

CABINET DECISIONS – 29 MARCH 2019

1. Cabinet has agreed to the introduction of the Building Control (Amendment) Bill into the National Assembly. The main object of the Bill is to provide, in case a notice sent by registered post by a local authority on the owner or occupier of a dangerous building returns undelivered and personal service of the notice could not be effected on the owner or occupier by an officer of the local authority, for substituted service to be effected on the owner or occupier by –

- (a) affixing a notice at the owner's or occupier's last known residence or business address;
- (b) affixing a copy of the notice at the dangerous building; and
- (c) publication of the notice in two newspapers, subject to the publication of the notice in the second newspaper is effected not later than 15 days after the publication of the notice in the first newspaper.

2. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of Hon Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, Prime Minister to Vienna, Austria and the United Kingdom (UK). In Vienna, the Prime Minister was invited by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to participate in the Ministerial Segment of the 62nd session of the Commission on Narcotics Drugs. The Commission decided to convene a Ministerial Segment at its 62nd regular session to take stock of the implementation of the commitments made to jointly address and counter the world drug problem, following the adoption of the ***“Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to counter the World Drug Problem”*** in 2009.

The Prime Minister addressed the Ministerial Segment Meeting and underlined the measures that Government was taking to address the drug scourge in Mauritius as well as in the region. He also indicated that one of Government's main challenges in Mauritius was the establishment of a well-structured psycho-social support for drug users. He stressed that one of the priorities of Government was the rehabilitation and social reintegration of drug users through the development and implementation of a health-based and a person-centred approach.

The Ministerial Segment also adopted the Ministerial Declaration on strengthening the actions of Member States at the national, regional and international levels to accelerate the implementation of the joint commitments to address and counter the world drug issue.

In the margins of the Ministerial Segment Meeting, the Prime Minister had meetings with –

- (a) Mr Yury Fedotov, Executive Director of the UNODC, who expressed his appreciation on the actions being taken by Mauritius to contain the scourge of drugs to whom a request for capacity building for the Forensic Science Laboratory was also made; and

- (b) Dr Amado de Andres, UNODC Regional Representative for Eastern Africa and his team with whom he reviewed the areas of cooperation.

In the UK, the Prime Minister met, at the request of the British authorities, the Rt Hon Theresa May, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom in the presence of the Rt Hon David Lidington CBE MP, Minister for the Cabinet Office and Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and the British High Commissioner in Mauritius to discuss, among others, the Chagos Archipelago issue. The British Prime Minister emphasised the good relations between the two countries and expressed her desire to further strengthen those relations by exploring new avenues of cooperation and joint initiatives in sectors of interest to Mauritius.

The Prime Minister welcomed the different proposals put forward by the UK, but at the same time, pointed out that the Chagos Archipelago issue would go back to the UN General Assembly. Mauritius and other countries would be tabling a draft resolution at the United Nations General Assembly towards the end of April 2019.

The Prime Minister also had a working session with Professor Philippe Sands QC on the Chagos Archipelago issue. He also had discussions with –

- (a) the Chairperson of the House of Lords Select Committee on Artificial Intelligence, His Lordship Clement-Jones and Lord Anthony St John of Bletso to discuss the way forward for Mauritius with respect to Artificial Intelligence, while taking cognizance of the latest developments in this field in the UK; and
- (b) Lord Meghnad Desai, Professor Emeritus at the London School of Economics, David Marsh and Philip Middleton, Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the Official Monetary and Financial Institutions Forum to discuss new strategies for the Mauritian economy and for the International Financial Centre.

3. Cabinet has taken note that a Submission has been made by the Republic of Mauritius to the United Nations Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (UNCLCS) on 26 March 2019, for an Extended Continental Shelf (ECS) of an approximate area of 175,000 km² in the Southern Chagos Archipelago Region. The Submission has been made in the light of the Advisory Opinion delivered by the International Court of Justice on 25 February 2019 whereby the Court concluded that the Chagos Archipelago had been unlawfully detached from Mauritius by the United Kingdom.

4. Cabinet has taken note that the Prime Minister led a delegation comprising the Minister Mentor, Minister of Defence, Minister for Rodrigues, the Minister of Health and Quality of Life, the Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security and senior officials to Rodrigues Island on 28 March 2019, to have an in-depth assessment of the damages caused by cyclone Joaninha.

He took the opportunity to take stock of the progress achieved by the different stakeholders on site and noted with satisfaction that the electricity supply which was badly damaged had been restored at around 40%. The Prime Minister also met some planters at Anse Quitor/Corail, Montagne Goyave, Anse Ally and St François who suffered loss of their crops and visited maize fields which were affected by the Fall Army Worm. The Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security would assist in the fight against the outbreak. He also visited a few 'radiers' at Baie du Nord and Bay Malgache which were severely flooded during the cyclone and families at Montagne Cimetièrè whose house had been damaged.

The Prime Minister had a working session with the Chief Commissioner and his Commissioners on the post cyclonic situation and the immediate actions taken to restore essential public services, namely, transport, electricity, telephone and water.

