

22. OTHER PERTINENT ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Caution

- 22.1 In the present turbulent socio-economic environment, coupled with emerging challenges, the principal role of the state is that of a facilitator and regulator. With a view to striking the right balance between economic and social policy, the efforts of the Bureau have been to devise a suitable pay package which will not only provide enough incentive to retain the brightest officers but also to attract the best candidates to join the service. In short, our recommendations should be in line with the philosophy of the state.
- 22.2 It has again been observed that, at the lower level, the public sector has generally a pay lead over the private sector. Request has been made for adjusting, designing or redesigning pay structures in line with what is obtainable elsewhere. While one of the important criterion used for pay determination has been external comparison to ensure the competitiveness of the recommended pay structure, it has not been possible nor is it desirable to bring about a complete alignment with what obtains in the private sector for several reasons. At the upper echelon, social acceptability sets limits to which the gap with the private sector can be bridged and the capacity of Government to pay is limited. It is equally undeniable that Government jobs provide unparalleled job security, pension benefits, work-life balance and status. Further, Government also provides a vast array of non-monetary benefits that can be monetised in order to correctly assess the actual compensation package available to the employees.
- 22.3 The pay package has been worked out taking into consideration pension contribution, tax element, compensation and other economic issues. ***With the implementation of this Report, the guaranteed salary shall be the initial of the salary scale or the starting salary of an incumbent in any post and annual incremental increase shall invariably be a variable component based on overall performance and has to be earned. The increments provided in the salary scales would be granted taking into consideration performance, conduct and behaviour, efficiency, diligence including, availability and regularity at work. In several instances, particularly for future entrants, the top salary is only indicative and theoretical as a large number of incumbents leave the grade before reaching the top. The remaining employees would remain in their grade and would reach the top end of their scale generally after 20 to 25 years' service, subject to satisfactory performance.***
- 22.4 Much difference exists between the public and private sector in terms of conditions and security of employment, quality of intake, perquisites, and hours of work, among others. In the 2008 PRB Report, the following has been stated: ***"It would, therefore, be wrong if private concerns were expected to align or to adjust blindly their salaries in the wake of the recommendations***

contained in this Report. Whereas we do not dispute that in many instances the need for an increase in pay may in fact be warranted, we fear that if this is done too generally and too lightly, many of the benefits so much expected of this review might well be negated". We are, maintaining same in this Report.

- 22.5 With a view to adjusting internal relativities of pay of a grade that has fallen out of line with market realities, the following measures have been taken:
- providing benefits for incumbents in post but recommend that in the relevant grades should carry new salaries nearer to market rates;
 - restructuring has been carried out and incumbents would be required to assume higher responsibilities; and
 - recruitment would no longer be made to such grades which implicitly carry personal salaries.
- 22.6 **The Bureau proposes to keep a watch on the market and may in the light of new development, review the scales for future entrants on need arising.**

Service Providing Institutions and Cess

- 22.7 The centralisation of sugar factories and the modernisation of the sugar industry became imperative with the substantial price fall of sugar on the European market as well as the quota on sugar guaranteed for Mauritius to be exported.
- 22.8 In the context of the sugar reform and the Multi Annual Adaptation Strategy (MAAS), the service providing institutions which were partly financed by cess money were to be phased out, and defunct institutions be merged into one single institution.
- 22.9 With the proclamation of the Mauritius Cane Industry Authority (MCIA) Act No.40 of 2011, the Acts governing the six service providing institutions have been repealed. Officers of the defunct organisations have been given three options namely:
- (i) to join the MCIA;
 - (ii) to be redeployed in other Government Institutions of parastatal bodies; and
 - (iii) to retire on grounds on abolition of office,

To this effect a memorandum of understanding has been signed by all parties.

- 22.10 An implementation committee is currently working on the setting up of an appropriate organisation structure for the MCIA in order to enable the country to continue modernising the sugar industry.

Employees with Disabilities

- 22.11 People with disabilities should enjoy equal rights and opportunities to other people. It has been observed that persons with disabilities have an important role to play and to make a positive contribution in the workplace. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has mainly stressed on the protection of the rights of disabled persons to just and favourable conditions of work together with safe and healthy working conditions.
- 22.12 The Sixth Central Pay Commission of India has taken note of the problems faced by Government employees with disabilities and recommended various measures to alleviate same including enhanced number of casual leave, among others.
- 22.13 It is to be noted that over the years the Mauritian Government has taken a number of decisions and initiatives to eliminate prejudice and discrimination against persons with disabilities especially as regards their employment and social integration. With Government's commitment to enable persons with disabilities to take full advantage of opportunities available in a fast developing economy, it is considered that a package of benefits over and above the facilities currently available is desirable for employees in the Public Service.
- 22.14 In the 2008 PRB Report, recommendations were made to improve the conditions of employees with disabilities. We are, in this Report, maintaining these recommendations.

