

MEASURES TO CHECK CORRUPTION IN
C.P.W.D.

*207. SHRI R. N. KAKATI: Will the Minister of WORKS, HOUSING AND REHABILITATION be pleased to state the various measures taken/proposed to be taken by Government to eradicate corruption and other malpractices in the Central Public Works Department?

THE MINISTER OF WORKS, HOUSING AND REHABILITATION (SHRI MEHR CHAND KHANNA): The various measures taken in the past for eradicating corruption, etc., in the Central Public Works Department have been reported in the Annual Reports of the Ministry of Works, Housing and Supply for the years 1956 to 1962.

A Departmental Committee which looked into the matter of corruption in the Central Public Works Department, has also made certain recommendations which are being implemented. A brief summary of the recommendations of the Departmental Committee is placed on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

Brief summary of the recommendations of the Departmental Committee on corruption in the Central Public Works Department

The Committee first reviewed the existing arrangements for investigation of complaints into the conduct of departmental officials including complaints of acceptance of sub-standard works and examined the time taken at present for disposal of disciplinary cases.

2. The Committee recommended a liberal policy in the matter of enlistment of contractors in order to promote free and healthy competition. When the tenders received for a work are unusually high and a call of re-tenders or negotiations do not succeed in bringing down the rates, the Committee recommended that departmental execution of works should be re-

sorted to more often so as to reduce the evil of "pooling".

3. The Committee pointed out that the time limit stipulated in a contract should be realistic and works should be awarded to contractors only after the department has taken possession of the site free from encroachments. Steps have also to be taken for better co-ordination between the Planning Wing, Architect Wing and the field staff to avoid delays in supply of drawings and designs. The Committee emphasised the need for timely procurement and issue of materials, the supply of which is the responsibility of the department. These steps have been recommended in order that there may be no disputes about the responsibility for delay in execution of works.

4. With a view to eliminating sub-standard work, there should be more frequent and intensive checking of works by Executive Engineers and by Superintending Engineers of the works in progress. They should give guidance to the subordinate staff in the course of these inspections and detailed inspection notes should be written incorporating their observations about the quality of materials and workmanship. This will ensure that inspections of superior officers are purposeful and meaningful.

5. Test checks made by Executive Engineers should be representative and cover all important items and aspects of the work. In earthwork contracts, all items carrying high unit rates should be test-checked by the Executive Engineers who should also determine the classification of the soil personally instead of leaving this work to their subordinates.

6. Where payment for earth work in cutting or filling is to be made on the basis of levels and the amount involved is substantial, it should be made compulsory for the Assistant Engineers and the Executive Engineers to test-check both the initial and final formation levels up to 50 per cent. and 10

per cent, respectively. These test-checks should be made by them independently and the plans showing the initial level, the location of the bench mark and the reduced level must be made to form an integral part of the contract which should be signed both by the Executive Engineer and the contractor before commencement of work.

7. In contracts where leads involved are not clearly stipulated, lead-charts should be got prepared before commencement of the work and should be duly checked by the Assistant Engineer and the Executive Engineer.

8. Senior officers should devote time and attention to the training of their subordinates. Junior officers should visit and inspect well-constructed buildings to get an idea of the standards which should be maintained and enforced. A whole-time senior officer should be detailed to take charge of new entrants to the department and impart training to them in all branches of work.

9. There should be intensive inspections of the stores maintained in the various Enquiry Offices of the C.P.W.D. There should be independent physical verification of stores in the divisions, particularly where the value of the stocks held is high. The verification has to be done by officers independent of the Stores Divisions concerned.

10. There should also be frequent surprise checks by senior officers of works where large-scale muster roll labour is employed.

11. Items of works like polishing of floors, repairs to fans, furniture, etc., which are not susceptible of precise measurement should be executed departmentally so that there may be no scope for manipulations and over-payments to contractors.

12. In order that there may be no harassment of contractors through delays in the payment of their bills,

Superintending Engineers should, during their inspection of divisional offices, pay special attention to the register showing the bills received and passed in the divisional office and investigate instances of abnormal delay.

13. In order generally to further improve the quality of the works undertaken by the department and the standards of administration and to reduce opportunities for misconduct, various other steps have been and/or are being taken by the Ministry as explained below.

14. It has been decided to redistribute the work among the Additional Chief Engineers and to locate the headquarters of each of them at a convenient place within his jurisdiction with a view to facilitating more frequent inspection of works. This will also make available to the field officers more easily than at present the advice and guidance of an experienced and senior officer of the status of Additional Chief Engineer.

15. Contractors will be registered by the department more liberally. Organisations like the National Buildings Construction Corporation and the Bharat Sevak Samaj will be encouraged to take up works in the department side by side with the contractors so that there may be healthy competition between the public sector building industry, the private sector building industry and non-official non-profit-making organisations like the Bharat Sevak Samaj.

16. The Vigilance Organisation will be strengthened so that enquiries into complaints of misconduct may be undertaken quickly and action against delinquent officials initiated promptly.

17. The Chief Technical Examiner's organisation will also be strengthened so that more and more works may be inspected by it in the course of construction.