the Government. For the dependant of a Government employee who dies in service, this job is presented on a platter if he possesses the basic qualification. In a democracy where the Constitution offers a fundamental right of equality, such inheritance of public employment is unacceptable. We come across the practice of attempts to launch family members in several walks of life – politics, business, professions, cinema etc., but in all these sectors, the ultimate success of career inheritance by the new entrant depends mostly on his/her personal competence. In Government service, such succession uses public money and there is no challenge of efficiency.

2.36 The numbers speak for themselves. The Commission has looked at the number of appointments made in the Departments/ organisations during the years 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20, and find that in several departments/ organisations, the number of appointments made through CES is more than 5% of the total number. The details are given in the Table below.

Department/ Organisation	No. of appointments made 2017-2020			CES as % of Total
	CES	KPSC	Total	
Collectorate, Thiruvananthapuram	68	447	515	13.20
Employment Directorate	28	181	209	13.40
Indian Systems of Medicine	22	370	392	5.61
Legislature Secretariat	18	113	131	13.74
NCC Directorate	15	192	207	7.25
Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit	5	30	35	14.29

The numbers under compassionate employment in the Government departments and organisations are quite significant. The salient point is that these many job aspirants who were to come in through a regular stream were denied the opportunity because of high numbers of compassionate appointments.

2.37 Several Heads of Departments have stated that the level of efficiency of most persons appointed under the compassionate employment scheme is extremely low, although there have been exceptions. An ordinary pass in the SSLC examination entitles the candidate to be appointed as a clerk; his capacity to process a file would be much lower than that of a candidate who has come through a competitive selection process. Further, these candidates are able to join service early, even at the age of 18, blocking the prospects of regular recruits. The large number of appointments under the scheme therefore leads to both social injustice and administrative inefficiency.

2.38 It would be appropriate to look at the basic objective of the scheme of compassionate employment. The purpose of the scheme was to provide immediate relief to the family of the deceased Government employee, who may suffer in the absence of such a relief. As mentioned earlier, there is an immediate emotional shock, for which the Government can do nothing, and time alone will heal the emotional wound. The financial shock needs

understanding and support. The family would be entitled to get family pension, gratuity, insurance, and the deceased person's savings like provident fund deposits, but these would not be adequate for many families with large financial requirements and no steady source of income. The irony with the Kerala scheme is that the relief in the form of a job is often not immediate – it could be twenty years later!

2.39 The Supreme Court, in the judgement dated March 4, 2020, in Civil Appeal Nos 9280-9281 of 2014 (N.C. Santhosh – Appellant Vs State of Karnataka & Others) reiterated the stand taken in majority of the earlier cases that the appointments will be according to the scheme prevailing at the time of appointment, and not as per the scheme at the time of death of the employee. In the judgment in *State of Himachal Pradesh & Anr. vs. Shashi Kumar* (2019) 3 SCC 653, the earlier decisions governing the principles of compassionate appointment were discussed and analysed. The Court reiterated that appointment to any public post in the service of the State has to be made on the basis of principles in accord with Articles 14 and 16 of the Constitution and compassionate appointment is an exception to the general rule. In *Steel Authority of India Limited vs. Madhusudan Das & Others*, (2008) 15 SCC 560, it was remarked that compassionate appointment is a concession and not a right. The Supreme Court in its judgement dated April 8, 1993 in the case of Auditor General of India and others vs G. Ananta Rajeswara Rao [(1994) 1 SCC 192.] has held that appointment on grounds of descent clearly violates Article 16(2) of the Constitution; but if the appointment is confined to the son or daughter or widow of the Government servant who died in harness and who needs immediate appointment on grounds of immediate need of assistance in the event of there being no other earning member in the family to supplement the loss of income from the bread winner to relieve the economic distress of the members of the family, it is unexceptionable. The Supreme Court judgement dated May 4, 1994 in the case of Umesh Kumar Nagpal vs. State of Haryana and others [JT 1994(3) S.C. 525] has laid down the following important principles in this regard:

- (i) Only dependents of an employee dying in harness leaving his family in penury and without any means of livelihood can be appointed on compassionate ground,
- (ii) The posts in Group 'C' and 'D' (formerly Class III and IV) are the lowest posts in non-manual and manual categories and hence they

alone can be offered on compassionate grounds and no other post i.e. in the Group 'A' or Group 'B' category is expected or required to be given for this purpose as it is legally impermissible.

- (iii) The whole object of granting compassionate appointment is to enable the family to tide over the sudden crisis and to relieve the family of the deceased from financial destitution and to help it get over the emergency.
- (iv) Offering compassionate appointment as a matter of course irrespective of the financial condition of the family of the deceased or medically retired Government servant is legally impermissible.
- (v) Neither the qualifications of the applicant (dependent family member) nor the post held by the deceased or medically retired Government servant is relevant. If the applicant finds it below his dignity to accept the post offered, he is free not to do so. The post is not offered to cater to his status but to see the family through the economic calamity.
- (vi) Compassionate appointment cannot be granted after lapse of a reasonable period and it is not a vested right which can be exercised at any time in future.
- (vii) Compassionate appointment cannot be offered by an individual functionary on an ad-hoc basis.

This being the legal position, the Kerala Government scheme is liberal beyond reasonable limits. And the Government is legally entitled to modify the scheme as appropriate and only the modified order would apply for the future cases of appointments even if the death took place earlier, as per most decisions of the Supreme Court. [Regarding applicability of old scheme for compassionate appointment vis-à-vis new substituted scheme for ex gratia payment, as there were conflicting decisions of two-Judge Benches of Supreme Court regarding applicability of governing scheme, the matter was referred to larger Bench in *SBI v. Sheo Shankar Tewari*, (2019) 5 SCC 600].

2.40 Considering the violation of the spirit of the Constitution, the denial of justice to large numbers of young job aspirants, the adverse effect on the efficiency of the civil service and the impropriety in the inheritance of public employment, the Commission recommends the total abrogation of

the scheme for compassionate employment, giving better financial benefits to the families of the employees who unfortunately die in harness.

2.41 If some appointments are made on compassionate ground in exceptional cases due to the dire needs of the family of the deceased, or otherwise, the appointee should not be promoted automatically to the next higher post or grade. He should take a rigorous screening test so that the required efficiency in the job is ensured.

F. Sports Quota

2.42 There is a scheme for giving appointments in Government Service for meritorious performance in Sports and Games. The criterion for selection is outstanding performance in sports. There can be no dispute that top performers in sports and games, who earn prestige for the State and for the nation need recognition, support and incentives. Many of them who come from poor families have the talent and perseverance, but lack the financial resources for concentrating on their chosen sport. A government job is certainly an encouragement and support. Often, there is competition among the States and Central Government organisations for enlisting outstanding sportspersons in their employment. In any case, active sportspersons should be encouraged to continue to perform better and better.

2.43 The last Pay Revision Commission had observed that the system of those appointed under the sports quota attending ½ day in office and spending the rest of the day for Sports practice gives no real gain for Government. Actually, those who are active in sports should be permitted to undergo regular practice and better their performance. Regular full time service need be extracted from them when they retire from active sports or when their competitive playing days are over. Once in regular service, they will have to undergo the required training cum orientation as in the case of other employees.

2.44 While in service, there may be occasions when such sports persons make further achievements in their field. In the past, some were given promotions to higher posts based on such achievements. **The Commission**

recommends that the achievements of sportspersons in service may be recognised by giving lump sum cash awards or additional increment(s) or both. Out of turn promotions could dampen the spirit of the other officers in the Department and is not desirable, unless the achievement is an extraordinary feat, like that of Sri P R Sreejesh in the Tokyo Olympics. Further, when they retire from active sports, they should be able to discharge their duties just like any other officer at that level.

G. Appointments in Aided Educational institutions

2.45 The growth of the education sector in Kerala has come about with joint and separate efforts of the government and private institutions. The pre-independence princely states and the post-independence Governments in Kerala State have always been proactive and supportive in respect of educational initiatives. The initial private providers were religious or charitable organisations, voluntary workers or even enlightened and socially committed individuals who could afford to invest. The decision of the State to meet the salaries of the school and college teachers and other staff appointed by the managements was primarily for the protection of the employees, although it helped in the sustainability of the institutions which have near zero income. Once self-financing professional colleges started, the ugly practice of capitation fees became rampant, especially in the medical education sector. Sad to say, but Governments indirectly promoted this practice by insisting on unrealistically low levels of fees with which such institutions cannot be run. The illegal collection of capitation fee and ignoring of merit were considered natural and inevitable until the Supreme Court came in with a strong intervention. With the Supreme Court orders supporting the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) and consequent introduction of merit in all medical admissions, the levy of capitation fee could be curtailed.

2.46 Another unacceptable practice or malpractice in the education sector in Kerala is the collection of money by several managements from the candidates selected for appointments in aided schools and colleges. This is akin to dowry - everybody professes that it is evil and should be prevented, but the practice is allowed to continue. Such unaccounted transactions of

black money should not be tolerated in public interest, and there has to be insistence on merit as the salaries are fully paid by the government from the public exchequer. The Managers however need money for the development of infrastructure and for the maintenance of the institutions, and it would be unfair to expect them to bring in new investment from own resources. Parent Teacher Associations, the public at large and even charitable organisations may be unwilling to fund privately owned educational institutions for obvious reasons. The perceptions have to change, considering that it is public money that is spent as salaries which sustains these institutions. The role of the Manager must also change from that of an owner to that of a Trustee who does not seek or take any financial returns from the institution. After all, most of the institutions established by religious or social organisations have been set up using the money of the public; individually owned institutions also should shed the image of being family properties – most of them were set up by philanthropic individuals and the current generation should act only as Trustees and not as owners of business.

2.47 Merit has to be the basis of selection for appointment to posts for which the salaries are fully paid by the government, and for this, there should be some reforms in the selection process. Any major change will face stiff resistance, including open protests and long litigation. Even minor changes will be difficult to get acceptance. However, irrespective of past practices and agreements, government should, by law, bring in reforms in the interest of merit and transparency.

2.48 The Commission feels that it would have been ideal to entrust the recruitment to the Public Service Commission. The second option is to create a statutory Kerala Recruitment Board for Private Schools and Colleges. **The Commission recommends the creation of a statutory Kerala Recruitment Board for Private Schools and Colleges.** The Board may have a full time Chairman, two full time Members, one among the Vice Chancellors of Kerala, Mahatma Gandhi, Calicut or Kannur Universities as a part time Member, the Director of General Education as a part time Member, and four part time Members representing the managements of schools and colleges. The Board may make selections for the vacancies due to arise in the next academic year based on reports from the managements. The interview Boards shall be constituted by the Chairman and may have five Members – two from among the Chairman and full time Members, one subject expert and two persons

from private institutions, of which one shall be the Principal of a College or School, nominated by the Chairman. The Board should be able to function as a financially self-reliant organisation in the longer term; the application fee should be reasonably high so that only serious candidates will apply.

2.49 Since this may not happen immediately, there should be adequate controls to ensure that the private managements' selection of persons for drawing government salaries is on merit, with transparency.

2.50 **The Commission recommends interim revamping of the system of recruitment to posts in private schools and colleges for which the salaries are paid by the government.** The system may be revamped with the following changes:

- (i) The vacancy should be advertised in brief in all the Kerala editions of the two Malayalam newspapers with the highest circulation, with details on the websites of the Management and the institutions (Every institution must have a website), the Department of General Education/ Collegiate Education/ Technical Education as the case may be and the University concerned. Considering the high cost of advertising in the major newspapers, the newspaper advertisement may be very short, containing only essential information about the posts vacant and about the website in which the details are given.
- (ii) The selection committee for college teachers now consists of representatives of the management, the Government and the University. It is improper that the representatives of the Government and the University are selected by the Managements. The Government and the University should decide on their nominees and should not let the Managements choose their favourites from among Government Secretaries and District Collectors. Any Member of the Committee who is not in agreement with the majority view at the meeting of the Selection Committee shall record his/her dissent with reasons for it.
- (iii) The selection committee for Higher Secondary school teachers consists of representatives of the Department and of the Management. It may continue as such. The Government officers shall record their independent views in the minutes of the meeting.
- (iv) **The interviews must be audio- video recorded** and the recording must be retained for future verification.

- (v) The rank list must be finalised by the selection committee immediately after the interviews are over. It must be published on the notice board and on the websites and the Government nominee shall leave the place of interview only after it is done
- (vi) The Commission has recommended the creation of an institution of Ombudsman for scrutinising complaints about appointments in the aided education sector.

2.51 The managers of the aided educational institutions are expected to provide the necessary infrastructure for the institutions. Good infrastructure is an absolute necessity for good instruction. Already, a lot of public funding has gone into the development of such infrastructure - challenge fund for school buildings, MPLAD funds for compound walls and other facilities, ADF and SDF for MLAs, grants for stadiums, financial support for toilets, supply of audio visual and electronic equipments etc. Apart from government funding, the institutions should access funds earmarked for Corporate Social Responsibility in the corporate sector. The older institutions would also be able to mobilise contributions from the alumni.

2.52 In case owners of aided educational institutions wish to relinquish the land and buildings because of their inability to sustain and develop their institutions, Government should accept such relinquishment, accepting the properties and the regular staff available at that time.

H. Ombudsman for Academic Appointments

2.53 Appointments of teachers and other staff in schools, colleges and universities have often been attracting adverse public opinion with allegations of manipulation of the selection process. The main categories of teachers appointed other than through the Public Service Commission are (i) University teachers, (ii) teachers of private colleges covered by the direct payment agreement, and (iii) teachers of aided schools - primary schools, high schools and higher secondary schools including vocational higher secondary.

2.54 The recruitments in respect of aided schools are governed by the provisions of the Kerala Education Act and Rules, and those in respect of colleges by direct payment agreements. In respect of Universities, these are governed by the Statutes/ Ordinances/ Regulations. The selection committees are usually headed by the Vice Chancellors, and are expected to be fair; however, there are sometimes allegations, generally of favoritism under the influence of the Syndicate members or of political powers. In respect of aided colleges and schools, many of the managements have well-established systems, but often there are allegations about huge pay offs involving black money. Both favouritism and payments for jobs are definite instances of corruption and the invariable bypassing of merit. Allegations are sometimes, though not always unfounded, raised by losing candidates who cannot accept defeat gracefully; on the contrary, there are cases of obvious malfeasance, with virtually no remedy for the aggrieved persons. In any case, the credibility of the system has to be maintained in the interests of the quality of education, and of cleansing our polity and economy of the vices associated with such malpractices. The appointments of non-teaching staff in aided schools and colleges are also made arbitrarily while their salaries are paid from the State exchequer. The payment of public money as salaries and pensions to persons recruited arbitrarily is reprehensible.

2.55 The Commission has recommended the creation of a statutory Board for the selection of candidates for appointment to posts in private schools and colleges with salary payment from government. Interim measures to ensure transparency and merit have also been recommended. An institutional mechanism is required to oversee the interim measures.

2.56 **The Commission recommends that the Government may establish an institution of Ombudsman for educational appointments, through a legislation.** The broad features of the scheme could be as follows:

- (i) The government shall appoint a retired Judge of a High Court or of the Supreme Court as Ombudsman.
- (ii) The office may be a lean office without the usual hierarchy; there should be a Secretary of the level of Additional Secretary to Government, one Under Secretary and three Assistants, apart from minimum essential personal staff for the Ombudsman. A vehicle may be hired and the support services outsourced.

- (iii) The Ombudsman will have the power to review the selection of personnel for all appointments by private schools and colleges to posts for which the salaries are paid by the Government.
- (iv) The Ombudsman will have the power to review the selection of personnel for all appointments made by the Universities other than through the Public Service Commission, in cases referred to him by the Chancellor.
- (v) The Ombudsman shall constitute a panel of ad hoc Advisers consisting of eminent administrators, educationists, and subject experts; the number may be as found functionally necessary.
- (vi) The recruitment processes in Universities are prescribed by the statutes, and those in schools and colleges by rules and contracts. Essential modifications for bringing in transparency and credibility have been suggested in the earlier part of this chapter.
- (vii) A key requirement is that all interviews must be video-recorded and the recordings preserved.
- (viii) Any person aggrieved by a selection made by a private management may file a complaint before the Ombudsman within fifteen days of the publication of the selection; the complaint shall be filed online in the format prescribed for the same.
- (ix) Any person aggrieved by a selection made by a University may file a complaint before the Chancellor within fifteen days of the publication of the selection; the Chancellor may refer the case to the Ombudsman if he is satisfied that there is a prima facie case for an enquiry.
- (x) Every complaint made to the Ombudsman shall be accompanied by the remittance of a fee equal to one month's basic pay attached to the post to which the selection is made. 50% of the fee will be non-refundable administrative charges, and the other 50% shall be refunded in the event of a successful complaint, but forfeited in the event of dismissal of the complaint. There need be no fees for references made by the Chancellor.
- (xi) The Ombudsman shall have all the powers of a civil court for summoning records and persons.
- (xii) On receipt of a complaint, or a reference from the Chancellor, the Ombudsman shall call for the copies of the records of the selection and the video recording of the interview and the comments if any of the authorities on the allegations. These may be obtained online.
- (xiii) If the records and the video are not available, the selection shall be set

aside.

- (xiv) When the records are received, the Ombudsman shall constitute a three-member group of Advisers selected from the panel of ad hoc Advisers if the complaint is in respect of schools; in respect of school teachers other than those of primary schools, at least one of the three members of the group shall be a subject expert. For colleges and Universities, the groups of Advisers should have four members, at least two of them being subject experts.
- (xv) Before considering any complaint in respect of schools and colleges, each Adviser shall sign a statement showing that he has no association with the concerned private management and that he does not personally know the candidates involved. In respect of Universities, if the Advisers know any candidate personally, the nature of such knowledge shall be intimated in writing to the Ombudsman, and he shall decide whether the Adviser should be associated with the further processing of the reference.
- (xvi) The Ombudsman and the Advisers shall scrutinize the records and the relevant portions of the video recording to see if there is any irregularity in the selection. If there is no irregularity apparent from the records and the videos, the complaint may be rejected.
- (xvii) If there is a prima facie finding of irregularities in the selection, the Ombudsman shall give an opportunity for hearing to the authority concerned; the Advisers shall also be present at the hearing, which may be direct or online as convenient.
- (xviii) The Ombudsman and the group of Advisers may, if found necessary, interview the relevant candidates if there is a suspicion of manipulation in any form.
- (xix) If there is a dissent in the group of Advisers, the Ombudsman shall co-opt two more Advisers, and the decision may be taken based on the views of the majority, with the Ombudsman having a casting vote if it becomes necessary.
- (xx) If the complaint is sustained after the process outlined above, the selection shall be set aside and the authorities asked to make the selection afresh in respect of private institutions. In respect of Universities, a recommendation shall be made to the Chancellor.
- (xxi) The officers of the government and the nominees of government or of universities who are associated with irregular selections shall be reported to the superior authorities for appropriate action.

- (xxii) The system will apply to institutions run by the minorities also, as long as the salaries are to be paid by the government.

2.57 The Commission believes that an institutional arrangement like this will serve to bring about substantial correction of the ills now associated with staff selection. There is every possibility of the private managements attempting to circumvent the system through devious means like advance preparation of their preferred candidate for manipulating the interview process. Much depends on the integrity of the government officers associated with the selection process. They should be reminded that merit should be the prime consideration in the selection of personnel paid from public money. Corruption and black money are ugly and efficiency reducing. The Ombudsman will help the government to eliminate or at least cut down these undesirable traits in society. Direct action by the Ombudsman will have considerable impact; the fear of such direct action will have a greater impact.

2.58 As mentioned earlier, this reform will need a legislation. Once the law is enacted, government could consider implementation in a phased manner to avoid a high level of expenditure. To start with, the Ombudsman for Local Bodies may be given concurrent responsibility for this work so that a new establishment need not be created.

CHAPTER 3

TRAINING

A. Capacity Building

3.1 The recruits for the civil services, though coming through the state of the art competitive examinations, are from diverse social, economic and cultural backgrounds with different attitudes and talents. Although their attributes vary widely, when it comes to performance, they need to have a single motive: efficient, cost effective and timely delivery of services. Governance and the service delivery ecosystem have undergone significant changes in recent years. The Government employees, unlike in the past, need to have skills, right attitudes, zeal, managerial aptitude, competitive spirit and above all compassion for the public at whose service they are placed. Industry 4 has made it inevitable to be digital in all aspects of governance. The expectations and aspirations of the public have changed with an increased awareness that those who pay the piper have the right to call the tune. In order to meet the expectations of the tax-paying public, the drive for greater efficiency must be relentless and productivity must continue to improve. Accountability of the civil service needs to be strengthened and capabilities built up. To create an open, fast moving organisation, the values of the Civil Service – impartiality, objectivity, integrity and honesty – should become the foundation to build effective and trustworthy institutions. The Civil Service should be flexible and agile, responding quickly and effectively to new priorities and changing demands.

3.2 The culture bequeathed from the past is one that is cautious and slow-moving, focused on process not outcomes, bureaucratic, hierarchical and resistant to change. This culture can make it difficult for the Government to adapt swiftly to the needs of the day. It is necessary to create a new civil service capability framework which will focus as much on behaviours as on skills. Capacity building through rigorous training at different stages is inevitable to reform the civil service to be efficient, accountable and result oriented.

3.3 The National Training Policy, 2012, was formulated in the background of the massive changes that have taken place globally and nationally in almost every human activity. These include rapid economic growth, devolution of funds, functions and functionaries to the Panchayats and Municipalities, enhanced transparency through the right to information, globalization, climate change and extremism which have created a complex and challenging environment. The Policy document states that the objective of training will be to develop a professional, impartial and efficient civil service that is responsive to the needs of the citizens. In doing so, care will be taken to emphasize the development of the right and proper ethics, commitment to work and empathy for the vulnerable sections.

3.4 Government of Kerala announced a new State Training Policy in 2017. The objectives of training as per the State Training Policy 2017 are:

- (i) Match individual competencies with the jobs they have to do and bridge competency gaps for current and future roles with the aim to improve performance of individuals and organisations.
- (ii) Expose the civil service to new trends in the socio economic and political environment in which it operates.
- (iii) Update on reforms and initiatives in governance.
- (iv) Impart skills and attitudes for reengineering of government processes and e-governance, and
- (v) Build attitudes conducive to institutionalising citizen-centric, corrupt free and participatory governance.

3.5 The Second Report (2018) of the 4th Kerala Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC) is on the Capacity Development of Civil Servants in Kerala. In practical terms, 'Capacity Development' is achieved through the training of the functionaries for improvement of their professional knowledge, broadening their outlook, equipping them with the right skills and adoption of right attitudes and behavioural standards with regard to their functional responsibilities for serving the public. Training has to be imparted (i) at the stage of induction into the service, (ii) while assuming higher responsibilities while in service, and (iii) when the employee needs re-skilling for performing new roles.

3.6 The two key requirements for a useful training are (i) a suitable training institution with the required infrastructure and faculty, and (ii) a reasonable number of trainees to be trained together. There is no dearth of training institutions under the Government of Kerala, starting with the government's apex training institution, the Institute of Management in Government, Trivandrum (IMG), with its regional centres in Kochi and Kozhikode. The training Academies in the uniformed services like Police, Forests and Fire Force are well-established. Many of the institutions under other Departments have excellent facilities, as in the Kerala Institute of Local Administration (KILA), Thrissur. The State Institute of Rural Development (SIRD), Kottarakara, now known as KILA Centre for Human Resource Development, Kerala State Institute of Health and Family Welfare, Institute of Land and Disaster Management, Kerala Highway Research Institute, Kerala Engineering Research Institute (KERI) etc. are departmentally managed autonomous institutions; they can be effectively utilised for training the staff of the particular department as well as other departments. Institutions like the Kerala Institute of Labour and Employment (KILE) and the recently formed Indian Institute of Infrastructure and Construction (IIIC) could also be utilised. However, there must be effective cooperation and coordination between these institutions so that the facilities could be put to optimum use. For this purpose, a State Training Council headed by the Chief Secretary and facilitated by the Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms can play an active role, monitoring the entire training activities of Government employees in the State.

3.7 The ARC had identified four core institutions to take care of the training in four different segments. These are

- (i) IMG - for general trainings of all departments and general as well as executive trainings of Agriculture & Allied Departments and Health Department will be handled by IMG. IMG will also coordinate with Departmental Training Institutions under these Departments
- (ii) KILA - Subjects on Development Administration, De-centralized planning, Co-operation, Social Justice etc. will be handled by KILA. All departments shall utilize expertise of KILA in these areas. KILA will also coordinate with departmental training Institutions under concerned departments.
- (iii) KERI - KERI shall be developed as a training and research institution

- in engineering and allied subjects to cater to training needs of all technical /engineering employees in the departments of Public Works, Harbour Engineering, Local Self Government Engineering, Ground Water etc. KERI will also coordinate with departmental training institutions under these and other similar departments, and
- (iv) Kerala Police Academy - This Institution will act as the lead training institution in respect of uniformed forces such as Police, Fire and Rescue Services, Prisons, Excise, Forest, Motor Vehicles etc. It will also coordinate the functions of departmental training institutions under these and other similar departments.

In addition to these four, medical workers including doctors also need specialised training with a view to evolving their attitude to the patients and the public. For this, Government may set up either a Medical Training Institute or a Unit in the IMG.

3.8 A strength but also weakness of these institutions is that some of the faculty are senior state government officers who are experienced, but may have the baggage of typical bureaucratic attitude to people and procedures. There should be a critical minimum number of guest faculty mostly from the All India Services, judiciary and academia.

B. Induction Training

3.9 Induction training is extremely important for all new entrants into Government service. The new recruits have generally been preparing intensely for the recruitment examinations of the Public Service Commission, and their general knowledge is more theoretical than practical. Training is inevitable for persons joining at cutting edge, middle and senior levels, and in posts from where they would rise to hold important positions. Young professionals like Engineers and Doctors also need introduction to the principles and practice of administration. The duration of the training programme and the curriculum will need to be decided by the State Training Council in consultation with the respective departments and the identified training institutions. The Induction Training shall have two components viz. foundation segment for general subjects applicable to all Government services and a professional course which will be department specific.

Induction training has to be holistic and residential so that the participants learn from peer interaction as well. As governance is becoming increasingly digital, thorough training in digital technology is required. Successful completion of the induction training should be made mandatory before the declaration of probation. It should also be ensured that the training does not degenerate into coaching for the departmental examinations. Some training in writing skills is also essential, considering that many of the Government letters and orders are clumsy.

3.10 Ideally, the new recruits should undergo the training before they report to their office for taking charge. Once they join an office, they will immediately get 'house-trained', and such orientation given by junior personnel working in the office will not help to develop the personality of the new recruit. Institutional training cannot be held for each individual and so, there must be 7 to 20 candidates in a batch. The appointing authorities should do the bunching and the KPSC should advise the required number of candidates for appointment together. Reasonable notice must be given to enable all the recommended candidates to join on the specified date. They should report at the designated Training Centre together and undergo the prescribed training programme. The date of commencement of training may be treated as the date of joining the State Government's service. It may be necessary to create some supernumerary posts for short periods till the trainees can be appointed in regular posts, and the Heads of Departments may be delegated with the powers to create such training posts.

3.11 The Kerala Public Service Commission has commenced the process of recruitment to the Kerala Administrative Service (KAS). The candidates selected will need to be trained well, and the pattern of training for the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) could be suitably adapted and implemented.

C. In-Service Training

3.12 Every employee should undergo mandatory institutional in-service training at reasonable intervals, linked to the stage in that person's career. Detailed recommendations including the periodicity and the curriculum have been made by the ARC. The State Training Council would be able to develop further and implement the programme, keeping in mind the period

for which the employees can be drawn out from their offices, the expenses involved in conducting the programme etc.

3.13 In-service training programmes should be residential as far as possible to extract maximum utility.

3.14 In addition to the normal in-service training, the institutions should regularly conduct short duration on-line programmes on topics of relevance to various sections of employees. These could be for one day or half a day, and the subjects could be related to the work in the department or generally on personality development, emerging technologies etc.

3.15 The Central Government has recently launched a Mission Karmayogi programme primarily aimed at the development of capacity and attitudes of the civil servants. Suitable components of that programme can be adopted with necessary adaptations.

D. Re-skilling

3.16 Changes take place fast. 'Resistance to change' is a clichéd but realistic expression. Technological changes, social changes, inevitable innovations, constraints caused by financial resources – these are all veritable events in the official life of any employee. He/she has to cope with it, and the supervisory officials in Government have to manage that change effectively. Failure in this would lead to the accumulation in the system of too many people who are no longer useful or effective in the organization or situation – dead wood - and who should be got rid of.

3.17 Redundancy can be addressed by re-skilling. Typists are still being recruited, designating them by the name Computer Assistants in several organisations. Word processing does not need a professional; it could be done by any user of a computer. Extra skills will make the Computer Assistant valuable for the office. The Commission is of the view that appointments to the posts of Typists should be done away with. Similarly, there are several posts in Government in respect of which the old job profiles have become obsolete. The need is to identify them, train them in the currently relevant jobs and utilise their services fully in the new areas.

3.18 Similarly, as administration and transactions of all kinds are becoming digital by the day, recruitment to the posts of office attendants, peons and attenders is an anachronism. They have very little opportunity to carry out any productive work. At the same time, they are a drain on the State's resources. Further recruitment of such support personnel should be stopped and the existing employees should be reskilled to do other work in the office.

3.19 The Commission recommends the introduction of induction training, in-service training and reskilling programmes as detailed in this Chapter.

3.20 The Commission recommends that recruitment to the posts of Typists/Computer Assistants and support staff like Office Attendants must be stopped immediately, and future recruitment made only after a review of the skill sets required for the department/ organisation.

CHAPTER 4

TRANSFERS

4.1 The transfers and postings of officials often attract complaints, as well as provide the scope for favouritism and corruption. There are norms for transfers issued by the Government from time to time, but these are often not followed, both because of practical or administrative reasons and because of personal interests of the authorities. The 10th Pay Revision Commission had suggested that Kerala should go in for a law on the pattern of the Maharashtra Government Servants Regulation of Transfers and Prevention of Delay in Discharge of Official Duties Act, 2005 which regulates transfers and postings in the State. The Act deals with tenures of posting of officials, transfers etc and also prescribes the preparation and publication of a Citizens' Charter by every office or department. The Commission does not believe that there should be a statute governing transfers as the objectives can be achieved through executive orders and appropriate systems. It should be adequate to stipulate the norms to be followed in transfers as this is a matter entirely within the Government. The order now in force governing transfer norms is G.O.(P) No. 3/2017/ P&ARD dated 25.02.2017.

4.2 An old problem which still subsists is the reluctance of officials to work in the northernmost Districts like Kasaragod, Wayanad and Kannur. Idukki is also similarly placed. Large sections of employees in most departments are from the Southern parts of the State, and the desire to stay at home and commute to the place of work is very strong among them. Even where the selections for appointment to service are made district wise, those from other districts get selected, and start working on their transfer to the home district soon after joining service. One of the reasons why the selections are made district-wise is to provide opportunity to residents of that district; selecting others should be construed as a favour. Almost everyone claims to have family compulsions, especially the responsibility to care for aged parents, and the need to look after small or school-going children. These claims might be genuine, but the difficulty is that such compulsions are universal; employees without such compulsions are few. Several Heads of Departments as well as Service Organisations have cited the non-availability of staff as an issue

affecting work in the northern Districts. The solution lies in two measures – one, administrative rigour by which the orders are enforced and two, facilitation by the provision of residential arrangements in the remote areas. While the construction of residential quarters is a solution that can be easily recommended, the financial situation of the State does not permit large scale investment in this. Private investment will happen if the people are confident of getting tenants. If there is a strict imposition of a three-year tenure before transfers are made, employees will be aware of the compulsion to serve in the place where they are posted. The tendency to seek frequent short spells of leave should also be curbed. This aversion to posting in remote areas is surprisingly very high in Kerala Government service; it is not that manifest among employees in other services like those under the Central Government and Banks, who are liable to be transferred to any part of India. The Commission recommends that the transfer norms should be strictly enforced.

4.3 With increasing digitalisation of data on Government employees, it is definitely possible to handle the entire activities related to transfers on online platforms to ensure transparency, objectivity and fairness. **The Commission recommends that the management of transfers of Government employees should be digitalised.**

4.4 Most departments practise what is called ‘working arrangement’. There are Government orders regulating it. P&ARD had issued circular No 1015/D2/92/ P&ARD dated 15.01.1992 directing that all working arrangements should be terminated forthwith and that where administrative needs exist, these are to be met by shifting posts under due sanction. In the fiscal management measures ordered by the Finance Department as per G. O. (P) No.442/2012/Fin dated 08.08.2012, one of the resource conservation measures ordered was that no working arrangement of staff shall be allowed except in Health and Family Welfare Department. These directives should be strictly followed.

