

KERALA STORY

A TALE OF BETRAYAL

ED files money laundering case against Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan's daughter Veena Vijayan, her IT company

The case has been registered under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), and some of the people involved are expected to be summoned by the agency.

Kerala's Karunya Arogya Suraksha Padhathi | A scheme that is bleeding hospitals dry

The Karunya Arogya Suraksha Padhathi has become a headache for the government.

RTI reveals revenue department as most corrupt in Kerala

Of the 152 government employees who were arrested by the Vigilance between January 2011 and July 2011, 117 belonged to the Revenue department.

News

Source: [The Hindu](#), [The Indian Express](#)

Gold smuggling: Kerala ranks first in country, over 3,100 cases in last four years

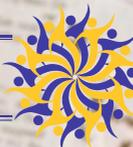
Alarming spike in drug abuse in Kerala as police cases jumped 333% last year

Police commissioner S Ananthakrishnan says most users of synthetic drugs are aged between 28 and 35.

Govt funding insufficient, Kerala school midday meal scheme in crisis

Teachers' unions demand hike in project allowance as several schools are in financial trouble.

लोक नीति
शोध केन्द्र



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Preface

As we navigate the intricate landscape of governance and public policy, it becomes increasingly evident that the effectiveness of governance directly impacts the well-being and progress of a society. In the vibrant Union of India's states, Kerala has long been celebrated for its achievements in various domains, from spiritual, cultural to natural beauty. However, beneath the surface of its idyllic landscapes and social indices lies a tale of misgovernance and systemic challenges that demand urgent attention.

This booklet delves into the nuanced intricacies of misgovernance in Kerala, meticulously researched and analysed by the Public Policy Research Centre. Through comprehensive examination and data-driven insights, it sheds light on critical areas where governance failures have stymied the state's development trajectory.

Kerala's fiscal landscape, once touted for its prudence and stability, now stands marred by alarming deficits and burgeoning public debt. The inadequacy of policies and budget allocations from the state government exacerbates this fiscal decline, casting a shadow over the state's economic prospects and overall progress. Moreover, the spectre of lawlessness looms large, manifesting in political violence, crimes against women, and the insidious proliferation of drug-related issues. These manifestations underscore profound governance and law enforcement shortcomings that demand urgent redressal. Similarly, Kerala's diverse sectors faces a litany of obstacles, including shrinking cultivation areas, unsustainable practices, and a surge in corruption cases. While these challenges loom large, initiatives from the central government under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi offer a beacon of hope, providing critical support for the state's development endeavours.

Through this meticulously crafted compilation, we aim to ignite a discourse on the imperative of effective governance and policy interventions in steering Kerala towards a trajectory of sustainable development and inclusive growth.

Dr. Sumeet Bhasin
Director, Public Policy Research Centre

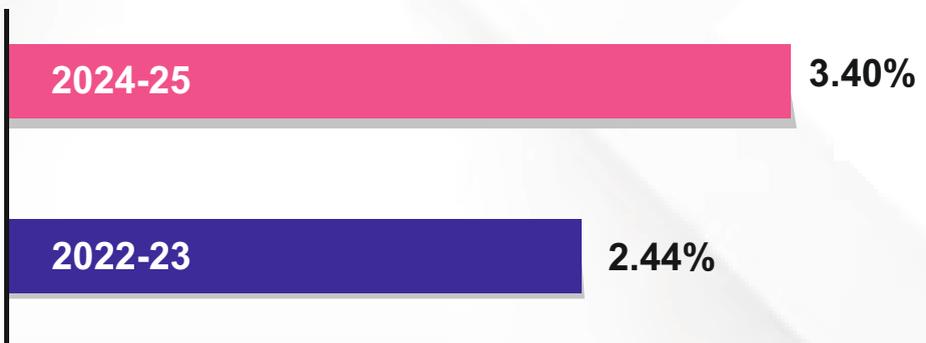
KERALA UNDER FINANCIAL DOWNTURN



Fiscal Deficit as % of GSDP

In 2022-23, the fiscal deficit of Kerala was 2.44% of GSDP, showing a relatively lower borrowing requirement. However, by 2024-25, it increased to 3.40%, suggesting a higher dependency on borrowing to cover expenditures.

Fiscal Deficit as % of GSDP



Source – Budget in Brief^f

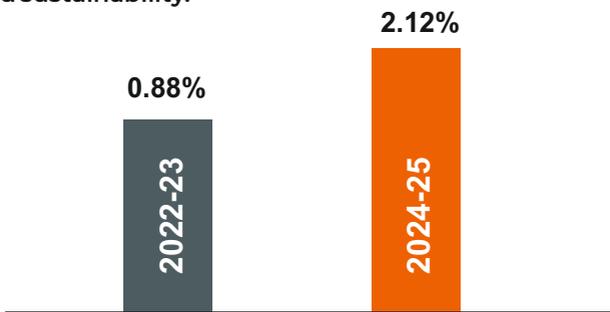
KERALA UNDER FINANCIAL DOWNTURN



Revenue Deficit as % of GSDP

In 2022-23, the revenue deficit stood at 0.88% of GSDP, indicating a relatively smaller gap between revenue receipts and expenditures. However, by 2024-25, it increased to 2.12% of GSDP, highlighting a larger deficit and potentially indicating challenges in managing revenue and expenditures effectively.

Also, it is worth noticing that the consistent trend of allocating approximately 90% of total expenditure to revenue expenditure, coupled with the limited allocation of around 10% to capital expenditure, underscores a concerning imbalance in budgetary priorities. This imbalance suggests that any increase in revenue expenditure may exacerbate revenue deficits, while simultaneously indicating neglect towards critical infrastructural development, as a relatively small portion of the expenditure is dedicated to capital investments essential for long-term growth and sustainability.



Source – Budget in Briefⁱⁱ

KERALA UNDER FINANCIAL DOWNTURN



Primary Deficit as % of GDP

The primary deficit as a percentage of GDP measures the shortfall in a state government's revenue compared to its expenditures, excluding interest payments on past debt. In 2022-23, the primary deficit as a percentage of GDP was a mere 0.04%, but it surged to 1.21% by 2024-25, indicating a significant increase in the state government's expenditure relative to its revenue, excluding interest payments on previous debts.

Primary Deficit as % of GDP



Source – Budget in Briefⁱⁱⁱ

KERALA UNDER FINANCIAL DOWNTURN



Public Debt of the State Government

Public debt refers to the total outstanding borrowing of a government, typically accumulated through issuing bonds or other securities to finance expenditures when revenue falls short. The public debt of the state grew steadily from Rs 17,926.14 crore in 2016-17 to Rs 24,419.91 crore in 2021-22, and by 2024-25, it reached a significant figure of Rs 35,988.28 crore, reflecting the government's reliance on borrowing to fund its activities over the years.

Public Debt (Rs Crores)



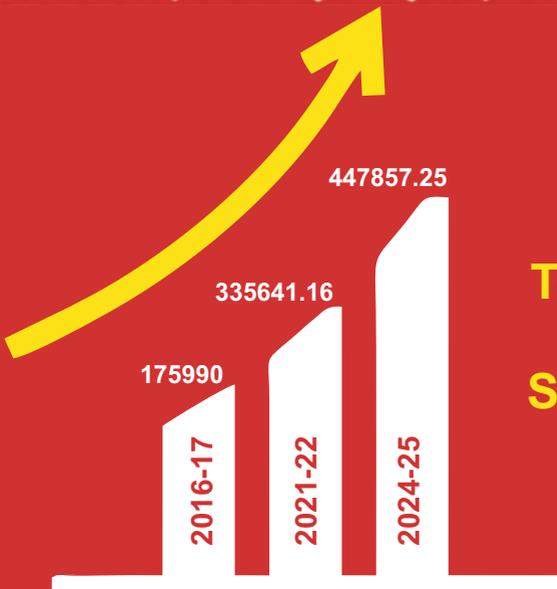
Source – Budget in Brief^{iv}

KERALA UNDER FINANCIAL DOWNTURN



Total Outstanding Debt of the State Government

The total outstanding debt of the State Government represents the cumulative amount of money owed by the government to creditors, including both domestic and external sources such as loans, bonds, and other financial obligations. Over the years, the total outstanding debt of Kerala has shown an increasing trend by increasing 154.47% from 2016-17 to 2024-25.



