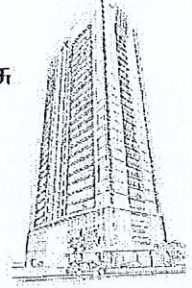




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**தொழில் மற்றும் வெளிநாட்டு வேலைவாய்ப்பு அமைச்சு**  
**Ministry of Labour and Foreign Employment**

හයවන මහල, "මෙහෙවර පියෙස්", නාරාහේන්පිට, කොළඹ 05, ශ්‍රී ලංකාව.  
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 6th Floor, "Mehewara Piyesa", Narahenpita, Colombo 05, Sri Lanka.



මගේ අංකය  
எனது இல  
My No.

MFE/DEV/IR-04/27

ඔබේ අංකය  
உமது இல  
Your No.

දිනය  
திகதி  
Date } 2023.04.24

**Ministry of Labour and Foreign Employment Circular No. 01/2023**

**Offering an Additional Duty – Free Allowance to Migrant Employees Who are Returning to Country after Employment**

This circular is issued for the implementation of the decision taken at the meeting of the Cabinet of Ministers held on 08.08.2022 to grant an additional duty free allowance to migrant employees on the basis of the amount of foreign exchange remitted by them in addition to the duty free allowance currently granted based on the duration of stay abroad, for the purchase of goods from the duty free complex of the airport upon their return to the country with a view to encouraging them to remit the foreign exchange earned from their foreign employment to the country through legal channels.

**02. Conditions/ Criteria**

- 2.1 The amount of foreign exchange earned from foreign employment and remitted only to an individual or joint rupee account of the beneficiary through the banking system of the country is considered for the granting of this additional duty-free concession. Accordingly, the relevant commercial bank will feed the rupee value of remittances of the beneficiary to the data system relevant to the App referred to in 3.1 of this circular. Thereafter, the said rupee value is reported as a dollar equivalent through the App itself and the Middle Exchange Rate declared by the Central Bank of Sri Lanka for the relevant day of remittance is used for the conversion to US dollars. However, for providing this concession, the remittances sent by the migrant worker to foreign currency accounts and payments over the counter in cash are not considered.
- 2.2 The amount remitted after 01.05.2022 is considered in determining the additional duty-free allowance. A migrant worker who obtains the duty-free concession once under this scheme will be entitled to obtain the concession again only after lapsing a period of 12 months. Accordingly, for the first time request to be made to claim this duty-free concession, the amount remitted to rupee accounts after 01.05.2022 until the date on which the request is made will be considered subject to a maximum of one year.
- 2.3 In order to be eligible for the additional duty-free concession, a minimum of 2400 US dollars should have been remitted within a period of one year or less than one year before returning to the country and the additional duty-free concession is granted on the basis of the amount of foreign exchange remitted to rupee accounts during said period, under 5 categories as set out in the table below.

Table 2.3.1 –Additional duty-free allowance entitled on the basis of foreign exchange remitted to Rupee accounts

Existing allowance		Proposed additional duty-free allowance		
Continuous period of stay abroad	Duty free allowance (USD)	Category of duty-free allowance	Minimum amount of US dollars or equivalent foreign exchange that should be remitted to a rupee account during the period under consideration	Additional duty-free allowance that can be claimed (US Dollars)
Less than 90 days	187.5	Silver	2,400- 4,799	600
Between 90-365 days	625.0	Silver Plus	4,800 -7,199	960
		Gold	7,200-11,999	1,440
More than 365 days	1,750.00	Gold Plus	12,000- 23,999	2,400
		Platinum	24,000 or more	4,800

### 03. Operational Procedure

3.1 This scheme will be operated through a database of LankaRemit app developed as required by the LankaPay (Pvt) Ltd. The interface required for the implementing partners of the scheme, i.e., commercial banks and Sri Lanka Customs as well, will be provided by LankaPay (Pvt) Ltd.

3.2 This duty-free concession can be applied directly through LankaRemit application. A Sri Lankan migrant worker using a smart phone can install LankaRemit application in his/her mobile phone and make a request through installed app from the bank/s to which the money is remitted to access details of the additional duty-free allowance using the facility available in the app prior to coming to the country. Such a request should be made at least before 48 business hours (Approximately 06 working days) of the banks. Then the details pertaining to the duty-free concession will be displayed to the person who make the request through this app and the relevant details are transmitted to the Sri Lanka Customs.

3.3 A person who is not using a smart phone should make his/her request in the form of a letter or as an email to the relevant bank/ as per the Annexure 01 of the Circular. The bank should feed the information relevant such request to the database developed by LankaPay (Pvt) Ltd through the interface provided.

In addition, the requested bank must provide a hard copy or soft copy of the confirmation letter containing all the information requested by the migrant worker with the signature of an authorized officer to the migrant worker or the partner of the

joint account, to whom the request is made. Annexure -2 of the Circular which should be used by the bank to provide the information to the Director General of Customs can be used for this purpose also.

3.4 This additional duty-free concession is only available for goods purchase from a duty-free shop located in an airport of Sri Lanka.

#### **4. Other**

4.1 Though the targeted direct beneficiaries of this scheme are migrant workers who remit their earnings to the country through legal channels, a Sri Lankan with dual citizenship residing outside Sri Lanka who has remitted foreign currency exceeding a value of USD 2,400 to a rupee account in Sri Lanka during the period under consideration too is entitled to this additional duty-free concession.

4.2 Based on the period of stay abroad and the amount of money remitted and converted to rupees by the migrant worker as at the date of obtaining the benefit as displayed on the interface provided by LankaPay (Pvt) Ltd., the officers of Sri Lanka Customs will determine the allowance to which each migrant worker is entitled to in terms of the table given under 2.3.1 above.

4.3 This duty-free concession is only valid for goods purchase at a duty-free shopping complex located at an airport. The duty-free allowance currently available to passengers based on the period of stay abroad is remained unchanged for the eligible goods purchased in overseas and sent through a baggage clearing agency.

4.4 This circular is issued with the concurrence of the Ministry of Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policies and the Central Bank of Sri Lanka. Should you need any further clarification regarding the circular, please feel free to contact the Additional Director (Policies) of this Ministry over phone number 011-2368137.

4.5 This circular is implemented with effect from 01<sup>st</sup> of May 2023.

**Sgd. R.P.A Wimalawecera**  
Secretary

Copies –

1. Secretary of the President
2. Secretary of the Prime Minister
3. Secretary of the Cabinet of Ministers
4. Auditor General
5. Secretary, Ministry of Finance, Economic Stabilization and National Policies

