

**CABINET DECISIONS – 11 SEPTEMBER 2009**

1. Cabinet has viewed with great concern the road accident which occurred in the early morning on Tuesday 8 September 2009 along Motorway M1 at Montebello, Pailles, causing the loss of four lives and injury to about 50 persons. Cabinet conveys its deepest sympathy to the bereaved families and the victims.

Dr the Hon Navinchandra Ramgoolam, GCSK, FRCP, Prime Minister, is personally looking into the circumstances which had led to two serious accidents within a period of two months involving heavy vehicles and causing loss of lives.

The Prime Minister has chaired a Committee on Road Safety after Cabinet Meeting today with a view to working out a strategy to avoid such horrendous accidents.

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2. Cabinet has taken note of the draft Energy Strategy Document and Action Plan, a blue print for the development of the energy sector up to 2025, prepared in the context of the ongoing reform in the sugar sector. The Document, which would be submitted to the European Commission, lays emphasis on the development of renewable energy, the reduction of our vulnerability on imported fossil fuel and the promotion of energy efficiency in line with Government's vision to promote sustainable development in the context of the "Maurice Ile Durable" project.

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3. Cabinet has taken note of the activities that would be organized by the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life to commemorate the 109<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary of Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, inter alia, -

- (a) A Wreath Laying Ceremony at the bust of SSR at SSRN Hospital.
- (b) An Open Day at specific units of the SSRN Hospital, namely at X-Ray Department, Physiotherapy Unit and Records Unit.
- (c) Programmes on MBC/TV on High Tech Medicine, a film and a panel discussion on the vision of SSR on health.
- (d) An Oral and Dental Examination at Triolet.
- (e) A demonstration of Tai Chi and other physical activities.
- (f) The Setting up of a health track at Calebasses.
- (g) Awareness campaigns on HIV/AIDS, ill-effects of tobacco and alcoholic products.

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4. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Senior Citizens Welfare & Reform Institutions would launch a Strategy Paper on the Protection of Elderly Persons containing measures to strengthen the institutional mechanisms set up under the Protection of Elderly Persons Act to provide protection and support to elderly persons who are subject to ill-treatment, viz. -

- (a) training of members and officers of Elderly Watch;
- (b) improving the means of communication;
- (c) organization of working sessions with the core group of Elderly Watch to make maximum use of their past experience;
- (d) establishing focal points in Ministries and Departments to improve linkages with the Welfare and Elderly Person's Protection Unit of the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Senior Citizens Welfare & Reform Institutions; and
- (e) intensive sensitization campaigns.

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5. Cabinet has taken note that Certificates of Registration have been issued to 21 registered law firms, foreign law firms, joint law ventures and foreign lawyers since the amendment made to the Law Practitioners Act in December 2008 aiming at attracting professionals of the legal sector to Mauritius.

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6. Cabinet has taken note that, according to data collected by the National Cancer Registry of the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life, there are about 1500 new cases of cancer each year and breast cancer in female and colon rectum cancer in male are the most common. Pending the finalization of a National Cancer Central Programme and Action Plan, the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life has initiated a series of measures to contain the problem, including -

- (a) the setting up of a Multidisciplinary Breast Tumour Board at Victoria Hospital to review and discuss the management of breast cancer and formulation of guidelines;
- (b) the re-engineering of the colposcopy services;
- (c) the setting up of a new Children Cancer Unit at Victoria Hospital to take charge of mainly children with leukaemia;
- (d) the screening for breast and cervical cancer by Mobile Clinics; and
- (e) medical surveillance by the Occupational Health Unit of the Ministry of high risk groups of workers who may be exposed to carcinogenic chemicals.

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7. Cabinet has taken note that, in line with the commitment of Government to provide a timely and quality medical care responsive to the needs and expectations of the population, the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life proposes to provide training to the Nursing Cadre on intravenous and invasive procedures (venepuncture) with a view to meeting the growing challenges and to cope with new trends in the health sector. The training program is a three-year course comprising written, practical and oral examinations leading to the award of a Certificate in General Nursing.

Cabinet has further taken note that, in the long term, the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life proposes to upgrade the Certificate in Nursing to Diploma level as recommended by the Pay Research Bureau. Furthermore, opportunities would be made available to the Nursing Cadre to pursue higher studies leading to a BSC, MSC or Phd.

