

CABINET DECISIONS – 01 APRIL 2016

1. Cabinet has taken note of the recommendations made by the Pay Research Bureau in its Report on the Review of Pay and Grading Structures and Conditions of Service in the Public Sector (Civil Service, Parastatal and other Statutory Bodies, Local Authorities and Rodrigues Regional Assembly) and the Private Secondary Schools, and has agreed to its implementation, *in toto*, as from 1 January 2016. The financial implications for the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Report would be to the tune of Rs3 billion.

Cabinet has also taken note that the Bureau has considered, *inter alia*, the following in making its recommendations –

- (a) national affordability and social acceptability;
- (b) the need for a performance-oriented culture, and introducing desired employee behaviour for an effective and efficient service delivery to meet citizen's need and for the wider benefit of the community;
- (c) erosion of purchasing power since the 2013 pay review, and cumulative inflation rate from January 2013 to 31 December 2015, which stood at 8.2%;
- (d) affording a better salary for the low and middle-income earners through a higher percentage increase in salary;
- (e) the need to address, to the extent possible, the relativity concerns of stakeholders to ensure fairness and equity in the pay system; and
- (f) pre-tax basic salary ratio between the general worker to Permanent Secretary which has been set at 1:7.

The Report is available on the following websites:

- (a) Pay Research Bureau – <http://prb.pmo.govmu.org>
- (b) Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms - <http://civilservice.govmu.org>

2. Cabinet has agreed to the recommendations on the financing of political parties made by the Ministerial Committee on Electoral Reforms, chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism and External Communications. The main recommendations of the Committee are on the registration of political parties; funding of political parties by the State, private individuals and corporate bodies; limits for election expenses for the party and the candidates, and the eligibility criteria for qualification for State funding.

3. Cabinet has taken note that some 846 households have reported having suffered loss due to flooding during the recent heavy rainfalls and, with the collaboration of the private sector, assistance would shortly be provided to those households.

4. Cabinet has agreed to the recommendation of the Project Plan Committee to include the construction of a refuge centre at Quatre Soeurs in the Public Sector Investment Programme. The project aims at providing a secure place to the local residents in case of sea level rise, storm surge, flooding and landslide.

5. Cabinet has taken note that the anti-influenza vaccine exercise for 2016 winter season would start on 4 April and be completed on 3 May 2016. Vaccine would be provided, free of charge, to persons aged 60 and above, children with disabilities attending specialized schools, and inmates of charitable institutions and private licensed homes. The vaccination exercise would also be carried out in Rodrigues.

6. Cabinet has agreed to the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands promulgating the Fisheries and Marine Resources (Automatic Identification System) Regulations to provide for all vessels or boats above 12 metres of length overall and licensed to fish, to be fitted with an Automatic Identification System. The System is an automatic tracking system used on boats and vessels for identifying and locating vessels by communicating data electronically to a station through satellites. The Regulations would be effective as from 1 August 2016.

7. Cabinet has agreed to the introduction of standards, in the first instance, on some 20 household and electrical appliances, such as hair dryers, fans, ovens, toasters, washing machines, electric shavers, hair clippers, electrically heated blankets, lamps, and electronic and magnetic ballasts with a view to protecting consumers against safety risks and hazards. The standards to be formulated by the Mauritius Standards Bureau would be based on the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) Standard, a worldwide standard for electrical and electronic appliances. The Consumer Protection (Safety Requirements) Regulations would be promulgated accordingly and take effect from 1 November 2016.

8. Cabinet has agreed to the introduction of a National Open Data Policy to enable Ministries, Departments and other Government agencies to release and manage designated Government datasets as open data. Data held by Government constitute a strategic national resource, which represents considerable value for stimulating economic growth, improving service delivery, transforming the policy outcomes of the country and contributing to achieve the “second economic miracle” and Vision 2030. The main objective of the National Open Data Policy is to create economic value out of the releases of Government datasets as open data.

