

PART-IV
GOVERNMENT OF MEGHALAYA
LAW (B) DEPARTMENT
ORDERS BY THE GOVERNOR

NOTIFICATION

The 27th March, 2014.

No.LL(B)11/99/368.—The Meghalaya Lokayukta Act, 2014 (Act No. 4 of 2014) is hereby published for general information.

MEGHALAYA ACT NO. 4 OF 2014

(As passed by the Meghalaya Legislative Assembly)

Received the assent of the Governor on 26th March, 2014.

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THE MEGHALAYA LOKAYUKTA ACT, 2014

An

Act

to provide for the establishment of a body of Lokayukta for the State of Meghalaya to inquire into allegations of corruption against certain public functionaries and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Meghalaya in the Sixty-fifth Year of the Republic of India as follows.

CHAPTER I

PRELIMINARY

**Short title,
extent,
application and
commencement.**

1. (1) This Act may be called the Lokayukta Act, 2014.
- (2) It extends to the whole of Meghalaya.
- (3) It shall apply to public servant.
- (4) It shall come into force on such date as the State Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, appoint.

Definitions.

2. (1) In this Part unless the context otherwise requires,—
 - (a) "Act" means the Meghalaya Lokayukta Act, 2014;
 - (b) "Bench" means a Bench of the Lokayukta;
 - (c) "Chairperson" means the Chairperson of the Lokayukta;
 - (d) "competent authority", in relation to —
 - (i) the Chief Minister, means the Legislative Assembly of the State;
 - (ii) a member of the Council of Ministers, means the Chief Minister;
 - (iii) a member of State Legislature other than a Minister means the Speaker of that House;
 - (iv) an officer in the Department of the State Government means the Minister-in-charge of the Department under which such officer is serving;

- (v) a chairperson or members of any body, or Board or corporation or authority or company or society or autonomous body (by whatever name called) established or constituted under an Act of the State Legislature or wholly or partly financed by the State Government or controlled by it, means the Minister in charge of the administrative Department of such body, or Board or corporation or authority or company or society or autonomous body;
- (vi) an officer of any body or Board or corporation or authority or company or society or autonomous body (by whatever name called) established or constituted under an Act of the State Legislature or wholly or partly financed by the State Government or controlled by it, means the head of such body or Board or corporation or authority or company or society or autonomous body;
- (vii) in any other case not falling under sub-clauses (i) to (vi) above, means such department or authority as the State Government may, by notification, specify:

Provided that if any person referred to in sub-clause (v) or sub-clause (vi) is also a Member of the State Legislature, then the competent authority shall be the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly;

- (e) "Governor" means the Governor of Meghalaya;
- (f) "High Court" means the High Court of Meghalaya;
- (g) "investigation" means an investigation defined under clause (h) of section 2 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973;
- (h) "Judicial Member" means a Judicial Member of the Lokayukta appointed as such;
- (i) "Legislature or State Legislature" means the Legislature of the State of Meghalaya and Assembly shall be construed accordingly;
- (j) "Lokayukta" means the body established under section 3;

- (j) "Member" means a Member of the Lokayukta;
- (k) "Minister" means Minister of a State Government but does not include the Chief Minister;
- (l) "preliminary inquiry" means an inquiry conducted under this Act by the Lokayukta;
- (m) "prescribed" means prescribed by rules made under this Act;
- (n) "public servant" means a person referred to in clause (a) to (h) of sub-section (1) of Section 14 but does not include a public servant in respect of whom the jurisdiction is exercisable by any court or other authority under the Army Act, 1950, the Air Force Act, 1950, the Navy Act, 1957 and the Coast Guard Act, 1978 or the procedure is applicable to such public servant under those Acts; and
- (o) "State Government or Government" means the Government of the State of Meghalaya.

(2) The words and expressions used herein and not defined in this Part but defined in the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, shall have the meanings respectively assigned to them in the said Acts.

CHAPTER II

ESTABLISHMENT OF LOKAYUKTA

Establishment of Lokayukta. 3. (1) As soon as after the commencement of this Act, there shall be established, by notification in the Official Gazette, a body to be called the "Lokayukta".

(2) The Lokayukta shall consist of-

- (a) a Chairperson, who is or has been a Chief Justice of the High Court or a Judge of the High Court or an eminent person who fulfils the eligibility specified in clause (b) of sub-section (3); and
- (b) such number of members, not exceeding four out of whom fifty percent shall be Judicial Members.

(3) A person shall be eligible to be appointed,-

- (a) as a Judicial Member if he is or has been a Judge of the High Court or is eligible to be a Judge of the High Court;

(b) as a Member other than a Judicial Member, if he is a person of impeccable integrity, outstanding ability having special knowledge and expertise of not less than twenty-five years in the matters relating to anti-corruption policy, public administration, vigilance, finance including insurance and banking, law, and management.

(4) The Chairperson or a Member shall not be —

- (i) a member of Parliament or a member of the Legislature of any State or Union territory;
- (ii) a person convicted of any offence involving moral turpitude;
- (iii) a person of less than forty-five years of age, on the date of assuming office as Chairperson or Member, as the case may be;
- (iv) a member of any Panchayat or Municipality or District Council;
- (v) a person who has been removed or dismissed from service of the Union or a State, and shall not hold any office of trust or profit (other than his office as the Chairperson or a Member) or be connected with any political party or carry on any business or practice any profession and accordingly, before he enters upon his office, a person appointed as the Chairperson or a Member, as the case may be, shall, if -
 - (a) he holds any office of trust or profit, resign from such office; or
 - (b) he is carrying on any business, sever his connection with the conduct and management of such business; or
 - (c) he is practicing any profession, cease to practice such profession.

Appointment of Chairperson or Members on recommendation of Selection Committee.

4. (1) The Chairperson and Members shall be appointed by the Governor after obtaining the recommendations of a Selection Committee consisting of—
- (a) the Chief Minister — chairperson;
 - (b) the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly — member;

- (c) the Leader of Opposition in the Legislative Assembly — member;
- (d) the Chief Justice of the High Court of Meghalaya or a Judge of the High Court nominated by him — member;
- (e) an eminent person nominated by the Governor — member.

