

CABINET DECISIONS – 06 MAY 2016

1. Cabinet has taken note that the “Report of the Commission of Inquiry on Processes/Practices for Granting of Loans Secured on Immoveable Property and Sale by Levy” would be made public. The Terms of Reference of the Commission of Inquiry, chaired by Ms Wendy Rangan Magistrate Intermediate Court, were -

- (a) to inquire and report on whether the processes and practices involved in the granting of loans secured on immoveable property, are unfair or otherwise detrimental to borrowers;
- (b) to inquire and report on the fairness of the current system of sale by levy and on whether the system gives rise or has given rise to any malpractice or wrongdoing resulting in undue hardship or prejudice to debtors, such inquiry being extended, where necessary, to matters and issues already dealt with by the previous Commission of Inquiry on the system of sale by levy, chaired by Sir Victor Glover, GOSK, in 2004; and
- (c) to recommend such scheme as may be necessary to alleviate any undue hardship or prejudice which debtors or former debtors are experiencing.

2. Cabinet has taken note of the elaboration of a new Road Safety Strategy for Mauritius for 2016-2025. One of the overriding objectives of the Strategy is to achieve a 50% reduction in the number of killed and serious injury crashes by the year 2025. The Strategy outlines the actions to be undertaken to improve safety on our roads. Ten strategic fields of action have been defined, namely -

- (a) the setting up of a Research and Development Programme;
- (b) the improvement of Safety Standards of the road infrastructure;
- (c) the reorganisation of the roadworthiness control of vehicles;
- (d) the setting up an effective communication strategy;
- (e) the strengthening of the Road Traffic Law and Enforcement;
- (f) the development of new perspectives for delivering Road Safety Education;
- (g) the re-engineering of the Driving Licensing Scheme;
- (h) the provision of post-crash trauma care and medical fitness to drive;
- (i) the reduction of accident costs and funding of the Road Safety Strategy; and
- (j) the setting up of a Road Safety Academy.

A National Road Safety Commission, under the chair of the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Affairs, Minister of Finance and Economic Development, Minister for Rodrigues and National Development Unit has also been set up. The Commission comprises -

- (a) the Minister of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research;
- (b) the Minister of Health and Quality of Life;
- (c) the Minister of Local Government;
- (d) the Attorney General; and
- (e) the Minister of Environment, Sustainable Development, and Disaster and Beach Management.

3. Cabinet has taken note of the draft policy document on the Nine Year Continuous Basic Education that articulates the policies and activities that are central to its implementation. The provision of Nine Years of Continuous Basic Education is in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goal 4 on Education which is to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”. The reform agenda rests on a careful alignment of six fundamental pillars namely, Curriculum, Pedagogy, Assessment, Professional Development, Conducive Learning Environment, and Accountability for Learning Outcomes. The main thrust areas in the document are, *inter alia*, -

- (a) the setting up of a new Education Structure with the advent of new institutional changes, such as the introduction of academies and polytechnics;
- (b) the introduction of the Primary School Assessment Certificate that will place a reliance on pupils being assessed on a curriculum comprising both core and non-core learning areas;
- (c) elimination of the Prevocational Education stream; and
- (d) increased attention to the building of capacity of School Leaders and Educators and the setting up of a Teachers’ Council to further teacher professionalization.

4. Cabinet has taken note of the recommendations made by Mr Gilles Clement, French Botanist and Horticulturist, to rehabilitate the Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam Botanic Garden. The main recommendations are, *inter alia*, -

- (a) redesigning and harmonizing of the overall landscaping of the Garden to improve its natural and esthetical aspects;
- (b) review of the monuments, statues, commemorative plates and stones to be in harmony with the Garden's role and functions and landscape;
- (c) introduction of more flowering plants;
- (d) setting up of the Garden's nursery, and production and sale of rare plants which exist at the Garden only; and
- (e) improvement of security aspects for visitors.

A Project Coordinator would be appointed to work out an implementation programme.