9. Cabinet has agreed to the introduction of the National Agency for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Substance Abusers (Repeal) Bill in the National Assembly. The object of the Bill is to repeal the National Agency for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Substance Abusers Act following the dissolution of the Agency. The Harm Reduction Unit of the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life has taken over the programmes on prevention, treatment and rehabilitation of substance abusers, previously carried out by the Agency.

10. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands would sign a Memorandum of Understanding with Growfish International Ltd of South Africa for collaboration in the aquaculture sector. Growfish International Ltd, which is involved in aquaculture activities, aims at producing high-value fish species mainly for export.

11. Cabinet has taken note that the Road Development Authority and the Korea Expressway Corporation would sign a Memorandum of Understanding providing for close collaboration and cooperation, *inter alia*, in the field of construction and maintenance of roads, bridges and tunnels in the context of the implementation of the Road Decongestion Programme.

Cabinet has further agreed to the Ministry of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport signing a Framework Cooperation Agreement with the Ministry of Land Infrastructure and Transport of the Republic of Korea providing for general cooperation in the areas of public infrastructure and transport.

12. Cabinet has taken note of the status of the project to set up the third submarine fibre optic cable linking Mauritius and Rodrigues to the rest of the world. The leg Rodrigues-Mauritius would be implemented on a priority basis.

13. Cabinet has taken note of the key ICT indicators for the ICT sector, the third pillar of the economy. The main local ICT indicators show that –

- (a) Internet subscriptions stood at 776,500 as at June 2015 as compared to 735,000 in 2014;
- (b) Broadband subscriptions stood at 620,600 as at June 2015 as compared to 579,000 in 2014; and
- (c) mobile phone subscriptions were at 1,680,200 in June 2015 as compared to 1,652,000 in 2014.

The main international ICT indicators are as follows –

- (a) Mauritius improved the ICT Development Index from 4.31 in 2010 to 5.41 in 2015;
- (b) the ICT Price Basket Index showed that Mauritius offered the cheapest prices for ICT services on the African continent;
- (c) Mauritius improved its score on the Networked Readiness Index to 4.5 in 2015, as compared to 4.31 in 2014;
- (d) the A.T. Keaney Global Services Location Index 2016 has placed Mauritius in the 30th position with an improved score of 5.17, gaining 6 places over 2014; and
- (e) the Global Cybersecurity Index has ranked Mauritius 9th with a score of 0.588 out of 105 economies assessed, i.e., first in the African continent.

14. Cabinet has agreed to the following national periodic reports being transmitted to the respective treaty body -

- (a) the Fourth Periodic Report on the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment for the period 2011-2015, to the UN Committee Against Torture. The Report highlights the measures that have been taken to consolidate the National Human Rights Commission;
- (b) the Fifth Periodic Report on the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, covering period 2005-2015, to the UN Human Rights Committee. The Report relates to the civil and political rights of the people, and highlights the measures taken to address the problem of discrimination and strengthen human rights; and
- (c) the Sixth to Eighth Combined Periodic Reports on the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, covering period 2009-2015, to the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights. The Report highlights measures taken to implement the recommendations made by the treaty bodies during the previous reviews.

15. Cabinet has agreed to the Consumer Protection (Control of Fairs) Regulations 2016 being amended to remove the theme “Wedding” from the list of themes under which a trade fair may be organized.

16. Cabinet has taken note that the Minister of Health and Quality of Life would make regulations under the Medical Council Act to include the following in the recognized list of medical institutions for the purpose of registration –

- (a) the Medical Association Berlin of Germany;
- (b) the University of Hull and The University of York of the United Kingdom;
and
- (c) the Nanchang University of China.

17. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare to New York where she participated in the 60th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women. The priority theme for this year’s Session was “**Women’s empowerment and the link to sustainable development**” and the review theme was “**The elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls**”. The Commission recognized women’s vital role as agents of development, and acknowledged that progress on Sustainable Development Goals at the heart of Agenda 2030 will not be possible without gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.
