

CABINET DECISIONS – 13 DECEMBER 2019

1. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent meetings that the Prime Minister had with Shri Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of the Republic of India and other eminent personalities while he was on private visit to India. Shri Narendra Modi congratulated the Prime Minister on his re-election as Prime Minister for a second term of office and underlined the desire of his country to pursue the remarkable strategic cooperation that India and Mauritius had initiated since 2015. Various issues of mutual interest were discussed.

The Prime Minister had meetings with –

- (a) Shri J. P. Nadda, “Working President” of Bharatiya Janata Party and discussions focused on various aspects of cooperation between Mauritius and India; and
- (b) Dr S. Jaishankar, Minister of External Affairs of India with whom he highlighted that the special relations between both countries had strengthened over the years and the support of India had been constant and unremitting in the socio-economic development of Mauritius.

2. Cabinet has taken note of the main proposals contained in the Airport Master Plan Report 2018 for the SSR International Airport and Plaine Corail Airport up to time horizon 2040, which has been prepared by *Aéroport de Paris International S.A.* Cabinet has agreed to the Airport Master Plan Report 2018 being used as a basis for the development of the airports infrastructure for the coming 20 years subject to such adjustments as may be necessary in the light of new developments. The main proposals of the Airport Master Plan Report 2018 are -

- (a) construction of a new main passenger terminal;
- (b) improvements to airside movement areas and associated facilities;
- (c) extension of cargo area;
- (d) relocation of airport rescue and fire fighting facilities, and helipads and isolated pad;
- (e) reservation area for fuel farm and power plant;
- (f) development of maintenance stands and hangars; and
- (g) definition of prime space and concept for setting up of an Airport City.

3. Cabinet has taken note that the Government of the Republic of France, the European Union and the *Agence Française de Développement* (AFD) would sign a Declaration of Intent with the Airports of Mauritius Co Ltd (AML) and the Rodrigues Regional Assembly (RRA), for the financing of the construction of a new runway at Plaine Corail Airport, in Rodrigues. The project consists of the construction of a new runway of 2.4 km long and 45 meters wide including provision of various airport facilities to support operations of A321 Neotype aircraft, viz the extension of airport parking stands, setting up of new facilities for increase aircraft fuel storage capacity, improving the Airport Rescue and Fire Fighting Services and construction of a new Air Control Traffic Tower.

4. Cabinet has taken note that the Prime Minister would proceed on official visit to Rodrigues from 17 to 18 December 2019. During his visit, he would, among others, launch the construction of a Technopark at Baladirou and inaugurate the Grande Montagne Police Station.

Cabinet has also taken note that the signing ceremony for the financing of the construction of the new runway at Plaine Corail and a drain project at Port Mathurin would also be held.

5. Cabinet has taken note that the National Multi Hazard Emergency Alert System which would cover Mauritius, Rodrigues, Agaléga and St Brandon, would be implemented by a Dutch company, under the supervision of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Centre. The National Multi Hazard Emergency Alert System would be a reliable high performance system which would disseminate warning and alert messages to a maximum number of people and stakeholders within an acceptable timeframe through a number of communication channels, among others, mobile and landline phone networks, TV & Radio, Internet, bulk email, social media, digital display signs and public broadcasting systems such as sirens, cell broadcast and mobile application. The National Multi Hazard Emergency Alert System is expected to go live by April 2020. The Emergency Alert Mobile Application, launched by the Ministry of Technology, Communication and Innovation in 2018, would be one of the channels of communication of the National Multi Hazard Emergency Alert System.

6. Cabinet has agreed to the implementation of a series of measures to support private sector enterprises, particularly in vulnerable sectors, in connection with the payment of the additional remuneration of Rs300 as from January 2020, namely –

- (a) the annual training levy payable by the private sector enterprises to the Human Resource Development Council would be reduced by 0.5% for one year starting 01 July 2020;

- (b) the payment of the Special Allowance to workers in Export-Oriented Enterprises (EOEs) and Non-EOEs would continue after 31 December 2019 and the phasing out of the Special Allowance would now take effect as from January 2022 instead of January 2021; and
- (c) as many firms might not be ready with the IT system to implement the Portable Retirement Gratuity Fund as from January 2020, a moratorium of three months would be provided.