**Total Outstanding
Debt of the
State Government
(Rs Crores)**

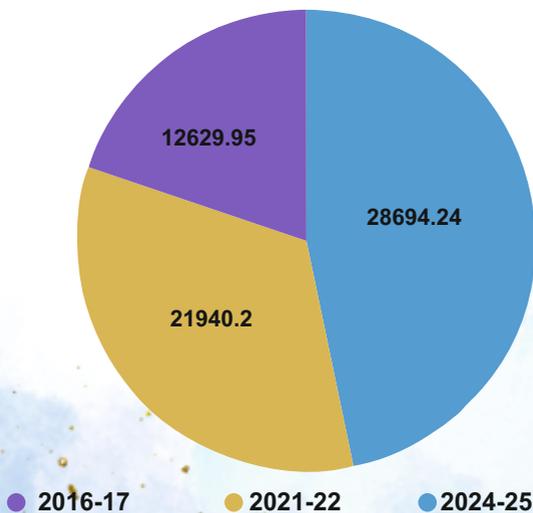
Source – Budget in Brief'

KERALA UNDER FINANCIAL DOWNTURN

Interest Payments

Interest payments represent the amount of money a government spends on servicing its debt, typically paid to creditors for borrowing money through loans, bonds, or other financial instruments. Over the years, the interest payments in Kerala have shown an increasing trend. In 2016-17, interest payments amounted to Rs 12,629.95 crores which increased to Rs 28,694.24 crores, reflecting a continued upward trend, possibly indicating higher borrowing costs or increased debt obligations.

Interest Payments (Rs Crores)



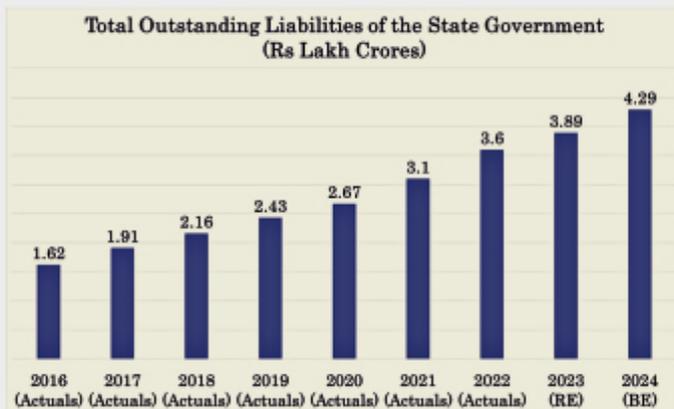
Source – Budget in Brief^{vi}

KERALA UNDER FINANCIAL DOWNTURN

Total Outstanding Liabilities of the State Government

Total outstanding liabilities of the State Government of Kerala from the end of March 2016 to March 2024 (BE) refer to the total amount of money that the government owes to creditors, accumulated from various sources such as loans, bonds, and other financial obligations.

The overall increase of 165% in Kerala's state government liabilities from 2016 to 2024 indicates a significant rise in the amount of money the government owes over this period, suggesting potential financial strain and increased debt burden on the state's finances.



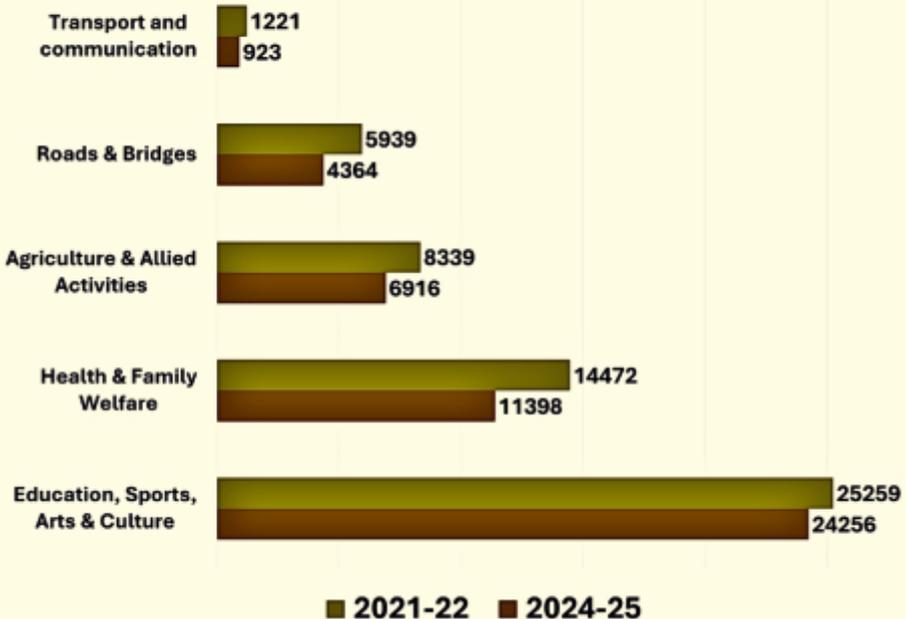
Source – Budget in Briefⁱⁱ

KERALA UNDER FINANCIAL DOWNTURN

Reduction of Budget Allocations

Reduction in budget allocation for crucial sectors like education, health, agriculture, infrastructure, and transportation could potentially hamper their development and provision of essential services, impacting overall societal well-being and economic growth. Such cuts may lead to compromised education standards, healthcare accessibility, agricultural productivity, infrastructure maintenance, and transportation efficiency, affecting various aspects of public life and economic progress.

Decline in Budget Allocation of Various Sectors (Rs Crores)

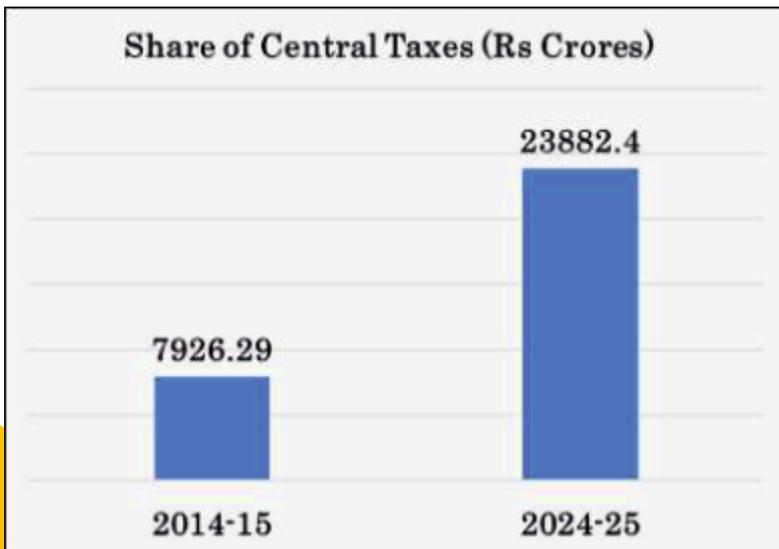


KERALA UNDER FINANCIAL DOWNTURN



Share of Central Taxes

The share of central taxes represents the portion of taxes collected by the central government that is allocated to states as per the recommendations of finance commissions. The share of central taxes received by the state witnessed fluctuations over the years, increasing from Rs 7,926.29 crore in 2014-15 to Rs 23,882.40 crore in 2024-25, indicating varying levels of financial support from the central government to the state's fiscal endeavours.



Source – Budget in Brief^{xiii}

GOD'S OWN COUNTRY TURNS A LAWLESS STATE

In first such case in the country, 15 people have been sentenced to death for killing BJP leader in Kerala.^{xiv}

Kerala court awards death sentence to 15 PFI-SDPI men over 2021 murder of BJP leader Ranjith Sreenivasan

Ranjith, 45, the BJP OBC Morcha state secretary, was hacked to death in front of his wife, mother and minor daughter in Alappuzha town on December 19, 2021.

Figure Source: The Indian Express

In 15 years between 2006-2021, 125 political killings took place in Kerala against the opposition.^{xv}



The image shows the top portion of a news article from Deccan Herald. The header includes the 'DH DECCAN HERALD' logo on the left and a navigation menu with links for 'Home', 'Elections 2024', 'India', 'IPL 2024', 'Karnataka', 'Opinion', and 'World'. The main headline reads 'Political killings remain unabated in Kerala amid blessings of state leadership'. Below the headline, a sub-headline states 'As per available data, around 125 political murders took place in Kerala during the last 15 years'.

