

The Committee on Prevention of Corruption (Santhanam Committee) made a range of recommendations to fight the menace of corruption. It recommended the constitution of the Central Vigilance Commission and administrative vigilance divisions in all Departments and major organizations of the Government. The Committee suggested rules to be framed for governing the conduct of civil servants. Some suggested changes in the rules were filing of assets and liabilities statement instead of immovable property statement by government servants, rules regarding receipt of gifts and raising of contributions, and rules regarding dealing in stocks and speculations. Changes were also suggested in Art. 311 of the Constitution of India for conducting disciplinary proceedings against government servants. The Committee also suggested a systematic review of the laws, rules, procedures, and practices of the Ministries so that the possible scope and modes of corruption may be identified and remedial measures prescribed. Changes in the Indian Penal Code were also suggested to strengthen anti-corruption measures. Economic offences, evasion of taxes, profiteering, black-marketing, misappropriation of public properties, trafficking in licenses and misuse of position by a public servant in making contracts and issuing licenses, etc, it was suggested, should find a prominent place in the general criminal law of the country. It was also suggested that the Law Commission should further look into these issues. The definition of a public servant was recommended to be widened under the IPC to include Ministers, employees of PSUs, etc. It was also recommended that the offering of bribes should be made a substantive offence. The Committee further suggested that on completing 25 years of service or 50 years of age, a government servant may be retired without prescribing any reason, if the government thinks it fit. This was subsequently incorporated in Rule 56(j) of the Fundamental Rules. The first ARC recommended that the departments and organizations which were in direct charge of development programmes should introduce performance budgeting. The ARC also recommended the establishment of two special institutions, the Lok Pal to deal with complaints against the administrative acts of Ministers and Secretaries to the government at the Centre and the Lok Ayuktas to deal with such complaints in States. The Hota Committee recommended that Sections 13 (1) (d) and 19 of the Prevention of Corruption Act and Section 197 of the Code of Criminal Procedure may be amended to protect honest civil servants from malicious prosecution and harassment. It also recommended that a Code of Ethics should be drawn up for civil servants incorporating the core values of integrity, merit, and excellence in public service. Another recommendation of the Hota Committee was that each department should lay down and benchmark services to be delivered, methods of grievance redressal, and public evaluation of performance. It also recommended that a Model Code of Governance should be drawn up benchmarking the standards of governance to be made available to the citizens. It further recommended that an annual State of Governance Report, benchmarking the performance levels of each State/department/Ministry should be brought out.