(2) No appointment of a Chairperson or a Member shall be invalid merely by reason of any vacancy in the Selection Committee.

(3) The Selection Committee shall for the purposes of selecting the Chairperson and Members of the Lokayukta and for preparing a panel of persons to be considered for appointment as such, constitute a Search Committee consisting of at least five persons of standing and having special knowledge and expertise in the matters relating to anti-corruption policy, public administration, vigilance, policy making, finance including insurance and banking, law, and management, or in any other matter which, in the opinion of the Selection Committee, may be useful in making selection of the Chairperson and Members of the Lokayukta:

Provided that not less than fifty percent of the Members of the Search Committee shall be from amongst the persons belonging to the Schedule Castes, the Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes and women:

Provided further that at the commencement of this Act, the Search Committee may submit a panel of names twice the number of Chairperson and Members of Lokayukta for consideration by the Selection Committee and subsequently thrice the number of vacancies to be filled up:

Provided also that the Selection Committee may also consider any person other than the persons recommended by the Search Committee.

(4) The Selection Committee shall regulate its own procedure for selecting the Chairperson and Members of the Lokayukta which shall be transparent.

(5) The term of the Search Committee referred to in subsection (3), the fees and allowances payable to its members and the manner of selection of panel of names shall be such as may be prescribed.

Filling of vacancies of Chairperson or Members.

5. The Governor shall take or cause to be taken all necessary steps for the appointment of a new Chairperson and Members at least three months before the expiry of the term of such Chairperson or Member, as the case may be, in accordance with the procedure laid down in this Act.

Term of office of Chairperson and Members.

6. (1) The Chairperson and every Member shall, on the recommendations of the Selection Committee, be appointed by the Governor by warrant under his hand and seal and hold office as such for a term of five years from the date on which he enters upon his office or until he attains the age of seventy years, whichever is earlier:

Provided that he may –

- (a) by writing under his hand addressed to the Governor, resign his office; or
- (b) be removed from his office in the manner provided in this Act.

(2) The Chairperson and every member shall before entering their office, make and subscribe before the Governor an oath or affirmation in the form set out for this purpose in the Schedule.

Salaries, allowance and other condition of service of Chairperson and Members.

7. The salary, allowances and other conditions of service of –

- (i) the Chairperson shall be the same as those of the Chief Justice of the High Court;
- (ii) other Members shall be the same as those of a Judge of the High Court:

Provided that if the Chairperson or a Member is, at the time of his appointment, in receipt of pension (other than disability pension) in respect of any previous service under the Government of India or under the Government of a State, his salary in respect of service as the Chairperson or, as the case may be, as a Member, be reduced –

- (a) by the amount of that pension; and
- (b) if he has, before such appointment, received, in lieu of a portion of the pension due to him in respect of such previous service, the commuted value thereof, by the amount of that portion of the pension:

Provided further that the salary, allowances and pension payable to, and other conditions of service of, the Chairperson or a Member shall not be varied to his disadvantage after his appointment.

Restriction on employment by Chairperson and Members after ceasing to hold office.

8. (1) On ceasing to hold office, the Chairperson and every Member shall be ineligible for—

- (i) reappointment as the Chairperson or a Member of the Lokayukta;
- (ii) any diplomatic assignment, appointment as administrator of a Union territory and such other assignment or appointment which is required by law to be made by the Governor by warrant under his hand and seal;
- (iii) further employment to any other office of profit under the Government of India or the Government of a State;
- (iv) contesting any election of President or Vice President or Member of either House of Parliament or Member of either House of a State Legislature or Municipality or District Council or Panchayat within a period of five years from the date of relinquishing the post.

(2) Notwithstanding anything contained in sub-section (1), a Member shall be eligible to be appointed as a Chairperson, if his total tenure as Member and Chairperson does not exceed five years.

Explanation. - For the purposes of this section, it is hereby clarified that where the Member is appointed as the Chairperson, his term of office shall not be more than five years ten in aggregate as the Member and the Chairperson.

Member to act as Chairperson or to discharge his functions in certain circumstances.

9. (1) In the event of occurrence of any vacancy in the office of the Chairperson by reason of his death, resignation or otherwise, the Governor may, by notification, authorise the senior-most Member to act as the Chairperson until the appointment of a new Chairperson to fill such vacancy.

(2) When the Chairperson is unable to discharge his functions owing to absence on leave or otherwise, the senior-most Member available, as the Governor may, by notification, authorise in this behalf, shall discharge the functions of the Chairperson until the date on which the Chairperson resumes his duties.

Secretary, other officers and staff of Lokayukta.

10. (1) There shall be a Secretary to the Lokayukta in the rank of Secretary to the State Government, who shall be appointed by the Chairperson from a panel of names sent by the State Government.

(2) There shall be a Director of Inquiry and Director of

Prosecution not below the rank of the Additional Secretary to the State Government or equivalent, who shall be appointed by the Chairperson from a panel of names sent by the State Government.

(3) The appointment of officers and staff of the Lokayukta shall be made by the Chairperson or such Member or officer of Lokayukta as the Chairperson may direct:

Provided that the Governor may by rule require that the appointment in respect of any post or posts as may be specified in the rule, shall be made after consultation with the State Public Service Commission.

(4) Subject to the provisions of any law made by the State Legislature, the conditions of service of secretary and other officers and staff of the Lokayukta shall be such as may be specified by regulations made by the Lokayukta for the purpose:

Provided that the regulations made under this sub-section shall, so far as they relate to salaries, allowances, leave or pensions, require the approval of the Governor after obtaining concurrence from Government.

CHAPTER III INQUIRY WING

Inquiry wing.

11. (1) Notwithstanding anything contained in any law for the time being in force, the Lokayukta shall constitute an Inquiry Wing headed by the Director of Inquiry for the purpose of conducting preliminary inquiry into any offence alleged to have been committed by a public servant punishable under the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988:

Provided that till such time the Inquiry Wing is constituted by the Lokayukta, the State Government shall make available such number of officers and other staff from such of its Departments, as may be required by the Lokayukta, for conducting preliminary inquiry under this Act.

