

CABINET DECISIONS – 23 JANUARY 2015

1. Cabinet has taken note, with sadness, of the demise of HE Mr Abdullah bin Abdulaziz, king of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The Prime Minister, on behalf of Government and in his own name, has conveyed his deepest condolences to the bereaved family and parents of HE Mr Abdullah bin Abdulaziz, and to the Government and people of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz, aged 90, acquired the throne in 2005, and he brought in cautious reforms, including giving women a greater public role.

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2. Cabinet has agreed to the setting up of a Vision 2030 High-Powered Committee to provide strategic direction in the design and implementation of an all encompassing “National Economic Development Blueprint” for Mauritius covering the period 2015 to 2030. The High-Powered Committee would also facilitate the implementation of large private sector investment projects, key to job creation, in order to avoid blurred signals that are given to businesses and investors because of delays in the issuance of permits and licences. The National Economic Development Blueprint would contain a series of underlying strategic thrusts, in particular, –

- (a) development and consolidation of the economic pillars around financial services, manufacturing, trading and logistics, i-Mauritius, duty-free shopping, tourism and real estate, regional services and ocean economy;
- (b) a national investment strategy to attract domestic capital formation and foreign direct investment;
- (c) enterprise development and economic empowerment;
- (d) good governance, transparency and accountability;
- (e) a well defined land use management strategy to ensure sustainable use of land;  
and
- (f) nation building and culture change for a new mindset towards discipline, work ethics, integrity and social inclusion.

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3. Taking into consideration substantial cost and time overruns reported on many road infrastructural projects since 2010, and serious technical defects in certain of the road networks, Cabinet has agreed to the Ministry of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms carrying out a complete technical, and financial audit, as well as the management of the contracts of all the projects, implemented by the Road Development Authority since 2010, situating responsibilities for shortcomings and irregularities, and making recommendations as appropriate. The audit required would include, amongst others, -

- (a) Whether all technical aspects had been investigated, including alternative solutions, for inclusion in the scope of works of each project.
- (b) Whether all preliminary tests and surveys had been carried out to avoid unnecessary variation at a later stage, i.e., during execution stage.
- (c) Whether all proper and appropriate checks, tests, supervision and surveillance had been carried out with reference to the specifications of the project.
- (d) Whether time and cost variations were really due to items of work that could not be foreseen at bidding stage.
- (e) Whether any of the overruns could have been avoided.
- (f) Whether the variations given were commensurate with tendered costs.
- (g) Whether value for money had been obtained with respect to quality and cost for all the audited projects.

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4. Cabinet has taken note that, following information received from the Police on 18 January 2015 that cracks had been identified on the Terre Rouge Verdun (M3) Highway at about one kilometre from Valton roundabout, an investigation was carried out by the experts of the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The main cause of the cracks and settlements has been identified as accumulation of excessive water following the heavy rainfall. The geotechnical experts from JICA, along with the Engineers of the Road Development Authority, have, after conducting appropriate tests, proposed remedial measures, including the complete closure of the road, covering of the cracks to avoid further infiltration of water, and construction of drains on the mountain side as well as on the valley side.

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5. Cabinet has taken note of the report on the landslide at Chitrakoot following the heavy rainfall, and agreed to an inter-Ministerial Committee, under the chairmanship of the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Housing and Lands, being set up to look into the multi-dimensional aspects, i.e., environmental, infrastructural, educational, social integration, rehousing, etc, and come up with appropriate solutions.

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6. Taking into consideration numerous failures in the management and oversight of public sector organisations, Cabinet has agreed to the implementation of the recommendations of the Ministry of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms aiming at enhancing good governance within public sector organisations. The recommendations, amongst others, include –

- (a) the roles and responsibilities of Chairpersons and Chief Executives to be kept separate to ensure a balance of power and authority;
- (b) Chairpersons to be responsible for the conduct of the affairs of the Board, putting in place structures and procedures to achieve the Board's independence; ascertaining that all the relevant information is provided to the Board; presiding meetings; and providing overall leadership to the Board; and
- (c) the Chief Executive to be responsible for the day-to-day management of the organisation and the implementation of the policies and decisions of the Board; ensuring that the organisation is managed efficiently and effectively and the Board's decisions are implemented effectively.

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7. Cabinet has taken note that, with a view to sustaining the professionalization of football, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, in collaboration with the Mauritius Football Association and the Mauritius Professional Football League, would enlist the services of Mr Didier Six as National Technical Director/National Coach of the National Football Team. He was the playmate of Michel Platini, winner of *Coupe d'Europe des Nations* in 1984, and Coach of Togo national team which reached the quarter final of CAN 2013 for the first time. Mr Didier Six would be assisted by Mr Alain Happe, who has been *formateur* at the *Centre de Formation de Metz* for several years, and was responsible for the physical preparation of the Togo team. He was also Assistant Coach of the French National Female Football Team. The main aim of the National Technical Director would be to prepare the National Football Team for –

- (a) Gold medal at Indian Ocean Island Games (male and female teams) scheduled for August 2015;
- (b) the final Phase of the Council of Southern Africa Football Associations (COSAFA) Cup;
- (c) the final phase of *Championnat d'Afrique des Nations de Football*; and
- (d) the final phase of the African Cup of Nations 2017.

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8. Cabinet has taken note that three companies have shown their interest to carry out offshore bunkering activities in Port Louis Harbour. Besides the core activities that are related directly with bunkering, the operators would also provide other services, such as shipchandling, changing of crew, food supply, water and inland transport. In time, owners of client vessels are expected to take advantage of the fuel-stop en route to carry out other incidental activities that would trigger a range of economic activities onshore.

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9. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent visit of the Task Force led by the Minister of Environment, Sustainable Development, Disaster and Beach Management to Rodrigues following the passage of Cyclone Bansi. The main objective of the Task Force was to take stock of the impact of Cyclone Bansi on Rodrigues, and arrange, in collaboration with the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, for reconstruction works to be carried out promptly.

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10. Cabinet has agreed to Government making a contribution of USD200,000 for the holding of elections in the Union of Comoros scheduled for 25 January and 22 February 2015.

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11. Cabinet has taken note of the activities that would be organised by the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security to mark the World Wetlands Day 2015, commemorated on 2 February, namely –

- (a) a clean-up campaign at the Pointe d'Esny Wetland;
- (b) launching of a poster and an essay competition for students on the theme: '*Saving our Wetlands for the Future*';
- (c) exhibitions, talks and film shows on wetland conservation at the Rivulet Terre Rouge Estuary Bird Sanctuary at Roche Bois;
- (d) guided tours for the public and students at the three Ramsar Sites, namely Rivulet Terre Rouge Estuary Bird Sanctuary, Blue Bay Marine Park and Pointe d'Esny Wetland;
- (e) a Photo contest for secondary schools from 2 February to 2 March 2015;
- (f) painting activities for students of primary schools in Roche Bois area; and
- (g) distribution in all schools of factsheets on the importance of wetlands.

The theme chosen for World Wetlands Day 2015 is **Wetlands for our Future**.

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12. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the Board of the National Housing Development Company Ltd with Mr Praveen Kumar Ramburn as Chairperson.

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