

CABINET DECISIONS – 29 MAY 2020

1. Cabinet has taken note that the Curfew Order in force would be lifted on Saturday 30 May 2020 at midnight. Accordingly, economic, commercial and other activities would resume normally as from Sunday 31 May 2020. The public and private sector entities would also resume work normally. The Work-From-Home Scheme would be encouraged wherever possible.

However, to maintain public safety and avoid any possible resurgence of the pandemic, a number of places would remain closed to the public and certain crowd pulling activities would be prohibited. A Regulation would be made accordingly under the Public Health Act.

Moreover, the wearing of face masks would continue to be mandatory and social distancing would have to be maintained as far as practicable. Further details would be available on the Government Web Portal.

2. Cabinet has taken note of the situation pertaining to the outbreak of COVID-19 and the measures taken to contain the pandemic and avoid any resurgence, namely –

- (a) there were currently three active cases in Mauritius;
- (b) as at 28 May 2020, 27,803 PCR tests had been carried out;
- (c) as at 28 May 2020, 81,014 Rapid Antigen tests for COVID-19 had been carried out; and
- (d) all the five COVID-19 Testing Centres were operational at the regional hospitals.

3. Cabinet has taken note that Regulation 14(b) of the Road Traffic Regulations would be amended to make provision for the extension of the replacement age of buses from 20 to 21 years, with effect from 01 March 2020.

4. Cabinet has taken note that National Land Transport Authority would extend the replacement period of taxis as well as deluxe type taxis, based at the SSR International Airport and hotels, to 16 years.

5. Cabinet has agreed to the implementation of the Action Plan for the resumption of sports and physical activities in a phased manner once the Curfew Order is lifted.

6. Cabinet has agreed to the extension of the social contract between the Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity and households eligible under the Social Register of Mauritius (SRM) for another period of six months from 01 July 2020 to 31 December 2020 due to the confinement resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. The recertification of the existing SRM households would be carried out with the assistance of a consultant.

7. Cabinet has agreed to the Ministry of Financial Services and Good Governance giving drafting instructions to the Attorney General's Office for the preparation of a new legislation, the Anti-Money Laundering and Combatting the Financing of Terrorism (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill. The objective of the proposed Bill is to amend various enactments with a view to reinforcing the existing legal provisions to further combat money laundering and the financing of terrorism.

8. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Financial Services and Good Governance would inform the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and the Eastern and Southern Africa Anti-Money Laundering Group (ESAAMLG) of the list of countries identified by Mauritius as being high risk, in line with Recommendation 19 of the FATF.

9. Cabinet has taken note that the sanitary measures disseminated by the Tourism Authority and the Beach Authority to the economic operators in the tourism sector for the resumption of their activities, have been duly recognised and awarded the Global Safety Stamp by the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC). Mauritius is among the first destinations and the first in the region to obtain this validation from the WTTC.

10. Cabinet has taken note of the Ayurvedic health services being provided at six Ayurvedic Clinics of the Ministry of Health and Wellness. The Ayurvedic Clinics cater for chronic cases, non-communicable diseases and seasonal ailments, among others. The Government of India has donated to the Government of Mauritius a consignment of about 10 tonnes of Ayurvedic drugs on 23 May 2020.

11. Cabinet has agreed to the submission of the proposed indicative amended draft Schedule of Commitments on Trade in Services by Mauritius to the World Trade Organisation for the purpose of negotiations in the context of the Joint Initiative on Services Domestic Regulation.

12. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the participation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, via video conference in the Special Meeting of the Committee of African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) Focal Points. The objective of the meeting was to deliberate on the governance of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic and discuss the revision of the 2020 APRM Work Plan and Missions in view of the current global crisis situation. The Chair of the Committee of Focal Points expressed concern about the number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Africa and the death rate reported. He praised the Bureau of the African Union (AU) and the Africa Centre for Disease Control for the efforts they are making towards combating the spread of the virus. He commended the establishment of the COVID-19 Response Fund which would contribute towards the purchase and distribution of vital medical equipment and the setting-up of the Task Force whose aim would be to solicit international economic support in the fight against COVID-19. A Task Force has been set up by the APRM Secretariat on Governance Assessment on AU Member States policy responses implemented to mitigate COVID-19 and Mauritius forms part of the Task Force.

13. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the 8th Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) Extraordinary Council of Ministers held recently via video conference. The objective of the Extraordinary Council was to deliberate on important issues pertaining to COVID-19 response and mitigation strategies to be adopted by the COMESA. The Council considered the Draft Guidelines for the Movement of Goods and Services across the COMESA Region during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Council further agreed on the following recommendations –

- (a) the development of an online platform for exchange of information on availability of essential products within the COMESA region;
- (b) Member States be urged to publish and share any newly introduced trade and customs-related measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the list of essential goods identified to facilitate customs clearance and border requirements;
- (c) the Secretariat to work with the National Task Forces (Trade and Health) on COVID-19 in the implementation of the Guidelines and to conduct a study on the impact of COVID-19 in Member States with a view to responding to and mitigating the spread of the pandemic whilst taking on board private sector contribution in the fight against COVID-19; and
- (d) the Secretariat to undertake a mapping exercise of essential medicines and equipment that can be sourced from the region.

14. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent participation of the Minister of Information Technology, Communication and Innovation in the 6th e-Governance Online Conference, organised by the e-Governance Academy, Estonia. The online e-Governance Conference provided participants with –

- (a) a unique opportunity to discuss the topics that reflect governments' current challenges in helping citizens to manage their lives and businesses online;
- (b) discussion platforms with e-governance experts from around the world; and
- (c) access to keynote presentations, live discussions and focus on the practical aspects of strategically designing digital agendas and collaborative models of e-governance.

One of the key learning and sharing objectives of the e-Governance Conference 2020 was on achieving long-term goals with continuous innovation that utilises smaller projects based on common principles.

15. Cabinet has taken note that the launching of the new Government Web Portal and Ministries' websites would be effected in July 2020. The portal has been revamped and redesigned with new features to better connect public services to the needs of modern users for a better digital experience.

16. Cabinet has taken note of the activities that would be organised by the Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change to mark World Environment Day 2020 celebrated on 05 June, namely –

- (a) the uplifting of health tracks at Le Dauguet Nature Trail, Camp Thorel, Bassin (Quatre Bornes), Priest Peak (Cite Martial) and Roche Noires;
- (b) general cleaning, reforestation and planting of endemic plants as well as fruit trees in some regions;
- (c) embellishment and tree planting along Jemmapes Street, Port Louis, outdoor Gymnasia at Le Dauguet Nature Trail and Citadel;
- (d) the greening and landscaping of verges of M1 and M2 Motorway and its lateral accesses to towns and villages; and
- (e) a sensitisation campaign on the theme of World Environment Day.

The theme for this year is "**Biodiversity**". The slogan for World Environment Day campaign 2020 is "**Time for Nature**".

17. Cabinet has taken note that in view of the outbreak of COVID-19, the Ministry of Health and Wellness would organise specific activities in the context of World No Tobacco Day, celebrated on 31 May, namely –

- (a) anti-tobacco messages from the youth ("*Fresque Murale*" Inter-College Competition 2019);
- (b) social media campaigns through the facebook page of the Ministry of Health and Wellness; and
- (c) sensitisation campaigns on TV.

Cabinet has also taken note that in the context of World No Tobacco Day, the Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Sports and Recreation would launch an Info Clip Competition, in collaboration with VISA. The competition would focus on the theme chosen for this year, which is "*Protecting Youth from industry manipulation and preventing them from tobacco and nicotine use*".