Figure Source: Deccan Herald

In the first term of Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijaya, between 2016-2021, 32 political killings took place in the state, of which, 12 took place in Kannur, the CM's home district.^{xvi}

Kerala CM's home district of Kannur has 'bloody history of killing': Governor Khan

Figure Source: The Hindustan Times

Kerala Crime: 8 Brutal Murders in Last 48 Hours Put State's Law & Order in Question

Figure Source: News18

As per report tabled by Congress Chief Minister Oommen Chandi, on the floor of the Kerala Assembly in 2012, since 2005 on average, 2,800-3,200 girls are being converted every year^{xvii}. (The number of girls converted in the last 10 years could be a staggering 30,000 and more)

Drug Menace is at rise in Kerala. 24046 people have been convicted in Kerala between 2020-2022 under the NDPS Act.^{xviii}

In 2022, Kerala registered a 300% spike in cases related to narcotics, liquor and banned tobacco products compared to 2016 when 5,924 cases were registered.^{xix}

Kerala registers 300% surge in drug related cases in 6 years

Police reportedly registered 26,629 cases under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act in 2022

Figure Source: Deccan Herald

Sharp rise in synthetic drug abuse in Kerala

NDPS cases registered doubled to 6,610 in 2022 as compared to 3,922 in 2021; decline in ganja seizure



Figure Source: The Indian Express

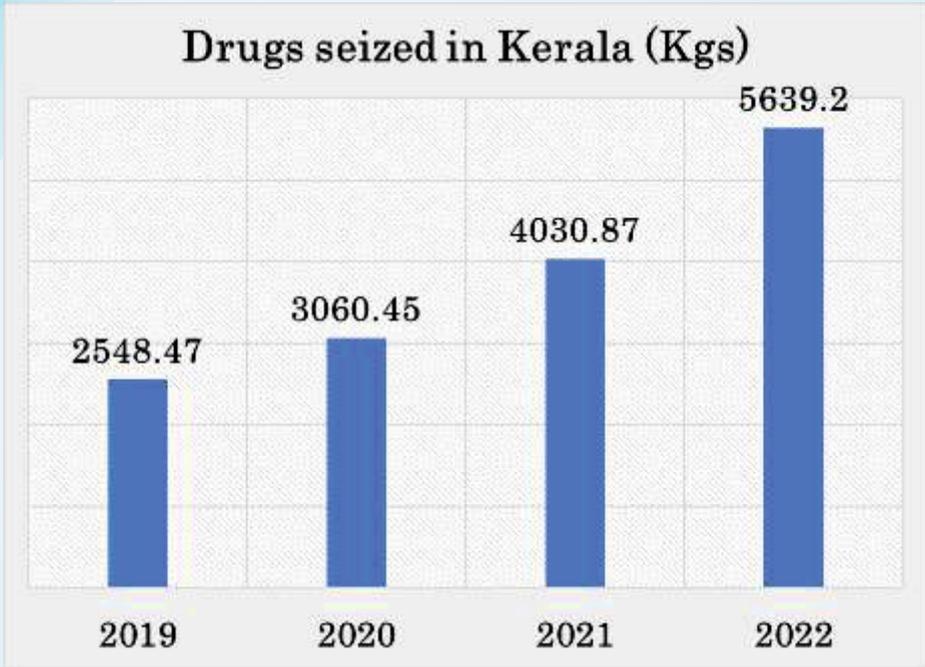
Excise seizures

Narcotic Substance	2021	2022
Ganja	5,632.6kg	3,602.312kg
Ganja plants	760	1902
Hashish	16,062g	37,455.468g
Heroin	18.187g	447.786g
Brown sugar	103.78g	129.328g
MDMA	6130.5g	7,775.425g
LSD	3.657g	42.783g
Cocaine	nil	40.959g
Methamphetamine	88.806g	2432.483g
Opium	0.87g	76g
Magic mushroom	nil	1,489g



Figure Source: The Indian Express

15278.97 kgs of various drugs have been seized in Kerala between 2020-2022 under the NDPS Act.^{xxxxi}



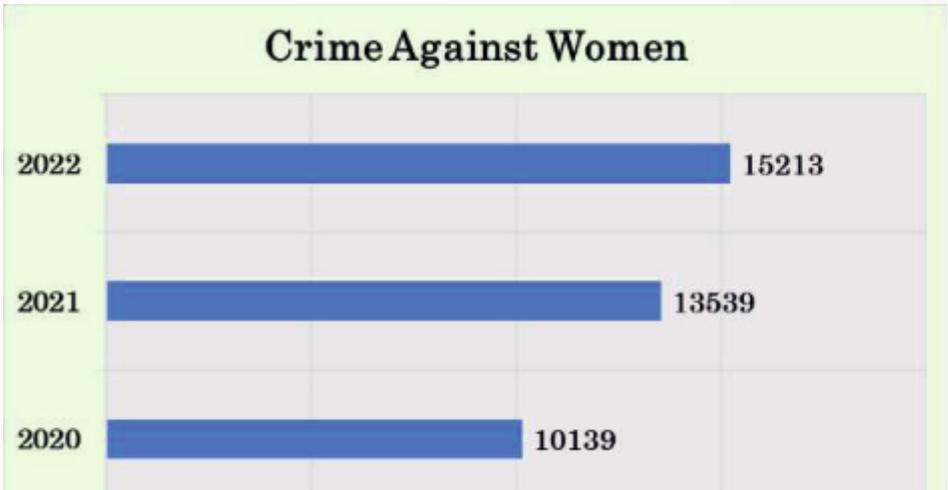
The drug menace in Kerala has reached alarming levels, with a significant increase in narcotic, abkari, and COTPA cases in 2022. A staggering 333% rise in cases witnessed under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, with 24,701 cases registered by November 2022 compared to 5,695 in 2021. Additionally, the excise department saw a 55% increase in NDPS cases, rising from 3,922 in 2021 to 6,116 in 2022.^{xxii}

Alarming spike in drug abuse in Kerala as police cases jumped 333% last year

Excise commissioner S Ananthkrishnan says most users of synthetic drugs are aged between 20 and 25.

Figure Source: The Indian Express, January 2023

Crime against women has seen a rising trend in the state, with 38,891 cases of crime registered between 2020-2022.^{xxiii}



Gold smuggling has tarnished the image of Kerala across the nation. Smuggled gold seizure increased nearly 47% year-on-year in 2022, with Kerala accounting for the maximum quantity of confiscation. While today, Kerala ranks first in the country in gold smuggling.^{xxiv}

News

Kerala India World Columns More+

Gold smuggling: Kerala ranks first in country; over 3,100 cases in last four years

Figure Source: Mathrubhumi

The Enforcement Directorate filed money laundering case against Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan's daughter Veena Vijayan, her IT company and others.^{xxv}

ED files money laundering case against Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan's daughter Veena Vijayan, her IT company

The case has been registered under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), and some of the people involved are expected to be summoned by the agency

Figure Source: The Business Today

STATUS OF HEALTH & EDUCATION

Health Sector

Sustainability of State's health insurance schemes in question

The financial fallout of KASP, with ₹3,030 crore in claims settlement during 2021-23, is pushing public sector hospitals to the verge of collapse. Medisep, still in its first year, has already paid claims worth ₹633 crore.

