

CABINET DECISIONS – 28 AUGUST 2009

1. Cabinet has taken note that, under section 140 of the Local Government Act, the Minister of Local Government, Rodrigues and Outer Islands would publish a Financial Management Manual, prepared on the same lines as those obtainable in the Financial Management Manual of central Government, to provide the appropriate tool to officers of local authorities to efficiently manage the finances of their respective Councils and to enable them to implement policies and programmes economically and effectively by preventing errors, waste and overspending. The Manual also defines the roles and responsibilities of Chief Executives and other officers of local authorities and provides detailed procedures in respect of, *inter alia*, the preparation of annual estimates, disbursement, cash management, procurement, internal auditing including auditing standards, performance management and good governance. The Manual bridges the lacuna of a formal financial guideline, which has led to the mismanagement of public funds on several occasions.

2. Cabinet has taken note of activities that would be organised to mark the 109th birth anniversary of Dr the Rt Hon Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, KCMG, GCMG, on 18 September 2009, viz., -

- (a) Wreath Laying Ceremony in front the statue of Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam at Port Louis Waterfront, as well as at Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam Memorial Park in Kewal Nagar;
- (b) messages and talks by eminent personalities on the life and mission of Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam;
- (c) essay, drawing, paint and poem recital competitions in primary and secondary schools;
- (d) exhibition of photographs at the Mauritius Institute Building, Port Louis;
- (e) a cultural programme organised by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Human Resources, in collaboration with the Moka-Flacq District Council and the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund, in front of the Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam Memorial Park, Kewal Nagar; and
- (f) telecast of documentary films on Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam and the organisation of a special round table on the theme '*Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam et l'Education*' by the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation.

3. Cabinet has taken note that, as a matter of priority, the Central Water Authority would replace the main water pipes feeding l'Unité Reservoir to address the problem of prolonged disruption of potable water supply in the regions of Lallmatie, Belvédère, Brisée Verdière, Bon Accueil, Laventure and Camp de Masque Pavé, due to recurrent breakdown of pipes.

Cabinet has further taken note that the Central Water Authority has set up six Emergency Cells region-wise to, *inter alia*, initiate urgent remedial action in cases of breakdown of pipes and to ensure the temporary supply of water and also established a Contingency and Emergency Plan to deal with cases of major breakdown of pipes and water treatment plants.

4. Cabinet has taken note of the programme of activities of the "Clean up the World Weekend 2009" that would be carried out by the Ministry of Environment and National Development Unit, jointly with the Ministry of Tourism, Leisure and External Communications and the Ministry of Local Government, Rodrigues and Outer Islands, from 18 to 20 September under the theme "Communities Uniting to Combat Climate Change". The objective of the campaign is to highlight important environmental issues, inform, inspire and enable people to improve and sustain the quality of life through the protection of the environment, and to prevent the resurgence of diseases, such as Chikungunya and Dengue.

5. Cabinet has taken note of developments in the computerization of the following social security services in Rodrigues, -

- (a) payment of pensions and other benefits to beneficiaries; and
- (b) collection of contributions for the National Pensions Fund in respect of registered employers in Rodrigues.

The project would allow real-time processing of data between Rodrigues and Mauritius and reduce the delay in awarding applications for social benefits to a period of one week.

6. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life, in collaboration with the University of Mauritius and the Baker IDI Diabetes and Heart Institute, would carry out a Mauritius Family Diabetes Study with a view to identifying the genetic risk factors for diabetes in the Mauritian population. The main objectives of the Study would be, *inter alia*, to –

- (a) improve current understanding of the mechanism of Type 2 Diabetes so that effective treatment could be possible in future;
- (b) facilitate exchange of reagents and data amongst Baker IDI and Heart Institute, the University of Mauritius and the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life; and
- (c) provide a framework for the training and interaction of Mauritian scientists and students having interest in medical research.

7. Cabinet has taken note of arrangements being made for the passage in Mauritius of the Queen's Baton Relay for the XIX Commonwealth Games Delhi 2010 in January next year. The Queen's Baton Relay, an integral part of the celebration of the Commonwealth Games, is the symbol of goodwill and community spirit and contains a special message of Her Majesty the Queen. The Relay aims at sensitizing people on the objectives of the Games. The Queen's Baton Relay will be launched on 29 October 2009 at Buckingham Palace by Her Majesty the Queen as Head of Commonwealth in the company of the Hon Smt. Pratibha Patil, President of the Republic of India, and will, thereafter, visit the 71 nations and territories of the Commonwealth before reaching India.

