

**HIGHLIGHTS OF CABINET MEETING – FRIDAY 07 APRIL 2023**

1. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation and Prasar Bharati of the Republic of India. The objectives of the Memorandum of Understanding would be to develop and strengthen cooperation in the field of broadcasting, which would include, inter alia -

- (a) mutual assistance for the distribution of DD India, DD Urdu and DD Sports 2.0 in Mauritius;
- (b) exchange of programmes in areas such as culture, education, history, science, entertainment, sports, news and other areas of mutual interest;
- (c) co-production of programme related to matters of mutual interest;
- (d) exchange of expertise/personnel and provision of training to staff;
- (e) cooperation with TV crews in both countries by providing facilities and general assistance; and
- (f) cooperation in the promotion of digital applications and environments.

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2. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between Information and Communication Technologies Authority and *L'Agence Nationale des Fréquences* of France. The objectives of the Memorandum of Understanding are mainly to promote cooperation and collaboration between the two regulatory bodies on activities relating to radiocommunication, radio frequency spectrum management, training of engineers and preparation for the World Radiocommunication Conference.

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3. Cabinet has agreed to Mauritius signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the UK for the development of a UK-Mauritius Strategic Trade Partnership. The Memorandum of Understanding would be a Government-to-Government initiative, aiming at establishing a joint, high-level confidential forum on which trade, investment, expertise transfer and commercial discussions would take place. The objectives would be mainly to enhance cooperation between Mauritius and the UK and to establish a practical framework for cooperation in areas of investment, trade in goods and trade in services.

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4. Cabinet has agreed to the setting up of an American Makerspace in the mini-theatre of the Rajiv Gandhi Science Centre, in collaboration with the Embassy of the United States of America. The objective of the American Makerspace would be to promote the understanding of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics among students in the age group of 14 to 18 years. It would also enable the Rajiv Gandhi Science Centre to further keep abreast with current international trends in science centres and museums.

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5. Cabinet has agreed to the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development signing an Exchange of Letters with the Government of Australia for disbursement of funds by way of a grant for financing of the supply of Oil Spill (OILMAP) and Search and Rescue Modelling Software (SARMAP) and Training project.

The aim of the project would be to enhance the preparedness and response capability of Mauritius to effectively respond to marine oil spills, and marine search and rescue operations through the provision of fast and accurate forecasts for the trajectory and fate of oil in the event of an oil spill to optimise for lost vessels, persons in water and other objects at sea.

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6. Cabinet has agreed to Mauritius hosting the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action Pathway-related Regional Preparatory Meeting of the Atlantic, Indian Ocean and South China Sea region in July 2023. The objective of the Regional Meeting would be to identify and develop inputs for the 4<sup>th</sup> International Conference on SIDS which would take place in 2024 in Antigua and Barbuda, while maximising coherence and complementarity with respect to other preparatory work. Some 60 international delegates were expected to participate in the event, including the staff of the UN Secretariat.

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7. Cabinet has agreed to the International Atomic Energy Agency holding a Regional Training Course on the "Introduction to Nuclear Forensics in Mauritius" from 22 to 26 May 2023, in collaboration with the Radiation Safety and Nuclear Security Authority. The objective of the IAEA Regional Training Course would be to raise awareness and understanding on the application of nuclear forensics and its role in a national nuclear security regime and national response plan and to support the participating Member States in developing their nuclear forensic capabilities. Some 24 participants from Comoros, Madagascar, Seychelles and Mauritius were expected to participate in the Training Course.

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8. Cabinet has agreed to Mauritius joining the “High Ambition Coalition to End Plastic Pollution” which was being led by Norway and Rwanda. The United Nations Environment Assembly adopted a Resolution in March 2022 to “End Plastic Pollution: Towards an International Legally Binding Instrument”. The strategic goals of the High Ambition Coalition are as follows -

- (a) to restrain plastic consumption and production to sustainable level as plastic production, which is projected to double in the next 20 years, would otherwise result in an unmanageable volume of plastic waste;
- (b) to enable a circular economy for plastics that protects the environment and human health. Due to hazardous chemicals that are intentionally added to give plastic material specific properties, the end products are not always reusable/recyclable and have adverse effects on the environment and human health; and
- (c) to achieve environmentally sound management and recycling of plastic waste. It is estimated that, out of the approximate amount of 9.2 billion tonnes of plastic waste generated since 1950, 76 percent have either been disposed of in landfills or released into the environment.

