

CABINET DECISIONS – 30 NOVEMBER 2018

1. Cabinet has agreed to the introduction of the Constitution (Electoral Reform) (Amendment) Bill into the National Assembly. The main object of the Bill is to reform certain aspects of the electoral system of Mauritius. The Bill, accordingly, amends the Constitution –

- (a) to provide, with a view to ensuring wider representation of parties in the National Assembly –
 - (i) for 63 seats in the Assembly for members representing constituencies, in lieu of 62; and
 - (ii) in addition to the 63 constituency seats, 12 proportional representation seats (PR seats) and a maximum of 10 additional seats;
- (b) to do away with the requirement for the mandatory declaration as to the community to which a constituency candidate belongs to;
- (c) to seek better gender representation in the National Assembly by providing that –
 - (i) every party or party alliance shall present not more than two thirds of constituency candidates of the same sex; and
 - (ii) every proportional representation list (PR list) submitted by a party or party alliance shall comprise not more than two thirds of persons of the same sex; and
- (d) to provide for anti-defection measures to enhance stability.

2. Cabinet has agreed to the introduction of the Declaration of Assets Bill into the National Assembly. The object of the Bill is to make better and more comprehensive provisions for the declaration of assets by holders of important offices in the public sector. Accordingly, the Bill –

- (a) repeals the Declaration of Assets Act;
- (b) extends the scope of assets to be declared;
- (c) extends the categories of persons, in addition to Ministers, members of the National Assembly, Commissioners for the Island of Rodrigues, members of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and Councillors of a Municipal City Council, Municipal Town Council or District Council, who shall be required to make a declaration of their assets and liabilities, to –

- (i) judicial officers and senior public officers;
 - (ii) the Chief Executives of a Municipal City Council, Municipal Town Council or District Council, and officers of such Councils drawing salary at the level of Deputy Permanent Secretary and above;
 - (iii) Chairpersons and Chief Executive Officers of State-owned enterprises and statutory bodies, and officers of such enterprises and statutory bodies drawing salary at the level of Deputy Permanent Secretary and above;
 - (iv) advisers and officers employed on a contractual basis in Ministries, drawing salary at the level of Deputy Permanent Secretary and above; and
- (d) provides that the Independent Commission against Corruption shall be the depository of every declaration.

3. Cabinet has taken note of the recommendations relating to the financing of political parties and further noted that the proposals would be made public and uploaded on the website of the Prime Minister's Office with a view to inviting suggestions/comments of political parties and any interested person.

4. Cabinet has agreed to the implementation of a Crop Loss Compensation Scheme for the benefit of small non-sugar planters registered with the Small Farmers Welfare Fund. The Scheme aims at compensating, in a more reasonable and fair manner, small planters growing in the open field for crop losses sustained as a result of excessive rainfall, cyclones and droughts with a view to enabling them to promptly re-start their plantation.

5. Cabinet has agreed to Mauritius joining a High Level Political Declaration entitled 'Paris Call for Trust and Security in the Cyberspace' which was launched by the French President Emmanuel Macron on Monday 12 November 2018, during the 13th Annual Meeting of the Internet Governance Forum. The Declaration reaffirms the applicability of international law in cyberspace, the reinforcement of cooperation amongst countries and the prevention of cybercrime. The principles highlighted in the Declaration are in line with the Budapest Convention on cybercrime to which Mauritius is a party.

6. Cabinet has taken note that Mr Marday Venkatasamy, President of the Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry has been elected as Chair Organisation of the Regional Business Institution at the 8th Annual General Meeting of the COMESA Business Council which was held in Lusaka, Zambia on 28 November 2018. He would serve as Chairperson of the COMESA Business Council for a period of two years.

7. Cabinet has taken note that the National Computer Board falling under the aegis of the Ministry of Technology, Communication and Innovation, has been selected to become an International Telecommunications Unit (ITU) Centre of Excellence in the priority area of cybersecurity.

8. Cabinet has taken note of the organisation of a “*Carrefour des Jeunes Volontaires*” on 05 December 2018 at the Clarisse House, Vacoas to celebrate the International Volunteer Day, with the objective to provide a platform to voluntary organisations to showcase these activities to young people. A parade would be held from Floreal Youth Centre to Clarisse House and some 500 young people would participate in the parade including, members from the Mauritius Scout Association, the Mauritius Girl Guides Association, Fellowship First Aiders and St John Ambulance.

9. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life would organise with relevant stakeholders a series of activities to observe World AIDS Day 2018, commemorated on 1 December.

Cabinet has also taken note that the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life has already initiated HIV testing through caravans moving across the island to reach a maximum number of persons and to mark the event this year, the following activities would, inter alia, be organised –

- (a) a capacity building workshop on care support and treatment of patients targeting the medical and paramedical staff and special training session for midwives on the importance of testing pregnant women and treatment and care provided to those who are HIV positive;
- (b) awareness sessions on HIV, the modes of transmission and the importance to know their status in different regions of the island targeting the public with emphasis on youngsters; and
- (c) sensitisation of inmates of the Rehabilitation Youth Centre and Correctional Youth Centre, as well as adolescents in shelters on the precautions to be taken to prevent HIV transmission.

The theme for this year is “**Know Your Status**”.

10. Cabinet has taken note of findings and recommendations of the Fact Finding Committee set up to enquire into the case of Mrs Bhumeswaree Gadadhur-Sookun who was initially expecting the birth of twins but during delivery, only one baby was born. The Fact Finding Committee has, on the basis of the enquiry carried out, concluded that only one baby was born on delivery and that the issue appeared to be more of a case of misdiagnosis.

The Committee has also recommended –

- (a) the introduction of Continuous Medical Education for the nursing staff;
- (b) the training on interpretation of Cardiotocography for both doctors and midwives;
- (c) the development of guidelines for the Gynaecological Unit; and
- (d) the introduction of Registrars in the Gynaecological Unit.

Cabinet has also noted that the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life would also examine the recommendations of the Committee and come up with appropriate proposals for their implementation.

11. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade to Lusaka where he attended the 37th Meeting of the Council of Ministers of COMESA. The meeting of the Council of COMESA discussed, inter alia, matters relating to Budgetary and Administrative matters and Audit matters. The COMESA Council has set up a Task Force, including Mauritius as member, to examine the External Auditors Report and to assist the COMESA Secretariat towards the establishment of a road map and an Action Plan to address the weaknesses identified by the External Auditors.

The Minister also had bilateral meetings with the Minister of Trade of Kenya on the Mauritius-Kenya Joint Commission and the Chief of Delegation of the EU Commission in Zambia.

12. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security to Egypt where he participated in the High-level Segment and the African Biodiversity Summit of the Conference of Parties (COP) 14 to the Convention on Biological Diversity. The theme of the High-level Segment of the 2018 UN Biodiversity Conference was “*Investing in Biodiversity for People and Planet*” and the theme of the African Ministerial Summit on Biodiversity was “*Land and ecosystem degradation and restoration: Priorities for increased investments in biodiversity and resilience in Africa*”. The objective of the High-level Segment was to provide a platform for discussions on ways and means to mainstream biodiversity into sectors such as energy and mining, infrastructure, manufacturing and processing and health.

13. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Attorney General, Minister of Justice, Human Rights and Institutional Reforms to Geneva where he participated in the thirty-first Session of the Universal Periodic Review Working Group. Recommendations made during the review would be examined at the level of the National Mechanism for Reporting and Follow Up Committee chaired by the Attorney General, Minister of Justice, Human Rights and Institutional Reforms.

During the mission, the Attorney General, Minister of Justice, Human Rights and Institutional Reforms and his delegation paid a courtesy call on HE Mr Michael Moller, Director General of the United Nations Office in Geneva and Mr Gianni Magazzeni, the Chief of Universal Periodic Review Unit of the Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights.

14. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of recent mission of the Minister of Housing and Lands to Botswana where he participated in the 11th Meeting of Conference of Ministers of the Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development. The Centre is mandated to provide services in the fields of surveying, mapping, remote sensing, Geographical Information System, Global Positioning System and in natural resources and environmental management.

During the Meeting, it was agreed, inter alia, that each Member State should establish its land data repository and establish a capital development fund to provide training and other capacity building activities to Member States in the fields of remote sensing, surveying, photogrammetry and data management.

15. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the Board of the Building Control Advisory Council for period 2018-2021 with Mr Seemadree Pilly (Ramdass) Mootanah as Chairperson.
