

CABINET DECISIONS – 7 MARCH 2014

1. Cabinet has taken note of the Programme of the Official Visit of the Hon Dato' Sri Mohd Najib Tun Abdul Razak, Prime Minister of Malaysia from 11 to 13 March 2014. He would be the Chief Guest on the occasion of the National Day 2014. He would be accompanied by his spouse, HE Datin Sri Rosmah Mansor, and lead a delegation of 75 persons comprising the Minister of International Trade and Industry of Malaysia and about 30 businessmen. The Prime Minister of Malaysia would call on the President of the Republic, have a working session with the Prime Minister, lay a wreath at the Samadhi of SSR, and attend a Civic Reception at the Islamic Cultural Centre.

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2. Cabinet has taken note of the programme of activities for the National Day Celebrations 2014, viz., the official celebrations that would be held at Anjalay Stadium comprising the official ceremony, and a high level cultural show, that would also include children from the National Institute for Citizenship Education Programme and have as theme '*Pays de Lumière*'. The Show would depict, amongst others, the cultural diversity of Mauritius in a globalized world.

Cabinet has also taken note of the various activities that would be organized by the Ministries, the local authorities and other organizations on the occasion of the National Day.

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3. Cabinet has taken note that the President of the Republic, after consultation with the Prime Minister, has reappointed Mr Soleman Mamode Hatteea as Ombudsman.

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4. Cabinet has taken note of developments in the sale of plots of State land, other than Pas Géométriques, of an extent not exceeding 422.087 square metres, i.e., 10 perches, and on which stands a residential unit, to holders of a building site lease at a nominal fee as announced in Budget Speech 2014.

Cabinet has agreed to a holder of a building site lease, who opts to purchase the portion of State land on which stands his residence, not paying stamp duty and registration duty, totalling Rs2,000, on the registration of the deed of sale.

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5. Cabinet has taken note that the African Centre for Economic Transformation ranks Mauritius first among the 21 African countries, assessed in the overall economic transformation, ahead of countries like South Africa, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, Uganda, Kenya and Gabon. The strong performance of Mauritius is attributed mainly to export competitiveness measured in terms of the share of exports of goods and services in a country's GDP relative to the corresponding share for the world, productivity and human well-being. The 2014 Africa Transformation Report also highlights that the main factors triggering the success of Mauritius are the commitment of the Government to its programme, link to a national economic agenda, cost effective and reliable infrastructure, effective planning and management, and business friendly administration and procedures for investors. Regarding the human well-being index, the Report states that Mauritius stands out mainly because of its high GDP per capita.

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6. Cabinet has taken note of developments in the implementation of the Crime Occurrence Tracking System Project by the Police Department. The aim of the project is to use ICT solutions for a more effective and efficient tracking of crime occurrences. The project would provide for statistical data on crimes, misdemeanours and contraventions; a Data Management System; the computerization of the Crime Occurrence Book and Master Registers; information on movement of files and tracking of dossiers from Police Station up to the Prosecutor's Office. The first Phase of the project that comprised the deployment of application software in the Western and the Metropolitan South Divisions of the Police Department and covered 40 Units and 23 Police Stations, went live in November 2012. Phase II of the Project would cover the six remaining Divisions, i.e., 66 Police Stations and 130 Units in Mauritius and Rodrigues.

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7. Cabinet has taken note of the activities that the Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare would organise on the occasion of the International Women's Day 2014, commemorated on 8 March, namely -

- (a) Official Ceremony at J&J Auditorium, Phoenix;
- (b) Cinema Itinerant (film shows) in Social Welfare Centres and Community Centres around the country;
- (c) Art Exhibition at Caudan Waterfront; and
- (d) Intercollege Challenger Cup Debate Competition.

The theme chosen this year is "*Inspiring Change*".

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8. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Business, Enterprise and Cooperatives would launch the second edition of the Mauritius Excellence Awards for Cooperatives. The main objective of the Awards is to give national recognition to the best way business is conducted by Cooperative Societies. It also provides an opportunity to disseminate cooperative principles and values that are used as a benchmark for the continual improvement of cooperatives on their journey towards excellence. The competition is open to all cooperative societies in Mauritius and Rodrigues.