7. Cabinet has taken note that the following Regulations would be promulgated to implement measures announced in Budget Speech 2019-2020 –

- (a) the Income Tax (Amendment No. 3) Regulations 2019, to, inter alia, specify core income generating activities that need to be carried out in Mauritius by an e-Commerce operator to be entitled to the 5-year tax holiday;
- (b) the Mauritius Revenue Authority (Alternative Tax Dispute Resolution) (Amendment) Regulations 2019 in order to enlarge the scope of the Alternative Tax Dispute Resolution Panel to cover disputes relating to Customs and the Environment Protection Fee;
- (c) the Income Tax (Amendment of Schedule) (No. 3) Regulations 2019 to, inter alia, classify SME Mauritius Ltd as a tax exempt body; and
- (d) the Economic Development Board (e-Commerce Scheme) Regulations 2019 provide for the setting up of an e-Commerce Scheme, the object of which shall be to provide a framework to, inter alia, enable e-Commerce operators to conduct commercial transactions in Mauritius through electronic networks.

8. Cabinet has taken note that the Customs (Amendment No. 2) Regulations 2019 would be promulgated to provide for the implementation of the 2019-2020 Budget measure relating to the operation of a revamped Voucher Scheme for tourists concurrently with the existing VAT and Customs Duty Refund Scheme.

9. Cabinet has taken note that the Building Control (Mandatory Guarantees) Regulations 2019 would be promulgated on the advice of the Building Control Advisory Council. The main objective of the Building Control (Mandatory Guarantees) Regulations is to ensure that end users are not prejudiced for any defect that manifests itself in their dwelling and that repairs to remedy such defects are carried out promptly, without the need to have recourse to the Courts. The Regulations would be effective on 01 January 2020.

10. Cabinet has agreed to the promulgation of the following Regulations under the National Land Transport Authority (NLTA) Act 2019 and Light Rail Act 2019 –

- (a) the National Land Transport Authority (Appeal Committee) Regulations 2019;
- (b) the Light Rail (Policy of Insurance) Regulations 2019; and
- (c) the Light Rail Regulations 2019.

The National Land Transport Authority (Appeal Committee) Regulations 2019 provides, inter alia, for an Appeal Committee to be constituted to determine appeals made against decisions of NLTA and the processes to be complied with when lodging appeals against their decisions.

The Light Rail (Policy of Insurance) Regulations 2019 would prescribe the minimum amount to be contracted by Metro Express Ltd in respect of its insurance policy against third parties for any occurrence which could lead to bodily injury or death in the course of the operation of the light rail.

The Light Rail Regulations 2019 would cater for the operation of the light rail system and would ensure that users of the light rail behave in an orderly and disciplined manner. Provision has also made for fines to be levied against those found guilty of defiling the light rail system or likely to cause annoyance to other passengers.

11. Cabinet has taken note that the Mauritius Research and Innovation Council would sign Memoranda of Understanding on Applied Research, Development and Innovation Cooperation with –

- (a) the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) of the Republic of India; and
- (b) the Technology Innovation Agency of the Republic of South Africa.

Both Memoranda of Understanding cover the following main areas of collaboration -

- (a) identification of applied research and innovation projects and their formulation;
- (b) applied research and development, and innovation programmes for industry and other fields;

- (c) exchange of knowledge, know-how, technology transfer and scientific and technical information; and
- (d) exchange of researchers, entrepreneurs, innovators, specialists and policy makers.

12. Cabinet has taken note of the implementation of a Management Information System by the Ministry of Public Service, Administrative and Institutional Reforms designed to support Transformation Implementation Committees set up in each Ministry and Department. The Management Information System aims to, inter alia, -

- (a) support Transformation Implementation Committees in the submission of Action Plans and Business Transformation initiatives;
- (b) enable the Public Sector Business Transformation Bureau to follow up and advise on the implementation of the Business Transformation initiatives in Ministries and Departments;
- (c) provide a useful tool for the proper conduct of the National Planning and Results Committee and the High Powered Committee meetings;
- (d) generate reports for enhanced decision-making; and
- (e) set Key Performance Indicators for each Ministry and Department for proper follow up by the Public Sector Business Transformation Bureau.

13. Cabinet has taken note that on 10 December 2019, the 'Sega Tambour Chagos' was successfully inscribed on the *List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding* by the UNESCO Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage at its 14th Session being held from 9 to 14 December 2019 in the Republic of Colombia.

