

HIGHLIGHTS OF CABINET MEETING – FRIDAY 28 JANUARY 2022

1. Cabinet has, as recommended by the Commission of Inquiry on Drug Trafficking Report, agreed to the setting up of a Drug Offenders Administrative Panel. The Panel would be under the purview of the Ministry of Health and Wellness and a new Bill would be prepared for its setting up.

2. Cabinet has agreed to the Fashion and Design Institute signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Birmingham City University, United Kingdom. The purpose of the Memorandum of Understanding is to develop co-operation and promote mutual understanding and excellence in practice-based education, research and knowledge exchange between the Parties. Both organisations aim at working collaboratively to develop, inter alia, the following activities in areas of mutual academic interest –

- (a) exchanges of academic and administrative staff and mutual visits to pursue research and to lecture;
- (b) exchanges of students and/or study abroad programmes and other enhancements to the student experience; and
- (c) identifying opportunities –
 - (i) for conducting collaborative research and development, lectures and seminars, organising symposia and conferences; and
 - (ii) to collaborate on the development of Joint and Dual Awards.

3. Cabinet has agreed to the World Bank Report on the Sugar Cane Sector Review being made public following consultations held with the Country Director of World Bank during her recent visit to Mauritius. The Report comprises a Competitiveness Analysis of the sugarcane sector, a Sector Vision and a Policy Note, in line with the Terms and Conditions of the Reimbursable Advisory Services, which the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security had signed with the World Bank, with a view to providing policy recommendations to enable Government to come up with strategies for the future and long-term development of the sector.

4. Cabinet has agreed to the President of the Republic being advised to make the Civil Establishment Order 2022 and the Civil Establishment (Rodrigues Regional Assembly) Order 2022.

5. Cabinet has taken note that MV Mauritius Trochetia had effected a voyage to Rodrigues with essential commodities and returned to Mauritius on 28 January 2022.

Cabinet has also taken note that MV Mauritius Trochetia also carried livestock from Rodrigues. The next voyage of MV Mauritius Trochetia is expected on 30 January 2022, subject to weather conditions.

6. Cabinet has taken note that following the rainfall during the month of January 2022, an assessment has been carried out by the Extension Services of the Food and Agricultural Research and Extension Institute (FAREI).

A rise in fungal and bacterial diseases on tomatoes, cabbage and chillies plantations is expected with the climatic conditions. Fungicide application was being recommended to growers. A slight drop in the production of tomatoes and chillies was expected in the next production cycle. An incidence of soft rot in carrot and cabbage was also foreseen.

Surveillance would be ongoing and advisory services/assistance would be provided to the farming community by the Agricultural Services of the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security as well as FAREI.

7. Cabinet has taken note that the Consultant appointed by the Ministry of Youth and Sports to prepare a National Policy Paper on Recreation has submitted the final policy document. The National Policy on Recreation is articulated on the following nine principles –

- (a) recreational activities in diverse forms are vital to quality of life;
- (b) recreational facilities will empower and promote happier families and communities;
- (c) instilling of values of lifelong recreational practice for social inclusion and equality of opportunity;
- (d) connection with nature in a spirit of preservation of the environment;
- (e) a flexible approach to respond to the local needs of the population;
- (f) focusing on partnership approaches to shared agendas and optimisation of resources;
- (g) ethos of continuous improvement taking into consideration evolving demography, changing lifestyle and social needs;
- (h) commitment to enhancing community-based leadership in recreation, with emphasis on targeted recreation awareness campaigns that increase knowledge about how recreation contributes to enjoyment and quality of life; and
- (i) recreation as a sector that contributes to the economy and job creation.

The five goals of the National Policy on Recreation are to –

- (i) promote an active healthy lifestyle;
- (ii) ensure inclusiveness for all;
- (iii) connect people with nature;
- (iv) foster an enabling environment; and
- (v) ensure overall coordination, organisation, and delivery of recreation activities.

8. Cabinet has taken note that the NOTAM which lays down conditions for passengers travelling to Mauritius has been extended up to 31 March 2022.

