

Head 208 - Department of National Museums - 2024

1. Financial Statements

1.1 Qualified Opinion

Head 208 - The audit of the financial statements of the Department of National Museums for the year ended 31 December 2024 comprising the statement of financial position as at 31 December 2024 and the statement of financial performance and cash flow statement for the year then ended was carried out under my direction in pursuance of provisions in Article 154(1) of the Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka read in conjunction with provisions of the National Audit Act, No.19 of 2018. The summary report containing my comments and observations on the financial statements of the Department of National Museums was issued to the Accounting Officer on 19 May 2025 in terms of Section 11(1) of the National Audit Act, No.19 of 2018. The Annual Detailed Management Audit Report relevant to the Department was issued to the Accounting Officer on 30 May 2025 in terms of Section 11(2) of the Audit Act. This report will be tabled in Parliament in pursuance of provisions in Article 154(6) of the Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka to be read in conjunction with Section 10 of the National Audit Act, No.19 of 2018.

In my opinion, except for the effects of the matters described in paragraph 1.6 of this report, the financial statements of the Department of National Museums as at 31 December 2024 give a true and fair view on the financial position and its financial performance and cash flows and all the material respects in compliance with the basis of preparation of the financial statements set out in Note 01 related to the financial statements.

1.2 Basis for Qualified Opinion

My opinion is qualified based on the matters described in paragraph 1.6 of this report. I conducted my audit in accordance with Sri Lanka Auditing Standards (SLAuSs). My responsibility for the financial statements is further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities Section. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

1.3 Emphasis of Matter - Basis of Preparation of Financial Statements

I draw attention to Note 1 to the financial statements which describes the basis of preparation of these financial statements. The financial statements have been prepared for the use of the Department of National Museums, General Treasury and Parliament in accordance with the Financial Regulations, 150 and 151 and Public Accounts Guideline No. 06/2024 dated 16 December 2024 as amended on 21 February 2025. Therefore, these financial statements may not be suitable for other purposes. My report is intended only for the use of the Department of National Museums, the General Treasury and the Parliament of Sri Lanka. My opinion on this matter is not modified.

1.4. Responsibilities of the Chief Accounting Officer and the Accounting Officer for the Financial Statements

The Accounting Officer is responsible for preparing financial statements that give a true and fair view in all material respects in accordance with the Financial Regulations, 150 and 151 and Public Accounts Guidelines No. 06/2024 dated 16 December 2024 as amended on 21 February 2025, and for determining such internal control as is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

As per Section 16(1) of the National Audit Act, No.19 of 2018, the Department is required to maintain proper books and records of all its income, expenditure, assets and liabilities to enable the preparation of annual and periodic financial statements.

In terms of Sub-section 38(1) (c) of the National Audit Act, the Accounting Officer shall ensure that an effective internal control system for the financial control exists in the Department and carry out periodic reviews to monitor the effectiveness of such systems and accordingly make any alterations as required for such systems to be effectively carried out.

1.5. Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

My objective is to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error and to issue an auditor's summary report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Sri Lanka Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate and its materiality depends on the influence on economic decisions taken by users on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with Sri Lanka Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Municipal Council's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the management.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with the Accounting Officer regarding, among other matters significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

1.6 Comments on Financial Statements

1.6.1. Accounting Deficiencies

(a) Property, Plant and Equipment

	Audit Observation	Comments of the Accounting Officer	Recommendation
(i)	Although the land of the National Museum in extent of 4.6317 hectares and building were accounted under non-financial assets at a valuation value of Rs. 10,800,000,000 based on the year 2013 and even though 11 years have passed since this property was valued by the year 2024, action had not been taken to revalue and account the lands and buildings as mentioned in paragraph (2) of the Non-Financial Assets Valuation Guidelines issued by the Comptroller General's Office on 31 December 2018.	The Government Valuation Department was informed several times to assess the buildings and land of the National Museum Department, and the assessment work is currently underway. Officials from the Valuation Department came for three days and carried out all the survey work, and it had been confirmed that the assessment future.	Circular instructions should be followed when preparing accounts.
(ii)	Action had not been taken to transfer the ownership of the lands and buildings belonging to other regional museums belonging to the Department, such as the Independence Memorial Museum, the Kandy National Museum, the Anuradhapura Folk Museum and the Galle National Museum, and to assess and account the value.	It was informed that the Independence Memorial Museum is owned by the Ministry of Home Affairs, and that the Anuradhapura Folk Museum has not been transferred to the Department since the Department only owns the land use rights of the Kandy National Museum, and re-agreement has been requested from the relevant institutions to transfer the Galle National Museum, and action is being taken to transfer the Polonnaruwa Ancient Technology Museum.	The value of all lands and buildings belonging to the Department must be included in the financial statements.
(iii)	Although the value spent on software development in Form ACA 02 of the financial statements during the year of audit had been Rs.3,778,343, the purchases for software development according to the computer printed Form SA 82 had	During the accounting of expenses in April 2024, a value of Rs. 91,680 was mistakenly debited to the Object 208-02-02-2106, and a journal voucher was entered into the CIGAS computer software in May 2024 to correct it in the correct Object 208-02-03-011-2106-0-13. As a result, steps were taken to	Financial statements must be prepared accurately.

