

CABINET DECISIONS – 27 JANUARY 2017

1. Cabinet has agreed to the Mauritius-Africa Scholarship Scheme being reviewed to provide for the payment of tuition fees up to Rs100,000 per annum for beneficiaries from SADC countries and up to a maximum of Rs160,000 per annum for those from non-SADC countries. Fifty scholarships are offered every year to deserving students from Member States of the African Union. The main features of the Scheme relate, *inter alia*, to -

- (a) a grant for the duration of the programme to each student to cover costs of university fees and other charges; and
- (b) its restriction to full time undergraduate studies only at any public Tertiary Education Institution.

2. Cabinet has taken note that, in the context of the development of a Special Economic Zone Project in Senegal, a delegation from Senegal is currently in Mauritius to finalise and sign an “*Accord de Développement Conjoint*” and a “Term Sheet”. Senegal would allocate a plot of land of a total area of 53 Hectares in the City of Diamniadio for the project. The project involves the management of newly built industrial and business facilities of a total space area of more than 33,000 square metres on a 13-Hectares site, and the development of an Industrial Park on 40 Hectares of land.

3. Cabinet has agreed to Mauritius recommending the nomination of Miss Jane Constance, renowned local artist who won the “*Voice Kids 2*” competition organised by TF1, as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Artist for Peace. Ms Constance, a 16-year old talented singer, embodies the normative human dignity and values that UNESCO promotes. She is an inspiration, especially for the younger generations. The UNESCO Artists for Peace are internationally renowned personalities who use their influence, charisma and prestige to promote the message and programmes of UNESCO.

4. Cabinet has taken note that HE Mr Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President of the Republic of Ghana, would be the Chief Guest for the National Day Celebrations 2017. The celebrations would be held in Champ de Mars as from 19 00 hours and the theme is ‘*La Main dans La Main*’.

5. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Arts and Culture to India where he attended the 2nd Uttar Pradesh (UP) Pravasi Bharatiya Divas in Lucknow. The objective of the event was to create an effective and meaningful relationship with the immigrants and People of Indian Origin of UP residing across the globe, and connect the UP diaspora to their motherland. The Conference focused on Mauritius and a *Samman* was conferred on the Rt Hon Sir Anerood Jugnauth, GCSK, KCMG, QC, former Prime Minister, and Minister Mentor, Minister of Defence and Minister for Rodrigues.

The Minister of Arts and Culture also attended the 14th Karnataka Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention held in Bengaluru where the Indian Prime Minister, HE Mr Narendra Modi, announced that the Indian Government would put in place new procedures and documentation requirements so that the descendants of Girmityas would be eligible for the Overseas Citizens of India (OCI) cards. The Hon P.K. Jugnauth, Prime Minister, was conferred the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award, the highest distinction conferred on overseas Indians.

During his visit, the Minister of Arts and Culture had meetings, *inter alia*, with –

- (a) the Hon Mahesh Sharma, Minister of Culture of India, on the implementation of the Cultural Exchange Programme signed in 2015; and
- (b) the Director General of the National Archives of India on, among others, records concerning indentured emigration to Mauritius and capacity building.

6. Cabinet has taken note that the CUTLASS Express Final Planning Event would be held in Mauritius from 30 January to 8 February 2017. CUTLASS Express, an annual naval military exercise organised by US Africa Command (AFRICOM), focuses on addressing piracy through information sharing and coordinated operations among international navies. The exercise is meant to enhance maritime security capabilities, improve information sharing and foster good relationships among participating nation's security forces. The Mauritius Police Force would be involved in the training exercise. Delegates from the USA, Denmark, the Seychelles, Madagascar, and Comoros Island would participate in the training exercise.

7. Cabinet has taken note that a Migration Expert team, deputed by the EU under the Migration EU Expertise (MIEUX) Programme, would visit Mauritius from 30 January to 03 February 2017 to assist in the preparation of a National Migration and Development Policy for the Republic of Mauritius. The mission will collect information and obtain a solid insight of Government's vision and priorities in the field of migration and development, and also raise awareness among stakeholders on the importance of a National Migration and Development Policy.