Recommendation 1

22.15 We again recommend that:

- (a) Government should continue to make improvement in all office structures and amenities to render work environment user-friendly for employees with disabilities and to ensure them easy access to their place of work;**
- (b) employees with disabilities be posted as far as possible near their place of residence;**
- (c) annual casual leave entitlement be 12 days;**
- (d) employees with disabilities travelling by bus to reach their place of work be allowed to leave office 15 minutes earlier subject to exigencies of the service; and**
- (e) refund of travelling by bus to attend duty should be by the most practical route though not the most economical one.**

Schemes of Service

- 22.16 In the light of structural changes recommended in this Report, **consequential amendments would have to be brought to the schemes of service of grades to reflect the required profiles and the new roles and responsibilities that would devolve on incumbents.**
- 22.17 Subsequent to the implementation of relevant recommendations made in this Report, appropriate action with regard to schemes of service requiring changes/ amendments as well as specifications of schemes of service for new grades should be taken, as far as possible, within a maximum period of six months.

Alignment of Schemes of Service in the Public Sector

- 22.18 We have, in this Report, brought certain changes in the qualifications, duties and responsibilities of several grades in the Civil Service. The salaries recommended for the grades take into account all these changes. Moreover, for the sake of harmonisation, identical/comparable grades in the Parastatal Bodies and Local Authorities, though under different appellations, have been aligned salarywise on their Civil Service counterparts.
- 22.19 Following the revision in the qualification requirements of these grades in the Civil Service, it is necessary that adjustments be made in the schemes of service of the corresponding grades in the Parastatal Bodies and Local Authorities in alignment with what obtains in the Civil Service.

Recommendation 2

- 22.20 **We recommend that where the salaries of identical/comparable grades in Parastatal Bodies and Local Authorities have been aligned on those of the Civil Service, the schemes of service of these grades should, wherever relevant, be amended along similar lines as those of their counterparts in the Civil Service.**

Mode of Selection/Promotion

- 22.21 The Bureau has refrained from making systemic changes in the existing modes of appointment. We believe that the change in modes of appointment from “promotion” to “selection” or vice versa is a matter for consideration by the Responsible Officer concerned after consultation with relevant stakeholders. In so doing, Responsible Officers may stand guided by the Promotion Framework outlined at Chapter 11 of Volume 1 of this Report. However, we emphasize that the Performance Management Report should be the basis of all promotion exercises.

Ensuring Availability of Best Talents

- 22.22 In recent years, it has been observed that the disparity between private sector salaries and salaries in the public sector has reduced attractiveness to the

public sector as a career option and is a cause for the decline in the quality of intake in the public service.

22.23 In several countries, appointment to senior positions is made from both within the service and outside candidates. This allows selection from a wider base of qualified and competent people not only from the public and private sectors locally but also from abroad. The Sixth Central Pay Commission has recommended for the Indian Civil Service the creation of such posts outside the traditional cadre system. This approach allows more flexibility in the appointment of talents to positions of responsibilities.

22.24 **The application of a similar policy for filling of senior, professional and managerial positions in the Public Service will allow the entry of new talents as a plus for enhanced service delivery. It will also induce our elite back home. Government may wish to consider the advisability of lateral entry at higher echelon in the service to ensure availability of the best possible talents from within and outside. However, enlistment of such talents should be strictly on functional considerations and such posts should invariably be created outside the existing cadres to be filled by method of open selection.**

Entertainment Allowance

22.25 Some top executives of the public sector have argued that, by virtue of their functions and position they occupy, they are required to stay connected with people, receive and entertain high officials and reciprocate invitations received. A case has therefore been made for the payment of an allowance for entertainment expenses.

Recommendation 3

22.26 **We recommend that officers of the level of Permanent Secretary and above be paid a monthly entertainment allowance of Rs 4950.**

“Gender Neutral” Considerations

22.27 Gender Neutral policies have become increasingly common throughout the world. It is viewed as treating everyone the same and treating officers according to their unique needs. Early versions of the Gender Equality strategy tended towards the gender neutral approach as it focused on equal opportunities for both sexes. In Mauritius, there are several laws that provide for the elimination of any form of discrimination. The Sex Discrimination Act provides for gender equality. The Equal Opportunities Act also makes provision for the equal participation of women and men in all spheres of life. Job classification/ appellation has therefore been rendered gender neutral.