- been Rs. 3,870,023, and the difference had been Rs. 91,680.
- remove that value from the CIGAS system to correct the error of accounting that value twice as an asset, and only the ledger balance had been indicated less by that. The value had not been removed from the BOS Report. It was informed that the relevant adjustments would be made to correct it in the year 2025.
- iv A difference of Rs. 4,564,665 was observed between the acquisition of capital assets as per the Statement of Financial Performance and the purchase of assets in the Statement of Non-Financial Assets (ACA 6).
- It was informed that these provisions had been transferred to the Department of Factories for the purchase of almirahs for the Anthropology Division, and the relevant almirahs had not been received by the Department at the time of preparing the accounts.
- If provision was transferred for purchases during the year, action should be taken to obtain the assets and account the assets within the relevant year.

(b) Imprest Balance

Audit Observation	Comments of the Accounting Officer	Recommendation
(i) Although the balance as per the departmental books as at 31 December 2024 had been indicated as Rs.3,562,756 in the Statement of Imprest Account (ACA 03) for the year 2024, the correct balance had been Rs. 687,338 after remitting the year-end imprest balance to the General Treasury, and therefore, the difference had been Rs. 2,875,418.	If the year-end balance of Rs. 2,875,418 is included as the settlement of imprest by cash within ACA – 03, the balance as per the books of the institution as at 31.12.2024 had been Rs. 687,338. Then the balance as per the treasury books as at 31.12.2024 will not be balanced with the sum of Rs. 3,562,756, which was the form SA – 70. Furthermore, it had not been indicated as the year-end settlement of imprest by cash in the submission of the financial statements for the years of 2022 and 2023. However, It was informed that it is expected to take action as indicated by that in the preparation of the future financial statements.	The current balance of imprest must be accurately stated in the statement of imprest account.
(ii) In accordance with paragraph 7.4 of the Public Accounts Guideline No. 6/2024 dated 16 December 2024, the amount of Rs. 2,875,418 remitted to the General Treasury at the end of the year had not been included as	It was informed that the year-end imprest balance will be included in accordance with the instructions in paragraph 7.4 in the preparation of financial statements in the future.	The Financial statements should be prepared as per circular instructions.

remittances to the General Treasury (d) in the statement of financial performance, and that balance had been included as a imprest balance in the statement of financial performance as at 31 December 2024. Accordingly, remitting the cash balance after settling the cash book in the statement of financial performance submitted had not been correctly indicated by the account.

2. Report on Other Legal Requirements

I express the following matters in terms of Section 6 (1) (d) of the National Audit Act, No. 19 of 2018.

- (a) The financial statements are consistent with the preceding year,
- (b) The following recommendations made by me on the financial statements of the preceding year had been implemented.

3. Financial Review

3.1 Expenditure Management

	Audit Observation	Comments of the Accounting Officer	Recommendation
(a)	The total net provision of 13 recurrent objects had been Rs.17,800,000, and the expenditure had been Rs.8,923,753 and provision amounting to Rs. 8,876,247 had been saved. The saving had been in the range of 31 to 88 percent, out of the net provision.	It was informed that the provision was saved due to controlling expenditure in accordance with the National Budget Circular dated 2024.01.10, not incurring fuel expenditure as expected, not incurring expenditure from the object of janitorial services as expected, not holding the mobile exhibitions as expected, requests were not submitted by officers as expected, not have to pay salaries as transfers and retirements were made and multi-purpose assistants have left the service.	Estimates should be prepared with a proper study.

