

CABINET DECISIONS - 11 NOVEMBER 2016

1. Cabinet has taken note that the 11th Edition of the *Festival International Kreol* would be held from 17 to 27 November 2016. The Festival aims at promoting the authenticity of the *kreol* culture through local music, arts, language and cuisine. Among the various activities that would be organised, a '*Konferans*' on the theme '*Lang kreol: Siman la Nasion*' would be held on 17 November 2016.

Cabinet has also taken note that His Majesty Otumfuo Osei Tutu II, Asantehene or monarch of the Kingdom of Ashanti, Ghana, would be the Chief Guest of the Festival. He would also lead a delegation of businessmen to explore business possibilities with Mauritian counterparts with a view to concluding mutually beneficial business agreements.

2. Cabinet has taken note of development in the setting up of the Land Drainage Authority, which would, among others, -

- (a) be responsible for the development and implementation of a land drainage master plan for the Republic of Mauritius;
- (b) carry out an inventory and map all existing drainage infrastructure;
- (c) undertake a study based on hydro-meteorological and hydrographic survey and produce a flood risk map and a National Land Drainage Plan;
- (d) review the flood risk map and the National Land Drainage Plan, as and when required; and
- (e) conduct and coordinate research and development on land drainage and watershed management.

The Land Drainage Authority Bill would, shortly, be introduced in the National Assembly.

3. Cabinet has taken note that the Mauritius Institute of Education Act would be amended to consolidate the provisions of the Act and empower the Institute to confer its own degree programmes at Bachelor's level. The Institute would continue to collaborate with all its international partners in order to sustain the benefits for international expertise, as well as ensure quality and standard for all its programmes.

4. Cabinet has taken note that, according to the last monthly report published by the Statistics Unit of the Ministry of Tourism and External Communications, 130,421 tourists visited Mauritius in October 2016 as compared to 109,014 for October 2015, i.e., a remarkable and record increase of 21,407 tourists amounting to 19.6%. For the period January to October 2016, tourist arrivals reached 1,011,311 as compared to 912,367 during the same period in 2015. Growth had been registered in arrivals from Germany (+42.7%), Italy (+20.8%), France (+15%), United Kingdom (+19.6%), India (+41.6%), South Africa (+15.5%) and Reunion Island (+2.5%).

5. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Finance and Economic Development to the People's Republic of China. He led a delegation for the Ministerial Session of the Tenth Session of the Sino-Mauritian Joint Commission. The following documents were signed -

- (a) a Memorandum of Understanding on the launching of a Joint Feasibility Study of the Mauritius-China Free Trade Agreement;
- (b) a Protocol to write off debt to the tune of RMB 87 million (equivalent to Rs450 million);
- (c) a Letter of Exchange relating to the donation of 30 additional semi low-floor buses; and
- (d) a Memorandum of Understanding between the Board of Investment, Mauritius and the Bureau of Commerce of Qingdao Municipal Government to reinforce cooperation in the field of investment.

The Chinese Government has also agreed to finance the construction of a multi-purpose Olympic sports complex of international standard to the tune of RMB 350 million (equivalent to Rs1.9 billion) in the context of the holding of the 10th Edition of the Indian Ocean Islands Games.

The Minister of Finance and Economic Development had meetings, among others, with -

- (a) HE Mr Zhang Yusei, Executive Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs with whom he discussed bilateral cooperation;
- (b) Mr Shi Jiyang, President of the China-Africa Development Fund, who expressed his willingness to actively support the initiatives of Mauritius to mobilise cross border investment from Chinese companies to Africa, using Mauritius as a regional platform; and
- (c) representatives of the LHF Marine Development Ltd regarding the status of implementation of the fishing terminal in Port Louis, and the construction of fishing vessels that would operate in our fishing zone.

6. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Finance and Economic Development to Brussels. The main objective of the mission was to initiate dialogue with the European Union to ensure that Mauritius is not placed on the blacklist of non-cooperative tax jurisdictions which EU is currently compiling. The Minister of Finance and Economic Development had meetings with -

- (a) Mr Pierre Moscovici, EU Commissioner for Economic and Financial Affairs, Taxation and Customs, with whom he had discussions on issues relating to our current tax regime;
- (b) Ms Cristina Russo, Director International Cooperation, Directorate General Research & Innovation, on areas of cooperation with EU in the fields of research and innovation; and
- (c) Mrs Sandra Gallina, Director, Directorate General Trade, on the upgrading of the current Interim Economic Partnership Agreement.

7. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection to the People's Republic of China. He had led a delegation comprising, among others, companies from the Manufacturing and Services Sectors to the 2016 Guangdong 21st Century Maritime Silk Road International Expo with a view to -

- (a) pursuing marketing efforts in China and Hong Kong following the recent Buyers Sellers Meeting and Contact Promotion Programme;
- (b) maximizing visibility of 'Mauritius Made with Care' products in China and nearby countries; and
- (c) establishing contacts and networks in Guangdong and wider China.

Cabinet has also taken note that, following participation in the event, -

- (a) the Bank of China (Mauritius), which has recently launched its opening in Mauritius, has received 3 potential clients worth USD1.3M;
- (b) in the Textiles Sector, Soge International has received a trial order for a full container load of denim wastes;
- (c) La Chartreuse has secured an official representative for its products in Guangdong; and
- (d) Tour Operators have established their presence as they had been targeting the Chinese markets.

8. Cabinet has taken note of the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Mauritian National Computer Security Incident Response Team (CERT-MU) and the Japan Computer Emergency Response Team Coordination Centre. The main objectives of the Memorandum of Understanding are to establish and strengthen strategic collaboration that aims at improving collective information security efforts. Both parties would, among others, -

- (a) exchange information on cyber security incidents detected;
- (b) collaborate in cyber security projects; and
- (c) exchange delegates and visits.

9. Cabinet has taken note that Infotech 2016 would be held from 01 to 04 December 2016. The aim of Infotech is to increase awareness on emerging technologies, bridge the digital divide and provide a platform for local ICT operators to develop business opportunities with potential technology partners and customers. This year's edition of Infotech would also include -

- (a) a Youth Forum on the theme "*Harnessing the Digital Revolution*";
- (b) an Open Source Space operated to showcase open source software and applications;
- (c) a Robotics Induction Corner to focus on how technology can help young people innovate; and
- (d) an e-Gov Services Stand aiming at promoting the use of e-services through the Public Internet Access Points in Post Offices.

10. Cabinet has taken note of the activities that would be organised by the Ministry of Technology, Communication and Innovation to mark the Computer Security Day observed on 30 November, namely -

- (a) a Cybersecurity Conference to focus on how to secure Internet of Things systems and gain the necessary skills to create robust Internet of Things security policies; and
- (b) a talk and video projection on Internet Security with a view to increasing awareness on the importance of Internet Security, encouraging Internet users to utilise appropriate internet applications and promoting responsible online behaviour and positive use of the Internet.

The Mauritian National Computer Security Incident Response Team (CERT-MU), in collaboration with the Forum of Incident Response Teams (FIRST), would also organise a Technical Colloquium, where best practices in cybersecurity would be shared.

11. Cabinet has taken note that the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) would hold a *Séminaire Régional sur le financement des entreprises et Projets Culturels* in Mauritius from 21 to 26 November 2016. The objectives of the Seminar are, *inter alia*, to -

- (a) reinforce capacity building in the field of cultural entrepreneurship and the management of cultural projects;
- (b) upgrade know-how in the presentation of cultural projects for financing by funding agencies, including credit facilities by banking institutions;
- (c) examine the challenges and opportunities for funding cultural entrepreneurs by banking institutions; and
- (d) stimulate cultural entrepreneurship and dialogue between entrepreneurs and funding agencies.

Participants from Madagascar, the Comoros, Reunion Island, the Seychelles and Mauritius would attend the Seminar.

12. Cabinet has taken note that the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Housing and Lands has approved the allocation of State land for residential and commercial purposes. The particulars of the applicants would be posted on the website of the Ministry of Housing and Lands.

13. Cabinet has taken note that Mr Sadatmanund Narain, former Deputy General Manager of the Central Electricity Board, has been appointed as Commissioner of the Utility Regulatory Authority in replacement of Mr Luc Eddy Astruc, who has declined the offer of appointment for personal reasons.