Figure Source: The Hindu

Kerala's Karunya Arogya Suraksha Padhathi | A scheme that is bleeding hospitals dry

The Karunya Arogya Suraksha Padhathi has become a burden for the government

Figure Source: The Hindu

- Kerala's health insurance scheme has become a huge burden on its finances.
- The state government owes private and public hospitals Rs 1,128.69 crore as reimbursement for free treatment given to Karunya Arogya Suraksha Padhathi (KASP) beneficiaries.^{xxvi}
- Public hospitals have been experiencing an acute shortage of drugs, consumables, and implants, as pending payments running into hundreds of crores have forced pharma companies to stop all supplies to public hospitals.
- Patients are forced to buy medicines from private outlets. Even the government's Karunya fair price medical shops do not have adequate stock.
- As per the Comptroller and Auditor General's recent audit report on Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY), KASP was being run by State Health Agency (SHA) without proper medical, death, or claim audits and no financial discipline, resulting in huge cost overruns and a high rate of overdue claims.^{xxvii}

Kerala's private health spending rises despite increased govt. investments in the sector

The State's per capita out-of-pocket expenditure rose from ₹6,772 in 2018-19 to ₹7,206 in 2019-20, even when its per capita GHE increased from ₹2,479 to ₹2,590

Figure Source: The Hindu

- According to the latest edition of National Health Accounts (2019-20), Kerala has the highest per capita out-of-pocket expenditure (OOPE) in the country at Rs 7,206 despite being one of the states with the highest per capita government expenditure on health.^{xxviii}
- The proportion of fully vaccinated children of 12-23 months in Kerala has dropped from 82.1 % in NFHS-4 to 77.8 % in NFHS-5, putting the State far behind other States in the 11th position.
- The percentage of children under five years who are stunted (height for age) has gone up from 19.7 in NFHS-4 to 23.4 in NFHS-5.
- Wasting (weight for height) has gone up by one point to 15.8%.
- Children under five years who are underweight has gone up from 16.1% to 19.7%.
- The percentage of children under five who are overweight has also gone up from
- Anaemia across all age groups has increased, while anaemia in pregnant women has gone up from 22.6 % to 31.4 %.^{xxix}
- As per NFHS-5, in Kerala, 39.4 % children (6-59 months) are anaemic as opposed to 35.7 % as reported in NFHS-4.
- 36.3 % of the women (15-49 years) in the state are anaemic, an increase of 2 % from

STATUS OF HEALTH & EDUCATION

Education Sector

There was a delay in appointing Principals in nearly 70 colleges in 2023, that necessitated senior Professors being given temporary charge in such institutions.

Very often, such officials have been reluctant to take bold decisions. The delay in appointments, owing to pressure exerted by various groups, shows that the government does not take higher education seriously.^{xxx1}

Higher education in low spirits

Many factors have contributed to the controversies raging in Kerala's higher education sector. Nearly 70 colleges do not have Principals and those in charge are reluctant to take bold decisions. Also, the practice of making "recommendations" for appointments and admissions in violation of university laws has come in for scathing criticism. Predictably, the reforms introduced by the government have been slow in yielding results

Figure Source: The Hindu

Several stakeholders have been demanding an end to the practice of making "recommendations" for appointments and admissions in violation of university laws.^{xxx2}

Illegal MBBS seats case gives medical education system some more bad publicity

Figure Source: The Economic Times

In March 2024, the Serious Fraud Investigation Office (SFIO) has sent a notice to the Karakonam Dr. Somervell Memorial CSI Medical College over financial dealings with Exalogic Solutions, the firm of Kerala Chief Minister's daughter Veena Vijayan.^{xxx3}

Bank transactions with firm of Kerala CM's daughter: SFIO issues notice to Karakonam Medical College

Figure Source: Mathrubhumi.com

In recent years, Kerala has witnessed a surge in admission scams plaguing its private medical colleges, casting a shadow over the integrity of the state's educational system.

These scams often involve underhanded tactics such as bribery, manipulation of entrance exam results, and the misuse of management quotas to secure coveted seats.

Corruption, coupled with a lack of oversight and enforcement mechanisms, has allowed these scams to persist, undermining the meritocratic principles essential for a fair and transparent admission process.

Deserving candidates are unjustly sidelined, while those with financial means or connections gain undue advantage, perpetuating a cycle of inequality and eroding trust in the educational institutions of Kerala.^{xxxiv}

In 2021, even after two rounds of seat allotments in higher secondary courses (Class 11), more than 1.15 lakh eligible students were still out of the admission process.

Even among the top scorers—those who have obtained A Plus in all subjects in Class 10—as many as 5,812 students had failed to secure admission.

While a record pass percentage in Class 10 in 2021 (99.47%) is primarily responsible for the situation, the crisis has thoroughly exposed the inadequacies in the state education sector, which have for years forced students to move out of the state to pursue education, especially after Classes 10 and 12.^{xxxv}

Govt funding insufficient, Kerala school midday meal scheme in crisis

Teachers' assns demand hike in project allowance as several schools are in financial trouble

Figure Source: The New Indian Express

Delay in release of funds for the midday meal scheme is snowballing into a crisis in some schools in Kerala with head teachers scrambling for money to buy groceries.

The state government has time and again delayed to give its share of the funds for the free lunch being served to over 30 lakh students up to Class VIII in more than 12,000 schools.^{xxxvi}

Delay in fund release affecting noon meal scheme in Kerala schools

Figure Source: The Hindu

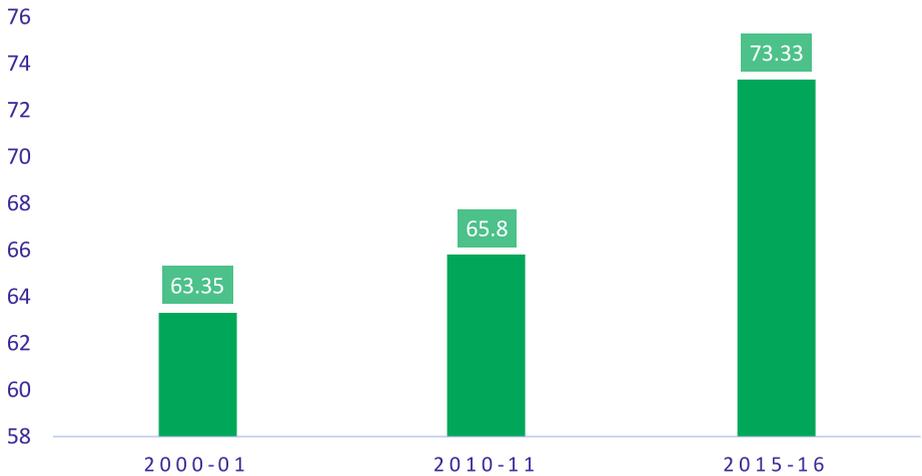
The head teachers have been demanding the State government to increase the allocation for the scheme as the expense per student had not been revised after 2016.

Even the cooks who prepare the food in the schools yet to get their honoraria.^{xxxvii}

AGRICULTURAL DECLINE IN KERALA

1. Marginal Holdings (less than 1 ha) increasing in Kerala

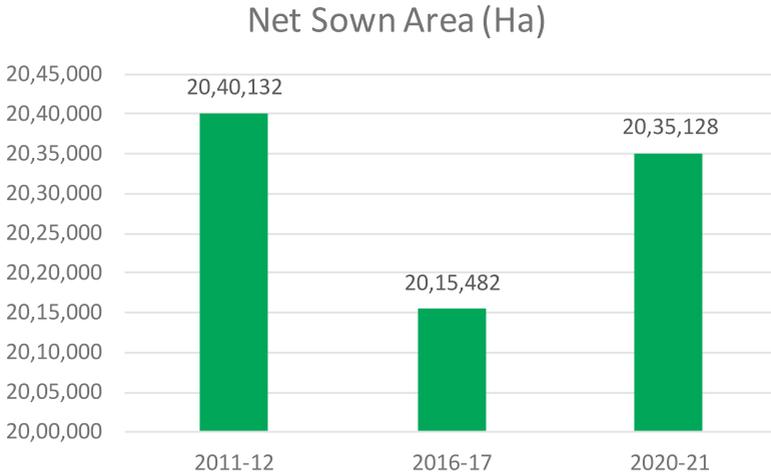
MARGINAL HOLDINGS (IN LAKHS)



The mounting number of marginal holdings in Kerala's agriculture sector reflects a pattern of neglect and mismanagement by successive administrations, including the CPI(M), CPI, and INC. This trend signifies declining productivity, rising income inequality, limited access to resources, land fragmentation, and dependency on subsistence farming. Urgent reforms are imperative to support small-scale farmers, enhance agricultural productivity, and alleviate rural poverty, lest Kerala's economy and social fabric continue to suffer from systemic deficiencies in governance and policy implementation.

