

## 26. ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE

- 26.1 The Attorney General's Office (AGO) is mandated to provide sound, independent and timely legal services to Government, including advisory, drafting and litigation support. It plays a cardinal role in supporting the Government in the pursuit of its objectives and also contributes to the development of a fair and just legal system also comprising promotion of the rule of law in the interest of the State and the people.
- 26.2 As the administrative head, the Solicitor-General is assisted by a pool of law officers as well as support staff, to ensure that objectives are met. The Office of the Parliamentary Counsel also forms part of the AGO. At its helm is the Parliamentary Counsel who is responsible for legislative drafting, which is an important component in the implementation of Government policy.
- 26.3 Submissions of Management and the staff side pertain, mainly to: upgrading in salaries; revising allowances; strengthening of the structure with additional levels; and reviewing qualifications requirement of certain positions. However, Management withdrew a few proposals as further consultations with relevant stakeholders were required.
- 26.4 The present structure of the AGO is considered appropriate to deliver effectively on its mandate. However, on need arising, Management may contemplate the creation of grades in-between an overall review exercise through the proper channel. Concerning issues of recruitment, attrition and retention of Judicial and Legal Officers, these have been examined in the light of the findings on the Survey on Recruitment and Retention problems in the Public Sector.
- 26.5 In this Report, we are, among others, merging and restyling the grades of Legal Assistant and Senior Legal Assistant; enhancing the benefits of the Solicitor-General subject to certain conditions; providing for the continued payment of the Special Legal Service Allowance; providing for the conduct of a Human Resource Planning exercise; and maintaining payment of existing allowances.

### **Solicitor-General**

- 26.6 Request was made for the Solicitor-General to be paid a Housing Allowance as well as retirement benefits accruing to a Puisne Judge. To substantiate the request, Management apprised that the officer in post could not be released on being offered appointment as Puisne Judge as he was assigned important responsibilities at the AGO. As a result and following approval of the High Powered Committee (HPC), he was granted the retirement benefits accruing to a Puisne Judge. Given the exceptional circumstance of the case, we consider that the present Solicitor-General in post as at 31 December 2025 may be granted retirement benefits accruing to a Puisne Judge on a personal basis, subject to the approval of the HPC.

**Recommendation 1**

**26.7** We recommend that, subject to the approval of the High Powered Committee:

- (d)** the Solicitor-General in post as at 31 December 2025 may, on a personal basis, be:
  - (iii)** accorded the retirement benefits accruing to those of a Puisne Judge; and
  - (iv)** paid a monthly pensionable Housing Allowance of Rs 12650, notwithstanding the provisions of this Report on “Pensionable Value of Rent Allowance”;
- (e)** on availing of the above post-retirement benefits, the same restriction on private practice applicable to members of the Judiciary should equally apply to the incumbent; and
- (f)** necessary amendments to the relevant existing legislations should be brought to give effect to the recommendations at (a) and (b) above.

**Senior Officers of the AGO**

**26.8** Representations have been made for officers of the AGO who have been offered appointment as Puisne Judge but who have opted to remain posted thereat to be brought at par with the Puisne Judge, in terms of the benefits accruing to the latter. Such requests were in the past examined and turned down by the High Powered Committee as there were no valid reason for retaining these officers at the AGO, the moreso it was only a matter of their career choice.

**26.9** In the last Report, we provided for Management to consider HR strategies to tackle retention issues and to refer exceptional cases to the High Powered Committee for examination. We are revisiting this provision.

**Recommendation 2**

**26.10** We recommend that only in exceptional cases where the high qualifications, unique competencies, distinctive experience and needs of the service, among others, so warrant that an officer of the AGO, who on being offered appointment as a Puisne Judge, could not be released, the High Powered Committee may consider the payment of a pensionable allowance to the officer on such terms and conditions as it may decide.

**Special Legal Service Allowance**

**26.11** In the last Report, payment of a monthly Special Legal Service Allowance was maintained on a personal basis to Judicial and Legal Officers and on their promotion within their respective Cadre.

