

## CABINET DECISIONS – 15 FEBRUARY 2013

1. Cabinet has reviewed the impact of the flooding caused by the torrential rain on 13 February 2013, particularly in the agricultural sector, road infrastructure and bridges. Rainfall recorded in certain parts of the country are as follows –

<u>Station</u>		<u>Amount (mm)</u>
Mon Loisir	-	135.0
Belle Mare	-	115.8
Queen Victoria	-	153.8
Souillac	-	135.4
Riche en Eau	-	127.6
Plaisance	-	159.1
Mon Bois	-	130.4
Nouvelle Decouverte	-	173.8
Providence	-	154.4

Cabinet has taken note of works to be carried out after site inspections conducted after the heavy rainfall and agreed to the urgent implementation/ completion of a number of projects in various regions of the country, e.g., dredging of canals, repair of bridges, embankments, and drains.

Cabinet has also taken note that an assessment carried out by AREU, MSIRI and the Tea Board has revealed that the overall damage to food crop is estimated at 35%.

Cabinet has agreed to seeds, planting materials and compost being provided free of charge to planters. The Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security has made arrangements for the issue of permits for the importation of selected vegetables for a period of three months. The Agricultural Marketing Board has sufficient stock of potatoes, onions and garlic to ensure the regular supply.

The AREU is currently carrying out an assessment in the livestock sector and appropriate schemes would be set up to assist breeders who have suffered losses.

Cabinet has taken note that some 500 persons have taken refuge in the various Refugee Centres. The Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions has already started payment of flood allowance to those eligible as provided under the current legislation.

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2. Cabinet has taken note of the programme of activities that would be organized for the National Day Celebrations 2013, viz.-

- (a) flag hoisting ceremony at 18 00 hours;
- (b) flypast by *Dornier* Police Helicopters and the A380 Aircraft of Emirates Airlines;
- (c) abseiling by *Groupe d'Intervention de la Police Mauricienne* and display by Police Helicopter Squadron;

- (d) para jump by *2ème Régiment de Parachutistes d'Infanterie de Marine des Forces Armées de la Zone Sud de l'Océan Indien* and a troop from India;
- (e) march past by Disciplined Forces and Uniformed Organisations followed by *défilé* of vehicles; and
- (f) *défilé* by crew of INS Sarveshak.

The theme for this year's celebrations is **Enn Pei, Enn Nasion, Enn Destin.**

A popular show would be held on Saturday 16 March 2013 as from 19 00 hours at Anjalay Stadium. Renowned Indian Star singers and musicians duo Vishal-Shekhar; the Maloya group – '*Sinangavole Maloya Manier Fam*' from Reunion Island and well-known artists from South Africa and Madagascar would also perform along with top local artists.

Cabinet has further taken note that arrangements have been made for reduced bus fares to those travelling by bus to Anjalay Stadium two hours before and from the Stadium two hours after the official celebrations as follows –

- (a) all fare-paying passengers to pay half the normal rate; and
- (b) all beneficiaries of the Free Travel Scheme, i.e., old-aged persons, disabled persons, and children aged less than 13 years, to travel free of charge.

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3. Cabinet has taken note that, in line with the commitments taken by the Independent Power Producers, the representatives of the Independent Power Producers, namely, Consolidated Energy Co. Ltd and FUEL Steam and Power Generation Company Ltd, Omnicane Thermal Energy Operations (La Baraque), Omnicane Thermal Energy Operations (St Aubin), Terragen Ltd, The (Mauritius) CT Power Ltd, and Sotravic Ltée and the Central Electricity Board, have, on 14 February 2013, formally signed an undertaking that they have no objection to disclose the terms and conditions of their Power Purchase Agreements to the National Energy Commission and eventually to the general public.

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4. Cabinet has taken note of arrangements being made by the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions for the payment of the Child Allowance of Rs750 per month to school children of families earning less than Rs6,200 per month as announced in Budget Speech 2013.

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5. Cabinet has taken note that Rodriguan patients referred to Mauritius for specialized medical treatment by Government Medical Officers would be provided with a subsistence allowance to enable them to meet additional expenses in terms of lodging, food and travelling during the period of recovery in Mauritius.

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6. Cabinet has taken note that the Information and Communication Technologies Authority would release its decision on the Migration from Seven to Eight Digits of Non-Geographic E.164 Telephone Numbers assigned for Mobile Networks, which would be effective from 1 September 2013. The migration is necessary in view of development in technology, particularly, those linked to convergence of fixed and mobile networks and services.

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7. Cabinet has taken note that, in line with the Long Term Energy Strategy which aims at increasing the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix up to 35% by year 2025, several small scale renewable energy projects have already been implemented in Mauritius and Rodrigues. The CEB is currently examining wind farm projects of a total capacity of about 39 MW and a solar farm project of a capacity of 25 MW. The implementation of these projects would help build a greener Mauritius.

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8. Cabinet has agreed to the Director of Civil Aviation considering the issue of additional licences, up to a maximum of 10, for the operation of ultra light aircrafts under specified conditions to allow the evolution of the sector of aviation and promote sightseeing activities, leisure flying and flight training.

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9. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Tourism and Leisure would sign a Memorandum of Understanding in the field of tourism. The Memorandum of Understanding provides for a framework for the expansion of bilateral cooperation in the Tourism Sector, exchange of information and data, exchange programmes for cooperation in Human Resource Development, investment in the Tourism and Hospitality Sectors, and exchange of experience in areas of marketing, destination development and management.

