

CABINET DECISIONS – 8 FEBRUARY 2013

1. Cabinet has taken note of the case of food poisoning that occurred this week at Bambous Government School. Cabinet was informed that an enquiry is being carried out to determine the cause thereof. Cabinet agreed that appropriate legal action should be initiated against the caterer concerned.

Cabinet has also agreed to all caterers supplying food to schools adopting a Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point system to assess hazards and establish control to ensure fitness of food distributed to school children.

Cabinet has also taken note that the Inspectorate Section of the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life would increase the regular checks carried out to ensure that the caterers respect hygiene on their premises and abide by the provision of the Food Act.

2. Cabinet has taken note of development in the implementation of the Mauritius Light Rapid Transit Project. A Multi-Criteria Analysis Workshop was held in January 2013 with the experts from the Singapore Cooperation Enterprise. In the Workshop, the results of the Technical Assessment of the project were presented and the different corridor options worked out taking into consideration complementary measures, such as, location of park and ride facilities, integration of re-engineered bus routes to accommodate feeder bus services, and location of intermediate stops. Works are scheduled to start in 2014 and are expected to be completed in 2017.

3. Cabinet has taken note of arrangements being made by the Ministry of Housing and Lands for the allocation of serviced plots of State lands at Ville Noire, Glen Park, Souillac and Solitude under the Sites and Services Project to eligible applicants. The Project comprises the provision of basic infrastructure facilities, such as roads, drains, water supply and electricity, on plots of State lands which are, subsequently, leased to households for the construction of a housing unit on their own.

4. Cabinet has taken note that the official ceremony of the celebrations of the National Day 2013 would be held at the Anjalay Stadium, Belle Vue.

Cabinet has also taken note that a popular show organized on the occasion of the National Day 2013 would be held on 16 March at the Anjalay Stadium as from 19 00 hours.

5. Cabinet has agreed to the implementation of a New Comprehensive Grant Formula to finance private-aided secondary schools for the period 2013-2015. The Grant Formula has been worked out on a performance-based approach to compensate private-aided secondary schools for their efforts to improve the quality of education; the existing elements, such as Operations Grant, Management Grant, Incentive Grant, Performance Grant, Pre-vocational Education Grant, and New Performance Indicators, have been increased; and new elements, such as quality of School Certificate graduates and students' attendance, have been added. As regards Rodrigues, a Rodrigues Element has been considered to provide adequate funds to the private secondary schools to meet certain specific costs due to their location. The annual cost of the implementation of the Formula is estimated at Rs510m.

6. Cabinet has taken note of the status in the implementation of the Mauritius National Identity Card Project under a Government-to-Government configuration with the Government of Singapore. It is expected that the first card would be issued by October 2013 and the project would be fully completed by December 2014.

7. Cabinet has taken note of amendments that would be brought to the Criminal Code to make better provision for the criminalization of various acts of a sexual nature with aggravating circumstances, e.g., gang rape or if death has resulted from gang rape or if the alleged victim has been tortured; marital rape; stalking; and false declaration of the commission of a sexual offence.

8. Cabinet has taken note that the Minister of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment would promulgate the Employment (Non-Citizens) (Restriction) Exemptions (Amendment) Regulations to allow a foreign student, aged 16 or more and enrolled in a tertiary education institution registered with the Tertiary Education Commission, to take up employment on a part-time basis for a maximum of 20 hours a week in any sector of employment, except in the field of security, as announced in Budget Speech 2013, and in a bid to consolidate the position of Mauritius as a regional educational hub.

9. Cabinet has taken note that the Minister of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection would promulgate the Consumer Protection (Price and Supplies Control) (Amendment of Schedule) Regulations to allow edible oil to be considered as a controlled item for Rodrigues as announced in Budget Speech 2013. Edible oil in Rodrigues would, henceforth, be at an affordable price.

10. Cabinet has taken note of the status in the operationalisation of the Public Key Infrastructure, set up by the Information and Communication Technologies Authority, with a view to enabling electronic transactions both within Ministries/ Departments and by citizens and businesses. As announced in Budget Speech 2013, digital signatures would be introduced, on a pilot basis, at the Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology and the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms. Mauritius is the first African country to implement the Public Key Infrastructure.

11. Cabinet has taken note that the total receipts for the Tourism Sector in 2012 was Rs44,378m, i.e., an increase of 3.9% as compared to the receipts in 2011.

