

HIGHLIGHTS OF CABINET MEETING – FRIDAY 13 MAY 2022

1. Cabinet has agreed to the introduction of the Supplementary Appropriation (2021-2022) Bill into the National Assembly. The object of the Bill is to provide for the supplementary appropriation, by votes of expenditure, both recurrent and capital, in respect of services of Government for the financial year 2021-2022, in excess of the expenditure appropriated by the Appropriation (2021-2022) Act 2021.

2. Cabinet has agreed to the promulgation of the Education (Amendment) Regulations 2022 which would, inter alia, cater for the adjustment in the school calendar, whereby admission to Grade 1 would now be held in January instead of June. The Regulations would also be amended to reflect the changes in the school year from June to May to one starting from January and ending in December as from 2023.

3. Cabinet has taken note that the Minister of Health and Wellness would make various Regulations under the Human Tissue (Removal, Preservation and Transplant) Act to provide a legal framework for organ donation in Mauritius, namely –

- (a) the Human Tissue (Removal, Preservation and Transplant) Regulations 2022 which provide for the place and conditions for the preservation of tissue;
- (b) the Human Tissue (Removal, Preservation and Transplant) (Prescribed Forms) Regulations 2022 which prescribe the various forms for the donation of tissue;
- (c) the Human Tissue (Removal, Preservation and Transplant) (Amendment of Schedule) Regulations 2022 which set out the procedure for certifying the brain death of a donor; and
- (d) the Human Tissue (Removal, Preservation and Transplant) (Approved Health Institutions) Regulations 2022 which provide for the listing of approved health institutions for the removal, preservation and transplant of tissue.

4. Cabinet has agreed to the promulgation of the National Land Transport Authority (Disciplinary Committee) Regulations 2022. The Disciplinary Committee would –

- (a) initiate and hear any disciplinary proceedings against the holder of a licence, a permit or an authorisation issued by the National Land Transport Authority; and
- (b) make recommendations to the Chief National Transport Commissioner on the suspension or revocation of a licence, permit or an authorisation or the issue of a warning to a licensee, as the case may be.

The Disciplinary Committee would be chaired by a Barrister-at-Law reckoning at least five years standing. The Regulations would apply to both mainland Mauritius and Rodrigues.

5. Cabinet has agreed to the Consumer Protection (Control of Imports) Regulations 2017 being amended in order to exempt companies, under the Inward Processing Scheme, from the requirement of obtaining an import permit for the importation of second-hand motor vehicles. A new project proposal has been received which consists of importing second-hand motor vehicles for the purpose of customisation and restoration and which would thereafter be re-exported under the Inward Processing Scheme.

The Regulations in force do not provide for this new type of business opportunity. A car dealership, dedicated to high-end personalisation of motor vehicles would customise same into unique ones. The company aims at becoming a one-stop shop for the region where it can transform any vehicle for the African, Middle East and European markets.

6. Cabinet has taken note of the salient recommendations of the Round Table on Phasing of Coal, organised by the Mauritius Renewable Energy Agency (MARENA), in collaboration with the British High Commission and the United Nations Development Programme. The objective of the Round Table was to bring on a common platform for the public and private sectors, to discuss on the Government policy to phase out the utilisation of coal in electricity generation by 2030 and to attain 60 percent of renewable energy in the energy mix by the same timeframe.

The Round Table discussions were organised around the following themes -

- (a) Theme 1 : Rapid deployment of clean power generation and energy efficiency measures in our economies.
- (b) Theme 2 : Working towards rapid scale-up of technologies and policies in this decade to achieve a transition away from unabated coal power generation in the 2030s for developed countries or 2040s for developing countries and not to put up any new coal plants.
- (c) Theme 3 : Ceasing issuance of new permits for new unabated coal-fired power generation projects, cease new construction of unabated coal-fired power generation projects.
- (d) Theme 4 : Strengthening domestic and international efforts to provide a robust framework of financial, technical, and social support to affected workers, sectors and communities to make a just and inclusive transition away from unabated coal power.

The recommendations were being examined and an Action Plan would be drawn for implementation within set timelines.

7. Cabinet has agreed to the Review of the Renewable Energy (RE) Roadmap 2030 for the Electricity Sector, following Government decision to attain 60 per cent of Renewables in the Energy mix by year 2030.

The Review of the RE Roadmap is in line with Government's agenda for a green energy transition, as announced in Budget Speech 2021/2022, through the setting up of the Green Energy Industry as a new economic growth pole, the acceleration of existing RE target to 60 percent of the country's energy needs by 2030 and the phasing out of the use of coal in the production of electricity by the same timeframe.

8. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of a Record of Discussions between the Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change, the National Coast Guard and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in respect of a project for the enhancement of institutional capacity on oil spill response. A team of experts from JICA would be in Mauritius to provide technical guidance and advice to all stakeholders on matters pertaining to oil spill response covering up to Tier 2 incident along undertaking a capacity building programme of officers of the various concerned Ministries.

A Joint Coordination Committee under the chair of the Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change would be set up to, inter alia, oversee the overall implementation of the project activities which are, namely –

- (a) tabletop exercise which is a training module for oil spill responder including decision makers and practitioners by assuming the worst-case scenario when incidents happen;
- (b) field training exercise which is a set of practical training using outcome of the tabletop exercise; and
- (c) training of trainers to ensure sustainable and steady growth of capability, knowledge and lessons learned which need to be stored and cultivated properly within organisations.

9. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security, the National Parks and Conservation Service and the North of England Zoological Society, Chester Zoo, UK. Chester Zoo is involved in conservation breeding, science and research, reintroduction /population management, education/behaviour change, protection of wild populations and habitats, capacity building/training and public awareness.

The Memorandum of Understanding would enhance the technical, scientific and educational cooperation between the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security and the Chester Zoo in the following joint projects and programmes -

- (a) biodiversity research,
- (b) conservation,
- (c) education, and
- (d) animal husbandry.

10. Cabinet has agreed to the participation of Mauritius to the XXII Commonwealth Games to be held in Birmingham, United Kingdom, from 28 July to 08 August 2022. As at date, 81 Mauritian athletes are expected to participate in the Games in the following sports disciplines –

- (a) Athletics;
- (b) Para-Athletics;
- (c) Badminton;
- (d) Boxing;
- (e) Cycling;
- (f) Judo;
- (g) Swimming;
- (h) Table Tennis;
- (i) Triathlon;
- (j) Weightlifting; and
- (k) Wrestling.

11. Cabinet has agreed to the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) (2022-2026) which has been prepared by the Human Resource Development Council (HRDC) in collaboration with stakeholders from both the public and private sectors and with the technical support of the *Agence Française de Développement*. The strategy seeks to establish and promote closer links between the “World of Work” and the “World of Education and Training”. The proposals contained in the NSDS are anchored around three main strategic clusters, namely –

- (a) Strategic Cluster 1: Improving Skills System Effectiveness;
- (b) Strategic Cluster 2: Tackling Skills Imbalances; and
- (c) Strategic Cluster 3: Strengthening the Education and Training Systems to Prepare and Empower Young People for the Future.

12. Cabinet has agreed to the Ministry of Labour, Human Resource Development and Training participating in a study on Labour Migration, commissioned under the Southern Africa Migration Management Project (SAMM) and to be jointly carried out by the International Labour Organization and the International Organization for Migration. The SAMM is a collaborative effort of four agencies of the United Nations, having a development and humanitarian mandate, namely –

- (a) International Labour Organization (ILO);
- (b) International Organization for Migration (IOM);
- (c) United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime; and
- (d) United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

The overall objective of the SAMM Project is to improve migration management in the Southern Africa and Indian Ocean region, guided by and contributing to the realisation of Goal 8 (“Decent Work and Economic Growth”) and Goal 10 (“Reduced Inequalities”) of the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. The study relating to Labour Migration, being carried out by ILO, in collaboration with IOM, supports the implementation of the UN Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. It involves a stock-taking exercise of strategies, policies, practices and regulatory frameworks regarding different aspects of Labour Migration in participating countries. The SAMM Project targets sixteen countries of the Southern Africa and Indian Ocean region.

13. Cabinet has taken note of the recommendations of the study on the National Response Strategy in the context of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) which were validated at a National Workshop held in March 2022. The strategy provides guidance, among others, on how Mauritius could –

- (a) enhance economic diversification and expand its trade in goods and services with African countries, including in markets not yet explored;
- (b) boost its investment potential through an assessment of comparative advantages and investigate value chains development at the regional and continental level;
- (c) account for issues pertaining to investment, intellectual property rights, competition policy and e-commerce; and
- (d) mainstream cross cutting issues such as gender, environmental and climate change mitigation and digital technologies.

The strategy further identifies four strategic objectives to be achieved to realise the untapped potential under the AfCFTA, namely -

- (i) adopting the necessary institutional framework to implement and benefit from the AfCFTA;
- (ii) building the capacity of business players to exploit the opportunities of the AfCFTA;

- (iii) reinforcing the country's trade promotion and economic diplomacy efforts; and
- (iv) improving the country's transport and logistics connectivity with the continent.

