

CABINET DECISIONS – 21 JUNE 2013

1. Cabinet has agreed to the price of bread made from wheat flour be reduced and brought to the same price as that of bread made from white flour as from 1 July 2013.

Cabinet has also taken note that the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection, in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions, the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life, the Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare, the State Trading Corporation, Les Moulins de la Concorde and the Association caring for Diabetes, would conduct a campaign to promote the consumption of whole wheat flour.

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2. Cabinet has taken note of development in the setting up of the Institute for Women's Health which would cater for specific health and medical needs of women with the state-of-the-art technology. Construction works are scheduled to start in September 2014.

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3. Cabinet has agreed to the introduction of the Animal Welfare Bill in the National Assembly. The objects of the Bill are to promote the welfare and good treatment of animals; protect animals from distress, pain or suffering; and regulate dog-keeping, dog-breeding and the importation of certain types of dangerous dogs. The Bill also establishes the Mauritius Society for Animal Welfare, which would be responsible for catching and disposing of stray dogs and cats, humane education, promoting the welfare and treatment of animals and also implementing other programmes, such as mass sterilization campaigns.

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4. Cabinet has taken note that the Bank of Mauritius proposes to issue Rs500, Rs50 and Rs25 banknotes on polymer substrate. The banknotes will bear an iridescent feature "Swing" printed and registered on a transparent window to create a complex security feature, and the Domino feature for the visually impaired.

Moreover, security features readable on machine, namely infrared feature on intaglio printing, Sicpa Talk feature, phosphorescent and invisible block and magnetic numbering, would be incorporated in the banknotes.

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5. Cabinet has taken note of progress in the implementation of the Mauritius National Identity Scheme Project. The issue of the new Smart National Identity Card is scheduled from 1 October 2013 and would be completed by December 2014. The Card would contain a printed photograph of the holder, and visible fields, such as name, gender, date of birth, ID number and signature. The chip would contain an encoded photo, civil data, finger prints and the residential address.

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6. Cabinet has taken note that the Mauritius Ports Authority and the Transport Events Management Ltd. would jointly host the 8<sup>th</sup> Indian Ocean Ports and Logistics 2014 Exhibition and Conference in Mauritius in January 2014. The Exhibition and Conference would aim at promoting the port, shipping, transport, and logistics sectors, as well as trade and industry; showcasing Mauritius as a cultural, tourist, and conference destination; and positioning the port as a major shipping hub in the Indian Ocean region. Some 30 world class business leaders would participate in the Conference and analyse the latest global transportation and logistics issues. It is expected that some 350 senior executives from over 20 countries, including Australia, USA, Netherlands, France, Germany, India, South Africa and Madagascar, would participate in the event.

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7. Cabinet has agreed to the implementation of the restructuring plan of the Agricultural Marketing Board to render the Board more effective, efficient and financially viable. The restructuring plan recommends, amongst others, the broadening of the scope of operations of the Agricultural Marketing Board; the opening of new retail outlets; and the construction of additional storage facilities for renting.

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8. Cabinet has taken note that a new Sports Bill would be introduced in the National Assembly shortly. The main objectives of the new Sports Bill would be, among others, to -

- (a) review the organization of football with a view to reviving public interest and fostering cohesion;
- (b) make better provisions for the management of sports federations with a view to ensuring that all national sports organizations operate on the principles of good governance, transparency and democracy;
- (c) make regionalization process more flexible in its application;
- (d) ensure that national sports governing bodies are exercising a specific, real and ongoing activity thus preventing the proliferation of fictitious sports federations and clubs;
- (e) provide for a machinery for arbitration; and
- (f) align the provisions of the Sports Act with the Olympic Charter.

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9. Cabinet has taken note of developments in the upgrading of Pailles Water Treatment Plant. During the period of heavy rainfall, water production at the Plant is disrupted due to high turbidity of the raw water, thus causing interruption of supply to residents of Port Louis. The upgraded plant would ensure reliable water supply in Port Louis even in adverse climatic conditions.

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10. Cabinet has taken note that a private company proposes to set up a wheat mill factory in the port area. The factory would produce 300 tons of wheat flour daily for exportation to Madagascar and the regional markets, and generate 30 jobs in the first phase of the project and an additional 25 jobs in the second phase.

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11. Cabinet has taken note that the Oil Consortium will construct facilities for the storage of 25,000 MT of mogas and gas oil. The storage facilities would enhance security of supply of petroleum products.

