

CABINET DECISIONS – 11 SEPTEMBER 2020

1. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent teleconference the Prime Minister had with HE Mr Toshimitsu Motegi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan. The Prime Minister expressed his appreciation to the Minister of Foreign Affairs for the instantaneous solidarity shown by the Government of Japan in addressing the challenges of the immediate impacts of the oil spill of MV Wakashio, in particular, for the dispatch of the Japan Disaster Relief Expert Team along with the provision of equipment and material to Mauritius. The assistance of the Government of Japan has been solicited, both for the post-MV Wakashio environmental remediation efforts and the recovery of the economy which had been severely affected since the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Government of Japan would dispatch a team from the Japan International Cooperation Agency to expedite the cooperation measures.

2. Cabinet has taken note that the Attorney General, Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security, to whom the responsibility of Shipping Development and Merchant Shipping has been assigned, has already appointed, under section 10(2) of the Merchant Shipping Act, the Court of Investigation on the casualty at sea of the MV Wakashio as follows –

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| Chairperson | - | Mr Abdurrafeek Hamuth, former Judge |
| Members | - | (i) Mr Jean Mario Genevieve, Licensed Marine Engineer and Registered Marine Surveyor |
| | | (ii) Mr Johnny Lam Kai Leung, Marine Surveyor |

3. Cabinet has taken note that the Attorney General, Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security, to whom the responsibility for Shipping Development and Merchant Shipping has been assigned, has already appointed, under section 10(2) of the Merchant Shipping Act, a Court of Investigation to investigate into the casualty at sea of Tug “Sir Gaetan” on 31 August 2020. The composition of the Court of Investigation is as follows –

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| Chairperson | - | Mr Joseph Gerard Angoh, former Puisne Judge |
| Members | - | (i) Captain Mahendra Babooa, Master Mariner |
| | | (ii) Mr Iran Mohamad Dowlut, Marine Engineer |

4. Cabinet has taken note of the latest developments regarding the wreck removal operations of the aft section of MV Wakashio. A Wreck Removal Notice was issued by the Director of Shipping to Okiyo Maritime Corporation, owners of MV Wakashio on 15 August 2020, ordering them to raise and remove the aft section of MV Wakashio, including all its apparels and any remaining pollutant of whatsoever nature from its present location at Pointe d'Esny.

The de-polluting operation had started on 23 August 2020 and was ongoing. The said operation was expected to last three more weeks as from 04 September 2020. According to Brand Marine Consultants GMBH, consultants for Owners and Insurers, the de-pollution exercise would minimise risks to personnel involved in the wreck removal operation. An "Invitation to Tender" had already been launched for the wreck removal operation of MV Wakashio. The Ministry of Blue Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping is closely monitoring the situation in consultation with the relevant authorities.

5. Cabinet has taken note of the latest developments regarding the accident of Tug Sir Gaëtan. On 07 September 2020, four concrete sinkers and respective buoys were conveyed by INS Nireekshak from Port Louis to Poudre d'Or site. These were placed under the guidance of PolyEco SA and assistance of divers of INS Nireekshak and Dive Solutions Ltd at the wreck site. The installation of about 200m of booms around the perimeter of the wreck of Sir Gaëtan would be effected before the start of pumping operations. Precautionary measures have been taken in case an oil spill occurs. The Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change is holding regular meetings of the National Oil Spill Contingency Plan to monitor the situation closely. Water and air quality surveillance is being carried out. As at date, no impact on shoreline, lagoon and mangrove areas in the region of Poudre d'Or and Ile d'Ambre has been reported.

6. Cabinet has taken note that in the Freedom House Annual Report 2020, which covers the year 2019, Mauritius occupies a prominent position, with a score of 89 points, out of 100 and with the status of a "free state", as in the 2018 Report. Freedom House is a US-based, non-profit NGO that conducts research and advocacy on democracy, political freedom and human rights. Its Report assesses the status of political rights and civil liberties in 210 countries/territories. Only three countries have scored 100 points, namely, Finland, Norway and Sweden. With a score of 89, Mauritius is second in Africa, after Cape Verde.

7. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Land Transport and Light Rail and the Mauritius Institute of Training and Development for the implementation of a training programme for driving instructors who are existing holders of an instructors' licence for motorcars. The objective of the Memorandum of Understanding is to provide necessary technical and pedagogical skills to existing licensed driving instructors that would help them provide safe driving skills to learner drivers.

8. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on the establishment of a Consultation Mechanism between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Italian Republic. The Consultation Mechanism with Italy would assist in reinforcing the bilateral relations through regular meetings in a structured format and would also serve as a platform to follow-up on developments as well as to identify new areas of cooperation, in the pursuit of economic growth with focus on concrete projects.

9. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of an Agreement between the Mauritius Museums Council and the Mauritius Marine Conservation Society for the lending of a 'small muzzle-loading bronze cannon'. The cannon dates back to 1650 and bears the crowned monogram of Christian IV, King of Denmark and Norway. The cannon was retrieved from the ship "Speaker" which wrecked off the East coast of Mauritius in 1702. The aim of the Agreement is to enable the Mauritius Marine Conservation Society to loan the cannon to the Mauritius Museums Council for a period of five years, so that this valuable artefact is exhibited in the Dutch Gallery of the National History Museum, Mahebourg.