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9. Cabinet has taken note that the Migration European Union Expertise + (MIEUX +) would organise –

- (a) a three-day onsite workshop on the presentation of the proposed Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for collaboration, investigation and case management of victims of Trafficking in Persons (TIP), from 17 to 19 April 2023; and
- (b) a virtual workshop on SOPs for management of shelters for male adults victims of TIP on 26 and 27 April 2023.

Some 17 local delegates were expected to participate in the onsite workshop and eight delegates, in the virtual workshop.

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10. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the Second Summit for Democracy held recently and co-hosted by the United States, Costa Rica, the Netherlands, Republic of Korea, and Republic of Zambia. Some 121 countries were invited for the Second Summit.

The Prime Minister participated in the Summit through a pre-recorded statement in which he highlighted, inter alia –

- (a) democracies around the world were faced with a series of challenges which have raised the bar for better governance,
- (b) the need for democracies across the world to work together to build collective democratic resilience; and
- (c) the need, in the face of threats of violent extremism, terror, online hate speech and cybercrimes, to protect democracy and rational political debate from disinformation, whilst at the same time, respecting free speech, with the right balance between freedom and prevention of risks.

He also provided an update on the pledges made by Mauritius at the First Summit for Democracy. Over 70 countries, including Mauritius, endorsed the legally non-binding Summit for Democracy Declaration which was developed and negotiated by an inter-governmental coordination body that included participation from over 65 countries.

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11. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Commerce and Consumer Protection would launch MOPRI, a user and inspector mobile application which would provide consumers with greater visibility of prices of widely consumed commodities and would help Officers of the Consumer Affairs Unit in the discharge of their duties respectively. The purpose of the mobile application would, inter alia, –

- (a) provide information to members of the public on the prices of the most consumed products in main outlets;
- (b) be an inspector mobile application for Officers of the Consumer Affairs Unit;
- (c) be a website for informative process;
- (d) provide back-end facilities for the processing of complaints and the management of the interaction between users; and
- (e) generate analytical reports which would be used for evidence-based policy formulation.

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12. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change, in collaboration with the local authorities, the Tourism Authority and relevant stakeholders would organise a series of activities to mark World Environment Day 2023 under the theme “*Solutions to Plastic Pollution*”. The aim is to reinvigorate environmental stewardship at all levels by instilling a culture of environmental stewardship in citizens. The activities would include, inter alia, –

- (a) an Environmental Awards Ceremony on 05 June 2023;
- (b) nationwide intensive sensitisation campaigns on plastic pollution through innovative three-dimensional structures displaying posters on the harmful effects of plastics and the need to shift to alternatives; and
- (c) TV broadcast of a video clip relating to Regulations on plastic.

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13. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Labour, Human Resource Development and Training, Minister of Commerce and Consumer Protection to India, where he participated in the 28th edition of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) Partnership Summit. The objective of the Summit, under the theme “Partnerships for Responsible, Accelerated, Innovative, Sustainable and Equitable Businesses”, was to strengthen partnership and shape new economic collaborations between countries and among businesses. This CII Summit was held in conjunction with B20, the Business Engagement Group of G20.

In the margins of the Summit, the Minister had a bilateral meeting with the Minister of Commerce and Industry of India where discussions were centered on the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement with India. Discussions were also held on the possible avenues of cooperation in the fields of Legal Metrology and Consumer Protection Affairs.

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14. Cabinet has taken note of the situation of the COVID-19 pandemic prevailing in Mauritius. As at 05 April 2023, there were 49 active cases of COVID-19, out of which nine were admitted at the New ENT Hospital. Over the period of 30 March to 05 April 2023, there was no death attributed to COVID-19.

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