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12. Cabinet has taken note that an international tobacco company from Dubai would set up a tobacco manufacturing plant in the Freeport of Mauritius for export to African countries. Phase I of the project would entail an investment of approximately USD 2 million and provide employment opportunities to some 25 persons. In the second phase, the company would invest approximately USD 4 million in a new building. The factory will have a monthly production capacity of 7,000 master cases of 10,000 cigarettes. It would create some 50 jobs.

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13. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Tertiary Education, Science, Research and Technology, in collaboration with the Mauritius Research Council, would set up a Mauritian Diaspora Research Scheme to encourage Mauritian professionals and researchers, settled overseas, to contribute to research, bring new ideas and innovation and share their expertise for the development of science and technology in Mauritius. Mobilization of diasporas for the benefit of the country of origin has shown a tremendous potential, both in terms of resource mobilization and access to knowledge and skills. Many countries have introduced diaspora schemes termed as *Brain Gain Strategy* or *Reverse Brain Drain* to encourage their nationals, who have settled abroad, to contribute to economic development.

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14. Cabinet has taken note that 1,004 youths have obtained employment under the Youth Employment Programme which was announced in the Budget Speech 2013 and became operational in mid-February 2013. The objective of the Programme is to enable unemployed Mauritian youth aged between 16 and 30 years, to obtain employment in companies for an initial period of one year, with the possibility of permanent employment thereafter on condition of satisfactory performance. To date, some 377 employers have registered for the Programme, of which 167 employers have signed a Memorandum of Understanding and are participating in the Programme.

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15. Cabinet has taken note of the activities that the National Agency for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Substance Abusers (NATReSA), in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life, would organize to mark the 26th International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, commemorated on 26 June, namely –

- (a) a sensitization programme on drug abuse, comprising sketches, songs, slams, “*témoignages*”, and prize giving to participants of a “Fresque” Competition and a painting competition, at the Auditorium of the Rabindranath Tagore Institute; and
- (b) wide sensitization campaigns on the themes “**Treatment and Rehabilitation**”; “**Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco**”; and “**Make health your new high in life, not drugs**”.

The theme chosen by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to mark the event is “**Make health your new high in life, not drugs**”.

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16. Cabinet has taken note of the report of a first assessment carried out at the Mauritius Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (MSPCA) by the Interim Management Committee. The assessment has revealed that there was a lack of accountability and absence of good governance in the day-to-day management of the Society. The Committee has taken a number of measures to reengineer the management of the Society.

Cabinet has also taken note that the Interim Management Committee would hold an Adoption day on Sunday 7 July 2013 at the MSPCA where emphasis would be laid on pet caring and responsibilities of owners. Free sterilization, as well as free veterinary counselling, is also scheduled on that day.

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17. Cabinet has agreed to the Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security reviewing the list of controlled products under the Mauritius Agricultural Marketing (Controlled Products) Regulations 1971 taking into account local production, market conditions, strategic foodcrops, and the production of local foodcrops to attain self-sufficiency. In this context, the importation and exportation of a number of products, including processed garlic, processed ginger, processed onions, salted fish, turmeric, beans, grapefruit, lemons, limes, milled maize, oranges, spices, tangerines and mandarines and unmilled maize, would no longer be controlled. However, certain products, in their raw form, namely garlic, onions, seed potatoes and table potatoes, would continue to be controlled under the Second Schedule and the Mauritius Agricultural Marketing (Controlled Products) Regulations 1971.

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18. Cabinet has taken note that the COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite Ministerial Committee on Trade and Industry would be held in Mauritius in July 2013. The Committee would, amongst others, consider the progress report on tripartite negotiations on trade and provide guidance to the negotiating process.

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19. Cabinet has taken note that the First IOR-ARC Economic and Business Ministerial Conference would be held in Mauritius on 4 and 5 July 2013. The Ministerial Conference would be preceded by a Joint Public Private Sector Dialogue on Business Facilitation, and include a Business Meeting. The issues that would be discussed during the Conference are –

- (a) unlocking the potential of the services sector in the IOR-ARC region;
- (b) enhancing trade and investment in the IOR-ARC region;
- (c) creating agri-business linkages, addressing food security and sustainable development; and
- (d) harnessing the potential of the Ocean Economy.

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20. Cabinet has taken note that exports of manufactured goods for the period January to May 2013 have grown by 2.2% as compared to the corresponding period in 2012. Growth has been recorded in the export of yarn and fabrics, pullovers, cardigans, shirts, processed fish, precious stones, pearls and medical devices.