12. Cabinet has taken note of the recommendations of the National Remuneration Board in respect of the Office Attendant grade and that the Minister of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment would promulgate the Remuneration Order Regulations incorporating the recommendations of the Board, together with his recommendations, which are, amongst others, as follows –

- (a) a wage increase varying between 21% to 61%;
- (b) increase in the meal allowance from Rs50 to Rs70;
- (c) increase in the annual leave entitlement from 14 days to 16 days;
- (d) increase in the quantum of Special Leave as follows –
 - (i) 6 working days' leave on full pay, instead of 2 days, on the occasion of the first religious or civil marriage;
 - (ii) 3 working days' leave on full pay, instead of 2 days, on the occasion of the religious or civil marriage of a child; and
 - (iii) 3 working days' leave on full pay, instead of 2 days, on the death of the spouse, child, father, mother, brother or sister;
- (e) increase in death grant from Rs2,500 to Rs3,500;
- (f) payment of an allowance of 15% of the daily basic wage, instead of the monthly basic wage, to an Office Attendant who, in addition to his normal duties, is required to drive a motor vehicle;
- (g) payment of an allowance of Rs300 to an Office Attendant who, in addition to his normal duties, is required to make and serve tea; and
- (h) increase in the annual entitlement for medical expenses from Rs300 to Rs3,000.

13. Cabinet has taken note of the Stamp Issue Programme for the year 2013. Stamps would be issued on the following themes –

- (a) *Sites and Monuments*, comprising a series of four stamps showing Le Batelage at Souillac, the Stone Building of Ireland Blyth situated at Bowen Square, Port Louis, the Prison of Belle Mare and the Chateau de Bel Ombre;
- (b) *Anniversaries and Events* comprising four stamps to mark the centenary of Red Cross, Maurice Ile Durable and the holding of FIFA Congress in Mauritius;
- (c) *Fauna and Flora* comprising three stamps showing the Bras d'Eau Reserve and the Hurricane Palm; and
- (d) *Eminent Personalities* comprising two stamps to pay tribute to Hervé Masson and Prof Stanley Alexander de Smith.

14. Cabinet has taken note that, at the *24ème Congrès des Notaires d'Afriques – CAAF-UINL* held in Cameroun, it was, *inter alia*, decided that legislation relating to immovable property would be adopted by the 18-member countries taking as model the legislation of the Republic of Mauritius.

15. Cabinet has taken note of progress achieved by the three National Research Chairs, who were appointed in January 2012, namely Prof D. Jhurry as National Research Chair in Biomaterials and Drug Delivery; Prof T. Bahorun as National Research Chair in Applied Biochemistry; and Prof R. Mohee as National Research Chair in Solid Waste Management. The Chairs have published a total of 18 papers in high impact peer reviewed international journals, supervised MPhil/PhD students to enhance capacity building in research, and consolidated collaboration with international institutions for the implementation of projects, such as the Solid Waste Management Research Programme, and the Programme on Biomaterials and Drug Delivery.

16. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the Second Meeting of the Joint Committee on cooperation in the textile and clothing industry held between the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection and the Ministry of Textiles of India, from 28 to 30 January 2013 in Mauritius. Five Memoranda of Understanding were finalised and signed between –

- (a) the Apparel Export Promotion Council and Enterprise Mauritius;
- (b) the Northern India Textile Research Association and the Mauritius Standards Bureau;
- (c) the Northern India Textile Research Association and the National Productivity and Competitiveness Council;
- (d) the Clothing Manufacturers Association of India and the Mauritius Export Association; and
- (e) the Institute of Apparel Management and the Fashion and Design Institute of Mauritius.

Discussions were held on the framework for the training of 1,000 textiles workers, 35 scholarship programmes to Mauritian students in apparel management and for the development of 10 compliant apparel factories as announced by the Minister of Commerce, Industry and Textiles of India during his recent visit to Mauritius, and on Mauritius as a destination for Indian Foreign Direct Investment in the Textile Sector. The Committee agreed that, with regard to the proposed Cotton Purchase Agreement, further discussions would be held on the modalities for establishing a derogation to eliminate the impact of export controls on cotton and cotton yarn.

17. Cabinet has taken note that the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime for Mauritius, in collaboration with the Indian Ocean Commission, would hold a Regional Training Programme on the Prevention of Drug Use, HIV and Crime among Young People from 8 to 12 July 2013. The Training Programme aims at enhancing national capacity to adopt and promote evidence-based drug and other substances prevention strategies and programmes. The topics that would be considered include safety and healthy parent/child attachment, parental supervision, monitoring and effective discipline, communication of pro-social family values, parental involvement in a child's life, supportive parenting, and cohesive and organized family environment.