8. Cabinet has taken note that, according to the last monthly report published by the Statistics Unit of the Ministry of Tourism, 148,134 tourists visited Mauritius in December 2016 as compared to 132,681 in December 2015, i.e., an increase of 11.6%. For the year 2016, tourist arrivals reached 1,275,227 as compared to 1,151,252 during the year 2015. Growth had been registered in arrivals from Germany (+23.2%), Italy (+1.5%), France (+7.7%), United Kingdom (+14.4%), India (+7.4%), South Africa (+22.4%) and Reunion Island (+4.6%).

9. Cabinet has taken note that the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Energy and Public Utilities would promulgate the Energy Efficiency (Energy Consumer and Energy Audit) Regulations to provide, among others, for -

- (a) mandatory energy audits in Government buildings;
- (b) the classification of energy consumers on the basis of their average annual energy consumption for the two recent calendar years;
- (c) large energy consumers to be those consuming above 15 Tonnes of Oil Equivalent per year, which, in electrical terms, is equivalent to above 174,418 kWh per year;
- (d) the Director of the Energy Efficiency Management Office to direct large energy consumers to commission an energy audit; and
- (e) the level of detail of the energy audits and for all energy audits to be conducted in accordance with ISO 50002 – Energy Audits.

The regulations would be effective as from 1 February 2017.

Cabinet has also taken note that the Energy Efficiency Management Office, in collaboration with the Joint Economic Council and the '*Agence Française de Développement*', is already implementing the '*Programme National d'Efficacité Energétique*'.

10. Cabinet has agreed to the Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security promulgating the Animal Welfare (Experiment on Animals) Regulations under the Animal Welfare Act, to enable experiments to be carried out on animals. The Regulations provide, among others, for the following -

- (a) experiments to be performed would be classified as non recovery, mild, moderate or severe using assignment criteria as specified in the regulations;
- (b) no person would perform an experiment where it involves severe pain, suffering or distress;
- (c) the purposes for performing animal experiment should be clearly specified and include the prevention, diagnosis or treatment of diseases, assessment of physiological conditions, the protection of the natural environment, advancement of knowledge, and education and training;
- (d) every licensee would observe the principles of replacement, reduction and refinement to ensure that live animals are not used, if alternative methods are available and that the number of animals used is reduced to a minimum; and
- (e) all licensees would be required to set up an Animal Care and Use Committee to advise on all matters related to the use and welfare of the animals and to monitor the conduct of the experiment.

The tests would be carried out according to international norms and guidelines.

11. Cabinet has taken note of the activities that would be organised by the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security to mark the World Wetlands Day 2017, commemorated on 2 February, namely –

- (a) sensitisation campaigns and talks on the importance of wetlands and the need to protect them;
- (b) distribution of posters, flyers and factsheets on the importance of wetlands; and
- (c) a youth photo contest.

The theme chosen for the World Wetlands Day 2017 is **Wetlands for Disaster Risk Reduction**.

12. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security to Germany where he attended the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture (GFFA) and the 9th Berlin Agricultural Ministers' Conference. The theme for the GFFA and the Agricultural Ministers' Conference was "**Agriculture and Water – Key to Feeding the World**". The Conference offered an opportunity to representatives from the world of politics, business, science and civil society to share ideas and agree on a different key topic of agricultural policy.

In the margins of the Ministerial Conference, the Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security had a meeting with Dr Lowenstein, President of the German Association of Organic Farmers, and Mrs Elizabeth Bunder, Head of the Division of Organic Farming at the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture, on collaboration in Organic Farming.

On his way to Berlin, the Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security stopped over in Paris where he visited the Rungis International Market and had a working session with Mr Stephane Layani, Chairperson and CEO, on collaboration in the context of the setting up of a National Wholesale Market Project.

13. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade to Cabo Verde where he participated in the First Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the African SIDS and Madagascar. The main purpose of the Conference was to formalise the "Group of African Island States", and establish a platform for the exchange of information, capacity-building and adoption of common positions on issues of mutual interests. The Group will provide a stable and durable platform for African island countries to better reflect and protect their interests in the context of the frameworks of the African Union Agenda 2063 and the UN Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.
