

CABINET DECISIONS – 21 MAY 2021

1. Cabinet has agreed to the introduction of the Securities (Amendment) Bill 2021 into the National Assembly. The main object of the Bill is to amend the Securities Act with a view to -

- (a) allowing, in addition to the Stock Exchange of Mauritius Ltd, other securities exchanges to establish, maintain or operate securities exchanges in Mauritius, whether physically, electronically or otherwise;
- (b) allowing, in addition to the Central Depository and Settlement Co. Ltd, other clearing and settlement facilities to provide, whether physically, electronically or otherwise, services in Mauritius with respect to the deposit, clearing or settlement of securities transactions;
- (c) introducing therein the concept of “retail investors”, being investors, other than sophisticated investors, as the Financial Services Commission may determine, and thereby recognising foreign funds whose securities are marketed to retail investors in or from Mauritius; and
- (d) waiving the requirement for foreign reporting issuers to be registered with the Financial Services Commission.

2. Cabinet has taken note that the Minister of Finance, Economic Planning and Development would make a recommendation to the President to amend the Pensions Act, by way of regulations. The Pensions (Amendment) Regulations 2021 would give effect to the recommendations of the 2013 and 2016 Pay Research Bureau Reports to align the pension benefits, of public officers who are proceeding on Early Voluntary Retirement and who have opted to cash in full their accumulated vacation leave, with those who are retiring on the grounds of age limit (i.e. 65 years). They would therefore also be eligible to the following benefits –

- (a) one additional increment for pension purposes;
- (b) one-off payment equivalent to 2 percent of annual pensionable emoluments for each completed year beyond 33 1/3 years of pensionable service; and
- (c) computation of pension on higher salary attached to the post in which an officer is in temporary capacity at time of retirement.

These recommendations would be deemed to have come into operation as from 01 January 2013.

3. Cabinet has taken note that the Minister of Health and Wellness would make the Quarantine (Control of Sale and Use of COVID-19 Home Self-Testing Kit) Regulations 2021. The Standing Committee set up under the chair of the Director General Health

Services to assess the applications received by the Ministry of Commerce and Consumer Protection for importation of COVID-19 Home Self-Testing Kits has recommended that appropriate Regulations should be put in place so as to control the sale and use of the COVID-19 Home Self-Testing Kits, including analysis of the samples and reporting of the results.

4. Cabinet has taken note that the Minister of Health and Wellness would make the Dental Council (Continuing Professional Development) (Amendment) Regulations 2021. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Continuing Professional Development (CPD) events are not being held as they entail gathering and close contact amongst people. Dental practitioners are, therefore, unable to accumulate the required CPD Credit Points which would enable them to renew their registration with the Dental Council of Mauritius and practise during the coming year. A new item is being added in the Schedule regarding *“Approved online CPD course or e-training programme (for at least one hour)”* to enable dental practitioners to follow online CPD courses or e-training programmes approved by the Dental Council of Mauritius to accumulate one credit point.

5. Cabinet has taken note of the status of the implementation of the first Mauritian Satellite project. As of date, the nano-satellite has reached the launching site at Kennedy Space Centre in Florida. The transportation of the Mauritian Satellite towards the International Space Station would be effected on 4 June 2021. The eventual deployment of the satellite into space would depend on International Space Station’s schedule of activities. Once the Mauritian nano-satellite would be successfully deployed in space and has started orbiting the earth, the Ground Station set up at the Mauritius Research and Innovation Council would be able to get into contact with it about 4 to 5 times a day. The Mauritian Satellite is the stepping stone for Mauritius to have its own geostationary satellite which could provide significant data for the country surveillance and sustainable exploitation of the Exclusive Economic Zone of Mauritius.

6. Cabinet has agreed to the Financial Services Commission hosting the Permanent Secretariat of the Committee of Insurance, Securities and Non-banking Financial Authorities (CISNA) of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) as a unit under its purview and nominating a Mauritian national to act as the Secretary General of the Secretariat until a secondment policy is formulated and approved by CISNA. CISNA was established in June 1998 as a Committee of Authorities responsible for the supervision of insurance, securities, and non-banking financial sector in SADC Member States. CISNA is part of the Trade, Industry, Finance and Investment Directorate of the SADC and reports to the SADC Committee of Ministers of Finance and Investment through the Committee of Senior Treasury Officials.