- 26.12 Management submitted that the significant improvement in the Conditions of Service brought by the PRB in its past Reports have addressed the problem of attrition at the AGO. They, therefore, requested to maintain payment of the Special Legal Service Allowance as a retention measure and review upward the rates payable so as to retain Judicial and Legal Officers with the necessary legal acuity to shape and safeguard the law of the country. The attention of the Bureau was drawn to the fact that incentives and prospects in private practice are manifestly better, so that it is becoming more and more difficult to recruit at entry level of the AGO.
- 26.13 Further to the findings of the survey on Recruitment and Retention Problems in the Public Sector, for this Report, we are, recommending for the continued payment of a Special Legal Service Allowance to Judicial and Legal Officers at the AGO until the next overall review exercise.

### Recommendation 3

- 26.14 **We recommend that with effect from 01 January 2026 and up to the next Overall Review of Pay and Grading Structures and Conditions of Service in the Public Sector, Judicial and Legal Officers should be paid a monthly Special Legal Service Allowance as per the table below:**

Grade	Special Legal Service Allowance (% of monthly salary)
State Counsels, State Attorneys and Assistant Curator of Vacant Estates reckoning at least 10 years' service in their respective grade. Senior State Counsels, Senior State Attorneys, Assistant Legal Secretary and Curator of Vacant Estates.	7
Principal State Counsels, Principal State Attorneys, Legal Secretary, Assistant Parliamentary Counsel, Assistant Solicitor-General, Deputy Chief State Attorney, Chief State Attorney, Chief Legal Secretary, Senior Assistant Parliamentary Counsel and Director, Attorney Services	10
Deputy Solicitor-General, Parliamentary Counsel and Solicitor-General reckoning less than 10 years' service in the respective grade.	15
Solicitor-General reckoning more than 10 years' service in the grade but less than 30 years' service.	20
Solicitor-General reckoning more than 30 years' service.	30

- 26.15** The above recommendation is made on the understanding that no additional remuneration, over and above the recommended package, will be considered until the next Overall Review of Pay and Grading Structures and Conditions of Service in the Public Sector.

#### **Judicial and Legal Allowance**

- 26.16** Judicial and Legal Officers are currently paid a yearly Judicial and Legal Allowance as an assistance towards meeting the cost of certain items related to the exercise of their profession. Management requested to review the allowance owing to an increase in prices of clothing. We are maintaining payment of the allowance whilst revising its amount.

#### **Recommendation 4**

- 26.17** We recommend that Judicial and Legal Officers of the AGO should be paid a yearly Judicial and Legal Allowance as per table below:

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Quantum (Rs)</b>
<b>Solicitor-General Parliamentary Counsel Deputy Solicitor-General</b>	<b>42560</b>
<b>Director, Attorney Services Assistant Solicitor-General Chief Legal Secretary Chief State Attorney Senior Assistant Parliamentary Counsel Assistant Parliamentary Counsel Deputy Chief State Attorney Legal Secretary Principal State Counsel Principal State Attorney Assistant Legal Secretary Curator of Vacant Estates Senior State Counsel Senior State Attorney Assistant Curator of Vacant Estates State Counsel State Attorney</b>	<b>26680</b>

#### **Legal Assistant/Senior Legal Assistant formerly Legal Assistant Senior Legal Assistant**

- 26.18** The Legal Assistant Cadre comprises five levels viz. Legal Assistant, Senior Legal Assistant, Principal Legal Assistant, Chief Legal Assistant and Registrar (Legal Assistant Cadre). Management requested for a merger of the grades of Legal Assistant and Senior Legal Assistant for better career earnings.

- 26.19 While studying the proposal, we observed that the duties of the two grades overlap to a large extent and the grade of Principal Legal Assistant exists as a supervisory level. Moreover, we have been informed by Management that officers of the two grades concerned have been consulted and they are agreeable to the merger. We are recommending accordingly.

