

CABINET DECISIONS - 10 OCTOBER 2014

1. Cabinet has agreed to the review of the eligibility criteria of the loan scheme for Private Grant-Aided Secondary Schools, operated by the Development Bank of Mauritius Ltd, for the purposes of upgrading and improving educational infrastructure of private grant-aided secondary schools in disadvantaged areas and for the acquisition of land. As at date, applications from eight secondary schools to the tune of Rs112.15m have been approved, and five applications are under consideration.

2. Cabinet has taken note of the activities that would be organized by the Ministry of Arts and Culture and the Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund to commemorate the 180th Anniversary of the Arrival of Indentured Labourers in Mauritius, namely wreath-laying ceremony, a re-enactment scene depicting the arrival of the first batch of indentured labourers to Mauritius, dance performances by local and foreign artists, launching of a Souvenir Magazine, inauguration and guided visit of the Beekrumsing Ramlallah Interpretation Centre and unveiling of the bust of late Mr Beekrumsing Ramlallah.

Cabinet has also taken note that HE Smt Sushma Swaraj, Minister of External Affairs and Overseas Indian Affairs of the Republic of India, would be the Chief Guest on the occasion.

3. Cabinet has taken note of further arrangements made by the Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment for a better dissemination of information on employment opportunities and the labour market by the MBC, namely production of a clip on employment prospects and opportunities, communiqués and announcements on employment opportunities daily on the radio, announcements on the holding of job fairs and employment forum, and monthly programmes “*A vous de Juger*” on relevant topics of the Ministry on Radio Kool FM.

4. Cabinet has taken note that 74,516 tourists visited Mauritius in September 2014 as compared to 71,951 in September 2013, i.e., an increase of 3.6%. United Kingdom, France, South Africa, Germany and Reunion Island remain the five top tourist-generating markets. For period January to September 2014, tourist arrivals increased by 4.5% to reach 725,623 as compared to 694,443 for the same period in 2013. Tourism receipts for the months of January to August 2014 increased by 9.0%.

5. Cabinet has taken note that the High Commission of India and the World Hindi Secretariat, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Human Resources, would hold the International (Regional) Hindi Conference in Mauritius from 29 October to 01 November 2014. The main objectives of the Conference are to generate greater coordination and collaboration between organizations engaged in teaching and the propagation of Hindi amongst the Diaspora, through a deeper understanding of the overall status of Hindi in the respective countries, and identify possible areas of collaborative action. Some 30 delegates from foreign Hindi institutions in the Diaspora would participate in the Conference. The theme of the Conference is **“Hindi teaching/propagation in the Diaspora: the way towards international cooperation.”**

6. Cabinet has taken note of the evolution of the Ebola Virus Disease in West Africa and the recent cases in the US, and Spain, and that surveillance at the airport and the port has been further reinforced.

7. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology would launch a sensitization campaign on the various e-services/online services offered by Government and hosted on the Government Online Portal. As at date, there are 83 e-services, such as applications for vacancies at the Public Service Commission, a Learner's Licence, registration for various services, that are available on the Government Online Portal.

8. Cabinet has taken note of the report of Dr Coffi Dominique Agossou, Senior Labour Statistics Specialist of the International Labour Organization Pretoria Office, who provided technical assistance and training to Officers of the Employment Service of the Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment. The main recommendations of Dr Agossou include, -

- (a) strengthening of employment counselling and the Labour Market Information Unit of the Employment Service;
- (b) development of new placement strategies through extensive analysis of labour market information;
- (c) defining clearly the informal sector and informal employment in the Mauritian context, and conduct of surveys in the informal sector; and
- (d) publication and dissemination of reports regarding employment opportunities in different occupations and sectors in demand in terms of job creation.

9. Cabinet has taken note of developments in the design and formulation of a National Export Strategy. With a view to managing and monitoring the works in progress and ensuring the required outputs are satisfactorily completed in time, Mr Louis Amedée Darga, Chairperson of Enterprise Mauritius, has been designated as Navigator. A National Core Team, comprising representatives of Ministries/ Departments and private sector organizations, has been set up to advise and support the Navigator.

10. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Tertiary Education, Science, Research and Technology to the UK and France. The main objectives of the visit were to hold discussions with universities on the setting up of a nanotechnology centre and joint research programmes in Mauritius, and discuss with the President of the University of Limoges on the continued collaboration with the Université des Mascareignes and the introduction of new programmes of studies.

In the UK, the Minister of Tertiary Education, Science, Research and Technology had a meeting with Professor Mark McCarthy, Director of the Oxford Centre for Diabetes Endocrinology and Metabolism, on the setting up of a Centre for Research on Genomics; and Professor Milo Shaffer, Co-Director of the London Centre for Nanotechnology, Imperial College London, on the setting up of a Nanotechnology Centre in Mauritius.

In France, the Minister of Tertiary Education, Science, Research and Technology had meetings, amongst others, with Mrs Helene Pauliat, President of the Université of Limoges, who agreed to extend collaboration to the IIT Research Academy of Mauritius and IIT Delhi for joint research into the development of a nano satellite, assist the Université des Mascareignes to consolidate its doctoral school and set up a Carrefour des Etudiants to advise on the choice of fields of study and careers. Mrs Geneviève Fiaroso, *Ministre de l'Education Nationale, de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche*, has expressed her appreciation on the setting up of the Université des Mascareignes, in collaboration with the Université de Limoges, as a bilingual university and upholding the objectives of francophonie and is the only institution in the African region to provide higher education of European standards and degrees which have dual recognition.

11. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Health and Quality of Life to the Republic of India. The main objectives of the mission were to consider e-Health solutions available for activities in health institutions, and to work out modalities for the implementation of the E-Health Project under a Government-to-Government Agreement. The Minister had a meeting with Dr Harsh Vardhan, Minister of Health and Family Welfare of the Republic of India, with whom he discussed cooperation in the fields of Health and Medicine, and recruitment of specialists in scarcity fields. The Mauritian delegation had a number of meetings with representatives of the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing on the Hospital Management Information System. The Centre has agreed to field a mission to study the scope of the e-health project. The delegation also had a meeting with Dr Jayshree Mehta, President of the Medical Council of India who had agreed to assist in the reform of the Medical Council of Mauritius.
