

REGISTRAR'S CIRCULAR NO. 1 OF 1954.

Financial Matters in 1954

To:

All Senior Assistant Registrars, Supreme Court
All Assistant Registrars, Supreme Court
All Presidents, Sessions Courts
All Circuit Magistrates.

Some months ago I circulated officers on the desirability of economy. As it is now the beginning of a new financial year, and, as events have made the need for care in financial matters even more evident, I am addressing you again. I have already been informed by the Treasury that the Finance Committee may be expected to view all applications for supplementary provision with the utmost caution.

2. This means that :-

- (a) Every effort must be made to keep expenditure under each subhead of the Estimates within the figure allowed therein and thus to avoid the necessity of A.S.Vs. It will be difficult to do this under certain subheads, but the effort must be made. Any extravagance would be disastrous.
- (b) Even further, it will be necessary in respect of some votes to keep expenditure well below the estimate, so as to provide savings, which can be utilised, if and when it is necessary to apply for an A.S.V. under another O.C.A.R. subhead.

3. It should be mentioned that there are certain items i.e. under Legal Expenses, the expenditure under which depends in great measure upon circumstances over which there is no control. This is realised by the Treasury. In the past these items were estimated on a somewhat generous basis with the result that there was usually considerable unexpended balances at the end of the year, these being available as savings to support any necessary application for supplementary provision. Treasury policy is now to estimate much more closely and no such balances can be anticipated if supplementary provision is required elsewhere.

4. This has been explained at some length as it is desirable that all officers should know the difficulties of the present financial position.

5. Attention has already been drawn in my previous circular to certain subheads and suggestions made for economies thereunder, but by way of emphasis, these are put forward again and other points are added :

Light, Power, Water, Conservancy and Cleaning.

Some saving can be made under this if an effort is made by Chief Clerks and others in charge of offices and courts. It is necessary for them to supervise subordinate staff to see that lights and fans are not left on unnecessarily, that taps are not left running and cleaning materials are not wasted. Senior Officers should check up that this is being done. All can help. It might be thought that very little can be saved in this way but I am sure this is not so. It is well known that the amount wasted by dripping taps can be very considerable.

Telephones.

Whilst it is fully realised that the use of the phone is often by far the most convenient and even in the long run the cheapest method of communication it is believed that

considered whether a short memo would not be equally as good. Some calls would be eliminated, and the number might prove to be considerable. Further all officers in charge of offices and courts, where there are phones, should see that a book is kept for entry of private phone calls and that it is used. No outside persons, whether Government officers or not, should be allowed to use a phone for a trunk call unless it is entered in the book and the amount of these calls by outsiders must be recovered when the monthly bill is received. It is the duty of Senior officers in charge to see that this is done. I know that it is done in some Courts but I suspect that it is overlooked in others. It is almost unnecessary to add that private trunk calls from officers' houses on official phones should always be paid by the officer concerned.

Incidental Expenses

The greater part of this subhead is used for postage and telegrams and it is doubtful if much saving can be made on these. But all expenditure should be closely scrutinised.

Transport and Travelling

As stated in a previous circular, travelling by Presidents and Magistrates to hear cases cannot be greatly reduced but care should be taken not to make unnecessary journeys. And officers going on transfer should make every effort to cut their expenses to a minimum. I do not think they always do this. If they act extravagantly they will be liable to find their claims cut down.

Stationery

A great deal of waste can occur on this unless the need for economy is kept constantly in view. A letter or memo should not use a full sheet, if a half sheet will do. If this is neglected, expenditure can be nearly doubled. Old forms and unused copies, printed or typed on one side only, can often be used for carbon copies and for drafting, thus saving new paper. Carbon papers and typewriter ribbons must be fully used and not half wasted. To see that this is done requires constant supervision.

Allocations

It is again stressed that the allocation of money under a subhead does not mean that the money should be expended except where strictly necessary. If a saving can be made, it should be made.

Estimating

Again I would stress the extreme importance of careful estimating by financial clerks and others, when the Financial Assistant calls for estimates. We are working on such a close margin that a faulty estimate and a later claim, which should have been foreseen, can put this office in a very difficult position in dealing with the Treasury. All such estimates should be checked by a Senior officer.

REGISTRAR
(D. H. SHACKLES)

The Federal Registry, Supreme Court,
Federation of Malaya.
Kuala Lumpur, 13th January, 1954.
(RSC.39/54: RSC.142/53 :/tkc)

c.c. The Director of Audit, Malaya.