4.5 The ostensible reason for a working arrangement is the sudden extra work in one place, for the completion of which employees are pulled out from another place. Invariably, the first place is the headquarters and the second a remote place. In other words, the employee is paid salary for doing some work other than what is officially assigned to him. Of course, there are

occasions when such arrangements become necessary in the short term, but it should not become a permanent feature.

4.6 Government should direct all working arrangements to end within a month. If there is short term work, any deployment should be approved by Government as an exceptional case; if there is a long term need, the department must seek additional posts, reducing posts elsewhere. The Finance and Vigilance Departments must verify whether the practice continues in any department. Violations should be strictly dealt with. **The Commission recommends an end to the practice of working arrangements, except for identified new time bound work for which Government approves short term deployment.**

CHAPTER 5

PROMOTIONS

Performance Appraisal and Promotions

5.1 The second report of the Fourth Kerala Administrative Reforms Commission has recommended the framing of comprehensive rules for effective operationalisation of the Performance Appraisal System. Those who fail to obtain an overall grade of 5 and above shall necessarily be imparted adequate training to acquire the required competency. This will increase efficiency and thereby facilitate effective delivery of services to public. **This Commission recommends the effective implementation of Performance Appraisal System which will enable positive growth of an employee by understanding his/her drawbacks.**

5.2 Further, the 4th report of Administrative Reforms Commission strongly recommends to ensure that employees have acquired sufficient skill for officiating in the promoted post, before promotion to a category. It is also recommended to consider introduction of eligibility test for promotion. **The Commission recommends the conduct of tests, preferably by the PSC or even by an outside agency for promotion from Subordinate Service to State Service and for promotion to higher posts in State Service.**

5.3 In line with the recommendations of the Administrative Reforms Commission, the XI Pay Revision Commission would also like to recommend that assessment of merit and ability of the official to hold the post must be done before granting promotion to Officers above the second gazetted post. Performance Appraisal System as suggested by the Administrative Reforms Commission, shall be used as a mechanism for considering employees for promotion.

Removal of Exemption from Departmental Tests

5.4 As per Rule 13 of Kerala State and Subordinate Service Rules 1958, no person shall be eligible for appointment to any service, class, category or

grade or any post borne on the cadre thereof unless he possesses such special qualifications and has passed such special tests as may be prescribed in that behalf in the Special Rules. As per Rule 13A, temporary exemption from special and departmental tests are allowed for members of service belonging to any of the Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes who are otherwise qualified and suitable for appointment to such class. They may be appointed thereto temporarily. Also, where a pass in a special or departmental test is newly prescribed by the Special Rules of a service for any category, grade or post therein or in any class thereof, a member of a service who has not passed the said test but is otherwise qualified and suitable for appointment to such class, category, grade or post may, within 2 years of the introduction of the test, be appointed thereto temporarily. However, this period shall be extended by 3 years in the case of a person belonging to any of the Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes. The period of relaxation from passing the tests, referred to in Rules 13 and 13AA, has been exempted for a specified period, as ordered by Government, for members belonging to a Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe, and already in service. This provision shall be deemed to have come into force with effect from 13th January 1972. However, the orders exempting members of the Scheduled Castes and of the Scheduled Tribes who were in service on the 13th January 1972, issued under Rule 13 AA was made applicable to members of the Scheduled Castes and of the Scheduled Tribes who entered service after the said date also via Rule 13 AB.

5.5 Further as per Rule 13 B, persons in Government Service who attained the age of 50 years who have put in 25 years of service shall be eligible for permanent exemption from passing the obligatory departmental tests, other than those prescribed as qualification in the Special Rules for all purposes such as promotion, appointment as full member of a service etc. It is also provided that persons belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes shall be eligible for the permanent exemption when they attain the age of 50 years.

5.6 It is worthwhile to bear in mind that Government have prescribed certain special qualifications or special tests for any category of posts/grades with a view to enhance the job skills of the officers to perform the higher duties and responsibilities attached to the promotion posts. To promote a person who does not possess these qualifications/tests is to defeat the very purpose of prescribing qualifications and tests and it denies quality service

delivery to the public. Unskilled persons in service are a disservice to the public. The 10th Pay Revision Commission in Part-II of their Report (Para5.37) had recommended to withdraw exemptions provided to employees on attaining the age of 50 years and make qualifications mandatory for any promotion including in the Education Department where a lot of teachers get promoted as Head Masters without test qualifications after 50 years of age. Perhaps such persons could be made to undergo training for the right attitude.

5.7 The Commission recommends that all relaxations from passing the obligatory departmental tests should be stopped and persons who do not appear for the departmental tests or consistently fail in tests must be made to stagnate.

Appointment of Heads of Departments (HoDs)

5.8 A department head plays a major role in leading the department to achieve a high standard of excellence in all its activities. He is expected to exercise leadership, demonstrate vision and empower others to execute an agreed-upon departmental strategy. His role in implementing the policies and programmes announced by the Government is no less significant. So, the selection of the right person to the post of Head of a Department is critical. Rule 28A Part II, Kerala State and Subordinate Service Rules 1958 lays down the broad parameters for appointment of Head of Department by promotion/or by transfer. Appointment by promotion or by-transfer is to be made on the basis of merit and ability, seniority being considered only when merit and ability are approximately equal. Merit and ability have to be assessed by the authority competent in the Government to make appointment to the post of HoD. Officers who do not have at least one year of service before the date of their superannuation after appointment to the post of HoD should not be included in the field of choice for consideration. The selection of Head of Department should not be automatically on the basis of seniority.

5.9 The mechanism now available for assessment of merit and ability is the Departmental Promotion Committee consisting of Chairman/ Member of the Kerala Public Service Commission, Secretary-in-charge of the administrative department concerned etc. Annual Confidential Report (ACR) of the officer in the field of choice forms the basis of assessment. The Reporting Officer

evaluates the performance of the officer reported on, on the basis of 15 performance indicators detailed in the ACR. Experience has, time and again shown that the assessments are generally far removed from objectivity and reality. So, the existing system of selection is not helpful in selecting the most suitable person and so the existing system of DPC procedure for selection of Heads of Departments may be scrapped. **The Commission recommends the creation of a Selection Board to advise the Government on the selection of Heads of Departments.** The Board /the Government should evolve a set of rules of procedure. The Board may consist of Chief Secretary, Secretary of the Administrative Department concerned, Law Secretary, Additional Chief Secretary (Vigilance) and an external expert nominated by the Government.

CHAPTER 6

ETHICAL CONDUCT

6.1 The expression 'public servant' is used only once in the Constitution of India – this is in the title of Article 284 about the custody of monies received by public servants and courts. The words 'civil servant', 'government employee', 'bureaucrat' etc. are not there at all in the Constitution. However, the Constitution uses the word 'officer' in several places, and although the word is not defined, it refers to persons employed and entrusted with certain functions by the government (President/ Governor), by Parliament or by the judiciary.

6.2 There have been discussions on the commitment of government officials, and the crucial question is – commitment to what or whom. Clearly, Government officials should be committed (only) to the law of the land, represented by the Constitution of India, and to the People of India who adopted, enacted and gave to themselves the Constitution. Our systems are all designed to ensure this, but several other commitments –to oneself, to political parties, to vested interests etc. often outweigh the commitment to the law and to the people.

6.3 The very first premise of ethical conduct is the realisation that one is a public servant, who is paid from the public exchequer for serving the public. This would imply decent personal conduct and dignified and considerate behaviour to each citizen one comes across. The position one holds or the salary one gets may have been determined by the individual's capability and successful performance in a competitive selection, but these are derived from the system created by the People. It is incumbent upon everyone paid from government funds to respect the common citizen, whether at work or outside. This must be part of the Conduct Rules. While there are frequent reminders on the courtesies to be extended to elected representatives like MPs and MLAs, the need for courteous behaviour to the general public is rarely highlighted.

6.4 The Kerala Government Servants Conduct Rules, 1960 need revision as recommended by the Fourth Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC) in paras 1.9 and 1.10 of the Fourth Report. The ARC has recommended that “the Kerala Government Servants’ Conduct Rules shall be restructured to reflect changes that happened/ are happening over the years. It should incorporate provisions on cyber laws and other issues relevant to the present context. Obsolete clauses shall be removed”. But a more fundamental question is – how many employees have fully read and imbibed the true spirit of the Rules? These Rules govern the personal conduct of government employees, who are in any case expected to be government employees 24/7, whether they are in the work place or at home or anywhere else. Basic awareness can be introduced through the induction training, but it is necessary to remind the employees periodically about the mandatory regulations regarding their private lives.

6.5 Rule 3 of Central Civil Services (Conduct) Rules, 1964 was amended in 2014 to incorporate the expected standards of the civil services and provide for accountability of civil servants to ensure good governance and better delivery of services to citizen. Sub-rule (1) of Rule 3 of the Rules now reads as follows:

Every Government servant shall at all times-

- (i) maintain absolute integrity;*
- (ii) maintain devotion to duty;*
- (iii) do nothing which is unbecoming of a Government servant;*
- (iv) commit himself to and uphold the supremacy of the Constitution and democratic values;*
- (v) defend and uphold the sovereignty and integrity of India, the security of the State, public order, decency and morality;*
- (vi) maintain high ethical standards and honesty;*
- (vii) maintain political neutrality;*
- (viii) promote the principles of merit, fairness and impartiality in the discharge of duties;*
- (ix) maintain accountability and transparency;*
- (x) maintain responsiveness to the public, particularly to the weaker section;*
- (xi) maintain courtesy and good behaviour with the public;*
- (xii) take decisions solely in public interest and use or cause to use public resources efficiently, effectively and economically;*

- (xiii) *declare any private interests relating to his public duties and take steps to resolve any conflicts in a way that protects the public interest;*
- (xiv) *not place himself under any financial or other obligations to any individual or organisation which may influence him in the performance of his official duties;*
- (xv) *not misuse his position as civil servant and not take decisions in order to derive financial or material benefits for himself, his family or his friends;*
- (xvi) *make choices, take decisions and make recommendations on merit alone;*
- (xvii) *act with fairness and impartiality and not discriminate against anyone, particularly the poor and the under-privileged sections of society;*
- (xviii) *refrain from doing anything which is or may be contrary to any law, rules, regulations and established practices;*
- (xix) *maintain discipline in the discharge of his duties and be liable to implement the lawful orders duly communicated to him;*
- (xx) *maintain confidentiality in the performance of his official duties as required by any laws for the time being in force, particularly with regard to information, disclosure of which may prejudicially affect the sovereignty and integrity of India, the security of the State, strategic, scientific or economic interests of the State, friendly relation with foreign countries or lead to incitement of an offence or illegal or unlawful gain to any person;*
- (xxi) *perform and discharge his duties with the highest degree of professionalism and dedication to the best of his abilities.*

Similar provisions may be introduced in the State Rules also.

6.6 Some of the key provisions in the Kerala Government Servants Conduct Rules are discussed below.

- (i) Rule 3. *General – Every Government servant shall at all times maintain absolute integrity and devotion to duty.*

This is the basic Rule governing the conduct of government personnel, although it is the briefest statement. Most of the subsequent rules derive from this. Integrity and Devotion must be inculcated in the government employees and any breach should be severely dealt with. There should be no tolerance of corruption; even non-performance is equally unacceptable.

- (ii) Rule 30 – *A Government servant should not ordinarily be posted to his native District or allowed to acquire land within the revenue District or Taluk in which he is serving. Permission to do this should be granted only*

in very special circumstances. He may usually be permitted to acquire immovable property outside the revenue District or Taluk in which he is Serving. But when, on transfer to a District or Taluk in which he holds immovable property, a Government servant makes a special report required by rule 41, the authority responsible should ordinarily transfer him to another District or Taluk.

Note: – Gazetted Officers employed in Educational, Technical and Research Institutions and Non-Gazetted Officers who are not entitled to exercise discretion in the course of their duties may be exempted from the provisions of the above rule.

This is a rule consistently being breached by the authorities themselves. The concept of native district has lost much of its relevance with people moving to other parts of the State for various reasons. The fact that many families have both wife and husband working has added another dimension to the issue. It would be desirable to specify the category of officials to whom such geographical restrictions would apply and to redefine the nature of such restrictions. The restrictions could apply to officials at all levels in departments like the Police, Land Revenue, Local Self-government, Legal Metrology, Mining and Geology, Goods and Service Tax and Survey and Land Records. Instead of District, the restriction may be for posting in the home Taluk or in regions covering the home Taluk – the one in which the official is ordinarily resident.

- (iii) *Rule 47 – Government servants shall be at liberty to take part in the promotion of Co-operative Societies, but no Government servant shall except in the course of duty or as provided for in the Service Regulations, hold office in any Co-operative Society or serve on any committee appointed for the management of its affairs unless the Society is composed wholly of Government servants or partly of Government servants and partly of employees of local bodies.*

Unlike in the past, there is enough talent in our society so that there is no need for government employees to involve themselves in the management of cooperative societies in which the general public have membership.

- (iv) *Rule 51 – Insolvency and habitual indebtedness – A Government servant shall avoid habitual indebtedness. If a Government servant is adjudged or declared an insolvent, or has incurred debts aggregating to a sum which in ordinary circumstances, he could not repay within a period of two years or*

if a part of his salary is frequently attached for debt, has been continuously so attached for a period of two years or is attached for a sum which in ordinary circumstances, he could not repay within a period of two years, he should be presumed to have contravened this rule and is liable to be removed from service provided that such removal will not ordinarily result in the forfeiture of the pension which the person concerned would then be entitled to under the rules had he been invalidated from service. But he need not be so deemed if he proves that the insolvency or indebtedness is the result of circumstances which, with the exercise of ordinary diligence, he could not have foreseen or over which he had no control, and had not proceeded from extravagant or dissipated habits. The burden of proving such special circumstances will always be upon the Government servant concerned.

Rule 52 – A Government servant who applies to be or is adjudged or declared insolvent shall, forthwith report his insolvency to the Head of the Office or Department in which he is employed.

Rule 53 – On receipt of information that a Government servant has been declared an insolvent or that his salary is being continuously attached as contemplated in rule 51, the Head of the Department or the Head of the Office shall in the case of those Government servants who are appointed by Government communicate the fact forthwith to Government and in the case of those whom they themselves or their subordinates are competent to appoint, take or cause to be taken such action as may be called for under rule 51 above.

Rule 54 – The plea that the insolvency or indebtedness has been caused by standing security for other persons shall in no case be accepted as an excuse for abating the action under these rules.

Rule 55 – A Government servant who has been removed from service on account of insolvency, shall not be eligible for re-employment in any branch of public service.

These provisions have great relevance for discipline in personal finances, but are seldom monitored. There must be vigil on the part of superior officers for this.

- (v) *Rule 67 – Taking part in politics and elections – (1) No Government servant shall be a member of, or be otherwise associated with, any political party or any organisation which takes part in politics nor shall he take part*

in, subscribe in aid of, or assist in any other manner, any political movement or activity.

It is an unfortunate reality that several government servants are actively associated with party politics, stopping short of holding official positions in the party. This must be strictly avoided.

- (vi) Rule 67A – *Taking part in communal or religious activity – (1) No Government servant shall be an office-bearer of any communal or religious organisation or of such trust or society.*

This needs reiteration and enforcement. It is not desirable for a government servant to be associated with any religious or communal organisation. India is a secular state, and the Government servants, while they are free to profess and practice any religion in their private lives, their public conduct should not create any impression that their religion is more dear to them than the secular philosophy of the State.

- (vii) Rule 69 – *Save as provided by or under any law for the time being in force, no Government servant shall canvass or otherwise, interfere or use his influence in connection with or take part, in any election to a Legislative Body, whether in the Kerala State or elsewhere:*

- 1) *Provided that a Government servant who is qualified to vote at such election may exercise his right to vote; but if he does so shall give no indication of the manner in which he proposes to vote or has voted.*
- 2) *A Government servant shall not be deemed to have contravened the provisions of this rule by reason only that he assists in the conduct of an election in the due performance of a duty imposed on him by or under any law for the time being in force.*
- 3) *The Government may permit a Government servant to offer himself as a candidate for election to a local authority and the Government servant so permitted shall not be deemed to have contravened the provision of this rule.*

Explanation: – The display by a Government servant on his person, vehicle or residence of any electoral symbol shall amount to using his influence in connection with an election within the meaning of this sub-rule.

- 4) *No Government servant shall, save as provided by or under any law for the time being in force, offer himself as a candidate for election to any of the authorities of a University.*

Rule 70 – A Government servant who issues an address to electors or in any other manner publicly announces himself or allows himself to be publicly announced as a candidate or prospective candidate for election to a Legislative Body shall be deemed for the purposes of rule 69 to take part in the election to such body.

Rule 71 – The provisions of rules 69 and 70 shall, so far as may apply to elections to local authorities or bodies, save in respect of Government servants, required or permitted by or under any law or order of the Government for the time being in force, to be a candidate at such elections.

As discussed under Rule 67 above, direct political activity of government servants shall be strictly prohibited. Almost all political parties are guilty of permitting their followers in government service to violate this rule. Rule 69(3) and 71 are obsolete and should be deleted.

(viii) *Rule 77 (a). Conditions for recognition. – No association of Government servants or association purporting to represent Government servants or any class thereof shall be recognised unless it satisfies the following conditions, namely:-*

(1) (i) *The association must consist of a distinct class of Government employees and must represent 25 per cent of the total strength of that class or 50 persons whichever is higher.*

Note 1 – Class I and Class II Officers shall not be allowed to be members in the same association in which Class III Officers are members and vice versa.

Note 2 – The Heads of Departments concerned will satisfy themselves about the prescribed minimum representative strength and report to Government while forwarding the applications from Service Association for the grant of recognition.

(ii) Every Government employee of the same class must be eligible for membership of the Association;

(iii) Persons who are not in the service of Government shall not be office bearers of the Association; and

(iv) The Association must not be formed on a territorial or communal basis.

(2) *The Association shall not be, in any way, connected with, or affiliated to any association, which does not, or any federation of associations, which do not, satisfy condition (1).*

(3) *The Association shall not be, in any way, connected with any political party or organisation.*

These are rules in respect of which we deceive ourselves. Note 1 says that Class I and Class II Officers shall not be allowed to be members in the same association in which Class III Officers are members and vice versa. This is extremely necessary for proper discipline in the office, but it is violated even in the heart of the State administration, namely the Secretariat. The Commission recommends strict enforcement of this provision.

Sub rule (3) prescribes that the Association shall not be, in any way, connected with any political party or organisation. It is well known that almost all service organisations are associated with political parties, and sometimes with groups in the same political party. Even relatively smaller political parties have promoted supporting outfits among government employees. It would be too naïve to expect a sudden change in this, but the Commission recommends that such a change in favour of a non-political civil service must be attempted.

- (ix) Rule 86 – *Government servants not to partake in any strike – No Government servant shall engage himself in any strike or incitement thereto or in any similar activities. Government servants should not engage themselves in any concerted or organised slowing down or attempt at slowing down Government work or in any act which has the tendency to impede the reasonably efficient and speedy transaction of Government work. Concerted or organised refusal on the part of Government servants to receive their pay will entail severe disciplinary action.*

This again is regularly violated with impunity. There must be efforts during training to educate the employees about the impact of their actions on the common man; the victim of all such acts is the ordinary citizen who pays for maintaining the government system.

- (x) Rule 93A. *Residence – All Government servants shall ordinarily reside, within the limits of their Headquarters Stations. Whenever any Government servant finds it necessary to live outside the prescribed Headquarters, he shall obtain specific sanction of the Head of Office or other Competent Authority. Permission to reside outside the headquarters will be granted only in exceptional case, each case being considered on its merits and in accordance with administrative convenience. When a Government servant living in the Headquarters Stations wants to leave the station on private business, he will have to obtain permission from his superior officer.*

Note – For the purpose of this rule –

(a) Government Servants, other than Medical Officers of the Departments of Health Services, Homoeopathy, Indigenous Medicine and of Medical Colleges, residing within a radius of fifteen kilometres from their offices shall be deemed to reside within the limits of their Headquarters Stations. This limit of fifteen kilometres radius shall not, however, be applied strictly in the case of big cities and towns provided that the persons concerned reside within the limits of the Headquarters city or town.

(b) Medical Officers of the Departments of Health Services, Homoeopathy, Indigenous Medicines and of Medical Colleges, residing within a radius of eight kilometres from the Hospital/Dispensary/Medical College/ Health Centre in which they are working shall be deemed to reside within the limits of their Headquarters Stations.

This rule is neither being enforced, nor is it capable of being enforced for obvious reasons. However, it is necessary to enforce it for identified categories of posts in every department, depending on the nature of duties and responsibilities. Officials who may have to report for work on urgent notice should be staying within the prescribed distance. Each department should identify the posts for which this Rule has to be mandatory and enforce it accordingly.

(xi) Rule 93B. *Consumption of intoxicating drinks and drugs: –*

(l) A Government servant shall

(a) strictly abide by any law relating to intoxicating drinks or drugs in force in any area in which he may happen to be for the time being;

(b) not be under the influence of any intoxicating drink or drug during the course of his duty and shall also take due care that the performance of his duties at any time is not affected in any way by the influence of such drinks or drugs;

(c) refrain from consuming any intoxicating drink or drug in a public place;

(d) not appear in a public place in a state of intoxication;

(e) not use any intoxicating drink or drug to excess.

Explanation: – For the purpose of this rule, "Public Place" means any place or premises (including a conveyance) to which the public have, or are permitted to have access, whether on payment or otherwise and includes a club meant exclusively for members where it permissible for the members to invite non-members as guests, but does not include a lodging room in a hotel.

(2) Government may by special or general order relax the provisions of sub-rule (1) in respect of any case if they consider that such relaxation is necessary in view of the special circumstances of such case.

Alcohol consumption and alcoholism are relatively high in Kerala compared to the other States. Punishing addicts in government service is essential for discouraging others to drift to the avoidable malady of alcoholism. The Commission recommends that government directs all supervisory authorities to implement this rule rigorously. The power for relaxation in (2) need not be there.

(xii) Rule 93C – *Taking or giving of dowry by Government servants – No Government servant shall take or give dowry for his marriage or for the marriage of any member, or dependent, of his family.*

Dowry is like bribe; neither the giver nor the recipient acknowledges it. This is a dreadful social evil, and some of the recent incidents of harassment of married young women have been extremely disconcerting. The border line between parental gifts and dowry is very thin, but there has to be a differentiation. The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961, the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 and the amendments to the Indian Penal Code are all there, applicable to all offenders, but in respect of government employees, it is necessary to have a special watch. Every male employee must, after 15 days but within one month of his marriage, or, if he is already married at the time of joining service, within one month of his joining the service, furnish separate affidavits, signed by him and his wife, showing the details of gifts in the form of immovable property, vehicles, gold, cash, durable goods or others (of value above the limit permitted under the Conduct Rules) received by each of them in connection with the marriage. This must be scrutinised by the supervisory officer and any suspicious case should be referred to the police and to the Dowry Prohibition Officer of the Department of Women and Child Development for detailed enquiry and further action.

6.7 As discussed, the Conduct Rules need revision and enforcement. **The Commission recommends that the government may get the Government Employees' Conduct Rules rewritten in tune with the current realities including the points discussed above, issue the new Rules and ensure enforcement.**

CHAPTER 7

WORKING DAYS, LEAVE AND WORKING FROM HOME

A. Working Days and Hours

7.1 The Commission has examined the pros and cons of the much-debated switchover to a five day week for State government offices. The Central Government has been working five days a week, and as per available information, the State Governments of Bihar, Delhi, Goa, Maharashtra, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal also have a five day week system. Several other State Governments including Kerala have adopted a five day week practice during the COVID 19 pandemic.

7.2 There are arguments for and against a change in the existing system of a six day week with the second Saturday of every month as a holiday. The main arguments in favour of a five day week are

- (i) A five day week promotes work/life balance by allowing the employees to spend more time with their families and pursue their hobbies
- (ii) It helps to reduce travel and therefore pollution and cut the carbon footprint
- (iii) It helps to reduce overheads like the cost of running offices, with reduced power consumption, and reduced use of government vehicles.
- (iv) With technological developments, it is possible to accomplish the same amount of work in less time
- (v) Trials of a four day week in some European countries are reported to have shown greater efficiency on the part of employees.

The main arguments against are

- (i) Long hours of work in a tropical climate lead to fatigue

- (ii) Employees commuting long distances will find it difficult to reach in time and may be tempted to leave early
- (iii) Several activities in offices are dependent on the number of working days and such matters will get delayed if there are fewer working days
- (iv) Citizens will get service only on a lesser number of days
- (v) Even now, several officers work outside office hours to finish their work in time

7.3 While there are irrefutable arguments in favour of the two contradictory approaches, and there are votaries for both, the Commission feels that a five-day week would be more beneficial both for the government and for the employees. **The Commission recommends the adoption of a five-day week system for the government offices, with the change accompanied by consequential changes in the working hours, holidays etc.**

Working hours

7.4 As per para 157 of the Manual of Office Procedure, the office timings fixed for the various government offices are from 10 AM to 5 PM, with an interval between 1.15 PM and 2 PM. The Government Secretariat and other government offices in the cities of Thiruvananthapuram, Kottayam, Ernakulam, Thrissur and Kozhikode follow the timings of 10.15 AM to 5.15 PM vide circular no. Rules-2/90/2019/P&ARD dt 17.08.2019. The working time is in effect 6 hours 15 minutes. With the introduction of the five day week system, there will be a loss of 40 working Saturdays in one year, excluding the 12 second Saturdays. To compensate for the loss of working hours, it would be necessary to increase the working hours by one hour per day, thus adding 5 hours per week. **The Commission recommends that the timings could be refixed as 9.30 AM to 5.30 PM for all offices.** Timings of the offices in selected cities were kept differently with the primary objective of reducing traffic congestion during the peak hours. With the revision of the timings, it is not necessary to have differential timings; an early start will help to attend live matters relating to the business in the Legislative Assembly.

7.5 The employees are expected to be in the office before the start of office hours. Late attendance or absence during working hours causes substantial loss to government. Often, if one employee is late, it may affect the work of several others as tasks are often interdependent. Assuming that our

recommendations are accepted, there will be 104 week-end holidays in a year of 365 days, 15 regular holidays and at least one additional holiday, 30 days of earned leave, 10 days of commuted leave and 12 days of casual leave, making a total of 172 days of eligible absence from work. The number of working days would be 193 in a year, or an average of 16.08 in a month. At the rate of 7.15 hours in a day, the average number of working hours in a month would be 115. An hour of absence has a cost of almost 1% of the monthly salary. If and only if work so demands, the supervisory officer two levels above the employee may allow the employee to work for extra hours to compensate for the absence during regular hours. Otherwise, the month's salary should be reduced at the rate of 1% for absence for every hour or part thereof. **The Commission recommends reduction from the monthly salary at the rate of 1% for absence for every hour or part thereof.** This will not be considered as a penalty, but only as an administrative measure. The supervisory authority will have no power to sanction or ratify such absence. And if absence is a regular practice for any employee, with more than five hours' absence in a month, disciplinary action may be taken.

B. Holidays

7.6 The number of holidays should ideally be reduced to 12 in a year, as in the Government of India. **The Commission however recommends that the number of holidays may be kept as 15, to compensate for the reduction being proposed in Earned Leave.** With the probability of only 5/7 of the days being week days other than Saturday and Sunday, it would be necessary to identify $15 \times 7/5$ days, ie 21 days as holidays. Of these, 19 may be regular holidays and two Restricted Holidays. The following 19 days may be declared as holidays every year:

- (a) Five holidays nationally observed, including the three national holidays
 - i. Republic Day - January 26
 - ii. Dr Ambedkar's Birthday - April 14
 - iii. May day - May 1
 - iv. Independence Day - August 15
 - v. Gandhi Jayanti - October 02

(b) Four days for Kerala's own festival of Onam

- i. First Onam
- ii. Thiruvonam
- iii. Third Onam - used to be observed as Ayyan Kali Jayanti
- iv. Fourth Onam- Sree Narayana Guru Jayanti

(c) Twelve important festivals/ observances

- i. Mahanavami
- ii. Vijayadasami
- iii. Sivarathri
- iv. Deepavali
- v. Sreekrishna Jayanti
- vi. Id-ul -Fitr (Ramzan)
- vii. Id-ul-Adha (Bakrid)
- viii. Milad -i-sheriff
- ix. Good Friday
- x. Christmas

(Vishu is not included as it usually falls on April 14, already included. If the date is different, Vishu may be included. Easter is on a Sunday.)

(d) The two Restricted Holidays may be chosen by each employee from the following list, irrespective of his religion or community.

- i. KarkadakaVavu
- ii. Sree Narayana Guru Samadhi September 21
- iii. Mannam Jayanti January 02
- iv. Muharram
- v. Maundy Thursday
- vi. Ayyan Kali Jayanti August 28
- vii. Ayya Vaikuntaswamy Jayanti
- viii. Avani Avittam
- ix. Viswakarma Day

Local Holidays

7.7 There is a practice of allowing local holidays for local festivals. Such local holidays should be allowed only for events which impact normal activities in the region, including public transport. **There is no need to declare holidays when the festival or event does not really affect life in the locality.** For example, Beemapally Uroos, Vettukad Feast and the Arat of Sree Padmanabha Swamy, all in Trivandrum city, do not require the closure of all government offices in the city. These are only examples, and there are similar events in other places for which local holidays are now allowed; these must be reviewed.

C. Leave

Casual Leave

7.8 **The number of days of casual leave may be reduced to 12 per year as in the Government of India.**

Earned Leave

7.9 In the Central Government, the Central Civil Services (Leave) Rules, 1972 provide for crediting earned leave in advance, in two instalments of 15 days each on the first day of January and July of every year, except in vacation departments. Earning of leave is at the rate of two and a half days per month. The current system in Kerala provides for one day of earned leave for eleven days, thus allowing 33 days of earned leave in a year.

7.10 The Commission has recommended the adoption of a five day week for government offices as in the Central government. **The Commission recommends that the number of days of earned leave may be revised as 30 per year and the system in the Central Government as given in Rules 26 and 27 of the CCS (Leave) Rules may be suitably adapted and followed.** The Commission has separately recommended three additional holidays for the State Government employees to compensate for the reduction in earned leave, although the Central Government did no such thing at the time of revising the Leave Rules.

D. Work from Home

7.11 Working from home has become the accepted practice in the corporate sector, especially in the Information Technology sector, after the start of the COVID 19 pandemic in March 2020. There are several jobs in government also that can be done without physical presence in the office. **The Commission recommends that each department may identify the jobs that may be done from home, so that some staff could be allowed to work from home for specified periods without sacrificing the quantity and quality of the output.** Jobs that do not require a lot of collaboration or social support or public interface can be performed better from home. The Commission does not recommend a 'work-from-home-whenever-possible' approach, because the employees need a social life at the place of work also. Those who are engaged in carrying out work of a confidential nature need not be allowed to work from home. However, it might often be prudent and humane to allow women employees in advanced stages of pregnancy or those who are breastfeeding their babies or persons with temporary health issues to avoid travelling to office. Work from home should not turn out to be a paid holiday, nor should there be a situation where the integrity of work is sacrificed by involving outsiders in the work. The government may prepare an appropriate protocol to ensure that the employee has the facilities including private space and connectivity to work undisturbed at home or any other place, attends to the work for eight hours a day and does not compromise on the integrity aspect.

CHAPTER 8

RETIREMENT AND DEATH WHILE IN SERVICE

A. Age of Retirement

8.1 Rule 60(a) Part I of Kerala Service Rules provides “Except as otherwise provided in these rules, the date of compulsory retirement of an officer shall take effect from the afternoon of the last day of the month in which he attains the age of 56 years. He may be retained after this date only with the sanction of Government on public grounds which must be recorded in writing, but he must not be retained after the age of 60 years, except in very special circumstances.”

