

We are committed to fighting corruption in govt offices: Saudi official

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Saleh Al-Ali, head of the Commission for Monitoring and Investigation, denied yesterday that some ministries were exempt from the purview of the commission.

"The commission treats all ministries and government departments alike without exempting any of them from its investigations. The regulations enable the commission to function without restriction or impediment. Its work is transparent as well," he said during his visit to the commission's Makkah office.

Al-Ali said the commission had implemented a new strategy for which royal approval had recently been given. The strategy, he said, focused on eliminating the corruption of government employees and guaranteeing their honesty.

The commission chief said the role of the commission in fighting corruption and improving the efficiency of government employees figured high in a recent meeting with Makkah Governor Prince Khaled Al-Faisal.

Al-Ali said Prince Khaled accepted his request to allot a building for the commission's Jeddah branch and to grant a plot for the construction of a building for the commission's headquarters in Makkah. "The prince has promised a building fit to house the commission's headquarters in Makkah," he said.

He said that employees of the commission discharge their duties freely and properly. "They are not hampered by any obstacle in their monitoring and investigation of government departments, ministries and government organizations. They are working in collaboration with the Ministry of Economy and Planning," he said.

The official said that the commission's employees suffer from administrative difficulties such as a shortage of employees in their offices. They also complain about the lack of promotions and the difficulty of getting transferred to areas close to their native towns, he said.

"I understand their difficulties. I am doing my best to solve them. However, the priority is always to their official duties. Their personal interests receive only a secondary consideration," he said.

Al-Ali said the commission had a women's section to monitor the activities of women workers in government offices which employ large number of women, such as the Ministries of Education and Health. "The women employees of the commission undertake monitoring and investigation just as the men monitor the operations of the departments where men work," he said.

He said the commission was committed to fight corruption, as it is increasingly important in the light of the Kingdom's rapid economic growth and accession to the World Trade Organization.