

CABINET DECISIONS – 07 AUGUST 2020

1. Cabinet has taken note of the measures being deployed by the relevant authorities to contain the oil leakage from the wreck of MV Wakashio which is grounded off Pointe d'Esny. Cabinet has also taken note that the Prime Minister chaired a meeting of the National Crisis Management Committee on Maritime Security on 6 August 2020 to take stock of the situation and measures being implemented. Another meeting of the Committee would be held on site at Blue Bay Marine Park Centre with relevant stakeholders on 7 August 2020.

An Environmental Emergency Declaration under the Environment Protection Act has also been signed by the Prime Minister and published on 7 August 2020.

Cabinet has also taken note that a Special Bank Account is being opened at the State Bank of Mauritius under the Prime Minister's Relief Fund to cater for any relevant expenditure related thereto. All contributions from local and international sources would be credited to this Special Bank Account.

2. Cabinet has taken note that the Prime Minister chaired a meeting of the Task Force on the Construction of 12,000 Housing Units and took note of the arrangements being made for the implementation of the project. A provision of Rs12 billion has been made in the Budget 2020-2021 under the COVID-19 Projects Development Fund as a subsidy to part-finance, inter alia, the construction of housing units and associated on-site and off-site infrastructural works.

3. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Housing and Land Use Planning would hold a National Forum on Housing and Land Use on 19 August 2020 at Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee Tower, Ebène. The Forum would bring together stakeholders from public and private sectors as well as the NGOs and the civil society, with the main aim to discuss and find solutions on how to meet the challenges in terms of meeting increasing demand for housing in a sustainable living environment and a judicious administration of land.

4. Cabinet has taken note that international Consultants would be in Mauritius in August 2020 for the capacity building of the Law Enforcement Agencies as well as other stakeholders and assisting in the implementation of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Action Plan. It is proposed to accelerate the implementation of the Action Plan with the support of the technical assistance obtained from the EU Anti-Money Laundering and Combating the Financing of Terrorism (AML-CFT) Global Facility and the German International Agency (GIZ). The Consultants/Experts would also have on-site interactions with local stakeholders.

5. Cabinet has taken note that the Government of Japan would provide a grant of 300 million JPY (approx. Rs100 million) to the Government of Mauritius, under its 'Economic and Social Development Programme'. The grant would be used to procure medical equipment for the hospitals in Mauritius to reinforce the health system in the context of the COVID-19 measures.

6. Cabinet has agreed to the implementation of a project for the recycling/processing of used tyres under a Build-Own-Operate Scheme in Mauritius. Around 4,500 tons of used tyres are generated annually in the country with an average of 600 tons being disposed of at the Mare Chicose landfill. The remaining tyres are either stored in garages, retreaded or illegally dumped on bare lands. A Request For Proposal would be launched to ensure transparency and accountability for the selection of a service provider.

7. Cabinet has taken note that the Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of the Republic of India in the field of Hydrography would be extended for a further period of five years after mutual agreement. The Memorandum of Understanding has been beneficial for the development of hydrographic facilities in Mauritius and has been instrumental in achieving, among others, the following –

- (a) establishment of a full-fledged hydrographic unit (known as the Mauritius Hydrographic Service) in the Ministry of Housing and Land Use Planning;
- (b) provision of technical and expert assistance in hydrography through the deputation of a hydrographic team from the Indian Navy;
- (c) provision of Inshore Survey vessel “Pathfinder” capable of carrying out multidisciplinary surveys;
- (d) supply of hydrographic equipment and capacity building;
- (e) production of ten Navigational Paper Charts and twelve Electronic Navigational Charts covering areas significant for maritime navigation in Mauritius and the Outer Islands; and
- (f) deployment of Indian Naval Ships in Mauritian waters to undertake hydrographic surveys fulfilling the requirements of various stakeholders.

8. Cabinet has agreed to the Minister of Land Transport and Light Rail promulgating –

- (a) the Road Traffic (Paid Parking) (Amendment) Regulations 2020. The Regulations provide that where the time period for making an application for the renewal of a reserved parking permit has expired during the period starting on 20 March 2020 and ending on 15 June 2020, the application for the renewal of the permit may, be made not later than 31 August 2020 and no surcharge of 50 per cent of the renewal fee shall, be charged provided that the application for the renewal of the permit is made not later than 31 August 2020; and
- (b) the Road Traffic (Parking Offences) Regulations 2020. The Regulations provide that where a person has been served with a parking notice and the period of 7 days within which the penalty of Rs600 was to be paid expired on or after 20 March 2020, the penalty of Rs600 may be paid not later than 31 August 2020. In cases where the 7 days within which the penalty of Rs600 was to be paid expired on 19 March 2020, a penalty of Rs1,000 may be paid not later than 31 August 2020.