8.2 Thus normally, the retirement age of State Government employees is 56 years. But the age of retirement from service on superannuation varies for different categories of employees of the Government of Kerala. The details are as follows:

Sl. No	Service/Department	Retirement Age
1	Kerala Judicial service or Kerala State Higher Judicial Service	60 years
2	Industrial Tribunal	60 years
3	Vigilance Tribunal	62 years
4	Last Grade Servant who has been in service w.e.f.07.04.1970	60 years
5	Ex-service Men who has been appointed in State Govt service after 07.04.1970 but were in military service prior to 07.04.1970	60 years
6	Patient employees who are appointed as Hospital Attendant Grade II in Leprosy Sanatorium under Health Service Department	60 years
7	Doctors of Medical Education Department	62 years
8	Doctors of Health Services Department	60 years

Sl. No	Service/Department	Retirement Age
9	State Government Employees who are members of National Pension Scheme and are appointed in Govt service on or after 01.04.2013	60 years
10	Allopathic Doctors of Insurance Medical Services Department	60 years
11	Other Doctors of Insurance Medical Services Department	58 years
12	Teaching faculties of Govt Nursing College	60 years
13	Non-Medical Teaching faculties of Govt Medical Colleges	60 years
14	Teaching faculties of Pharmacy Colleges	60 years
15	Teaching faculties of Homoeo Medical Colleges	60 years
16	Doctors of Govt Dental Colleges and those of Dental Departments in Medical Colleges	60 years
17	Teaching faculties of Ayurveda Medical Colleges	60 years

8.3 There is no uniform retirement age throughout India. The retirement age is different in different States. It is 56/58/60/62 and 65. In Central Government and in the neighbouring States like Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, the retirement age is 60 years. In some other States, the retirement age is 58 years. Only in a very few states like Kerala, the retirement age is fixed at 56 years.

8.4 The age of 56 is too early for retirement from service considering the levels of life expectancy in Kerala. As life expectancy continues to rise, a new report suggests that governments need to raise the age of retirement in order to keep up.

8.5 Around 20,000 employees are retiring from service each year. The numbers of employees retiring from the Government service for the next five years are estimated as follows:

Year	Number of employees retiring from service
2021	21537
2022	20719
2023	21083
2024	21604
2025	22185
2026	23424
2027	23714

8.6 Enhancement of the retirement age would benefit the Government in several ways, while it has adverse impacts also. The benefits are:

- (i) The employees would have gained considerable experience by that time, and the services of a majority of them, especially those in senior positions, would be very valuable.
- (ii) The bulk payment of terminal benefits like gratuity, pension commutation and leave surrender can be deferred in the initial period.

The adverse effects are

- (i) The intake of young persons will be delayed in the initial period.
- (ii) Higher recurring liability on pension as the pay and consequently pension will be higher with a higher retirement age.

8.7 While there is strong case in favour of enhancement of the retirement age, the governments in Kerala have been reluctant to do so apprehending protests from the youth. This is because government jobs are seen as the ultimate employment opportunities in this society. The governments also have been highlighting the number of appointments as an achievement of the government.

8.8 The deferment of the disbursement of pensionary benefits amounting to around ₹ 4000 Crores in a year may help the Government temporarily to tide over its resource constraints due to Covid 19 pandemic and also against the backdrop of the need for more social security interventions. **The Commission recommends enhancement of the retirement age by one year, to 57.**

B. Death while in Service

8.9 The sudden loss of a family member causes a massive emotional shock and creates an unbridgeable familial and financial gap. It is estimated that 747 employees of the Kerala Government unfortunately died in the year 2018, 743 in 2019 and 534 in 2020. Government, both as an employer and as the provider of social security, has an obligation to support the families financially.

8.10 On the death of an employee who joined service before 01.04.2013, his family is entitled to receive the following financial benefits:

- (i) Family pension @50% of the basic pay for seven years or till the age of 63 whichever is earlier, and 30% thereafter,
- (ii) Death Cum Retirement Gratuity at one half of monthly pay plus dearness allowance for each completed year of service
- (iii) Earned leave surrender subject to a maximum of 300 days
- (iv) General Provident Fund closure
- (v) Benefits under State Life Insurance
- (vi) Benefits under Group Insurance Scheme
- (vii) Write off of loans/advances up to ₹ 2 lakhs
- (viii) Relief of ₹ 10,00,000 under Group Personal Accident Insurance Scheme for death in accidents.

8.11 For employees who joined service on or after 01.04.2013, the benefits available to the family are the following:

- (i) Refund of deposit made under the Contributory Pension Scheme
- (ii) Compassionate Assistance at the rate of 30% of the last pay drawn till appointment under the Compassionate Employment Scheme
- (iii) Earned leave surrender subject to a maximum of 300 days
- (iv) General Provident Fund closure
- (v) Benefits under State Life Insurance
- (vi) Benefits under Group Insurance Scheme
- (vii) Write off of loans/advances up to ₹ 2 lakhs
- (viii) Relief of ₹ 10,00,000 under Group Personal Accident Insurance Scheme for death in accidents.

(iii) to (viii) are common for both the categories.

8.12 The essential financial support can be provided for a reasonable period by a slight tweaking of the Family Pension scheme in deserving cases. The current rule provides that a higher rate of family pension at half of the pay last drawn or twice the amount of Family Pension admissible, whichever is less, will be paid to the family of a Government servant who dies while in service with not less than 7 years' qualifying service, for a maximum period of seven years or till the age of 63 in the case of superannuation at 56 years of age from the date following the date of death (67 years of age in the case of

superannuation at 60 years of age) whichever is earlier, and thereafter at normal rate. **The Commission recommends improved financial benefits to the families of employees who die while in service.** The benefits may be as follows:

- (i) In addition to the normal rate of Family Pension of 30% and the higher rate of 50%, a Special rate of 100% may also be introduced. The Special Family Pension may be granted to the dependent of regular employees who die while in service, initially for a period of one year from the date of death, or till the date on which the employee would have retired, whichever is earlier.
- (ii) The rate of this Special Family Pension may be equal to the last basic pay drawn, and may be limited to ₹ 50,000 per month (i.e. below ₹ 6,00,000 per year). The special rate will therefore not apply to those with basic pay above ₹ 1,00,000, who are eligible for a higher family pension of ₹ 50,000 and above.
- (iii) If the family income from all sources including the family pension is below ₹ 8,00,000 per year, the Special Family Pension may be continued till the end of five years from the date of death or till the date on which the employee would have retired, whichever is earlier.
- (iv) The payment of Family Pension as per the existing rules will commence at the end of one year or three years as the case may be.
- (v) The Compassionate allowance mentioned in para 3(ii) may be discontinued since the scheme of compassionate employment is proposed to be stopped.

Such a system will help to provide immediate financial support to the families of employees dying while in service; in the long term, they will have to be satisfied with the regular family pension and the other financial benefits they would have received.

8.13 In para 11.44 of Part I of our Report, the Commission had recommended as follows:

11.44. Death of Government employees in accidents is covered under Group Personal Accident Insurance Scheme. But death of employee while on duty is not covered under the scheme, and so Rs.1,50,000 was sanctioned towards exgratia

payment to employees who die while on duty with effect from 01.02.2011 by GO(P)No.153/2013/(144)/Fin dated 6.4.2013. All other contingencies under the existing ex-gratia payment scheme are now taken care of under Group Personal Accident Insurance Scheme. Hence an appropriate revision of Ex gratia payment to employees who die while on duty also needs to be considered. Duty for ex-gratia allowance has been defined by GO(P)No.156/2016/Fin dated 18.10.2016. For the purpose of ex gratia allowance, an officer will be considered to be on duty during the hours he performs his official duties including an occasion beyond the normal office hours and holidays. No ex gratia payment is admissible to an officer who dies or gets injured during joining time, training - stipendiary or otherwise, a course of instruction or leave of any kind including Casual leave and Special Casual leave. The Commission recommends to enhance the amount of ex gratia allowance to ₹ 5,00,000/- (Rupees Five Lakhs Only) since the rate fixed in 2013 needs a considerable revision.

8.14 The Commission reiterates this recommendation to enhance the Ex-gratia allowance to the employees who die while in duty.

8.15 A lump sum ex-gratia payment may be made by government to the families of government employees who are killed while on duty. These would be special cases on which government may take appropriate decisions based on the circumstances of each case, instead of having straitjacket provisions for this.

8.16 These recommendations are made in the background of the Commission's recommendations to stop compassionate appointments for the dependants of the employees dying in harness, breeding inefficiency and frustrating the meritorious. Any decision in the matters may therefore be made only as a package.

CHAPTER 9

SIMPLIFICATION OF SERVICE MATTERS

A. Online Availability of Personnel Data

9.1 The Commission is happy to note that almost all complex areas consuming a lot of time for processing establishment matters have now been digitalised and made simpler. The examples are PRISM (Pension Processing Application), SCORE (Annual Confidential Report Management System), SPARK module for processing GPF closure, sanctioning of temporary advance and NRA from GPF, application for admission to GPF, Leave Management System etc. The preparation of seniority lists still remains out of digital intervention. Along with other records of service, seniority lists form the basis for cadre and ratio promotions. Employees resort to litigations which may prolong for many years, in order to settle seniority disputes. Unsettled seniority lists cause delay in effecting both cadre and ratio promotions, leading to several administrative inconveniences. So, an error free seniority list of employees is a pre-requisite for an efficient administration. Seniority lists of various categories of employees have to be prepared and published from time to time following the prescribed process of publication of draft, consideration of objections and finalisation. Government as per G.O.(Rt)No.4675/2021/Fin dated 25.06.2021 has constituted a committee for furnishing a report for implementing an option in SPARK for generating seniority list of employees. **The Commission expects the completion of the process of online preparation of seniority lists without delay. The Commission recommends that the entire data on personnel should be digitalised and maintained online so that the personnel management function is handled in an efficient and transparent manner.**

B. Time-bound Higher Grades (TBHG)

9.2 A tedious exercise consuming considerable time is the sanctioning of Time Bound Higher Grade promotion, and consequent fixation of pay, as the related government orders are too many, and the application of various rules

consumes a lot of time. Employees with pay scales ranging from ₹ 23000-50200 to ₹ 85000-143600 are sanctioned various Time Bound Higher Grade promotions on completion of the prescribed period of qualifying service. Different time scales on which Time Bound Higher Grade is sanctioned are incorporated under Table I, II, III and IV of G.O.(P)No.27/2021/Fin dated 10.02.2021. In certain cases, grade scales are higher than the next scale in the standard scales of pay and in certain other cases, grade scales are the immediate next higher scales. Incumbents in the non-gazetted entry posts in the entry scales of pay ranging from ₹ 23000-50200 to ₹ 45600-95600 are sanctioned time bound higher grades in the scale of pay of promotion posts in the direct line, if they are qualified for promotion and the table scales are lower than the promotion scales. Unqualified hands will be allowed the next higher scale of pay above that of the scale of pay of the post held at that time in the standard scales of pay. So, while processing a case of TBHG, the officials processing the case have to identify the eligible scale for time bound higher grade from Table scales, scales of promotion posts and the list of standard scales of pay, after verifying the status of passing of tests. This is really a cumbersome exercise. It may be seen that sanction of time bound higher grade in the scale of pay of the promotion post has made the whole Time Bound Higher Grade scheme very complicated.

9.3 The complexity arises because of the applicability of various rules as envisaged in the Scheme of Time Bound Higher Grade and this is creating difficulties for persons handling the subject in the field offices right from clerks to Heads of Departments. This consumes much time and it is suggested that simplified procedures must be adopted for sanctioning Time Bound Higher Grades. The Commission in Part-I of its Report had initiated steps to remove ambiguities in the existing rules for sanctioning Time Bound Higher Grade promotion with suitable illustrations and incorporating all the existing rules governing Time Bound Higher Grade promotion in a nutshell. The Commission still feels that prevailing rules regarding the sanctioning of Table Scales and Scales of Pay of promotion post in the direct line of promotion according to criteria like qualifying mandatory test, limiting such benefit to a particular scale of pay, granting of further time bound higher promotions etc. are creating lots of complexities.

9.4 Employees in the eligible pay scales, who do not obtain any regular promotion, may be sanctioned 1st TBHG, II TBHG, III TBHG and IV TBHG

on completion of 8, 15, 22 and 27 years of qualifying service, on the next higher scale of pay above that of the scale of pay of the post held at that time in the standard scales of pay, irrespective of whether they are qualified or not. Re-structuring TBHG scales as suggested above will not operate to deprive the employees of the benefit of two increments normally admissible on fixation of pay under Rule 28A Part I KSR. As we follow the system of master scale, the rate of increment is uniform across the scales. In other words, there is no direct financial loss to the employee, nor a direct financial savings for the government; the gain is the simplification of the process; what can take a few hours can be done in a few minutes. When an employee in the higher grade gets promoted to the higher post, fixation of pay may be under Rule 30, Part I KSR. **The Commission recommends that the Government may adopt the principle of giving Time Bound Higher Grade promotions to eligible employees in the immediate next higher scale.**

C. Staff Loans

9.5 The Government grants the following advances to the employees in accordance with the rules contained in the Kerala Financial Code:

- (i) Advances for the purchase of motor conveyances
- (ii) House Building Advance
- (iii) Interest free advances to Government employees
- (iv) Advances to Class IV employees to meet the marriage expenses of their daughters

9.6 Most of these advances have become non essential or obsolete and only nominal provisions have been made in the Budget, except for the Interest-free advances (for medical treatment) and the advance for marriage expenses. Each instance of the sanction of advance and its recovery and accounting creates additional work in the offices. The scheme for giving advances for the marriage of the daughters of Class IV employees has no rationale. Class IV employees with daughters of marriageable age are not so ill off as in the past. Further, the requirement of the money may be for giving dowry or for conducting ostentatious marriages, both of which are social evils that should be discouraged. Moreover, loans for vehicle purchase and house building are easily available these days at reasonable terms from banks. **The Commission recommends that all the schemes for loans and advances to employees may be scrapped, except the scheme of interest free advances for medical**

treatment, which may continue till a scheme for cashless hospitalization is introduced as part of MEDISEP.

D. Pension Disbursement

9.7 The media often report about long queues of aged and weak persons standing in lines for drawing their pension from the Treasuries. The system does not mandate such physical presence in the Treasuries. A pensioner has two options- he can get his pension credited to a PTSB account opened in the Treasury, or to a bank account of his choice. The PTSB account has both cheque and online banking facilities; the pensioner can transfer funds from his PTSB account to a bank account and draw from the bank. Several pensioners prefer to use the PTSB system and draw directly from there, and this causes crowding at the Treasury during the first ten working days. It is the presence of the weak and infirm persons that attracts media attention.

9.8 It would be easy to credit the pension to the PTSB account first and then transfer the amount to a bank account. This may however have some impact on the government's ways and means position in the early days of every month when there are huge outflows from the Treasuries. A feasible measure is to educate the pensioners on making online transactions and facilitating such education. The organizations of pensioners could do this. **The Commission recommends that the government may engage with the organizations of pensioners to develop capacity for online use of the PTSB accounts, obviating the need for visiting the Treasuries.**

CHAPTER 10

DIGITAL GOVERNANCE

10.1 Digital governance, the successor terminology to E-governance, involves the use of various digital technologies, as an integrated part of a governments' modernisation strategies, to create public value. E-governance is traditionally known as the usage of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to provide and facilitate government services, exchange of information, communication transactions and integration of various standalone systems and services. The use of technology in governance helps to avoid several pitfalls of the traditional governance system, as it enhances speed, efficiency, transparency, objectivity and convenience. There are compulsions for the government machinery to adopt technology because the rest of the society is imbibing the benefits of the technological revolution. Government work has to be integrated with private work in several respects, and this needs use of technology, to remain relevant and to take full advantage of the spillover effects.

10.2 The Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) targets of the United Nations include developing effective, accountable and transparent institutions and ensuring responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels. ICT is an essential enabler for this. The constraint, however, is the limited digital awareness of majority of the population of the country. Empowerment through digitalisation will happen only with capacity development of the common people to harness the benefits offered.

10.3 Digitalisation is not just the use of computers and connectivity for running the business which was earlier done through movement of written documents. The government exists for the people; so the ultimate objective is better service to the public. The design of the digital system therefore has to be developed through reverse engineering or at least re-engineering of the existing system. Where necessary, internal processes should be totally redesigned in the interest of effectiveness and simplicity.

10.4 Data is a very valuable asset which the government comes to possess by default. The Department of Economics and Statistics has a machinery for collection and analysis of data, with their staff posted in the various departments. With digitalisation, the availability of data will multiply manifold with little extra effort. It is not difficult to develop algorithms and computing technologies to analyse this data to generate fuller information useful for planning and implementation of programmes. Conventional consolidation of data has to give way to innovative aggregation and analysis so that decisions based on them would also be more accurate and responsive to the needs of the stakeholders.

10.5 These are times when the younger generation is increasingly becoming tech-savvy. The policies should therefore be forward-looking, and at the same time, supporting the technologically weaker older generation to cope with the change. The commercial private sector is into aggressive marketing, providing services on demand, and even personalising the customer preferences. A modern government has to attempt to provide such smart services in all sectors where there is direct contact with the public. Healthcare, education, nutrition etc are areas with greater interface with the public, where such changes are possible.

10.6 Land- related matters constitute an important area requiring adoption of technology. The digitalisation of land records has been discussed elsewhere in this Report. While the focus now is on integration of the related functions in the Land Revenue, Registration and Survey & Land Records Departments, it should be possible to integrate it with land utilisation, a subject handled by several departments. High resolution imagery can be collected from satellites and by using drones. The Big Data that would flow from such integration can assist the State both in developmental and environmental planning and in resource mobilisation, and would facilitate the grant of financial, technical or other support for private economic activities.

10.7 Artificial intelligence (AI) is a term liberally used in current literature, but rarely used in government parlance. It is simply the use of machine-based systems for making predictions or recommendations to influence decisions. AI can be integrated into several service delivery processes. Activities like

healthcare, transportation, security, crime prevention, emergency response etc. would benefit from the use of AI.

10.8 The potential is tremendous, but its realisation so far has been inadequate. The constraints have been primarily the paucity of resources, both financial and human. The financial resource constraint can be overcome by giving top priority to the development and implementation of appropriate technological interventions in every government activity, prioritising it over other activities for funding. This would be in public interest in the long term and the allocation of adequate budgetary support should be seen as a valuable investment. The problem of non-availability of suitable manpower can be easily overcome by contracting out the responsibility for the design of programmes to specialised firms. Many of the new recruits in government service are technically qualified or at least technically oriented and they can run the systems effectively. But introduction of AI or analysis of Big Data needs greater skills, and the personnel for that may have to be recruited on contract. This will not cause additional financial burden to the government if the recruitment to functionally redundant posts like typists / computer assistants/ attenders/ peons/ office attendants is reduced and the resultant savings are used for developing and maintaining these applications.

10.9 The Commission examined the available information on the status of e-governance in the various departments. Where the Heads of Departments took the initiative, appropriate systems were developed and put to use. Surprisingly, some of the Engineering departments were the laggards. The National Informatics Centre has been part of the team driving this reform in the State Government; their involvement should help in the standardization of programmes developed by others also, so that future integration becomes smooth and harmonious.

10.10 The major initiatives in e-governance undertaken so far are the following, according to the details furnished by the Electronics & Information Technology Department.

(1) e-Office File Management system

The e-Office project envisions modernizing government offices by replacing manual paper file processing with a digital workflow system. The

government offices will be transformed to paperless offices, gaining the immense benefits of transparent processing and faster decision making. All the 54 Departments of the Secretariat, all the 14 Collectorates, 20 Revenue Divisional Offices, more than 100 Offices of Heads of Departments, 15 Taluk offices and 214 Villages Offices have adopted the e-office system. Numerous offices with other e-Filing systems like DDFS are migrating to e-Office.

(2) E-District (<https://edistrict.kerala.gov.in/>)

A number of services are made available to the public through the e- District portal maintained and monitored by KSITM on a 24x7 basis. The major citizen-centric services available through the e-District portal are:

- i. Revenue Department Certificate Services
- ii. Right to Information (RTI) Services
- iii. Public Grievance Services
- iv. Payment Services- Utility Payment Services, Calicut University Services, Welfare Board Fee Payments, Police Department Payments
- v. Revenue Court Cases
- vi. Forest Department Services

(3) AKSHAYA Centres: (www.akshaya.kerala.gov.in)

Akshaya Centers are being set up within a maximum of 2 kilometres for any household for the effective delivery of Government services to the public. Each Akshaya centre is equipped with necessary computers, fax, printers, telephones, broadband internet connectivity and necessary software. Kerala State IT Mission is one of the core partners in the implementation of the Akshaya projects in the state. Akshaya Centers are identified as the medium for delivering Government and Citizen (G2C) quality services at lower cost. They enable the delivery of e-Governance services to the public through a wide network of e-Kendras, facilitating payment of utility bills and fees through Akshaya e-Pay, Skill development programmes and doorstep access to e-Learning, e-Krishi and e-Commerce.

(4) Malayalam Computing (<http://malayalam.kerala.gov.in>)

Computing has to be in Malayalam for greater use by the public. KSITM, ICFOSS, Akshaya and SPACE are the main implementing agencies for the Malayalam computing campaign. The objectives are strengthening Malayalam language by using the possibilities provided by Information and Communication Technologies, addressing the linguistic barrier which prevents the people from tapping the new technologies and helping ordinary citizens to have better access to e-governance and digital government services.

(5) State Data Centres

The State Data Centre project was mandated by the Government of India to provide the core infrastructure for the e-Governance initiatives of the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP). The mission is to provide efficient electronic delivery of Government-to-Government (G2G), Government-to-citizen (G2C) and Government-to-business (G2B) services in the States and Union Territories by consolidating the services, applications and infrastructure on a single platform. All the Government services are made interoperable and are rendered through this central platform seamlessly supported by core Connectivity Infrastructure such as Kerala State Wide Area Network (KSWAN) and Common Service Centers (CSC). Aggregation of all IT Infrastructure resources and Management resources into a single platform ensures faster delivery of services at reduced costs. In Kerala, there are two State Data Centers, both monitored and managed by Kerala State IT Mission. These Centres offer Co- Hosting Services, Co Location Services, Virtual Infrastructure, Virtual Private Network Service, and Cloud Infrastructure.

(6) Kerala State Wide Area Network (KSWAN)

The State Wide Area Network (SWAN) is a state-of-the-art framework that allows the provision of Wide Area Network (WAN) connectivity and associated services to the public sector in the State. Government of Kerala had set up a State Wide Area Network to extend the State Information Infrastructure (SII, consisting of three NOCs at Thiruvananthapuram, Kochi

and Kozhikode, and the e-Governance Data Centre at Thiruvananthapuram) to the 14 District Headquarters and the 152 Block Headquarters of Kerala.

(7) e-Procurement (<https://etenders.kerala.gov.in>)

e-Procurement system was started in 2012 for facilitating all aspects of procurement for government, like

- i. Vendor/ Supplier Management: Facilitates a single interface for the registration of all suppliers who intend to do business with the Government,
- ii. Indent Management: Facilitates the online creation of the works and goods indents and estimates in standardized/ customized formats for approval,
- iii. e- Tendering: Facilitates the creation of online tender notification & document and its publishing, online bid submission, opening, evaluation & shortlisting.
- iv. Contract Management: Facilitates issuance of electronic Work Orders/ Purchase orders, updating of Measurement Book, the progress of work, etc.
- v. Catalogue Management: Facilitates management of new and concluded Rate Contracts
- vi. e-Payments: Facilitates and manages online payments of tender documents, bid submission fees, EMD, payments to contractors/ vendors etc.
- vii. Management Information System: Facilitates integration with other modules in order to generate reports from all functional modules.

(8) Centralized Procurement and Rate Contract System (CPRCS)

(<http://cprcs.kerala.gov.in/>)

Centralized Procurement and Rate Contract System is an end-to-end online Marketplace for the Kerala State Government Departments acting as a single point of contact for the procurement of commonly required IT products like Desktops, Laptops, Printers and Scanners. It supports all the activities like order placing, tracking, delivery, installation and warranty support of IT products to be procured through six major modules namely Requirement Analysis, Online Order Registration, IT Asset Registry and Digital Asset

tracking tool, Installation Certificate, Complaint Management system /Issue Tracker System and SLA and Penalty calculation.

(9) Service Plus (<https://serviceonline.gov.in/>)

Service Plus, developed by NIC, Delhi, is for rolling out typical G2C services quickly. It is a metadata based, configurable, open source based, web enabled service delivery & grievance management software. When a service is to be made online, it can be designed/ configured in Service Plus. Development, testing and launch of the service are done through Service Plus itself. Service Plus can be used to develop services only in those cases where the department requirement can be met using Service Plus.

(10) Public Wifi (K-Fi)

K-fi is a free Wi-Fi project implemented by the Government of Kerala for providing the various benefits of Information Technology, various government services and information to the public. This service is available at selected public places in all districts. It is available at public places such as Bus stops, District offices, major government offices and government hospitals. This project implemented by the Kerala State IT Mission is now available in nearly 2000 public places including in the coastal areas. The public can use this service daily up to 1 GB with 10 Mbps speed in their mobile phones, laptops and other devices free of cost.

10.11 The Commission is happy to see the work done and still continuing to be done in the Finance Department of the Secretariat for managing or developing and using applications covering the entire governmental system. These include (i) the Integrated Financial management System (IFMS) which envisages end-to-end integration of systems and IT services among various stakeholders such as Finance Department, Treasury Department, Administrative and Line Departments, Accountant General, RBI and Banks, (ii) Service and Payroll Administrative Repository for Kerala (SPARK) which is an integrated personnel and payroll management system covering all departments in the State, (iii) SCORE for processing Statewide Confidential Reports on Employees, (iv) PRISM for pension-related matters, (v) VEELS for management and monitoring of government vehicles, (vi) Finance Archive Management System (FAMS), (vii) PRISMPLUS, for additional services to

pensioners, (viii) Efunds for managing the Chief Minister's Distress Relief Fund, and MEDISEP for health insurance for all employees and pensioners. These are extremely important for the government and for the employees, and there is a continuous effort to keep developing the programmes further. The Commission hopes to see such developments in the other departments also.

10.12 In all the e-governance initiatives, process reengineering is of paramount importance. This makes it easier for software development and future changes. Any further change in processes prescribed in the codes or any new orders on schemes should be capable of incorporation into the software so that the implementation becomes smooth.

10.13 The Commission recommends that the time bound digitalisation of government activities may be given top priority in the government budget and that suitable manpower may be engaged for the purpose.

CHAPTER 11

RIGHT TO SERVICES

11.1 The Kerala Right to Service Act, 2012 (sevanavakasaniyamam) was enacted primarily to provide for the delivery of services to the general public within the stipulated time limit. As per the Act, the government departments and agencies are to notify in the Gazette the services that will be rendered by each of them, the designated officers, the first appellate authority, the second appellate authority and the stipulated time limit. The Act declares the right of every eligible person obtain the notified services within the stipulated time limit. The implementation of the Act is in the hands of the designated officer, the first appellate authority and the second appellate authority. The Act came into force on 1 November 2012 as per G.O (P) No.55/2012/P&ARD. A consolidated list of the Rights to Services (RTS) is available on the official web portal of the Government of Kerala.

11.2 The enactment of the law generated great expectations. Among the main objectives were the time bound delivery of public services to all eligible persons, reduction of corruption among officials and ensuring transparency and public accountability. However, it does not seem to have made any great impact on the delivery of services. Most departments have issued the notifications required, but there is hardly any monitoring. The adoption of technology for the discharge of the functions of the departments has been slow and inadequate, with the result that speedy action for the delivery of the identified services is sometimes beyond the capability of the officials.

11.3 Rule 6 of the Kerala State Right to Service Rules issued under the Act provides for the display of all relevant information related to services, stipulated time limit etc. on the notice board of every office. The list of documents that are to be enclosed with every application for service and the prescribed forms are also to be displayed on the notice board. This is a very important provision, and the display of this information has to be on the website of the department and its offices, apart from the display on the notice board. As time passes, displays on notice boards get concealed by new

notices; there is a need for a permanent notice board for matters like RTS and RTI.

11.4 The biggest drawback of RTS system in Kerala is the absence of monitoring. There should also be a mechanism for identifying and punishing erring officials. Maharashtra has constituted a State Commission for Right to Service as a statutory body empowered to implement the law. The duties of the Commission are to ensure proper implementation of the Act and to make suggestions to the State Government for ensuring better delivery of public services. The Commission is authorised to

- (a) take suo motu notice of failure to deliver public services in accordance with the Act and refer such cases for disposal as it may deem appropriate;
- (b) carry out inspections of offices entrusted with the delivery of public services and the offices of the First Appellate Authority and the Second Appellate Authority;
- (c) recommend Departmental inquiry against any Designated Officer or Appellate Authorities who have failed in due discharge of functions cast on them under the Act;
- (d) recommend changes in procedures for delivery of public services which will make the delivery more transparent and easier: Provided that, before making such a recommendation, the Commission shall consult the Administrative Secretary of the Department which is to deliver the public service;
- (e) recommend steps to be taken by the Public Authorities for efficient delivery of public services;
- (f) monitor delivery of the public services by Public Authorities; and
- (g) hear and decide the appeal filed before it against the orders of the second appellate authority within a stipulated time period.

11.5 The Commission has been conferred with the same powers as vested in Civil Courts while trying a suit under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908, in respect of the summoning and enforcing the attendance of persons, compelling them to give oral or written evidence on oath and producing documents or things; requiring the discovery and inspection of documents; receiving evidence on affidavits; requisitioning any public records or copies

thereof from any court or office and issuing summons for examination of witnesses or documents.

11.6 For the effective implementation of the Act, Kerala needs a Commission for the Right to Service, headed by a Chief Commissioner. The service conditions and eligibility may be similar to those of the Chief Information Commissioner. It is not necessary to create more positions of Commissioners in the initial stages; it can be considered later if the work load justifies it. The ideal person to hold the position would be an experienced administrator, who has retired from service at the level of Chief Secretary or equivalent in the recent past.

11.7 The Commission therefore recommends that

- 1. The Kerala Right to Service Act, 2012 may be amended to provide for establishing a Commission for the Right to Service, headed by a Chief Commissioner.**
- 2. All departments may review the notifications issued under the Act taking into account the developments during the last nine years after 2012, and issue fresh notifications under Section 3 of the Act.**
- 3. All notifications under the Act and all the requirements for the services rendered by each office shall be displayed with clear visibility on permanent notice boards of the offices and on the websites of the departments/ agencies.**

CHAPTER 12

SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

12.1 Accountability of the civil service is multi-directional – accountability to the Government, to the Constitution and the laws of the land, and primarily to the people. Social accountability is the accountability to society, and this would logically involve the citizens, communities, civil society organizations and independent media. Social accountability tools help to enhance people’s participation in democratic governance, leading to improved service delivery by the Government machinery. There are several means through which the public can ensure accountability of the officialdom.

12.2 At the local self-government unit level, one of the valuable contributions of the 73rd Constitutional amendment was the creation of the Gram Sabhas. As per the Constitution, ‘Gram Sabha’ means a body consisting of persons registered in the electoral rolls relating to a village comprised within the area of Panchayat at the village level; in Kerala, the Gram Sabhas had to be at the ward level in the Panchayats because of the size of the electorate in the Panchayats. The Gram Sabha can play a very important role in the identification of the needs of the Panchayat ward and the people therein and the possible interventions for governmental support for welfare and development. The Sabha can also evaluate the programmes implemented.

12.3 The People’s Plan Campaign in Kerala, initiated twenty five years back in 1996, is one of the most significant activities performed with people’s participation. The People’s Plan Campaign had well defined systems and processes, including constitution of Working Groups, status assessment for every sector, need identification through stakeholder consultations and citizen consultation at meetings of Gram/ Ward Sabhas, preparation of vision documents, formulation of draft plans, vetting by Technical Advisory Groups and final plan approval. This has helped to build the required expertise in the local bodies for preparation and implementation of plans.

12.4 The Right to Information Act, introduced in 2005, has been a great tool in the people's empowerment exercise. Despite large scale use and misuse for narrow personal purposes, it has helped to remove the opacity associated with the work of government offices. Transparency leads to accountability, and consequent reduction of corruption. Well-informed citizens provide the fundamental strength for a democratic system of governance. The provisions for suo moto publication of information helps to make matters known to the people – this is important, because they can seek the right and relevant information only when the broad details are known to them.

12.5 Citizens' charters are statements of commitments by the official system for delivery of services in the specified manner within the specified time limit. The Kerala Panchayat Raj Act stipulates as follows:

272 A. Citizen Charter to be published. - (1) Every Panchayat shall, in the manner prescribed, formulate citizens charter regarding the different categories of services rendered to the citizen by the panchayat, the conditions for such service and also the time limit for such service and publish it in the name 'citizens charter'. (2) The citizens charter shall be renewed and updated periodically at least once in a year.