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| (b) | The total of net provision of 05 capital objects had been Rs.185,475,886, and the expenditure had been Rs.121,965,905 and the saving of provision had been Rs. 63,509,981. The saving had been in the range of 30 to 59 percent, out of the net provision. | It was informed that the provision had been saved due to reasons such as non-incurring of expenditure due to non-completion of the relevant work, the implementation of the project carried out on foreign grants until April 2025 and the completion of the relevant work at a cost lower than the expected estimates. | Estimates should be prepared with a proper study. |
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3.2 Entering into Liabilities and Commitments

	Audit Observation	Comments of the Accounting Officer	Recommendation
(a)	The total net provision for the installation of the fire protection system under the object 208-2-2-0-2103 was Rs.180,000,000, and the expenditure for the year was Rs.180,000,000. However, at the end of the year, it entered into liabilities and commitments of Rs.21, 884,027 exceeding the provision.	It was informed that the provisions requested for the year 2024 were insufficient and although a letter signed by the Secretary of the Ministry of Buddhasasana, Religious and Cultural Affairs was submitted to the Department of National Budget in the year 2024 requesting additional provisions for that purpose, due to the non-receipt of the relevant provisions, liabilities of Rs. 21,884,027 had to be entered from the estimated provisions allocated in the year 2025 as a part of this expenditure.	Liabilities should not be entered exceeding the provisions of the year.
(b)	The Department had not updated the CIGAS accounting system on a daily basis to cover the process of settling commitments and liabilities as per paragraphs 03 and 04 of the State Accounts Circular No. 255/2017 dated 27 April 2017.	The process of settling commitments and liabilities is carried out correctly in making payments during the year and it was informed that since the last bill related to the fire protection system was received at the end of December, due to insufficient provisions, insufficient provisions for utility bills and the existence of vouchers received later, it was not possible to account for these programs as commitments and liabilities in the CIGAS system.	Action should be taken in accordance with the instructions of the Circular.

3.3. Non-compliance with laws, rules and regulations

Instances of non-compliance with the provisions of laws, rules and regulations observed during the sample audit tests are described below.

	Reference to the laws, rules and regulations	Observation Value Rs.	Non-compliance	Comments of the Accounting Officer	Recommendation
(i)	In accordance with paragraphs 4.5 and 4.6 of Chapter XXIV of the Establishments Code of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and 113 (6) of Financial Regulations of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka promulgated by Public Finance Circular No. 01/2020 dated 28th August 2020 and paragraphs (e) and (f) of the Guidelines No. 01	1,111,512	The debt balance of Rs.1,111,512 due from employees who left the service as at 31 December 2024 had not been settled in accordance with the Circular.	A request letter was sent to the Ministry of Buddhasasana, Religious and Cultural Affairs in 2024 to obtain the relevant approval to settle the total loan amount of Rs. 1, 152,445.00 due from the employees who left the service as of 31.12.2024. However, the relevant approval was received in February 2025. Due to this, it was informed that it has not been possible to recover the said loan amount.	Action should be taken in accordance with the instructions of the Circular.
(ii)	No. 31 (I) and (II) of the Cabinet decision No. CM/24/1125/620/020 dated 02 July 2024.	-	Even though it was informed that the repairs for conservation of the National Museum building, Ratnapura should commence immediately in 2024, it had not commenced	The Department of Buildings had held a pre-bid discussion on 02.10.2024 at the National Museum premises, Ratnapura and the Department of Buildings had informed that due to the problematic situations that arose during this discussion, the work was not carried out in 2024. It had been informed that the	Action should be taken in accordance with the decision of the Cabinet of Ministers.

		even by the date of this report.	procurement activities of the related useful project for the year 2025 have been initiated and planned to be carried out with a relevant plan.
(iii)	Circular No. PED/e- - GP/Circular/2018 of the Ministry of Finance, Economic and Policy Development dated 17 December 2019 and Circular No. PED/e- GP/Circular/2018 of the Ministry of Finance and Mass Media dated 23 October 2018.	The relevant activities for conducting e - procurement in accordance with the Circular had not been carried out.	It was informed that from the second quarter of 2025, procurement activities are planned to be carried out using the e - procurement method whenever possible.
		e- Procurement should be carried out in accordance with the Circular.	