5. Cabinet has taken note that following the tabling of the Report of the Director of Audit for Financial Year 2017-18 in the National Assembly, the Prime Minister has set up a Committee under the chair of the Senior Chief Executive of the Ministry of Justice, Human Rights and Institutional Reforms, to examine the Report in consultation with Ministries/Departments and to propose measures to address the weaknesses and shortcomings mentioned therein. The Committee would also comprise the representatives of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development and the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms. The Internal Control Division of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development would follow up with Ministries/Departments to ensure that remedial actions proposed by the Committee are implemented.

6. Cabinet has taken note that the Minister of Health and Quality of Life would make Regulations under the Dental Council Act for the recognition and listing of two dental institutions, namely the Gulf Medical University, United Arab Emirates and the University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka, as recommended by the Dental Council of Mauritius.

7. Cabinet has taken note of the activities that would be organised to mark World Health Day 2019, observed on 7 April. The following activities would be held at the Trianon Convention Centre on 8 April 2019 –

- (a) the launching of a booklet on Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) and their risk factors;
- (b) the screening and counselling for NCDs; and
- (c) an exhibition on health related issues and cooking demonstration.

Sensitisation campaigns would also be held on TV/Radio as well as in Community Health Centres, Women Centres, Social Welfare Centres, schools, urban/rural community settings, on the risk factors of diseases and the preventive measures to be taken.

The theme for this year is **“Universal Health Coverage: everyone and everywhere”**.

8. Cabinet has taken note that the Municipal City Council of Port Louis has organised a public collection of funds to help the victims of Cyclone IDAI which hit Mozambique and Zimbabwe. Special bank accounts in the name of “The Municipal City Council of Port Louis – Victims of Cyclone IDAI” have been opened for the public to donate funds as follows –

- (i) State Bank of Mauritius: A/c No. 50300000374763; and
- (ii) Mauritius Commercial Bank Ltd: A/c No. 000446801003.

9. Cabinet has agreed to the closure of Médine Sugar Mill with effect from the end of crop 2018, subject to certain conditions, in accordance with the provisions of the Mauritius Cane Industry Authority Act. The Mauritius Cane Industry Authority recommended the closure after consultations with relevant stakeholders including planters, employees, trade unions and receiving sugar mills. The packages to planters and workers and staff have been worked out in line with the provisions of the Blue Print on Centralisation of Sugar Milling Operations in Mauritius of May 1997. Arrangements are also being made with other factories to receive the canes from Médine.

10. Cabinet has taken note that the second edition of the 12-Hour Relay Walk, Jog, and Run for Health and Fun would be held on Saturday 30 March 2019, from 06 00hrs to 18 00hrs, at Maryse Justin Stadium, Réduit.

11. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of recent mission of the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Local Government and Outer Islands and Minister of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare to New York where she participated in the 63rd Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). The priority theme for the year 2019 was “Social protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls” and the review theme was “Women’s empowerment and the link to sustainable development, from the 60th session of the CSW”. In her statement at the Plenary Session, the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Local Government and Outer Islands and Minister of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare laid emphasis, inter alia, on –

- (a) the efforts of the Government to strengthen the existing welfare state through various support programmes to ensure that “no one is left behind”; and
- (b) the use of the National Steering Committee on Gender Mainstreaming as a platform for policy dialogue and exchange of best practices.

In the margins of the visit, the Vice-Prime Minister had bilateral meetings with –

- (a) HE (Mrs) Kersti Kaljulaid, President of Estonia on assistance to Mauritius in the field of ICT and e-governance; and
- (b) HE David Stanton, Minister with responsibility for Equality, Immigration and Integration of Ireland on sharing of best practices, including the policies and programmes to curb gender based violence.

12. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Attorney General, Minister of Justice, Human Rights and Institutional Reforms to Geneva where he participated in the 40th Regular Session of the Human Rights Council where the Universal Periodic Report (UPR) of Mauritius was considered for approval. In his introductory statement, he expressed his appreciation to Member States for their participation, constructive recommendations and recognition of the progress achieved by Mauritius so far and also explained the various challenges faced by Mauritius. The session was transmitted live on the UN Web TV and the adoption of the UPR of Mauritius was published on the website of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. Various Member States commended Mauritius for accepting most of their recommendations which, inter alia, related to –

- (a) fight against corruption;
- (b) domestic violence;
- (c) protection and promotion of human rights;
- (d) empowerment of women;
- (e) setting up of the Independent Police Complaint Commission; and
- (f) equal employment rights;

In the margins of his visit, the Attorney General, Minister of Justice, Human Rights and Institutional Reforms met HE Mr Le Yucheng, Vice-Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of China and Mr Sanjoy Hazarika, Director Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative.

13. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of –

- (a) the Board of the Wastewater Management Authority with Mr Sulaiman Hansrod as Chairperson; and
- (b) the Board of the Irrigation Authority with Mr Kissoonduth Sarju as Chairperson.
