No Fire hazard response and mitigation plan was found to have been prepared for assessing requirements of infrastructure and equipment for the entire State. On the financial management front, savings under major construction works was a matter of concern, given the fact that a number of under-construction fire stations had time overrun. Substantial expenditure incurred by the Government on procurement of fire fighting vehicles did not fructify into strengthening of the fleet.

The matters were referred to the Government in May 2020; replies were, however, awaited (November 2020).

HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE DEPARTMENT

WEST BENGAL MEDICAL SERVICES CORPORATION LIMITED

3.2 Excess payment to contractors on Integrated Facility Management Services at eight Super Specialty Hospitals

West Bengal Medical Services Corporation Limited made an excess payment of ₹ 4.93 crore to three contractors for Integrated Facility Management Services in eight Super Specialty Hospitals during March 2018 to August 2020, as it allowed payment in excess of carpet area in deviation from bid documents.

The Health & Family Welfare (H&FW) Department set-up (between October 2016 and July 2019) 42 Multi/ Super Specialty Hospitals (SSHs) in 15 districts of West Bengal, each with a capacity of 300/ 500 beds. West Bengal Medical Services Corporation Ltd. (WBMSCL), a State Government Corporation, has been entrusted to manage security, housekeeping and patient support services in these hospitals. WBMSCL decided (November 2017) to outsource the entire job (formally referred as Integrated Facility Management Services) by engaging private agencies.

WBMSCL invited bids in November 2017 and January 2018 and awarded contracts in February 2018 to three agencies selected for providing the services[112] in 42 hospitals for an initial period of three years.

WBMSCL, in the bidding document, had *inter alia* indicated hospital-wise tentative super-built areas (80,000 sq ft for 300 bedded G+4 buildings and 160,000 sq ft for 500 bedded G+9 buildings) and stipulated that financial bid would be quoted by the bidder on per square foot of carpet area per month basis. In accordance, rates were finalised on per square foot of carpet area per month basis.

Scrutiny of records of WBMSCL (March-April 2019 and September 2020) pertaining to the period from March 2018 to August 2020 showed that ₹ 39.53 crore was paid to three agencies against services provided to eight hospitals. Further scrutiny showed that the service providers claimed bills for areas in excess of carpet area and in most cases, based on the built-up areas. WBMSCL, however, accepted the claims and released payment accordingly as detailed in ***Appendix 3.9***.

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[112] Services are broadly classified into three types of services, viz. Security Services, Housekeeping Services (including Pest Control and Horticulture Services) and Patient Support Services.

As a result, against a total carpet area of 6,04,397 sq ft in those eight hospitals, payment was released for 6,89,238 to 6,89,250 sq ft per month for various periods [113] starting from March 2018 (in six hospitals), January 2019 (one hospital) and April 2019 (one hospital). This practice was continuing as of August 2020 leading to excess payment of ₹ 4.93 crore against an aggregate excess area of 24,35,266 sq ft (adding all months).

It was not clear to Audit how the authority paid for Integrated Facility Management Services to the contractors on the basis of area in excess of carpet area and in most cases on built-up area instead of carpet area in violation of its own terms of contract.

The issue being pointed out by Audit, the Corporation stated (March 2020) that the matter would be looked into.

The matter was referred to the Government in October 2020; reply was, however, awaited (November 2020).

WEST BENGAL STATE HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE SAMITI

3.3 Avoidable expenditure

Payment of employees' contribution to the Employees Provident Fund Organisation without actual realization led to an avoidable outgo of ₹ 1.32 crore.

Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions (EPF & MP) Act 1952, aims to provide social security in the form of Employees' Provident Fund (EPF), Pension and Insurance to all employees who are employed for wages, in or in connection with the work of an establishment. Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO), functioning under the aegis of the Ministry of Labour and Employment (MLE), Government of India (GoI), is entrusted to administer the EPF & MP Act. Under the EPFO, the Central Board of Trustees, is responsible for administering the Funds vested with it, which include the Employees' Provident Funds Scheme 1952, Employees' Pension Scheme, 1995 and Employees' Deposit-Linked Insurance Scheme, 1976. The referred Schemes, comprised contributions (at applicable rates as fixed from time to time by the MLE, GoI) payable by the employer of any establishment, in respect of Wages[114] payable to each employee. The employees' contribution[115], applicable only for the Employees' Provident Funds Scheme 1952, was to be recovered by means of deduction from the wages of the employee and not otherwise.

During examination (August 2018 to December 2018) of records[116] of the West Bengal State Health & Family Welfare Samiti[117] (*Samiti*) it was observed

[113] *As the coverage area gradually increased during the initial months of operation of the hospitals, calculation of excess payment has been made on a conservative way by considering only the period when the coverage area shown in bills surpassed the total carpet area and even reached built-up area.*

[114] *"Basic wages + dearness allowance (including cash value of any food concession) + retaining allowance".*

[115] *Employee contribution: 12 per cent of the wages.*

[116] *Pertaining to the Accounts of fiscal 2016-17.*

[117] *West Bengal State Health & Family Welfare Samiti, functions under the Health & Family Welfare Department, Government of West Bengal.*

Appendix 3.9

(Refer paragraph 3.2, page 97)

Statement showing details of excess payment made by WBMSCL by allowing payments in excess of carpet area

Name of the SSH	Bill period	Built-up Area	Carpet Area	Area paid for per month	Excess area paid for per month	Total excess area paid for totaling all months	Rate per sq ft	Excess payment	Excess payment (including GST)
		(in sq ft)					(in ₹)		
Ghatal SSH	March 2018-August 2020	80,000	66,772	76,748	9,976	2,99,280	16.36 to 22.10	**50,62,022**	**59,73,186**
Jalpaiguri SSH	March 2018-August 2020	1,60,000	1,38,170	1,60,000	21,830	6,54,900	16.81 to 18.89	**1,11,00,118**	**1,30,98,140**
Bishnupur SSH	March 2018-August 2020	80,000	65,916	80,000	14,084	4,22,520	16.36 to 22.10	**71,46,503**	**84,32,874**
Raghunathpur SSH	March 2018-August 2020	80,000	66,677	78,000	11,323	3,39,690	16.36 to 22.10	**57,45,517**	**67,79,710**
Rampurhat SSH	January 2019 to August 2020	80,000	66,677	71,137	4,460	89,200	17.99 to 18.89	**16,47,256**	**19,43,763**
Diamond Harbour SSH	March 2018 to August 2020	80,000	66,585	71,142 to 71,154	4,557 to 4,569	1,36,788	18.41 to 20.10	**25,81,407**	**30,46,060**
Domkal SSH	April 2019 to August 2020	80,000	67,177	72,211	5,034	85,578	18.41 to 18.89	**15,87,573**	**18,73,336**
Mal SSH	March 2018 to August 2020	80,000	66,423	80,000	13,577	4,07,310	16.81 to 18.89	**69,03,633**	**81,46,287**
Grand Total		**7,20,000**	**6,04,397**	**6,89,238 to 6,89,250**	**84,841 to 84,853**	**24,35,266**		**4,17,74,029**	**4,92,93,356**

Source: Records of WBMSCL