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Graft to splurge: CAG points out irregularities against Behera

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STATE Police Chief Loknath Behera is in the dock over rifles and bullets going missing in addition to allegations of fund diversion and splurging on official villas and vehicles. A report by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG), tabled before the Assembly on Wednesday, raised serious allegations of corruption in purchases, major irregularities and compromising the safety of the force, against the DGP.

According to the performance audit report, the money used for constructing five villas at Bhaktavilasom police quarters in Thiruvananthapuram was meant for staff quarters for 30 upper subordinates (Sub-Inspector and Assistant Sub-Inspector). The report found that the Police Chief diverted Rs 2.81 crore for the purpose. The decision to redesign the project and fund diversion happened between November 4, 2017, and August 2018, Accountant General (General and Social Sector Audit) S Sunil Raj told media persons.

Even when an objection was



I won't comment on the issue. It's a breach of privilege. Since the government is also involved in it, I'll give an explanation to the Public Accounts Committee

Loknath Behera, state police chief

raised by the Finance department, the SPC requested the department to ratify his decision to construct five villas. The diversion was unacceptable for CAG because the Modernisation of Police Force (MOPF) guidelines clearly stated that the benefit was meant for upper subordinates.

The report also questioned Behera's penchant for luxury using the fund meant for improving operational effectiveness of the force. MOPF guidelines prohibit the procurement of cars. Instead of making good the shortfall of vehicles in police stations, 15 per cent of the 269 light motor vehicles procured by the Police department were luxury cars. These cars were deployed for use of high-level officers and non-operational units like CBCID.

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Charges against Behera

- Diverted ₹2.81 crore meant for constructing official residences for himself and his immediate juniors
- CAG questioned his penchant for spending lavishly on vehicles instead of using the funds meant for improving the operational effectiveness of the force
- Audit report has also accused police department of covering up the shortfall of ammunition

Opposition UDF demands an investigation by CBI and NIA

The findings of the CAG report can be examined at a separate level. We all know the procedures that are followed in examining the CAG's report

Pinarayi Vijayan, Chief Minister