

CABINET DECISIONS – 8 SEPTEMBER 2017

1. Cabinet has taken note that HE Mr Danny Faure, President of the Republic of the Seychelles, would effect a State Visit to Mauritius from 26 to 29 October 2017. During the Visit, working sessions would be held, areas of cooperation discussed, and Memoranda of Understanding signed.

Cabinet has also taken note that a meeting of the Mauritius-Seychelles Commission on Bilateral Cooperation would be held from 23 to 25 October 2017.

2. Cabinet has taken note that the Minister of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport had discussions with the representatives of bus companies operating along the proposed corridor of the Metro Express Project on the reengineering of bus routes, as well as the impact of the implementation of the Project on bus industry workers.

3. Cabinet has taken note of the status in the implementation of the Zoning of Lagoon Project, which aims at enhancing safety and security at sea, preserving the fragile marine ecosystem, preventing conflict of use among sea users, and ensuring navigation safety. The Ministry of Tourism is proceeding with the repair, replacement, reinstatement and cleaning of the zoning systems to ensure their full functionality; and the establishment of a buffer zone and a mooring zone at Crystal Rock, and navigable passages at Grand Baie and Rivière Noire.

4. Cabinet has taken note of arrangements being made for the construction of a new Wastewater Pumping Station at Roche Bois, and the upgrading of Baie du Tombeau Wastewater Treatment Plant to avoid any environmental hazard due to the higher amount of waste water inflows.

5. Cabinet has taken note of arrangements being made for the implementation of major projects in the Water and Energy Sectors, for which funds have been provided under the Indian Line of Credit, including the rehabilitation and increase in capacity of La Ferme Dam; water pipe replacement works; the setting up of a Telemetry System at the Central Water Authority; and the construction of a 10 MW solar plant at Henrietta.

6. Cabinet has taken note that the selection of beneficiaries of the Solar Home Project, that consists of the installation of 10,000 solar panels over a period of five years in the home of households falling under the Social Tariff 110A of the Central Electricity Board, would be carried out shortly. Priority of consideration would be given to the households that are also listed on the Social Register of Mauritius.

7. Cabinet has taken note that the Minister of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport would make the Building Control (Accessibility and Gender Compliance in Buildings) Regulations to ensure that –

- (a) persons with impaired mobility and communication, elderly persons, and pregnant women are able to access and use a building and the facilities provided therein comfortably; and
- (b) gender specific requirements are integrated in a building.

The Regulations would be effective as from 1 November 2017.

8. Cabinet has agreed to the Ministry of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping, the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, the Indian Ocean Commission and the Parc national de Port-Cros, France, signing a Memorandum of Understanding on a Technical Exchange Programme on the conservation, protection and management of marine protected areas. The objective of the Programme is to strengthen the capacities of park and reserve technicians through field demonstration and sharing of knowledge and experience on good marine conservation practices. The Programme also aims at maintaining an equilibrium between the marine ecosystem and the tourism industry.

9. Cabinet has taken note that, according to the last monthly report published by the Statistics Unit of the Ministry of Tourism, 100,191 tourists visited Mauritius in August 2017 as compared to 94,920 in August 2016, i.e., an increase of 5.6%. Tourist arrivals reached 838,397 for the period January to August 2017 as compared to 789,506 during the same period in 2016.

10. Cabinet has agreed to the ratification of the amendments brought to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants. Four new pesticides and industrial chemicals and their by-products that affect human health and the environment, namely, hexabromocyclododecane, pentachlorophenol and its salts and esters, chlorinated naphthalenes and hexachlorobutadiene, have been added to the existing list of 22 chemicals in the Convention.