3.4. Transactions in the nature of frauds

Audit Observation	Comments of the Accounting Officer	Observation
The total revenue lost to the Department was Rs.1,652,605 based on the investigation conducted in 2022 regarding the employee irregularities that occurred in the banking of the ticket revenue issued to visitors of the Maritime Museum, Galle and the preliminary report under Financial Regulation 104 (3). Even though a full investigation report in this regard should be submitted within three months from the date of the loss, after the investigation in terms of Financial Regulation 104 (4), action had not been taken accordingly even by the audit date of 26 March 2025.	The Board of Inquiry appointed has so far met once to obtain a full report in terms of F.R. 104(4) by the letter of the Secretary to the Ministry No. CA/1/1/24/22 dated 23.10.2024. The Chief Accounting Officer of the Cultural Division of the Ministry has also been appointed as a member of this Board of Inquiry. Since the accounts of the year 2024 were being settled, the Board of Inquiry had not had an opportunity to meet again. It was informed that the members of the Board have informed that they would meet again soon and provide a full report in accordance with Section 104(4) of the Act.	Those responsible should be determined and damages should be recovered in accordance with Financial Regulation 104 (4).

4. Operational Review

4.1 Vision and Mission

Audit Observation	Comments of the Accounting Officer	Observation
(a) The Department of National Museums had not taken steps to publish an Artifact Collection Management Policy by December 2024. Furthermore, no action had been taken to amend the existing law so that the Department of National Museums would have the authority to regulate the entire museum system in Sri Lanka and to obtain that authority from the Department of National Museums, which should have the regulatory power in the museum sector.	The Artifact Management Policy consists of 03 chapters and 15 subtopics. This work has already been started and policies related to 02 chapters (main part) and 10 subtopics have been drafted and completed. The remaining part will be completed by 31 July 2025, and this work will be completed after obtaining the opinions of external experts and consulting the public, submitting it to the National Policy Formulation Committee by the Secretary of the Ministry, and obtaining the approval of the Cabinet of Ministers with its recommendations. It was informed that this work will be completed by the end of 2025 and arrangements will be made to publish these policies as a valid policy.	The existing law should be amended to provide the authority to formulate an artifact collection management policy and regulate the entire museum system.
(b) The Code of Ethics for Museums has been prepared by ICOM (International Council of Museums) to cover a wide range of the museum subject area, and even though the Department had commenced drafting the Code of Ethics in a manner consistent with the laws, regulations and policies in force in Sri Lanka since 2021, that task had not been completed by 14 May 2025.	The Code of Ethics for Museums published by the ICOM Organization is also followed by the Department of National Museums. However, it should be formulated separately according to the laws, regulations, and policies of Sri Lanka. It was informed that those policies are currently being formulated.	The ethics introduced by ICOM should be formulated to suit the country.

4.2 Planning

Audit Observation	Comments of the Accounting Officer	Recommendation
Even though the Annual Action Plan for the ensuing year should be prepared before 15 December of the current year and the Annual Procurement Plan before 10 December of the current year in terms of the provisions of paragraphs 03 and 04 of the Public Finance Circular No. 02/2020 dated 28 August 2020 and copies thereof should be submitted to the Auditor General along with the approval of the Chief Accounting Officer, the approved Action Plan and Procurement Plan for the year 2024 had been submitted to the Audit on 04 March 2024. The relevant approval to amend the Action Plan approved for the year 2024 had been given by the Chief Accounting Officer on 24 February 2025, the same date as the approval of the financial statements. Accordingly, the relevant approval to amend the action plan for the year under review had been obtained after the end of the relevant accounting year	The revised Annual Action Plan was submitted to the Secretary and the Additional Secretary (Cultural Promotion) of the Ministry of Buddhasasana, Religious and Cultural Affairs on 20 February 2025 for approval, and it was informed that it had been approved on 24 February 2025.	The action should be taken in accordance with Public Finance Circular 02/2020, and the approval related to the amendments to the Action Plan should be obtained at the relevant time.

4.3 Non-performance of roles

The following observations are made.

Audit Observation	Comments of the Accounting Officer	Recommendation
(a) The work related to preparing a nameplate for the National Museum, Colombo had not been implemented based on the provisions of Rs.02 million included in the Action Plan for the year 2024.	The plans and estimates for the preparation of the nameplate were obtained from the Department of Buildings, and the estimated cost was Rs.5, 092,000. Accordingly, a sum of Rs. 02 million received for this project was insufficient. Hence, the amount was used to install the underground electricity cable near the rear guardroom, which was an urgent and essential task at that time. It was informed that since the project had been funded in the year 2025, the work was scheduled to be completed in this year.	When preparing plans, close attention should be paid to the requirement of provisions.

