

**CABINET DECISIONS – 26 FEBRUARY 2016**

1. Cabinet has agreed to the recommendations of the Ministerial Committee, chaired by the Acting Prime Minister, to look into the problems faced by taxi operators based at hotels. The Committee has, after consultation with all stakeholders, *inter alia*, made the following recommendations –

- (a) a redistribution exercise be carried out to determine the number of taxis in excess based at hotels on a regionwise basis, taking into account the ratio of one taxi to ten hotel rooms. No new taxi licence, with base of operation at hotels, would be issued until the completion of the exercise;
- (b) taxi operators based at hotels be provided training by the Tourism Authority;
- (c) a Taxi Desk be set up at hotels of more than 100 rooms, after consultation between the management of a hotel and taxi operators;
- (d) taxi meters be made mandatory for all hotel and airport based taxis;
- (e) contract cars and taxis from other base of operation be not allowed to have access to hotels to collect tourists for excursions/outings;
- (f) staff of hotels be not allowed to do canvassing on behalf of tour operators; and
- (g) necessary legislation be introduced to make it mandatory for newly licensed contract cars of up to 1800 cc to be exclusively self-driven except for such cars that are already in use and on a case-to-case basis, and to prohibit payment of 'commission' to taxi drivers and tour operators by restaurant and other shop owners.

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2. Cabinet has agreed to the monthly allowance payable to foster parents being increased from Rs1,500 to Rs5,250 with effect from 01 March 2016 with a view to, among others, motivating more parents to come forward to foster children, and promoting individualised care of children, victims of abuse or neglect, to live in a substitute familial environment. Since the implementation of the Foster Care Programme, a total of 142 children have, so far, been placed with foster parents, and 48 children adopted by their foster parents.

Cabinet has also taken note that the Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare would mount a campaign to encourage more parents to foster children.

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3. Cabinet has agreed to the additional proposals of the Ministerial Committee, chaired by the Acting Prime Minister, to the Report of the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence Committee. The Ministerial Committee has, besides recommending domestic violence being treated as an aggravated offence, proposed that –

- (a) the cases of domestic violence be dealt with expeditiously by the judiciary and the safety and security of victims be safeguarded;
- (b) mediation be accompanied by other stringent measures to prevent recurrence of domestic violence;
- (c) victims, if unemployed, be trained to enable them to become employable and earn a decent living; and
- (d) an emergency accommodation for victims of domestic violence be set up.

Arrangements are being made for the appropriate legislations to be amended accordingly.

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4. Cabinet has taken note that the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Housing and Lands has approved the grant/renewal of State lands for lease to 50 applicants, namely 36 residential, 6 commercial/industrial, 2 socio-cultural/religious, 2 cultivation, and 4 campement. The particulars of the applicants would be posted on the website of the Ministry of Housing and Lands for transparency and accountability.

Cabinet has agreed to the allocation to Miss Marie Annabelle Laprovence of a plot of State land at Pointe aux Sables for residential purpose, in recognition of her performance at the Commonwealth Games held in Glasgow in 2014, where she won a bronze medal in Judo.

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5. Cabinet has taken note of the proposed programme of activities for the celebration of National Day 2016. The theme for the celebrations will be "*nou destin dan nou lame*". The official programme that would be held at Champ de Mars as from 18 00 hours, will comprise –

- (a) the Flag Raising Ceremony;
- (b) march past by the Police Band, Disciplined Forces and Uniformed Organisations;
- (c) display by helicopters and Queen Elizabeth College Majorettes; and
- (d) a cultural show by local artists.

Cultural shows would also be held on 13 March 2016 as from 16 00 hours at Flacq and Bambous.

Cabinet has also taken note that the following arrangements would be made for those travelling by bus to Champ de Mars two hours before, and two hours after the official celebrations -

- (a) all fare-paying passengers to pay half the normal rate; and
- (b) children aged less than 13 years to travel free of charge.

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6. Cabinet has agreed to the construction of drains being fast tracked in flood-prone areas.

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7. Cabinet has agreed to the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands promulgating the Fisheries and Marine Resources (Safety and Security Measures for Fishermen at Sea) Regulations to provide for further safety and security measures to fishermen operating fishing boats of less than 12 metres long. The Regulations will -

- (a) render it mandatory for the fishermen to carry and use basic lifesaving equipment;
- (b) make it an offence for a person operating a fishing boat under the influence of an intoxicating drink, or a drug, or after consuming alcoholic drinks;
- (c) require fishing vessels operating on banks, and from islets used as a fishing base, to keep radio communication facilities; and
- (d) require fishermen carrying out off-lagoon fishing to be equipped with an auxiliary engine.

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8. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Arts and Culture to Germany and the UK.

In Germany, the Minister of Arts and Culture attended the *Berlinale Film Festival* and promoted Mauritius as a film shooting destination and enumerated the facilities extended to foreign film producers. He also had meetings with several film producers and directors.

In the UK, the Minister of Arts and Culture had working sessions, among others, with Dr Richard Benjamin, Head of the International Slavery Museum, Ms Vanessa Salter, Assistant Curator of Projects of the Wilberforce House Museum in the context of the setting up of a Slavery Museum as recommended by the Truth and Justice Commission.

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9. Cabinet has agreed to the recommendations of the Project Plan Committee to include six projects in the Public Sector Investment Programme. The projects, to the tune of Rs275.54m, include –

- (a) the construction of stormwater drains at Péreybère, Camp Carol, Grand Baie and Cité Argy, Flacq;
- (b) the relocation of the Quatre Bornes Fire Station;
- (c) the construction of a new block for the Materials Testing Laboratory; and
- (d) the construction of a covered gymnasium at St Félix.

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10. Cabinet has agreed to the Second State of Conservation Report of Le Morne Cultural Landscape World Heritage Property being submitted to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre for consideration at the 40th Session of the World Heritage Committee scheduled for July 2016. The Report provides an update on the various activities undertaken, such as research, capacity building, community engagement, and biodiversity challenges, and also includes the revised Management Plan and its sub plans.

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11. Cabinet has taken note that, following a decision of the Town and Country Planning Board, the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Housing and Lands would seek the approval of the President of the Republic to extend the date of operation of the District Council Outline Schemes to the year 2020 in order to be in compliance with the Court judgment in the matter of Mr A. G. Nuckcheddy & Ors v/s the Town and Country Planning Board & Ors.

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12. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Environment, Sustainable Development, and Disaster and Beach Management would sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry on the setting up, operation, and monitoring of an Electrical and Electronic Wastes (E-Wastes) Management System in Mauritius.

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13. Cabinet has taken note that the Minister of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions recently visited India at the invitation of the Confederation of Senior Citizens Associations of Delhi and the Respect Age International of Agra. The Minister participated in an International Seminar on “*Ageing without Pain, Hardship and Neglect*” organised by Respect Age International. She also had working sessions with the Senior Citizens Council of Delhi on the changing needs and the improvement of the quality of life of the elderly. The Minister had meetings, among others, with –

- (a) Hon Krishnan Pal Gurjar, Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment, with whom she had discussions on disability-related issues; and
- (b) Mr Subhash Arya, Mayor of South Delhi Municipal Corporation, on the issue of pension and other assistance provided to senior citizens.

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