Section 563A of the Kerala Municipality Act also has a similar provision. The citizen charters empower the citizens by giving them assurances about the delivery of services, and give them the right to question lapses or delays that might occur.

12.6 The Right to Service, discussed separately in Chapter 11 of this Report provides statutory right to the citizen to obtain services within specified time limits. With the reform that we have recommended, the law can be a very effective instrument for ensuring timely delivery of services.

12.7 Social audit is an effective mechanism for involving people in the assessment of projects, schemes and programmes. The term 'audit' is generally used in the context of the utilization of funds; social audit would involve the financial scrutiny element plus assessment of the effectiveness and impact.

12.8 A major national scheme with social audit as a statutory requirement is the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) scheme. The MGNREGA Audit of Scheme Rules 2011 is the first governmental guideline on social audit. As required by the Rules, Kerala has also established a Social Audit Society for facilitating, guiding and supervising the social audit of the scheme. The Vision of the organization is to establish a vigilant Society for effectively conducting Social Auditing of Mahatma Gandhi NREGS in the state based on the principles of Transparency, Participation, Consultation and Accountability; the Mission is to involve public vigilance and verification of quantity and quality of works under Mahatma Gandhi NREGS at different stages of implementation in every Grama Panchayat as a continuous and ongoing process; and the objectives are to ensure involvement of all stakeholders in the planning, decision making, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Mahatma Gandhi NREGS, to ensure public accountability and transparency in the implementation of projects under Mahatma Gandhi NREGS and the laws and policies related to Mahatma Gandhi NREGA, to have a fact finding process by investigating through cross verification of facts at work sites and duties and responsibilities of labourers involved in the scheme and to ensure people's participation for community development through Mahatma Gandhi NREG.

12.9 The adoption of social audit for public schemes has several positive outcomes. The most important is the empowerment of citizens through their involvement in the governance process. Social consciousness is immensely valuable. Social audit promotes collective decision-making and the sharing of responsibilities. The tendency, if any, on the part of the elected functionaries and officials to implement schemes and choose beneficiaries according to their will and pleasure will be totally curtailed, thus reducing corruption and malpractices. Another big advantage will be the emergence of informed citizens, which would be a very valuable asset in a democracy. Greater awareness creates more trust, and of course, more suspicion; over a period of time, trust will increase.

12.10 The National Food Security Act, 2013 provides for every local authority, or any other authority authorised by the State Government, to conduct periodic social audits on the functioning of fair price shops, Targeted Public Distribution System and other welfare schemes, and cause to publicise

its findings and take necessary further action as per Rules made by the State Government. The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 mandates social audit of all general schemes and programmes involving the persons with disabilities to ensure that the schemes and programmes do not have an adverse impact upon the persons with disabilities and meet the requirements and concerns of persons with disabilities. Increasingly, international organisations, Governments and even corporate entities have been introducing social audit.

12.11 Social Audit needs sound preparation, through identification of the objectives, training of the social auditors, and facilitating the access to all relevant documents. The process too is demanding. There is always the possibility of subjective elements getting into the social audit process. Despite its shortcomings, the advantages make it one of the best tools for ethical and effective planning and implementation of programmes at the field level. Social audit should ideally not be like a post mortem analysis; the involvement of the stakeholders and the general public should be there throughout, from the conceptual stage to the completion.

12.12 The Commission recommends that the Government may introduce social audit of all programmes implemented at local levels.

CHAPTER 13

PEOPLE-FRIENDLINESS

13.1 Government business is mostly done through files – paper or electronic. Every file handles an issue of relevance for some individual, groups of individuals, regions or the State as a whole. Most files contain a human problem about which someone has expectations, rational or irrational. People-friendliness starts with the commitment to take the final decision in the matter without avoidable delay. Speedy result-oriented disposal of any business would be one of the most essential qualities of a good civil servant. Equally important is the communication of that decision to the interested/affected persons, showing the reasons for such a decision if it is a contested or disputed matter.

Professionalism

13.2 The quality of the decision depends on the inputs received by the decision-maker. Taking decisions and the processing of papers for decisions have to be professionally done, in accordance with the law. Objectivity and impartiality should come naturally to the civil servant. Where there is discretion, it can always be used in favour of persons belonging to the weaker sections of society. There should be no discrimination based on political affiliations, caste, gender or any such extraneous factor. Every type of ideal conduct may not be codified in the Conduct Rules; unwritten codes of ethics should also be seen as applicable. Whatever be the level of the official, personal integrity and professionalism in work are some of the most people-friendly measures possible.

Interaction with the Public

13.3 Direct personal interactions are the occasions for the public to gauge the civil service based on the quality of the interaction. Customer service is extremely important in all public offices at the cutting edge level. The officers must be trained in this aspect so that they are able to handle their interactions professionally. Body language matters; the civil servant should not appear as

an intimidating and overwhelming presence. They should be approachable and courteous in their interactions, and should appear to be so.

Badges for Identification

13.4 The public have the right to know the name of the official they are dealing with. **The Commission recommends that all officers having a public interface should wear legible and readable name badges while on duty, irrespective of the level of the officer.**

Reducing the Need for Office Visits by the Public

13.5 The public are entitled to visit offices for follow-up on their papers, but the ideal situation is one in which they do not have to do so. Each office, especially in the rural areas, builds a reputation of its own. If there is an arrangement to furnish interim information over the telephone as is done in several developed countries, there is no need for the public to crowd into offices for enquiry about the status of their file. The status could be capable of being ascertained online also. Nobody should be called to an office unless there is a specific requirement for the same. **The Commission recommends that each office should have a designated Public Contact Officer who will be responsible to interact with the visiting public and give them the required information.** A physical Front Desk may be set up in offices with large number of visitors, and the Public Contact Officer can be in charge of that, in addition to his normal duties.

Regulatory Reforms

13.6 The Second Administrative Reforms Commission, in its report to the Central Government on 'Citizen-centric administration, had recommended adoption of self-certification of the documents by the applicants instead of attestation by gazetted officers as a measure for simplifying procedures. The Central government had issued an office memorandum dated 10 May 2013 accordingly to all State governments and Central Ministries.

13.7 People-centred service delivery is the theme of the fifth report of the Fourth Kerala Administrative Reforms Commission. This report covers the Departments of Land Revenue, Survey & Land Records, Registration, Food

& Civil Supplies and Police Departments. The ARC has made detailed recommendations for simplification of processes and for adoption of people-friendly measures. This includes the need for obtaining certificates from the Village Offices or other offices for various purposes. The Revenue Department has already prescribed the period of validity of various certificates. The Department may review it further to see if the validity could be extended for longer periods, thereby reducing work for the government office and for the citizen. For example, a community certificate is normally valid for the entire life time of a person, and does not have to be renewed after ten years except in extraordinary circumstances.

13.8 The Commission recommends that all departments may review the requirement for original certificates or copies attested by gazetted officers at the initial stage of an application filed by a citizen.

13.9 There are several other avoidable features of official requirements that create delays and difficulties. Forms prescribed by Rules or otherwise often ask for information that may not be directly relevant for the purpose. Similarly, the changed circumstances may have made many of the forms obsolete. **The Commission recommends that all the Departments may review the rules, procedures and forms which have been in existence for more than ten years with a view to making matters simpler both for the officers and for the public.**

Communication

13.10 The quality of communication is extremely important, whether it is written or through the website. For every service that an office would deliver to the public, detailed information should be given about the process, and a checklist should be given indicating the documents required. Posters and brochures should be prepared in the layman's language, avoiding legalese. If necessary, external professional help may be taken to rewrite instructions and leaflets for effective mass communication. Websites should be friendly to navigate and should invariably have a section on frequently asked questions. Whether it is individual communication or mass communication, understandable language should be used instead of highly formulated officialise. **The Commission recommends improving communication with the people through better written language and user-friendly websites.**

People's Participation

13.11 The ultimate form of people-friendliness is people's participation and involvement in governmental activities. When the needs and voices of people are taken into account while designing, delivering, implementing and evaluating public policies and services, governance becomes people-centric. Citizens can be directly involved in decision-making processes at the local levels and the performance of policies and services can be evaluated against people's needs and expectations. Here again, the civil service should have the skills and capabilities to identify and anticipate the needs of the public, and to have a meaningful engagement with them. The Commission has pointed out elsewhere the need to train and retrain employees in skill acquisition and upgradation. **The Commission recommends that all development departments should ensure people's participation while planning and implementing schemes at local levels.**

CHAPTER 14

INVESTOR-FRIENDLINESS

14.1 Investor friendliness is a social attribute in which the officialdom has a major role. It is often the interface with the bureaucracy at various levels which determines the interest and the confidence of a person to invest in any venture. Big investments need support from the top decision-makers in government, both through systemic arrangements and through honoured assurances. It needs continuous effort to promote the State as an investor-friendly location and to substantiate that perception through visible measures. Perhaps, positive perceptions are less visible than negative perceptions and so it needs conscious efforts to avoid unnecessary or extra-legal actions on the part of officials which would attract adverse publicity.

14.2 The ease of doing business index is a globally discussed ranking brought out by the World Bank annually. India has been making continuous efforts to improve its ranking, and such efforts have been somewhat successful, partly through substantive action and partly through improved reporting. The Reserve Bank of India brings out a publication on the ease of doing business in the different States/ Union Territories in India based on the implementation of the Business Reform Action Plan (BRAP) recommended by the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) to all States and UTs. Kerala has a lowly ranking of 28 as per the latest report; ironically Kerala is simultaneously No 1 among the States in the Niti Aayog's latest Sustainable Development Goals Index. Actually the State needs both - sustainable development and investment.

14.3 The Business Reform Action Plan (BRAP),2020, recommended by the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) to the States and UTs is a fairly comprehensive guideline. The objective of the Action Plan is to layout the series of reforms targeted at increasing transparency and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of regulatory framework and services for businesses in India. This Action Plan for the year 2020 consisted of 301 Reform points spread across 15 Areas. It would be useful to look at some of the parameters identified in the action plan.

- (i) 'Investment enablers' - This encompasses reforms related to 'Access to information and transparency', 'Investment Facilitation Centre/ Investment Promotion Agency' and 'Online Single Window System'.
- (ii) Single Window system enabled with dashboard - The envisaged features of the single window system include online submission of application, payment of application fee, tracking of application status, download of the final signed certificate third-party verification.
- (iii) Sectoral reforms - the sectors are Tourism, Telecom, Hospitality, Trade License, Healthcare, Legal Metrology, Cinema Halls and Movie shooting.
- (iv) Public procurement undertaken by Industries department
- (v) Reforms relating to 'elimination of the requirements of renewals of certificates/ approvals/ licenses' and 'implementation of computerized central random inspection system' (Department of Expenditure has linked additional borrowing of 0.25% of GSDP of the States in 2020 subject to implementation of Ease of Doing Business reforms).

14.4 Single Window clearance mechanisms have been available in several States since the 1980s. However, Kerala was the first State to enact a law for this – the Kerala Industrial Single Window Clearance Boards and Industrial Township Area Development Act, 1999 was a pioneering legislation for establishing a systemic arrangement for facilitation of industrial investment. The Act has been developed further, and there is a robust Single Window clearance system now available in the State. The debate on the State's industry-friendliness became a topic for discussion recently with the KITEX decision to invest in Telengana instead of in Kerala.

14.5 Our weaknesses as an investment destination are well-known, and many of these factors are beyond the control of the State Government. And there are factors in which the State would not want to relax the rules, whether it is environmental issues or labour protection. However, there are several steps possible to make the State more investment-friendly and to promote such a perception, and many of these are already being undertaken by the State government. Many of these are not under the domain of the Industries Department, and are generally related to the overall ambience. Some of the requirements are:

- (i) The Single Window mechanism has to function effectively for supporting any new investment. After commencement of the functioning also, the official teams must function together, avoiding unnecessary inspections, making joint inspections where required, and monitoring through the use of technology unless physical inspections become inevitable.
- (ii) The State needs to be presented as a strong economy, with high per capita income, and exposure of a sizeable chunk of the population to global practices and styles, and high consumption.
- (iii) A highly skilled work force is an attraction for investment; this has to be developed through reform in the educational system.
- (iv) Transport infrastructure is important for all investors irrespective of the sector. The government should give out the message that there is continuous focus on the development of infrastructure for providing good connectivity within the State and with the neighbouring States – immediate development of the National Highways (We lost several years discussing how narrow the Highways could be.), a High speed rail system, Ports with all facilities including deep draft etc. are all in the pipeline. Once the flights recommence, the State needs flight connectivity with Europe and South East Asia.
- (v) The State has a pro-investment leadership, with consistent policies and attitudes and capacity to liaise with the central government.
- (vi) Further efforts are required to improve the ease of living, with safety and security, high quality Municipal services, healthcare facilities and a clean environment. This would involve seemingly unconnected, but extremely relevant matters like reduction of sound pollution from places of worship and high decibel vehicle horns, enforcement of traffic discipline and efficient waste management.
- (vii) The State has to continue to be protective of labour, both domestic and migrant, but at the same time ensuring that the workers do not resort to calamitous violence motivated by unreasonable demands driving away the investors. Head load workers need to be reined in; the suggestions for the same have been given in the section on Labour Department in this Report.
- (viii) Land in Kerala is a limited resource, with high cost. Therefore, there is a need to acquire land, develop industrial parks and attract investment into these parks so that the private investor can readily find a location for hassle-free investment. Between 1998 and 2001, the Industries

Department under Minister Smt Suseela Gopalan, was able to get substantial areas of unutilised land released from Central Government organisations like HMT in Kalamassery, Sainik School in Trivandrum, and Government of India Press in Koratty, and develop industrial parks there, attracting a lot of investment. Development of industry-ready infrastructure has to continue. Similarly, business support facilities may be made available at arms' length.

- (ix) Promotion of tourism generates investment in all sectors; often, tourists, Indian or foreign, end up with investment decisions. Along with providing basic conveniences and maintaining cleanliness of high standard, the authorities must ensure measures to protect tourists from miscreants and stalkers.
- (x) And there is the need for a team of officers, with total support of the government, always willing to help in times of need or even proactively.

Competition among States

14.6 Unhealthy competition among the various States for attracting investments is unfortunate and undesirable. Before the introduction of State Value Added Tax in 2005, the competing States used to offer substantial monetary incentives and tax concessions. VAT and now GST do not allow such tax concessions. The system of having an Empowered Committee of State Finance Ministers was an effective forum for controlling tax concessions. The competition now is through cheaper land and infrastructure and relaxed regulations. Land and infrastructure may be costlier in Kerala, and present a handicap, but that by itself would not deter investors if the efficiency levels are high. As far as regulations are concerned, there must be constant review of the need for such regulations and the process of implementation of the regulations. Implementation of the regulations should not lead to unnecessary harassment; the spirit of the law is often more important than the letter of the law. The State may not like to relax provisions relating to environmental matters, protection of the workers etc, and consistency in the approach will generate confidence in investors. Incentives should be given in line with and as part of a declared policy; exceptional cases involving large scale employment or future revenues to the State can always

be treated differently. **The Commission recommends that the Government may try to mobilize a consensus at the national level on the types of concessions that may be given for new investments.**

CHAPTER 15

PUBLIC GRIEVANCES

15.1 Every Government which is citizen-centric should have a robust system for the redressal of public grievances. Both the Central Government and the Kerala Government have established centralized arrangements for the receipt and monitoring of public grievances. The CPGRAMS (Centralized Public Grievance Redress And Monitoring System) is an online web-enabled system over NICNET developed by NIC, in association with the Directorate of Public Grievances in the Cabinet Secretariat and the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances. CPGRAMS platform enables submission of grievances by the aggrieved citizens from anywhere and anytime (24x7) basis to Ministries/Departments/Organizations/State Governments who are expected to scrutinize and take action for speedy redress of the grievances. Tracking grievances is also facilitated on this portal through the system-generated unique registration number. The CPGRAMS interlinks 86 Central Ministries/ Departments/ Organisations and 37 States/ Union Territories.

15.2 The Kerala Chief Minister's Grievance Redressal Cell is a Government of Kerala web portal (www.cmo.kerala.gov.in) facilitating the citizens to register and review the status of petitions registered, which needs the special attention of the Government. According to the website, redress of citizens' grievances being one of the most productive indicators of the good governance in a State, the Government formulates public grievance redressal mechanisms for effective and timely redressal / settlement of citizens' grievances. The Government has been making endeavours to bring excellence in public service delivery in a meaningful way by effectively coordinating with different departments or strata of the Government.'

15.3 A public grievance arises when the system is unable to resolve satisfactorily an issue raised by a citizen within a reasonable time frame. Every grievance cannot be categorized as a public grievance to be settled by the Government. The obvious exceptions would be

- (i) Quasi judicial processes with statutory provisions for appeal against a decision of an officer -the settlement has to take place through the appeal process.
- (ii) Matters which are sub judice -the parties will have to wait for the judgement of the Court.
- (iii) Individual requests in matters relating to recruitment through the Public Service Commission - the Government does not interfere in the recruitment through the KPSC.
- (iv) Grievances of employees in respect of service matters - these have to be settled through the prescribed departmental procedures. However, post retirement grievances are public grievances.
- (v) Commercial contracts – disputes will need to be legally resolved and not through a public grievances machinery.
- (vi) Policy matters of the Government – there are other means for providing inputs to Government in policy matters.
- (vii) Trivial and frivolous matters.

15.4 The need for a centralized public grievances redress machinery arises because there are often inadequacies in the delivery of services at the lower levels. Speedy and transparent delivery of services can happen with the use of technology, but the IT system has to be robust. Grievances would probably come down in course of time with greater adoption of technology and more professionalization of the administration. Still, a central arrangement for receiving and responding to public grievances will be necessary.

15.5 The Cell is now part of the Chief Minister’s Office (CMO). The advantage with locating the Cell in the CMO is that the recipients of forwarded complaints will attach greater importance to something forwarded from the Chief Minister’s Office. After all, the grievance arose out of the dissatisfaction with some action or inaction by a Government functionary at a lower level. With chances of scrutiny at the highest level, the officers are more than likely to attend to the grievance quickly and sympathetically.

15.6 The requirement is for a continuous upgradation of the technology platform, in consultation with the departments from which complaints arise. There is always scope for making the portal more user-friendly. Based on experience, it should be possible to identify the matters which attract

complaints, and provide options on the platform through dropdown menus to be chosen by the user. The matter should be referred directly to the office responsible for the decision in the matter; reporting through superior officers can be stipulated where such reporting adds to the objectivity in handling the matter. There should also be a facility for the user of the portal to keep track of the movement of his grievance in the official channels. Increasingly, the portals have to be accessible through mobile phones, with suitable mobile apps developed and integrated with the portal. The time limits fixed for the final disposal of grievances should be revised from time to time based on the experience with grievances of each type, and the revised time frame should be indicated in the portal.

15.7 The Commission recommends that the technology platform of the CM's Public Grievances Cell may be periodically upgraded to make it more user-friendly and mobile-friendly.

15.8 Public Grievances are raised before other authorities as well. Ministers, District Collectors and Heads of Departments also receive petitions with complaints. The petitions before the Ministers and the Heads of Departments would be generally about matters in respect of their portfolios/ departments and so it is obligatory that these are followed up and disposed of within specified time limits. The District Collectors would be receiving petitions about any subject; the Collectorates must also have a technology enabled system for handling grievances. Acknowledgements must be given, together with information on the office to which the petition is forwarded. There also, the grievances must be settled within specified time limits.

CHAPTER 16

SERVICE OF KUDUMBASHREE

Utilisation of Kudumbashree and Co-operatives for Services

16.1 The size of the Government would depend on the functions being performed. There is a general feeling expressed in several studies that Governments are bloated, with too many employees doing too little work. This is true for several departments and agencies, and untrue for several other departments and agencies which function with limited manpower. This Commission does not propose to go into the issue in detail. Governments have found it politically inconvenient to reduce the size of the Government. The effective implementation of a down-sizing in Government was done only in the central Government in the 1990s.

16.2 In Kerala, Government has been a major employer, and employment in Government is seen as the most important goal of one's life by many young people. For the Government, the objective should be to get the work done effectively at a justifiable cost. Every job does not have to be done by a regularly appointed Government employee. Permanent employees are required to discharge the critical functions where accountability is important. There are several tasks that can be outsourced for better performance; such outsourcing also provides employment, if such employment is given to persons from the relatively weaker sections of society, Government would be promoting a great social cause. An organisation like Kudumbashree becomes relevant in this context.

16.3 Kudumbashree is an unexceptionable socio-economic organisation with close to 45 lakh women members enrolled in more than 3 lakh Neighbourhood Groups and their federations. It has been engaged in various domains of Kerala's social life for more than two decades now. As the primary concern is understandably about the life and livelihoods of its members and their families, Kudumbashree since its early years worked on creating avenues of employment and livelihood for the State's poorer sections. Of late, it has entered into the domain of service delivery, covering

both Governmental and private institutions and businesses. If outsourced to Kudumbashree, services would reach the beneficiaries without delay or leakage.

16.4 With its State-wide network and a record in providing gainful employment to the poor, Kudumbashree is well positioned to offer various types of services to institutions in ways that are suitable to the context. Over the years, different forms have evolved in Kudumbashree's engagement with institutions. These include wage employment, service delivery through enterprises, and working as a 'vendor' providing materials and services.

16.5 There are several advantages in engaging Kudumbashree for performing or delivering different services at Government offices or in the premises.

- (i) Kudumbashree can offer a variety of services including data entry, clerical jobs, record keeping, billing and bill collection, computerised accounts management, technical maintenance services involving construction, electrical wiring and plumbing, cleaning services, catering and canteen management, and gardening and landscaping.
- (ii) Kudumbashree has the ability to mobilise a workforce locally. This would ensure uninterrupted and timely services in any location of the State, given the wide grassroots network. Kudumbashree already has a track record of performing various functions locally at an acceptable level.
- (iii) It would be possible for the institutions and agencies to source in services from a single agency at the Panchayat or City level. The Community Development Societies (CDS) of Kudumbashree have their operational area coterminous with the local Governments. While the institutions can deal with the CDS for services, the CDS being an institution entrenched in local governance and adept at handling local level development programmes can work as a proactive and responsible partner.
- (iv) Kudumbashree Mission's organisational structure with District Missions and staff deployed up to the Block levels with the bandwidth to reach out even to the Neighbourhood level, offers another advantage. The Mission's network of professionals can provide a backend support in service provision. Kudumbashree

Mission has programmes that can be used for training women to develop new skills or hone the existing ones to take up different assignments to the satisfaction of the institutions. In the case of services through enterprises of women, Kudumbashree has programmes to support them in evolving into professionally run businesses.

- (v) Partnership with Kudumbashree CDS for service provision can work out as a rewarding engagement for institutions and agencies as it can leverage from the local availability of resources and the commitment of Kudumbashree members as enabling citizens in local development.
- (vi) The expenditure on the engagement of Kudumbashree's services would be less than the total cost to Government for engaging permanent employees, and it would be possible to provide employment and income to more individuals.
- (vii) Using the services of Kudumbashree will be in sync with the Government policy of inclusive development.

16.6 The Government had issued a circular with No 84/2019/ Finance dated 05.10.2019 directing all departments to enter into annual contracts with Kudumbashree and KEXCON for cleaning and security respectively, instead of engaging temporary employees. This was however cancelled as per Circular no 95/2019/ Fin dated 04.12.2019.

16.7 **The Commission recommends that each department should identify services that can be entrusted to Kudumbashree, and enter into a contractual arrangement with them for delivering such services.**

16.8 A male counterpart of Kudumbashree may not be fully feasible for obvious reasons. However, it would be possible for young persons, male or female, to gain strength and to have wider opportunities by organising locally under an appropriate umbrella, preferably a cooperative society. The success of Uralungal Labour Contract Society should be an inspiration for this. **The Commission therefore recommends the development of co-operative societies of young persons, for providing a variety of services to Government offices and to the private sector, using their initiative to mobilise opportunities.**

CHAPTER 17

ESTABLISHMENT OF A CIVIL SERVICE REVIEW MISSION

17.1 Kerala State was formed on November 1, 1956. The first elected government took charge on April 5, 1957. Since then, the administrative systems have undergone several changes, either catalysed by policy decisions of the State or Central governments or compelled by external factors like social, economic and technological changes. The changes in some of the major sectors are discussed in the paragraphs below.

17.2 The District has been the unit of administration below the State level. The number of Districts has grown from 9 in 1960 to 14 now. The number of Taluks and revenue villages has increased at a similar pace, standing now at 77 and 1644 respectively. The District is a very important level in the administration since most departments of the government have offices at that level. The Taluk is also important in that respect, although the Block has emerged as the intermediate level for decentralised development administration.

17.3 School education is the biggest single department both in terms of manpower and in terms of budgetary expenditure. The State is the first among the Indian States in literacy, building further on the earlier achievements. The government started paying the entire salaries of the staff of private schools in the 1950s, but the regulation of appointments has been slack. Schools continue to exist even when the number of students has fallen to nominal levels and teachers continue to be paid in such schools. The school education system witnessed a structural change in 1997 when the pre degree course in colleges was abolished, and the plus two courses were introduced in schools. The total liberalisation of the examination system has led to consistent fall in the quality of matriculates - the pass percentage jumped to over 90 in the second half of the first decade of this millennium and a tad below 100 in recent years. A recent improvement has been in the

infrastructure of the government schools, together with technology-enabled learning.

17.4 Higher education has witnessed massive expansion. Kerala University was the only University in the State until 1968 when Calicut University was established. The system of direct payment of salaries by government to the staff of private colleges was introduced in 1972. There are now five affiliating universities in addition to the separate affiliating universities for engineering and medical colleges. Cochin University of Science and Technology, set up in 1971 has not risen to the expected levels of excellence after an initial demonstration of great potential. Separate Universities for Sanskrit and Malayalam were set up, apart from deemed universities, both private and public. A large number of private self-financing colleges came up after 2001 following the opening up of the sector for private investment. But, in spite of all these, we do not have a satisfactory answer to questions on the employability of our graduates, value of the research in the universities and the performance of our students in national competitive examinations. Now, there are a few institutions of excellence set up by the Central Government, like the IIM, IIT and IISST.

17.5 The local self-government system has undergone dramatic changes. The Panchayats at the village level and the Municipalities and Corporations in the urban areas were the only local bodies in the State till 1990, when District Councils were created. Following the 73rd and 74th Constitution Amendments, much more powerful local bodies were created in the form of a three - tier Panchayat system with Panchayats at the village, Block and District levels, and more powerful Municipalities in the towns and Municipal Corporations in cities. District Planning Committees were also set up for coordination between rural and urban planning. The local bodies now receive a substantial chunk of the State's plan funds, and grass-root level officers of various development departments have been functionally brought under the control of the local self-governments. A major administrative change is the recent decision to bring together all employees serving the local bodies - Panchayats, Municipalities, Rural Development, Town & Country Planning and Local Self Government Engineering under one service.

17.6 Land tenures and related matters underwent significant changes in the mid-1970s, with the implementation of the Land Reforms Act, 1963, which

provided for land title for the cultivating tenants, homestead for the agricultural labourers, ceiling on land holding, distribution of excess land to the landless etc. Plantations were kept out of the land ceiling laws. The Resurvey exercise started in 1966 is still going on. The land use patterns have changed over the years. Forest protection has been successful after the Central Government's Forest Conservation Act of 1980. Roads have been built across low lying lands and backwaters; paddy fields have been reclaimed and houses have come up everywhere.

17.7 The major source of tax revenue has been the tax on trade of commodities. We had the Sales Tax, which was replaced by the Value Added Tax in 2005, and then by the Goods and Services Tax in 2017. For the GST, parallel systems exist under the State Government and the Central Government. State Excise also had major changes - arrack was banned in 1996 and the sale of foreign liquor was brought under State monopoly.

17.8 The pre-independence manufacturing industries have mostly closed down. The Kochi Refinery set up in 1966 remains as the biggest industrial unit in the State. Manufacturing growth has been negligible. Some of the biggest units are in the State public sector, like the Kerala Minerals and Metals Ltd, Travancore Titanium Products Ltd, Travancore Cochin Chemicals and Malabar Cements. The growth driver is the Information Technology Industry, for which specialised industrial parks have been set up. The traditional industries like coir and handloom survive because of government patronage. The Single Window Clearance system introduced in 2000 facilitates the ease of doing business, although the overall ranking of the State, at 28 among the Indian States as per the latest assessment, has to improve.

17.9 The above narratives have been made to indicate the nature of the changes that have come about in the administration and society over the years. Ad hoc administrative arrangements are constantly being made with the result that there has been an exponential increase in the number of government employees. Governments have issued orders on ensuring economy in expenditure, right from the early 1960s. This has not stood in the way of increasing the numbers of government employees. Further, the successive Pay Revision exercises have given the employees opportunities for promotions based on ratios, time-bound grades etc. apart from functional promotions. Employment in government for large numbers of persons by

itself is not bad economics, but non-productive jobs performing irrelevant functions are wasteful.

17.10 It is necessary to have an independent critical scrutiny of the work of each department and agency of the government to ascertain if the department is able to perform the functions expected of it. It has to be examined if the department's structure is conducive for effective performance. The wastage of resources, both financial and human, needs to be identified and corrective action taken. Such an exercise can be done only by an independent body working on it full time. The Commission recommends that a Civil Service Review Mission may be set up for this task.

17.11 The Mission Directorial Team may consist of three members including the Chairman who should be a former IAS officer of the Kerala cadre, who has worked as Chief Secretary or as Secretary to Government of India. The members should also be experienced professionals familiar with the working of the government; one should ideally be a former Vice Chancellor of a University considering the importance of the education sector. A senior officer of the IAS may be appointed as the Director/ CEO of the Mission. The secretariat for the Mission may be provided by deployment of staff from the Secretariat Departments including the Finance and Law Department, and the staff pattern may be similar to that for this Pay Revision Commission.

17.12 The functions of the Mission may be as follows:

- (i) to review the vision and mission of each Department of the government, university, local body and grant in aid institution, once in five years,
- (ii) to review the organisational structure of each such department and agency and assess if the structure is appropriate for achieving the declared objectives,
- (iii) to suggest measures for restructuring the office organisation to cater to the special and changing needs of the departments including redeployment of tasks in the context of fast-changing technology,
- (iv) to examine the human resources available with the department/ agency and determine the surplus or shortage if any and to recommend appropriate redeployment and capacity development,

- (v) to examine the need and use of government vehicles in each department,
- (vi) to suggest measures for more effective coordination between departments/ agencies for better delivery of services and achievement of the common objectives,
- (vii) to suggest improvements to processes and procedures so that the disposal of business becomes faster and more efficient,
- (viii) to examine if there has been proper re-engineering of practices with the adoption of technology,
- (ix) to suggest measures for increasing government's revenue and reducing expenditure, and
- (x) to advise government on employee benefits including revision of pay and allowances, instead of appointing a Pay Revision Commission.

CHAPTER 18

FORMATION OF STATE GOOD GOVERNANCE BOARD

Background and Rationale

18.1 'Governance' as an all-encompassing phenomenon has attracted the interests of thinkers, planners and implementers alike ever since the emergence of human civilizations. Multi-disciplinary studies covering different areas of public administration and public policy, politics and development, economic regulations and structures, social anthropology and power, law and management studies are now increasingly engaged in exploring options for reforms in governance. The world has thus experienced continuous reforms in practices to improve governance in order to ensure that the legal frameworks, governance institutions as well as the political, managerial and administrative processes are responsive to the needs of the population.

18.2 The Government of India and the Government of Kerala have constituted Administrative Reforms Commissions (ARC) during different periods to make recommendations to improve the efficiency of the administrative system. Four ARCs have been constituted in the State. A quick review of the action taken on the recommendations of the ARCs in the State reveals that most of the recommendations are yet to be acted upon. Perhaps the general aversion to change due to the uncertainties involved has been holding back reforms. Another reason for the slackness in implementing the suggestions on reforms could be the absence of an institutional mechanism that can spearhead the necessary reforms by following up with the decision makers as well as with the implementing departments. The concept of an exclusive institution for Good Governance gains significance in this context. The current void in speedy reforms due to the absence of a professional mechanism to lead the same is thought to be filled up by establishing a State Good Governance Board as an Institution for strengthening Good Governance in Kerala. This will be the counterpart of the State Planning

Board which plans, guides and monitors the development activities in the State.

