

CABINET DECISIONS – 11 DECEMBER 2015

1. Cabinet has taken note that the second Joint Public-Private Sector Steering Committee Meeting, under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister, will be held on 15 December 2015. The aim of the Meeting is to develop a strong synergy between Government and the private sector to achieve the second economic miracle.

2. Cabinet has agreed to the Calf Productivity Incentive Scheme being extended to beef type calves. The Scheme provides for a cash bonus of Rs2,500 per dairy calf with a view to encouraging farmers to adopt good reproductive and calf management practices, and reducing calf mortality for optimal production. It also encourages farmers to keep the calves up to weaning, thus contributing to the conservation of the local genetic resources and consolidating the national herd. Some 300 small breeders will benefit from the extension of the Scheme.

3. Cabinet has agreed to the recommendations of the Implementation Committee on the Report of Landell Mills Commodities International Ltd (LMC) on the Sugar Sector Reforms. The recommendations ensure the future viability and sustainability of the sugar cane industry and that the cane growers obtain a reasonable and adequate income.

4. Cabinet has agreed to the implementation of the Non-Sugar Sector Strategic Plan 2016-2020. The main objectives of the Strategic Plan are, among others, to provide safe and quality food for local consumption and export, and build capacity to enable farmers to face climate change and move on to “climate-smart agriculture”.

5. Cabinet has taken note that the Saudi authorities have approved the opening of a Mauritian Embassy in Saudi Arabia.

6. Cabinet has taken note that the SME One-Stop-Shop, which will be located at the Ex-BAI Building in Port Louis, will be operational as from 14 December 2015. The One-Stop-Shop will provide support, financing, information and permits and licences that SMEs require to start and grow their business, as announced in Budget Speech 2015-2016.

7. Cabinet has taken note of measures taken/proposed by the Ministry of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport to address the issue of illegal operations in the Transport Sector, namely –

- (a) amendment of the Road Traffic Act to include the use of a motor vehicle as a bus, contract bus, taxi or contract car without a public service vehicle licence as one of the offences which could lead to the disqualification of the contravenant's driving licence;
- (b) publication of the Road Traffic (Control of Contract Cars and Contract Bus Operations) Regulations to provide for contract buses to have labels affixed on the front door and windscreen of vehicles specifying the service authorized under the licence;
- (c) amendment of the Road Traffic (Construction and Use of Motor Vehicles) Regulations to provide for the registration number and the plates of motor vehicles operating under a public service vehicle licence to be of a different colour from those of a private motor vehicle; and
- (d) setting up of a fast track desk at the National Transport Authority to deal with disciplinary cases of unlawful operations by licence holders.

A Bus Modernisation Programme is also being implemented to encourage public to make full use of the public transport system and deter travelling in motor vehicles which are not properly licensed.

8. Cabinet has agreed to Mauritius signing an Agreement on mutual abolition of visa requirements with the Russian Federation. The Agreement provides for citizens of both countries to enter, stay in, exit, or transit, without a visa. The period of each stay should, however, not exceed 60 days, and the total period of authorized stay should not exceed 90 days within each period of 180 days. A visa would still be required for the purposes of employment, study, or residence.

9. Cabinet has taken note of the results of the Certificate of Primary Education Examinations 2015. Out of the 17,589 school candidates examined for the first time, 13,664 passed the examinations, representing 77.68% as compared to the pass rate of 77.21% for the year 2014. The pass rate for Rodrigues has improved from 72.95% in 2014 to 77.49% in 2015. Out of 2,845 candidates who sat for the CPE examinations a second time, 697 passed, i.e., a pass rate of 24.5%. As regards ZEP schools, 1,370 candidates were examined, and the overall pass rate is 45.62%. As in previous years, girls have outperformed boys with a pass rate of 83.07%.

Cabinet has also taken note that the resit examination for those candidates who have passed in three subjects but would require one additional subject to obtain an award of Certificate of Primary Education, will be held on 21 December 2015.

10. Cabinet has agreed to the Ministry of Housing and Lands, with the assistance of the Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development, setting up a National Geo-information Committee to spearhead the National Spatial Data Infrastructure Project for Mauritius. The Spatial Data Infrastructure provides a framework of standards, policies, data, procedures and technology to support the effective coordination and sharing of spatial information among a community of stakeholders. The Project would provide LAVIMS and other agencies with a shared platform to improve efficiency, reduce duplication, improve functionality and effectiveness.

11. Cabinet has taken note that, following the recent amendment brought to the Construction Industry Development Board Act, the Minister of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport would make –

- (a) the Construction Industry Development Board (Registration of Consultants and Contractors) (Amendment) Regulations to provide, among others, for new definitions, procedures to be adopted for application for registration as consultant, contractor or multidisciplinary firm, and the quantum of fees to be paid on registration; and
- (b) the Construction Industry Development Board (Prescribed Period) Regulations 2015 to provide for the period for the registration of consultants and contractors to be extended up to 30 June 2016.

12. Cabinet has taken note of the current situation regarding stray dogs and of the measures being taken by the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security to address the issue, namely –

- (a) launching of an aggressive sensitization campaign;
- (b) a national mass sterilisation campaign for dogs; and
- (c) acquisition of modern equipment to ensure that the dog catching exercise is carried out in a more humane manner.

13. Cabinet has taken note that the services of Mr Gilles Clement, world renowned botanist and horticulturist, have been enlisted to advise on the rehabilitation of Sir Seewoosagar Ramgoolam Botanic Garden. Mr Clement will also advise on the renovation of existing gardens and the creation of new ones, as well as other green areas, in line with Government policy to enhance the environment and promote nature based activities for leisure and recreational purposes.

14. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the 62nd East, Central and Southern Africa Health Community Health Ministers Conference held in Mauritius. Resolutions that were passed, covered, *inter alia*, the following –

- (a) Transitioning from MDGs to SDGs in the ECSA Region;
- (b) Enhancing Health Care through Innovation in Health Financing for Financial Risk Protection;
- (c) Surveillance and Control of Non-communicable Diseases and Trauma;
- (d) Regional Collaboration in the Surveillance and Control of Communicable Diseases;
- (e) Innovations in Health Professional Training using the ECSA College of Health Sciences Model;
- (f) Global Health Diplomacy and Strengthening Ministries of Health; and
- (g) Strengthening the Use of Evidence in Health Policy.

The Global Fund Project on Strengthening Tuberculosis Diagnostic Services in the region was launched during the Conference.

15. Cabinet has taken note that the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade attended the Third Annual Africa Global Business Forum held in Dubai in November last. The theme of the 2015 edition was “**New Drivers, New Partners**”. The Forum served as a platform to engage key leaders from various governments and multinationals to support economic development, and explore new investment opportunities in emerging markets across the globe. The Forum urged African Governments to work in close collaboration with the private sector to improve export readiness. African countries were also urged to step up efforts to adopt innovative policies and strategies.

16. Cabinet has taken note of the appointment of Prof. (Dr) Toolseeram Ramjeawon, Mr Satyajeet Ramchurn and Mr Beenesh Anand Motah as Members on the Environment and Land Use Appeal Tribunal.
