

Copy of Punjab Government Circular letter No. 1611-GII-59/5697, dated 5th May, 1959, from the Chief Secretary to Government, Punjab addressed to all Heads of Departments, etc. etc.

Subject :—Speedy disposal of cases against Government servants under suspension—Instructions regarding.

I am directed to say that a perusal of the lists of suspended Government servants received in response to Punjab Government circular letter No. 5432-B&C-58/13819, dated the 10th September, 1958 has revealed that the number of Government servants under suspension is very large and that many of them have been under suspension for a long time (as much as four or five years in some cases.) Government feel that this state of affairs requires to be remedied with speed. I have been directed to ask you to see that all pending cases of this nature in your department are disposed of within three months, as far as possible. If there are cases in which departmental enquiries have not yet started these should be started forth with. Where they have begun enquiry officers should be instructed to complete them expeditiously.

2. In order to ensure that satisfactory progress is made by the departments concerned it has been decided that each department should submit a quarterly report showing the progress made in such cases to the Administrative Department concerned. The Anti-Corruption Department will separately be supplied information asked for by them in their letter No. 919-ACC-50/353, dated the 4th April, 1950 (copy enclosed). It will be the responsibility of the Administrative Department concerned to scrutinize the quarterly reports and to bring to the notice of the Minister in charge of the department cases which are not registering sufficient progress.

3. It is noticed that a major cause of undue prolongation of period of suspension is that a suspected official is very often suspended before the charge-sheet is served on him and that the charge sheet is very often not prepared until long after his suspension has been ordered. It, should, therefore be made a matter of firm principle, to be deviated from only in cases of rare urgency, that no official is suspended until a proper sheet is served upon him and his explanation obtained and found unsatisfactory. A departmental enquiry can only begin at this stage and at this stage should be started forth with. The enquiry officer should ordinarily complete all the proceedings and submit his report within a period of three months and the punishing authority should not take much longer to decide the case (obtaining the advice of the P.C.S., where required, expeditiously). If this procedure is observed it will be possible to curtail to a large extent long and unjustified periods of suspension. In no case should the period between suspension and final orders exceed six months. Long periods of suspension are unfair to the official concerned and can often prove uneconomical to Government.

4. The cases of Government servants involved in criminal cases should be dealt within accordance with the provision of rules 7.5 and 7.6 of the Punjab Civil Services Rules, Volume I, Part I.

5. These instructions may be brought to the notice of all working under you and the receipt of this letter may be acknowledged.