

CABINET DECISIONS – 4 NOVEMBER 2016

1. Cabinet has agreed to the introduction of the Information and Communication Technologies (Amendment) Bill in the National Assembly in view of the implementation of live broadcasting of the proceedings of the National Assembly in the near future. The Bill amends -

- (a) the Information and Communication Technologies Act to exempt MultiCarrier (Mauritius) Ltd, which will operate the transmission stations for the broadcast of the proceedings of the National Assembly, from the payment of any fee to the Information and Communication Technologies Authority;
- (b) the Independent Broadcasting Authority Act to provide that the National Assembly shall, for the broadcast of its proceedings, be exempt from being licensed with the Independent Broadcasting Authority; and
- (c) the National Assembly (Privileges, Immunities and Powers) Act to provide that no civil or criminal proceedings shall be instituted against any person for broadcasting the proceedings of the National Assembly.

2. Cabinet has agreed to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly (Amendment) Bill being forwarded to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly for concurrence. The main object of the Bill is to reform the electoral system in Rodrigues by providing -

- (i) gender equality;
- (ii) a more equitable representation of parties; and
- (iii) anti-defection measures to enhance stability.

The Bill amends the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act and lays down, among others, that -

- (a) the Regional Assembly shall consist of -
 - (i) 12 local region members elected on the first past the post basis;
 - (ii) 5 island region members, instead of 6, elected under the current Proportional Representation system;
 - (iii) allocation of additional seats, where needed, to ensure an overall majority of 3 seats to the party which has won 7 or more local region seats;
- (b) each registered party presenting more than 2 candidates at an ordinary election, shall ensure that not more than two thirds of the total number of candidates of that party in the 6 local regions are of the same sex;

- (c) a registered party may file a Party List which shall contain the names of not more than 12 persons, and not include the name of a person whose name is included on any other list submitted by a registered party for election as a member for the Island, and who is a registered party candidate, other than Party Leader, for election as a member for a local region; and
- (d) a registered party may file a Party List which shall not comprise more than two thirds of persons of the same sex.

3. Cabinet has agreed to the introduction of the Cooperatives Bill in the National Assembly. The object of the Bill is to repeal and replace the Cooperatives Act 2005 by a new enactment, which will, *inter alia*, provide for -

- (a) the setting up of a Cooperative Audit Unit within the Ministry of Business, Enterprise and Cooperatives to ensure transparency and accountability in the management and control of cooperatives; and
- (b) the establishment of a National Cooperative College which will be responsible for developing the cooperative movement through education and training.

4. Cabinet has agreed to the extension of the existing agreement between the Government of Mauritius and the Mauritius International Arbitration Centre Ltd to include the setting up and operation of an International Arbitration Hearing Centre equipped with the state-of-the-art technology and amenities/facilities to create the ideal physical setting for arbitration and dispute resolution hearings in Mauritius as announced in the 2016-2017 Budget Speech. The opening of the Hearing Centre will ensure that Mauritius maintains its lead in the field of arbitration.

5. Cabinet has taken note of the National Code of Corporate Governance for Mauritius (2016) which has been endorsed by the National Committee on Corporate Governance. The main objectives of the Code are to introduce and encourage organisations to comply with good governance practices, and empower participation of stakeholders in ensuring that these practices are effectively implemented. The purpose of Corporate Governance is to facilitate entrepreneurial and prudent management that can deliver the long-term success of an organisation.

6. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security would authorise the importation of pregnant heifers, bull for slaughter, as well as goats and sheep, to meet the demand for fresh meat on the local market during the festive period of December 2016/January 2017. The Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security would make appropriate arrangements as regards quarantine of the animals.

7. Cabinet has taken note of measures taken by the Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare to strengthen the Foster Care System. In this connection, Ms Vasundhra Sachdeva, Managing Director of Centre of Excellence in Alternative Care for Children (New Delhi) and Research Scholar with the Institute of Technology and Management (ITM) University, Gurgaon, has been assigned the responsibility to -

- (a) conduct a situation analysis of the actual Foster Care System;
- (b) conduct a feasibility study of the Foster Care System as a public or private component; and
- (c) determine ways and means to professionalise the Foster Care System in Mauritius.

There is currently no standard to foster care and no guideline to regulate the work of foster carers.

8. Cabinet has taken note of the setting up of an Academic Board at the Mauritius Maritime Training Academy to -

- (a) supervise and develop all academic activities of the Academy, including the maintenance of high standards in teaching and research;
- (b) determine all matters related to courses and subjects, admission and enrolment of students, assessment and admission to courses;
- (c) be responsible for formulating and reviewing policies, rules, guidelines and procedures in relation to academic matters;
- (d) monitor the implementation and effectiveness of policies at the Academy to sustain academic quality and assurance; and
- (e) elaborate recommendations on collaboration and networking with foreign maritime institutions.

