

Copy of letter No. 5824-3GSI-66, dated the 20th October, 1966 from the Chief Secretary to Government, Punjab to all Heads of Departments etc., etc.

Subject:—Approaching Ministers and other officers.

I am directed to invite your attention to Rule 20 of the Punjab Government Employees (conduct) Rules, 1966 which forbids Government employees from approaching members of the Punjab State Legislature or of the Parliament with a view to having their personal grievances, connected with their conditions of service; redressed through them. As this tendency on the part of subordinate officers, to approach members of the Legislature as also the Ministers was on the increase the provisions of the rules were specifically brought to the notice of the Government employees enjoining at the same time that cases of breach of these instructions would be suitably dealt with. Again in May, 1956 attention of the Government employees was drawn to paragraph 37 of the Punjab Government Consolidated Circular No. 5 which inter alia lays down that subordinate officers should always address higher authorities/Government through their superiors and that anybody violating the provision would be liable to disciplinary action. These instructions were reiterated in November, 1962.

2. These instructions also did not have the desired effect and the Government employees continued to approach the Ministers and higher officers through the members of the legislature and other non-officials for the redress of their grievances. This necessitated the reiteration of this Government instructions once again in November, 1963. The Government employees were told that strict disciplinary action would be taken against those guilty of default in this regard.

3. In March, 1965, it was brought to the notice of Government that some Departmental Heads had been too harsh to and had even tried to victimize officers/officials who had approached ministers for the redress of their grievances whereas no such adverse notice was taken in cases where Government officers/officials might have seen higher officers over the head of their immediate departmental superiors. As a result of this it was decided that the orders of ministers in such cases should be appropriately carried out and no action should be taken against any official for approaching a minister without the permission of the minister concerned.

4. The matter has been examined further with reference to the relevant provisions in the various conduct rules which generally prohibit Government employees from bringing in any political or other outside influence to bear upon any superior authority to further his interest in respect of matters pertaining to his service. In a democratic set up, where the impartiality of the services and the detachment from any kind of political influence has to be consciously fostered, the need for this rule and for its strict enforcement cannot be over emphasised. Regular procedures have been prescribed in the various service rules for the redress of grievances, and Government employees are expected not to utilize methods other than those available in the service rules for this purpose. It has, therefore been decided that no outside influence of any kind must be brought in by the Government employees for the redress of their official grievances. The instructions contained in Punjab Government letter No. 5394-DSGS(I)-65, dated the 6th July, 1965, may therefore, be deemed to have been modified to this extent and it may be brought to the notice of all concerned that any violation of the Punjab Government Employees Conduct Rules will be strictly dealt with.

5. As already pointed out in Punjab Government letter No. 4174-P-54/17154, dated the 28th, July, 1954 also Government employees seeking intervention of the Ministers should be allowed to see them through the Administrative Secretary of the concerned department. The Administrative Secretaries should freely grant this premission but where they have reasons to refuse permission they should record their reasons and send these to their respective Ministers.