8. Cabinet has taken note that, as regards Influenza A(H1N1), a decrease in attendances at Flu-Clinics in hospitals and Area Health Centres has been recorded. The public is, however, advised to maintain all sanitary precautions.

Cabinet has further taken note that all educational and training institutions, except pre-primary schools and nurseries, would resume normally on 31 August 2009.

9. Cabinet has taken note that Infotech 2009 would be held at the Swami Vivekananda International Convention Centre from 18 to 22 November 2009. This year's event would comprise, *inter alia*,:

- (a) an **ICT Trade Fair** with stands for exhibitors to showcase and sell their products and services;
- (b) **Product Demos** consisting of presentations by exhibitors on their products and services; and
- (c) a **CyberCafé** with personal computers and Internet facilities provided to visitors free-of-charge.

The main objectives of the Fair are to:

- (a) position and promote Mauritius as the regional ICT hub;
- (b) provide information on developments and achievements in the ICT sector in Mauritius and the region;
- (c) create awareness on emerging technologies; and
- (d) demonstrate and promote local and regional ICT talents, expertise, know-how and export potential.

10. Cabinet has taken note of measures being taken to monitor the reduction in the percentage of planned and controlled burnt cane area by the sugar corporate sector in view of its impact on the environment and the agreement reached with the European Commission for the disbursement of funds by the EU under the Accompanying Measures. The Mauritius Sugar Authority, in collaboration with the sugar corporate sector, has developed a work programme and produced templates for reporting and auditing purposes. The sugar estates would have to scrupulously adhere to the established protocol for the burning of sugar cane.

11. Cabinet has taken note of the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Action Plan on Suicide Prevention, which would be launched on 10 September 2009 on the occasion of the World Suicide Prevention Day. The recommendations include, among others, aggressive sensitization campaigns targeting the youth, talks at the workplace and in community centres, vulgarization of the services of the Suicide Prevention Unit, training programmes for stakeholders, and advice on the storage of dangerous chemical products by farmers.

12. Cabinet has agreed to the ratification of the “Convention on the Law Applicable to Certain Rights in Respect of Securities held with an Intermediary”, also known as the Hague Securities Convention, which -

- (a) provides certainty as to the law applicable to clearance, settlement and secured credit transactions that cross national borders;
- (b) markedly improves transactional efficiencies in global securities markets;
- (c) reduces systemic risk in cross-border transactions and intermediary holdings; and
- (d) facilitates cross-border capital flows.

13. Cabinet has taken note that the Minister of Women’s Rights, Child Development and Family Welfare would promulgate the Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction (Amendment of Schedule) Regulations to amend the Second Schedule to the Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction Act to include the following nine countries with which the local Central Authority for international child abduction deals -

- (a) Kingdom of Belgium;
- (b) Mexico;
- (c) People’s Republic of China;

- (d) Principality of Monaco;
- (e) Portugal;
- (f) Republic of Croatia;
- (g) Republic of Hungary;
- (h) Republic of Serbia; and
- (i) Slovak Republic.

The Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction aims at –

- (a) securing the prompt return of children wrongfully retained in a State to the country of habitual residence; and
- (b) ensuring that the rights of custody and access under the law of one contracting State are effectively respected in another State.

14. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the Fourth Meeting of the COMESA Fund Ministerial Committee held on 11 August 2009 in Mauritius.

The Meeting decided, *inter alia*, that -

- (a) a joint application from all eligible countries be submitted to the Regional Integration Support Mechanism (RISM-I) which compensates for revenue loss resulting from trade liberalization; and
- (b) consultation be urgently made with the European Commission on the acceleration of the next RISM (RISM II) to ensure its availability to support integration efforts of COMESA Fund members in the light of the 10th EDF Regional Strategy Paper.

Cabinet has also taken note that Mauritius has been re-elected Chairperson of the Bureau of the COMESA Fund Ministerial Committee for another period of one year.
