

HIGHLIGHTS OF CABINET MEETING – FRIDAY 15 APRIL 2022

1. Cabinet has agreed to the introduction of the National Environment Cleaning Authority Bill into the National Assembly. The main object of the Bill is to provide for the establishment of the National Environment Cleaning Authority which shall be responsible for –

- (a) the development of a National Cleaning and Embellishment Strategy with an Action Plan to embellish Mauritius and keep Mauritius clean, in consultation with relevant Ministries and other stakeholders;
- (b) identifying and prioritising, in collaboration with relevant Ministries and other stakeholders, the sites to be kept clean and embellished; and
- (c) coordinating, monitoring and supervising the implementation of cleaning and embellishment programmes.

The Bill further provides that the National Environment Cleaning Authority shall, in the discharge of its functions and exercise of its powers, inter alia, –

- (i) undertake, as and when required, cleaning and embellishment works, and cause cleaning and embellishment works to be undertaken by a local authority, the Road Development Authority, the Tourism Authority, the Beach Authority and other relevant stakeholders, including entities financed by the National Environment and Climate Change Fund;
- (ii) assist, and be assisted by, a local authority, the Road Development Authority, the Tourism Authority, the Beach Authority and other relevant stakeholders, including entities financed by the National Environment and Climate Change Fund; and
- (iii) advise the Minister on cleaning and embellishment policies and strategies, including recycling of waste, and on any other matter related thereto.

2. Cabinet has agreed to the promulgation of the Consumer Protection (Control of Imports) (Amendment No. 2) Regulations 2022 to extend the existing ban on the importation of incandescent lamps/light bulbs of at least 75 watts to all incandescent lamps used for general lighting purposes, for more energy efficient lighting.

3. Cabinet has taken note that the Minister of Health and Wellness would make 18 Regulations under section 39(3)(a) of the Allied Health Professionals Council Act, to provide for the prescription of Codes of Practice for the different allied health profession, namely Sports Therapist, Occupational Therapist, Podiatrist, Physiotherapist, Orthopaedic Technician, Speech and Language Therapist, Audiologist, Nutritionist, Dietitian, Counsellor, Psychologist, Psychomotor Therapist, Psychotherapist, Chiropractor, Osteopath, Clinical Scientist, Medical Imaging Technologist and Medical Laboratory Technologist.

4. Cabinet has taken note that the Prime Minister would lead a delegation to Gujarat, India to participate in the Ground Breaking Ceremony for the World Health Organization-Global Centre for Traditional Medicine on 19 April 2022 and to attend the inaugural session of the Global Ayush Investment and Innovation Summit on 20 April 2022. The Prime Minister would also have meetings with the Prime Minister of the Republic of India, as well as other dignitaries, including the Chief Ministers of Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh and the Director General of the World Health Organization.

The Prime Minister would leave Mauritius on 16 April 2022 and return on 24 April 2022.

5. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Economic Development Board (EDB) and the Egyptian African Businessmen's Association. The Memorandum of Understanding would consolidate the EDB's market diversification strategy and open up new avenues of cooperation for investment attraction and trade promotion in Egypt and the wider Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. The Memorandum of Understanding has the following main objectives –

- (a) establishing a practical framework for cooperation with regard to Trade and Investment promotion and facilitation of export of services to Egypt and the MENA region; and
- (b) strengthening institutional relations and capacity building through mutual cooperation.

6. Cabinet has agreed to the Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology hosting the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) 2022 Triennale on Education and Training in Africa in mid-October 2022, following a request made by the Executive Secretary of ADEA. The ADEA is a Pan African Organisation regrouping all 54 Ministers of Education in Africa. It is a high-level forum for dialogue and advocacy, generating knowledge on policy formulation and implementation in education, mainly through research and analytical work.

7. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of the Letter of Support to the Paris Declaration which calls for a sustained investment in education. The Global Education Meeting 2021 which was co-convened by UNESCO and the French Government in November 2021, culminated in the "Paris Declaration: A Global Call for Investing in the Futures of Education" that underscores the urgency for Member States to sustainably fund education by, inter alia –

- (a) relying on public financing and public-private cooperation;
- (b) devoting an adequate share of national stimulus packages to education;
- (c) targeting support to marginalised learners; and
- (d) emphasising skills development for employment.

The progress and commitments made as part of the Paris Declaration would be monitored by UNESCO's SDG4 - Education 2030 High Level Steering Committee.

8. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of a project document between the Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change, the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for the Capacity Building Initiative for Transparency project. In accordance with Article 13 of the Paris Agreement, Country Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change are required to establish an Enhanced Transparency Framework for action and support, under which developing countries such as Mauritius should provide information on financial, technology transfer and capacity building support needed and received.