(2) For the purposes of assisting the Lokayukta in conducting a preliminary inquiry under this Act, the officers of the Inquiry Wing not below the rank of Under Secretary to that Government, shall have the same powers as are conferred upon the Lokayukta under section 88.

CHAPTER IV

PROSECUTION WING

Appointment of Director of Prosecution. 12. (1) The Lokayukta shall, by notification, constitute a Prosecution Wing headed by the Director of Prosecution for the purpose of prosecution of public servants in relation to any complaint by the Lokayukta under this Act:

Provided that till such time the Prosecution Wing is constituted by the Lokayukta, the State Government shall make available such number of officers and other staff from such of its Departments, as may be required by the Lokayukta, for conducting prosecution under this Act.

(2) The Director of Prosecution shall, after having been so directed by the Lokayukta, file a case in accordance with the findings of the investigation report, before the Special Court, and take all necessary steps in respect of the Prosecution of public servants in relation to any offence punishable under the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988.

(3) The report under sub-section (2) shall be deemed to be a report filed on completion of investigation, referred to in section 173 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973.

CHAPTER V

EXPENSES OF LOKAYUKTA TO BE CHARGED ON CONSOLIDATED FUND OF STATE

Expenses of Lokayukta to be charged on consolidated Fund of State. 13. The administrative expenses of the Lokayukta, including all salaries, allowances and pensions payable to in respect of the Chairperson, Members or Secretary or other officers or staff of the Lokayukta, shall be charged upon the Consolidated Fund of State and any fees or other moneys taken by the Lokayukta shall form part of that Fund.

CHAPTER VI

JURISDICTION IN RESPECT OF INQUIRY

Jurisdiction of Lokayukta to include Chief Minister, Ministers and Member of Legislature and officers and employees of State Government.

14. (1) Subject to the other provisions of this Act, the Lokayukta shall inquire or cause an inquiry to be conducted into any matter involved in, or arising from, or connected with, any allegation of corruption made in a complaint in respect of the following, namely:-

- (a) any person who is or has been a Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister;
- (b) any person who is or has been a Speaker and Deputy Speaker;
- (c) any other person who is or has been a Minister, Minister of the State, Parliamentary Secretary, Deputy Minister, Leader of Opposition, Government Chief Whip and Opposition Chief Whip and such other function of the State Legislative Assembly and Chairman, Co-Chairman, Vice-Chairman or Deputy Chairman appointed by Government or authority under Government;
- (d) any person who is or has been a Member of the State Legislature;
- (e) all officers and employees of the State, from amongst the public servants defined in sub-clauses (i) and (ii) of clause (c) of section 2 of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 when serving or who has served, in connection with the affairs of the State;
- (f) any person who is or has been a Chairperson or Member or officer or employee in any body or Board or corporation or authority or company or society or trust or autonomous body or District Council (by whatever name called) established by an Act of Parliament or of a State Legislature or wholly or partly financed by the State Government or controlled by it;
- (g) any person who is or has been a director, manager, secretary or other officer of every other society or association of persons or trust (whether registered under any law for the time being in force or not), by whatever name called, wholly or partly financed or aided by the State Government and the annual income of which exceeds such amount as the State Government may, by notification, specify; and

(h) any person who is or has been a director, manager, secretary or other officer of every other society or association of persons or trust (whether registered under any law for the time being in force or not), by whatever name called, in receipt of any donation from any foreign source under the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010 in excess of ten lakh rupees in a year or such higher amount as the State Government may, by notification, specify.

Explanation.—For the purpose of clauses (g) and (h), it is hereby clarified that any entity or institution, by whatever name called, corporate, society, trust, association of persons, partnership, sole proprietorship, limited liability partnership (whether registered under any law for the time being in force or not), shall be the entities covered in those clauses:

Provided that any person referred to in this clause shall be deemed to be a public servant under clause (c) of section 2 of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 and the provisions of that Act shall apply accordingly.

(2) Notwithstanding anything contained in sub-section (1), the Lokayukta shall not inquire into any matter involved in, or arising from, or connected with, any such allegation of corruption against any Member of the State Legislature in respect of anything said or a vote given by him in the State Legislature or any committee thereof covered under the provisions contained in clause (2) of article 194 of the Constitution.

(3) The Lokayukta may inquire into any act or conduct of any person other than those referred to in sub-section (1), if such person is involved in the act of abetting, bribe giving or bribe taking or conspiracy relating to any allegation of corruption under the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 against a person referred to in sub-section (1):

Provided that, no action under this section shall be taken in case of a person serving in connection with the affairs of the Union, without the consent of the Central Government.

(4) No matter in respect of which a complaint has been made to the Lokayukta under this Act shall be referred for inquiry under the Commissions of Inquiry Act, 1952.

Explanation.—For the removal of doubts, it is hereby declared that a complaint under this Act shall only relate to a period during which the public servant was holding or serving in that capacity.

Matter pending before any court or committee or authority for inquiry before Lokayukta not to be effected.

15. In case any matter or proceeding related to allegation of corruption under the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 has been pending before any court or committee of the State Legislature or before any other authority prior to commencement of this Act or prior to commencement of any inquiry after the commencement of this Act, such matter or proceeding shall be continued before such court, committee or authority.

Constitution of benches of Lokayukta.

16. (1) Subject to the provisions of this Act, —

- (a) the jurisdiction of the Lokayukta may be exercised by benches thereof;
- (b) a bench may be constituted by the Chairperson with two or more Members as the Chairperson may deem fit;
- (c) every bench shall ordinarily consist of at least one Judicial Member;
- (d) where a bench consists of the Chairperson, such bench shall be presided over by the Chairperson;
- (e) where a bench consists of a Judicial Member, and a non-Judicial Member, not being the Chairperson, such bench shall be presided over by the Judicial Member;
- (f) the benches of the Lokayukta shall ordinarily sit at Capital of the State and at such other places as the Lokayukta may, by regulations, specify.

(2) The Lokayukta shall notify the areas in relation to which each bench of the Lokayukta may exercise jurisdiction.

(3) Notwithstanding anything contained in sub-section (2), the Chairperson shall have the power to constitute or reconstitute benches from time to time.