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9. Cabinet has taken note that, following high demand for turkey, the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security would open a Turkey Unit at the Belle Vue Experimental Station at Albion. Breeders and members of the public would be able to buy month-old turkeys at the Unit. The Duck Unit, also operational at the Belle Vue Experimental Station, sells day-old ducklings to the farming community. Study tours are regularly organised at Albion Duck farm with a view to apprising farmers of duck breeds, housing system, feeding, reproduction, record keeping and other husbandry practices. An average of 11,000 day-old ducklings are currently produced yearly. The Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security would organise an open day on the occasion of the launching of the Turkey Unit.

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10. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security would carry out a study on the Evaluation of Basic Veterinary Care in Mauritius. Under the Reinforcing Veterinary Governance in Africa Programme, a Livestock Policy Hub has been set up at the Ministry aiming at strengthening the institutions providing livestock services. The main object of the study would be to assess the effectiveness of the veterinary services provided to small breeders. The study would also consider the possibility of entrusting veterinary care services to the small breeders to private veterinarians.

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11. Cabinet has taken note that, since its creation in 1953, the MSIRI sells sugarcane varieties and fuzzi, i.e., sexual seeds obtained by the crossing of female and male fertile parent varieties under controlled conditions, and provide services and training to research institutions and sugar companies in Africa and Asia. A number of sugarcane varieties, e.g., M1176/77, M1400/86 and M1551/80, are performing well and are being exploited commercially for sugar production on increasing acreage. Several Mauritian varieties are now being tested for use as potential commercial biomass varieties for the production of electricity and ethanol in Sierra Leone. Based on its internationally reputed expertise in sugarcane research and development, the Institute is often requested to offer expert advice and consultancy services in different fields, namely the setting up of sugarcane improvement programmes; the elaboration of selection strategies for different climatic zones; and the agronomic and best management practices, such as planting method and density, fertilization, herbicide and irrigation.

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12. Cabinet has taken note of the setting up, on a *pro bono* basis, of an Advisory Committee, under the chairmanship of Mr Pierre Rosario Domingue, CEO, Law Reform Commission, to make recommendations on measures to reinforce the framework for the protection from domestic violence, including amendments to be made to the Protection from Domestic Violence Act.

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13. Cabinet has taken note that the Project Plan Committee has recommended nine projects to the tune of Rs859.65 million for inclusion in the Public Sector Investment Programme. The projects include the construction of additional classrooms at Lady Sushil Ramgoolam State Secondary School, Triolet; the upgrading of Plaines des Roches Road, and the road at St Gabriel to Petit Gabriel, Rodrigues; water project at Montagne Fayence; the setting up of a MITD Training Centre at Petit Bel Air, Mahebourg, and the construction of new blocks at Jawaharlal Nehru Hospital.

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14. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Housing and Lands has been awarded the Geospatial World Excellence Award in the Policy Implementation Category for the successful implementation of the Land Administration, Valuation and Information Management System. The Ministry of Housing and Lands has also received the following awards - the 6<sup>th</sup> AAPAM Innovative Management Awards of the Association for Public Administration and Management (AAPAM) in November 2012, and the ICT Excellence Awards 2012 of the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology in December 2012.

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15. Cabinet has taken note that the Minister of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment would promulgate the Occupational Safety and Health (Fees and Registration) (Amendment) Regulations to eliminate shortcomings in the existing Occupational Safety and Health (Fees and Registration) Regulations 2007 and the Occupational Safety and Health (Fees and Registration) (Amendment) Regulations 2012, pertaining to the payment of fees for the consideration of an application of a candidate as a boiler inspector or a machinery inspector, and for registration as a boiler inspector and as a machinery inspector.

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16. Cabinet has taken note that the Minister of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment would promulgate the Manufacturing Sector (Collection of Contributions) Regulations to provide for the delay within which manufacturing enterprises should remit their monthly contributions to the Manufacturing Sector Fund under the Act. The Regulations would come into operation on 15 March 2014.

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17. Cabinet has taken note that the Minister of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection would promulgate the Consumer Protection (Export Control) (Amendment) Regulations to allow the exportation of samples items, such as rice, wheat or meslin flour, sugar and portland cement, without an export permit. The samples should be exported solely for the purposes of analysis or marketing, and weigh 10 kilogrammes or less, and no transfer of funds should be involved.

