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Thimphu Thomde's fraud and corruption cases forwarded to ACC

The Royal Audit Authority has referred four fraud and corruption cases concerning the Thimphu Thomde in the 2023-2024 financial year to the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC). These cases included unauthorised granting of e-PEMS access to accountants, as well as discrepancies in non-revenue receipts. Additionally, potential misappropriation of funds and deposit of government funds into personal savings accounts, among other issues were also observed, totalling over Nu 2.5 M.

The report revealed that the former Thimphu Thomde's account assistant's access to the electronic Public Expenditure Management System was not revoked during his Extra Ordinary Leave (EOL) even after a new accountant was appointed.

It was noted that the account assistant made transactions and adjustments remotely during the EOL without proper documentation of Nu 1.072 M.

Moreover, the report mentioned that granting access to e-PEMS during EOL was highly irregular as it posed a risk of passing unauthorised transactions.

The audit also observed that the same accountant during the EOL period deposited an advance of Nu 440,000 of government funds into the personal account of an administrative assistant at Yangchenphu Higher Secondary School.

The administrative assistant then transferred the equivalent amount back into the personal account of the accountant at Thimphu Thomde.

The Public Finance Act of Bhutan 2007 prohibits depositing government funds into personal savings account. The Royal Audit Authority could not determine the purpose for which the advances were released due to the lack of supporting documents.

In another case, the dealing accountant of Thimphu Thomde had not recorded 33 non-revenue receipts, totalling Nu 655,000.

These lapses occurred due to weaknesses in the internal control system for managing non-revenue receipts according to the report.

Moreover, a physical cash shortage and unaccounted non-revenue receipts amounting to Nu 1.062 M were also recorded in the report. These non-revenue receipts were related to the leasing of temporary space and vegetable sheds, and other similar transactions.

The authority has directed Thimphu Thomde to investigate the case, recover the missing funds, and deposit them into the Audit Recoveries Account.

All the cases have been qualified for further investigation by the ACC. ACC investigation has yet to begin.

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