(4) If at any stage of the hearing of any case or matter it appears to the Chairperson or a Member that the case or matter is of such nature that it ought to be heard by a bench consisting of three or more Members, the case or matter may be transferred by the Chairperson or, as the case may be, referred to him for transfer, to such bench as the Chairperson may deem fit.

Distribution of business amongst benches.

17. Where benches are constituted, the Chairperson may, from time to time, by notification, make provisions as to the distribution of the business of the Lokayukta amongst the benches and also provide for the matters which may be dealt with by each bench.

Power of Chairperson to transfer cases.

18. On an application for transfer made by the complainant or the public servant, the Chairperson, after giving an opportunity of being heard to the complainant or the public servant, as the case may be, may transfer any case pending before one bench for disposal to any other bench.

Decision to be by majority.

19. If the Members of a bench consisting of an even number of Members differ in opinion on any point, they shall state the point or points on which they differ, and make a reference to the Chairperson who shall either hear the point or points himself or refer the case for hearing on such point or points by one or more of the other Members of the Lokayukta and such point or points shall be decided according to the opinion of the majority of the Members of the Lokayukta who have heard the case, including those who first heard it.

CHAPTER VII

PROCEDURE IN RESPECT OF PRELIMINARY INQUIRY AND INVESTIGATION

Provisions relating to complaints and preliminary inquiry and investigation.

20 (1) The Lokayukta shall, on receipt of a complaint, first decide whether to proceed in the matter or close the same and if the Lokayukta decides to proceed further, it shall order the preliminary inquiry against any public servant by its Inquiry Wing or any agency (including any special investigation agency) to ascertain whether there exist a prima facie case for proceeding in the matter.

(2) During the preliminary inquiry referred to in sub section (1), the Inquiry Wing or any agency shall conduct a preliminary inquiry and on the basis of material, information and documents collected, seek the comments on the allegations made in the complaint from the public servant and competent authority and after obtaining the comments of the concerned public servant and competent authority, submit, within sixty days from the date of receipt of the reference, a report to the Lokayukta.

(3) A bench consisting of not less than three Members of the Lokayukta shall consider every report received under sub-section (2) from the Inquiry Wing or any agency and after giving an opportunity of being heard to the public servant, decide as to whether there exists a prima facie case, and make recommendations to proceed with one or more of the following actions, namely:—

- (a) investigation by any agency (including any special investigation agency);
- (b) initiation of the departmental proceedings or any other appropriate action against the concerned public servants by the competent authority;
- (c) closure of the proceedings against the public servant and take action to proceed against the complainant under section 47.

(4) Every preliminary inquiry referred to in sub-section (1) shall ordinarily be completed within a period of ninety days and for reasons to be recorded in writing, within a further period of ninety days from the date of receipt of the complaint.

(5) In case the Lokayukta decides to proceed to investigate into the complaint, it shall either direct any investigation agency (including any special agency) to carry out the investigation as expeditiously as possible and complete the investigation within a period of six months from the date of its order:

Provided that the Lokayukta may extend the said period by a further period not exceeding six months at a time for the reasons to be recorded in writing.

(6) Notwithstanding anything contained in section 173 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, any investigation agency (including any special agency) shall, in respect of cases referred to it by the Lokayukta, submit the investigation report to the Lokayukta.

(7) A bench consisting of not less than three Members of the Lokayukta shall consider every report received by it under sub-section (6) from any investigation agency (including any special agency) and may, decide as to –

- (a) file charge-sheet or closure report before the Special Court against the public servant;
- (b) initiate the departmental proceedings or any other appropriate action against the concerned public servants by the competent authority.

(8) The Lokayukta may, after taking a decision under sub-section (7) on the filing of the charge- sheet, direct its Prosecution Wing to initiate prosecution in a Special Court in respect of cases investigated by any investigation agency (including any special agency),—

- (a) its Prosecution Wing to initiate prosecution in the Special Court in respect of the cases investigated by the investigation agency (including any special agency); or
- (b) any other agency in respect of the cases investigated by such agency on the direction of Lokayukta to obtain its approval and thereafter initiate prosecution in the Special Court and forward a copy of charge-sheet filed by it under this clause to the Lokayukta for the purposes of superintendence .

(9) The Lokayukta may, during the preliminary inquiry or the investigation, as the case may be, pass appropriate orders for the safe custody of the documents relevant to the preliminary inquiry or, as the case may be, investigation, as it deems fit.

(10) The website of the Lokayukta shall, from time to time and in such manner as may be specified by regulations, display to the public the status of number of complaints pending before it or disposed of by it.

(11) The Lokayukta may retain the original records and evidences, which are likely to be required in the process of preliminary inquiry or investigation or conduct of a case by it or by the Special Court.

(12) Save as otherwise provided, the manner and procedure of conducting a preliminary inquiry or investigation (including such material and documents to be made available to the public servant) under this Act, shall be such as may be specified by regulations.

Persons likely to be prejudicially affected to be heard.

21. If, at any stage of the proceeding, the Lokayukta –

- (a) considers it necessary to inquire into the conduct of any person other than the accused; or
- (b) is of opinion that the reputation of any person other than an accused is likely to be prejudicially affected by the preliminary inquiry, the Lokayukta shall give to that person a reasonable opportunity of being heard in the preliminary inquiry and to produce evidence in his defence, consistent with the principles of natural justice.

Lokayukta may require any public servant or any other persons to furnish information.

22. Subject to the provisions of this Act, for the purpose of any preliminary inquiry or investigation, the Lokayukta or the investigating authority, as the case may be, may require any public servant or any other person who, in its opinion, is able to furnish information or produce documents relevant to such preliminary inquiry or investigation, to furnish any such information or produce any such document.

Previous sanction not necessary for investigating and initiating prosecuting by Lokayukta in certain cases.

23. (1) No sanction or approval of any authority shall be required by the Lokayukta for conducting investigation by any agency in respect of the cases investigated by such agency on the direction of the Lokayukta, under section 197 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 or section 19 of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, as the case may be, for the purpose of making preliminary inquiry by the Inquiry Wing or investigation by any agency into any complaint against any public servant or for filing of any charge sheet or closure report on completion of investigation in respect thereof before the Special Court under this Act.