- (b) 04 projects worth Rs. 7.213 million, such as the repair of the window of the Colombo National Museum, the installation of protected underground electrical cables in the Department of National Museums, the repair of the rain gutters of the Museum of Natural History and the repair of the Laksala Building, had been carried out in the year 2024. However, those works had not been included in the approved Action Plan. If there were urgent tasks that had to be carried out, the Action Plan should have been revised during the year, and approval should have been obtained from the relevant parties. However, action had not been taken accordingly.
- Considering the height and risk of the external ground level window of the building, scaffolding was used to install them safely, since it was necessary to fix the electrical cable very quickly and safely due to the insecurity caused by the sudden breakage of this electrical cable, the work of installing this underground electrical cable was carried out in the year 2024 under the instructions of the Department of Buildings, the repair work of the rain gutters was completed on 2024.06.24, and by ensuring that rainwater is properly drained, the roof can be prevented from deterioration and the walls from getting mossed and discolored, and since the relevant provisions for the estimate of Rs. 48 million were not available in the year 2024, several tasks in the Annual Action Plan 2024 were canceled and an amount of Rs. 02 million was transferred to the Department of Buildings and the work of fixing water leakage points in the Laksala building was carried out. It was informed that essential works were carried out by allocating Rs. 02 million, as there were no provisions for the estimate of Rs. 07 million.
- In case of urgent needs, plans should be revised before the end of the year and the approval of the Chief Accounting Officer should be obtained.
- (c) The estimated cost of the 3 projects, namely the repair of the ancient monument wall and mesh fence surrounding the museum premises, the roof repair of the Colombo Museum and the renovation of the exhibition halls of the Anuradhapura Folk Museum, was Rs.33 million and the work on those projects had not been completed in the year 2024.
- The repair work of the ancient monument wall and the mesh fence surrounding the museum premises was fully completed in March 2025 and the Navy is carrying out the necessary work to prevent water leakage from the concrete floor on the roof of the auditorium building presently. Further, the repair work to prevent water leakage from the concrete floor on the roof of the building where the museum police station is located is due to commence in June 2025 and it had been informed that the work is expected to be completed by 31.12.2025 and that it was not possible to commence the renovation work of the internal exhibitions of the Anuradhapura Folk Museum in due time.
- Actions should be taken to complete the project expeditiously.

4.4 Assets Management

Following observations are made.

	Audit Observation	Comments of the Accounting Officer	Recommendation
(a)	Seven types of artefacts dating from 1877 to 1957 had gone missing due to internal control weaknesses in the Department, such as problems related to the custody and protection of artefacts, failure to maintain files related to them properly, failure to properly transfer the custody of the artefacts when officers changed and as of the date of this report, action had not been taken to obtain the instructions of the Deputy Secretary to the Treasury in accordance with the provisions of Financial Regulation 105 (2)(c).	.Actions have been taken to appoint a panel in this regard and prepare a full report and submit to the Ministry on 24.04.2024 for action in accordance with the provisions of Financial Regulation 105 (2) (c). Since the Ministry requested a further report in this regard on 28.05.2024 and it had been informed that further relevant information was submitted on 25.06.2024.	Actions should be taken to act in accordance with the provisions of Financial Regulation 105 (2) (c).
(b)	The left side of the second floor adjacent to the Biology Division of the Natural Science Museum had been completely closed and removed from public display since 2012 and Actions had not been taken to make the necessary repairs and open it for public display or use it for any other productive purpose until 31 December 2024.	The models to be displayed for 10 exhibition booths have been selected and the work of painting and repairing the backgrounds in the 10 already completed booths has begun. Further, the main exhibition board and 06 exhibition boards containing information about the booth have been prepared and it had been informed that the assignment letters for the preparation of the ceiling, preparation of the floor and air conditioning of the booth have been forwarded to the Sri Lanka State Trading (General) Corporation	Actions should be taken to make necessary repairs should and arrangements should be made to open it for public display.