#### **Recommendation 5**

- 26.20 **We recommend that the grades of Legal Assistant and Senior Legal Assistant be merged and restyled Legal Assistant/Senior Legal Assistant.**
- 26.21 **We further recommend that consequential amendments be brought to the scheme of service of the grade of Principal Legal Assistant with regard to the mode of appointment and duties, where relevant.**

#### **Black Jacket Allowance**

- 26.22 At present, officers of the Legal Assistant Cadre are entitled to the payment of a yearly Black Jacket Allowance. As this practice is still prevalent, we are maintaining the allowance whilst reviewing its quantum.

#### **Recommendation 6**

- 26.23 **We recommend that officers of the Legal Assistant Cadre at the AGO, who are required by the rules of the Court to appear in black jacket with tie, should be paid a yearly Black Jacket Allowance of Rs 5640.**

#### **Legislative Drafting Unit - Allowance for Working Extra Hours**

- 26.24 Presently, officers in certain positions at the Legislative Drafting Unit are paid a monthly allowance for working beyond their normal office hours. The allowance was extended to other officers working thereat for satisfying the same conditions, upon endorsement by the High Powered Committee. We are reiterating this provision.

#### **Recommendation 7**

- 26.25 **We recommend that officers in the Legislative Drafting Unit at the AGO who are effectively required to work over and above their normal working hours, during Weekends and Public Holidays, to meet the tight legislative deadlines for implementing Government policy in a timely manner, should be paid a monthly allowance as hereunder, up to the next Overall Review of Pay and Grading Structure and Conditions of Service in the Public Sector:**

Eligible Officer	Quantum (Rs)
Supervising Officer/Team Leader designated by the Solicitor-General	27500

Eligible Officer	Quantum (Rs)
Designated officers in the grade of State Counsel and above	25300
Officers of the Legal Assistant Cadre Officers of the AGO performing same duties as officers of the Legal Assistant Cadre while posted to the Legislative Drafting Unit	10670

### Specialised Units - Allowance for Working Extra Hours

26.26 Officers posted in the Specialised Units of the AGO namely: Human Rights; Specialist Tribunals; International Trade; Intellectual Property; International Cooperation in Legal Matters (Extradition and Mutual Assistance); Public International Law; and Registration and Regulation of Law Firms and who are required to work long hours over and above their normal working hours, are paid a monthly allowance. Management requested to revise the quantum of the allowance while extending it to new units.

26.27 After examining the request, we consider that a proliferation of specialised units would ultimately bring rigidity in the organisation. The Office should, therefore, refrain from the practice of creating such units. We, however, hold that for an optimal use of its human capital, Management should contemplate providing appropriate training to officers of the AGO so that they may be posted in the different units on a rotational basis to encourage polyvalence among them and for greater flexibility and adaptability. We are meanwhile maintaining the continued payment of the allowance.

### Recommendation 8

26.28 **We recommend that the Officer-in-Charge and designated officers of the AGO posted in the Specialised Units namely: Human Rights; Specialist Tribunals; International Trade; Intellectual Property; International Cooperation in Legal Matters (Extradition and Mutual Assistance); Public International Law; and Registration and Regulation of Law Firms, who are called upon to work long hours over and above their normal working hours, should be paid a monthly allowance of Rs 11000 and Rs 5500 respectively.**

### Pupil Barristers and Pupil Attorneys

26.29 Pupil Barristers and Pupil Attorneys are required to undergo pre-registration practical training in order to be registered in accordance with legislation in force to be able to practice. Those undergoing such training at the AGO are currently paid a monthly stipend of Rs 25525. In line with what obtains for graduate trainees in other quarters, we are revising the quantum.

**Recommendation 9**

- 26.30** We recommend that the monthly stipend payable to Pupil Barristers and Pupil Attorneys who are required to undergo pre-registration practical training in order to be registered in accordance with legislation in force to be able to practice, be revised to Rs 35840.

**Human Resource Planning**

- 26.31** Management apprised that officers of the AGO are being regularly called upon to work under high work pressure and in strenuous conditions, owing to a significant increase in workload. Request has, therefore, been made for an increase in the number of posts of the different grades. We are making an appropriate recommendation to address this issue.