10. Cabinet has agreed to the Minister of Financial Services and Good Governance promulgating the Financial Reporting Council (Penalty) Regulations 2020. With a view to strengthening the regulatory objectives of the Financial Reporting Council (FRC), amendments were brought to section 43 of the Financial Reporting Act, through the Finance (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, to provide for the FRC to sanction licensed auditors and audit firms through payment of such penalty as may be prescribed, for non-compliance to rules, codes, guidelines and standards relating to auditing.

Any licensed auditor or audit firm that does not comply with the Financial Reporting Act or any rules, codes, guidelines and standards relating to auditing issued by the Council shall in case of non-compliance –

- (a) by a licensed auditor practising in his own name, be liable to a penalty not exceeding 500,000 rupees;
- (b) by an audit firm, be liable to a penalty not exceeding one million rupees; and
- (c) by a licensed auditor in an audit firm, be liable to a penalty not exceeding one million rupees.

11. Cabinet has taken note that the Primary School Achievement Certificate (PSAC) Assessment 2020/2021 would be held as follows –

(a) **Grade 5**

Modular Assessment (Module 1)

Date	Subject
Tuesday 02 March 2021	Science History & Geography

(b) **Grade 6**

Modular Assessment (Module 2)

Date	Subject
Wednesday 02 December 2020	Science
Thursday 03 December 2020	History & Geography

(c) **End of Year Grade 6 Assessment (Core Subjects)**

Date	Subject
Tuesday 16 March 2021	French
Wednesday 17 March 2021	English
Thursday 18 March 2021	Asian Languages/Arabic/Kreol Morisien
Friday 19 March 2021	Mathematics

In addition to the above core subjects, private candidates would sit for the PSAC Assessment papers in Science and History and Geography as follows –

Date	Subject
Tuesday 16 March 2021	Science
Thursday 18 March 2021	History and Geography

Pupils would be assessed in two non-core subjects, namely Communication Skills and ICT Skills, through school based assessment. The PSAC Grade 6 Assessment results are expected to be announced around 30 April 2021.

12. Cabinet has taken note that the Minister of Health and Wellness would make Regulations under the Dental Council Act to include N.N. Burdenko Voronezh State Medical Academy of Russia in the recognised list of institutions of the Council for the purpose of registration.

13. Cabinet has taken note that the Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security would promulgate the Sugar Investment Trust (Amendment) Regulations 2020 with a view to prescribe the Sugar Investment Trust Land Holdings Ltd as a subsidiary of the Sugar Investment Trust. The Sugar Industry Efficiency Act has been amended to exempt the Sugar Investment Trust Land Holdings Ltd from the requirement of sending individual written notice to its 15,000 shareholders to the Annual Meeting of Shareholder. Instead, notices can now be given through press communiqué.

14. Cabinet has taken note that the online launching of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Centre of Excellence in Mauritius would be held on 28 September 2020. The launch would be followed by an online Cybersecurity Risk Management Training programme delivered by the Computer Emergency Response Team of Mauritius, from 28 to 30 September 2020. The objectives of the first training are to –

- (a) equip participants with the necessary skills to perform regular risk assessments for their organisations;
- (b) help organisations in mapping their business requirements to implement security controls;
- (c) learn the elements of risk assessment and the data necessary for performing an effective risk assessment;
- (d) identify risk management models for implementing risk management programme in organisations; and
- (e) enhance the ability to perform risk management, which is crucial for organisations for the defence of their systems.

Some 68 participants from 48 countries have already confirmed their participation in the training.

15. Cabinet has taken note of the situation of the COVID-19 pandemic prevailing worldwide and in the region. As at 10 September 2020, 361 cases of COVID-19 had been registered in Mauritius. The last local case was registered on 26 April 2020.

As at 10 September 2020, there were 14 imported active cases of COVID-19 in Mauritius. The public should continue to observe strict sanitary precautions in order to avoid any importation or resurgence of COVID-19 in the country.

16. Cabinet has taken note of the activities being organised by the Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change to mark the International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer, celebrated on 16 September, namely –

- (a) the holding of a one-day workshop on Refrigeration and Air Conditioning with some 100 stakeholders and the launching of a copybook on ozone layer protection on 16 September 2020;
- (b) a two-day training for Customs Officers on the tracking of illegal trading of ozone depleting substances in October 2020 at the Mauritius Revenue Authority along with hands-on practical activities;
- (c) a training for Technicians of the private sector on safe handling of natural refrigerant by the Mauritius Institute of Training and Development in November 2020; and
- (d) a sensitisation campaign to raise awareness on ozone related issues.

The theme for this year is 'Ozone for Life'.

17. Cabinet has taken note of the activities being organised by the Ministry of Arts and Cultural Heritage, in collaboration with the Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund, on 2 November 2020 to commemorate the 186th Anniversary of the Arrival of Indentured Labourers in Mauritius, namely –

- (a) a wreath laying ceremony by dignitaries followed by an official programme, including artistic and cultural activities at the Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Site;
- (b) the annual 'Yaj' performed at the Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Site by the Aapravasi Ghat Indian Indenture (*Girmitya*) Arrival Celebrations Committee, in collaboration with the Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund;
- (c) the launching of a short clip entitled '*Aapravasi the Legacy*', produced in collaboration with the New Chinatown Foundation and a short film, produced by the Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund, in collaboration with the Mauritius Film Development Corporation, on the system of indenture; and
- (d) the launching of the Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund e-magazine and an e-exhibition on indenture in the world.

Other activities such as live art painting, storytelling and workshops would also be organised from 2 to 8 November 2020 at the Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Site.

18. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the Management Committee of the Trust Fund for Excellence in Sports with Mr Marie Joseph Ramsamy, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Sports and Recreation as part-time Chairperson.