(2) A Special Court may, notwithstanding anything contained in section 197 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 or section 19 of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, on filing of a charge sheet on completion of investigation, by the Lokayukta or any officer authorised by it in this behalf, take cognizance of offence committed by any public servant.

(3) Nothing contained in sub-sections (1) and (2) shall apply in respect of the persons holding the office in pursuance of the provisions of the Constitution and in respect of which a procedure for removal of such person has been specified therein.

(4) The provisions contained in sub-sections (1), (2) and (3) shall be without prejudice to the generality of the provisions contained in article 311 and sub-clause (c) of clause (3) of article 320 of the Constitution.

Action on inquiry against public servant being Chief Minister, Ministers or Member of State Legislature.

24. Where, after the conclusion of the investigation, the findings of the Lokayukta disclose the commission of an offence under the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 by a public servant referred to in clause (a) or clause (b) or clause (c) of sub-section (1) of section 14, the Lokayukta may file a case in the Special Court and shall send a copy of the report together with its findings to the competent authority.

**CHAPTER VIII
POWERS OF LOKAYUKTA**

Supervisory powers of Lokayukta.

25. The Lokayukta shall, notwithstanding anything contained in any other law for the time being in force, have the powers of superintendence and direction over the investigation agency in respect of the matters in so far as they relate to the investigation by such agency under this Act.

Search and seizure.

26. (1) If the Lokayukta has reason to believe that any document which, in its opinion, shall be useful for, or relevant to, any investigation under this Act, are secreted in any place, it may authorise any agency to whom the investigation has been given to search for and to seize such documents.

(2) If the Lokayukta is satisfied that any document seized under sub-section (1) may be used as evidence for the purpose of any preliminary inquiry or investigation under this Act and that it shall be necessary to retain the document in its custody or in the custody of such officer as may be authorised, it may so retain or direct such authorised officer to retain such document till the completion of such preliminary inquiry or investigation:

Provided that where any document is required to be returned, the Lokayukta or the authorised officer may return the same after retaining copies of such document duly authenticated.

Lokayukta to have powers of civil court in certain cases.

27. (1) Subject to the provisions of this section, for the purpose of any preliminary inquiry, the Inquiry Wing of the Lokayukta shall have all the powers of a Civil Court, under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908, while trying a suit in respect of the following matters, namely: -

- (i) summoning and enforcing the attendance of any person and examining him on oath;
- (ii) requiring the discovery and production of any document;
- (iii) receiving evidence on affidavits;
- (iv) requisitioning any public record or copy thereof from any court or office;
- (v) issuing commissions for the examination of witnesses or documents:

Provided that such commission, in case of a witness, shall be issued only where the witness, in the opinion of the Lokayukta, is not in a position to attend the proceeding before the Lokayukta; and

(vi) such other matters as may be prescribed.

(2) Any proceeding before the Lokayukta shall be deemed to be a judicial proceeding within the meaning of section 193 of the Indian Penal Code.

Power of Lokayukta to utilize services of officers of State Government.

28. (1) The Lokayukta may, for the purpose of conducting any preliminary inquiry or investigation, utilise the services of any officer or organisation or investigation agency of the State Government.

(2) For the purpose of preliminary inquiry or investigating into any matter pertaining to such inquiry or investigation, any officer or organisation or agency whose services are utilised under sub-section (1) may, subject to the direction and control of the Lokayukta,-

- (a) summon and enforce the attendance of any person and examine him;
- (b) require the discovery and production of any document; and
- (c) requisition any public record or copy thereof from any office.

(3) The officer or organisation or agency whose services are utilised under sub-section (2) shall inquire or, as the case may be, investigate into any matter pertaining to the preliminary inquiry or investigation and submit a report thereon to the Lokayukta within such period as may be specified by it in this behalf.

Provisional attachment of assets.

29. (1) Where the Lokayukta or any investigation officer authorised by it in this behalf, has reason to believe, the reason for such belief to be recorded in writing, on the basis of material in his possession, that –

- (a) any person is in possession of any proceeds of corruption;
- (b) such person is accused of having committed an offence relating to corruption;
- (c) such proceeds of offence are likely to be concealed, transferred or dealt with in any manner which may result in frustrating any proceedings relating to confiscation of such proceeds of offence,

he may, by order in writing, provisionally attach such property for a period not exceeding ninety days from the date of the order, in

the manner provided in the Second Schedule to the Income-tax Act, 1961 and the Lokayukta shall be deemed to be an officer under sub-rule (e) of rule 1 of that Schedule.

(2) The Lokayukta shall, immediately after attachment under sub-section (1), forward a copy of the order, along with the material in his possession, referred to in that sub-section, to the Special Court, in a sealed envelope, in the manner as may be prescribed and such Court may extend the order of attachment and keep such material for such period as the Court may deem fit.

(3) Every order of attachment made under sub-section (1) shall cease to have effect after the expiry of the period specified in that sub-section or after the expiry of the period as directed by the Special Court under sub-section (2).

(4) Nothing in this section shall prevent the person interested in the enjoyment of the immovable property attached under sub-section (1) or sub-section (2), from such enjoyment.

Explanation.—For the purposes of this sub-section, "person interested", in relation to any immovable property, includes all persons claiming or entitled to claim any interest in the property.

Confirmation of attachment of assets.

30. (1) The Lokayukta, when it provisionally attaches any property under sub-section (1) of section 29 shall, within a period of thirty days of such attachment, direct its prosecution wing to file an application stating the facts of such attachment before the Special Court and make a prayer for confirmation of attachment of the property till completion of the proceedings against the public servant in the Special Court.

(2) The Special Court may, if it is of the opinion that the property provisionally attached had been acquired through corrupt means, make an order for confirmation of attachment of such property till the completion of the proceedings against the public servant in the Special Court.

(3) If the public servant is subsequently acquitted of the charges framed against him, the property, subject to the orders of the Special Court, shall be restored to the concerned public servant along with benefits from such property as might have accrued during the period of attachment.