Earlier Examples

18.3 The first Centre for Good Governance (CGG) in the country was established in Hyderabad in October 2001 by the then Government of Andhra Pradesh (now Telengana) in collaboration with the Department for International Development (DFID) of the UK government and the World Bank. The CGG was tasked with helping the Government of Andhra Pradesh achieve the goal of Transforming Governance. CGG explains its hitherto functioning in three Phases:

Phase I (2001 – 2005):

- Institution Building
- Grounding of Key Ideas of Governance Reforms
- Strengthening with Key Personnel

Phase II (2006 – 2009):

- Financial Autonomy and Self Reliance
- Role of Project Manager of Dfid Project
- Departments took up Reform Projects
- Consultancy Projects for GoI and other States
- Strategic and Performance Innovation Units (SPIU) in 15 Departments

Phase III (2009 onwards)

- Manages Reform Incentives Fund to sustain Governance Reforms
- Major Consultancy Projects at GoI and State level
- Develops key IT Applications for Departments and Organisations

18.4 The CGG has been working closely with policy-makers, senior officials, management experts, institutions and other stakeholders, especially citizens. It has been undertaking action researches, extending professional advice and organizing change management programmes for Departments. It has been recognized as a replicable model on governance reforms prompting the Inter-

State Council Secretariat to recommend the model of CGG to other States that are planning to establish their own Centers of Excellence for action research and change management for good governance.

18.5 A national institution with focus on strengthening good governance practices is the **National Centre for Good Governance (NCGG)**, an autonomous institution under the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, Government of India. The NCGG was formed in 2014 from the National Institute of Administrative Research (NIAR) set up in 1995 by the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA), with an expanded mandate in good governance. NCGG aims to assist in governance reforms through studies, training, knowledge sharing and promotion of good ideas. It undertakes policy research, prepares case studies, involves in disseminating knowledge, exploring & developing ideas and offer capacity building of civil servants from India and other developing countries for implementation of reform measures.

18.6 The Fourth Administrative Reforms Commission - Kerala has also recommended establishment of a Centre for Good Governance - Kerala in Chapter 6 of its Second Report on 'Capacity Development of Civil Servants.

The Institution

18.7 The institution may be called the **Kerala State Good Governance Board (GGB- Kerala)** and established in Thiruvananthapuram.

18.8 The Fourth ARC had suggested that the CGG-K be registered as a society under the Travancore-Cochin Charitable Societies Act, 1955. However, the Commission feels that it would be better to establish GGB - Kerala as a Professional organisation like the State Planning Board, with functional autonomy and similar status as that of the State Planning Board. The GGB-K is envisaged as an autonomous institution with financial support from the regular Government budget, but it should become financially self-sustaining in due course with ideas for generating revenue and reducing expenditure.

18.9 The Board is envisaged to act as a think tank for good governance, with unbiased and neutral analysis to evolve reform initiatives and support

implementation of the essential administrative reforms in the State. It shall also be an interface between the bureaucracy and information technology. Along with adequate functional autonomy, it should also be delegated with the necessary administrative authority to push through the reforms. All data management activities including managing the Data Centre of the Government may be entrusted with the Board. Besides action research, consultations and evolution of comprehensive reform measures, the GGB-K should train the officials appropriately to enable them to manage and sustain the changes/reforms. As suggested by the Fourth ARC Kerala, it shall work closely with the policy makers, senior officials, management experts, institutions and other stakeholders, especially the people.

18.10 As recommended by the Fourth ARC Kerala, the Board can also be the 'permanent Administrative Reforms Mechanism to suggest measures for administrative reforms and to handhold/oversee administrative reforms initiatives of government departments and agencies'.

18.11 The Fourth ARC has also recommended that the 'mandate of Kerala Development and Innovation Strategic Council (K-DISC) shall also be entrusted to the proposed CGG or vice versa'. However, although the envisaged impact of innovative strategies developed by K-DISC is also good governance, the activities of K-DISC have a focus on massive employment in a knowledge society, and so it need not be brought under the Board.

Focus Areas

18.12 As suggested by the Fourth ARC Kerala, GGB-K shall act as a think tank to foster growth-oriented and people-centric governance, with emphasis on projects focusing on public satisfaction. It should also focus on innovative approaches in the following:

- Policy research and advice
- Innovation and Strategies
- Administrative and Civil Service Reforms
- Public Accountability and Service Delivery
- Human Development
- Change Management and Organisation Development
- Public Finance Management

- Local Economic Development
- Urban Governance
- E-Governance Reforms

18.13 The key activities of the Centre shall include:

- Policy reviews/formulations – review of policies, development of new policies, reform strategies, innovations with focus on good governance
- Assessment and evaluations – outcome and impact monitoring and evaluation of programmes/projects
- Capacity building of departments and functionaries at state and local levels on change management, sustaining changes and specialized topics/subjects
- Consultancy and advisory support – good governance, governance structures, legal frameworks, service delivery
- Data centre – data security and data management
- e-Governance and m-Governance provider – software and tools for improving service delivery and ease of doing business
- Artificial Intelligence, Block chain and IoT technologies – use of modern systems for improvement in governance and service delivery
- Documentation - bank of best practices and tools in governance reforms

Organisation and Governance Structure

18.14 The Board may be governed by a Governing Council chaired by Chief Minister of Kerala. A full time Vice Chairman may be appointed on similar terms as the Vice Chairman of the State Planning Board. The other proposed members of the Governing Council are:

- Ministers for Finance, Revenue, Industries and Vigilance
- Vice Chairman of the State Planning Board
- Chief Secretary to government
- The Chairman of the proposed Civil Service Review Mission, and the proposed Chief Commissioner for the Right to Service.
- Additional Chief Secretary/ Principal Secretary/ Secretary to Government, Finance, Information Technology, General Administration, Personnel & Administrative Reforms and Vigilance Departments

- Director, Institute of Management in Government
- Director General, Vigilance and Anti-Corruption Bureau.
- Three eminent persons from the private sector, academia and civil society with expertise and interest in governance reforms
- Member-Secretary of the Board, who shall be a senior officer of the IAS, who will be ex-officio Secretary/ Principal secretary/ Additional Chief Secretary to Government.

18.15 The functions and activities of the Centre shall be guided by a Steering Committee chaired by the Vice Chairman of the Governing Council. Other members of Steering Committee may include the Chief Secretary, Finance Secretary, IT Secretary, DG Institute of Management in Government, DG Kerala Institute for Local Administration and Secretary P&ARD. The Member-Secretary shall be the Chief Executive of GGB-K responsible for the executive functions and administration of the Board and the Convener of the meetings of the Steering Committee and the Governing Council.

Divisions and Core Areas

18.16 CGG-K may have four Functional Divisions namely, 1). Governance & Management, 2). IT, e-Governance and m-Governance, 3). Knowledge Management and 4). Administrative Reforms, besides the HR and Administrative set up for the Centre. The core areas of functioning of each Division may be as follows:

Governance & Management

- Research & Development in Policy, Public Administration and Governance
- Good Governance Practices
- Economics and Finance
- Human Resources and Administration
- Transparency and Accountability
- Service Delivery and Citizen Friendliness
- Ethics in Governance
- Elimination of Corruption
- Documentation and Dissemination

- Consultancy Services

IT, e-Governance & m-Governance

- IT, ITES
- Software
- E Governance
- M Governance
- AI, Blockchain, IoT
- Artificial Intelligence & Reforms
- Consultancy Services

Administrative Reforms

- Impact Assessment Studies – Output & Outcome, Processes & Procedures, Reach & User friendliness
- Continuous Reform Measures
- Change Management, Reform Management, Handholding
- Documentation and Dissemination

Knowledge Management

- Research and Development in Information Environment and Information Assets
- Knowledge acquisition and Sharing
- Statistics, Data Acquisition, Data Safety – Data Centre
- Data Analysis & Management and Data Sharing
- Capacity Building
- Consultancy Services

18.17 It is imperative that all the Divisions of GGB-K operate in close cooperation to accomplish its objectives. It is also necessary that the Divisions interact closely with all stakeholders. Some of the functions are interlinked with the functions proposed for the Civil Service Review Mission and the inclusion of the Mission Chairman in the Board would help in coordination. The key to efficient functioning of the institution will be its human resources. The process of staffing of the Centre has therefore to be carried out judiciously. The Government may prescribe the selection procedure,

qualifications, experience etc., for the CGG-K. It has to be ensured that the best talents in terms of domain knowledge, research and reforms aptitude and, commitment are made available in the Centre.

18.18 As suggested by the Fourth ARC, each Division shall be under a Division Chief with the status of an Additional Secretary to Government of Kerala. Domain experts shall be engaged in the permanent or contract categories as required by the Divisions based on an annual plan of action. Sufficient number of Research Officers/Research Associates/Project Staff may be selected on project basis. Managerial and administrative staff may also be positioned in the Finance and Administration and HR functions of the Centre.

Funding Pattern

18.19 As suggested by the Fourth ARC, the capital expenditure for establishing GGB-K can be sought from Ministry of Personnel, Government of India. The recurring expenditure may be provided by the Government of Kerala. GGB-K shall also raise their own revenue through sources such as consultancy services to Government of Kerala, Government of India, other State governments and private sector stakeholders, and from capacity development programmes.

18.20 The Commission recommends the establishment of the Kerala State Good Governance Board on the lines detailed in the report.

CHAPTER 19

DEPARTMENT-WISE SUGGESTIONS

AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT AND FARMERS' WELFARE

19.1 The Agriculture Department is one of the largest departments in Kerala having its presence even in all the Grama panchayats through the Krishi Bhavans. As per the details provided by the Director, the Department has a staff strength of 7932 including ministerial staff. But the statistics show that the State has not achieved any remarkable gain from the activities of the department. Owing to various reasons like urbanisation and other developmental activities, the agricultural land has been dwindling in the State day by day. As per the Agricultural Statics 2018-19, the total area of food crop cultivation has decreased by 2% during the year 2018-19 compared to 2017-18 and there is a decrease of 27.91 % compared to 2001-02. Production of almost all the food crops in Kerala registered a decrease in the year 2018-19.

19.2 Absence of sound marketing and storage facilities seems to be the perennial issue faced by the farmers of Kerala. They are forced to sell their products through the middlemen at very cheap prices. Though agencies like VFPCCK, HortiCorp etc. are procuring the agricultural products at Government rates, their marketing network is not wide enough to reach out to every nook and corner of Kerala. The department should take the initiative to arrange for procurement of the products directly from the farmers and to ensure adequate storage facilities. The department should take action to impart training to the farmers for applying modern technology in farming for augmenting their yield. If agriculture related activities are made economically viable, it can attract young professionals into this vocation. Krishi Bhavans should be tech-savvy and user friendly, capable of impressing the new generation and attracting them to invest or work in agriculture.

19.3 Agriculture and allied sectors faced a severe setback due to the havoc wrecked by the two floods. The 2018 Floods caused not only crop loss but changed the very structure of the soil also. As per the Study conducted by the

Department of Soil Survey and Soil Conservation namely, 'Soil Health Status in Kerala in Post Flood Scenario', the Flood caused changes in soil texture, water holding capacity, landscape, nutrient availability etc. This in turn affects the productivity of the soil. **The Agriculture Department has to identify the plant varieties best suited for the changed nature of the soils and to take steps to popularise their farming.**

19.4 Another pertinent point to be noticed is that the land pattern of Kerala has undergone a sea change over the last thirty years. Arable lands have been converted into residential and commercial areas. Paddy fields remain marshy lands. In this regard, X Pay Revision Commission had recommended to collect the statistics and data of cultivated land with farmers and allot sufficient number of officers, staff and facilities keeping in view, the needs of the group of farmers and farmlands coming under them. By doing so, the Commission's expectation was that there would be surplus staff and there would be no scope for filling up of arising vacancies. It seems that the department has not taken any initiative in this regard. **Hence the Department should take immediate step to redeploy its personnel based on the agricultural needs of the area.**

19.5 Most of those who engaged in farming are not full-time farmers. They carry out farming along with other gainful activities. The proportion of marginal farmers in Kerala is a little above 96 percent. Similarly, the average size of holdings is as low as 0.18 hectares. Hence the Agricultural Department should reach out to them with support rather than waiting for them to approach the Krishi Bhavans. In other words, officers will have to spend more time in the farms than in the office.

19.6 Similarly, the farm size is so tiny that most of the modern farming techniques are not necessarily suitable to these farms. Hence, the Department should collaborate with research institutions in developing farm specific and region-specific technology and take it to the small and marginal farms.

19.7 The Agriculture Engineering Wing is prima facie heavily overstaffed and under worked. **Corrective administrative measures should be taken to utilize the available manpower for productive purposes. The need for each post has to be critically examined and the post should continue only if there is sufficient justification.**

CO-OPERATION

19.8 Co-operative Societies have a very important role in Kerala's economic and social spheres. The primary agricultural credit societies have emerged as effective institutions for the provision of rural credit for all purposes, and for the promotion of savings, provision of services akin to banking and facilitation for various activities. The Department of Cooperation is managing the specialized job of promotion and regulation of the cooperative societies. The Department and its employees have a feeling that they are understaffed and overworked, with hardly any expansion even though the number of societies has been increasing substantially. However, in the current era of technological advancement, it should be possible for the Department to redesign its operations with maximum use of technology.

19.9 Part IXB of the Constitution of India, included as per the 97th Amendment, has now been declared by the Supreme Court as operative only in respect of multi-State Cooperatives. The Constitutional provisions now do not apply to State level cooperatives. This actually increases the responsibility of the State governments, because the Constitution amendment had improved the discipline in the sector, and the onus is now on the State governments to ensure the continuity of the discipline with further improvement. There have been weaknesses in safeguarding the interests of the members and fulfilment of objects for which the societies were organised. There were instances where elections have been postponed indefinitely and nominated office bearers or administrators put in charge of these institutions for a long time. Inadequate professionalism in management in many of the co-operative institutions has led to poor services and low productivity. The induction of professionals into the service of the bigger societies is a must. **The Commission recommends that the government may devise methods to professionalise the management of the cooperatives, and ensuring at the same time the democratic character of the governance of societies.**

The Professionalisation of Co-operative Audit

19.10 The Co-operative Audit Department under the overall control of the Registrar of Co-operative Societies is entrusted with the audit of co-operative societies. Sections 63 and 64 of the Kerala Co-operative Societies Act deal with audit. The relevant statutory provisions are:

- (i) The managing committee shall cause to audit the accounts of every society at least once every year, and the audit shall be within six months of the close of the financial year.
- (ii) There should be an Audit Manual approved by the Director of Co-operative Audit, which shall be updated every five years.
- (iii) The auditors shall be appointed by the general body or special general body from among the panel of auditors approved by the Director.
- (iv) All apex societies shall be audited by auditing firms from among the panel approved by the Director.
- (v) The audit reports of apex co-operative societies shall be laid by the Government before the Legislative Assembly.
- (vi) It is the responsibility of the managing committee to convene general body meeting or special general body meeting to appoint auditors or auditing firms within the stipulated time from among the panel approved by the Director, failing which, the members of the managing committee shall cease to hold their office.
- (vii) The financial statements and other statements shall be prepared by the chief executive of the society within one month from the date of close of the financial year and submitted before the managing committee, who shall submit the above statements for audit within one month.
- (viii) It shall be the duty of the managing committee of every society to ensure the accuracy of financial and other statutory statements.
- (ix) The Director shall issue an audit certificate to the concerned society with a copy of the audit memorandum.
- (x) The Auditor shall complete the audit within four months from the date of receipt of the statements and submit audit report to the Director.
- (xi) The amount of fee or cost for the audit of accounts of society for each year shall be fixed by the Director and it shall be paid by the society concerned within thirty days of intimation.
- (xii) Defects found in the working of a society shall be brought to the notice of the society by the Director; serious defects shall be communicated forthwith to the Registrar for immediate further action.
- (xiii) The Director may, by order in writing, direct the society or its officers to take specified action, within the specified time to rectify the defects disclosed in the audit.

19.11 The Audit department, headed by an officer from the IAS, has 1 Additional Director, 15 Joint Directors, 1 Deputy Director, 79 Assistant

Directors and 546 Auditors. The Department collects audit fees and the audit cost plus leave salary and pension contribution.

19.12 The inadequacy of the audit and the high cost are matters of concern. The Department represents that the workload of the officers is high since the number of societies has doubled from 1985 whereas the staff strength has had nominal growth. The inadequacy is partly due to the paucity of staff and partly due to their limited exposure. The high cost is due to the high salaries of regular government employees.

19.13 A new Cooperative Audit Manual has been prepared by a Working Group consisting of Departmental Officers, Chartered Accountants and former Audit Officers of the Accountant General's office. It is a fairly comprehensive Manual, covering almost all areas of audit required for cooperatives.

19.14 Several instances of malpractices in cooperative societies have come out recently, underscoring the need for effective auditing of societies, especially those in the financial sector. The audit should include detailed financial audit and administrative audit encompassing propriety audit, management audit, efficiency audit, performance audit and cost audit. The adequacy of the internal control systems needs to be scrutinized because there could be material weaknesses in the internal financial controls even if the financial statements are not misstated. Since the societies have also started functioning in computerized environments, the audit should be capable of performing its duties in such environments also, with a proper understanding of the systems and processes. The Manual provides brief guidelines for all these.

19.15 The expansion of the Cooperative Audit department is certainly not a feasible solution considering the very high cost that will have to be borne by the societies. The Commission feels that audit will be more efficient and cost-effective if it is done by professionals auditing the corporate sector. While there are differences between the objectives and styles of functioning of cooperative societies and joint stock companies, the broad financial principles are the same and the organization has to protect the interests of the investor-member or shareholder by whatever name we call him.

19.16 Audit has to be followed up with action on the audit reports. The Department should be primarily responsible for this, as the matter cannot be left to the societies themselves as most societies handle public money as well as money of the public.

19.17 The actual audit function can be entrusted to the Auditors (Chartered Accountants) selected by the general body of the society from a panel maintained by the Registrar. The Chartered Accountants are professionally regulated by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI), a statutory body, created under an Act of Parliament. ICAI has laid down accounting standards, auditing procedures, ethical standards etc and it is not difficult to adapt them to the cooperative environment.

19.18 Since the Department now collects the cost of audit, it will be a loss to government if the function moves out to professional Auditors and the staff continue with government. It should be possible to make a total switchover in ten years' time, reducing the staff in the Audit Department by not making new appointments and by transferring the staff from Audit to the functional Department as and when vacancies arise in the latter. Ten years is too long for a transition, but the available staff have to be accommodated taking into account the protection of the employees and the financial interests of the government.

19.19 The above discussion on audit presupposes the existence of a good accounting system. Accounting Standards should be adhered to in accounting by the societies; financial sector cooperatives must have accounting systems similar to those in the banks and financial institutions.

19.20 **The Commission recommends that the audit of co-operative societies be entrusted to professional Auditors over a ten- year period, reducing the strength of the Co-operative Audit Department in parallel.**

DAIRY DEVELOPMENT

19.21 The major activities of the Department are rural dairy extension, Organisation of Dairy Co-Operatives, Strengthening of Dairy Co-Operatives and implementation of Fodder development programmes, Milk Shed Development Programme and cattle feed subsidy scheme etc., besides the

statutory function under the Kerala Co-operative Societies Act,1969. The Department is the authority in Quality Control and Quality Assurance of Dairy products in the State whereas that of other food materials is monitored by the Food Safety Department. Dairy Extension Officers are the grass root level officers in the Department and are qualified and trained in the assessment of the quality of milk and allied products. Their service may be tapped more efficiently for the quality assurance and enforcement if they work in close collaboration with the Food Safety Department. There might be organisational issues in deploying Dairy Extension Officers with Food Safety Department as their scale of pay is much higher than those of food safety officers. **The Commission recommends the functional utilisation of the services of the Dairy Extension Officers in the Food Safety Department through an appropriate administrative arrangement for the strengthening of the food safety work in the State.**

FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES

19.22 The Director General, Fire and Rescue Services has proposed several measures for improving the service of the Department. The suggestions highlighted are the establishment of a proper District Office, providing 40 staff as per the standard pattern in all the 129 fire stations, strengthening middle management level at the headquarters and formation of three Special Task Force units. All these are functionally beneficial proposals, considering the work that the Department is doing. Apart from fire fighting, search and rescue operations, the Department is involved in public awareness creation, civil defence volunteer scheme, fire safety beat, fire safety clearance certificate, fire safety audit, ambulance services etc. The developers of multi-storied buildings and factories need clearance / NOC from the Department, and speedy attention to this work is important from the point of view of investor-friendliness.

19.23 **The Commission recommends to Government, consideration of the proposals for upgradation and strengthening of the District Office.**

FOOD SAFETY

19.24 The Commission makes the following recommendation for strengthening Food Safety Department.

19.25 There are Officers in the Dairy Development Department who are qualified to perform the Food Safety functions under the Food Safety & Standards Act 2006. The Dairy Development Department has check posts, but they are ineffective in the absence of statutory powers. Hence utilization of services of these officers may be considered for the Food Safety functions, by bringing them under the Food Safety Department. The differences in the levels of salaries need not be constraint in such a functional arrangement.

GENERAL EDUCATION

19.26 The Kerala model of development has its primary roots in the spread of education and healthcare. Kerala is far ahead of the rest of India in education and healthcare, and is at levels close to those in the developed countries in several respects. The truly exceptional features of the educational development of the State have been the growth of women's education and access to education for the weaker sections of society. Public provisioning and/or funding of education facilities have long been the foundation for Kerala's acclaimed development achievements.

19.27 As is well documented, historically, all the social reform and political movements in Kerala have encouraged school education as an effective tool against caste, gender and class discrimination. Kerala accepted early enough that "mass literacy required mass schooling". This approach helped Kerala to surge ahead of the other States in human development indicators such as literacy levels including female literacy levels, enrolment in schools, percentage of girl students and Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes students in schools, low drop-out rates and the number of schools in rural areas.

19.28 By the early 1980s, enrolment at the primary level was near universal, with virtually no gender gap. Also, significantly, even as early as 1957, 41 per cent of the school teachers in Kerala were women, a factor that must have encouraged many parents to send their girls to school. The trend has continued, and at present 74.73 per cent of school teachers are women.

19.29 There were 12,951 schools in Kerala in 2019-20, out of which 4,693 (36.24 per cent) are Government schools, 7,216 (55.71 per cent) are aided schools and 1,042 (8.05 per cent) are unaided schools. Kerala has one lower primary school for every square kilometre and one high school for every

4 sq km. In the year 2019-20, the dropout ratio among school students in Kerala was 0.11 percent, much lower than the all India average of 4.13%. Almost all government schools have pucca buildings, access to drinking water, and toilet facilities for boys and girls. Public spending on education in Kerala is the highest in the country and more than 80 percent of it is on school education.

19.30 There was a time when State-run schools slowly started losing their sheen and several were facing closure due to a shortage of students. 2,591 government schools and 2997 aided schools were listed under the 'uneconomic category' (later the nomenclature was changed as 'Schools with Less Number of Students'). The State government also put 3,825 employees of the education department under a 'protected' list. As per the Government norms, a school is considered 'uneconomic' or as a 'School with Less Number of Students' if the total number of students in a class is less than 15.

19.31 The Pothu Vidyabhasa Samrakshana Yajnam (General Education Protection Mission) was designed in 2016 to revitalise the state-run schools through public participation. With government assistance including funding and public participation, many local schools now have hi-tech classrooms and other modern facilities. Needless to say, the groundswell of support from the people, elected representatives and youth organisations, has been the key to the success. The results started showing in 2017 itself. In 2019-20, a total of 1,63,558 new students enrolled in government schools, continuing the reversal of a 25-year trend which had seen numbers dipping every year.

19.32 The Kerala Economic Review 2020 identified that in 2019-20, there were 996 schools with average strength of less than 25 students; out of these, 382 were government schools and 614 were in the aided sector. There were 37 government lower primary schools and 84 aided schools having average number of students with less than 10. The highest number of schools with less number of students was in Pathanamthitta (215) followed by Kottayam (118), Kannur (103), and Alappuzha (103). Lower primary schools constitute the largest chunk of the schools with less number of students, with 94.50 percent in government sector and 87.95 per cent in the aided sector.

19.33 This data shows that a large number of school buildings and other infrastructural facilities are unutilized or underutilized and are crumbling.

Unoccupied school compounds and buildings become haven for anti-social activities. In a State, where availability of land is one of the biggest challenges for developmental works, idling of school premises is in fact a waste of public money and property. With a stagnating/decreasing student population in the schools, the chances are that the number of such schools will only increase.

19.34 The General Education Protection Mission has resulted in some of the Government and Aided schools acquiring a high reputation as centres of excellent schooling, and consequently bursting at the seams. On the other hand, the poorly managed schools are finding it very hard to attract students. In the absence of a reasonable number of students, the school atmosphere will not be conducive for the children's social interactions and for extra-curricular activities. Further, the schools do not get modern audiovisual and electronic equipments, thus denying them the exposure given to their counterparts in normal schools. This is grave injustice to the children who unfortunately have to study in these schools. **The Commission recommends that Government take steps for mergers and splitting of schools and transfers of students and teachers to have only healthy schools maintaining viable student teacher ratios, with required academic and recreational facilities.** The schools with Less Number of Students in a locality covering a radius of 3 to 5 kilometres shall be merged with other schools (viable or uneconomic, as available), which have the required facilities. As far as possible, schools with the lowest strength of students should be merged by transferring students and teachers to the neighbouring schools. The school which is to be retained shall be identified on the basis of better infrastructure facilities and accessibility. If the distance to the new school is more than 1 km, the local body may consider providing free transportation to the children, considering that most of them will be from the relatively poorer sections of society.

19.35 The shifting of the students and teachers may be seen as a temporary phenomenon. The school can be revived at any point of time if there are justifying circumstances.

19.36 The land released as a result of such an exercise is a valuable asset. Such land and facilities belonging to the government may be used by the government or by the local bodies for public purposes like overall capacity development of the population, young and old, in that local area. They could be utilised for co-curricular learning like sports or arts or theatre activities or

as adjunct learning centres for vocational training & skill development, computer labs, science labs, language labs and other capacity enhancing /development programmes including personality development and employability enhancement programmes for the youth. Such a scheme will ensure optimum utilisation of available resources for a better future.

19.37 The release of land to the owners of aided private schools could unreasonably attract flak, since land is a very sensitive subject in Kerala. Such sensitivities are irrational and unjustified. If there has been public investment, it has to be recovered from the owners, but the private land and buildings constructed with private money will remain with the owners only when they are not required for educational purposes. However, since a view can be taken that the shifting of the school is temporary, it can be stipulated that the land shall not be utilised for any activity other than educational for a specified period, say five years. If the institution is not restarted during this period, the land owner should be at liberty to utilise the land appropriately without any approval.

HEALTH SERVICES

Review of the cadre system of Medical Officers

19.38 The existing cadre system in Health Services Department was introduced as per G.O (P)No.69/10/H&FWD dated 17.02.2010. Four branches were created, A - Administrative Cadre, B - General Cadre, C - Speciality Cadre and D - Public Health Laboratory Cadre and Blood Bank and Clinical Lab (Transfusion Medicine) Cadre. The system has been there for more than ten years now and is probably due for a review. However, the Department is fully involved in fighting the COVID 19 pandemic, and the timing is not appropriate for any administrative review. A review may be undertaken in 2022-23 in the context of emerging challenges in the present public health scenario and to address several problems being pointed out by members of the respective cadres. One of the matters to be reviewed will be whether the great value of qualified doctors is wasted in administration. The feasibility of inducting non-medical graduates with Degree in Hospital Administration, Public Health etc. in to the system (with much lower pay scales) also needs to be examined.

Health Inspectors

19.39 Health Inspectors were grossly under worked till the arrival of COVID 19. There are Health Inspectors in the Health Services Department, in Municipal Service and in Panchayats. The Health Inspectors in the Health Services Department are functionally with the Panchayats. The role of the Health Inspectors may be reviewed after the passing of the pandemic, hopefully in 2022-23. The numbers could be substantially reduced, and they could be placed administratively also under the Panchayats.

HOUSING (TECHNICAL CELL)

19.40 The Housing (Technical Cell) was formed in 1980 as a new Technical Cell under the Department of Housing. The main responsibility of the Cell is to provide technical guidance in all matters related to 'Housing' to the Department. The cell was actively engaged in policy formulation and providing Technical assistance to various projects undertaken by the Department and the agencies in the Housing Sector earlier. Presently most of the housing related development activities of the government are happening through 'Mission Mode' and implemented through either local bodies, Housing Board or other organisations. In a broad sense, now the Cell has no relevant role in the housing related programmes of the Government. **Hence the Commission recommends that the Cell may be abolished and the regular staff may be redeployed to other suitable places.**

INDUSTRIAL TRIBUNAL

19.41 The appointment, transfer and posting, promotion, disciplinary action etc. of Subordinate staff attached to the Industrial Tribunals are being done by the Labour Commissioner. The Industrial Tribunals have no say in their service matters. Considering the request of all the Presiding Officers, it is recommended that the staff in the Industrial Tribunals may be appointed from the Subordinate Judiciary. The power to make such appointments may be delegated to the Principal District Judge of the district in which the Tribunal is situated. For the Tribunals, 86 posts may be created in the Subordinate Judiciary at the levels and in the Districts as shown in the Table except Presiding Officer / District Judge, simultaneously abolishing the 86 posts in the Labour Department in the various categories. The implementation of the abolition / creation of posts may be done in a phased

manner, so that administrative difficulties are avoided. As and when a post held by a person from the Labour Department falls vacant, the post may be filled up by a person from the Subordinate Judiciary.

Table

Category	Thiruvananthapuram	Kollam	Alappuzha	Thrissur	Palakkad	Kozhikode	Idukki	Total
Presiding Officer / District Judge	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7
Secretary	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7
Senior Clerk / Clerk	5	3	4	5	3	5	4	29
Typist	1	2	2	1	2	1	2	11
Confidential Assistant	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7
Driver / Driver cum Office Attendant	1	1	1	1	-	1	-	5
Office Attendant	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	13
Night Watchman	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7
Part Time Sweeper	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7
Total	14	13	14	13	12	14	13	93

INSURANCE MEDICAL SERVICES

19.42 In our recommendations in this Report on the Health Services Department, the Commission has recommended to review the cadre system in Health Services Department by 2022-23. Since Government have referred the matter of implementation of the Cadre System in Insurance Medical Services Department to the XI Pay Revision Commission, recommendations of the Commission for the implementation of Cadre System are as detailed below. However, it is suggested that Government may take a final decision

for the implementation of the recommended cadre system in Insurance Medical Services Department in the context of reviewing the cadre system in Health Services Department.

19.43 The implementation of the cadre system in Insurance Medical Services Department can be viewed as a tool for career advancement of Medical Officers more than a functional necessity. Health Services Department being a behemoth organisation of health care system in Government sector, the categorisation of doctors into different cadres was a functional necessity and the system has been implemented without much hurdles. The system is now stabilised with an exception that the professional excellence of doctors in the administrative cadre is not being effectively utilized for clinical purpose since they are engaged only in administrative work. Insurance Medical Services Department is a smaller organization and most of the institutions under Insurance Medical Services are either dispensaries with limited infrastructure and having one or two doctors and are working only in day time, or small hospitals having three or four doctors but have IP. As per the report of the Director, there are 9 hospitals and 145 dispensaries under this Department. Out of the 145 dispensaries, 97 are working with one or two doctors. The Director, Insurance Medical Services department has recommended for doctors in the Administrative Cadre for heading these 145 dispensaries. But the Commission is of the considered view that exclusive administrative posts of Medical Officers for heading these small dispensaries will be wasteful. However, taking into account of the fact that Administrative Cadre system is existing in the Health Services Department and Special Rules are already issued for implementing such a cadre system in Insurance Medical Services department as well, the Commission recommends implementation of cadre system as follows:

(a) Administrative Cadre:- As per the Special Rules, no additional qualification is prescribed for Administrative Cadre other than qualification prescribed for the Entry Cadre(MBBS), whereas in Health Services Department, additional qualification (PG Degree/Diploma in Public Health or Hospital Administration) is necessary. For administering a dispensary having only one or two doctors, an exclusive post in the Administrative Cadre is not necessary. Administrative cadre posts of Medical Officers may be provided for the 9 ESI hospitals and 48 dispensaries having 2 or more posts of Medical Officers. In addition, the existing administrative posts of Director,

Joint Director and Regional Deputy Director may be included in the Administrative cadre. The Commission recommends that administrative cadre system may be implemented in Insurance Medical Services department on strict condition that, those doctors except in the post of Director, Joint Director and Regional Deputy Director should not abstain from clinical duties. Hence the Administrative Cadre may be structured as follows:

Category	Name of Post	No	Remarks
Category 1	Director	1	Existing 1 post of Director
Category 2	Joint Director (Medical)	1	Existing 1 post of Joint Director
Category 3	Regional Deputy Director	3	Existing 3 posts of Regional Deputy Director
Category 4	Medical Officer (Administration) / Hospital Superintendent	9	Existing 9 posts of ESI Hospital Superintendents
Category 5	Junior Medical Officer (Administration)	48	Existing 48 posts of ESI Dispensary Superintendent (above Type 2 doctor)
	Total	62	

(b) Speciality Cadre:- As per the Special Rule, the qualification prescribed for Speciality Cadre is Degree in Modern Medicine and PG Degree or Diploma in concerned Speciality, which is as same as the qualification prescribed for Speciality Cadre in Health Services Department. At present there are only 61 approved posts of Specialists spread across 11 specialities. The existing strength of specialists in various specialities is as follows.

