23.5   REGISTRAR-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT

23.5.1   The Registrar-General's Department (RGD), which operates under the *aegis* of the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development, is the central agency for maintaining a repository of all documents that are registered including those pertaining to immovable and movable property transactions.

23.5.2   The activities of the Department are carried out under four main units namely the Professional Taxing Unit, Public Taxing Unit, Land Registry (Mortgage) and Valuation Unit (Re-assessment). The main functions of these units are, as follows: taxation of deeds deposited by Notaries, Banks, Leasing Companies, Financial Institutions, other stakeholders and members of the public to give a "date certaine" to the transactions; capturing of information regarding land transactions and secured loans to give publicity to safeguard interest of Creditors; and following up to claim additional duties/taxes after re-assessment of value of immovable properties. As per a New Operational Plan, two additional units have been set up since January 2020, namely Erasure and Examination Unit.

23.5.3   The Registrar-General has overall responsibility for the effective and efficient management and the day-to-day administration of the RGD and also acts as the Conservator of Mortgages, Receiver of Dues and the Authorised Officer for Campement Site and Campement Tax. She is assisted in her daily duties by the Deputy Registrar-General, Assistant Registrar-General, officers of the Registration Officers Cadre and those of the General Services grades.

23.5.4   In the context of this Report, the Bureau had consultations with both Union and Management. The Union made the following representations: to demerge the grades of Registration Officer/Senior Registration Officer and Principal Registration Officer/Chief Registration Officer; the scheme of service of the grade of Chief Registration Officer to be amended such that only this grade performs the functions of attending Court/Assessment Review Committee/Objection Unit; setting up of an Investigation Unit for the processes of checks and balances; incumbents in the grade of Copyist and Check Clerk be promoted as Inscription and Check Clerk; and upgrading the qualifications requirement of the grades of Registration Officer and Assistant Registrar-General.

23.5.5   On the other hand, Management's proposals were geared towards: creation of dedicated IT Unit, a Call Centre/Help Desk, a Documentation Unit; and upgrading the initial salary of the grade of Registration Officer/Senior Registration Officer.

23.5.6   During consultative meetings, both parties were apprised of the Bureau's policy for merging of grades which aims at having lean structures to enable a better service delivery.   As regards creation of Units, the onus rests upon Management. Stakeholders were also informed that amending the duties in the scheme of service devolves upon Management. Upgrading in salaries is considered whenever there is, among others, a change in the complexity of work and level of responsibility.

Appropriate explanations were provided for those requests which, for technical reasons, could not be acceded to.

23.5.7   We have examined the proposals and consider that the present structure is appropriate to enable the Registrar-General's Department to fulfil its mandate.

Duty to attend Court/Assessment Review Committee/Objection Unit

23.5.8   According to their existing scheme of service, incumbents in the grade of Registration Officer/Senior Registration Officer have to attend to Court. On the other hand, in line with the scheme of service, incumbents in the grades of Principal Registration Officer/Chief Registration Officer have to depone in Court on behalf of the Registrar-General's Department. The staff side has stated that officers in the grade of Registration Officer/Senior Registration Officer are called upon to depone in Court as their counterparts in the grade of Principal Registration Officer/Chief Registration Officer. They claimed that attending court and deponing are distinct in nature as in the former, the officer submits the certified copies while to depone, officers should be well versed with the file. Since it is an administrative issue that should be dealt with inhouse, **the Bureau considers that the matter be addressed at the Registrar-General's Department and each grade be made aware of its respective duties, role and responsibilities.**

Assistant Registrar-General

23.5.9   At present, the scheme of service of the grade of Assistant Registrar-General provides that appointment to the grade should be made by selection from among officers in the grades of Chief Registration Officers (Personal to officers in post as at 31.12.12) and Principal Registration Officer/Chief Registration Officer reckoning at least five years' service or an aggregate of at least five years' service in the grades of Principal Registration Officer/Chief Registration Officer and former grade of Principal Registration Officer in a substantive capacity and who possess the Diploma in Legal Studies or Law and Management or in a relevant field.

23.5.10 Various representations have been received from the stakeholders for the upgrading of the qualifications requirement of the grade of Assistant Registrar-General to a Degree in Legal Studies or Law and Management or an equivalent qualification from a recognised institution. In this respect, Management has submitted a proposed scheme of service of the grade of Assistant Registrar-General which is fraught with several discrepancies. The Bureau advises Management to work anew the scheme of service of the grade in consultation with all stakeholders and same may be considered on an *adhoc* basis at a later stage.