AGRICULTURAL DECLINE IN KERALA

2. Net Sown Area declining



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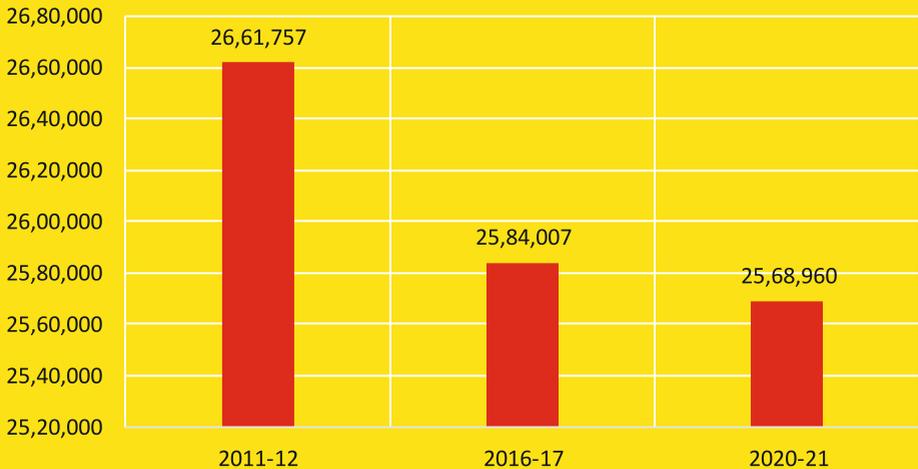
Net Sown Area in Kerala has been on a declining trend since 2000-01. Since 2011-12, it has declined from 20,40,132 hectares to 20,35,128 hectares in 2020-21.

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AGRICULTURAL DECLINE IN KERALA

3. Gross Cropped Area declining

Gross Cropped Area (Ha)



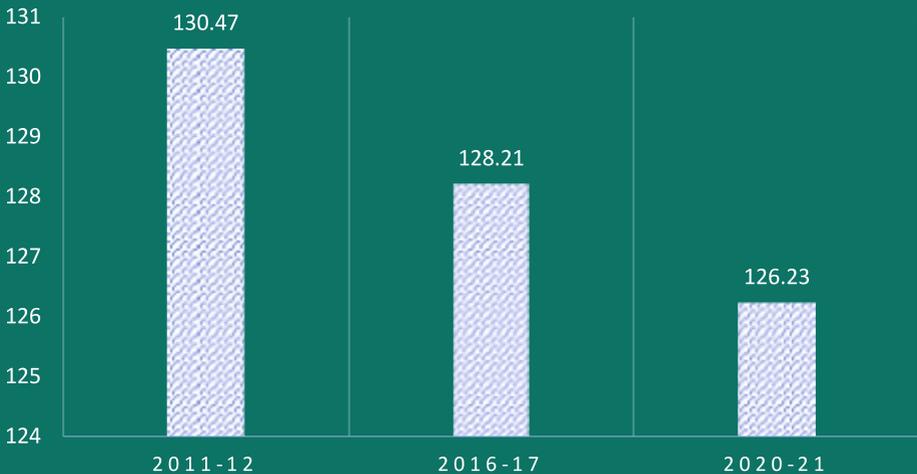
Gross Cropped Area in Kerala has declined constantly. From 26.61 lakh hectares in 2011- 12, it has reduced to 25.68 lakh hectares in 2020-21.



AGRICULTURAL DECLINE IN KERALA

4. Intensity of Cropping has been on a decline

INTENSITY OF CROPPING (%)



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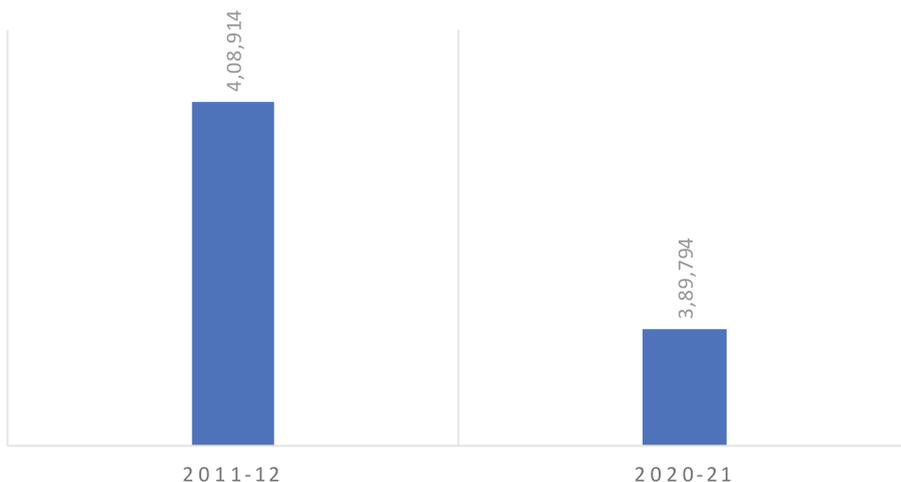
The declining intensity of cropping in Kerala bears significant implications for the state's agriculture and economy. This trend suggests a reduction in agricultural productivity, diminishing land use efficiency, and a shift away from intensive farming practices. Without intervention, this decline could exacerbate food insecurity, rural unemployment, and economic stagnation, highlighting the urgent need for policies that incentivize sustainable agricultural practices, encourage crop diversification, and promote technological innovations to revitalize Kerala's agricultural sector.

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AGRICULTURAL DECLINE IN KERALA

5. Net Irrigated Area on a decline

NET IRRIGATED AREA (HA)



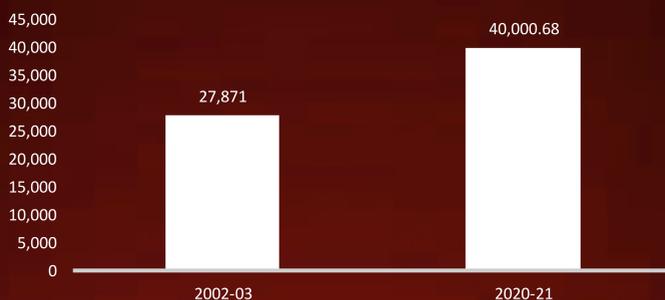
The declining net irrigated area in Kerala signifies a worrisome trend for the state's agriculture and water management. This decline suggests reduced access to reliable water sources for crop cultivation, which could lead to decreased agricultural productivity and food insecurity. Without effective measures to address this issue, Kerala's agriculture sector may face further challenges in sustaining crop yields, impacting both food production and rural livelihoods. Urgent interventions are needed to improve water conservation efforts, modernize irrigation systems, and promote sustainable agricultural practices to mitigate the adverse effects of declining net irrigated area on Kerala's agriculture and economy.

AGRICULTURAL DECLINE IN KERALA

6. Area under HYV Paddy Cultivation increasing

As the area under High Yielding Variety (HYV) paddy cultivation increases in Kerala, there are concerning adverse effects that can be attributed to the governance of the Left government. Firstly, the extensive adoption of HYV paddy varieties often relies heavily on chemical fertilizers and pesticides, leading to environmental degradation and soil health deterioration over time. Secondly, this shift may exacerbate the state's already fragile ecosystem, including its wetlands and water bodies, as HYV cultivation often requires intensive water usage, which can lead to water scarcity and ecological imbalances. Furthermore, the emphasis on monoculture practices associated with HYV paddy cultivation can increase the vulnerability of Kerala's agriculture sector to pest outbreaks and crop diseases, posing risks to food security and farmer livelihoods. The Left government's failure to promote diversified and sustainable farming practices has contributed to these adverse effects, highlighting the need for policies that prioritize ecological resilience and agricultural sustainability in Kerala's agricultural development agenda.

AREA UNDER HYV PADDY CULTIVATION (HA)



Despite the production of paddy reaching 6,26,886 tonnes in 2020-21, with HYV paddy accounting for 6,16,920 tonnes and local paddy a mere 9,966 tonnes (only 1.59% of total paddy), the Left government's failure to promote diversified and sustainable farming practices has contributed to these adverse effects, highlighting the need for policies that prioritize ecological resilience and agricultural sustainability in Kerala's agricultural development agenda.

AGRICULTURAL DECLINE IN KERALA

7. Decline in Millets production

Ragi production (tonnes) has been decreasing exponentially since 2002-03 till 2020-21, a disturbing trend given the cereal's nutritional and ecological benefits. From 1,068 tonnes in 2002-03, the production has come down to 330 tonnes in 2020-21. In 2016-17, before millets were declared as 'nutri-cereals' by PM Modi, Kerala was producing only 42 tonnes of ragi in an entire year.