The objective of the Capacity Building Initiative for Transparency project is to strengthen the national Greenhouse Gas inventory of the Republic of Mauritius as well as improve data collection, storage and dissemination. The Capacity Building Initiative for Transparency project comprises three components, namely –

- (a) Component 1: improve the accuracy and localisation of the national greenhouse gas inventory;
- (b) Component 2: strengthen the national greenhouse gas inventory process; and
- (c) Component 3: mainstream the national greenhouse gas inventory to enhance transparency and support policy-making

A Project Steering Committee would be set up to monitor progress of implementation of the project.

9. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Sports and Recreation, in collaboration with the Mauritius Sports Council and the National Youth Council, would organise a series of recreation activities, namely '*Vakans Zen*' scheduled from 20 to 29 April 2022 during the first term school holidays.

'*Vakans Zen*' would provide an opportunity for young persons aged between 14 to 20 years to engage in fun and healthy recreation activities. The following activities would be organised –

- (a) Aquatic games (Kayak and Pedalo);
- (b) Horse riding;
- (c) Mōlkky;
- (d) Cycling;
- (e) Quad Biking;
- (f) Climbing; and
- (g) Fun games.

'*Vakans Zen*' would be hosted at designated venues, namely Anse La Raie Residential Training Centre, Flic en Flac Outdoor Centre, Belle Mare Outdoor Centre, Pointe Jerome Residential Training Centre, Bel Ombre Public Beach, and Le Morne Green Village. In view of the prevailing sanitary restrictions, only 40 participants would be invited to participate in '*Vakans Zen*' every day at each of the designated venues. Some 2000 youngsters are expected to benefit from these activities.

10. Cabinet has taken note of the findings of the fourth Report of the National Wage Consultative Council (NWCC) on the impact of the implementation of the national minimum wage since January 2018 and its review in January 2020. The fourth Report of the NWCC, which covers period July 2020 to June 2021 focused, inter alia, on the following:

- (a) the impact of the national minimum wage on labour market indicators such as unemployment, share of workers contributing to the Mauritius Revenue Authority and wage rate index, among others;
- (b) the evolution of wage distribution by, inter alia, sectors, gender, size of firm, from 2017 to 2021; and
- (c) the characteristics and location of low wage workers, both full-time and part-time, drawing up to Rs11,000 a month, that is, around 10% above the national minimum wage. This is an approach used by Eurofound, a tripartite European Union Agency established in 1975 to provide knowledge to assist in the development of better social, employment and work-related policies, through Reports on national minimum wage in Europe.

11. Cabinet has agreed to the Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam Botanic Garden Trust increasing the entrance fee for Non-Mauritian Citizens (tourists). The entrance fee for Non-Mauritian citizens aged five years and above would be increased from Rs200 to Rs300. The entrance fee was last revised from Rs100 to Rs200, in July 2012.

12. Cabinet has taken note that a delegation led by Dr Shavana Haythornthwaite, Adviser and Head of the Human Rights Unit of the Commonwealth Secretariat in London would be in Mauritius from 23 to 28 May 2022 for the holding of two workshops in collaboration with the Human Rights Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade. The themes of the workshops are 'Human Rights and Youth Engagement' and 'Business and Human Rights'. The workshop on 'Human Rights and Youth Engagement' would be held from 23 to 25 May 2022 with some 30 youth trainers. It is built around the understanding that human rights principles and values are powerful tools to enhance participation, reinforce accountability and create spaces for peaceful dialogue among the youth and the society.

The workshop on the theme 'Business and Human Rights' would be held on 26 May 2022 for some 50 participants. It would be held against the backdrop that business enterprises can significantly impact the human rights of employees, consumers and communities throughout their operations. The 'Business and Human Rights' workshop aims to –

- (a) raise awareness and strengthen understanding on the UN Business and Human Rights Guiding Principles for key stakeholders;
- (b) identify gaps, opportunities and challenges; and
- (c) examine the impact of COVID-19 on business and human rights in various sectors.

13. Cabinet has taken note that a National Consultation would be held on 28 April 2022 in the context of the forthcoming international environmental meeting under the theme

“Stockholm+50: a healthy planet for the prosperity of all – our responsibility, our opportunity”. To commemorate the 50 years since the first United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in 1972, the United Nations General Assembly has agreed to convene the international meeting entitled “Stockholm+50: a healthy planet for the prosperity of all in Stockholm, Sweden on 2 and 3 June 2022, during the week of World Environment Day.