14. Cabinet has taken note of the proposal of the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security to embark on a sustainable project for the dog population control in Mauritius. This endeavour consists of a mass sterilisation project to be conducted by the Mauritius Society for Animal Welfare.

The project would consist of a survey on the number of unsterilised and unowned dogs across Mauritius. Thereafter, a component termed as Catch-Neuter-Release would be implemented in all residential areas with the objective to curb the growth of the dog population in a more humane, efficient and cost-effective manner. The benefits of the project would be the control of the stray dog population, elimination of pack gatherings, decrease in the number of aggressions and curbing of illegal breeding.

An Expression of Interest would be launched for the services of local and international service providers to implement the project across the island for sterilisation, registration and microchipping of dogs. Relevant amendments would be made to the current regulatory framework for the operationalisation of the project.

15. Cabinet has taken note of issues pertaining to the Land Research and Monitoring Unit (LRMU). Out of 20 claimants who were informed that their cases could be lodged in court, 12 have signified their willingness to proceed with the filing of their cases.

Some 125 cases could not be pursued further for one of the following reasons –

- (a) court judgments have already been delivered;
- (b) applicants do not wish to proceed further;
- (c) cases have been settled between concerned parties;
- (d) cases do not relate to land dispossession, but rather to claims of compensation as descendants of slaves; and
- (e) applicants have failed to attend meetings at the LRMU.

The claimants in these 125 cases were being informed accordingly. As at date, there were 164 remaining cases that were being assessed by the LRMU, out of which 41 cases concern Rodrigues. The enlistment of the services of, inter alia, a genealogist and a project manager was being finalised.

16. Cabinet has taken note of the status of implementation of the project for the construction of 12,000 residential units by the New Social Living Development Ltd. As at date, 48 sites totalling some 472 Arpents of land have already been identified. The Project Management Consultants in Construction have been appointed. Geotechnical investigations on sites have started in January 2022 and preliminary reports have been received in respect of 19 sites.

17. Cabinet has taken note of the report of the Mauritius Meteorological Services with regard to the Winter 2022 Seasonal Outlook for Mauritius and Rodrigues. According to the Mauritius Meteorological Services, the winter season 2022 in Mauritius and Rodrigues would be from the first half of May to October.

The Winter 2022 Seasonal Outlook report would be released to the general public and updated by the Mauritius Meteorological Services upon availability of fresh information.

18. Cabinet has agreed to the Road Development Authority implementing a project for the Upgrading of Engineer Street and other ancillary works at Port Louis, in the context of the Victoria Urban Terminal project. Engineer Street, located adjacent to the Terminal, would be used as a main entrance for buses to access the Terminal itself. The road is presently narrow with inadequate drainage infrastructure.

19. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Health and Wellness proposes to conduct the fourth Mauritius Nutrition Survey, in collaboration with the Monash University, Australia, the University of Helsinki, Finland and the Umea University Hospital, Sweden. The last survey was conducted in 2012. The Nutrition Survey 2022 would serve to monitor and evaluate progress made within the last decade by comparing data from the previous surveys. The overall goal of the Nutrition Survey 2022 is to study the food consumption patterns and assess the nutritional status of the population with a view to addressing diet and nutrition related health problems and non-communicable diseases in Mauritius. The target population for the survey comprises Mauritian children, adolescents, young and old adults, i.e. persons aged 5 to 74 years.

20. Cabinet has taken note of the activities being organised by the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security in the context of the International Tea Day, observed on 21 May. The theme for this year is "Tea and Fair Trade". The Ministry would organise an exhibition *cum* sales on Saturday 21 May 2022 at the Farmers Service Agency at Union Park with the participation of some 15 entrepreneurs engaged in the trade of tea and tea products, the National Agricultural Products Regulatory Office and the Small Farmers Welfare Fund. Some 50,000 tea plantlets from the nursery of the Agricultural Services would be symbolically handed over to 25 planters who have recently embarked in tea cultivation.

21. Cabinet has taken note of the activities being organised by the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security in the context of the International Day for Biological Diversity, observed on 22 May. The slogan chosen for this year is “Building a shared future for all life”.

The Ministry, in collaboration with the National Parks and Conservation Service, would launch a new trail of 7.5km in the Bras D’Eau National Park at the Mare Sarcelles wetland area which would be known as the Mare Sarcelles trail. The trail would add to the network of 5km trails already existing in the 497.2 hectare at the Bras D’Eau National Park.

