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ROYAL GOVERNMENT OF BHUTAN
MINISTRY OF FINANCE
TASHICHHO DZONG



MoF/DNB/Notification/2022-23/308

September 1, 2022

NOTIFICATION

Government Expenditure Rationalization Initiatives

In our continued collective efforts towards ensuring proper management of scarce public resources, the Ministry of Finance announce the following cost rationalization measures effective immediately, until revised or rescinded;

1. Printing

- a. **Printing of reports and publications:** Discontinue printing of annual/quarterly/monthly reports and eliminate paper publications. All such reports & information should be posted to agencies' websites and/or distributed electronically.
 - b. **Office printing:** With the growing momentum of online official correspondence; all office orders, circulars, notifications and intra office memo shall be circulated electronically through emails, official web-page, official social media page and through other possible virtual platforms (unless absolutely required to observe confidentiality; and office copy to be maintained in pdf format.
 - c. **Consolidation of printers:** The head of the agency shall ensure that the procurement of dedicated printers per employee must be discontinued and promote the use of network printers or initiate consolidation of printers in the office.
2. **Ex-country travel:** Foreign travel should be restricted to unavoidable official engagements. As such, the head of the agency must prohibit study tours, participation in seminars/workshops/conferences and training funded by the RGoB except for formal meetings of bilateral/multilateral bodies approved by the Lhengye Zhungtshog. Where the international meetings are unavoidable, the agencies must use the diplomats in the mission abroad to represent the agencies & reduce the size of official delegations.

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3. **Refreshments and Meals:** The head of the agencies must rationalize the serving of working lunch/refreshments during the internal meetings considering the budgetary constraints.
4. **In-country Training/conference/workshops/meetings:** Utmost austerity shall be observed in organizing in-country training, conferences, seminars and workshops. All such activities must be adequately substantiated and justified to be approved by the head of the agencies and due prudence must be observed. The agencies to the best possible extent must encourage virtual meetings and annual subscription to virtual apps shall be encouraged at Departmental level. Further, respective ICT officials must validate and make subscription for respective agencies.
5. **Awareness, Sensitization and Advocacy programs:** Expenses on awareness/sensitization/advocacy programs must be rationalized by exploring the ICT platforms; the agencies must also explore possibilities to consolidate the awareness and sensitization programmes of similar nature.
6. **Extension kits:** It is observed that budgetary bodies continue to procure and distribute extension kits such as tents, sleeping bags, boots, rucksacks bags, camping equipment etc. Given the huge expenditure on such procurement on an annual basis, the head of the agency shall ensure that procurement of extension kits will remain restricted irrespective of funding sources.
7. **Payment of prize money, cash support and free toolkits:** Budgetary agencies are observed to have a system of giving prize money to winning competitors in different categories to encourage participation in various skills/entrepreneurial development and creating income generating opportunities programs. Henceforth, all the budgetary bodies shall refrain from providing cash based incentives (prize money and cash support).
8. **Fuel & Maintenance of Vehicles:** With an increasing Year-on-Year (YoY) expenses on vehicle fuel and maintenance at 10 to 15 percent annually, the head of the budgetary bodies should exercise utmost economy in the use of dedicated and pool vehicles. In addition, towards containing the rising expenses on maintenance of

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government vehicles, surrendered vehicles shall be immediately auctioned and not be available for further redeployment, transfer.

9. **Procurement and replacement of Laptops:** The head of the agency shall ensure that the officials are not issued multiple laptops/desktops irrespective of available funding sources (RGoB/Donor Funded) In addition, the replacement of the laptop should be approved by the head upon ascertaining the condition of the equipment by the ICT officer, verification by procurement/store officer and is not as a result of mishandling.

These initiatives are expected to reduce recurrent expenses and ensure that the approved controllable budget is able to adequately maintain and support critical services and operations of the agencies. In addition, respective head of the agencies must use your own rational judgment to ensure that best prudence is observed to ensure cost efficiency, while delivering the mandates.

(Kesang Deki)

Finance Secretary

Copy to:

1. Hon'ble Prime Minister, Gyalyong Tshogkhang, for kind information.
2. The Hon'ble Ministers for kind information.
3. The Hon'ble Auditor General, Royal Audit Authority, Thimphu.
4. The Head of Constitutional Bodies.
5. All Government Secretaries.
6. The Head of Autonomous Agencies.
7. The Dzongdas, Thrompon and Gups.
8. The Head of Finance Division, all budgetary bodies.

For the kind information of: Hon'ble Dasho Gyalpoi Zimpon, Office of the Gyalpoi Zimpon, Thimphu.