**Recommendation 10**

- 26.32** We recommend that Management should carry out a Human Resource Planning exercise, as provided in the Chapter Recruitment, Promotion and Retention in Volume 1 of this Report, prior to considering increasing the establishment size of existing grades.

**ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE****SALARY SCHEDULE**

<b>Salary Code</b>	<b>Salary Scale and Grade</b>
12 000 124	<b>Rs 222000</b> Solicitor-General
12 000 120	<b>Rs 190000</b> Deputy Solicitor-General Parliamentary Counsel
12 000 116	<b>Rs 166000</b> Director, Attorney Services

Salary Code	Salary Scale and Grade
12 000 115	<b>Rs 162000</b> Assistant Solicitor-General Chief Legal Secretary Chief State Attorney Senior Assistant Parliamentary Counsel
12 000 112	<b>Rs 150000</b> Assistant Parliamentary Counsel Deputy Chief State Attorney
12 093 104	<b>Rs 84500 x 2250 - 86750 x 2500 - 94250 x 2750 - 102500 x 3750 - 110000 x 4000 - 118000</b> Legal Secretary Principal State Attorney Principal State Counsel
12 082 099	<b>Rs 62350 x 1850 - 67900 x 1900 - 75500 x 2250 - 86750 x 2500 - 94250 x 2750 - 99750</b> Assistant Legal Secretary Curator of Vacant Estates Senior State Counsel Senior State Attorney
12 071 094	<b>Rs 47950 x 1050 - 49000 x 1100 - 54500 x 1450 - 58850 x 1750 - 62350 x 1850 - 67900 x 1900 - 75500 x 2250 - 86750</b> Assistant Curator of Vacant Estates State Counsel State Attorney
12 060 094	<b>Rs 37290 x 925 - 39140 x 970 - 46900 x 1050 - 49000 x 1100 - 54500 x 1450 - 58850 x 1750 - 62350 x 1850 - 67900 x 1900 - 75500 x 2250 - 86750</b> Legal Research Officer/Senior Legal Research Officer
12 075 094	<b>Rs 52300 x 1100 - 54500 x 1450 - 58850 x 1750 - 62350 x 1850 - 67900 x 1900 - 75500 x 2250 - 86750</b> Registrar (Legal Assistant Cadre)
12 069 088	<b>Rs 45930 x 970 - 46900 x 1050 - 49000 x 1100 - 54500 x 1450 - 58850 x 1750 - 62350 x 1850 - 67900 x 1900 - 73600</b> Chief Legal Assistant



Salary Code	Salary Scale and Grade
12 064 084	<b>Rs 41080 x 970 - 46900 x 1050 - 49000 x 1100 - 54500 x 1450 - 58850 x 1750 - 62350 x 1850 - 66050</b> Principal Legal Assistant
12 040 079	<b>Rs 28225 x 320 - 28865 x 350 - 30965 x 400 - 31765 x 425 - 33040 x 560 - 35840 x 725 - 37290 x 925 - 39140 x 970 - 46900 x 1050 - 49000 x 1100 - 54500 x 1450 - 57400</b> Legal Assistant /Senior Legal Assistant <i>formerly Legal Assistant</i> <i>Senior Legal Assistant</i>
18 060 090	<b>Rs 37290 x 925 - 39140 x 970 - 46900 x 1050 - 49000 x 1100 - 54500 x 1450 - 58850 x 1750 - 62350 x 1850 - 67900 x 1900 - 75500 x 2250 - 77750</b> Regulatory Officer
24 027 060	<b>Rs 24245 x 300 - 26945 x 320 - 28865 x 350 - 30965 x 400 - 31765 x 425 - 33040 x 560 - 35840 x 725 - 37290</b> Driver
24 020 050	<b>Rs 22175 x 270 - 22445 x 300 - 26945 x 320 - 28865 x 350 - 30965 x 400 - 31765</b> Handy Worker

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