9. Cabinet has taken note of the status of the implementation of the first Mauritian Satellite project known as the Mauritius Imagery and Radio-Satellite (MIR-SAT1), which is being implemented by the Mauritius Research and Innovation Council (MRIC). The MIR-SAT 1 is being implemented by a team led by the MRIC under the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA) and the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) KiboCUBE Programme 2018. The construction of the satellite has been completed in July 2020 at Clyde space in Glasgow. Final tests are currently being carried out by JAXA and would end in mid-August 2020. The expected date of delivery to JAXA is scheduled for early September 2020. The expected deployment in space from the International Space Station is scheduled for March 2021.

10. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Public Service, Administrative and Institutional Reforms would organise a Health Week at the Ministry from 11 to 17 August 2020, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Wellness. The Ministry of Health and Wellness would carry out a one-week screening programme which would comprise mainly blood pressure measurement, vision tests, screening for diabetes, breast palpation and referral of abnormal cases, consultation by Medical Officer, counselling/health education and issuing of Health Cards individually to participants with screening results. A one-day Blood Donation Campaign would also be organised. Similar activities would be organised in other Ministries.

11. Cabinet has taken note of the activities being organised by the Human Rights Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade in collaboration with stakeholders to mark World Humanitarian Day 2020, observed on 19 August each year, namely –

- (a) a peaceful march from Champ de Mars to the Municipal Council of Port Louis in honour of local frontliners involved in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic;
- (b) the Ministry of Local Government and Disaster Risk Management would organise a Roving Exhibition of posters showcasing volunteers at work at all Municipal and District Councils;
- (c) the Police Department, the Mauritius Fire and Rescue Services and the Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity would prepare a video to showcase their contribution during the confinement period; and
- (d) the Mauritius Red Cross Society would, in collaboration with the Blood Donors Association, organise a mega blood donation activity at the Municipal Council of Port Louis.

12. Cabinet has agreed to the naming of a street in the City of Port Louis in the vicinity of Plaine Verte in honour of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Father of the Nation of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. Late Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was a visionary leader and the inspiration of the People of Bangladesh who struggled during his lifetime to establish the rights of the people and the economic emancipation of his countrymen.

13. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent participation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade in the Extraordinary Session of the Organisation of African Caribbean Pacific States (OACPS) Council of Ministers. The aim of the Extraordinary Session was to –

- (a) review the state of play of the post-Cotonou negotiations;
- (b) oversee the status of the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA), and
- (c) expand the mandate of the ad hoc Contact Group on Tax matters.

The new Secretary General of the OACPS outlined the drastic effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on OACPS economies and called on the OACPS to become a global player on the international stage. The composition of the new Bureau of the Council for the period 1 August 2020 to 31 January 2021 which would be presided by Tanzania was approved.

14. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent participation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade in the 66th Ordinary Session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR), by videoconference where the 9th and 10th Country Periodic Report of Mauritius was considered. The ACHPR congratulated Mauritius for the outstanding presentation of the Periodic Report and for its fruitful engagement with the Commission. The Chairperson of the Commission and the Special Rapporteur for Mauritius stated that they would advocate to declare Mauritius as the Champion of Human Rights within the African Union.

15. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Arts and Cultural Heritage would make an online submission of the Third Cycle Periodic Reporting Questionnaire, for the Republic of Mauritius, as required under the UNESCO World Heritage Convention to which Mauritius is a party. The Periodic Reporting serves the following main purposes –

- (a) to provide an assessment of the application of the World Heritage Convention by the State Party;
- (b) to provide an assessment as to whether the outstanding universal value of the properties inscribed on the World Heritage List is being maintained over time;
- (c) to provide up-dated information about the World Heritage properties to record the changing circumstances and state of conservation of the properties; and
- (d) to provide a mechanism for regional co-operation and exchange of information and experiences between States Parties concerning the implementation of the Convention and World Heritage conservation.

16. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund (SILWF) Committee with Mr Nazir Mohamad Ameen Junggee as Chairperson.