18. Cabinet has taken note that the Experts Meeting of UNESCO on Climate Change Education for Sustainable Development in Africa would be held in Mauritius from 20 to 22 March 2013. The main objectives of the Meeting, which would focus on the challenges that climate change poses to education systems in Africa, more particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, are, *inter alia*, to –

- (a) further the important contribution of education in climate change adaptation and mitigation in African countries;
- (b) enhance the exchange of experiences and good practices on climate change education among Ministries, teachers, practitioners and youth; and
- (c) identify opportunities for partnerships among schools, NGOs, UN agencies and UNESCO networks to further education programmes on climate change.

19. Cabinet has taken note that the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping would promulgate regulations for the modification of the Pointe aux Piments-Mon Choisy Coast Road to enable the implementation of development projects in the region and proclaim a new access road which would be constructed to join the Pointe aux Piments-Mon Choisy Road (B38) to the Mon Choisy-Cap Malheureux Road (B13).

20. Cabinet has taken note of the reform programme that would be undertaken in 2013 by Ministries, as enunciated in Budget Speech 2013, to help improve the efficiency of the public sector, sharpen competitiveness and resilience of the economy, and prepare for the next phase of inclusive economic growth. The reform programme would be financed by the second tranche of the Public and Private Sectors Development Policy Loans from the World Bank.

Over the last seven years, Mauritius, with the help of its development partners, has undergone a series of reforms to maximize the country's potential to transform itself into a high-income economy. The reforms were designed to enhance the country's competitiveness and put the economy on a higher growth trajectory whilst creating opportunities for the most vulnerable groups.

21. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Development to Lusaka, Zambia where he participated in the Annual Board of Governors Meeting of the Eastern and Southern African Trade and Development Bank (PTA Bank) and the COMESA Fund Ministerial Meeting. In the margin of the meetings, the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Development met the Ministers of Finance of the reform-oriented and like-minded countries, i.e., Zambia, Seychelles and Malawi, to review progress made with respect to the Accelerated Programme on Economic Integration since the last Ministerial Meeting held in Seychelles in September 2012. He also had discussions with the Secretary General of COMESA with respect to softening rules of origin that would boost cross-border movement of trade and investment.

22. Cabinet has taken note that, in the context of the International Labour Day 2013 and to mark the 75th Anniversary of the Labour Administration in Mauritius, the Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment would -

- (a) hold an Occupational Safety and Health Week; an Occupational Safety and Health Best Poster and Best Slogan Competition; and a Painting Competition for primary, secondary and tertiary students;
- (b) organize a Symposium and an Exhibition depicting the Labour History and the various activities of the Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment;
- (c) launch a commemorative magazine;
- (d) hold a High Level Conference to come up with resolutions for better service delivery;
- (e) organize a Family Day at the State House, Le Réduit; and
- (f) issue a Special Commemorative Cover.

23. Cabinet has taken note of the activities that would be organized in the context of the Law Day commemorated on 4 March 2013, viz., –

- (a) free legal services would be dispensed by qualified law practitioners and law students on 2 March at the Citizens Advice Bureaux of Goodlands, Cité Vallijee, Central Flacq, Chemin Grenier, Rose Belle and Quatre Bornes;
- (b) the Hon Chief Justice would deliver a lecture on “Democracy and the Rule of Law” on 4 March at the Sir Harilall Vaghjee Hall, Port Louis;
- (c) the Faculty of Law and Management of the University of Mauritius would organize a Moot Competition; and
- (d) the Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare, the Police Department, the Independent Commission Against Corruption, the Equal Opportunities Commission and the National Human Rights Commission would organize sensitization campaigns.

The theme retained for this year is **Celebrating 45 years of our Constitution.**

24. Cabinet has taken note that the Minister of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection would promulgate the Mauritius Accreditation Service (Certification Body Accreditation Fees) (Amendment) Regulations, and the Mauritius Accreditation Service (Laboratory Accreditation Fees) (Amendment) Regulations to review fees and charges for services offered by the Mauritius Accreditation Service in view of increase in costs.

25. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of –

- (a) the Pharmacy Board with Dr K. Pauvaday, Acting Director General Health Services, as Chairperson;
- (b) the Mental Health Commission with Dr Sivalingum Ramen, Acting Regional Health Director, as Chairperson; and
- (c) the Mental Health Board with Dr Parmanun Jagarnath, former Consultant-in-Charge (Psychiatry), as Chairperson.

Cabinet has also taken note that the following Advisory Committees, set up under the Pharmacy Act, have been reconstituted –

- (a) the Education Committee and the Poisons Committee with Mrs S. Jankee, Director, Pharmaceutical Services, as Chairperson; and
- (b) the Trade and Therapeutics Committee and the Planning Committee with Dr T.R. Nundlall, Acting Director Health Services, as Chairperson.
