

## **CABINET DECISIONS – 24 NOVEMBER 2017**

1. Cabinet has agreed to the payment of a salary compensation of Rs360 per month across the board as from 1 January 2018 to compensate for loss in purchasing power. The amount is based on an inflation rate of 3.6% for the year 2017. The cost to the economy would be to the tune of Rs2.2 billion.

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2. Cabinet has taken note of the Report of the High Level Committee on cleaners engaged by private contractors providing cleaning services in schools, chaired by Mr D.D. Manraj, GOSK, Financial Secretary.

Cabinet has also taken note that Landscape (Facilities) Co Ltd, a subsidiary of Landscape (Mtius) Ltd, acting as a professional cleaning services provider to, among others, schools, would employ on a full-time basis, and on contract, the cleaners who are less than 65 years old. The contract would be for a period of two years, renewable subject to satisfactory performance. The cleaners, aged 65 years and above, would not be enlisted, but would be paid an *ex-gratia* gratuity on retirement for every year of service in schools.

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3. Cabinet has agreed to the introduction of the Bus Industry Employees Welfare Fund (Amendment) Bill into the National Assembly. The object of the Bill is to amend the Bus Industry Employees Welfare Fund Act in order to -

- (a) provide for an increase in the rate of monthly contribution payable to the Bus Industry Employees Welfare Fund by bus operators and the employees of the bus industry; and
- (b) give the Minister of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport the power to amend, after consultation with the Board of the Fund, the Schedules to the Act by way of regulations.

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4. Cabinet has taken note that, during his recent visit to Rodrigues, the Hon Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, Prime Minister, had launched the Mauritius-Rodrigues Fibre Optic Submarine Cable Project that connects Rodrigues to Mauritius by submarine cable with an initial bandwidth connectivity of 100 Gigabits per second. The Prime Minister was also invited as Chief Guest to the inauguration of a new Police Station at Petit Gabriel, and attended the reopening of the Rodrigues Office du Tourisme. As regards the Water Sector in Rodrigues, the Prime Minister announced that the Indian authorities would shortly depute a team of experts to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the Sector with a view to preparing a Rodrigues Water Development Plan.

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5. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in the field of Information and Communication Technology with the Government of the Republic of Estonia. The areas of cooperation include -

- (a) cybersecurity, protection of critical infrastructure and cybercrime;
- (b) economic diplomacy infrastructure, including digital diplomacy; and
- (c) setting up of a regional e-Governance Academy and an ICT Observatory in Mauritius.

Estonia is known as the EU Centre of Excellence in matters of digital society, cybersecurity, fight against cyberterrorism, and is one of the five most advanced digital societies in the world. The Memorandum of Understanding would be signed by the Hon Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, Prime Minister, during a bilateral meeting that he would have with the Prime Minister of the Republic of Estonia at the forthcoming meeting of the African Union – European Union Summit to be held in Côte d'Ivoire.

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6. Cabinet has agreed to consultations being held on the draft Higher Education Bill, that would repeal the Tertiary Education Commission Act, and enact a reformed, modern and appropriate legislative framework so as to ensure better control and regulation of the Higher Education Sector in Mauritius. The Bill provides, among others, for -

- (a) a Higher Education Advisory Council, which shall, inter alia, advise Government on policies for the effective direction, promotion and development of higher education; and
- (b) the establishment of a Higher Education Commission and a Quality Assurance Authority which would take over the functions and powers of the Tertiary Education Commission, as the case may be.

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7. Cabinet has taken note that since the launching of the Citizen Support Portal on 28 April 2017, some 19,768 requests have been received, out of which 13,841 (i.e., 70%) have been resolved.

Cabinet has also taken note that the Minister of Technology, Communication and Innovation would soon launch the sms notification following registration of a request on the Citizen Support Portal.

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8. Cabinet has taken note that a total of 10,311 vacancies in the public service have been filled during the period 1 July 2016 to 31 October 2017. There are still some 7,013 vacancies that remain to be filled.

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9. Cabinet has taken note that, in the context of the International Volunteer Day commemorated on 5 December 2017, the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity, and Environment and Sustainable Development would hold a function at the Municipal City Council of Port Louis on 5 December 2017 when training programmes, focusing on Effective Communication, First Aid, and Social Leadership for NGO Staffs/Volunteers, and aiming at building the capacity of NGOs, would be launched. The theme for this year is “**Volunteers Act First. Here. Everywhere**”.

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10. Cabinet has taken note that, in the context of the World AIDS Day 2017 commemorated on 1 December, the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life would, among others, -

- (a) organise a workshop on the theme ‘*Increasing Impact through Transparency, Accountability, and Partnerships*’;
- (b) mount training programmes for the benefit of the health personnel on stigma and prevention;
- (c) carry out sensitisation campaigns on HIV and AIDS; and
- (d) hold a half-day HIV testing at the five Regional Hospitals.

The theme chosen by UNAIDS this year is “**Increasing Impact through Transparency, Accountability, and Partnerships**”.

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11. Cabinet has taken note that a Mega Blood Donation would be held on 20 December 2017 on the Esplanade of Emmanuel Anquetil Building, Port Louis to ensure that there is no shortage of blood during the festive periods of December 2017 and January 2018.

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12. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade to Russia where he had a meeting with HE Mr Sergey Lavrov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, on bilateral, regional and multilateral issues, as well as the enhanced role of Russia in the development of the African Continent using Mauritius as a platform. He sought the assistance of the Russian authorities for the provision of internship opportunities to Mauritian students having completed their studies in medicine, and for the development of the Fisheries Sector. The Minister also participated in the Business Forum entitled - ‘*Mauritius: An Investment Platform of Choice*’ - organised by the Board of Investment, in collaboration with the Financial Services Commission, and attended the Mauritius Tourism and Aviation Day organised jointly by the Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority and Air Mauritius. Russia has agreed to participate in the commemoration of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Independence of Mauritius in 2018 with the organisation of a Russian Week.

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13. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Arts and Culture to Belgium where he had participated in the 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Ministers of Culture. The theme of the Meeting was “*Making Culture an impact investment in achieving 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development*”. The Meeting adopted the Brussels Declaration 2017 that sets out a roadmap for the cultural sector, and commits, inter alia to, -

- (a) use appropriate mechanisms to ensure consistency and harmonization of cultural cooperation programmes so that actions are sustainable;
- (b) establish and develop databases of credible cultural statistics in ACP countries; and
- (c) develop financing mechanisms to combat piracy and the illicit trafficking of artefacts and works of art.

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14. Cabinet has taken note of the constitution of the Allied Health Professionals Council of Mauritius.

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