5. Cabinet has agreed to the Private Secondary Schools Authority Act 1976 being amended, as enunciated in Government Programme 2015-2019, to -

- (a) provide for enhanced accountability and governance in the decision making structure;
- (b) set up a consultative mechanism at the level of the Authority for greater involvement of stakeholders including the managers, and the staff of private secondary schools and of the organization;
- (c) restore the pedagogical inspection and quality assurance functions of the Authority; and
- (d) introduce educational counselling and psychological support services in line with the educational reforms.

6. Cabinet has taken note that the Fish-i Africa 5th Task Force Meeting on Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing would be held in Mauritius in June 2016. Fish-i Africa is a partnership of eight South-East African countries namely, the Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, the Seychelles, Kenya, Mozambique, Somalia and the United Republic of Tanzania. The aim of Fish-i Africa is to combat and eventually eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in the western part of the Indian Ocean through the sharing of real-time information among Member countries. The main objectives of the Meeting are to assess the activities of the Task Force; identify challenges, constraints and solutions; and explore further avenues of cooperation.

7. Cabinet has taken note of the status of waste oil management in Mauritius as well as of the measures that the Ministry of Environment, Sustainable Development, and Disaster and Beach Management would take to render the system more effective, efficient and environment-friendly. Waste oils may contain various contaminants and hazardous constituents, such as heavy metals and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, that contribute to long term hazards, including risks of cancer. In order to maximize capture of waste oils, the following measures would be adopted -

- (a) ban the use of waste oils unless they have been re-refined;
- (b) make it mandatory for existing facilities carrying out basic treatment to upgrade the treatment processes of waste oil to re-refining; and
- (c) waste oils generated in Mauritius be disposed of only by EIA licensees having a re-refining facility.

The Environment Protection (Collection, Storage, Treatment, Use and Disposal of Waste Oil) Regulations 2006 would be amended accordingly.

8. Cabinet has agreed to the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms conducting Customer Satisfaction Surveys in the Civil Service to gauge the level of customer satisfaction in the delivery of public services. Feedbacks from citizens on their direct experience with public services are of paramount importance in the formulation of policies and enhancement of service delivery. Customer Satisfaction Surveys would be carried out, on a pilot basis, in the Civil Status Division of the Prime Minister's Office.

9. Cabinet has taken note that the Saudi authorities have already issued a Registration Number, a prerequisite in the setting up of the Mauritius Embassy in Riyadh and a Consulate in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The official opening of the Embassy would be finalized on the completion of all arrangements in connection with the operationalisation of the Mission.

10. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life would, shortly, conduct the Global Youth Tobacco Survey 2016. The objectives of the Survey are to -

- (a) gather data on the magnitude, patterns, determinants and consequences of tobacco use and exposure to tobacco smoke amongst students aged between 13 to 15 years; and
- (b) assess the attitudes, knowledge and behaviours of the targeted students.

The Survey would target some 3,500 students in colleges in Mauritius and Rodrigues. The findings of the Survey would help strengthen existing tobacco control measures, as well as develop new tobacco control strategies to address smoking, particularly among youth.

11. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Environment, Sustainable Development, and Disaster and Beach Management has developed a climate resilient and site specific guideline for coastal setback as a key proactive adaptation measure to address adverse impacts of climate change and sea level rise on the coastal zone. The implementation of the guideline on coastal setback is expected to bring multiple benefits, such as enhancement of conservation ecosystems, adaptation to sea-level rise, sustainable land use, sustainable coastal development, future investment, engagement of the Tourism Sector in adaptation and sustainable development and disaster risk reduction. The guideline proposes a minimum site specific setback for 13 sites, namely Baie du Tombeau, Pointe aux Cannoniers, Mon Choisy, Bras d'Eau, Quatre Cocos, Ile aux Cerfs, Pointe d'Esny, Bel Ombre, Le Morne, Flic-en-Flac, Albion, Pointe aux Sables, and Grand Sable.

