

**Observations stated in the Report Tabled at the Parliament by the Committee on Public Accounts as per Standing Order No. 119(4) and Presentation of Relevant Actions taken**

**Parliamentary Series Number :290**

**Name of the Institution : Ministry of Environment**

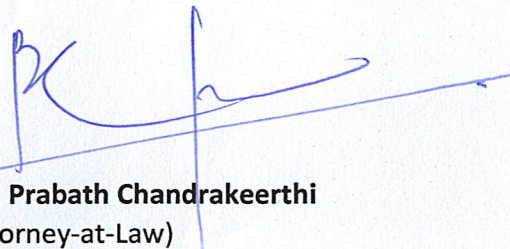
| <b>Shortcoming identified by the Committee</b>                                                                                         | <b>Action taken by the Institution to rectify the shortcomings/ current status</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
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| Replies were not submitted within a month for every audit query made by the Auditor General.                                           | In certain occasions, when providing replies for audit queries, information has to be obtained from other state institutions and replies provided by various sections have to be complied to prepare the final report. Therefore, there were occasions where delays occurred in providing replies for audit queries, however, action are being taken to prevent this type of delays in future. |
| Documents relating to confirmation of ownership of vehicles were not in possession of the institution with regard to all the vehicles. | Due to changes in Ministry names, it has become difficult to find out the institutions which own the said vehicles. In several instances, requests have been made to the Comptroller General seeking instructions.                                                                                                                                                                             |
| State emblem was not painted on every vehicle.                                                                                         | Measures are being taken to stick the state emblem on vehicles and currently the specifications are being prepared.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| A condemned vehicle was not disposed of within a period of 08 months after its being declared as condemned.                            | A Board of Assessment has been appointed to dispose vehicles and as soon as a Motor Vehicle Inspector was nominated by the Departemnt of Motor Traffic, measures will be taken to dispose vehicles.                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Provisions were allocated to other institutions external to the specified time period.                                                 | Measures are taken at present to release provisions within the specified period.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |



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| <p>Staff had been recruited exceeding the approved limit.</p>                                                                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of Development Officer positions in year 2021 exceeded by 02 positions than the number of positions approved for the Ministry of Environemnt up to that year and by the letter No. 02/02/ADM/Misc-10 dated 15.12.2020, a request has been made to the Department of Management Services under F.R. 71 to approve additional number of 30 Development Officers to the Ministry than the Development Officers serving currently.</li> <li>• Further, considering the request made by District Secretaries to appoint an Environmental Officer to every Divisional Secretariat, by my letter No. 02/02/ADM/Misc-10 dated 04.05.2021, a request has been made under F.R. 71 to create 391 Development Officer Positions for the Minsitry of Environment.</li> <li>• Approval has been granted to this ministry by the letter No. DMS/CM/11dated 25.01.2023 of the Department of Management Services to recruit 299 Development Officers.</li> <li>• Although the Ministry of Public Administration, Home Affairs, Provincial Councils and Local Government has attached 597 new Development Officers to this ministry, as approval given only to 299 of them has become a problematic issue, it has been informed by the letter No. ADM/02/02/01 dated 14.08.2023, sent to the Committee to Review Public Sector Recruitments, that there is no objection regarding the approval of excess development officers to this ministry or their placement in another duty station.</li> </ul> |
| <p>From among the planned training opportunities, the number of training opportunities provided remained at a level lesser than 50%.</p> | <p>Due to the Covid Pandamic situation prevailed in year 2021, organizing of training programs became impractical, the number of training opportunities remained at a lower level. Further, according the Cabinet decision No.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |



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|                                                                                                    | <p>21/1596/304/134 dated 30.08.2021 and owing to the situation prevailed at that time; having reviewed the expenditure of this expenditure head, the Treasury was informed that provisions of Rs. 1.2 Million would become residual.</p> <p>Due to limitations made on public expenditure by National Budget Circular No. 03/2022, even the planned staff training programs could not be implemented in year 2023.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| The opinion of the audit on accounts of the institution remained at a disclaimer or adverse state. | The opinion on accounts of the institution does not remain at a disclaimer or adverse state as the opinion given by the Auditor General's Report is a qualified opinion.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Recommendations of the Auditor General's Report were not implemented.                              | <p>The recommendations stated in the Auditor General's Report have been implemented. With regard to recommendations relating to the "Sobadam Piyasa" building, the present situation is as follows.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In several instances, Urban Development Authority has been requested to transfer the land in which the building is located. Subsequent to transfer of land, measures will be taken to reveal its assessment value in Financial Statements under non-financial assets.</li> <li>• Subsequent to making the final bill payment of the building, measures will be taken to release the retention money.</li> </ul> |

  
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 Secretary  
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