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18. Cabinet has taken note that the 6th Plenary Meeting of the Forum of Nuclear Regulatory Bodies in Africa would be held in Mauritius from 24 to 27 March 2014. The Forum, established on 26 March 2009, is a platform for exchanging experiences and knowledge-sharing with a view to enhancing, strengthening and harmonising radiation safety and nuclear security regulatory infrastructures and frameworks amongst the regulatory bodies in Africa. It complements the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency on the application of international nuclear safety standards. Some 46 participants from 36 countries, mainly from Africa, are expected to attend the Forum.

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19. Cabinet has taken note that, within the framework of the IAEA regional project on "Sustaining the regulatory infrastructures for the control of radiation sources", a regional training course on Effective and Sustainable Regulatory Control of Radiation Sources would be held in Mauritius in April 2014. The aim of the course is to assist regulators of Member States to implement an effective and sustainable regulatory system in line with the IAEA Safety Standards. Some 30 participants from 12 Member States, namely Botswana, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, United Republic of Tanzania and Zimbabwe, as well as a representative from the IAEA, are expected to attend the course.

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20. Cabinet has taken note of the status regarding resumption of studies in pre-primary, primary and secondary schools for the academic year 2014. The number of students admitted in January 2014 are as follows:

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|-----|-------------------------------|---|--------|
| (a) | Pre-primary Schools           | - | 28,650 |
| (b) | Standard 1                    | - | 12,946 |
| (c) | Form 1 (Mainstream)           | - | 13,018 |
| (d) | Year 1 (Prevocational stream) | - | 598    |
| (e) | Special Educations Needs      | - | 32     |

The number of admission in Standard 1 in Rodrigues and Agalega were 781 and 11 respectively.

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21. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security to Rome, Italy where he participated in the 37th Session of the Governing Council of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). The Session discussed, amongst others, the following issues -

- (a) Achieving a sustainable future for all: IFAD and the Post-2015 Agenda;
- (b) Investing in smallholder family farmers for the future we want; and
- (c) Stories from the field: Investment in the transformation of rural people's lives.

The Fifth Global Meeting of the Farmers' Forum was held concurrently and focused on rural development and poverty reduction.

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22. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Arts and Culture to India where he participated in the India International Film Tourism Conclave (IIFTC) 2014. The Conclave provided a platform to promote the country's film locations and the dissemination of the Film Rebate Scheme set up recently. The Minister also discussed the changing requirements of Indian film producers who choose to shoot films in foreign locations. 53 film producers have expressed their interests to come for location shooting in Mauritius this year, and Prasad Studios and After, two post production studios in Chennai and Hyderabad respectively, have expressed strong interest to set up post-production facilities in Mauritius.

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23. Cabinet has taken note that the Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security would amend the Mauritius Cane Industry Authority (Registration of Person Making Contribution from Sale of Sugar on Local Market) Regulations to provide for an increase in contribution on sugar imported for sale on the local market. The main objective for levying the contribution is to raise revenue to meet the pension costs of the ex-dockers of the Bulk Sugar Terminal.

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24. Cabinet has taken note of the activities that would be organised in the context of the World Water Day 2014, commemorated on 22 March, namely -

- (a) an exhibition on the theme “Water and Energy”;
- (b) quiz competitions for students of secondary schools;
- (c) a project competition at national level open to primary and secondary schools students; and
- (d) opening of La Marie water treatment plant to the public from mid-March to mid-July 2014.

The theme for this year is “*Water and Energy*”.

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25. Cabinet has taken note of the activities that would be organized by the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security to mark the International Day of Forests commemorated on 21 March and raise awareness of the importance of all types of forest ecosystems to sustainable development, namely, –

- (a) opening of the Vallee d’Österlog Endemic Garden on 21 March;
- (b) launching of the Public Private Initiative through the signature of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security and designated representatives of private forest owners under the Protected Area Network Project to restore invaded private forests;
- (c) restoration of forests at Petrin, Plaine Raoül and Gunners’ Quoin; and
- (d) holding of talks, exhibitions and Open Days on forests and terrestrial biodiversity in the Visitors Centers at Petrin, Bras d’Eau, Plaine Sophie, MonVert and Powder Mills.

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