Similarly, small millet had reduced from 61 tonnes in 2012-13 to 38 tonnes in 2020-21, with the lowest production coming in 2016-17 at 6 tonnes in an entire year.

Jowar has followed a similar trend, with the production reducing from 1,311 tonnes in 2002-03 to 204 tonnes in 2020-21. The lowest production was recorded in 2016-17, at 110 tonnes.

AGRICULTURAL DECLINE IN KERALA

8. Decline in important crops, horticulture produce and vegetables

Area under coconut cultivation has reduced from 9,25,783 ha in 2000-01 to 7,68,809 ha in 2020-21. Production has reduced from 5,536 million nuts in 2000-01 to 4,788 million nuts in 2020-21.

Area under ginger cultivation reduced from 8,998 ha in 2002-03 to 2,217 ha in 2020-21. Production has increased.

Garlic's cultivation area and production has reduced. From 616 ha producing 10,472 tonnes in 2002-03 to 203 ha producing 1,068 tonnes in 2020-21.

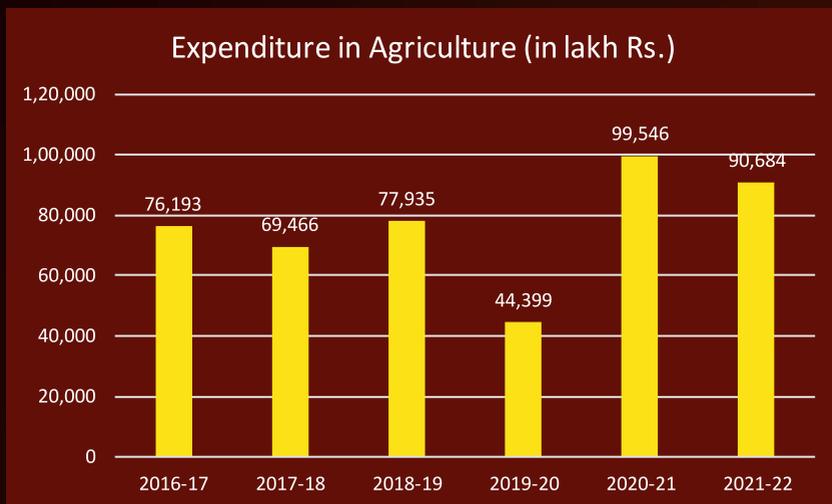
Area of other fresh fruits has been reducing from 12,329 ha in 2002-03 to 9,987 in 2020-21.

Pulses' area of cultivation and production has reduced heavily, from 5,764 ha and 4,615 tonnes in 2002-03, to 1,981 ha and 1,923 tonnes in 2020-21.

Vegetables have reduced in production from 19,050 tonnes in 2012-13 to 6,038 tonnes in 2020-21. Area of cultivation has reduced from 975 ha in 2012-13 to 446 ha in 2020-21.

AGRICULTURAL DECLINE IN KERALA

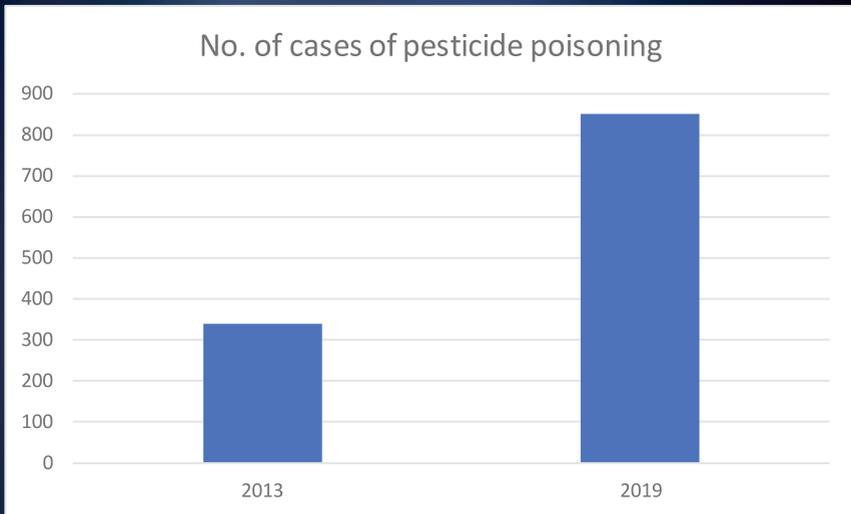
9. Unstable stimulus to agriculture sector



The expenditure allocated by successive Kerala governments to the agriculture sector has exhibited a concerning pattern of inconsistency and instability. Despite agriculture being a vital component of the state's economy and a lifeline for millions of farmers, the allocation of funds and resources to support agricultural development has been uneven over the years. This erratic expenditure has hindered the sector's growth potential, impeding efforts to modernize farming practices, enhance infrastructure, and improve the livelihoods of rural communities. The lack of sustained investment in agriculture has left farmers vulnerable to various challenges, including climate change impacts, market fluctuations, and resource constraints. Moreover, the fluctuations in expenditure reflect a broader neglect of the agriculture sector in policymaking and planning, highlighting the urgent need for a more cohesive and consistent approach to agricultural development in Kerala.

AGRICULTURAL DECLINE IN KERALA

10. Number of pesticides poisoning cases on the rise



The rise in the cases of pesticides poisoning in Kerala has a grim background.

- **Endosulfan pesticide poisoning** has been a silent killer in the state of Kerala, and in the district of Kasargod alone, it has officially wrecked the lives of more than 6,500 individuals and their families for over two decades. In the northern part of Kerala, which has a distinct red laterite soil, the organochloride insecticide has been sprayed in massive quantities between late 1970s and early 2000s in cashew estates. This has resulted in the insecticide percolating in the soil, rivers, ponds and streams, affecting the lives of lakhs of people who inhabited the region.
- While it was unjust enough to let such a crime, supported by the state, go unchecked, the CPI(M)-led government headed by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has taken the injustice a few steps further.

-
- Endosulfan sufferers were added to a government list as 'victims' by doctors. They were given a one-time compensation of Rs. 5 lakh and other benefits such as monthly pension of Rs. 1,700 and subsidised medicines. However, the Pinarayi Vijayan-led CPI(M) government has framed new guidelines, invalidating the victims who were exposed to the chemical before 1980 and after 2011.
-
- The CPI(M) is of the stand that the persistence of endosulfan in the environment lasts for a maximum of six years and since the pesticide was banned officially in 2005, its effects on the population would remain only till 2011. However, there have been cases of people getting listed as victims as late as 2017. These victims have been abandoned by the state, causing unimaginable hurt, loss of livelihood, and in some cases, loss of lives as well. The 2023 government order ignores the visible long-term genetic impact on unexposed generations and aims to diminish the size of the tragedy.
-
- Earlier this year, on January 30th, a coalition of individuals affected by endosulfan initiated an ongoing demonstration outside the mini civil station in Kanhangad town. Their demands include the withdrawal of the 2023 government directive, the addition of 1,031 eligible individuals to the victims' roster, the organization of medical camps staffed with specialist physicians, and the punctual disbursement of pensions. Despite these appeals, the government has remained unresponsive.^{xxxix}

AGRICULTURAL DECLINE IN KERALA

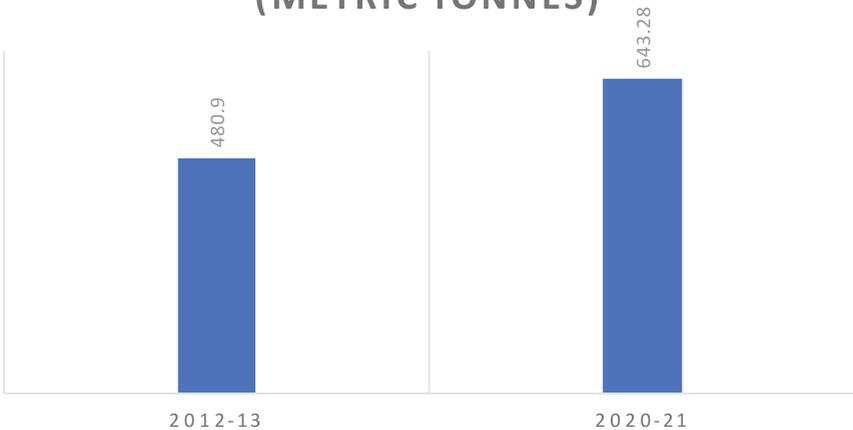
11. Kerala government reducing incentive bonus per quintal of paddy