12. Cabinet has taken note that the World Bank would hold a Ministerial Conference and an Investment Forum in Mauritius in October 2016 to bring together African Governments, the private sector and the civil society to –

- (a) discuss the contents of the “Africa Oceans Finance Package”;
- (b) prepare an African Governments’ position on the ocean economy leading to COP 22; and
- (c) hold a public dialogue on the ocean economy and climate change.

In this context, a high level delegation from the World Bank is currently in Mauritius for the Economic Sector Work on fisheries and aquaculture, ports and logistics, and renewable energy.

13. Cabinet has taken note that a plaque marking the inscription of the Indenture Immigration Records of the Republic of Mauritius on UNESCO’s Memory of the World International Register would be unveiled at the Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Site, Port-Louis on 09 June 2016. The inscription of the Indenture Immigration Records of the Republic of Mauritius in the Register places Mauritius on the World Documentary Heritage Map, and will –

- (a) lead to improved conservation of the documentary heritage;
- (b) encourage its preservation and digitization; and
- (c) promote its dissemination by making the documents accessible to users.

The Indenture Immigration Records of the Republic of Mauritius, covering the period 1834 to 1930’s, provide a unique and comprehensive documentation of the “Great Experiment” undertaken in Mauritius by the British, during the 19th Century.

14. Cabinet has taken note that the final Coordination Meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency Regional Project RAF/6/042 '*Applying Nuclear Techniques to Design and Evaluate Interventions to Reduce Obesity and Related Health Risks*' would be held in Mauritius in October 2016. The purpose of the Coordination Meeting is to review the progress made by the African Member States in their efforts to use stable isotope techniques to assess body fat, total energy expenditure and physical activity to inform the design and improvement of interventions aimed at prevention and control of obesity and related health risks, such as diabetes, among women and children in Africa.

15. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport to Ethiopia and Dubai.

In Ethiopia, the Minister attended the 2nd Africa Resilient Infrastructure Development in Africa. The theme of the Summit was "*Climate resilient Infrastructure Development in Africa*". The objective of the Summit was to introduce technology, investment and services needed to plan and implement climate resilient projects in Africa in the sectors of energy, transport infrastructure, agriculture and food security and water. In the margins of the Summit, the Minister of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport met, among others, HE Mrs Fatima Haram Acyl, Commissioner for Trade and Industry and Acting Chairperson of the African Union, with whom he discussed the holding of the Africa Economic Forum in Mauritius in June 2016.

In Dubai, the Minister of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport participated in the Transport Congress and Exhibition on the theme "*Think Big, Act Smart*". He had the opportunity to meet key decision makers and acquaint with the future trends, challenges, opportunities and developments concerning the Public Transport Sector.

In the margins of the Congress, the Minister of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport had discussions with Dr Eng. Abdulla Bilhaif Al Nuaimi, Minister of Infrastructure Development of the United Arab Emirates, on the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding in the field of infrastructure development.

The Minister of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport also visited -

- (a) the Burj Khalifa, the highest tower in the world, which has been built by a South Korean company;
- (b) two tunnels (KALBA tunnel and Sharm tunnel) located in the North of Dubai and which were constructed by the UAE Authorities;
- (c) the ongoing beach reprofiling and coastal development project; and
- (d) a road project where cuts have been made through the mountains as in the case of Terre Rouge/Verdun Road, and where stabilisation works have been carried out to prevent landslides and rock falls.

16. Cabinet has taken note that Mr Mamode Hossen Gendoo has been appointed Member of the Board of Directors of the National Transport Corporation. Mr Gendoo is an Analyst in the Credit Underwriting Team at MauBank Ltd and a Part Time Lecturer in the fields of Statistics, Operations Research, Mathematics Education, Mathematical Foundations for Management, Research Methods, Quantitative Methods for Business, Operations Management and Financial Mathematics at the University of Technology, Mauritius and the Open University of Mauritius.
