

CABINET DECISIONS – 10 JANUARY 2014

1. Cabinet has agreed to the holding, in Mauritius in 2014, of the Reference Group Meeting of the Second International Indian Ocean Expedition. The objectives of the Meeting are, *inter alia*, to -

- (a) review the history of the First Expedition undertaken in the sixties with a view to identifying scientific questions that are still unanswered and should be pursued as part of the Second Expedition;
- (b) define a science plan and an implementation strategy for a new international and interdisciplinary research programme in the Indian Ocean; and
- (c) assess ongoing and planned research activities in the Indian Ocean.

The Second Expedition is scheduled from 2015 to 2020. Some 20 participants from Australia, the People's Republic of China, the Comoros, India, Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique, the Seychelles, South Africa, Tanzania and the USA are expected to participate in the Meeting.

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2. Cabinet has agreed to the proposal of the Health and Sports Company of Reunion Island to organize annually football matches between prestigious European Clubs in Mauritius. A first match between Liverpool Football Club and either Manchester City, Newcastle United, Tottenham Hotspur or Chelsea Football Club is envisaged later this year. The project would help boost the proposed semi-professional football league in Mauritius.

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3. Cabinet has taken note that, as announced in Budget Speech 2014, beneficiaries of Basic Retirement Pension, aged 75 and above and who are eligible to monthly domiciliary medical visits, would be called upon to exercise an option to either continue benefiting from the free medical visits or be paid a monthly cash allowance amounting to a total of Rs6,000 per year. However, the provision of free monthly domiciliary medical visits to centenarians would be maintained. In this connection, the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions would, shortly, issue a communiqué requesting beneficiaries of the scheme to exercise their option.

4. Cabinet has taken note of the activities that would be organised to mark the 179th Anniversary of the Abolition of Slavery in Mauritius on 1 February 2014, namely –

- (a) the Official Programme that would be held at Le Morne Public Beach, would comprise, *inter alia*, the National Anthem sung by children and youth of Le Morne village, a wreath laying ceremony, a South-African song to pay tribute to late Nelson Mandela, donation of tablettes to 12 students of Le Morne Government School who have passed the CPE examinations 2013 and a cultural programme depicting the Code Noir, and the first freedom fighters and the accomplishment of their descendants;

- (b) an Exhibition on the theme “*Le Morne – enn simbol*” at Macaque village to showcase a replica of the village through several exhibits and the projection of a high definition film; and
- (c) a Wreath Laying Ceremony at the Monument des Esclaves, Pointe Canon, Mahebourg.

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5. Cabinet has agreed to the restructuring of the Mauritius Meat Authority as recommended by the Office of Public Sector Governance. The main recommendations are –

- (a) the construction of a new Slaughter House;
- (b) the introduction of proper legislation to control the movement of animals and deter illegal slaughtering; and
- (c) the introduction of cold room/chilling facilities.

The Authority has been facing financial difficulties despite the various measures taken to improve its financial sustainability and operational efficiency. The implementation of the recommendations would result in the Authority generating net cash surplus as from the year 2014 with an average of Rs4m per year over the next four years.

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6. Cabinet has taken note of the completion of a number of road projects, namely Belle Rive-Quartier Militaire Road, La Sourdine Bridge, Schoenfield Bypass, B33 Riche Terre Road and Nouvelle France-La Flora Bypass. The total cost of the projects is Rs1,377m.

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7. Cabinet has taken note that 117,086 tourists visited Mauritius in the month of December 2013 as compared to 115,465 in December 2012, i.e., an increase of 1.4%. Total tourist arrivals for the year 2013 was 993,106 as compared to 965,441 for the year 2012, i.e., an increase of 2.9%.

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8. Cabinet has taken note of the launching of a voluntary scheme for the energy efficiency labelling of household electrical appliances to provide information on the energy efficiency level, and the annual energy consumption of the appliances with a view to helping customers make better purchasing decisions. The scheme, starting in January 2014, would, in the first instance, cover certain household electrical appliances, namely refrigerators, electric ovens, dishwashers, air conditioners, washing machines, lamps, tumble dryers and televisions. Energy efficiency labelling would become mandatory as from December 2014.

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9. Cabinet has agreed to the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions signing a Memorandum of Understanding on Legal Cooperation with the Office of the Attorney General of the Kingdom of Thailand. The objectives of the Memorandum of Understanding are to promote and develop mutually beneficial legal cooperation activities, exchange legislation, experience, information and best practices on subjects of common interest. The Memorandum of Understanding would also be an instrument to establish a platform to discuss and resolve issues related to trans-border crimes, in general, and illegal fishing in our territorial waters, in particular.

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10. Cabinet has taken note of activities that would be organised in 2014 in the context of the School Health Programme for Secondary Schools, and the project Screening and Counselling Services at your Doorstep in the community and at worksites. The main objective of the Programme is to screen students of Form III and Lower VI of all Secondary Schools for non-communicable diseases, including -

- (a) measurement of height and weight to determine the Body Mass Index;
- (b) measurement of blood pressure;
- (c) sensitization for diabetes, as well as counselling and education on the risk factors of non-communicable diseases;
- (d) screening for diabetes, hypertension, vision and obesity;
- (e) breast and cervical cancer screening for women;
- (f) cooking demonstrations; and
- (g) physical activity demonstrations, particularly on the necessity of doing physical exercises regularly.

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11. Cabinet has taken note of arrangements being made by the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology to enhance the state of preparedness of Mauritius for the effective collaboration with signatory Member States of the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime. Mauritius is one of the five countries that have been selected by the Council of Europe and the European Union to participate in a new project known as the Global Action on Cybercrime (GLACY). The main objectives of the project are to prevent and fight organised crime, enable criminal justice authorities to engage in international cooperation on cybercrime and electronic evidence on the basis of the Budapest Convention.

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12. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Housing and Lands to the People's Republic of China where he participated in the High-Level Symposium of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The theme of the Symposium was "*Sustainable Cities and Sustainable Urbanization*". The main objective of the Symposium was to assist Governments in improving decision-making in urban planning, and moving towards sustainable cities and urbanization.

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13. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life would publish the Family Planning and Demographic Yearbook 2012. The Yearbook provides information on population, family planning and health service points for the Republic of Mauritius.

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14. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the Registered Professional Engineers Council.

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