4.5 Losses and damages

Audit Observation	Comments of the Accounting Officer	Recommendation
Although it has been 12 years since the theft of 221 artefacts worth an estimated Rs.4,440,140 from the Colombo National Museum on 16 March 2012, as of 31 December 2024, the case had not been concluded due to the Attorney General's Department not having filed charges against the accused.	The Secretary to the Ministry appointed a committee to take action under Section 104(3) of the Criminal Procedure Code in respect of the items stolen from the Colombo National Museum on 16.03.2012. These items, which were currently missing and later recovered, are sealed and in the custody of the Department under court orders. It was informed that it had not been possible to take action under Section 104(3) of the Criminal Procedure Code until the completion of the proceedings as the seals on these items cannot be removed.	Actions should be taken to expedite the proceedings by maintaining coordination with the relevant parties and conducting regular follow-up activities.

4.6 Uneconomic transactions

Audit Observation	Comments of the Accounting Officer	Recommendation
The department had printed ticket books in bulk, between 500 and 2000 at a time in printing tickets, regardless of the average annual ticket requests made by other museums during the 03-year period from 2022 to 2024. According to the departmental budget, Rs. 1,698,148 had been spent on printing 100 tickets in 2022, and Rs.2,576,061 had been spent on printing 3,500 tickets in 2023, totaling Rs. 4,274,259. It was observed that spending money on printing more tickets, regardless of the annual demand for regular tickets, was an uneconomical expense.	The reprinting of tickets has been made in anticipation of a higher number of visitors with the revival of the tourism industry after the Covid pandemic. Since significant progress has already been made in the number of visitors in 2024 and 2025 compared to previous years, it had been informed that this stock of tickets would be used without reprinting tickets.	Actions should be taken to develop a ticket issuing system using modern technology.

4.7 Management weaknesses

Following observations are made.

Audit Observation	Comments of the Accounting Officer	Recommendation
(a) The National Museum Library has a collection of books that are over 150 years old and there were many books that had become unusable and unpreservable over time. There was no library disposal register for the books that had been destroyed in this way in the library section and actions had not been taken to appoint a disposal board and prepare related standards for the books that should be disposed of.	The library staff has begun documenting and identifying all the books currently in the library that cannot be preserved and restored. It had been informed that once the relevant report is completed, actions would be taken to appoint an appropriate disposal board and the books that cannot be restored would be disposed of according to formal procedures.	Actions should be taken to appoint a disposal board to determine which books should be disposed of and formulate relevant standards.
(b) There was not an air conditioning system in the library in addition to the fire safety system and only a few fans had been installed. Although the department's role is to provide opportunities for local and foreign readers to use ancient books and Ola leaves manuscripts that are many years old and of great value for a long time, there was a risk of destruction of the valuable books due to the lack of technical equipment to control the lighting, air conditioning and humidity conditions that should be maintained at the optimum level for the survival of these books. Also, the staff on duty were highly susceptible to respiratory and skin diseases due to the lack of a comfortable working environment that should exist in a library environment and the presence of extremely dusty conditions.	The dust situation is mostly caused by dust falling into the library from the wooden floor of the upper floor due to visitors walking to the exhibitions. Therefore, there is a need to implement an air conditioning system in the library. Therefore, it had been informed that it is expected to install air conditioners at least in the sections of the library, including the reading room, where the paperback book collection and the rare book collection are located, after obtaining plans and estimates from a recognized institution in the future and allocating funds.	Actions should be taken to prevent the risk of books being destroyed create a comfortable service environment for local and foreign readers.
(c) 272 gemstones from the Geology Section of the Department had been deposited at the Metropolitan Branch of the Bank of Ceylon since 18 September 1964, and after one of the gemstones was revealed to be a	They have informed in writing that the collection of gemstones should be taken to the the Gem and Jewellery Authority for examination. However, the Departmental Audit Management	Actions should be taken to to assess the present financial value.

synthetic stone during a physical examination conducted in 1993, that stone was deposited in the Geology Section. Actions had not been taken to assess the value of these remaining 271 gemstones with the assistance of a gemologist from the National Gem and Jewellery Authority. Although it was submitted in response to the Annual Detailed Management Audit Report in accordance with Section 11(2) of the National Audit Act, No. 19 of 2018 on Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2023, that it was expected to obtain the approval of the Secretary to the Ministry in this regard and to carry out further work, action had not been taken until March 2025.