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21. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Education and Human Resources to Belgium where he attended the Meeting of the Bureau of the *Conférence des Ministres de l'Éducation des États et Gouvernements de la Francophonie* (CONFEMEN). The main objective of the Bureau Meeting was to articulate a roadmap for CONFEMEN keeping in view the thrusts on the international high-level fora on the Post-2015 Development Framework and discuss the *Note de Cadrage* on the theme for the 56th Ministerial Meeting to be held next year. The Bureau agreed that the theme for the 56th Ministerial Session to be held in Abhijan, Ivory Coast in July 2014 would be: ***Education inclusive et de qualité pour tous en francophonie: défis, priorités et perspectives pour l'après 2015.***

After the Bureau Meeting, the Minister proceeded to Paris where he had discussions with the French Authorities on the Sankoré Project, that commended Mauritius for the successful implementation of the First Phase of the Project. The French Authorities had donated some 576 interactive digital equipment for the creation of digital classrooms in all primary schools at Standards IV and V levels. During the second phase of the Project, the French Authorities would provide 520 additional interactive digital equipment. With a view to building capacity for the production of digital material for TVET and integrating ICT in TVET programmes in Mauritius, the *Centre Régional de Documentation Pédagogique* has agreed to provide training to resource persons of the Ministry of Education and Human Resources, the Mauritius Institute of Education and the Mauritius Institute of Training and Development. The *Centre International d'Etudes Pédagogique* would be organizing a *Formation des Formateurs Programme* in December 2013 in Mauritius to further develop capacity in the application of latest technology and innovative practices in the Sankoré project. The programme would also serve to train resource persons in the development of digital learning material for Asian Languages and Arabic at primary school level in Mauritius.

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22. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent lobbying mission on the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy that the Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security led in Europe. The delegation, which comprised, amongst others, Ambassador Patrick Gomes of Guyana and Ambassador Joël Nhleko of Swaziland, met the Hon Mr Simon Coveney, Ministry of Agriculture, Marine and Food of Ireland; the Hon Mrs Isle Aigner, Federal Minister of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection of Germany and Hon Mrs Sharon Dijksma, Minister of Agriculture of Netherlands. The Minister made a plea to the different Governments to support the ACP in extending the present sugar quota provisions up to 30 September 2020.

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23. Cabinet has taken note that the Minister of Health and Quality of Life would promulgate the Mauritius Institute of Health (Fees) Regulations to provide for the Mauritius Institute of Health to claim appropriate fees from training institutions requesting the Institute to act as an awarding body. The Mauritius Institute of Health conducts courses, holds examinations, grants certificates and diplomas, and acts as an awarding body for training programmes that are run by private and public institutions in the Health Sector.

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24. Cabinet has taken note that the East, Central and Southern African (ECSA) Health Community would organize a Joint Health Systems and Services Development/Monitoring and Evaluation Expert Core Group Meeting from 1 to 5 July 2013. The main objectives of the Meeting would be to –

- (a) review the reports on the implementation of resolutions adopted at the ECSA Health Ministers' Conference and propose improvements;
- (b) establish a mechanism for supporting the follow up of regional initiatives at country level; and
- (c) develop a framework for managing and updating country data.

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25. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection to Nairobi, Kenya where he participated in the 20th Edition of the AU Conference of African Ministers of Industry (CAMI-20). The objective of the Meeting was to reflect on key issues for African industrial development within the Post-2015 Development Agenda and contribute to the Post-2015 Development Framework.

In the margin of the Conference, the Minister had bilateral meetings with, amongst others, -

- (a) HE Mr Tadesse Haile, Minister of Industry, Ethiopia, to further strengthen trade and investment relations with Ethiopia at the Government, institutional and private sector levels;
- (b) HE Mrs Amelia Kyambadde, Minister of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, Ghana, who expressed her willingness to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection in order to set up a framework to promote and facilitate trade between the two countries;

- (c) HE Mr Calle Schlettwein, Minister of Trade and Industry, Republic of Namibia, on the review of Memoranda of Understanding on the fish processing industry, agro-processing and diamond and semi-precious stones; and
- (d) HE Mr Jean B. Bakole, UNIDO Representative to the African Union and Director of Regional Office, who agreed to UNIDO assisting the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection in the new industrialization strategies and penetration in new sectors.

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26. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of –

- (a) the Mauritius Cane Industry Authority Board with Mr Salil Roy as Chairperson; and
- (b) the Mauritius Meat Authority Board with Mr Rishi Kumar Choony, MSK, as Chairperson.

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