Sl. No.	Name of Speciality	Chief Consultant	Senior Consultant	Consultant	Junior Consultant	Total
1	Physician	1	1	3	4	9
2	Surgeon	1	1	2	4	8
3	Gynaecologist	1	1	2	4	8
4	Orthopedician	1	1	2	4	8
5	Anaesthetist	1	1	2	4	8
6	Paediatrician	0	1	2	5	8

Sl. No.	Name of Speciality	Chief Consultant	Senior Consultant	Consultant	Junior Consultant	Total
7	Ophthalmologist	0	0	1	2	3
8	Physiatrist	0	0	0	1	1
9	ENT Surgeon	0	0	1	1	2
10	Radiologist	0	0	1	2	3
11	Chief Physician	0	0	1	2	3
	Total	5	6	17	33	61

19.44 The Director IMS has recommended for all cadre posts viz, Chief Consultant, Senior Consultant, Consultant and Junior Consultant for all the specialities. It is neither practical nor necessary to provide for all the Cadre posts (viz., Chief Consultant, Senior Consultant, Consultant and Junior Consultant) in each Speciality in view of the meagre cadre strength. It is noteworthy that as far as the Health Services is concerned, the number of posts of Chief Consultant and Senior Consultant are 1.6% and 3.4% respectively of the total cadre strength of the Speciality Cadre. The Commission is of the view that a similar ratio has to be applied for calculating cadre strength of Chief Consultant and Senior Consultant in IMS department also. Common seniority may be taken irrespective of speciality and the senior most among all the specialities may be appointed as Chief Consultant, Senior Consultant and Medical Consultant. The Speciality Cadre in IMS department may be formed as follows:

Category	Name of Post	No
Category 1	Chief Medical Consultant	1
Category 2	Senior Medical Consultant	3
Category 3	Medical Consultant	24
Category 4	Junior Medical Consultant	33
	Total	61

(c) Entry Cadre:- The total cadre strength of Medical Officers in IMS department is 467. After placing 123 posts (62+61) into Administrative and Speciality cadres, the remaining 344 posts may be retained in the Entry Cadre. The nine posts in the category of Dental Surgeon may also be included in the entry cadre with the designation Assistant Dental Surgeon. Accordingly, the Entry Cadre will be as follows:

Category	Name of Post	No
Category 1	Assistant Insurance Medical Officer	344
Category 2	Assistant Dental Surgeon	9
	Total	353

(d) Pay & allowances for various categories in each Cadre:- The existing scale of pay of Director, IMS Department is on par with that of Additional Director of Health Services Department. Hence the scales of pay of the Director, Joint Director / Regional Deputy Director, Medical Officer (Administration) / Hospital Superintendent and Junior Medical Officer (Administration) in the IMS Department may be placed corresponding to the scales of pay of the Additional Director, Deputy Director, Assistant Director and Junior Medical Officer (Administration) respectively in Health Services Department. Higher start in pay may also be allowed to the doctors in all the Cadres as in Health Services Department, but at lower rates compared to Health Services Department.

19.45 In Health Services Department, Special Pay is granted for arduous nature of duties in Administrative and Speciality Cadres. The same may be allowed in Insurance Medical Services Department also once the cadre system is implemented, but at lower rates. It is recommended that Special Pay of Administrative Cadre in Insurance Medical Services may be 25% of amount allowed to corresponding categories in Health Services Department. Speciality Cadre doctors in Insurance Medical Services department are not handling complex cases as being handled by Speciality Doctors in Health Services Department. Hence the rate of Special Pay in Speciality Cadre may be 50% of the rates applicable to Speciality Cadre doctors in Health Services Department.

19.46 In short, the designation, scale of pay, higher start in Pay, cadre strength and Special Pay of Medical Officers in each Cadre may be as follows:

Administrative Cadre

Designation	Cadre Strength	Scale of Pay (In ₹)	Higher Start (In ₹)	Special Pay (In ₹)
Director	1	123700-166800	129300	2100
Joint Director	1	118100-163400	123700	2100

Designation	Cadre Strength	Scale of Pay (In ₹)	Higher Start (In ₹)	Special Pay (In ₹)
Regional Deputy Director	3	118100-163400	123700	2100
Medical Officer (Administration) / Hospital Superintendent	9	95600-153200	105300	1800
Junior Medical Officer (Administration)	48	63700-123700	71800	1175

Speciality Cadre

Designation	Cadre Strength	Scale of Pay (In ₹)	Higher Start (In ₹)	Special Pay (In ₹)
Chief Consultant	1	123700-166800	129300	8400
Senior Medical Consultant	3	118100-163400	123700	8400
Medical Consultant	24	95600-153200	105300	7350
Junior Medical Consultant	33	63700-123700	71800	4950

Entry Cadre

Designation	Cadre Strength	Scale of Pay (In ₹)	Higher Start (In ₹)
Assistant Insurance Medical Officer	344	63700-123700	71800
Assistant Dental Surgeon	9	55200-115300	57900

19.47 The Commission further recommends that new designations, scale of pay and special pay may be sanctioned after issuing detailed orders by the Government to the above effect implementing cadre system. Till then the Medical Officers may be allowed only corresponding proposed scales of pay of their existing scales of pay.

IRRIGATION

19.48 The core activities of the Irrigation Department are focused on providing irrigation facilities, flood control, water conservation, inter-state water sharing, infrastructure for inland waterways to facilitate water transport etc. Numerous projects like Kallada, Peechi, Vazhani, Malampuzha, Mangalam, Gayathri, Pothundi, Neyyar etc have been taken up by Irrigation Department for harnessing the irrigation potential of our State. The then primary objective of irrigating paddy fields has limited relevance or use now. The reservoirs and canals now help to provide drinking water, to recharge wells and irrigate crops like bananas, vegetables etc. Also, there are other agencies of the government involved in the management of water and soil resources conservation, including the Soil Survey and Soil Conservation Department, Haritha Mission, Kerala Irrigation Infrastructure Development Corporation etc.

19.49 The details of the capital, revenue, salary expenditure of Irrigation Department (Major, Medium and Minor) are as below:

Capital Expenditure on Irrigation (₹ in Crore)					
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Major Irrigation	74.36	85.29	73.23	68.80	83
Medium Irrigation	74.91	108.34	67.92	51.27	64
Minor Irrigation	283.76	192.69	72.58	125.71	97
TOTAL	433.03	386.32	213.73	245.78	244

Revenue Expenditure on Irrigation including salaries (₹ in Crore)					
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Major Irrigation	142.99	153.71	150.35	134.67	107
Medium Irrigation	153.11	171.90	169.92	160.61	139
Minor Irrigation	232.61	270.75	240.67	213.71	222
TOTAL	528.71	596.36	560.94	508.99	468

Salary Expenditure on Irrigation (₹ in Crore)					
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Major Irrigation	74.34	84.56	81.11	77.93	79
Medium Irrigation	125.40	144.43	142.15	137.08	110
Minor Irrigation	85.39	107.48	95.19	89.95	96
TOTAL	285.13	336.47	318.45	304.96	285

From the above details, it is seen that the revenue expenditure of the Department is disproportionate to the capital expenditure.

19.50 The Commission noted that there is a definite case for rationalizing the staff structure of the Department, both technical and ministerial, taking into account the quantum of works being executed. The role of the Department also needs to be reappraised considering the fact that while the Department was originally the agency for constructing major dams and canals for providing water for agriculture, the functional role has changed with time. **The Commission recommends that Government should have an urgent review of the functions of the Department and its staff structure.**

KERALA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Appointment of members of the Public Service Commission

19.51 The Public Service Commissions are Constitutional entities, established under Article 315(1) of the Constitution. As per Article 316 (1), the Chairman and other members of a State Public Service Commission shall be appointed by the Governor of the State. It is stipulated that half of the members of the Commission shall be persons who have held office for at least ten years under the Government of India or under the Government of a State. A member of the Commission shall hold office for a term of six years from the date on which he enters upon his office or until he attains the age of sixty-two years, whichever is earlier. On ceasing to hold office, the Chairman or Member of a State Public Service Commission shall be eligible for appointment as the Chairman or member of the Union Public Service Commission or as the Chairman of any other State Public Service

Commission, but not for any other employment either under the Government of India or under the Government of a State.

19.52 According to Article 318, the Governor of the State may by regulations – (a) determine the number of members of the Commission and their conditions of service; and (b) make provision with respect to the number of members of the staff of the Commission and their conditions of service. The Governor of Kerala has made the ‘Kerala Public Service Commission (Composition and Conditions of Service of Members and Staff) Regulations, 1957 to determine the number of members of the Commission and their conditions of service. With 21 Members including the Chairman, the Kerala Public Service Commission is perhaps the largest in the country.

19.53 The functions of the Public Service Commission are defined in Article 320 of the Constitution. These are (1) to conduct examinations for appointments to the services of the State, and (2) to be consulted – (a) on all matters relating to methods of recruitment to civil services and for civil posts; (b) on the principles to be followed in making appointments to civil services and posts and in making promotions and transfers from one service to another and on the suitability of candidates for such appointments, promotions or transfers; (c) on all disciplinary matters affecting a person serving under the Government in a civil capacity, including memorials or petitions relating to such matters; (d) on any claim by or in respect of a person who is serving or has served under the Government in a civil capacity, that any costs incurred by him in defending legal proceedings instituted against him in respect of acts done or purporting to be done in the execution of his duty should be paid out of the Consolidated Fund of the State; (e) on any claim for the award of a pension in respect of injuries sustained by a person while serving under the Government in a civil capacity, and any question as to the amount of any such award, and it shall be the duty of the Public Service Commission to advise on any matter so referred to them and on any other matter which the Governor of the State, may refer to them.

19.54 The functions being discharged by the KPSC are

- (A) Making recruitment to various posts under
 - (i) The Services of the State
 - (ii) The Kerala State Electricity Board

- (iii) The Kerala State Road Transport Corporation
- (iv) The Local Authorities
- (v) The Co-operative Sector and
- (vi) Various other Companies and Corporations, and

(B) Rendering advice on all matters relating to

- (i) The methods of recruitment to Civil Services posts;
- (ii) The principles to be followed in making appointments to Civil Services and posts and in making promotions and transfers from one service to another and in the suitability of candidates for such appointments, promotions, transfers.
- (iii) Disciplinary matters affecting a person serving under the Government in a Civil Capacity
- (iv) Any claim in respect of the cost incurred in defending legal proceedings relating to the acts in the execution of duty, to be paid out of the consolidated fund of the state.
- (v) Any claim for the award of pension in respect of injuries sustained by a person while serving under the Government, in a Civil Capacity and any question as to the amount of any such award.

19.55 The constitutional provisions on public employment and the specific provisions relating to the Public Service Commissions indicate their importance in the overall system of public governance in India. It is therefore necessary that the Commissions perform efficiently and maintain credibility. While the Union Public Service Commission has generally been functioning with efficiency and credibility, the same cannot be said about some of the State Public Service Commissions. In Kerala, there may not have been serious allegations against the Commission, but it is definitely necessary and possible to acquire a greater reputation for efficiency and performance.

19.56 What makes a Public Service Commission great is the calibre of its Members and the efficiency of its staff. The recruitment of the core cadre of staff is at the level of Assistants, through a graduate-level competitive selection conducted by the Commission itself for recruitment to the Secretariat, KPSC and a few other offices. The competition is tough and the

selection is from among the best available candidates, following the principles of reservation for fifty per cent of the seats. With necessary training and capacity building, proper screening for promotions to the higher posts and some career planning, it would be possible to have an efficient official machinery for the work of the Service Commission. Adoption of technology would make the routine work systematic and transparent and free of ennui and drudgery.

19.57 There are no statutes or guidelines for the selection of Members, except for the provision for having fifty percent of the Members from among persons with ten years' service in government. Nothing now prevents the Governor from appointing (based on the advice from the Government) persons who have held non-gazetted positions in government service, with no administrative experience. When persons in active politics are appointed, it would give a strong politically partisan flavour to the Commission. With coalition governments being the order of the day, it is possible that miniscule political parties with limited reach resort to undesirable practices to 'select' the candidate for membership of the Service Commission. There have been instances of the types mentioned above, and these are certainly undesirable and avoidable. It is therefore imperative to frame a set of guidelines governing the selection of persons for appointment to the very important Constitutional position of Chairman/ Member of the Public Service Commission. The formulation of the guidelines will help the government to select the right candidates and will discourage those ineligible persons aspiring to get selected solely through political patronage.

19.58 While framing such guidelines, the government may be sacrificing a lot of discretionary power, but such self-regulation is necessary in public interest. It has to be borne in mind that each Member should have the capacity to be supervising the selection of candidates to the high level posts in government including by direct recruitment to the Kerala Administrative Service and by promotions through the Departmental Promotion Committees. Also, he should be competent to render advice to the government in service matters including in disciplinary cases. **The Commission recommends the framing of a set of guidelines governing the selection of persons for appointment to the position of Chairman/ Member of the Public Service Commission.** The essential terms of the guidelines may be the following.

- (i) The minimum age may be 55, considering that the maximum length of service is six years, that the age of retirement is 62 and that there is a ban on future appointment under the governments after the service in the Commission.
- (ii) The maximum age at the time of appointment may be 59 years, considering that the person would have service of not less than three years as Member.
- (iii) Government officers or former officers should have served at the level of the Head of a Department for consideration for appointment. Those with academic background should have been a Professor in a University or the Principal of a College.
- (iv) Since the age of retirement in several services is sixty, such persons may take voluntary retirement if they are willing to accept appointment for a term of not less than three years.
- (v) Persons known to be active in politics should not be appointed.
- (vi) Persons without service in government should have a post graduate degree or a professional degree, with administrative or professional experience, for consideration for appointment.

19.59 The guidelines could be incorporated in the Regulations, as the Regulations govern the conditions of service, and the manner of appointment cannot be delinked from the conditions of service. In case there is any technical objection, the guidelines can be issued as a government decision.

LABOUR

Head Load workers

19.60 Head Load workers play an active role in the economic life of Kerala. It is, perhaps, only in Kerala among Indian States that a comprehensive legislation, namely the Kerala Head Load Workers Act, 1978 (Act 20 of 1980) was enacted to regulate the employment of Head Load Workers and to make provision for their welfare, for the settlement of disputes in respect of their employment or non employment and for matters connected therewith. This piece of welfare legislation is very much evidence of the concern that Kerala society shows to the working class.

19.61 The enforcement of rights conferred on the Head Load workers by the Act had led to the rise of certain unwelcome and socially undesirable attitudes among the workers, including violent clashes with their employers and the public. So, the Kerala Head Load Workers Act was amended to give more clarity to the definition of the term Head Load Worker. The amendment Act 2008 specifically provided that engagement of a head load worker for domestic purpose in certain areas directly linked to the personal activities of the individuals would not come within the area of operation of the head Load workers. Such excluded areas are the following:-

- (i) shifting including transportation of furniture, personal effects and other house hold articles for domestic use; or
- (ii) working in connection with the shifting of articles of a dwelling house of a person including work in connection with religious or social or public functions; or
- (iii) cutting, removing, shifting and transportation of trees and wood for personal use; or
- (iv) constructing or repairing and maintenance of house including the shifting and transportation of construction materials, equipments or machinery for personal use and not for the purpose of trade; or
- (v) dismantling, demolishing and shifting of old building materials or equipments including their transportation which is not for industrial or commercial purpose; or
- (vi) shifting and transportation of animals for personal use; or
- (vii) shifting and transportation of materials including agricultural implements, agricultural machinery, raw materials, agricultural produces, other materials related to agricultural operations in a person's land.

19.62 In spite of such defined and clear exclusions from the area of operation of head load workers, it is common knowledge that they often forcefully thrust themselves to work in those areas and demand remuneration which the employer is not legally obliged to pay. The unorganized citizens find it hardly possible to defend themselves against such intrusions. These illegal activities seldom get reported to the police for remedial action; even if reported, seldom get redressed; and consequently people suffer in silence.

19.63 The Commission recommends to put in place a mechanism to eliminate this practice and to provide all assistance by the police and the Labour Department to the needy persons.

19.64 Negative reporting about aggressive trade union practices in Kerala is primarily caused by the conduct of the Headload Workers themselves. The services of Head load workers are necessary for society, and the problem is with their attitude and aggressive approach. The workers may be organized into cooperative societies for providing the service to the needy. Formation of cooperative societies will also help them to diversify their activities, and earn better remuneration. This will also be an investor friendly measure. **The Commission recommends the formation of cooperative societies of Headload Workers.**

LABOUR COURTS

19.65 There are four Labour Courts in the State functioning under the Labour Department at Kollam, Ernakulum, Kozhikode and Kannur. While the Presiding Officers of these Courts are deputed among from the Officers in the cadre of District Judge in the Subordinate Judiciary, the Secretary and the supporting staff are deputed from the Labour Department.

19.66 The Presiding officers have informed that the frequent transfer and posting of staff from the Labour Department are adversely affecting the functioning of the Courts. **Considering the difficulties caused by the frequent transfer of the staff, the Commission recommends that the staff in the Labour Courts may be appointed from the Subordinate Judiciary Service. The power to make such appointments may be delegated to the Principal District Judge of the District in which the Labour Court is situated. While creating the required posts in Subordinate Judiciary Service for Labour Courts, the corresponding posts may be abolished in the Labour Department. The implementation of the abolition/ creation of the posts may be done in a phased manner, so that administrative difficulties are avoided. As and when a post held by a person from the Labour Department falls vacant, that post may be filled up by a person from the Subordinate Judiciary Service.**

LAND USE BOARD

19.67 The Land Use Board is a Board only in name. It is a small department of the Government, doing good work in the area of land use studies. Since there are several departments involved in similar exercises, it is necessary that the information is shared, duplication of efforts avoided and the output of each department's work utilized properly. To ensure this, there should be a Land Use Board for the State. It is proposed that a Kerala State Land Use Board may be constituted with the following composition:

- (i) Vice Chairman, State Planning Board – Chairman
- (ii) Secretary, Planning & Economic Affairs – Vice Chairman and ex-officio Land Use Commissioner
- (iii) Heads of the following departments – Agriculture Development and Farmers Welfare, Land Revenue, Survey and Land Records, Panchayaths, Urban Affairs, Town and Country Planning, Environment and Climate Change, Mining & Geology, Rural Development, Soil Survey and Soil Conservation and Kerala State Remote Sensing and Environment Centre – Members
- (iv) Director, Kerala State Land Use Board – Secretary

19.68 The present post of Land Use Commissioner may be re-designated as Director, Land Use Board. He will be the Head of the Department. The Board should meet once in six months.

MOTOR VEHICLES

19.69 As per the existing Special Rules of the Department, appointment to the post of Joint Regional Transport Officer is made by promotion from Motor Vehicle Inspectors and by transfer from Senior Superintendents in the ministerial cadre in the ratio 2:1. As the post of Joint Regional Transport Officer is a technical post and the duties attached to the post requires technical knowledge about vehicles, the 10th Pay Revision Commission in Part – II of its Report observed that the basic qualification and experience of Senior Superintendents are not sufficient to perform the duties of a Joint RTO, but no further action was taken by Government in the matter. This Commission is also of the view that appointment of ministerial staff to a technical supervisory post needs to be dispensed with. The experience as

Clerk, Senior Clerk, Head Clerk, Junior Superintendent and Senior Superintendents do not prepare an employee for performing the duties of Joint RTOs, and such a system of appointment tends to compromise on the efficiency of the organisation. The argument that ministerial staff posted to senior positions can do technical work with assistance from the subordinate technical staff does not have any logic since the technically trained persons can understand and do the jobs directly. When there are two streams of feeder posts, and if one has technical qualifications, it would be prudent to entrust the task to them. The Clerks also actually have an opportunity to move to the technical stream. The Commission feels that in the longer term, the field posts of Joint RTOs should be manned by technical personnel promoted from the ranks of Motor Vehicle Inspectors. At the same time, the Commission feels that sudden elimination of a large number of promotion posts of ministerial staff would cause resentment among those categories and that the changes to be introduced should address their concerns also. Therefore, it is recommended that an administrative rearrangement as detailed below may be considered, which will

- (i) dispense with the existing system of lateral entry of Senior Superintendents to the post of Joint RTO
- (ii) protect the promotional avenues of ministerial employees and
- (iii) make sure that offices under independent charge of Joint RTO are headed only by technically qualified officers.

At present, the total number of Joint RTOs existing in the department is 89, and the promotion is made from technical categories and ministerial categories in the ratio of 2:1. That is, the numbers of Joint RTOs from the technical cadre and the ministerial cadre are 60 and 29 respectively. The distribution of posts of Joint RTOs in various offices are as follows:

SI No	Office	No. of Posts
1	Office of Transport Commissioner (as Assistant Secretary, State Transport Authority)	1
2	Offices of Deputy Transport Commissioners at Thiruvananthapuram, Thrissur and Kozhikode	3
3	Offices of Regional Transport Officers	17
4	Offices of Sub Regional Transport Officer	68

19.70 There will be no further promotions for Senior Superintendents once the channel for lateral appointment to the post of Joint RTO is plugged. Therefore, the existing 21 posts of Joint RTOs on ₹ 40500-85000 in the offices mentioned at Sl. No. 1, 2 and 3 of the above table may be converted as 'Assistant Transport Officer (Administration)' in the scale of pay equivalent to the post of Administrative Assistant in the common category (₹ 42500-87000). Taking into consideration that Joint RTOs have further promotion to the post of RTO / Assistant Transport Commissioner, that avenue for ministerial staff may be protected by setting apart one post of Assistant Transport Commissioner, which is an interchangeable post of RTO in the office of the Transport Commissioner, as the promotion post of Assistant Transport Officer (Administration) and this post may be designated as Assistant Transport Commissioner (Administration), so that the ministerial and technical categories could be maintained as parallel wings and interchangeability of posts from one wing to the other can be stopped.

19.71 Now there are 29 promotion posts of Joint RTO for the category of Senior Superintendent. Even after setting apart 21 posts as mentioned above, 8 incumbents will be in excess. Hence, on the date of implementation of the new system, 21 senior-most Senior Superintendent-turned Joint RTOs' may be accommodated in the post of Assistant Transport Officer (Administration) and the junior-most 8 may be allowed to continue in the existing posts. On accrual of vacancy in the post of Assistant Transport Officer (Administration), those vacancies may be filled from the above 8 incumbents on seniority basis. Further promotion from Senior Superintendent to Assistant Transport Officer (Administration) may be made in the vacancies after accommodating all the 8 incumbents in the post of Assistant Transport Officer (Administration). If any incumbents from the cadre of Senior Superintendent are now holding the post of Regional Transport Officer, the senior most among them may be posted as Assistant Transport Commissioner (Administration) and the method suggested in the case of excess Senior Superintendent-turned Joint RTOs may be followed in the case of the rest of the incumbents now holding the post of Regional Transport Officer.

PANCHAYATS

19.72 The Department of Panchayats, constituted under the provisions of the Kerala Panchayat Act 1960 came into force on 19th January 1962. Government as per G.O(Ms)No.61/2011/LSGD dated 26.02.2011 ordered the constitution of a common service integrating the services under the Panchayats, Rural Development, Urban Affairs, Town & Country Planning, Local Self Government Engineering Wing and the Municipal Common Service. The Commission makes the following recommendations regarding the Department of Panchayat:

1. As per the Kerala Panchayat Subordinate Service Rules, 1994 the period of probation of Office Attendants in the Department is two years with in a continuous period of three years where as in all other departments the period is one year. The appointment of Office Attendants in all the Departments including Panchayats is made from one common rank list prepared by KPSC. **Hence the period of probation in respect of Office Attendants in the Panchayat Department may be reduced to one year as in all other departments.**
2. Kerala has a well-developed Public Library system with over 8,000 libraries affiliated to the Kerala State Library Council and several independent libraries. The library utilization patterns have drastically changed over the years. **In this scenario there is no need for Panchayats to run libraries directly and so the control may be transferred to appropriate authority based on local preferences. The librarians in Panchayat Department may be declared vanishing category and no recruitment may be made in future. The management of the existing Panchayat libraries may be entrusted to suitable local library affiliated to Library Council. If there are nearby Library Council libraries, the books can be transferred to them without duplicating the facilities at a high cost.**
3. At present there are posts of Health Inspector in the departments of Health, Municipal Common Service and Panchayats with separate recruitment process in place for each. The functional control of the Health Inspectors in the Health Department is vested under the Department of Panchayat. The category was mostly un-utilized to its potential in the Pre-Covid era. **In view of the experience out of the Covid-19 Pandemic situation, after its eradication, the role of the**

category may be reviewed and appropriate decision regarding the staff strength and administrative control may be made by the Government.

PRINTING

19.73 The Printing Department undertakes the printing works of the Government and supplies printed documents, forms and registers etc required by all Government Departments.

19.74 The Department of Stationery supplies materials to the Printing Department. Effective coordination between the two departments is necessary for the smooth functioning of the Printing Department. **Hence the Commission recommends that these two departments may be integrated and renamed as Department of Printing and Stationery headed by a Common Head of Department as in the past.**

19.75 Many posts in the department have become obsolete with the advent of modern technology in printing. But at the same time, there is shortage of manpower in the modernized sections of Printing department such as Offset Printing, DTP and Pre-Press etc. **The Commission recommends that the obsolete posts may be abolished and adequate posts may be created in the required sections after conducting a work study.**

19.76 District Form Store Offices were established for the distribution of various forms required by the Government for supply to the public, and for use in Government Offices and other Public Undertakings. With the advent of e-governance, the system of filing printed forms is being replaced by online systems, and so the District Form Stores have lost their relevance in the digital environment. **The Commission, therefore, recommends that the District Form Store Offices may be abolished. The forms/registers currently supplied by the Offices, if any, may be distributed via Government Presses.**

PRISONS AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

19.77 In Para 7.68 (xiv) of Part I of the Report, the Commission had examined and taken a view on the request for a higher scale of pay for the Chief Audit Officer, based on order of the Kerala Administrative Tribunal. The Commission is inclined to review the matter considering the increased importance of the audit function, especially in a Department with low visibility from outside. The Superintendent, Central Prison is in the scale of ₹ 95600-153200 and is the second highest post in the Department, excluding the Director General. Programme Officer and Chief Welfare Officer are also at that level. The Programme Officer is appointed from the level of Chief Audit Officer by promotion and so the Chief Audit Officer cannot be given this scale. The current scale of Chief Audit Officer is ₹ 59300-120900, and that of its feeder post is ₹ 55200-115300.

19.78 Considering the huge gap between the pay scales of Programme Officer and Chief Audit Officer and considering the need to raise the level of the Chief of audit, the Commission recommends that the scale of pay of Chief Audit Officer may be revised to ₹ 77200-140500 (pre-revised ₹ 55350-101400) with effect from 01.07.2019.

PUBLIC WORKS

19.79 While the Commission has not conducted a detailed study, there is a prima facie case for the restructuring of the Department. The execution of works is actually done at the Section office level. The present number of section offices in various wings of PWD does not appear to be adequate and these are not based on the volume of work handled or number of assets maintained like plinth area of buildings, length of road stretches etc. Hence, for each wing, proper re-organisation or re-arrangement is to be done with provision for augmented office resources and manpower especially for site supervision of works and office infrastructure like vehicle and computers with allied peripherals and proper network connectivity. With increased dependency on software like PRICE, WINGS, e-Office etc, the above requirements are highly necessary. Section offices should be provided with at least one clerical staff and adequate overseers for work supervision depending on the volume of work. The infrastructure and manpower of other

offices like sub-divisions and Divisions also need to be suitably re-arranged. All this can be done without creation of additional posts.

19.80 Presently the ministerial staff strength of PWD is high. Due to the e-governance initiatives, the need for clerical staff is getting reduced. Some clerical staff can be re-deployed to sections and other offices based on need.

19.81 The training infrastructure and arrangements need attention with more emphasis on practical orientation. Direct recruits should be put on induction training without independent charge for some definite period, say one year. In this period they should be posted in various wings and offices for getting hands on training on the nature of works to be executed in the Department, as is done in the Central PWD.

19.82 Engineers shall be relieved from all types of non-technical activities like Rest House Management.

SOIL SURVEY AND SOIL CONSERVATION

19.83 The Department of Soil Survey and Soil Conservation is a twin department with two parallel streams. The point of convergence is the post of Director. Although there are close functional linkages and although the qualification for the direct recruitment of Soil Conservation Officers and Soil Survey Officers is the same, namely B.Sc (Agriculture), the personnel are not interchangeable. The two streams maintain separate field offices including District Offices. This is certainly to be avoided.

19.84 **The Commission recommends integration of the two wings. Soil conservation being the prime activity, and soil survey being a preparatory support activity, the Department may be renamed as the Department of Soil Conservation. The Special Rules need to be amended, making matters simpler for both the Department and for the Public Service Commission. The corresponding levels in the two streams should be integrated.**

19.85 There should be only one District Office. The District level Officer may be of the level of Deputy Director, which involves the upgradation of six posts of Assistant Directors. The head of the Training institution IWDMK may be

at the level of Joint Director so that the status and capacity of the institution would be higher. The Engineering wing also needs to be strengthened. However, it would be possible to reduce the number of posts substantially at all the lower levels, as the Department is prima facie overstaffed. The adoption of technology for both office work and field work will help to reduce the manpower further. The Department may critically analyse the work load of each employee, with reference to the functions expected to be performed at each level. The surplus staff can be diverted to places where additional personnel would be required.

STATE INSURANCE

19.86 The Kerala State Insurance Department is a composite insurer doing both General Insurance Business and Life Insurance business and is empowered to underwrite Insurance Business of any subject matter in which State Government have substantial financial interest. Insurance is a specialised profession and thus, it is necessary that the personnel of the department are imparted proper and systematic training to develop efficient and skilled insurance professionals to serve the department. **Hence the Commission recommends the following:**

- i) **There should be an induction training of 2-3 months duration, at a training institute, for Clerks. The Centre for Training in Financial Management under the Finance Department could perhaps be the training institution and they could hire suitable faculty for imparting specialised training in Insurance. There should also be in service course for Senior Clerks and for Officers.**
- ii) **Pass in Licentiate Examination conducted by the Insurance Institute of India shall be made a mandatory qualification for promotion to the level of Junior Superintendent.**

STATIONERY

19.87 The Stationery Department is a minor department bifurcated from Printing and Stationery Department in the year 1992. This Department is the centralized agency for the purchase and supply of stationery materials to all Government Departments.

