

Crackdown on corruption: Embezzlement of 19.29 cr detected

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Chandigarh, June 12:

Zero tolerance towards corruption is the new mantra of the state government. Taking the Chief Minister, Capt Amarinder Singh's crusade against corruption to a new level, the Finance Department has unearthed a Rs 19.29-crore embezzlement of public funds.

This huge financial irregularity was detected during the audit of Local Funds, Public and Quasi Public Bodies for the financial year 2017-18.

Taking the crackdown on corrupt practices to the implementation level, the department has initiated action against those involved in such cases with clear orders from the top that none of the guilty would be spared. "Any erring official/functionary found involved in such malpractices, will be dealt with severely," said an official spokesman.

These irregularities of Rs 19.29 crore were found in the Improvement Trust, Amritsar; Municipal Corporation, Moga; Municipal Council, Rampura Phul; Municipal Council, Begowal; Nagar Panchayat, Mehatpur; Municipal Council, Raikot; Nagar Panchayat, Chauke (Bathinda); Municipal Council, Sri Anandpur Sahib; and several other gram panchayats.

These embezzlements/irregularities were detected by the Local Audit Wing of the department. A sum of Rs 7.62 crore on account of audit fee received by the Audit Wing while auditing the accounts has since been deposited in the Government Treasury.

The spokesman further disclosed that an amount of Rs 4.40 crore was saved during the pre-auditing of bills by retrenching excess/wrong payments made to Local Bodies. Besides, while pre-auditing the bills Rs 4.40 crore was saved by curtailing the excess and wrong payments of various municipal corporations, municipal councils, improvement trusts, universities, Punjab School Education Board and Sewerage Board and circles across the state.

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