

## GOVERNMENT OF MAURITIUS

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My Ref.: MOC/GEN/144 V13

Date: 17 September 2024

Your Ref.:

From : Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Commerce and Consumer Protection

To : Supervising Officer of Ministries and Departments

Holding of Fairs under Patronage

As you may be aware, the authorization for holding local and international fairs is regulated by this Ministry under the Consumer Protection (Control of Fairs) Regulations 2016, as subsequently amended. Under this legal framework, a "fair" is defined as an event organized over more than one day to showcase, promote, and conduct trade of various goods and services. These regulations specify the conditions for holding fairs, including authorized items for sale and prohibited locations such as sports grounds, parking areas, or gardens. They also include provisions for exemptions and the requirement for relevant permits and approvals from the government.

2. The aforementioned legislation also permits the holding of fairs justified by national interest by Ministries or under their patronage to promote policies implemented by their respective organizations. These events benefit from several exemptions, including no restrictions on the timing of the event and exemption from government fees ranging from a minimum of Rs 300,000 for a local fair and a minimum of Rs 700,000 for fairs with international participants. Additionally, there are no restrictions on the types of products and services that can be sold during these events.

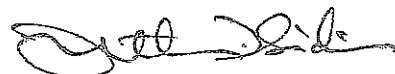
3. However, this Ministry has received numerous representations from stakeholders in the local retail industry. They have observed that many events held under the patronage or in collaboration with Ministries are predominantly organized by private entities. These participants gain a competitive advantage by holding events during restricted months and not paying any government fees. According to industry representatives, the proliferation of such unrestricted events creates unfair competition. Specifically, brick-and-mortar retailers, who conduct trade with all relevant permits and local operating costs, face significant financial and operational disadvantages.

4. To address these concerns and to ensure that the holding of fairs under Ministerial patronage aligns with the national interest and does not inadvertently harm other market participants, all Ministries/Departments and other Governmental organisations are, henceforth, required to seek the agreement of Government at least one month prior to holding a fair. The submission to Cabinet should also provide the following information, amongst others, -

- (i) duration and venue for the event;
- (ii) amount of fees the event will be exempted from;
- (iii) type of goods and services that will be put on sale; and
- (iv) any clearance obtained from any government organisation, other than this Ministry, for holding the event, including clearances for international participants, if any.

5. This Ministry relies on your cooperation in adhering to the above to ensure that the organization of fairs under Ministerial patronage is transparent and fair.

6. For any clarification or further information, please do not hesitate to contact the Trade Division of this Ministry for further guidance.



**D. M. Mathur Dabidin (Mrs)**  
**Permanent Secretary**

**Cc: Secretary to Cabinet and Head of the Civil Service**

**Secretary to Public Service**