(4) If the public servant is subsequently convicted of the charges of corruption, the proceeds relatable to the offence under the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 shall be confiscated and vest in the State Government free from any encumbrance or leasehold interest excluding any debt due to any bank or financial institution.

Explanation.—For the purposes of this sub-section, the expressions "bank", "debt" and "financial institution" shall have the meanings respectively assigned to them in clauses (d), (g) and (h) of section 2 of the Recovery of Debts Due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993.

Confiscation of assets, proceeds, receipt and benefits arisen or procured by means of corruption in special circumstances.

31. (1) Without prejudice to the provisions of sections 29 and 30, where the Special Court, on the basis of prima facie evidence, has reason to believe or is satisfied that the assets, proceeds, receipts and benefits, by whatever name called, have arisen or procured by means of corruption by the public servant, it may authorise the confiscation of such assets, proceeds, receipts and benefits till his acquittal.

(2) Where an order of confiscation made under sub-section (1) is modified or annulled by the High Court or where the public servant is acquitted by the Special Court, the assets, proceeds, receipts and benefits, confiscated under sub-section (1) shall be

returned to such public servant, and in case it is not possible for any reason to return the assets, proceeds, receipts and benefits, such public servant shall be paid the price thereof including the money so confiscated with the interest at the rate of five per cent per annum thereon calculated from the date of confiscation.

Power of Lokayukta to recommended transfer or suspension of public servant connected with allegation of corruption.

32. (1) Where the Lokayukta, while making a preliminary inquiry into allegations of corruption, is prima facie satisfied, on the basis of evidence available, that –

- (a) the continuance of the public servant referred to in clause (d) or clause (e) of sub-section (1) of section 14 in his post while conducting the preliminary inquiry is likely to affect such preliminary inquiry adversely; or
- (b) the public servant referred to in clause (a) is likely to destroy or in any way tamper with the evidence or influence witnesses, then, the Lokayukta may recommend to the State Government for transfer or suspension of such public servant from the post held by him till such period as may be specified in the order.

(2) The State Government shall ordinarily accept the recommendation of the Lokayukta made under sub-section (1), except for the reasons to be recorded in writing in a case where it is not feasible for administrative reasons.

Power of Lokayukta to give direction to prevent destruction of record during preliminary inquiry.

33. The Lokayukta may, in discharge of its functions under this Act, issue appropriate directions to a public servant entrusted with the preparation or custody of any document or record –

- (a) to protect such document or record from destruction or damage; or
- (b) to prevent the public servant from altering or secreting such document or record; or
- (c) to prevent the public servant from transferring or alienating any assets allegedly acquired by him through corrupt means. The Lokayukta shall function as the final appellate authority in respect of appeals arising out of any other law for the time being in force providing for delivery of public services and redressal of public grievances by any public authority in cases where the decision contains findings of corruption under the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988.

Lokayukta to function as appellate authority for appeals arising out of any other law.

34. The Lokayukta shall function as final appellate authority in respect of appeals arising out of any other law for the time being in force providing for delivery of public services and redressal of public grievances by any public authority in cases where the decision contain finding of corruption under the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988.

Power to delegate.

35. The Lokayukta may, by general or special order in writing, and subject to such conditions and limitations as may be specified therein, direct that any administrative or financial power conferred on it may also be exercised or discharged by such of its Members or officers or employees as may be specified in the order.

CHAPTER IX

SPECIAL COURTS

Constitution of Special Court.

36. (1) The State Government shall constitute such number of Special Courts, as recommended by the Lokpal, to hear and decide cases arising out of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 or under this Act.

(2) The Special Courts constituted under sub-section (1) shall ensure completion of each trial within a period of one year from the date of filing of the case in the Court:

Provided that in case the trial cannot be completed within a period of one year, the Special Court shall record reasons therefor and complete the trial within a further period of not more than three months or such further periods not exceeding three months each, for reasons to be recorded in writing before the end of each such three months period, but not exceeding a total period of two years.

Letter of request to a contracting State in certain cases.

37. (1) Notwithstanding anything contained in this Act or the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 if, in the course of an preliminary inquiry or investigation into an offence or other proceeding under this Act, an application is made to a Special Court by an officer of the Lokayukta authorised in this behalf that any evidence is required in connection with the preliminary inquiry or investigation into an offence or proceeding under this Act and he is of the opinion that such evidence may be available in any place in a contracting State, and the Special Court, on being satisfied that such evidence is required in connection with the preliminary inquiry or investigation into an offence or proceeding under this

Act, may issue a letter of request to a court or an authority in the contracting State competent to deal with such request to –

- (i) examine the facts and circumstances of the case;
- (ii) take such steps as the Special Court may specify in such letter of request; and
- (iii) forward all the evidence so taken or collected to the Special Court issuing such letter of request.

(2) The letter of request shall be transmitted in such manner as the State Government may prescribe in this behalf.

(3) Every statement recorded or document or thing received under sub-section (1) shall be deemed to be evidence collected during the course of the preliminary inquiry or investigation.

CHAPTER X

COMPLAINTS AGAINST CHAIRPERSON, MEMBERS AND OFFICIALS OF LOKPAL

Removal and suspension of Chairperson and Member of Lokayukta.

38. (1) The Lokayukta shall not inquire into any complaint made against the Chairperson or any Member.

(2) Subject to the provisions of sub-section (4), the Chairperson or any Member shall be removed from his office by order of the Governor on grounds of misbehaviour after the High Court, on a reference being made to it –

- (i) by the Governor; or
- (ii) by the Governor on a petition being signed by at least one third of the Members of State Legislature; or
- (iii) by the Governor on receipt of a petition made by a citizen of India and where the Governor is satisfied that the petition should be referred, has, on an inquiry held in accordance with the procedure prescribed in that behalf, reported that the Chairperson or such Member, as the case may be, ought to be removed on such ground.

(3) The Governor may suspend from office the Chairperson or any Member in respect of whom a reference has been made to the High Court under sub-section (2), on receipt of the recommendation or interim order made by the High Court in this regard until the Governor has passed orders on receipt of the final report of the High Court on such reference.

