

Uttarakhand Mandates Bizarre Boss Approval for Employee Spending Over Rs 5,000



In a move that has surprised and stirred debate among its workforce, the Uttarakhand government issued a directive on July 14, 2025, requiring its employees to seek prior approval from their superiors for any personal expenditure exceeding Rs. 5,000 (approximately 60 USD). This new order extends to transactions involving movable property and aims to enhance transparency, though it has raised concerns about practicality and personal autonomy.

The directive, which applies to purchases of movable property, stipulates that a government servant must immediately report any transaction exceeding "his one month's pay or Rs. 5,000, whichever is less," to the appropriate authority. Furthermore, the order specifies that prior approval is mandatory for any transaction conducted with an individual or entity not considered a "regular and reputable businessman." For transactions concerning immovable property, employees are already required to obtain permission from their department head or the "appropriate authority," and this new order reiterates the need for employees to declare all immovable property at the time of joining service and every five years thereafter, including assets held by spouses or family members residing with them.

While some officials suggest the measure is intended to curb potential malfeasance and ensure financial accountability, the sudden implementation of such a low threshold for approval has drawn criticism. Karam Ram, President of the Uttarakhand Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Employees Federation, expressed strong disapproval, terming the order "ridiculous." He questioned the feasibility of adhering to such a strict limit in everyday life, particularly given current economic conditions. "If you want to buy a saree for your wife, do you have to take permission from the department head for that too? Do you have to take permission to buy

clothes for the children?" Ram was quoted as saying by NDTV, highlighting that many common household purchases now routinely exceed the Rs. 5,000 mark due to inflation and various taxes.

Ram further suggested that the order should have been formulated after consultation with employee representatives and proposed raising the limit to Rs. 1 lakh (approximately USD 1,200). This order signifies a notable tightening of financial oversight on government employees, and its practical implications for daily living are likely to continue to be a point of contention for the state's workforce. The government's response to these concerns, and any potential modifications to the order, will be closely watched.