

CABINET DECISIONS – 30 MAY 2014

1. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the Official Visit of Dr the Hon Navinchandra Ramgoolam, GCSK, FRCP, Prime Minister, to India, where, on a personal invitation of Mr Narendra D. Modi, Prime Minister of India, he attended the Swearing-in Ceremony of the new Government held on 26 May 2014. Mauritius was the only non-Member State of SAARC invited to the Ceremony.

On 27 May 2014, the Prime Minister had a meeting with Prime Minister Modi, in the presence of Mrs Sushma Swaraj, Minister of External Affairs of India, on bilateral issues. He congratulated Prime Minister Modi on his party's brilliant victory at the recent General Elections. During the meeting, the Prime Minister raised, amongst others, the issue of the Double Taxation Avoidance Convention. The Prime Minister assured the Indian side of the unwavering commitment of Government to ensure that there is no abuse and misuse of our jurisdiction for illicit purposes. In this context, the Prime Minister proposed to allow the automatic exchange of information and provide adequate safeguard on limitation of benefits. The Prime Minister also proposed the setting up of a Special Cell at the Prime Minister's Office of both countries to fast track progress on the Double Taxation Avoidance Convention and other projects of strategic importance.

Prime Minister Modi assured that India would never take any action that would hurt the economic interests of Mauritius.

The Prime Minister also invited Prime Minister Modi to consider jointly developing our financial centre that would provide capital more competitively to meet India's infrastructure requirements and development.

The Prime Minister also discussed the issue of Ocean Economy. He highlighted the enormous prospects for both countries, and informed that a Road Map has already been finalized focusing, *inter alia*, on Seabed Exploration for Hydrocarbons and Minerals, Fishing, Marine Service and Marine Renewable Energies and invited India to foster a partnership with Mauritius to develop the Sector for mutual benefits.

The Prime Minister extended an invitation to Prime Minister Modi to visit Mauritius to which the latter responded positively.

The Prime Minister also paid a courtesy call on Mr Pranab Mukherjee, President of the Republic of India with whom he discussed issues of common interest.

The Prime Minister held a Press Conference to brief the Indian media on Mauritius-India relations, new avenues of economic cooperation, and new proposals on the Double Taxation Avoidance Convention with India.

2. Cabinet has taken note that, as at date, some 7,000 holders of a building site lease have applied to purchase the plot of the State land on which stands their houses as enunciated in Budget Speech 2014. Some 3,000 applications have already been examined, and Letters of Intent issued to some 2,000 applicants. Their deeds of sale have also been drawn up. The Ministry of Housing and Lands would, shortly, publish regulations amending the First Schedule to the Pas Géométriques Act to exclude 22 villages from the List of Declared Villages in the Schedule to enable some 900 persons holding building site leases to purchase the State land on which stands their houses.

3. Cabinet has taken note of the implementation of the recommendations of the Workshop on Vector Borne Diseases, organized by the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life in the context of the World Health Day. The recommendations made are, amongst others, -

- (a) the Ministry of Local Government and Outer Islands to continue to carry out regular environmental audit, identify bare and waste lands, derelict buildings, rivers and canals, and such other spots likely to develop into breeding places for mosquitoes, and arrange for their cleaning;
- (b) the setting up of an Integrated Vector Management Committee in each local authority, and with the participation of community leaders and other stakeholders, to assist and reinforce measures taken to keep the environment clean and further sanitation programmes; and
- (c) strengthening measures taken for the prevention of Vector Borne Diseases, and conduct aggressive sensitization campaigns against the diseases.

4. Cabinet has taken note that a Workshop on the theme “**Moving from Cyber Island to Smart Mauritius**” would be held on 12 June 2014. The main objectives of the Workshop are to lay the foundation stones towards a SMART economy and proactively address potential threats by allowing sharing of knowledge, insights and best practices on Cyber Security, disaster recovery and business continuity through a collaborative Public-Private Partnership. The keynote speakers would be Mr Johan Gott and Mr Mike Small. Mr J. Gott works at the A. T. Kearney’s Global Business Policy Council of New York, which offers consultancy in redesigning public and private organisations, and Mr Mike Small leads the Government Solutions for the IBM (International Business Machines Corporation) in the Middle East and Africa and is at the forefront of bringing IBM’s significant investment in smart cities solutions, and expertise in delivering smarter plant initiatives to the region.

5. Cabinet has taken note of the setting up of a Federation of Artisanal Fishermen operating around the islands, Members of the Indian Ocean Commission. The setting up of the Regional Federation would facilitate, amongst others, -

- (a) the implementation of the '*Pêcheur Entrepreneur*' concept on a regional basis;
- (b) the evaluation of the general state of artisanal fishers organisations in the region;
- (c) the participation in the effective and sustainable co-management of fisheries resources; and
- (d) the promotion of a balance in the significance of artisanal fishery with regard to both domestic and foreign industrial fishing activities in the region.

6. Cabinet has taken note of activities that would be organized in the context of the World Environment Day 2014 observed on 5 June, namely –

- (a) organization of seminars on Environmental Protection, Climate Change and Coastal Zone Management, and Sustainable Lifestyle;
- (b) production of a booklet on common plants of Mauritius, "Une Famille, Une Plante", and a pamphlet on "Sea Level Rise & its Impacts on our Coastal Zone";
- (c) planting of endemic trees in various regions;
- (d) drawing and painting competition for students of primary schools, slam competition for students of secondary schools and poster competition for students of tertiary institutions;
- (e) sensitization campaigns on environmental issues and distribution of plants; and
- (f) free guided tours at Blue Bay Marine Park on 8 June 2014.

The theme chosen to mark this year's World Environment Day is '**Raise Your Voice, Not the Sea level**'.

7. Cabinet has taken note that a Consultative Meeting of Technical Resource Persons on Addressing Social Determinants of Health in the World Health Organisation African Region would be held in Mauritius in June 2014. The main objectives of the Meeting are to -

- (a) review overall progress on Social Determinants of Health implementation in the Africa Region;
- (b) deliberate on the specific activities for supporting Member States from the thematic areas of the Strategy for Addressing Key Determinants of Health in the African Region and the Rio Political Declaration on Social Determinants of Health;
- (c) agree on a resource mobilisation agenda based on broad Social Determinants of Health research activities; and
- (d) explore the possibility of formalising the Social Determinants of Health Resource Group into a Task Force or Advisory Group.

8. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Health and Quality of Life to Geneva where he attended the 67th Session of the World Health Assembly. The Assembly, amongst others, agreed to –

- (a) a resolution requesting the World Health Organisation to develop a draft global action plan to combat antimicrobial resistance;
- (b) the adoption of revised provisions on yellow fever or revaccination under the International Health Regulations; and
- (c) the development of a global plan of action to strengthen the role of national health systems within a multi-sectoral response to address interpersonal violence, in particular against women, girls and children.

Following meetings the Minister of Health and Quality of Life had in the margins of the World Health Assembly, -

- (a) Mauritius has been included on the mHealth Programme, an innovative programme using mobile telecommunications technology to create awareness on non-communicable diseases;
- (b) the Global Fund has reaffirmed the allocation of 5.1 million USD for Mauritius for the period 2014-2016 for technical support for a rehabilitation programme to be linked up with our methadone substitution programme; and
- (c) Dr Dominique François Gazielly, Associate Professor of Shanghai Tiao Tong University, Consultant University Hospital of Geneva and Head of Shoulder Unit, Clinique de Genolier has agreed to help establish a Shoulder Unit in Mauritius.
