

CABINET DECISIONS – 28 OCTOBER 2016

1. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Finance and Economic Development to Brussels where he had discussions, among others, with Mr Pierre Moscovici, EU Commissioner for Economic and Financial Affairs, Taxation and Customs Union, on issues relating to our Tax Regime in the context of the forthcoming EU blacklisting of non-cooperative tax jurisdictions. He also had meetings with EU Officials on issues, such as Trade, Brexit, Agriculture especially sugar, and EU assistance in respect of the Foot and Mouth Disease. The Minister of Finance and Economic Development also had fruitful discussions with several other diplomatic personalities and potential investors.

2. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the visit of the Ministerial delegation, led by the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism and External Communications, to Rodrigues where the delegation had consultations with political parties and the civil society on the proposed reform to the electoral system in Rodrigues. The delegation had a fruitful exchange of views and various proposals had been made, among which is that the leaders of political parties should be able to have their candidature on both lists, i.e., the First Past The Post and the Proportional Representation. Cabinet has agreed to the proposal being included in the list of recommendations, and appropriate legislative amendments being brought after concurrence of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

3. Cabinet has taken note of the status of repayments to the policyholders of the Super Cash Back Gold Scheme, and the investors of the Bramer Asset Management Ltd by the National Property Fund Ltd. As at date, a total of Rs10.1 billion has been repaid to some 15,815 policyholders of the Super Cash Back Gold Scheme, and some 3,177 investors of the Bramer Asset Management Ltd as follows –

- (a) policyholders of the Super Cash Back Gold Scheme who had invested less than Rs1 million, have been repaid their initial investments in full without any deduction; and
- (b) policyholders of the Scheme who have invested more than Rs1 million have been repaid as per their chosen option, i.e, repayment of capital only (excluding bonuses earned) in five equal instalments payable on 30 June 2016, 30 June 2017, 30 June 2018, 30 June 2019 and 30 June 2020, or 75% of capital invested in two instalments on 30 June 2016, and 30 June 2019.

Appropriate arrangements are being made to payments being effected to the remaining policyholders of the Super Cash Back Gold Scheme and investors of the Bramer Asset Management Ltd.

4. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research would launch the Special Scholarship Scheme for students with disabilities for pursuing tertiary studies locally as announced in Budget Speech 2016-2017. Five scholarships would be awarded, and the scholarships would be open for enrolment on either a fully-accredited full-time, or a part-time basis, or a distance learning programme in a recognized tertiary education institution or local training institution. The scholarship would cover costs of tuition/training fees, and a monthly stipend, as well as a return airfare/ship travel for beneficiaries from Rodrigues and the Outer Islands.

5. Cabinet has taken note that the Minister of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms would make regulations under the Financial Services Act to provide for the inclusion of the Overseas Family Office (Single) and the Overseas Family Office (Multiple) in the Second Schedule to the Act with a view to allowing Overseas Family Corporations to set up a base in Mauritius as announced in Budget Speech 2016-2017. The Overseas Family Offices constitute new lines of financial offerings targeting at investment advice, such as budgeting, insurance, charitable trusts, family-owned businesses, wealth transfer, and tax services. The Financial Services Commission would, thereafter, issue Rules to regulate the activities of the Overseas Family Offices.

6. Cabinet has taken note of the election of Justice Satyabhooshun Gupt Domah, GOSK, as Member of the United Nations Sub-Committee on the Prevention of Torture and Other Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment for a 4-year term as from January 2017.

7. Cabinet has agreed to the implementation of the recommendations made in the Country Implementation Plan formulated under the SWITCH Africa Green Programme, an initiative designed and funded by the European Union to facilitate the transition of African countries to sustainable development. The Report details the findings of the Policy Support Component with regard to identified priority sectors, namely, Agriculture, Manufacturing, Tourism with Energy, Water, Eco-innovation, Eco-labelling and Sustainable Trade as cross-cutting issues. The main recommendations pertain to gaps in the enabling legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks, and the potential for more economic incentives to drive the desired shift towards green businesses.

8. Cabinet has agreed to the salary grading and the determination of conditions of service of the staff of the National Wage Consultative Council being governed by the Pay Research Bureau. The National Wage Consultative Council would be mainly responsible to make recommendations to Government regarding the introduction of a national minimum wage in the private and public sectors, and the payment of additional remuneration to offset any increase in the cost of living every year.

9. Cabinet has taken note of the status in the renovation of Port Louis Theatre. Works would be carried out in phases and priority would be given to works that are required to prevent further deterioration of the building, particularly the roof and the walls.

10. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade to Madagascar where he attended the 19th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA). The theme of the Summit was “*Inclusive and Sustainable Industrialisation.*” The issues discussed were, among others, -

- (a) the concerns of Member States regarding Brexit;
- (b) the COMESA Industrialisation Policy;
- (c) Trade Promotion in the COMESA Region;
- (d) the development of a Maritime Corridor; and
- (e) Tripartite Free Trade Area Agreement.

In the margins of the Summit, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade had meetings, among others, with –

- (a) HE Mr Hery Rajaonarimampianina, President of Madagascar, regarding the lifting of the suspension on the imports of dairy and animal products from Mauritius, and the establishment of a Special Economic Zone in Fort Dauphin; and
- (b) HE Mr Ahmed Shide, Minister of Finance of the Federal Republic of Ethiopia on the establishment of a Joint Commission, and the development of a Special Economic Zone in Ethiopia.

11. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Technology, Communication and Innovation, in collaboration with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), would organise a Workshop on Innovation in November 2016. The objectives of the Workshop will be to –

- (a) share and discuss case studies and good practices in Innovation;
- (b) provide a platform to allow knowledge/technology transfer, and collaboration among SIDS in the region; and
- (c) explore the possibility of initiating a Regional Innovation Alliance among SIDS and the setting up of a Regional Innovation Centre.

12. Cabinet has taken note that Mrs Beebee Feroza Maudarbocus Moolna, CSK, Senior Attorney, has been appointed Chairperson of the Muslim Family Council, following the resignation of Mrs Shameem B.A. Hamuth-Laulloo, Master and Registrar.

13. Cabinet has taken note of the constitution of the Private Secondary Education Board with Mr Serge Ng Tat Chung as Chairperson.