(4) Notwithstanding anything contained in sub-section (2), the Governor may, by order, remove from the office, the Chairperson or any Member if the Chairperson or such Member, as the case maybe, -

- (a) is adjudged an insolvent; or
- (b) engages, during his term of office, in any paid employment outside the duties of his office; or
- (c) is, in the opinion of the Governor, unfit to continue in office by reason of infirmity of mind or body.

(5) If the Chairperson or any Member is, or becomes, in anyway concerned or interested in any contract or agreement made by or on behalf of the Government of India or the Government of a State or participates in any way in the profit thereof or in any benefit or emolument arising there from otherwise than as a member and in common with the other members of an incorporated company, he shall, for the purposes of sub-section (2), be deemed to be guilty of misbehaviour.

**Complaints
against official
of Lokayukta.**

39. (1) Every complaint of allegation or wrongdoing made against any officer or employee or agency under or associated with the Lokayukta for an offence punishable under the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 shall be dealt with in accordance with the provisions of this section.

(2) The Lokayukta shall complete the inquiry into the complaint or allegation made within a period of thirty days from the date of its receipt.

(3) While making an inquiry into the complaint against any officer or employee of the Lokayukta or agency engaged or associated with the Lokayukta, if it is prima facie satisfied on the basis of evidence available, that -

- (a) continuance of such officer or employee of the Lokayukta or agency engaged or associated in his post while conducting the inquiry is likely to affect such inquiry adversely; or
- (b) an officer or employee of the Lokayukta or agency engaged or associated is likely to destroy or in any way tamper with the evidence or influence witnesses, then, the Lokayukta may, by order, suspend such officer or employee of the Lokayukta or divest such agency engaged or associated with the Lokayukta of all powers and responsibilities hereto before exercised by it.

(4) On the completion of the inquiry, if the Lokayukta is satisfied that there is prima facie evidence of the commission of an offence under the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 or of any wrongdoing, it shall, within a period of fifteen days of the completion of such inquiry, order to prosecute such officer or employee of the Lokayukta or such officer, employee, agency engaged or associated with the Lokayukta and initiate disciplinary proceedings against the official concerned:

Provided that no such order shall be passed without giving such officer or employee of the Lokayukta, such officer, employee, agency engaged or associated with the Lokayukta, a reasonable opportunity of being heard.

CHAPTER XI

ASSESSMENT OF LOSS AND RECOVERY THEREOF BY SPECIAL COURT

**Assessment of
loss and
recovery thereof
by Special
Court.**

40. If any public servant is convicted of an offence under the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 by the Special Court, notwithstanding and without prejudice to any law for the time being in force, it may make an assessment of loss, if any, caused to the public exchequer on account of the actions or decisions of such public servant not taken in good faith and for which he stands convicted, and may order recovery of such loss, if possible or quantifiable, from such public servant so convicted:

Provided that if the Special Court, for reasons to be recorded in writing, comes to the conclusion that the loss caused was pursuant to a conspiracy with the beneficiary or beneficiaries of actions or decisions of the public servant so convicted, then such loss may, if assessed and quantifiable under this section, also be recovered from such beneficiary or beneficiaries proportionately.

CHAPTER XII

FINANCE, ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT

**Budget of
Lokayukta.**

41. The Lokayukta shall prepare, in such form and at such time in each financial year as may be prescribed, its budget for the next financial year, showing the estimated receipts and expenditure of the Lokayukta and forward the same to the State Government for information.

**Grants by State
Government.**

42. The State Government may, after due appropriation made by Assembly by law in this behalf, make to the Lokayukta grants of such sums of money as are required to be paid for the salaries and

allowances payable to the Chairperson and Members and the administrative expenses, including the salaries and allowances and pension payable to or in respect of officers and other employees of the Lokayukta.

**Annual
Statement of
Accounts.**

43. (1) The Lokayukta shall maintain proper accounts and other relevant records and prepare an annual statement of accounts in such form as may be prescribed by the State Government in consultation with the Accountant General of the State.

(2) The accounts of the Lokayukta shall be audited by the Accountant General of the State at such intervals as may be specified by him.

(3) The Accountant General or any person appointed by him in connection with the audit of the accounts of the Lokayukta under this Act shall have the same rights, privileges and authority in connection with such audit, as the Accountant General of the State generally has, in connection with the audit of the Government accounts and, in particular, shall have the right to demand the production of books, accounts, connected vouchers and other documents and papers and to inspect any of the offices of the Lokayukta.

(4) The accounts of the Lokayukta, as certified by the Accountant General of the State or any other person appointed by him in this behalf, together with the audit report thereon, shall be forwarded annually to the State Government and the State Government shall cause the same to be laid before the Legislature.

**Furnishing of
returns.**

44. The Lokayukta shall furnish to the State Government, at such time and in such form and manner as may be prescribed or as the State Government may request, such returns and statements and such particulars in regard to any matter under the jurisdiction of the Lokayukta, as the State Government may, from time to time, require.

CHAPTER XIII

DECLARATION OF ASSETS

**Declaration of
Assets.**

45. (1) Every public servant shall make a declaration of his assets and liabilities in the manner as provided by or under this Act.

(2) A public servant shall, within a period of thirty days from the date on which he makes and subscribes an oath or affirmation to enter upon his office, furnish to the competent authority the information relating to –

(a) the assets of which he, his spouse and his dependent

children are, jointly or severally, owners or beneficiaries;

(b) his liabilities and that of his spouse and his dependent children.

(3) A public servant holding his office as such, at the time of the commencement of this Act, shall furnish information relating to such assets and liabilities, as referred to in sub-section (2), to the competent authority within thirty days of the coming into force of this Act.

(4) Every public servant shall file with the competent authority, on or before the 31st July of every year, an annual return of such assets and liabilities, as referred to in sub-section (2), as on the 31st March of that year.

(5) The information under sub-section (2) or sub-section (3) and annual return under sub-section (4) shall be furnished to the competent authority in such form and in such manner as may be prescribed.

(6) The competent authority in respect of each Department shall ensure that all such statements are published on the website of such Department by 31st August of that year.