Committee meeting held in the second quarter of 2024 decided that since it was dangerous to take the collection of gemstones abroad, the task has been delayed until now. However, a committee has been appointed to weigh, photograph and properly report this gem collection and submitted it to the Ministry for approval. It had been informed that once approval is received, the gem collection will be properly photographed and weighed within the bank premises.

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| <p>(d) The artifacts remained unprotected due to the lack of CCTV camera systems installed in 08 museums except the Colombo, Kandy and Polonnaruwa museums as of 31 December 2024.</p> | <p>CCTV camera systems are installed in accordance with the order of threats faced by each museum. It is difficult to provide funds to install CCTV camera systems in all museums. Therefore, it had been informed that it is expected to install CCTV camera systems in other museums in the future, considering the threats faced by each museum and the collection of artifacts year after year.</p> | <p>It is the responsibility of the department to ensure the safety of artifacts.</p> |
| <p>(e) The report on the Artifacts Survey conducted for the year 2024 had not been submitted for audit and the Department had not taken actions to facilitate the annual census work by establishing an Artifacts database and integrating it into a barcode system to avoid practical difficulties arising during this Artifacts survey.</p> | <p>A database is being prepared to enter information related to artifacts at present. Once the system is completed, artifacts from all departments and museums are to be entered into that database. Since pasting barcodes on the surface of artifacts is harmful to those artifacts, it cannot be done with artifacts. Therefore, it had been informed that they can be easily handled for various needs by preparing a formal database system.</p> | <p>Actions should be taken to overcome practical problems that arise during the survey of artifacts.</p> |

- (f) According to the Cabinet paper submitted on 09 November 2017, approval had been also given to seek the assistance of Sri Lanka Telecom and Sri Lanka Mobitel in providing the necessary information, technical and communication facilities for the Polonnaruwa Ancient Technology Museum without inviting bids. Accordingly, the procedure for issuing tickets using the M Gate system had been carried out by Sri Lanka Mobitel for a sum of Rs. 3,510,188 (tax inclusive) and this procedure had commenced from 05 April 2019 with the signing of an agreement between the two parties. There are some technical issues in printing tickets in this system, such as the fact that a serial number or sequential number is not printed, the tickets are in a bundle placed in a box before printing, and although Mobitel stated that there are 1,000 tickets in each, when counting the tickets, the tickets in different bundles are of different quantities, the technical errors that occur in this system have to be resolved by Mobitel itself through the online method and it is not possible to issue tickets as this takes a lot of time and it was also observed during the audit that some tickets in the ticket bundle are not printed by the printer and then they have to be removed. Further, although 6 years have passed since 2019, the Department had not taken actions to resolve these technical issues.
- There are some technical and various issues with the ticket issuance system of the Polonnaruwa Ancient Technical Museum. There are practical issues such as the fact that a serial number or sequential number is not printed on the ticket books when they are printed, the tickets are in a bundle placed in a box before printing and although Mobitel stated that there are 1,000 tickets in those bundles, when counting the tickets, the tickets in different bundles are of different sizes, the technical errors that occur in this system have to be resolved online by Mobitel itself and this takes a lot of time, thus the ticket issuance cannot be carried out in the meantime and some tickets in the ticket bundle are not printed by the printer and then they have to be removed. For this reason, it had been informed that work was being done to introduce a ticketing system online through a new website, rather than introducing this system to other museums.
- Actions should be taken to resolve these technical problems, which have existed for 6 years.

5. Human Resource Management

Audit Observation	Comments of the Accounting Officer	Recommendation
Although the approved cadre as of 31 December 2024 was 566, the actual cadre was 393, being a shortage of 173 vacancies. These vacancies comprised 07 out of 16 executive level posts, 03 out of 05 tertiary level posts, 121 secondary level posts and 42 primary level posts. The post of Senior Librarian of the National Museum had been vacant for about 15 years.	The actual staff was 393 out of the approved staff of 566 as of 31.12.2024 and the total number of vacancies was 173. Although the total number of vacancies was 173, the statutory responsibilities of the Department are being maintained with maximum efficiency under the actual cadre. Requests have been continuously made to the Ministry of Public Administration, Provincial Councils and Local Government and the Department of Management Services to fill the vacancies in the executive level, tertiary level, secondary level and primary posts. Although there are vacancies in the post of Senior Librarian, it had been informed that the library activities are being maintained optimally under the supervision of two Grade III Librarians.	Action should be taken to fill essential cadre shortages and increase the performance of the institution.