The Stockholm+50 is focusing on three leadership dialogues that are designed to be collaborative and multi-stakeholder with a focus on recommendations that would contribute to the environmental dimension of sustainable development. The main objectives of the consultations are to stimulate an inclusive whole-of-society and whole-of-government dialogue on the main themes of Stockholm+50 for ideas, insights, and innovation that would –

- (a) build a shared global vision on how to achieve a healthy planet and prosperity for all while accelerating progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Multilateral Environment Agreements through an inclusive green recovery; and
- (b) offer clear recommendations on priority actions that can advance national and sectoral policies that address climate change and leverage nature-based solutions. This can build on and inform the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and SDG frameworks.

14. Cabinet has taken note of the Report on the “Industrial Waste Management - Cost Structure Review” which was carried out by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) under the Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE) initiative, in collaboration with the Ministry of Industrial Development, SMEs and Cooperatives and Business Mauritius.

The main objective of the Industrial Waste Management - Cost Structure Review was to determine the cost burden of industrial waste management borne by manufacturing enterprises, with a view to enhancing their competitiveness and promoting a circular economy, through the adoption of Extended Producer Responsibility principle. The Report has provided the insights on the cost structure for industrial solid waste management in Mauritius.

15. Cabinet has taken note of the situation of the COVID-19 pandemic prevailing across the world. Some 502 million cases have been reported globally, of which 452.4 million persons have been successfully treated.

With regard to Mauritius, as at 13 April 2022, there were 671 active cases of COVID-19, out of which 20 were admitted at the New ENT Hospital. Over the period 07 to 13 April 2022, three deaths were attributed to COVID-19.

Cabinet has also taken note of progress in the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme including the administration of the booster dose in the Republic of Mauritius. As at 14 April 2022, 1,006,722 persons had received a first dose of vaccine (representing 79.5 percent of the population). 972,316 persons were fully vaccinated (representing 76.8 percent of population). 614,851 persons had received a booster dose (representing 48.6 percent of the population). 76.4 percent of adolescents aged 12 to 17 years had received a first dose of vaccine and 69.8 percent had received a second dose.

Cabinet has further taken note that the administration of the second COVID-19 booster dose for those aged 59 years and above and for High Risk Patients has started on 13 April 2022.

16. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Health and Wellness has launched the H1N1 Vaccination Campaign in all Regional Hospitals, District Hospitals, Mediclinics, Area Health Centres and Community Health Centres on 11 April 2022.

17. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the participation of Minister of Land Transport and Light Rail, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade in the Global Diaspora Summit held recently in Dublin, Republic of Ireland. The Summit was organised by the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The Global Diaspora Summit was the first Summit of the Member States of the IOM since the Ministerial Conference held in Geneva in 2013.

The Summit was held in preparation for the International Migration Review Forum, a major review of global migration policy being organised by the United Nations in New York in May 2022. The Summit took stock of international developments and achievements in the field of migration since the 2013 IOM Ministerial Conference, with particular focus on the progress made so far on the implementation of Objective 19 of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in 2018, namely “Create conditions for migrants and diasporas to fully contribute to sustainable development in all countries”.

The Minister gave an overview of the migration and diaspora policy of Mauritius, while highlighting that Mauritius is a land of migrants with no indigenous population and that has been peopled by migrants from all continents. The Summit concluded with the adoption of the “Dublin Declaration” – a future agenda of action for global diaspora engagement. In the margins of the Summit, the Minister had a meeting with the Minister for Overseas Development Aid and Diaspora of the Republic of Ireland and discussed bilateral cooperation issues.

18. Cabinet has taken note of the activities being organised by the National Heritage Fund to commemorate the International Day for Monuments and Sites on 18 April 2022, namely –

- (a) the launching of the Mobile Application ‘MauHeritage’ on 18 April 2022 to promote the National Heritage of Mauritius to a wider audience and raise awareness on cultural heritage. Through this application, the public would, inter alia, have access to information on the National Heritage, including intangible cultural heritage; and
- (b) the organisation of an Award Ceremony for participants of the fourth edition of the Heritage Short Film launched in 2020 by National Heritage Fund, in collaboration with Mauritius Film Development Corporation on 21 April 2022.

19. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the following Boards/Committees, under the Pharmacy Act –

- (a) the Pharmacy Board with Dr Bhooshun Ori, Director General, Health Services as Chairperson;
- (b) the Trade and Therapeutics Committee with Dr Prithviraj Ramputty, Director, Health Services as Chairperson;
- (c) the Poisons Committee with Mr Jawaharduth Bohoorun, Ag Director, Pharmaceutical Services as Chairperson; and
- (d) the Planning Committee with Dr Vijayasing Dinnasing, Director, Health Services as Chairperson.

20. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the Managing Committee of the National Arts Fund with Mr Gaëtan Abel as Chairperson.