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10. Cabinet has taken note that the Government of the Republic of Cyprus and the Government of the Republic of Mauritius would sign an Agreement on Merchant Shipping aiming, amongst others, at developing cooperation in the field of merchant shipping for the economic development of both countries, eliminating hindrances which may hamper the development of sea trade and taking appropriate measures to reduce unnecessary delays of vessels in the respective ports.

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11. Cabinet has taken note that, in line with the vision of Government to make optimum use of ICT to modernise the economy and facilitate the life of citizens, a guideline regulating mobile banking and mobile payment systems has been issued.

Cabinet has also taken note of the introduction of a first batch of 10 e-payment services, including the payment of parking fines, business registration fees and income tax.

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12. Cabinet has taken note that the International Centre for Parliamentary Studies would organize its 6<sup>th</sup> International Electoral Affairs Symposium in Mauritius from 27 to 30 May 2013. The main subject of discussion would be: “*Challenges Facing Electoral Management Bodies in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century - e-voting; professional procurement procedures; new technology; social media; voter participation; and the electoral process.*”

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13. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions, in collaboration with the British High Commission, would organize a Conference on Employment of Persons with Disabilities on 27 and 28 February 2013. The theme of the Conference would be ***Access to Employment: A Legitimate Right for Persons with Disabilities***. The main objectives of the Conference would be to promote full integration of persons with disabilities in the world of work and to give them the opportunity to develop and utilize their creative and intellectual potentials.

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14. Cabinet has taken note of the organization of the International Human Resource Development Conference in Mauritius on 17 and 18 October 2013. The Conference aims at encouraging the sharing of international best practices and taking stock of new trends in the field of Human Resource Development. Some 150 participants would attend the Conference. The theme of the Conference would be ***Excellence in HRD for Sustainable Growth***.

In the margins of the Conference, a Master Class on the ***New roles of HR*** would be held to allow participants to impart their skills for strategic Human Resource practice. A Round Table would also be held to discuss on ***HR development in a dynamic world: lessons for Mauritius***. The second edition of the Human Resource Excellence Award 2013 would be organized to provide further opportunity to companies to showcase the progressive and sustained endeavour to adopt Human Resource initiatives and best practices for the overall development of human resource management.

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15. Cabinet has taken note that the Mauritius Institute of Education, in collaboration with the *Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie*, the *University of Rennes of France* and the *University of Saint-Etienne of France*, would organize an International Conference on Teaching and Learning of French Language in Mauritius on 26 and 27 February 2013. The main objectives of the Conference would be to share international good practices in the teaching and learning of French Language and to provide support to academics who are engaged in research, as well as in the teaching and learning of the Language. Some 25 academics from African countries are expected to participate in the Conference.

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16. Cabinet has taken note that the Tenth Session of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission Compliance Committee and the Commission Meeting would be held in Mauritius from 2 to 10 May 2013. The main objective of the Commission is to promote cooperation amongst Member States to ensure the conservation and optimum utilization of stocks, and to encourage sustainable development of fisheries. The Indian Ocean Tuna Commission Compliance Committee has the responsibility to report on the status of compliance by Member States and provides technical advice on conservation and management measures. The Meetings would be an opportunity to showcase the role of Mauritius as a major player in the tuna industry in the Indian Ocean.

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17. Cabinet has taken note of the mission of the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Energy and Public Utilities to Ethiopia where he participated in the Twentieth Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union. The theme of the Summit was ***Pan Africanism and African Renaissance***. The key issues discussed were, amongst others, -

- (a) Peace and Security Situation in Africa;
- (b) Terrorism;
- (c) Establishment of the African Institute for Remittances;
- (d) Follow-up on the outcome of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20 Conference); and
- (e) The New Economic Partnership for African Development (NEPAD).

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18. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the mission of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade to Turkey. Two Memoranda of Understanding, namely the Framework Agreement on Trade and Economic Cooperation and the Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement, were signed. The Minister met the Vice-Prime Minister, HE Bekir Bozdag; the Foreign Minister, Prof Ahmed Davutoglu; the Minister of Economy, Mr Zafer Caglayan; and the Minister of Culture and Tourism, Mr Omer Celik, with whom he discussed bilateral issues. He also interacted with the Turkish business community and met a group of Mauritian students who are studying in Turkey.

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19. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade is developing a new Intellectual Property Policy for Mauritius to promote innovation, scientific and technological research and development, and to attract Foreign Direct Investment. It is proposed to revisit the Intellectual Property laws and implement structures that are effective and promote a coordinated and coherent approach to Intellectual Property administration. In this context, four sets of Draft Bills are currently being considered, namely the Industrial Property Bill that brings under one umbrella all matters dealing with Industrial Property, the Copyrights and Related Rights Bill, the Mauritius Intellectual Property Council Bill and the Mauritius Intellectual Property Office Bill.

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20. Cabinet has taken note that the National Computer Board would organize the ICT Expo 2013 in Rose Belle at the “Centre Commerciale du Vieux Moulin” on 13 and 14 April and at Goodlands Farmers Service Corporation on 27 and 28 July 2013. The main objectives of the Expo are to:-

- (a) create awareness on emerging technologies;
- (b) sensitize the public on the potential applications of ICT and choice of technology for effective business and individual solutions;
- (c) sensitize on career opportunities in the ICT sector; and
- (d) bring Government services closer to the people by providing accessible services.

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21. Cabinet has taken note of the publication of a Booklet on Sustainable Consumption and Production-Best Practices in Mauritius by the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development. The booklet comprises thirty case studies highlighting the best practices with regard to:

- (a) energy efficiency in buildings;
- (b) waste minimization through recycling initiatives;
- (c) increasing food security by practising backyard and roof top gardening; and
- (d) water savings through rainwater harvesting.

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