22. Cabinet has taken note that the meetings of the Commonwealth of Learning 35th Academic Board and 14th Executive Governing Board to oversee the Commonwealth Executive Master in Business Administration (CEMBA) and Commonwealth Executive Master in Public Administration (CEMPA) programmes would be held in Mauritius from 26 to 28 May 2022.

The Commonwealth of Learning has made a request to the Open University of Mauritius which is one of the partners offering the CEMBA and CEMPA programmes to co-host the meetings of the two Boards. The Academic Board and Executive Governing Board meetings for these programmes are held on a rotation basis at each partner university. Some 25 international members from 11 countries were expected to attend the meetings which would be held in accordance with the prevailing sanitary protocols.

23. Cabinet has taken note of the recent mission of the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Housing and Land Use Planning, Minister of Tourism to Reunion Island. The objectives of the mission were to renew political dialogue with the Reunion Island authorities in order to rekindle the cooperation between the two islands, explore possibilities for collaboration in the field of tourism and engage in face-to-face communication with tourism partners with a view to boosting tourist arrivals from Reunion Island.

The Deputy Prime Minister had meetings and discussed various issues with -

- (a) Mrs Catherine Frécaut, President of ‘*Les Entreprises du Voyage*’ in Reunion Island and also Director General of ‘Bourbon Voyages’ as well as Mr Serge Etheve, Director of ‘Transcontinents’;
- (b) Mr Patrick Lebreton, Chairman of ‘Ile de la Reunion Tourisme’ and also the Mayor of the town of Saint Joseph, and first Vice-President du Conseil Régional;
- (c) Mr André Thien Ah Koon, Mayor of Tampon and also the President of ‘*La Communauté d’Agglomération du Sud*’, Mr David Lorion, Member of the French National Assembly, and Mr Olivier Naria, Vice President of ‘*La Communauté Intercommunale des Villes Solidaires*’ and Deputy Mayor of Saint Pierre;

- (d) Ms Karine Lebon and Mr Jean Hugues Ratenon, Members of the French National Assembly;
- (e) Mr Jacques Billant, Préfet de La Réunion; and
- (f) Mrs Huguette Bello, Présidente du Conseil Régional.

The Deputy Prime Minister also had a fruitful working session with an extended group of travel agents and tour operators in Reunion Island with a view to understanding the current challenges they are facing with regard to selling Mauritius as a tourist destination.

24. Cabinet has taken note of the situation of the COVID-19 pandemic prevailing across the world. Some 519.2 million cases have been reported globally, of which 474 million persons have been successfully treated.

With regard to Mauritius, as at 11 May 2022, there were 229 active cases of COVID-19, out of which eight were admitted at the New ENT Hospital. Over the period 5 to 11 May 2022, no death was attributed to COVID-19.

Cabinet has also taken note of progress in the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme, including the administration of the booster doses in the Republic of Mauritius.

Cabinet has further taken note that 211,200 paediatric doses of Pfizer vaccine have been donated by the UK Government. The vaccines would be administered to children aged between 5 to 11 years. The Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention has donated sequencing reagents to the Ministry of Health and Wellness.

25. Cabinet has taken note of the activities being organised by the Mauritius Museums Council and the Intercontinental Slavery Museum (Mauritius) Ltd on the International Museum Day, celebrated on 18 May. The theme for this year is "Power of Museums". The following activities would be organised -

- (a) exhibition on stamps of Mauritius encompassing, inter alia, different themes such as fauna and flora, birds of Mauritius, indigenous flowers, history of Mauritius in collaboration with the Dodo Philatelic Society at the Natural History Museum, Port Louis on 18 May 2022;
- (b) launching of a brochure and an exhibition on the heroic, mythical and historical figure of '*Ratsitatane*' who was beheaded on 15 April 1822 upon accusation of inciting a slave revolt, as well as a logo competition at the Intercontinental Slavery Museum, Port Louis, on 18 May 2022;
- (c) exhibition on the theme "*Sculptures marines, objets de l'homme façonnés par la mer*" in collaboration with the Mauritius Marine Conservation Society at the National History Museum, Mahebourg, on 25 May 2022; and

- (d) launching of an essay competition on “*Ratsitatane*, Heroic, Mythical and Historic Figure” by the Intercontinental Museum Day (Mauritius) Ltd, for Grade 6 students in collaboration with the District Council of Pamplemousses on 20 May 2022.

- 26. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the Board of the Road Development Authority with Mr Louis Joël Yves José Patron as part-time Chairperson.
