

e-procurement to ensure transparency

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In an initiative to bring efficiency and transparency in making purchases, the government plans to introduce e-procurement system in a phased manner in public-private partnership.

In the first phase, the system will be adopted in departments and boards that make large-scale purchases. A workshop conducted in collaboration with the national institute of smart government in this regard recommended that e-procurement be introduced in the Public Works Department, the Irrigation and Public Health Department, the electricity board, the Forest

Department, the Civil Supplies Corporation and the Health and Family Welfare Department. The minimum limit in terms of value of purchase for which e-procurement will be mandatory, will be decided by the government shortly.

The e-procurement system will take care of all aspects right from tendering, contract management, automated indent and inventory managements, payments based on evaluated work flow, e-auction and e-reverse auction. The project will be implemented through a private party. However, unlike other states where the entire project has been outsourced to private companies, the Himachal Government has decided to keep the security

control of the software with itself.

The registered vendors will be given intimation about tenders through email. Bids will also be filed on line for which each vendor will be allotted a user name and a password. Thus, the entire process will not involve any paperwork. The technical bids will be scrutinised and evaluated by computer in accordance with fixed parameters. The financial bids of the vendors whose technical bids are rejected will be automatically discarded and financial bids of only those companies that qualify after the evaluation of technical bids will be considered.

With computer taking over the job of scrutinising and eval-

uating tenders, there will be no scope for manipulation at any stage. For automated management of indent and inventory management and e-payments, the Internet connectivity will be essential right down to the village level. For this, 3,361 "gram sugam kendras" being established at the panchayat level will be used.

The state road transport corporation has already introduced the e-tendering system that has not only speeded up the procurement process, but also brought down rates due to greater competition. The corporation hopes to save around Rs 30 to 35 lakh due to competitive rates and that it will not have to spend money on advertising tenders in newspapers.