IT UNIT

23.5.11 Management has made a case for a full-fledged IT Unit with dedicated grades to be established at the department based on the ground that the E-Register System that has been put in place requires proper management and monitoring. It has also been averred that presently, officers of the Central Information Systems Division (CISD) who

are posted to the Department are carrying out these functions. However, as the posting of these officers is done on a rotational basis and they are subject to transfer, this mobility hampers the proper monitoring of the system. Further, it takes the ones replacing the outgoing officers quite a long time to understand the system in view of its complexity. It has also been submitted that the request made to the CISD for the permanent posting of CISD staffs to the Department was not acceded to owing to a shortage of staff.

23.5.12 In principle, the Bureau refrains from creating departmental IT grades given that the responsibility for the provision of ICT services rests upon the Ministry of Information Technology, Communication and Innovation. However, to better assess the situation and the need for the new levels asked for in the present case, we deemed it appropriate to carry out a site visit at the Department.

23.5.13 During the said visit, we noted that the E-Registry System has turned the RGD into a fully automated organisation. However, the system, is set up by a foreign supplier, who also holds the contract of maintenance of the system which is complex and requires constant monitoring. We were also apprised that Management is envisaging a transfer of knowledge from the supplier to the IT officers so that the latter can troubleshoot defects, whenever the system is down, instead of relying solely on the supplier for corrective actions to be taken.

23.5.14 Our analysis of the situation following the visit is that the problems being encountered by the RGD relating to its IT system may not necessarily be resolved by the creation of departmental grades. Management's representatives were informed of the various shortcomings that the dedicated grades would present. Finally, we found that the transfer of knowledge as envisaged may partly resolve the problem. Further, other practical solutions are also being proposed. **We consider that the Registrar-General's Department should make appropriate arrangements with the CISD to ensure that the work at the Registrar-General's Department is not affected, merely because of frequent change in posting of officers. We also consider that when the CISD officers are transferred, sufficient notice should be given to the Registrar-General's Department so that appropriate handing over may be done to ensure a smooth transition.**

REGISTRAR-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT

SALARY SCHEDULE

Salary Code	Salary Scale and Grade
18 000 110	**Rs 119500** Registrar-General

Salary Code	Salary Scale and Grade
18 091 102	**Rs 68000 x 1800 - 69800 x 2000 - 75800 x 2150 - 82250 x 3000 - 88250 x 3125 - 94500** Deputy Registrar-General
18 072 091	**Rs 39350 x 950 - 42200 x 1300 - 46100 x 1575 - 49250 x 1650 - 54200 x 1700 - 64400 x 1800 - 68000** Assistant Registrar-General
18 062 083	**Rs 30700 x 825 - 35650 x 900 - 37450 x 950 - 42200 x 1300 - 46100 x 1575 - 49250 x 1650 - 54200** Principal Registration Officer/Chief Registration Officer
18 053 076	**Rs 24475 x 525 - 26050 x 675 - 27400 x 825 - 35650 x 900 - 37450 x 950 - 42200 x 1300 - 43500** Inscription and Check Clerk
18 053 074	**Rs 24475 x 525 - 26050 x 675 - 27400 x 825 - 35650 x 900 - 37450 x 950 - 41250** Senior Registration Officer (Personal to officers in post as at 31.12.12)
18 037 072	**Rs 18650 x 275 - 18925 x 300 - 19525 x 325 - 21475 x 375 - 22225 x 400 - 23425 x 525 - 26050 x 675 - 27400 x 825 - 35650 x 900 - 37450 x 950 - 39350** Registration Officer/Senior Registration Officer
18 028 066	**Rs 16265 x 260 - 17825 x 275 - 18925 x 300 - 19525 x 325 - 21475 x 375 - 22225 x 400 - 23425 x 525 - 26050 x 675 - 27400 x 825 - 34000** Copyist and Check Clerk (Personal)
16 028 070	**Rs 16265 x 260 - 17825 x 275 - 18925 x 300 - 19525 x 325 - 21475 x 375 - 22225 x 400 - 23425 x 525 - 26050 x 675 - 27400 x 825 – 29875 QB 30700 x 825- 35650 x 900 - 37450** Print Finishing/Book Binding Operator (Roster) 　*formerly Machine Minder/Senior Machine Minder (Bindery) (Roster)*

Salary Code	Salary Scale and Grade
24 025 058	**Rs 15485 x 260 - 17825 x 275 - 18925 x 300 - 19525 x 325 - 21475 x 375 - 22225 x 400 - 23425 x 525 - 26050 x 675 - 27400** Driver

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