9. Cabinet has taken note that Mr Dheerendra Kumar Dabee, GOSK, SC, Solicitor General, has been appointed Chairperson of the Board of the Financial Intelligence Unit.

10. Cabinet has taken note of the Third National Communication Report on Climate Change for the Republic of Mauritius. The Report highlights the state of affairs in relation to climate change and measures implemented at national level in various key sectors, namely, energy, transport, waste management, water, agriculture, biodiversity, coastal zone, fisheries, health and infrastructure.

11. Cabinet has taken note of the new National Plan of Action for Nutrition for the period 2016 to 2020. The main objectives of the Plan are, amongst others, to -

- (i) promote appropriate diets and healthy lifestyles, including raising the consumption of fruits and vegetables by two fold, decreasing the consumption of oils, saturated fats and trans-fatty acids by 5%;
- (ii) protect consumers through improved food quality and safety, enforcement of food regulations, consumer education;
- (iii) prevent specific micro-nutrient deficiencies, particularly minimising anaemia;
- (iv) mount aggressive sensitisation campaigns on risks associated with overweight and obesity, and the benefits of adopting healthy lifestyles; and
- (v) establish dietary recommendations for adults for the prevention of chronic diet-related diseases based on the World Health Organization's population nutrient intake goals.

12. Cabinet has taken note of the activities that would be organised to mark the World Diabetes Day 2016 observed worldwide on 14 November. The theme of this year's event is "**Eyes on Diabetes.**" According to the Non-Communicable Diseases Survey Report 2015, the prevalence of diabetes in Mauritius has stabilised at 22.8% in 2015, as compared to 23.6% in 2009, while the prevalence of pre-diabetes for the same period has declined from 24.4% to 19.4%. The activities would include -

- (a) the launching of a 'First Day Cover' on diabetes;
- (b) an exhibition on NCDs and other health related issues, such as retinal and foot care;
- (c) retinal and NCD screening across the country;
- (d) an open day with Type 1 Diabetic patients aged between 17 to 30 years at Victoria Hospital; and
- (e) Continuous Nursing Education on the theme "*Healthy Living and Diabetes Care*", including demonstration on insulin injection techniques, proper use of glucose meters at Dr A.G. Jeetoo Hospital.

13. Cabinet has taken note of the Family Planning and Demographic Yearbook 2015. The Yearbook provides information on population trends, family planning and health service points for the islands of Mauritius and Rodrigues. The Ministry of Health and Quality of Life proposes to prepare a comprehensive population policy document with a view to determining priorities in population and development programmes for sustainable development of the country.

14. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare is organising a Walk from Ebène to Rose-Hill on the theme “*Let’s Walk the Talk for Gender Equality*”, in the context of the UN Women campaign “*Planet 50-50 by 2030 - Step it Up for Gender Equality*”. The objectives of the Walk are to -

- (a) raise awareness on gender equality;
- (b) bring forth that women’s rights are human rights;
- (c) flag out the issue of violation of women’s rights;
- (d) enlist the commitment of all partners working for gender equality; and
- (e) showcase best practices on gender equality.

15. Cabinet has taken note of activities that would be organised on the occasion of the International Day Against Violence Against Women commemorated on 25 November. The theme for year 2016 is ***From Peace in the Home to Peace in the World: Make Education Safe for All***. The slogan retained by the Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare is ***Aret Violans Domestik***. The activities would include -

- (i) a colloquium for Magistrates on “*Domestic Violence: The Justice System*”;
- (ii) the launching of a National Video Clip Competition on “*Aret Violans Domestik*”; and
- (iii) launching of an awareness campaign on toll-free hotline 139.

16. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms would launch the Public Service Excellence Award (PSEA) 2016, on the theme “**Excellence – doing ordinary things extraordinarily well**”.

Cabinet has further taken note that Sir Abdool Razack Mohamed State Secondary School was declared Grand Winner for the PSEA 2015.

17. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade to Indonesia where he attended the 16th Meeting of the IORA Council of Ministers. The issues discussed were, among others -

- (a) IORA Concord and Action Plan;
- (b) establishment of an Economic Cooperation Framework for the IORA Region; and
- (c) Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.

In the margins of the Meeting, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade had bilateral discussions, among others, with the Hon Julie Bishop, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Australia, on the setting up of a Joint Commission to deepen diplomatic and economic relations, and the Hon Meezan Merican, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia on the Malaysian investment in Mauritius and Africa and the Mauritius-Malaysia Cooperation.

18. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the Cooperative Development Advisory Board with Mr Pradeo Buldee as Chairperson.
