

JTC made 100 kickback payments for ODA work

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The Yomiuri Shimbun

Japan Transportation Consultants, Inc. made 100 payments of illicit kickbacks totaling ¥160 million to 13 officials from the governments of Vietnam, Indonesia and Uzbekistan from 2009 to 2014, in return for orders received to conduct projects under Japanese official development assistance, a third-party committee investigating the incident said Friday. The JTC practice of making such illegal kickback payments to foreign civil servants began in 1990s, the committee investigation found.

According to the committee, the Tokyo-based railway consulting firm's management decided to continue the payment of illegal kickbacks as a systematic business practice even after they were identified to be problematic during the course of a tax inspection by the Tokyo Regional Taxation Bureau in 2013.

In relation to the allegations, the Tokyo District Public Prosecutors Office's special investigation squad is questioning JTC employees who gave the money in question to government officials in the three countries. The case is being considered as a violation of the Unfair Competition Prevention Law, which prohibits business corporations from giving bribes to foreign civil servants.

At a Friday press conference in Tokyo, lawyer Tadashi Kunihiro, chairman of the third-party committee, criticized JTC, saying the firm "is not a victim, subject to demands for bribes, but an accomplice in wrongdoings that promote corruption in these countries."

According to the committee's investigation report, JTC first began paying such kickbacks in Indonesia in the 1990s. Early payments were made based on requests from government officials, and it eventually became a routine.

As the Japanese firm launched its operations in Vietnam and Uzbekistan, where the railway construction industry was thriving, officials of public corporations in those countries demanded JTC pay kickbacks.

In the Vietnam cases, the kickbacks were recorded as suspense payments and then brought to the country by airplane in cash, where they were handed to the recipients in yen.

In Indonesia, the company made kickback payments in the local currency from funds generated by falsely inflating outsourcing costs. In Uzbekistan, JTC transferred funds in U.S. dollars to bank accounts designated by the kickback recipients.

Across six projects in the three countries, JTC made such illegal payments a total of 100 times from 2009 to 2014, and the number of recipients totaled 13.

The investigation committee said that 16 people on the JTC side were involved with these payments, including a then executive board member who previously headed the firm's international division. Within JTC, the existence of the kickback payments was kept confidential, and related information was carefully controlled, the committee said. Most JTC employees involved in the cases were aware of the illicit nature of the payments, the third-party committee said.

the-japan-news.com/news/article/0001237691

ODA不正リベート 1億6千万円、第三者委認定

2014年04月26日 03時00分

政府開発援助（ODA）事業を巡る不正なりべと提供疑惑で、鉄道コンサルタント会社「日本交通技術」（JTC、東京）の第三者委員会は25日、JTCによるリべと提供は1990年代から始まり、2009～14年に総額約1億6000万円がベトナムなど3か国の政府関係者ら13人に提供されていたと発表した。

13年の税務調査で問題を指摘された後も経営陣がリべと継続を決め、「業務として組織的に行われていた」と指摘した。（関連記事39面）

東京地検特捜部は、不正競争防止法違反（外国公務員への贈賄）にあたりとみて、現地で政府関係者に現金を渡した複数の同社社員らの事情聴取を進めている。第三者委の委員長の国広正弁護士は25日、東京・霞が関で記者会見。「JTCは賄賂を要求された被害者ではなく、相手国の腐敗を助長する不正の共犯者だった」と述べた。

www.yomiuri.co.jp/national/20140426-OYT1T50002.html