14. Cabinet has taken note that in the context of the celebrations to mark its Foundation Day, the Hindi Speaking Union would hold the Hindi Mahotsav on 22 December 2019 at the Mont Choisy Public Beach. The programme would include, inter alia, a cultural programme and the presentation of honours, namely the '*Mauritius Hindi Speaking Sarvotch Samman*'.

15. Cabinet has taken note of the status of construction of five Mediclinics at Floréal, Quartier Militaire, Coromandel, Bel Air and Stanley, an Area Health Centre at Petite Rivière and five Community Health Centres at Tombeau Bay, Grand Bay, Pointe aux Sables, François Xavier, Port Louis and Roche Bois, currently being undertaken by the Ministry of Health and Wellness.

16. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Health and Wellness would prepare a National Service Framework for NCDs and National Integrated NCD Action Plan. The World Health Organization (WHO) would provide the services of a Consultant from January to March 2020 to support the development of both projects. The Terms of Reference of the Consultant would be to, inter alia, –

- (a) work closely with the Ministry of Health and Wellness in the process of the elaboration of the National Service Framework for NCDs and National Integrated NCD Action Plan;
- (b) assess the present NCD situation in Mauritius; and
- (c) provide a roadmap for the implementation of the NCD Programmes based on the indicators used by the WHO.

17. Cabinet has taken note of the “Family Planning and Demographic Yearbook 2018”. The Yearbook provides information on population trends, family planning and health service points for the islands of Mauritius and Rodrigues for use by planners and policy makers. As regards the projection for the population of Mauritius, it would decline by around 25% from 2018 to 2058. A Ministerial Committee has been set up under the chairpersonship of the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology to look into the findings of the Report and make recommendations accordingly.

18. Cabinet has agreed to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) holding the following events in Mauritius in April 2020 -

- (a) a Seminar on the Chemical Weapons Convention and Chemical Safety and Security Management for the OPCW Member States in the Africa Region; and
- (b) an Executive Programme on Integrated Chemicals Management.

The Seminar would provide a platform for the exchange of experiences on national framework for chemical safety and security management. The Executive Programme would cover a variety of topics relevant to those leading the implementation of integrated chemicals management from both policy and industrial perspectives.

19. Cabinet has agreed to the proposal of the Government of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to open an Embassy in Mauritius. Mauritius and the UAE have established diplomatic ties since January 1976 and have maintained a friendly and mutually beneficial relationship with a strong economic focus and have a shared commitment to bolster relations in all areas of mutual interest. Both countries are also linked through their common membership in many regional and international organisations.

20. Cabinet has taken note of the status regarding the project for the construction of the Civil Service College, Mauritius. The services of a Project Monitoring Consultant would be enlisted for the preparation of the detailed design and architectural works for the project including monitoring of the project during the construction phase.

21. Cabinet has taken note that the Data Protection Office would organise a workshop on the theme '**Data Protection Today – Breaking the Iceberg**', on 16 January 2020. The objective of the Workshop is to assess the implementation status of the Data Protection Act 2017 in Mauritius. The workshop would provide data controllers and other organisations from different sectors with a platform to analyse the depth of their implementation process and to seek any further clarification on the provisions of the legislation. The workshop is expected to bring together some 500 participants from different sectors of the economy.

22. Cabinet has taken note that for the end of year festive seasons 2019, the Ministry of Tourism would organise a series of events on Mauritius Magical Christmas, in collaboration with the *Association des Hoteliers et Restaurateurs de l'île Maurice*, the Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority, the Tourism Authority and the Airport Terminal Operations Ltd. Two major events would be organised, simultaneously, at Grand Baie Public Beach and Flic en Flac Public Beach on 21 and 22 December 2019 to celebrate the spirit and magic of Christmas. These events would involve the participation of the local community and consist of a musical animation, including Christmas carols and songs by local choirs and other artists.

23. Cabinet has taken note of the results of the PSAC Assessment 2019 which were proclaimed on 12 December 2019. Out of the 14,985 school candidates of the Republic of Mauritius who took part in the Assessment for the first time, 11,068 have met the requirements for the PSAC, representing 73.86%. Some 14,186 candidates took part in the PSAC Assessment in the island of Mauritius, out of whom 10,504 have met the PSAC requirements, i.e., 74.04%.

As for Rodrigues, 799 candidates took part in PSAC Assessment and 564 candidates have attained the PSAC requirements, i.e., 70.59%.

The registration exercise in secondary schools has been rescheduled for 19 December 2019. The PSAC re-assessment exercise would be held on 20 December 2019.