Kerala has reduced its incentive bonus for the procurement of paddy in 2022-23. While the MSP provided by the Central Government increased from Rs. 1,940 per quintal of paddy in 2021-22 to Rs. 2,040 in 2022-23, Kerala government reduced its incentive bonus from Rs. 860 per quintal to Rs. 780 per quintal, preventing the paddy farmers receive additional surplus through the MSP.^{xi}

AGRICULTURAL DECLINE IN KERALA

12. Consumption of bio-pesticides on the rise

CONSUMPTION OF BIO-PESTICIDES
(METRIC TONNES)

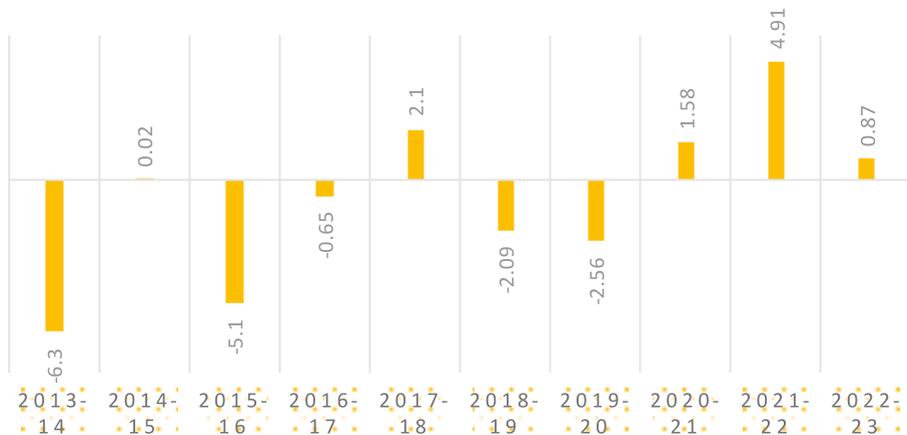


- ◆ The consumption of biopesticides in Kerala is on the rise, signaling a shift towards more sustainable agricultural practices. This trend reflects the growing awareness among farmers about the environmental benefits and effectiveness of bio-based pest management solutions.^{xii}

AGRICULTURAL DECLINE IN KERALA

13. Declining and Erratic Agriculture Growth

AGRICULTURE GROWTH RATE PER ANNUM IN KERALA (%)

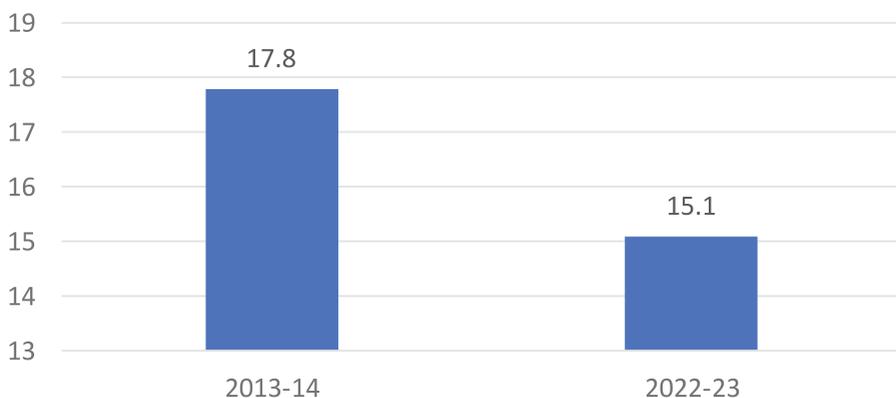


The annual growth rate of agriculture and allied activities, measured by GVA at constant 2011-12 prices, has exhibited erratic fluctuations over the years, indicating instability in the sector's performance.

AGRICULTURAL DECLINE IN KERALA

14. Share of Kerala's Agriculture in India's total GVA shows decline

Share of Kerala's agriculture in India's GVA (in %)



The share of agriculture and allied sectors in the country's total GVA has been declining in the last decade. Sector's share in the Gross Value Added (GVA) of the country at constant prices has declined from 17.8 per cent in 2013-14 to 15.1 per cent in 2022-23. The declining share of agriculture and allied sectors in the country's total GVA over the last decade bears significant implications for the overall economy. This trend suggests a gradual shift away from agriculture-centric economic activities, which could potentially lead to reduced rural employment opportunities and increased urban migration. One of the primary causes behind this decline could be the relatively slower growth rate of agriculture compared to other sectors, coupled with challenges such as climate change, inadequate infrastructure, and limited access to credit and technology for small-scale farmers.^{xliii}

CORRUPTION CHRONICLES

UNVEILING CASES IN KERALA

Karuvannur Service Cooperative Bank Scam

CPM MLA and former State Minister, A.C. Moideen along with other party leaders are accused in Rs 343 crore bank scam.

The bank's total deposit of Rs 500 crore reduced by more than 40 percent. Existing depositors facing harassment and are not able to recover their money.

Karuvannur Service Cooperative Bank scam: 51 loans worth Rs 24cr issued to 1 person, says ED

Meanwhile, ED has issued a fresh notice to former minister and CPM MLA A C Moideen in connection with the money laundering aspect of the bank scam.

Source: The New Indian Express

CORRUPTION CHRONICLES

UNVEILING CASES IN KERALA

Gold Smuggling Scam

Customs officials seized 30 kg of gold worth nearly Rs 15 crore from inside baggage that was about to be smuggled to UAE through a flight.

Former principal secretary to Kerala CM Vijayan, M Sivasankar has been suspended. Prime accused Swapna Suresh claims CM Vijayan and CPI(M) state secretary MV Govindan were key conspirators.

Kerala gold smuggling case: Customs imposes fine of around ₹66 crore on 44 accused

Customs department has imposed a penalty of ₹50 lakh on M. Sivasankar, former Principal Secretary to Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, and ₹6 crore on prime accused Swapna Suresh

November 07, 2023 03:03 pm | Updated 03:03 pm IST - KOCHI

Source: The Hindu

CORRUPTION CHRONICLES

UNVEILING CASES IN KERALA

Life mission scam

The 'Kerala Life Mission Case' pertains to the alleged violation of the Foreign Contribution (Regulations) Act in the project, by alleged corrupt practices in the funds from Red Crescent via the UAE consulate, which intended to provide homes to the poor who lost their houses in the floods of 2018.^{xliii}

ED attaches properties worth ₹5.38 crore in LIFE Mission scam case

October 20, 2023 11:37 pm | Updated 11:45 pm IST - KOCHI

Source: The Hindu

CORRUPTION CHRONICLES

UNVEILING CASES IN KERALA

Suspicious Transactions of Vijayan's daughter firm

Kerala CM Vijayan's daughter Veena was paid Rs 1.72 crore by a Kochi-based private minerals firm as consultancy fees to her IT firm while no services were allegedly provided.

ED books Kerala CM's daughter Veena Vijayan under PMLA, payments of Rs 1.7 cr under scanner

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan had denied the allegations against his family and said that his daughter started the company using his wife's retirement funds.