19.88 The budget provision for the department for Purchase & Supply of Stationery Stores is ₹ 27.05 Crore & ₹ 25.8 Crore and that for Direction & Administration is ₹ 12.42 Crore & ₹ 15.54 Crore for the Financial Years 2020-21 and 2021-22 respectively. This is a disproportionately high cost of procurement and hence a review of the present system is necessitated. Most of the materials of stationery could be procured through rate contracts which may be entered into by the Stores Purchase Department of the Government. Also the Heads of Department and heads of offices may be allowed to purchase articles within their budget provisions and financial powers. Possibility of Procurement through GeM portal may also be explored. Furthermore, the present Government policy is implementation of paperless office and most of the offices are using electronic file management system. **Hence the Commission recommends to consider replacing the existing system of procurement and distribution by the Stationery Department with the rate contracts entered by the Stores Purchase Department in Government and to revise the delegation of powers to the HoDs considering their budget provision.**

SURVEY AND LAND RECORDS

Resurvey and Digitalization of Land Records

19.89 In Part I of the Report, the Commission had observed as follows:

- (i) *The Commission observes that the main function of the Department as stated in its website is the completion of resurvey of the State. Resurvey, started in 1965, has been completed only in 907 out of 1664 villages, covering 51% of the land area of the State, according to the information furnished by the Department. The Commission notes that there have been plans and efforts to complete the exercise, but the performance so far does not inspire confidence. Also, the resurvey process has to be transparent, with intimation to the owners of the land even if it involves some time and cost. With modern technologies available for survey, there could be a time bound plan to prepare error-free documents regarding the area, title and ownership of the lands, with joint action by the Land Revenue Department and the Survey and Land Records Department. Future changes in land ownership can be easily captured through the linkage with the Registration Department.*

- (ii) *The Department, with a total staff strength of about 3800, has three wings, namely the Field Wing with the Surveyors, the Office Wing with the Draftsmen and the Administration Wing manned mostly with staff from the Land Revenue Department. The work of the Office Wing has become nominal with digitalization; therefore, the Draftsmen could be trained and deployed as Surveyors for survey field work. Recruitment of Draftsmen must be stopped immediately.*

19.90 Resurvey has been going on for more than fifty-five years. The current status is:

- (i) Resurvey of 909 villages has been completed and the records have been handed over to the revenue administration. Among the resurveyed villages, only 87 villages were resurveyed using modern survey instruments and have digital land records.
- (ii) In order to provide e-service to the citizens, an effective mapping application for mapping (e- Maps) application has been customised through NIC.
- (iii) Maps of 76 villages out of 87 digitally surveyed villages have been integrated with the Revenue Land Information System (ReLIS) and provided in the e-Maps portals <https://emaps.kerala.gov.in/>, <https://revenue.kerala.gov.in/>. Post mutation sketches are available online in these 76 villages.
- (iv) The Department aims to bring 95 villages under the e-Maps system, including 87 villages where digital records are currently available and additional 8 villages by September 15, 2021.
- (v) Digital resurvey of 29 villages is in progress. Out of these, the department plans to complete the resurvey of 8 villages and to finish the field survey of 5 villages and publish the notification as per the section 9(2) of the Survey and Boundaries Act by 15th September 2021.

19.91 Once the resurvey of a village is completed, a new village will be assigned to that team. Thus, under the present system, the resurvey of only 30 villages will be progressing across the State simultaneously.

19.92 The Commission is happy to note that the Government has given in principle approval for a time-bound action plan for the digitalization of land

records, as per G.O.No.24/2021/Planning dated 18.08.2021, issued by the Planning & Economic affairs (Rebuild Kerala Initiative) Department.

19.93 The Department is working on the establishment of Continuously Operating Reference Stations (CORS) by January 2022 to facilitate and expedite the survey activities. The Survey of India has identified 85 locations, out of which 28 suitable locations will be finalized for establishing COR stations based on the satellite signal tests. The cost is estimated at ₹ 9 crores, and part of the amount has been advanced to the Survey of India.

19.94 The SVAMITVA scheme of the Ministry of Panchayathi Raj, Government of India, aims to provide an integrated property validation solution for rural India. The demarcation of areas would be done using Drone Surveying technology. The objective is to issue property cards to landowners.

19.95 The Department has identified the following as the deliverables of digital survey:

- (i) CORS network will bring the entire State under one geodetic network and will enable different departments to compile their own GIS database very accurately thus helping all departments who are handling the GIS database.
- (ii) As the map data will be in universal coordinate system, any stakeholder can check its correctness by comparing with Google, satellite, aerial photo etc. on a real-time basis.
- (iii) After the implementation of online system, the public can inspect their record from anywhere without visiting multiple offices.
- (iv) Integration of PEARL, ReLIS and E Maps software in a single interface portal will help the citizen to know the details of land with a single user id and password instead of login into multiple portals.
- (v) Once the single interface is functional, post mutation sketch can be made mandatory before registration, and after registration post mutation records and sketch can be viewed by the citizen in a single portal.
- (vi) After the completion of digital resurvey, land related dispute resolution will be faster and effective.

- (vii) Since the records are prepared digitally, Government can easily identify Government land for various developmental projects.
- (viii) The details of Government property, road, canal, dry land etc. can be easily identified by the public and hence encroachments can be prevented.
- (ix) Single window portal will fasten the process of online mutation process imparting ease of living to the citizens as well as for doing business.
- (x) Public will get their map and RoR records online.
- (xi) Government can speed up all developmental projects like widening of roads, identifying no-man's land, land acquisition etc.
- (xii) Agriculture department can provide grading of soil on subdivision basis in the GIS map to increase productivity under agriculture sector.
- (xiii) Health department can point their dispensary, hospitals, laboratories, medical shop warehouses etc. in GIS maps for public information.
- (xiv) Police department can use this map for the fixation of their Station boundaries, crime mapping etc.
- (xv) Multipurpose maps can be prepared for election purpose.
- (xvi) Local Government Institutions can mark their areas of interest precisely based on subdivision.
- (xvii) Disaster preparedness, post disaster assessment etc. can be strengthened.
- (xviii) GIS map can be utilized for various research institutions for their studies.
- (xix) Multipurpose cadastral data gives access to multiple stakeholders
- (xx) The cost of tax payment comes down for the citizen and that of tax collection for the government.

19.96 Land records are extremely important for various purposes. For most citizens, it is a record of their most valuable asset. Kerala has lagged behind in the development of a fully digitized land records system; some of the neighbouring States have evolved very advanced systems for land records.

19.97 The Commission recommends that the government may implement a time bound programme for the digitalization of land records and giving online access to the citizens within a period of two years.

TOURISM

19.98 The Department handles the Promotion, Planning and Development of Tourism apart from handling the hospitality function of the State. Kerala is an internationally acclaimed tourist destination and one of the most popular tourist centers in India. The Department is also the Government agency responsible for looking after the comforts of Guests of the Government and their conveyance needs. It also runs Tourist Information Offices at Chennai, Mumbai, Kolkata and Mysore.

19.99 **The Commission recommends that the need for continuing the office at Kolkata may be reviewed. The department may also examine whether the Mysore office should be relocated to Bengaluru.**

19.100 In addition to the department, quasi government agencies such as KTDC, DTPCs and Tourfed also play active role in the promotion of the industry. Kerala has a variety of tourist attractions viz. abundance of beaches, backwaters, hill stations, wild life Sanctuaries, water falls, festivals, ayurveda resorts, monuments, art forms, etc. Besides foreign tourists, a large number of domestic tourists within and from other states too visit the various tourist destinations in Kerala. The Kerala tourism model is acclaimed as one of the most liberalised tourism models with the private sector leading tourism development and the State acting as a facilitator rather than a regulator. Tourism constituted 10 per cent of Kerala's GDP, as per official statistics.

19.101 The industry suffered major setbacks in the forms of floods and Nipah virus scare. The industry which was recovering from the ebb, has collapsed again with the outbreak of COVID-19 Pandemic. The Travel and tourism sector, which provides employment directly and indirectly for more than 10 Lakh persons in Kerala, suffered a loss more than 90 per cent due to lockdown and other pandemic-related restrictions. **In these circumstances, the Department should frame time-bound comprehensive policies, programs and action plans for revitalising the industry in collaboration with other agencies to regain the past glory.**

WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

19.102 The Department of Women and Child Development was established in 2017 bifurcating the Social Justice Department for focused attention on the welfare and development of women and children. The vision of the Department is an inclusive state where all women are socially, politically and economically empowered, and all children are protected, nurtured, and encouraged to realize their full potential as well as participate appropriately in decisions that affect them and the mission includes empowering women and children through policies, programs, and projects that tap interdepartmental synergies, build strong partnerships, and take a result based approach so that women and children enjoy their rights and live with dignity and without violence.

19.103 The post of District Women and Child Development Officer plays pivotal role in the implementation and popularisation of various schemes of the Department. There are 14 posts of District Women and Child Development Officers in the department. The major duties and responsibilities of the post includes the implementation of Dowry Prohibition Act 1961, Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2006, Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, Child Marriage Act 2006, Protection of Children from Sexual Offences(POCSO)Act 2012 etc. In addition, there are 14 posts of Women Protection Officer and 3 posts of Regional Dowry Prohibition Officer assisting the District Women and Child Development Officer in their activities. Even though Kerala's development experience is marked with very high social and Human Development Index, the State is witnessing an increase in crimes against women and children. The POCSO and Dowry related violence cases are relatively high in the State. **In the above circumstances, the powers, duties & responsibilities of the above officers may be strengthened so as to prevent such incidents and also to provide better aid and services for the affected. The Government may look in to the matter seriously and necessary modifications/ supervisory regulations may be initiated.**

GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT

19.104 The Secretariat has been growing fast. Part of the growth is inevitable as the demands of the new socio-economic situations have to be met. However, increased delegation to the local bodies and introduction of e-office should have led to some reduction of staff in the Secretariat. The Commission notes that there have been several studies, internal and external, about reforms in the Secretariat. The 13th Report of the Fourth Kerala Administrative Reforms Commission submitted in March 2021 is a detailed report on Secretariat Reforms. With such a recent report by a high level body, there was no felt need for a detailed study by this Commission. And we had neither the time nor the resources for a detailed study. Based on the details available with the Commission, we recommend the following for immediate action.

19.105 The Commission recommends that the Finance Department and the Personnel & Administrative Reforms Department review the general delegation of powers and functions to the Heads of Departments and order the delegation of more powers; similarly the Local Self-government Department may examine in consultation with the various Departments the additional functions that can be assigned to the local bodies, and each Department may re-examine the delegation of powers with a view to decentralizing the exercise of powers.

19.106 The Commission further recommends that recruitment to the posts of Confidential Assistants, Computer Assistants, and Office Attendants be stopped until a detailed review of the functional requirement is made.

CHAPTER 20

UNIVERSITIES

Reforming the University Administration

20.1 The extant administrative structure in Universities in Kerala is as old as the independence of the nation. It is hard to imagine a well-functioning higher education institution without a well-functioning administration. Unprecedented technological change and digitalisation revolution have radically altered the academic landscape of Universities the world over. Traditional teaching and learning culture have changed drastically. Universities are no longer teaching shops. The key stakeholders of the system, namely students, demand fast, less procedural and more proactive services from the Universities. Much has changed in teaching and research which have tried to keep pace with the technological leapfrogging. However, administration still prefers to maintain path dependency as far as possible. While everything else shows an uptick, administration still keeps yo-yoing.

20.2 The best Universities in the world, particularly those in the Western hemisphere, have brought the classic roles such as salary administration, accounting and secretarial work to the margin. They have broken new grounds by adopting new and timely roles like internationalisation, business liaison and strategic research support. A more globalised world means encountering new categories of students with diverse cultural ethos. Higher education institutions have to be proactive, taking measures to handle increased competition, both when it comes to attracting the best students and to securing research funding. Furthermore, society expects higher education institutions to show the societal impact they make. As knowledge creation at the cutting edge is the desired goal of Universities, searching and obtaining research funds and grants have become an important function of Universities. Interaction with international higher education institutions demands cross-cultural competence. As forging university-industry linkage, particularly in research, has become increasingly important, interaction with industry is favoured by knowledge about values and norms in business life. Administrative support, which has previously been seen as a peripheral

function, has now become more central when fulfilling these new demands and, thereby, has also become essential for the success of teaching and research. The complexity of the activities undertaken by the Universities demands diversity in roles for the administrative staff. They should have the competences, attitudes and aptitude to respond to the need to ensure the capacity for handling changes in the wider society. The role of professional support staff with the task of supporting higher education institution research activities demands a wide array of competences.

1. In addition to the above, Universities also play the outreach role to the society. The surrounding society has much more broadened expectations from Universities and to meet these expectations, highly educated and specialised support staff needs to be positioned close to the management.
2. Given the changed academic scenario in the state, it is desirable to make reforms in the following areas or processes to amp up the University administration.

Strengthening Technology Adoption

20.3 Currently, e-governance and adoption of digital technology have not made much headway in many of our universities. Still, each file originating at the level of the Assistant in its physical form has to pass through six to seven hands before it reaches the final decision-making destination and then takes its reverse travel for final delivery to the stake holders causing great delay. Similarly, the current practice of parallel file processing -one using paper and the other paperless - that duplicates the processes should be brought to nought. The students who migrate from one University to another, or do part of a course in another University need to spend time and effort to grapple with the nuances of varied IT systems of the different Universities. Proper adoption of IT enabled systems can right size the administrative staff strength. **The Commission recommends that the administration should be entirely digitalised and that a common software for e-governance is used in all the Universities in the State.**

Decentralisation and Delegation

20.4 There seems to be no ownership of decision-making support services in the Universities. Files are routinely and to some extent, mechanically

examined by the support staff without any involvement in the final outcome. This practice does not enable the staff to give their best to the University and the society. Decentralised decision making can ensure better staff involvement that can achieve quality decision making and fast delivery. Many decisions that do not have financial implications may be made at the middle level of administration. Even financial decisions can be decentralised to different levels by assigning different weights to the financial implications of the decision. Delegation of authority should be tagged to accountability. Universities in the State should learn from the best practice in the world. This will considerably save on staff time and resources. Power delegation is an important aspect of decentralisation. All files need not go to the Vice Chancellor for a final nod. Decisions can be arrived at different levels of authority such as Pro-Vice Chancellor, Registrar, Joint/Deputy/ Assistant Registrars depending on the importance of the subjects that are dealt with. **The Commission recommends that layers in the decision-making process should be brought down to the minimum with the enhanced use of technology and that more powers should be delegated to the officers at various levels.**

Skill Enhancement

20.5 Faster and responsible decision making presupposes certain skill set for the University employees. Each employee should have skills in writing, use of MS Office, Acts, Statues and Ordinances of the Universities and rules and regulations prescribed in the KSR. In addition, the administrative staff should have a clear understanding of the changed roles of universities in the fast changing globalised world. These skills can be imparted to the employees by suitably framed training packages. An induction training to inculcate right attitude, aptitude, knowledge and skillset must be introduced. **The Commission recommends that newly recruited administrative staff in different universities should be given a residential induction training of the duration of at least 15 days in a central place in groups of 20-40 candidates.**

1. As the higher echelons of the administrative structure should be highly skilled to cope with technology induced fast changes in the universities, the promotions after the stage of Assistant Registrar should be based on a detailed screening test. Officers with the desired

skills only should go further up the ladder in the larger interest of efficiency. **The Commission recommends introduction of necessary screening for appointments to the posts of Assistant Registrar and above.**

2. The extant fat administrative structure should be made lean and mean to make decision making faster and also to reduce administrative costs to ease the mounting financial burdens of Universities which are currently reeling under severe financial strain.

Reskilling and Redeployment of Staff

20.6 The structure of University administration was designed to support teaching and learning in their rudimentary form. The academic roles of Universities have been redefined pari passu with technological advancement. Consequently, some of the administrative jobs have become out of sync with the changed scenario. Similarly, multiple layers of supervisory jobs created in line with traditional administrative tasks, may have to collapse into fewer ones. **The Commission recommends that each University conducts a review of the work attached to each post, identify the posts like attenders and typists which have become anachronistic, abolish such posts and reskill the existing staff in these positions for redeployment to perform more productive functions.**

Examinations

20.7 The entire process of examination in Universities can be made online without much difficulty. Right from question paper production, administration of tests/ examinations, mark entry in the system, board meeting unto publication of results can be made online with a view to reducing lead time, financial costs and man hours. The current practice of duplicating the processes should stop. **The Commission recommends that all the functions related to examinations be made online.**

Library

20.8 Another area where revamping is required is in the organisational structure of the library. Electronic and digital technologies have significantly penetrated the academic realm; so has it got to be with respect to the Library. The University Library should move away from its traditional functions to modern digitalised practices so that it can render more effective support to

the academic activities. Many of the traditional functions such as issuing and receiving books, accession of books into the catalogue, classification of books etc. can be more efficiently and cost effectively handled by technology. Libraries should be more oriented to act as a support system for teaching, learning and research. It should reach out to the academic actors with documentation support.

20.9 Similarly, the two streams of library personnel, one under the UGC scheme and the other under the State scheme, create unnecessary tension resulting in inefficiency and should be, as far as possible, done away with. A viable scheme to absorb the qualified ones in the State scheme to the UGC stream should be put in place.

20.10 All University Libraries in the State need to be linked through a common software so that each stake holder has access to the resources of all libraries in the state. By introducing inter-library loan facility, buying of expensive books by each library can be avoided. Similarly, subscription to expensive international and national journals should be to a common pool which can be accessed by academics and students in all universities. Possibility of linking all college libraries in the state with the university libraries should be explored so that students in far flung areas have access to the latest books and important journals which otherwise are high hanging fruits for them.

20.11 In many of the Universities, each Department within the same campus has its own library. This results in unnecessary duplication of books, physical space and avoidable library staff. Another fall out of this is that while central libraries have become more tech savvy, the departmental libraries are more luddite like.

20.12 The Kerala State Higher Education Council is coordinating a programme KALNET for making the books and journals from the various libraries available online. **The Commission recommends revamp of the library system in the Universities based on the current requirements, taking into account the above observations also.**

Engineering

20.13 The traditional role of an engineering wing in a University should be reviewed in the fast emerging context. Major engineering activities have become more technology intensive and hence it is not wise for Universities to invest massively in the Engineering Departments. Instead, quick fix solutions of fault and technical glitches should be the aim of the engineering section. Major works should be outsourced to competent players outside the University. This will reduce the need for manpower and work will become faster, cost saving and more efficient. **The Commission recommends a reduction of the staff in the Engineering Wing.**

Planning and Development

20.14 Planning and Development Units/Sections/Departments also should move away from their traditional roles. In many universities, physical, financial and manpower planning are not meticulously carried out and such decisions are often taken on an *ad hoc* basis. In the globalised world, plenty of opportunities for research funding and academic exchange exist. Scope for university-industry interaction is also aplenty. Similarly, inter institutional interaction can go a long way in enriching the teaching and research activities. **The Commission recommends that the Planning and Development Department should be manned by professionally qualified staff so that it can play a key role in activities which can enhance the resources and visibility of the university.**

Periodic Work Study

20.15 The Commission recommends that periodic work studies of University administrative system be carried out by outside professional agencies for increasing efficiency, reducing costs and enabling universities to put the best foot forward.

Amendment of Statutes

20.16 Pay revision orders of University Employees have been issued by the Government from 9th Pay Revision onwards. 9th Pay Commission had conducted detailed study of the various posts existing in the Universities and

recommended to unify the scales of pay of common posts. The Commission observed that the posts under Faircopy Section in Universities up to Office Superintendent were in parity with Secretariat Service. But the University staff were enjoying two more promotions, i.e., Section Officer(FC&D) Higher Grade and Pool Officer. Since no additional work or duty was seen assigned to Pool Officer / Section Officer (FC&D) / Section Officer (FC&D) HG, the Commission recommended to discontinue the practice of promotion of Office Superintendents as Section Officer (FC&D), Section Officer (FC&D) HG and Pool Officer which did not exist in the Secretariat. Similarly, in the case of Agricultural University, the Commission observed that

“On verification of the pay structure of the different posts in Kerala Agricultural University, the following differences were seen when compared with the same or equated posts in other Departments and Universities. 1:1:1:1 ratio promotion is existing between Grade.I, Grade.II, Senior Grade and Selection Grade of Farm Assistant, Farm Assistant (Vety), Technician, Lab Assistant Grade. III, Clerical Assistant, Lab Assistant Grade II, HDV & LDV Driver, Hostel Manager, Matron, Pump Operator, Tractor Driver, Duplicating Machine Operator, Bus Attendant Grade II, Class IV Employee Gr.II, Printer/Compositor/Binder Gr.II posts in Kerala Agriculture University. In Agriculture Department the ratio promotion between Agri. Asst. Gr.II (6080- 9830), Agri. Asst. Gr.I (7450-11910), Sen. Gr. 8390-13270 is in the ratio of 2:2:1. In Animal Husbandry Department Live Stock Inspector Gr.II, Gr.I and Senior Grade also enjoy the same ratio promotion and scale of pay as that of Agri. Assistant. Technician is also enjoying a higher ratio 1:1:1:1 in Agri. University whereas no such ratio promotion is enjoyed by equated posts in other Departments. Drivers in State Department are in the ratio of 2:2:1. Clerical Assistant in Secretariat is in the ratio of 1:1. Class IV employees are enjoying a ratio 2:1 in State Govt. service. Technician, Lab Assistant Gr.II, Gr.III, Clerical Assistant, Hostel Manager, Matron, Pump Operator, Duplicating Machine Operator, Bus Attender Gr.II, Printer, Compositor, Binder are eligible for Time Bound Higher Grade in State Departments”. Hence the Commission recommended to discontinue the higher ratio promotion enjoyed in violation of guidelines in G.O.(P)No.62/2006/H.Edn dated 12.06.2006 and G.O.(P)No.3/2008/H.Edn dated 05.01.2008 and to allow eligible ratio promotion and TBHG as that of State Government employees.

20.17 Based on the recommendation of the IX Commission, Government issued G.O(P)No.86/2011/Fin dated 26.02.2011 revising the pay and allowances of University employees of the State in which the posts mentioned by the Commission were included with the revised scale of pay only for those incumbents holding the posts then. It was also mentioned that the practice of promotion of Office Superintendent as Section Officer (FC&D), Section Officer (FC&D) HG and Pool Officer had been discontinued. Meanwhile some employees of the Universities, aggrieved by the implementation of the 9th Pay revision order, filed Writ Petitions before the Hon'ble High Court against the provisions in the 9th Pay revision order curtailing the promotion posts which have already been enjoyed by them. Hon'ble High Court in its judgement dated 21.08.2014, has set aside the impugned orders declaring that the respondent Universities were directed to fill up the vacancies in the posts concerned in accordance with the Statutes and consider the claim of petitioners for promotions to such posts. It was also ordered that no statutory posts can be abolished either by Government or by the Pay Revision Commission.

20.18 Later by the common judgement dated 08.12.2015 in the Writ Appeals No. 692/2015, 787/2015 etc., the Hon'ble High Court ordered that in respect of the posts which are covered by the concerned Statutes / Ordinance / Syndicate decision of the University, its abolition can only be based on amendment to the Statutes / Ordinance / Syndicate decisions. Based on this judgement, the Kerala Agricultural University issued Order No.GA/J1/4562/2014 dated 19.12.2016, reinstating all the posts and the benefits which were abolished by 9th Pay Revision order, in respect of employees who entered and continuing in a cadre in KAU service before 01/02/2011. It was also ordered that the employees who entered in service on or after 01/02/2011 are entitled for benefits as stipulated in 9th and 10th Pay Revision orders only.

20.19 In brief, the Universities have not amended the Statute/ Ordinance as per the recommendation of 9th Pay Commission and the 9th and 10th Pay Revision Orders. Only because of this, Hon'ble High Court ordered to restore the promotion to the discontinued posts. Hence the Commission recommends to amend the Statutes/Ordinances of the Universities concerned in line with the 9th Pay Revision Order.

Preparation of Office Manual

20.20 It is seen that for declaration of probation of the post of Assistant in the University, a pass in Secretariat Office Manual is necessary. But the Secretariat Office Manual is the backbone of process management in the Secretariat. SOM delineates Secretariat Organisation, functions of different departments in the Secretariat, processing of various types of files etc. Nature of work in the office of a university is entirely different from that of Secretariat. Hence passing Secretariat Office Manual will not provide any fruitful result to the functions of an Assistant or higher officials in the University. **In this circumstance, the Commission recommends to frame a different manual for the staff of the universities prescribing the procedures to be followed in the offices of universities.**

CHAPTER 21

GENERAL ISSUES

A. Pay Revision

21.1 The revision of individual pay based on general revision of the pay and allowances of employees is usually a long process. The Commission was able to evolve a new system by which pay stage to pay stage revision will be made for each of the 83 stages in the master scale for most of the employees. This exercise becomes extremely simple in SPARK. **The Commission recommends that the practice of stage to stage revision may be adopted for the future.**

21.2 In Part I of the Report, the Commission had recommended as follows:

'The Next Revision

5.24 According to the practice followed in Kerala in the recent past, the revision of pay and allowances has been happening every five years. The compounding effect of such revision would take the State employees' scales of pay much higher compared to those of the Central government and most State governments. The last revision in the Centre was with effect from 01.01.2016 and the likely date of effect of the next revision will be 01.01.2026. We are now proposing the revision with effect from 01.07.2019, and if the next revision is made with effect from 01.07.2024, the pay scales will go up to levels which society at large will not accept. Therefore, the Commission recommends that the next revision of pay and allowances in the State should be only after the next pay revision in the Central Government.'

21.3 The Commission reiterates its recommendation that the next revision of pay and allowances of State Government employees

should be considered only after the next pay revision in the Central government.

B. Inclusion of Mobile Phone Numbers in Service Books

21.4 Government employees are full time public servants, and they should be available on call at any point of time. SPARK has the mobile telephone numbers of majority of the employees, but the information is not complete. Every person now in service and every person newly joining service shall furnish his unique personal mobile number to the Department. Normally there should be no need to change the number; the number can be retained even when the phone is damaged or lost, or the number is ported to another telecom operator. The change should be allowed only in exceptional circumstances. **The Commission recommends that every employee must have a unique personal mobile phone number which shall be incorporated in the service records.**

CHAPTER 22

PROBLEMS OF WOMEN EMPLOYEES AND INTERVENTIONS

22.1 The Commission's Terms of Reference include the following: 'To consider the need for a gender sensitive service structure especially multifaceted issues faced by women employees and make suggestions for remedial measures'. The questionnaire issued by the Commission listed the following issues for eliciting feedback from all persons interested:

- (1) What are the multifaceted issues faced by women employees and what measures do you suggest to solve these issues?
- (2) What policies, programmes, processes, practices, rules, regulations and organisational structure do you suggest to make government service more gender sensitive?
- (3) Do you think the existing facilities provided for women employees in the offices are adequate? If not, give suggestions?
- (4) Do you think it is feasible to provide more crèches, breastfeeding facilities, rest rooms and toilets for the Government offices?
- (5) Suggest measures for using Gender Budgeting as a tool for achieving a gender sensitive and family friendly working culture.
- (6) Do you think the representation of women in any particular service is not in the right proportion? Do you consider it necessary to introduce gender quotas to enhance the number of women both at entry and promotion levels?
- (7) Suggest measures, if necessary, to enhance women's professional advancement through specific training programmes, workshops, exposure visits etc.?
- (8) Are the existing systems for handling cases of sexual harassment adequate and sufficient in Government Offices?

22.2 The Commission has received responses to these points from various service organisations and individuals. The matter has also been discussed with some of the District Collectors and Heads of Departments. The

suggestions received are primarily about improvements in infrastructural facilities like toilets, crèches, feeding rooms etc, and do not include any innovative ideas.

22.3 Socio-political and economic empowerment of women is no longer an aspiration in Kerala; much has been achieved over the years. Four conspicuous changes in the social spectrum are (i) women holding more than fifty percent of the elected seats in the Panchayats and Municipalities, (ii) the emergence of Kudumbashree as a strong, multifariously competent organisation of women belonging to the economically weaker sections, (iii) women joining professions which were till recently considered as exclusively male domains, and (iv) girl students outnumbering boys in the institutions of higher education. On the other hand, we see the political empowerment of women generally stopping at the local body level, with the percentage of women members of the Kerala Legislative Assembly at 7.86%, and those of women members of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha from Kerala at 5% and 0% respectively, as on July 1,2021.

22.4 Women employees outnumber men in several departments including sectors with large scale employment like Education and Health. About 75% of the school teachers are women. The Police force has only about 8% women as of now; there are declared plans to raise the strength of women police officers. In the uniformed services like Excise and Forests which were earlier considered unsuitable for women officials, the numbers are increasing. The Fire and Rescue Services however maintains an almost totally male work force. Many departments have women officers at decision-making levels. 8 out of the 14 District Collectors in the State are women. A casual look at the rank lists published by the Kerala Public Service Commission for appointment to the posts in Kerala government service will show that women outnumber men in most of the rank lists.

22.5 Gender budgeting has been seriously talked about in India for two decades now. According to official statements (on the website of the Ministry of Women and Child Development), “Gender Budgeting is a powerful tool for achieving gender mainstreaming so as to ensure that benefits of development reach women as much as men. It is not an accounting exercise but an ongoing process of keeping a gender perspective in policy/ programme formulation, its implementation and review. GB entails

dissection of the Government budgets to establish its gender differential impacts and to ensure that gender commitments are translated into budgetary commitments. The rationale for gender budgeting arises from recognition of the fact that national budgets impact men and women differently through the pattern of resource allocation. Women, constitute 48% of India's population, but they lag behind men on many social indicators like health, education, economic opportunities, etc. Hence, they warrant special attention due to their vulnerability and lack of access to resources. The way Government budgets allocate resources, has the potential to transform these gender inequalities. In view of this, Gender Budgeting, as a tool for achieving gender mainstreaming, has been propagated".

22.6 In practice, the initial effort was to analyse the government budget from a gender perspective to assess the level of attention given to matters relating to women. The obvious focus is on policies and programmes by which women are impacted differently from men, and on areas where women have been historically lagging behind. Gender Budgeting has come to stay in the Indian budgetary system. Kerala has also adopted gender budgeting, and the approach in Kerala has been less of patriarchal and protective and more of empowering and promotive of entrepreneurship. The gender responsive budgets are targeted at women in general and have not bestowed attention on women employees.

22.7 The Commission recommends that the government and the local bodies should earmark specific provisions in their respective gender budgets for creation of adequate women-specific infrastructure in government offices for the benefit of both employees and visitors.

- (i) Toilets should be the first priority, whether in small offices or in schools or in office complexes.
- (ii) Large complexes should have crèches for the children of employees – Government may provide convenient and suitable built up space for this free of cost, allowing the employees' cooperatives or other appropriate organisations to establish and manage them.
- (iii) Some offices have provided a place for women employees to take rest when they feel unwell, mostly during or after pregnancy, beginning of the monthly menstrual period etc. Surprisingly, the main building of the Secretariat does not have such a facility. The Commission

recommends that all big office buildings should have a Wellness Room for Women, with essential facilities including a toilet, for taking rest at the time of discomfort.

- (iv) All offices with large numbers of women employees must have sanitary napkin vending machines installed at convenient locations.

22.8 The Commission has examined the demands relating to service benefits applicable only to women. The most significant rule is about Maternity leave (Rule 100, KSR, Part 1). Accordingly, the competent authority may grant to a female officer, maternity leave on full pay for a period of 180 days; Maternity leave is also admissible to temporary female officers, to the female candidates undergoing pre-appointment stipendiary training and to provisional female recruits continuing in service in a single department beyond one year provided they would continue in service but for proceeding on such leave. Maternity leave may be combined with leave of any other kind. Also, leave not exceeding six weeks may be granted in cases of miscarriage including abortion if the application for the leave is supported by a medical certificate. Leave under rule 100 may also be granted to female officers in cases of hysterectomy subject to the condition that the leave does not exceed 45 days and application for the leave is supported by a medical certificate. Maternity leave period is reckoned as duty for all purpose including probation as per KS&SSR, Part-I, Rule 2(6)(g). Thus the provisions regarding Maternity leave are fairly liberal and the Commission does not see any need for a change.

22.9 There has been a demand for Child Care Leave as in the Central government. The Commission feels that the Central Government has gone beyond reasonable limits of employee mollicoddling by allowing two years leave with full pay (recently reduced to 80% in the second year) for taking care of two children upto their age of eighteen years. The Commission, however, does not recommend adoption of this in the State service considering the limited fiscal space at the disposal of the State. However, there are cases where there is genuine need for the mother to be available for the care of the child, especially during the early days of infancy. We have therefore proposed a Child Care Leave for women employees in Part I of our Report, providing that such leave would be treated as duty for all purposes, except that salary would be reduced.

22.10 Some service organisations have suggested the grant of menstrual leave for one or two days a month. A system of menstrual leave is available in some countries like Japan, South Korea and Indonesia. The Commission however feels that menstruation is a normal physical phenomenon for women for which a special leave is not necessary, and in case of acute discomfort or pain, different types of leave are already available to the employee. It is a private affair which does not have to be declared to the office and it should not be seen as something affecting the efficiency of the women employees.

22.11 Professional advancement of women employees is another topic on which the Commission had sought responses through the questionnaire. However, this is an area where there can be no gender bias or preferences; career advancement cannot and should not be gender-based; it should be based on performance, aptitude and the requirements as per the extant rules. In any case, the Commission has not noticed any gender based discrimination in Kerala government service, and deserving women officers are seen rising to the top levels in the administration. Cliched expressions like glass ceiling and broken rung have no place in the Kerala State service. Training is important for all, and elsewhere in the report, we have given our recommendations for training at various stages in the career of an employee.

