

CABINET DECISIONS – 05 FEBRUARY 2016

1. Cabinet has agreed to the setting up of an appropriate legal and administrative structure for the domestication of the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in respect of Intercountry Adoption, and the introduction of new policies on adoption matters. The Convention aims at preventing the abduction, sale of, or trafficking in children in Member States, and ensuring that intercountry adoptions are done in the best interests of children through the establishment of international standards of practice. The National Adoption Council (NAC), which is the Central Authority, would be restructured to meet the obligations under the Convention.

2. Cabinet has agreed to regulations being made under the Road Traffic Act to enable a better control over the operation of contract buses, and help identify contract buses operating unlawfully by collecting passengers on bus stops and competing with bus operators. Provision is, *inter alia*, also being made for one-man operated bus, magnetic fare card, stages travelled, prepaid tickets payment and issue of tickets, and the payment of a fee for the obtention of a student identity card.

3. Cabinet has taken note that following the recent mission of the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Housing and Lands to Saudi Arabia, the Saudi Authorities have confirmed that they would recruit some 930 medical practitioners.

4. Cabinet has taken note that a round of air services negotiations would be held with the Federal Republic of Germany on 24 and 25 February 2016 in Mauritius with a view to modernizing the existing Bilateral Air Services Agreement and providing for a permanent extension of the traffic rights, particularly the multiple designation of airlines and increase in the number of frequencies. Germany is one of the most promising tourism market for Mauritius and its booming economy has the capacity to increase the number of tourists. Following the recent request of the German authorities to increase the number of frequencies, Condor and Lufthansa are, respectively, operating five and two weekly flights. The Mauritian delegation would be headed by the Secretary to Cabinet and Head of the Civil Service.

5. Cabinet has taken note of the projects being implemented by the Central Electricity Board (CEB) to increase electricity generation capacity in order to meet peak power demand in the short to medium terms.

6. Cabinet has taken note that the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has selected Mauritius as one of the countries for a pilot project for regional capacity building on Waste Management in Africa. The project comprises –

- (a) the production of a Regional Waste Management Outlook for Africa;
- (b) support to countries to develop national and local waste management strategies with associated Action Plan; and
- (c) provision of facilities to a consortium of African universities on developing and delivering waste management course curriculum.

7. Cabinet has taken note that discussions would, shortly, be held with DP World on their proposal for the creation of the Special Economic Zone and port development in Mauritius. The objective of Government is to transform Port Louis Harbour from a destination Port to a regional hub and in this context, it is imperative to increase productivity and efficiency of cargo handling activities, and provide state-of-the-art infrastructure.

8. Cabinet has taken note that, as from March 2016, the St Antoine Planters Co-operative Trust would implement the following new schemes for the benefit of sugar cane planters cultivating not more than 6.5 hectares of land and falling within the factory area of the former St Antoine Sugar Factory -

- (a) the Grant Scheme for the Purchase of Sprayers – the grant would cover 50 per cent of the cost of one sprayer up to a maximum of Rs1,800 every five years;
- (b) the Grant Scheme for Purchase of Fertilizers – planters would be provided with a grant on the purchase of recommended fertilizers for each arpent cultivated every year;
- (c) the Grant Scheme for Cutting, Loading and Transport of Sugarcane - an annual grant of Rs40 per ton would be allocated for cutting, loading and transport of sugar cane; and
- (d) the Road Mending Scheme, under which access roads to fields of eligible planters in the former St Antoine Sugar Factory area would be mended.

9. Cabinet has taken note of the performance of the Export-Oriented Enterprises Sector for the year 2015 as compared to 2014. Based on the provisional export figures, the value of exports reached Rs49.23 billion in 2015 as compared to Rs49.07 billion in 2014, representing an increase of 0.3%. Increase had been recorded in the value of exports of Textiles and Clothing (+3.9%), Textiles (Yarns and Fabrics) (+4.2%), and pearls, precious and semi-precious stones and jewellery (+11.6%). Increase had also been recorded in exports to the Netherlands (+13.8%), USA (+4.0%), South Africa (+16.6%) and Madagascar (+12.4%).

10. Cabinet has agreed to the establishment of diplomatic relations with the Solomon Islands in line with the aim of Government to forge new relationships across the world. The Solomon Islands, an archipelago with a total land area of 27,556 sq km, have a population of around 573,000 inhabitants. The Solomon Islands are a member of the United Nations, the Commonwealth, the Alliance of Small Island States, the World Trade Organisation, and the African Caribbean Pacific Group of States.

11. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent visit of the Minister of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms to Rodrigues. The main purpose of the visit was to take stock of the situation in the general administration of the public service in Rodrigues and its inherent constraints. The Minister launched a training programme for Departmental Heads and senior officials of the Rodrigues Administration to kick-start the implementation of the Performance Management System. Discussions were also held on collaboration between the Civil Service College and the Rodrigues Regional Assembly for the mounting of focused training programmes, taking into account the specificity of Rodrigues. The Minister had working sessions with the Chief Commissioner and the Island Chief Executive on issues of common interest, with a view to rendering the Rodrigues Regional Assembly more efficient.