Explanation.—For the purposes of this section, "dependent children" means sons and daughters who have no separate means of earning and are wholly dependent on the public servant for their livelihood.

Presumption as to acquisition of assets by corrupt means in certain cases.

46. If any public servant willfully or for reasons which are not justifiable, fails to –

- (a) declare his assets; or
- (b) gives misleading information in respect of such assets and is found to be in possession of assets not disclosed or in respect of which misleading information was furnished, then, such assets shall, unless otherwise proved, be presumed to belong to the public servant and shall be presumed to be assets acquired by corrupt means:

Provided that the competent authority may condone or exempt the public servant from furnishing information in respect of assets not exceeding such minimum value as may be prescribed.

CHAPTER XIV
OFFENCES AND PENALTIES

Prosecution for false complaint and payment of compensation etc to public servant.

47. (1) Notwithstanding anything contained in this Act, whoever makes any false and frivolous or vexatious complaint under this Act shall, on conviction, be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months and with fine which may extend to one lakh rupees.

(2) No Court, except a Special Court, shall take cognizance of an offence under sub-section (1).

(3) No Special Court shall take cognizance of an offence under sub-section (1) except on a complaint made by a person against whom the false, frivolous or vexatious complaint was made or by an officer authorised by the Lokayukta.

(4) The prosecution in relation to an offence under sub-section (1) shall be conducted by the public prosecutor and all expenses connected with such prosecution shall be borne by the State Government.

(5) In case of conviction of a person being an individual or society or association of persons or trust (whether registered or not) for having made a false complaint under this Act, such person shall be liable to pay compensation to the public servant against whom he made the false complaint in addition to the legal expenses for contesting the case by such public servant, as the Special Court may determine.

(6) Nothing contained in this section shall apply in case of complaints made in good faith.

Explanation.—For the purpose of this sub-section, the expression "good faith" means any act believed or done by a person in good faith with due care, caution and sense of responsibility or by mistake of fact believing himself justified by law under section 79 of the Indian Penal Code shall have the same meaning assigned to it in section 52 of the Indian Penal Code.

False complaint made by society or Association of persons or Trust.

48. (1) Where any offence under sub-section (1) of section 47 has been committed by any society or association of persons or trust (whether registered or not), every person who, at the time the offence was committed, was directly in charge of, and was responsible to, the society or association of persons or trust, for

the conduct of the business or affairs or activities of the society or association of persons or trust as well as such society or association of persons or trust shall be deemed to be guilty of the offence and shall be liable to be proceeded against and punished accordingly:

Provided that nothing contained in this sub-section shall render any such person liable to any punishment provided in this Act, if he proves that the offence was committed without his knowledge or that he had exercised all due diligence to prevent the commission of such offence.

(2) Notwithstanding anything contained in sub-section (1), where an offence under this Act has been committed by a society or association of persons or trust (whether registered or not) and it is proved that the offence has been committed with the consent or connivance of, or is attributable to any neglect on the part of, any director, manager, secretary or other officer of such society or association of persons or trust, such director, manager, secretary or other officer shall also be deemed to be guilty of that offence and shall be liable to be proceeded against and punished accordingly.

CHAPTER XV

MISCELLANEOUS

Report of Lokayukta.

49. It shall be the duty of the Lokayukta to present annually to the Governor a report on the work done by the Lokayukta and on receipt of such report the Governor shall cause a copy thereof together with a memorandum explaining, in respect of the cases, if any, where the advice of the Lokayukta was not accepted, the reason for such non-acceptance to be laid before the State Legislature.

Protection of action taken in good faith by public servant.

50. No suit, prosecution or other legal proceedings under this Act shall lie against any public servant, in respect of anything which is done in good faith or intended to be done in the discharge of his official functions or in exercise of his powers.

Protection of action taken in good faith by others.

51. No suit, prosecution or other legal proceedings shall lie against the Lokayukta or against any officer, employee, agency or any person, in respect of anything which is done in good faith or intended to be done under this Act or the rules or the regulations made thereunder.

**Members,
Officers and
employees of
Lokayukta to be
public servant.**

52. The Chairperson, Members, officers and other employees of the Lokayukta shall be deemed, when acting or purporting to act in pursuance of any of the provisions of this Act, to be public servants within the meaning of section 21 of the Indian Penal Code.

**Limitation to
apply in certain
cases.**

53. The Lokayukta shall not inquire or investigate into any complaint, if the complaint is made after the expiry of a period of seven years from the date on which the offence mentioned in such complaint is alleged to have been committed.

**Bar of
jurisdiction.**

54. No civil court shall have jurisdiction in respect of any matter which the Lokayukta is empowered by or under this Act to determine.

Legal assistance.

55. The Lokayukta shall provide to every person against whom a complaint has been made, before it, under this Act, legal assistance to defend his case before the Lokayukta, if such assistance is requested for.

**Act to have
overriding
effect.**

56. The provisions of this Act shall have effect notwithstanding anything inconsistent therewith contained in any enactment other than this Act or in any instrument having effect by virtue of any enactment other than this Act.

**Provision of this
Act to be in
addition of other
laws.**

57. The provisions of this Act shall be in addition to, and not in derogation of, any other law for the time being in force.

**Power to make
rules.**

58. The State Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, make rules to carry out the provisions of this Act.

**Power of
Lokayukta to
make
regulations.**

59. Subject to the provisions of this Act and the rules made thereunder, the Lokayukta may, by notification in the Official Gazette, make regulations to carry out the provisions of this Act.

Laying of rules and regulations.

60. Every rule and regulation made under this Act shall, as soon as may be after it is made, be laid before the State Legislature.

Power to remove difficulties and laying of order.

61. (1) If any difficulty arises in giving effect to the provisions of this Act, the State Government may, by order, published in the Official Gazette, make such provisions not inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, as appear to be necessary for removing the difficulty:

Provided that no such order shall be made under this section after the expiry of a period of two years from the commencement of this Act.

(2) Every order made under this section shall, as soon as may be after it is made, be laid before the State Legislature.

Repeal.

62. The Meghalaya Lokayukta Act, 2012 is hereby repealed.

L. M. SANGMA,
Secretary
Government of Meghalaya,
Law Department.