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8. Cabinet has taken note that, following the recent seizure and disposal of food items unfit for human consumption, the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life has taken a series of measures to control the fitness of human consumption of foodstuffs and proposes to reinforce the public health legislation with a view to -

- (a) updating and harmonising various definitions with the recommendations of the CODEX ALIMENTARIUS;
- (b) increasing penalty for offences;
- (c) providing for a minimum time for foodstuffs to reach Mauritius; and
- (d) indicating production and expiry dates for frozen goods.

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9. Cabinet has taken note that, in line with the strategy of the Ministry of Agro Industry, Food Production and Security to sensitize the public on possibilities that exist in the agro-business sector, the Agricultural Research and Extension Unit (AREU) has issued the following publications –

- (a) Guidelines in Egg Production;
- (b) Pineapple Processing;
- (c) Ginger Processing;
- (d) Guidelines on the Processing of Roselles;
- (e) Farming News; and
- (f) *Mieux gérer vos cultures et votre élevage en période cyclonique.*

To date, AREU has published about 145 leaflets and booklets in its endeavour to disseminate information among the farming community. AREU proposes to issue other booklets shortly, inter alia, on strawberry cultivation, duck rearing, economic crop outline for onion and guidelines for soyabean seed production.

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10. Cabinet has taken note of the Health Statistics Report 2008 for Mauritius and Rodrigues. The salient features are -

Island of Mauritius

- (a) the estimated resident population as at 31 December 2008 was 1,234,042 as compared to 1,227,075 as at 31 December 2007;
- (b) Crude Birth Rate was 12.7 per thousand mid-year resident population as compared to 13.2 in 2007;
- (c) Crude Death Rate was 7.1 per thousand mid-year population as compared to 6.8 in 2007;
- (d) Infant Mortality Rate was 14.3 per thousand live births as compared to 15.3 in 2007;
- (e) total fertility rate dropped to 1.56;
- (f) life expectancy at birth was 69.1 years for male and 76.1 years for female;
- (g) the number of inpatients treated in Government hospitals was 193,348; and
- (h) the total number of pathological tests carried out in public laboratories was 7.6 million.

Island of Rodrigues

- (a) the estimated resident population as at 31 December 2008 was 37,700 as compared to 37,499 as at 31 December 2007;
- (b) Crude Birth Rate was 20.8 per thousand mid-year resident population as compared to 22.6 in 2007;
- (c) Crude Death Rate was 5.5 per thousand mid-year resident population as compared to 4.7 in 2007;
- (d) Infant Mortality Rate per thousand live births was 16.6 in 2008 compared to 15.4 in 2007;

- (e) Total Fertility Rate dropped to 2.5; and
- (f) Life Expectancy at birth was 70.7 years for male and 76.4 years for female.

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11. Cabinet has taken note that the 5th Meeting of the SADC Steering Committee on Communicable Diseases would be held in Mauritius from 16 to 18 September 2009. The main objective of the Committee is to oversee the implementation of the SADC-ADB supported projects pertaining to the control of communicable diseases, namely, HIV and AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. Participants from countries, such as Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Namibia, South Africa and Mauritius, would attend the Committee.

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12. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the mission of the Minister of Agro Industry, Food Production and Security to Zimbabwe on 3 September 2009, where he participated in the Second Joint Meeting of COMESA Ministers of Agriculture and Environment.

The Ministerial Meeting adopted the Victoria Falls Town Declaration which incorporates, inter alia, -

- (a) a Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development which provides an Africa vision and strategic framework to support and guide national Governments in planning and implementing their agricultural development plans to bring about accelerated development of agriculture in Africa to achieve poverty reduction, food security, economic growth and the Millennium Development Goal, i.e., reduction of poverty by half by 2015;
- (b) sustainable land and water management for the promotion of crop irrigation and livestock production in order to boost production and achieve food security among vulnerable population;
- (c) fisheries development in the COMESA Region; and
- (d) forestry development strategy.

In the margins of the Meeting, the Minister of Agro Industry, Food Production and Security met the Hon C.M. Dlamini, Minister of Agriculture of Swaziland with whom he discussed cross-border initiatives to promote regional food security, and who has agreed to provide land with all infrastructure for agriculture development.

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13. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the mission of the Minister of Environment and National Development Unit from 31 August to 4 September 2009 to Geneva, Switzerland where he participated in the World Climate Conference 3, convened by the World Meteorological Organization. The main objective of the Conference was to establish a global framework that would link scientific advances in climate predictions to the needs of users for decision-making from a seasonal to multi-decadal timescale to better cope with changing conditions. The Conference led to the adoption of a Declaration establishing the Global Framework for Climate Services.

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