11. Cabinet has taken note of the status in the development of a state-of-the-art digital platform at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade. The platform would facilitate interconnectivity between the Ministry and the Missions overseas, and ease access to information by officers in the course of their work. In this context, a Government-to-Government Agreement in the field of Information Technology had been signed with the Republic of Estonia. A group of experts from the Republic of Estonia would field a mission to Mauritius in October 2017 to advise the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade on the establishment of the platform. A Transformation Implementation Committee has also been set up to take forward the Mauritian Economic Diplomacy Project as recommended by Beasley Intercultural, an Australian Consultancy Firm.

12. Cabinet has taken note of the organisation of a National Workshop on the COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite Free Trade Area in Mauritius in October 2017. The objectives of the Workshop are to build awareness, and sensitise stakeholders on the COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite Free Trade Area, including the trade opportunities and benefits to be derived from the enlarged market of 26 countries.

Cabinet has also taken note that Mauritius would sign the COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite Free Trade Area Agreement during the Workshop.

13. Cabinet has taken note that the Board of the Bus Industry Employees Welfare Fund has approved an increase in the rate of contributions payable by employees and employers of the bus industry to enable the Fund to launch new projects as regards loans, grants and scholarships as provided in the Bus Industry Employees Welfare Fund Act. The Minister of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport would make regulations accordingly.

14. Cabinet has agreed to the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life charging fees to private firms and organisations for Non-Communicable Diseases, Breast and Cervical Cancer Screenings as from October 2017. Enterprises employing less than 10 persons and classified as SME's would be exempted from payment of the fees.

15. Cabinet has taken note that the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Energy and Public Utilities would make the Waste Water (Miscellaneous Waste Water Services) (Fees) (Amendment) Regulations to provide for the Wastewater Management Authority to charge a single fee of Rs1,500 per application for clearance for Building Land Use Permits.

16. Cabinet has taken note that on the occasion of the World Tourism Day, commemorated on 27 September, the Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority and AHRIM would organise leisure days at Flic-en-Flac and Belle Mare.

17. Cabinet has taken note of the activities that would be organised to mark the International Day of Older Persons, commemorated on 1 October, namely -

- (a) a national function comprising a cultural programme and dance performances; and
- (b) four regional activities, including a walk to sensitise the elderly on the importance of keeping fit, a cultural programme, and a talk on matters related to ageing.

The theme chosen by the UN for the Day is "***Stepping into the Future: Tapping the Talents, Contributions and Participation of Older Persons in Society.***"

18. Cabinet has taken note that the contract of Mr Jean Daniel Raymond as Road Safety Coordinator would be renewed for a further period of one year. Mr Raymond is working on a number of projects, namely -

- (a) the National Road Safety Strategy;
- (b) the Review of Licensing Scheme;
- (c) the Moto Ecole;
- (d) the Road Crash Data System; and
- (e) the Road Accident Prevention Plan.

19. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research to Ghana where she participated in the Fourth Square Kilometre Array (SKA) Ministerial Forum. The objectives of the Forum were, inter alia, to -

- (a) identify future directions for institutionalising cooperation in Radio Astronomy among the nine African Partner countries, mainly with regard to the SKA and the African Very Long Baseline Interferometer projects;
- (b) proceed with the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding by the Ministers of the nine African SKA Partner countries; and
- (c) launch the Kuntunse Observatory in Accra, Ghana.

20. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping to Sri Lanka where he attended the 2nd Indian Ocean Conference. The theme of the Conference was *'Peace, Progress and Prosperity'*. The main objective of the Conference was to develop interdependence among countries of the region, abide by the legal obligations under UNCLOS, and supplement the existing international framework with a code of conduct and principles of engagement regarding ocean activities.

In the margins of the Conference, the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping had a meeting with the Hon Mahinda Amaraweera, Minister of Fisheries of Sri Lanka, on the proposed signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in the maritime and shipping sectors.

21. Cabinet has taken note of the appointment of –

- (a) Mr Vijaye Anand Ramchurn as Chairperson of the National Heritage Trust Fund; and
- (b) Mr Ranna Swamber as Chairperson of the National Library.