9. Cabinet has taken note of the activities being organised by the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security in the context of the World Wetlands Day celebrated on 02 February each year. The theme for the 2022 World Wetlands Day celebration proposed by the Ramsar Convention is “Wetlands action for people and nature” and the slogan is “Value-Manage-Restore–Love Wetlands”. The Ministry would, in collaboration with the National Parks and Conservation Service, organise a Clean-up Campaign at Bras d’Eau National Park on Saturday 29 January 2022 along Poste Lafayette coastal road over a distance of about three kilometres on both sides starting from Bras d’Eau Public Beach to Mare Sarcelles. An area of 0.5 Ha would also be restored, some 200 endemic trees would be planted at Mare Sarcelles and information materials would be distributed to participants. The event would be held in accordance with the prevailing sanitary restrictions related to outdoor activities with less than 50 participants.

10. Cabinet has taken note of the activities being organised by the Ministry of Health and Wellness in the context of World Cancer Day 2022, observed on 04 February each year. The theme of the three-year World Cancer Day campaign from 2022 to 2024 is ‘Close the care gap.’

The event would be launched on Friday 04 February 2022 at L’Escalier Mediclinic where screening for breast and cervical cancer would be carried out. Talks on cancer and an exhibition on healthy lifestyle and healthy diet would also be held. Other activities also include –

- (a) radio talks and TV programmes by health professionals on MBC TV on the theme of the World Cancer Day;
- (b) the dissemination of information on the causes of cancer in order to raise awareness among the population at large about the potential risk of cancer;
- (c) screening for cervical cancer for sexually active women aged 25 to 60 years in the community and at worksites; and
- (d) display of banners about the risk factors of developing cancer in Municipal Councils, District Councils and Regional Health Hospitals.

11. Cabinet has taken note of the situation of the COVID-19 pandemic prevailing across the world. Some 364.7 million cases have been reported globally, of which 288.4 million persons have been successfully treated.

With regard to Mauritius, as at 26 January 2022, there were 1,048 active cases of COVID-19, out of which 15 were admitted at the New ENT Hospital. Over the period 20 January 2022 to 26 January 2022, 13 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 27 January 2022, 978,612 persons had received a first dose of vaccine (representing 77.3 percent of the population). 930,676 persons were fully vaccinated (representing 73.5 percent of the population). 356,425 persons had received a booster dose (representing 28.2 percent of the population). 68.5 percent of adolescents aged 12 to 17 years had received a first dose of vaccine and 45.1 percent had received a second dose.

12. Cabinet has taken note that Rodrigues detected its first case of locally transmitted COVID-19 on 26 January 2022. An extensive contact tracing exercise has been launched and as at 28 January 2022 (0900 hours), 82 cases have been detected.

The Ministry of Health and Wellness was sending three medical staff to Rodrigues, namely a Medical Superintendent, a Community Physician and a Regional Public Health Superintendent. The Ministry of Health and Wellness is also supporting the Rodrigues Health Department regarding the implementation of treatment protocols and contingency planning. Additional stock of drugs used for treatment of COVID-19 was being sent to Rodrigues.

13. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the meeting of the *Conseil International des Jeux des Iles de l'Océan Indien* (CIJ) held recently in Madagascar. Madagascar would host the Indian Ocean Islands Games (IOIG) in 2023. Members of the CIJ proceeded to Madagascar to discuss issues related to the holding of the 2023 IOIG and to take stock of progress achieved in the preparations for the games. The CIJ Board members were elected and the members of the Comité d'Organisation des Jeux des Iles were introduced.

23 sports disciplines have been provisionally approved by the CIJ for the games and four as demonstration sports. The 23 sports disciplines are Athletics/Para Athletics, Badminton, Basketball, Boxing, Cycling, Equestrian, Football/Beach Soccer, Weightlifting, Handball, Judo, Karate, Kickboxing, Wrestling, Swimming/Para Swimming, Petanque, Rugby, Tae Kwon Do, Archery, Tennis, Table Tennis, Yachting, Volleyball/Beach Volley and Surf. The four demonstration sports are Fencing, Teqball, Auto Sport and Billiard.

14. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the Agalega Island Council with Mr Gino Alfred as Chairperson.

15. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the Board of Governors of the *Université des Mascareignes* with Professor Nathalie Bernardie-Tahir as Chairperson.

16. Cabinet has taken note of the constitution of the Institute of Technical Education and Technology Council with Mr Yamal Matabudul as Chairperson.

17. Cabinet has taken note of the appointment of Mr Joseph Gérard Angoh, retired Judge of the Supreme Court, as Chairperson of the Financial Services Review Panel.