7. Cabinet has taken note of the situation of the COVID-19 pandemic prevailing across the world. With regard to Mauritius, as at 21 May 2021, 1,325 cases (including imported cases) of COVID-19 had been registered. There were 86 active cases of COVID-19 in

Mauritius, out of which 74 were local cases and 12 imported cases. Contact tracing exercises and random testing are being carried out in accordance with the established protocol. The public should observe strict sanitary precautions, including the wearing of masks.

Cabinet has also taken note of progress in the implementation of the national COVID-19 vaccination programme and arrangements being made to administer the second dose of vaccine. Employees of crèches and pre-primary schools were also being vaccinated.

Cabinet has further taken note that –

- (a) on 20 May 2021, Mauritius received a consignment of 500,000 doses of Sinopharm vaccine which has been procured from China;
- (b) following mass testing in the villages of St Aubin, Batimarais and Benares and taking into consideration that the risk of further spread of the virus in those villages had been mitigated, the Prime Minister made an Order on 19 May 2021 to remove those villages from the Red Zone; and
- (c) a National Awareness Campaign on COVID-19 would be launched by the Prime Minister on Sunday 23 May 2021 at Côte d'Or National Sports Complex. The Campaign would focus on the importance of sanitary measures and protocols in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

8. Cabinet has taken note of remarkable performances of two Mauritian athletes in the Grand Prix Para Athletics held recently in Switzerland –

- (i) Ms Noémi Alphonse smashed the African record in the 100m T54. She has already been qualified for the Paralympic Games to be held in Japan; and
- (ii) Ms Anaïd Agéline could become the fourth best performer in the world in the long jump event T37.

Cabinet has also taken note that Ms Priscilla Morand has won silver medal in the Under 48 kg in the African Judo Championships held in Dakar, Senegal.

9. Cabinet has taken note that the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions has initiated a judicial enquiry into the cause of death of Jockey Nooresh Juglall at Champ de Mars on 15 May 2021 and has requested the Police to conduct an investigation into the matter.

10. Cabinet has taken note that a consignment of 182,500 doses of vaccine against Foot and Mouth Disease reached Mauritius on 15 May 2021. Some 100,000 doses of the vaccine have been conveyed to Rodrigues. The vaccination programme has started in Rodrigues on 20 May 2021 and on 19 May 2021 in Mauritius.

11. Cabinet has taken note of progress achieved so far by Ministries/Departments in the implementation of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) introduced in July 2020 to support the Public Sector Business Transformation Strategy. The three KPIs relate to e-procurement, training and good governance to accelerate the process of transformation across the Public Service and promote integrity. The Ministry of Public Service, Administrative and Institutional Reforms would continue to monitor the implementation of the foregoing KPIs with the relevant Ministries and Departments.

12. Cabinet has taken note of the outcomes of the “Summit on Financing African Economies” chaired by the President of the Republic of France on 18 May 2021 which was attended virtually by the Minister of Finance, Economic Planning and Development. The main objective of the meeting was to rally the international community for concerted efforts in mobilising financing to assist African countries in their economic recovery in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. The meeting was attended by Heads of States and Governments of some 30 countries and international organisations, including the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, Agence Française de Développement and the European Union Commission.

The Summit took note that an additional financing of some USD 285 billion would need to be mobilised over the period 2021-25 for African countries to step up the spending response to the pandemic. The French President has pressed upon the rich countries to work towards reallocating at least USD 100 billion in IMF Special Drawing Rights monetary reserves to African States by October 2021. A call was also made on the equitable access to safe and affordable vaccines and treatments to accelerate immunisation against COVID-19 in Africa.

13. Cabinet has taken note that following the resignation of Mr Ramalingum Maistry, Mr Shankhnad Ghurburrun would be appointed as non-executive Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Mauritius Ports Authority for a period of two years.

14. Cabinet has taken note of the re-appointment of Hon Mrs Aruna Devi Narain, Puisne Judge to the Commonwealth Secretariat Arbitral Tribunal for a second term with effect from 01 August 2021.

15. Cabinet has taken note of the appointment of Ms Carine Charlette, Director of Financial Intelligence Unit, as member of the National Regulatory Sandbox Licence Committee.

16. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the Jewellery Advisory Council with Mr Atmaram Sonoo as Chairperson.

17. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the National Computer Board with Mr Dhurma Ashdeo Soburrun as Chairperson.

18. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the ICT Appeal Tribunal for a period of three years.