22.12 Sexual harassment is a matter of concern as it is the worst form of gender-based exploitation, violating women's right to equality, life and liberty and creating an insecure and hostile work environment. From the reports available to the Commission, we find that instances of sexual harassment in the work places are extremely rare in the Kerala government offices. The law, primarily the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act 2013, and the systems required by law to be put in place for handling such complaints are fairly robust and are capable of taking care of such allegations. Therefore, the Commission does not feel the need for any radical or innovative change in the system for this.

CHAPTER 23

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS (ADMINISTRATIVE DEPARTMENT-WISE)

23.1 AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT AND FARMERS' WELFARE

i. Agriculture Development and Farmers' Welfare Department

- The department should take the initiative to arrange for procurement of the products directly from the farmers and to ensure adequate storage facilities. (Para 19.2)
- The department should take action to impart training to the farmers for applying modern technology in farming for augmenting their yield. (Para 19.2)
- Krishi Bhavans should be tech-savvy and user friendly, capable of impressing the new generation and attracting them to invest or work in agriculture. (Para 19.2)
- The Agriculture Department has to identify the plant varieties best suited for the changed nature of the soils and to take steps to popularise their farming. (Para 19.3)
- The Department should take immediate step to redeploy its personnel based on the agricultural needs of the area. (Para 19.4)
- The Agricultural Department should reach out to the farmers with support rather than waiting for them to approach the Krishi Bhavans. (Para 19.5)
- The Department should collaborate with research institutions in developing farm specific and region-specific technology and take it to the small and marginal farms. (Para 19.6)

- The Agriculture Engineering Wing is prima facie heavily overstaffed and under worked. Corrective administrative measures should be taken to utilize the available manpower for productive purposes. The need for each post has to be critically examined and the post should continue only if there is sufficient justification. (Para 19.7)

ii. Soil Survey and Soil Conservation department

- Soil Survey and Soil Conservation wings may be integrated. (Para 19.84)
- The status of the head of the Training institution IWDMK may be upgraded to the level of Joint Director. (Para 19.85)
- Technology for both office work and field work may be adopted so as to reduce the manpower. The workload of each employee may be critically analysed with reference to the functions expected to be performed at each level. (Para 19.85)

23.2 ANIMAL HUSBANDRY

Dairy Development Department

- The services of Dairy Extension Officers may be functionally utilised in the Food Safety Department through an appropriate administrative arrangement for the strengthening of food safety work in the State. (Para 19.21 and 19.25)

23.3 BACKWARD CLASSES DEVELOPMENT

- 20% of the posts reserved for OBCs may be reserved for the EWS belonging to these communities. Posts remaining unfilled for want of eligible candidates belonging to EWS may go to that reserved category itself so that there is no reduction in total reservation for that group. (Para 2.27)
- The income limit adopted for the reservation for the EWS in the general category can be adopted for the OBCs also, avoiding the exemptions. (Para 2.29)

23.4 CO-OPERATION

- Government may devise methods to professionalise the management of the cooperatives, and ensuring at the same time the democratic character of the governance of societies. (Para 19.9)
- Audit of co-operative societies may be entrusted to professional Auditors over a ten- year period, reducing the strength of the Co-operative Audit Department in parallel. (Para 19.20)

23.5 ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

- Time bound digitalisation of Government activities may be given top priority in the Government budget and suitable manpower may be engaged for the purpose. (Para 10.13)

23.6 FINANCE SECRETARIAT

- Induction training, in-service training and reskilling programmes may be introduced for the employees. (Para 3.19)
- Recruitment to the posts of Typists/Computer Assistants and support staff like Office Attendants must be stopped immediately, and future recruitment made only after a review of the skill sets required for the department/ organisation. (Para 3.20)
- The number of days of casual leave may be reduced to 12 per year as in the Government of India. (Para 7.8)
- The number of days of earned leave may be revised as 30 per year and the system in the Central Government as given in Rules 26 and 27 of the CCS (Leave) Rules may be suitably adapted and followed. (Para 7.10)
- Retirement age may be enhanced by one year i.e., to 57 years. (Para 8.8)

- Improved financial benefits may be given to the families of employees who die while in service. (Para 8.12)
- The Commission reiterates its recommendation made in Para 11.44 of its Report-Part I, to enhance the Ex-gratia allowance to Rs.5 lakhs to the employees who die while in duty. (Para 8.14)
- A lump-sum ex-gratia payment may be made by Government to the families of Government employees who are killed while on duty. These would be special cases on which Government may take appropriate decisions based on the circumstances of each case. (Para 8.15)
- The Commission expects the completion of the process of online preparation of seniority lists without delay. The entire data on personnel should be digitalised and maintained online so that the personnel management function is handled in an efficient and transparent manner. (Para 9.1)
- Government may adopt the principle of giving Time Bound Higher Grade promotions to eligible employees in the immediate next higher scale. (Para 9.4)
- All the schemes for loans and advances to employees may be scrapped, except the scheme of interest free advances for medical treatment, which may continue till a scheme for cashless hospitalization is introduced as part of MEDISEP. (Para 9.6)
- Government may engage with the organizations of pensioners to develop capacity for online use of the PTSB accounts, obviating the need for visiting the Treasuries. (Para 9.8)
- Finance Department and Personnel & Administrative Reforms Department may review the general delegation of powers and functions to the Heads of Departments and order delegation of more powers. (Para 19.105)
- The practice of stage-to-stage pay revision may be adopted for the future pay revisions. (Para 21.1)

- The Commission reiterates its recommendation that the next revision of pay and allowances of State Government employees should be considered only after the next pay revision in the Central government. (Para 21.3)
- Every employee must have a unique personal mobile phone number which shall be incorporated in the service records. (Para 21.4)
- Government and the local bodies should earmark specific provisions in their respective gender budgets for creation of adequate women-specific infrastructure in government offices for the benefit of both employees and visitors. (Para 22.7)

State Insurance Department

- There should be an induction training of 2-3 months duration, at a training institute, for Clerks. The Centre for Training in Financial Management under the Finance Department could perhaps be the training institution and they could hire suitable faculty for imparting specialised training in Insurance. There should also be in service course for Senior Clerks and for Officers. (Para 19.86)
- Pass in Licentiate Examination conducted by the Insurance Institute of India should be incorporated as a mandatory qualification for promotion to the level of Junior Superintendent. (Para 19.86)

23.7 FOOD, CIVIL SUPPLIES AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS

Food Safety Department

- The Dairy Development Department has check posts, but they are ineffective in the absence of statutory powers. Hence utilization of services of Dairy Extension Officers may be considered for the Food Safety functions, by bringing them under the Food Safety Department. (Para 19.21 and 19.25)

23.8 GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

i. General

- The number of holidays may be kept as 15, to compensate for the reduction being proposed in Earned Leave. (Para 7.6)

ii. Chief Minister's Public Grievance Cell

- The technology platform of the CM's Public Grievances Cell may be periodically upgraded to make it more user-friendly and mobile-friendly. (Para 15.7)

iii. Kerala Public Service Commission

- A set of guidelines governing the selection of persons may be framed for appointment to the position of Chairman/ Member of the Public Service Commission. (Para 19.58)

23.9 GENERAL EDUCATION

- A statutory Kerala Recruitment Board may be created for Private Schools. The system of recruitment to posts in private schools for which the salaries are paid by the government may be revamped in the interim. (Para 2.48 and 2.50)
- Government may establish an institution of Ombudsman for educational appointments, through a legislation. (Para 2.56)
- Government may take steps for merger and splitting of schools and transfer of students and teachers to have only healthy schools maintaining viable student teacher ratios, with required academic and recreational facilities. (Para 19.34)

23.10 HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE

- A review of existing cadre system of Medical Officers may be undertaken in 2022-23 in the context of emerging challenges in the

present public health scenario and to address several problems being pointed out by members of the respective cadres. (Para 19.38)

- The feasibility of inducting non-medical graduates with Degree in Hospital Administration, Public Health etc. into the system (with much lower pay scales) may also be examined. (Para 19.38)
- The Health Inspectors in the Health Services Department are functionally with the Panchayats. The role of the Health Inspectors may be reviewed after the passing of the pandemic, hopefully in 2022-23. The numbers could be substantially reduced, and they could be placed administratively also under the Panchayats. (Para 19.39)

23.11 HIGHER EDUCATION

- A statutory Kerala Recruitment Board may be created for Private Colleges. The system of recruitment to posts in private colleges for which the salaries are paid by the government may be revamped in the interim. (Para 2.48 and 2.50)
- Government may establish an institution of Ombudsman for educational appointments, through a legislation. (Para 2.56)

i. Printing Department

- Departments of Printing and Stationery may be integrated and renamed as Department of Printing and Stationery headed by a Common Head of Department as in the past. (Para 19.74)
- The obsolete posts in Printing Department may be abolished and adequate posts may be created in the required sections after conducting a work study. (Para 19.75)
- The District Form Store Offices under Printing department may be abolished. The forms/registers currently supplied by the Offices, if any, may be distributed via Government Presses. (Para 19.76)

ii. Stationery Department

- The existing system of procurement and distribution by the Stationery Department may be replaced by suitable alternatives. (Para 19.88)

iii. Universities

- The administration should be entirely digitalised and a common software for e-governance be used in all the Universities in the State. (Para 20.3)
- The layers in the decision-making process should be brought down to the minimum with the enhanced use of technology and more powers should be delegated to the officers at various levels. (Para 20.4)
- Newly recruited administrative staff in different universities should be given a residential induction training of the duration of at least 15 days in a central place in groups of 20-40 candidates. (Para 20.5)
- Necessary screening for appointments to the posts of Assistant Registrar and above may be introduced. (Para 20.5)
- Each University may conduct a review of the work attached to each post, identify the posts like Attenders and Typists which have become anachronistic, abolish such posts and reskill the existing staff in these positions for redeployment to perform more productive functions. (Para 20.6)
- All the functions related to examinations may be made online. (Para 20.7)
- Library system in the Universities may be revamped based on the current requirements. (Para 20.12)
- The staff in the Engineering Wing may be reduced. (Para 20.13)
- Planning and Development Department should be manned by professionally qualified personnel so that it can play a key role in

activities which can enhance the resources and visibility of the university. (Para 20.14)

- Periodic work studies of University administrative system may be carried out by outside professional agencies for increasing efficiency, reducing costs and enabling universities to put the best foot forward. (Para 20.15)
- Statutes/Ordinances of the universities may be amended in line with the recommendations of the 9th and 10th Pay Revision Commissions for abolishing certain posts/benefits. (Para 20.19)
- A manual for the staff of the universities prescribing the procedures to be followed in the offices of universities may be framed. (Para 20.20)

23.12 HOME

i. Fire and Rescue Services Department

- For improving the performance of the Fire and Rescue Services Department, Government may consider the proposal of the department for upgradation and strengthening of its District Office. (Para 19.23)

ii. Prisons and Correctional Services Department

- Considering the huge gap between the pay scales of Programme Officer and Chief Audit Officer and considering the need to raise the level of the Chief of audit, the scale of pay of Chief Audit Officer may be modified to ₹ 77200-140500 (pre-revised ₹ 55350-101400) with effect from 01.07.2019. (Para 19.78)

23.13 HOUSING

- Housing Technical Cell may be abolished and regular staff may be redeployed to other suitable places. (Para 19.40)

23.14 INDUSTRIES

- Government may try to mobilize a consensus at the national level on the types of concessions that may be given for new investments. (Para 14.6)

23.15 LABOUR AND SKILLS

i. Industrial Tribunal

- The staff in the Industrial Tribunals may be appointed from the Subordinate Judiciary and the power to make such appointments may be delegated to the Principal District Judge of the district in which the Tribunal is situated. (Para 19.41)

ii. Insurance Medical Services Department

- The Commission has recommended for the implementation of cadre system in Insurance Medical Services Department. However, it is suggested that Government may take a final decision in the context of recommendation for reviewing the cadre system in Health Services Department. (Para 19.42)

iii. Labour Department

- A mechanism to eliminate the illegal practices of Head load workers may be put in place and all assistance to the needy people may be provided by the Police and the Labour Department to redress the grievance of forceful self-engagement of workers so that individuals would enjoy unlimited freedom to engage persons of their choice. (Para 19.63)
- Instead of working under competing Trade Unions, they may be organized with cooperative societies for providing the service to the needy. The Commission recommends the formation of cooperative societies of Headload Workers. (Para 19.64)

iv. Labour Courts

- The staff in the Labour Courts may be appointed from among the ministerial staff of Subordinate Judiciary. While creating the required posts in Subordinate Judiciary for appointment in Labour Courts, the corresponding posts in Labour Department may be abolished. (Para 19.66)

23.16 LOCAL SELF GOVERNMENT

- Government may introduce social audit of all programmes implemented at local levels. (Para 12.12)
- Each department should identify services that can be entrusted to Kudumbashree, and enter into a contractual arrangement with them for delivering such services. (Para 16.7)
- Co-operative societies of young persons may be developed for providing a variety of services to Government offices and to the private sector, using their initiative to mobilise opportunities. (Para 16.8)
- The Local Self-government Department may examine in consultation with various Departments the additional functions that can be assigned to the local bodies, and each Department may re-examine the delegation of powers with a view to decentralize the exercise of powers. (Para 19.105)

Panchayat

- Period of probation of Office Attendants in the Panchayat Department may be reduced to one year as in all other departments. (Para 19.72)
- Panchayat Libraries may be re-structured. (Para 19.72)
- Review the role and relevance of the category of Health Inspectors. (Para 19.72)

23.17 MINORITY WELFARE

- The income limit adopted for the reservation for the EWS in the general category can be adopted for the OBCs also, avoiding the exemptions. (Para 2.29)

23.18 PERSONNEL AND ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS

- Two-thirds of the posts in the KAS may be filled up by open direct recruitment from the next selection onwards. The balance one-third may be by selection from among Government employees, gazetted or non-gazetted, through an examination which is different from that for the direct recruits and the quota for Government employees may be abolished after five years. (Para 2.17)
- The Scheme for Compassionate Employment may be abrogated by giving better financial benefits to the families of the employees who unfortunately die in harness. (Para 2.40)
- Achievements of sportspersons in service may be recognised by giving lump sum cash awards or additional increment(s) or both. (Parra 2.44)
- Induction training, in-service training and reskilling programmes may be introduced. (Para 3.19)
- Recruitment to the posts of Typists/Computer Assistants and other support staff like Office Attendants must be stopped immediately, and future recruitment may be made only after a review of the skill sets required for the department/ organisation. (Para 3.20)
- Management of transfers of Government employees should be digitalised. (Para 4.3)
- The practice of working arrangements may be stopped, except for identified new time bound work for which Government approves short term deployment. (Para 4.6)
- Performance Appraisal System in line with the 4th ARC recommendation may be implemented effectively, which will enable positive growth of an employee by understanding his/her drawbacks. (Para 5.1)

- Tests may be conducted preferably by the PSC or even by an outside agency for promotion from Subordinate Service to State Service and for promotion to still higher posts in State Service. (Para 5.2)
- All relaxations from passing the obligatory departmental tests should be stopped and persons who do not appear for the departmental tests or consistently fail in tests must be made to stagnate. (Para 5.7)
- A Selection Board to advise the Government on the selection of Heads of Departments may be constituted. (Para 5.9)
- Government may get the Kerala Government Servants Conduct Rules rewritten in tune with the current realities, issue the new Rules and ensure enforcement. (Para 6.7)
- A five-day week system may be adopted for the government offices, with the change accompanied by consequential changes in the working hours, holidays etc. (Para 7.3)
- The timings could be refixed as 9.30 AM to 5.30 PM for all offices. (Para 7.4)
- Reduction may be effected at the rate of 1% from the monthly salary for absence for every hour or part thereof. (Para 7.5)
- There is no need to declare local holidays when the festival or event does not really affect life in the locality. (Para 7.7)
- The Kerala Right to Service Act, 2012 may be amended to provide for establishing a Commission for the Right to Service, headed by a Chief Commissioner. (Para 11.7)
- All departments may review the notifications issued under the Act taking into account the developments during the last nine years after 2012, and issue fresh notifications under Section 3 of the Act. (Para 11.7)

- All notifications under the Act and all the requirements for the services rendered by each office shall be displayed with clear visibility on permanent notice boards of the offices and on the websites of the departments/ agencies. (Para 11.7)
- A Civil Service Review Mission may be set up to have an independent critical scrutiny of the work of each department and agency of the government to ascertain if the department is able to perform the functions expected of it. (Para 17.10)
- Kerala State Good Governance Board may be established, which is envisaged to act as a think tank for good governance, with unbiased and neutral analysis to evolve reform initiatives and support implementation of the essential administrative reforms in the State. (Para 18.20)
- Finance Department and Personnel & Administrative Reforms Department may review the general delegation of powers and functions to the Heads of Departments and order delegation of more powers. (Para 19.105)
- Recruitment to the posts of Confidential Assistants, Computer Assistants, and Office Attendants in the Secretariat may be stopped until a detailed review of the functional requirement is made. (Para 19.106)

23.19 PLANNING AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

- The present structure of Land Use Board as a State Government department may be done away with, and in its place a 'Kerala State Land Use Board' may be constituted with the suggested panel of members. (Para 19.67)

23.20 PUBLIC WORKS

- For each wing of Public Works Department proper re-organisation or re-arrangement is to be done with provision for augmented office resources and manpower especially for site supervision of works and

office infrastructure like vehicle and computers with allied peripherals and proper network connectivity. (Para 19.79)

- Some clerical staff can be re-deployed to sections and other offices based on need. (Para 19.80)
- Direct recruits should be put on induction training without independent charge for some definite period. (Para 19.81)
- Engineers shall be relieved from all types of non-technical activities like Rest House Management. (Para 19.82)

23.21 REVENUE

Survey and Land Records

- Government may implement a time bound programme for the digitalization of land records and giving online access to the citizens within a period of two years. (Para 19.97)

23.22 SCHEDULED CASTES/SCHEDULED TRIBES DEVELOPMENT

- The SCs/ STs stand on a different constitutional footing, and in view of the legal advice, the Commission is unable to make a recommendation for a reservation of 20% out of the posts reserved for SCs/STs for the Economically Weakest Sections belonging to these groups, but suggest that Government may examine this further. (Para 2.28)

23.23 SOCIAL JUSTICE

- Government and the local bodies should earmark specific provisions in their respective gender budgets for creation of adequate women-specific infrastructure in government offices for the benefit of both employees and visitors. (Para 22.7)

Women and Child Development

- The powers, duties & responsibilities of the post of District Women and Child Development Officer may be strengthened. (Para 19.103)

23.24 SPORTS AND YOUTH AFFAIRS

- Achievements of sportspersons in service may be recognised by giving lump sum cash awards or additional increment(s) or both. (Para 2.44)

23.25 TOURISM

- The need for continuing the Tourist Information office at Kolkata may be reviewed and relocation of Mysore office to Bengaluru may be examined. (Para 19.99)
- Time-bound comprehensive policies, programs and action plans may be framed by the department for revitalising the industry in collaboration with other agencies due to lockdown and other pandemic-related restrictions. (Para 19.101)

23.26 TRANSPORT

Motor Vehicles Department

- The existing system of lateral entry of Senior Superintendents to the post of Joint RTO may be dispensed with, through an administrative rearrangement without detriment to their promotional prospects. (Para 19.69)

23.27 WATER RESOURCES

Irrigation Department

- Government should have an urgent review of the functions of the Irrigation Department and its staff structure in view of the fact that the functional role of the department has changed with time. (Para 19.50)

23.28 ALL DEPARTMENTS

- Each department may identify the jobs that may be done from home, so that some staff could be allowed to work from home for specified periods without sacrificing the quantity and quality of the output. (Para 7.11)
- Time bound digitalisation of Government activities may be given top priority in the Government budget and suitable manpower may be engaged for the purpose. (Para 10.13)
- All departments may review the notifications issued under the Right to Services Act taking into account the developments during the last nine years after 2012, and issue fresh notifications under Section 3 of the Act. (Para 11.7)
- All notifications under the Act and all the requirements for the services rendered by each office shall be displayed with clear visibility on permanent notice boards of the offices and on the websites of the departments/ agencies. (Para 11.7)
- All officers having a public interface should wear legible and readable name badges while on duty, irrespective of the level of the officer. (Para 13.4)
- Each office should have a designated Public Contact Officer who will be responsible to interact with the visiting public and give them the required information. (Para 13.5)
- All departments may review the requirement for original certificates or copies attested by gazetted officers at the initial stage of an application filed by a citizen. (Para 13.8)
- All departments may review the rules, procedures and forms which have been in existence for more than ten years with a view to making matters simpler both for the officers and for the public. (Para 13.9)

- Communication with the people may be improved through better written language and user-friendly websites. (Para 13.10)
- All development departments should ensure people's participation while planning and implementing schemes at local levels. (Para 13.11)

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Government Orders on the constitution and functions of the Commission

Appendix 1A



GOVERNMENT OF KERALA

Abstract

Revision of pay of Government employees, staff of educational institutions, local bodies, etc. - Constitution of Pay Revision Commission - Orders issued.

FINANCE (SECRET SECTION) DEPARTMENT

G.O. (Ms) No.414/2019/Fin.

Dated, Thiruvananthapuram, 06.11.2019

ORDER

Government hereby appoint a Pay Revision Commission consisting of the following members to study and make recommendations on revising the pay and allowances and other benefits of the State Government employees including teaching and non-teaching staff of Aided educational institutions, local bodies, etc.

1. Sri. K. Mohandas IAS (Retd.) (Chairman)
 2. Prof. M. K. Sukumaran Nair,
Honorary Director, Centre for Budgetary Studies, Cochin University
of Science and Technology. (Member)
 3. Adv. Ashok Mamen Cherian (Member)
2. The Terms of Reference of the Commission shall be as follows: -
- i) To suggest modifications, if found necessary, for the pay and allowances of;
 - a) Posts under Government Service, including Part-time Contingent Service and Casual Sweepers
 - b) Posts under Education Institutions of the Government, Aided Schools and Colleges and also such institutions covered by Direct Payment Scheme, including employees in Part-time posts and Casual Sweepers and excluding those posts covered by UGC/ AICTE schemes of Scales of Pay and also posts for which, Central Scale of Pay have already been allowed such as Teaching Staff in Medical Colleges and Judicial Officers etc. and

- c) Posts under Local Bodies and Universities except those covered by AICTE/UGC/Central Schemes.
- ii) To examine the present structure of Pay and Allowances and Other Emoluments and Service conditions including, promotional avenues and fringe benefits available to the above categories of employees and suggest changes, if any required.
- iii) The commission shall also examine the scope of introducing non-cadre promotion to various categories of both gazetted and non-gazetted posts who continue in the entry cadres for long periods of service.
- iv) To examine and suggest changes, if any, to the benefits available to Service Pensioners.
- v) To consider the scope of extending the benefits which are available to Central Government employees at present, but not available to the State Government employees.
- vi) To look into the cases of anomalies in the last Pay Revision specifically referred to the commission by Government and suggest remedial measures.
- vii) To examine the present Civil Service set up as a whole and make suggestions to increase efficiency, social accountability and making Civil Service more people friendly
- viii) To consider the need for a gender sensitive service structure especially multifaceted issues faced by women employees and make suggestions for remedial measures
- ix) To review the existing rules and procedures for fixation of pay and suggest methods for simplification thereof with a view to reduce cost and time spent on such exercises
- x) To asses and indicate the additional financial commitment on account of implementation of its recommendations, including the methodology/ assumptions adopted for such assessment.
3. The Commission shall submit its report within a period of six months.

By Order of the Governor,
MANOJ JOSHI,
Additional Chief Secretary (Finance)

To

Sri. K. Mohandas IAS (Retd.) (Chairman).
Prof. M. K. Sukumaran Nair,
Honorary Director, Centre for Budgetary Studies, Cochin
University of Science and Technology (Member).
Adv. Ashok Mamen Cherian (Member).

The Accountant General (A&E), Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram.
The Accountant General (G&SSA), Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram.
The Accountant General (E&RSA), Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram.
All Heads of Departments and Offices.
All Departments (all Sections) of the Secretariat including Law Department.
The Director of Treasuries, Thiruvananthapuram.
The Secretary, Kerala Public Service Commission,
Thiruvananthapuram (with C.L.).
The Secretary, Kerala State Electricity Board, Thiruvananthapuram (with C.L.).
The Managing Director, K S RT C, Thiruvananthapuram (with C.L.).
The Registrar, High Court of Kerala, Ernakulam (with C.L.).
The Registrar, University of Kerala/Cochin/Calicut/Mahatma Gandhi/
Kannur/ Kerala Agricultural University/ Sree Sankaracharya Sanskrit
University/ APJ Abdul Kalam Technological University/
Kerala University of Fisheries and Ocean Studies/Kerala University of Health
Sciences/ Kerala Veterinary and Animal Sciences University/ Thunchath
Ezhuthachan Malayalam University (with C.L.).
The Advocate General, Kerala, Ernakulam (with C.L.).
All Secretaries, Additional Secretaries, Joint Secretaries, Deputy
Secretaries and Under Secretaries to Government.
The Secretary to Governor.
The Private Secretaries to Chief Minister and other Ministers,
Government Chief Whip and Leader of Opposition.
The Private Secretary to Speaker/Deputy Speaker.
The Director of Public Relations, Thiruvananthapuram
The Additional Secretary to Chief Secretary
The Managing Directors/General Managers of all Government
Companies/Boards/ Corporations/ Autonomous Bodies Nodal Officer,
www.finance.kerala.gov.in
The Stock File/ Office Copy.

Appendix 1B**GOVERNMENT OF KERALA****Abstract**

Revision of pay and allowances of officers and staff of the Kerala Water Authority, Municipal/Corporation contingent employees and employees of various grant in aid institutions in Kerala -Entrusting Eleventh Pay Revision Commission to study and make recommendations-Orders issued

FINANCE (SECRET SECTION) DEPARTMENT**G.O. (Ms) No.40 /2020/Fin.****Dated, Thiruvananthapuram, 17.03.2020***Read G.O.(Ms) No. 414/2019/Fin. dated 06.11.2019***ORDER**

Government have constituted Eleventh Pay Revision Commission to study and make recommendations on revising the pay and allowances of the State Government employees vide Government Order read above. Now Government are pleased to entrust the above Commission to examine and make recommendations on revision of pay and allowances and other benefits of officers and staff of the Kerala Water Authority, Municipal/Corporation contingent employees and employees of various Grant in aid institutions in Kerala confining to the Terms of Reference issued in the Government Order read above.

(By Order of the Governor)

MINI V.R.,

Additional Secretary (Finance)

To

1. Sri K. Mohandas IAS (Retd.) Chairman, 11th Pay Revision Commission (with C.L.)
2. Prof. M. Sukumaran Nair, Member, 11th Pay Revision Commission (with C.L.)
3. Adv. Ashok Mamen Cherian, Member, 11th Pay Revision Commission (with C.L.)
4. The Secretary, Eleventh Pay Revision Commission, Thiruvananthapuram.
5. The Accountant General (A&E), Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram.
6. The Accountant General (G&SSA), Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram.
7. The Accountant General (E&RSA), Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram.
8. All Secretaries, Additional Secretaries, Joint Secretaries, Deputy Secretaries and Under Secretaries to Government.
9. The Managing Director, Kerala Water Authority, Thiruvananthapuram.
10. The Director of Urban Affairs, Thiruvananthapuram.
11. The Private Secretaries to Chief Minister and other Ministers, Government Chief Whip and Leader of Opposition
12. Under Secretary to Additional Chief Secretary (Finance).
13. Nodal Officer, www.finance.kerala.gov.in
14. Stock File/ Office Copy (SS2/13/2019-FIN E 1245658)

Appendix 1C



**കേരള സർക്കാർ
സംഗ്രഹം**

ധനകാര്യ വകുപ്പ്-ശമ്പളപരിഷ്കരണ കമ്മീഷന്റെ കാലാവധി ദീർഘിപ്പിച്ച് ഉത്തരവ് പുറപ്പെടുവിക്കുന്നു.

ധനകാര്യ (രഹസ്യ) വകുപ്പ്

സ.ഉ. (കൈ.) നം. 78/2021/ധന.

തീയതി, തിരുവനന്തപുരം, 13/07/2021

- പരാമർശം:- 1 06.11.2019 ലെ സ.ഉ.(കൈ.) നം.414/2019/ധന.
- 2 07.05.2020 ലെ സ.ഉ.(കൈ.) നം.54/2020/ധന.
- 3 08.01.2021 ലെ സ.ഉ.(കൈ.) നം.5/2021/ധന.
- 4 പതിനൊന്നാം ശമ്പളപരിഷ്കരണ കമ്മീഷൻ സെക്രട്ടറിയുടെ 18.06.2021-ലെ 1832/എ1/2020/XI-പി.ആർ.സി. നമ്പർ കത്ത്.

ഉത്തരവ്

സർക്കാർ, എയ്ഡഡ് സ്ഥാപനങ്ങൾ, തദ്ദേശസ്ഥാപനങ്ങൾ എന്നിവിടങ്ങളടക്കമുള്ള ജീവനക്കാരുടെയും അദ്ധ്യാപകരുടെയും ശമ്പളവും അലവൻസുകളും മറ്റ് ആനുകൂല്യങ്ങളും പരിഷ്കരിക്കുന്നതിന് ശുപാർശ സമർപ്പിക്കുന്നതിനായി സർക്കാർ പരാമർശം 1 പ്രകാരം ശമ്പളപരിഷ്കരണ കമ്മീഷനെ ആറു മാസ കാലാവധി നിശ്ചയിച്ച് നിയമിച്ചിരുന്നു. പ്രസ്തുത കമ്മീഷന്റെ കാലാവധി പരാമർശം 2, 3 ലെ ഉത്തരവുകൾ പ്രകാരം യഥാക്രമം 31.12.2020, 30.06.2021 വരെ ദീർഘിപ്പിച്ചിരുന്നു. കോവിഡ്-19 രണ്ടാം തരംഗത്തിന്റെ പശ്ചാത്തലത്തിൽ ഏർപ്പെടുത്തിയ ലോക്ഡൗൺ മൂലം പ്രവർത്തി ദിനങ്ങൾ നഷ്ടപ്പെട്ട സാഹചര്യത്തിൽ കമ്മീഷനെ ചുമതലപ്പെടുത്തിയിരുന്ന പ്രവർത്തികൾ പൂർത്തീകരിക്കുന്നതിനായി ശമ്പളപരിഷ്കരണ കമ്മീഷന്റെ പ്രവർത്തന കാലയളവ് 31.08.2021 വരെയും കമ്മീഷനിലെ ഉദ്യോഗസ്ഥരുടെ കാലാവധി 30.09.2021- വരെയും ദീർഘിപ്പിച്ച് നൽകണമെന്ന് കമ്മീഷൻ ചെയർമാൻ പരാമർശിത കത്ത് മുഖാന്തിരം സർക്കാരിനോട് അഭ്യർത്ഥിച്ചിരുന്നു.

സർക്കാർ ഇക്കാര്യം വിശദമായി പരിശോധിച്ചതിന്റെ അടിസ്ഥാനത്തിൽ ശമ്പളപരിഷ്കരണ കമ്മീഷന്റെ പ്രവർത്തന കാലാവധി 31.08.2021 വരെയും കമ്മീഷനിലെ ഉദ്യോഗസ്ഥരുടെ കാലാവധി 30.09.2021-വരെയും ദീർഘിപ്പിച്ച് ഉത്തരവാകുന്നു.

(ഗവർണ്ണറുടെ ഉത്തരവിൻ പ്രകാരം)
രാജേഷ് കുമാർ സിംഗ്
അഡീഷണൽ ചീഫ് സെക്രട്ടറി (ധനകാര്യം)

പകർപ്പ്:
 പ്രിൻസിപ്പൽ അക്കൗണ്ടന്റ് ജനറൽ (എ&ഇ), കേരള, തിരുവനന്തപുരം
 അക്കൗണ്ടന്റ് ജനറൽ (സ്റ്റേറ്റ് ആഡിറ്റ്-II), കേരള, തിരുവനന്തപുരം
 സെക്രട്ടറി, പതിനൊന്നാം ശമ്പളപരിഷ്കരണ കമ്മീഷൻ, ട്രാൻസ് ടവേഴ്സ്, വഴുതക്കാട്,
 തിരുവനന്തപുരം-14
 ഷെറി ഡയറക്ടർ, തിരുവനന്തപുരം
 നോഡൽ ഓഫീസർ, www.finance.kerala.gov.in,
 ഓഫീസ് പകർപ്പ് / സൂക്ഷിപ്പ് ഫയൽ (1245658).