

## **Responses to the issues highlighted in the Article**

Implementation of projects though desired was not possible due to the conditions prevalent at that time in the Northern and Eastern Provinces due to.

Lack of human and physical resources.

Further Projects that commenced took along period to complete due to the same reasons. Therefore it was imperative that we kept the money in Deposit Account with the approval of the Treasury until completion of the Project.

All payments were made in accordance with approved procedures or with Cabinet Approval.

**The correct position with regard to each of the issues are specified below**

### **1. Preparation of Procurement Plans-**

The Ministry of Constitutional Affairs and National Integration was conceived in 2005 and it was not possible to come up with a Procurement plan for that year. However thereafter up to 2015, procurement plans had been drawn up yearly.

### **2. Rs. 170,360 of Funds provided by the UNDP retained in a Deposit Account till 2011**

All funding provided for reconciliation purposes was fully utilized for that purpose by the Ministry. All MULTILINGUAL name boards in the DISTRICT and the DIVISIONAL SECRETARIES in the said Provinces were erected with the resources provided by UNDP. I ACKNOWLEDGE that it could not be done at the speed that was intended. The money. Was held until fully utilized with approval from the relevant authorities. If money was misappropriated by the Ministry UNDP would never have provided funds to the Ministry until 2017 which the 3rd phase of the same Project.

### **3. Payment of rent for six vehicles**

The Ministry had very limited resources. The 8 vehicles which were the Ministry assets were all old vehicles and was used by the officers. Therefore with the approval of the Treasury was compelled to take six vehicles on rent for a limited period of time for the Minister and the Deputy Minister.

### **4. Books valued at Rs 27,792 misplaced**

The Ministry shifted to a. new location in Rajagiriya in 2009, in transition 95 books in the library had got misplaced. Following the applicable circulars investigation was made by a committee appointed for that purpose. The books were valued at Rs . 27, 792 .The recommendations of the Committee was given effect to as per the Financial Regulations Applicable for losses at Government Institutions.

**5. Duties of the National integration Programme Unit not stated and Consultants appointed outside Public Finance Circulars**

The National Integration Programme Unit (NIPU) functioned under the ministry once the funding dried up. This Unit was brought under the Ministry with the approval of the Cabinet of Ministers.

Many experts from diverse fields functioned as Consultants. It was only the support staff that was absorbed to the Ministry.

The Consultants continued to provide the same inputs until their term of office expired. However during their tenure of office under the Ministry their allowances were paid in line with Government approved rates which was their entitlements for services rendered.

**6. Salary and allowance drawn by Chairman National Institute of Language Education and Training-**

This matter was referred to the Attorney General for his opinion. As per his advice the Attorney General has taken steps to file action to recover the amount overpaid to the officer. This officer made a part payment and action filed to recover the balance due to the State.

**7. Teaching of the Tamil language at Pirivenas**

Teaching of Tamil Language at Pitivenas enabled anyone desirous of learning the Tamil language to learn same at the pirivenas. The ministry in consultation with the Teachers evaluated same and since it was not generating the desired results handed it over to the Pirivena Unit of the Ministry of Education. The second language textbook used in schools was used for teaching at the pirivenas. Many attempts were made to streamline the teaching process at the Pirivenas with consultations with the Ministry of Education.

**8. Language program and the popularization of the English Language .**

This programme was proposed for 2007. However after an evaluation and a situation analysis, considering the context prevalent at that time the Consultants appointed for the purpose expressed the view that it would be prudent to upscale the teaching of the Official Languages instead of teaching English since there were many organizations providing that facility.

The resources allocated was used for the recurrent expenditure for the teaching of the Official Languages.

**9. Payment of Rs 77,147 and 57,013 for 8 programme,for officers who conducted same ,with the Approval of the Director Establishments**

These payments were made to officers who took part in the Mobile Services during the "Negenehira Navodaya and the Uhthuru Vasanthaya" development programmes during the period. 2007- 2009. The officers had to be out of Colombo continuously for several during the week and the. Weekends, in order to ensure the effective delivery of services approval was sort to make an additional payment to the

officers who attended these mobile clinics. Our interpretation of the circular was that it granted approval to make the payment for a limited time period.

Since it was made known after further inquiry that the payment cannot be made it was completely stopped.

It should be noted that these officers who attended these Mobile Clinics were able to provide these disadvantaged groups of people their basic LEGAL DOCUMENTATION In quick time which was the need of the hour.

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