Source: Financial Express

CORRUPTION CHRONICLES

UNVEILING CASES IN KERALA

Health Department Scam

- Former State Health Minister in CPM government, KK Shailaja has been accused of receiving kickbacks for agreeing to procure medical equipment and PPE Kits in 2020 at unreasonably high rates.
- A PPE kit which was worth Rs 446 was procured for Rs 1,550 which was in the knowledge of Chief Minister Vijayan.^{xiv}

**Kerala cleared PPE kit purchase at 3 times market price:
Reply to RTI query**

TNN / Updated: Apr 11, 2022, 05:26 IST



Source: The Times of India

CORRUPTION CHRONICLES

UNVEILING CASES IN KERALA

Bribery cases

Since May 2021, as many as 114 government officials have been found accepting bribes.^{xlv}

BRINGING SHAME					
Department-wise officials caught red-handed since May 2021					
Revenue	33	Forest	2	Water resources	1
LSGD	26	Animal Husbandry	2	Sale tax	1
Health	9	Civil Supplies	2	KSRTC	1
Police	6	Labour	1	Electrical Inspectorate	1
Registration	6	PRD	1	Tourism	1
Survey	3	Education	1	Central tax and Central Excise	1
MVD	3	Irrigation	1	ST Development	1
Agriculture	2	SC Development	1		
KSEB	2	Civil Supplies	1		
Legal Metrology	2	Co-operation	1	Total- 114	

Source: The New Indian Express

RTI reveals revenue department as most corrupt in Kerala

Of the 151 government employees who were arrested by the VACB between January 2017 and July 2022, 42 belonged to the Revenue department

November 25, 2022 06:24 pm | Updated 06:46 pm IST - KOCHI

Figure Source: The Indian Express

CORRUPTION CHRONICLES

UNVEILING CASES IN KERALA

Misuse of Power

Former State Industry and Commerce Minister EP Jayarajan is accused of misusing his position to make money through the illegal acquisition of property worth Rs 30 crore. The whistle-blower in this case is also a CPM leader.^{xlvi}

In addition, allegations of black money have also surfaced as a report claimed that a resort erected on the property had received funding of Rs 7.62 crore in an attempt to dispose of unaccounted cash.^{xlvii}

Hawala Transactions at rise

In just two months of 2024, hawala transactions to the tune of Rs 264 crores have taken place in Kerala.^{xlviii}

WORK DONE BY MODI GOVERNMENT FOR KERALA'S WELFARE

Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana

As of 20th March 2024, out of a total of 61,98,756 beneficiaries have Jan Dhan accounts and 34,03,260 RuPay cards have been issued, facilitating access to financial services. The cumulative balance in the beneficiary accounts amounts to Rs 2,704.96 crore, providing a substantial resource base for economic empowerment and financial inclusion initiatives among the beneficiaries.^{xlix}

Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) 2.0

As of 3rd April 2024, under the Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) 2.0, 1381 out of 1402 villages in Kerala have been designated with the ODF Plus status. This achievement signifies substantial progress towards ensuring cleanliness, sanitation, and hygiene facilities in rural areas, contributing to the overall well-being and health of the communities in the state.ⁱ

Jal Jeevan Mission

A total of 37.14 lakh households have been provided with safe and adequate drinking water under Jal Jeevan Mission.ⁱⁱ

Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana

Nearly 1.6 lakh houses have been completed under PM Awas Yojana (Urban+Rural), providing affordable ease of living to the urban population.ⁱⁱⁱ

Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana

Under PM Ujjwala Yojana, 82.27 lakhs connections were provided as on April, 2023 as an alternative of clean cooking fuel such as LPG, to the rural and deprived households.

Ayushman Bharat

Till April 3, 2024, a total of 1,74,78,356 ABHA (Ayushman Bharat Health Account) cards have been generated, alongside 75,97,897 Ayushman Bharat cards. Additionally, authorized hospital admissions under this scheme have amounted to Rs 81,979.07 crore. These statistics underscore the significant strides made towards providing healthcare access and financial protection to millions of beneficiaries across India.

Pradhan Mantri Jan Aushadhi Kendra^{vi}

As of April 3, 2024, there are 998 Pradhan Mantri Jan Aushadhi Kendras in the state of Kerala. Under the scheme, dedicated outlets known as Janaushadhi Kendras are opened to provide quality generic medicines at affordable prices.

Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY)

As of December 2023, a total of 1,895 claims have been paid, amounting to Rs. 37.9 crore. This insurance scheme aims to provide accidental death and disability coverage to individuals at affordable premiums, ensuring financial assistance to the insured or their nominees in case of unfortunate events resulting in death or disability.^{lvii}

Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY)

As of December 2023, a total of 4,214 claims have been paid, amounting to Rs. 84.28 crore. This scheme provides financial protection to individuals and their families by offering insurance coverage for life-threatening events at affordable premiums, ensuring financial security during difficult times.^{lviii}

Atal Pension Yojana

Until August 2023, there were 9,91,004 beneficiaries of the Atal Pension Yojana in the state of Kerala. Atal Pension Yojana encourages the workers in the unorganised sector to voluntarily save for their retirement. Under the scheme, a subscriber would receive a minimum guaranteed pension of Rs 1,000 to Rs 5,000 per month, depending upon his contribution, from the age of 60 years.^{lix}

E-Sanjeevani - National Telemedicine Service

A total of 10,52,453 consultations have been provided to patients in Kerala. This digital healthcare platform has facilitated remote medical consultations, contributing to improved access to healthcare services and patient care in the state.^{lx}

Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY)

As of 29th January 2024, a total of 9,85,585 beneficiaries have been paid a total amount of Rs 438.41 crore.^{lxi} This scheme provides financial assistance to pregnant women and lactating mothers to support their health and nutrition needs during pregnancy and after childbirth.

Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana

Since its inception until December 2023, the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana has facilitated a total of 14,44,10,014 loan accounts, with a sanctioned amount totaling Rs 93,918.68 crore. This initiative has been instrumental in providing financial support and opportunities for entrepreneurship and small business development across India.^{lxii}

Startup India Initiative

Since the launch of the Startup India initiative in 2016 by the Government of India till 2023, there were 5131 recognised startups in Kerala to build a strong and inclusive ecosystem for innovation and entrepreneurship.^{lxiii}^{lxiv}

Stand up India

Since its inception until December 2023, the Stand Up India Yojana has provided loans to 7,594 accounts, with a total sanctioned amount of Rs 1,453.81 crore. This initiative aims to promote entrepreneurship among women and SC/ST communities by facilitating access to loans and support for setting up greenfield enterprises.^{lxv}

Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (PMGDISHA)

As of March 2024, a total of 1,77,256 students have registered for the program. Among them, 1,18,183 students have successfully completed the training, highlighting the significant efforts towards enhancing digital literacy and skills development, particularly in rural areas.^{lxvi}

Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana

Until the fiscal year 2023-24, a total of 73,032 candidates have been trained. This initiative focuses on providing skill development and vocational training to rural youth, empowering them with the necessary skills for employment and entrepreneurship opportunities, thereby contributing to rural economic growth and development.^{lxvii}

Atal Tinkering Labs

Out of the 10,000 ATLs established across the country, 369 ATLs have been set up in Kerala. These labs play a pivotal role in fostering innovation and nurturing the creativity and problem-solving skills of students, thereby contributing to the growth of the innovation ecosystem in the state.^{lxviii}

Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana

From May 2014 to April 2024, under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, a total of 698 roads with a cumulative length of 2,242.266 kilometers have been successfully constructed, contributing to improved connectivity and accessibility in rural areas across the country.^{lxix}

Amrit Sarovar Mission

In 14 districts of Kerala, a total of 859 Amrit Sarovars have been constructed. These Sarovars serve as crucial water bodies, providing communities with access to clean and safe drinking water, contributing to enhanced health and well-being across the state.^{lxx}

PM SVANIDHI Scheme

As of February 2024, there were 86,470 beneficiaries who received loans and the total amount of loans disbursed amounted to Rs 111 crore.^{lxxi} This scheme aims to provide affordable loans to street vendors to facilitate their livelihoods and businesses.

Investment in Rail Network in Kerala

During the period spanning from 2014 to 2023, investment in the rail network within Kerala experienced a significant surge under the Modi-government, amounting to a 2.7-fold increase compared to the preceding five-year period of 2009 to 2014. This uptick in investment facilitated notable advancements in infrastructure, evidenced by the commissioning of 125 Km of rail sections. Within this total, 29 Km was dedicated to gauge conversion, while 96 Km was allocated to doubling existing lines. This equated to an average annual commissioning rate of 13.89 Km, marking a remarkable 31% increase over the rate observed during 2009-2014, which stood at 10.6 Km per year. Additionally, by December 2023, substantial progress was made in terms of railway electrification, with a cumulative length of 947 route Km (Rkm) achieved, underscoring the state's commitment to modernizing and enhancing its rail infrastructure.

Average Budget Outlay per year (Rs crores/Year)



Source- Lok Sabha Questions^{lxxii}

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