

HIGHLIGHTS OF CABINET MEETING – FRIDAY 20 JANUARY 2023

1. Cabinet has agreed to –
 - (a) the provision, for the period January 2023 to December 2023, of a monthly financial assistance for payment of salary compensation 2023, including end of year bonus –
 - (i) of an amount of Rs300 per employee of an export-oriented enterprise, including an expatriate employee, deriving a basic wage not exceeding Rs51,635 monthly; and
 - (ii) of an amount of Rs250 or Rs500 per employee of an eligible small and medium enterprise deriving a basic wage not exceeding Rs51,775 monthly; and
 - (b) the waiving of the outstanding penalties and arrears of the COVID-19 Levy.

2. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Seychelles Coast Guard and the National Coast Guard of Mauritius for cooperation in the field of maritime surveillance and security of the Management Area of the Mascarene Plateau Region. The Memorandum of Understanding would enable cooperation to, inter alia, -

- (a) enforce the sovereign rights of Mauritius and Seychelles over the Joint Management Area;
- (b) safeguard the natural living and non-living resources pertaining to the seabed and sub-soil of the Joint Management Area;
- (c) ensure that activities related to 'natural resources', as defined under the Treaty Concerning the Joint Management of the Continental Shelf in the Mascarene Plateau Region, are carried out so as to secure biodiversity, prevent pollution and other harmful risks to the environment of that area; and
- (d) organise joint patrols and/or coordinated interventions at sea to prevent or respond to situations affecting maritime surveillance and security in the Joint Management Area.

3. Cabinet has agreed to Mauritius signing a Protocol amending the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between the Republic of Türkiye and the Republic of Mauritius. Mauritius and Türkiye are implementing a FTA since 01 June 2013 which covers trade in goods, with duty free access provided to Mauritius on all industrial products and preferential tariff rate quotas on 46 agricultural products.

Following discussions, Türkiye agreed to provide improved market access to Mauritius in terms of duty-free access on beer and wine, and more meaningful tariff rate

quotas for several products including fisheries products, pineapples, lychees, and dog or cat food. Türkiye has also included new products in its offer such as vanilla, fruit wine, poultry feed and rum. These improved offers have been included in the Protocol amending the FTA between Türkiye and Mauritius and would provide better market access for Mauritian exporters on the Turkish market.

4. Cabinet has agreed to the Ministry of Information Technology, Communication and Innovation signing a Memorandum of Understanding in the field of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) with the Ministry of Information and Communication Technologies and Innovation of the Republic of Rwanda. The Memorandum of Understanding aims at fostering cooperation in the following areas –

- (a) formulation of policies, legal and regulatory frameworks of common interest;
- (b) sharing of expertise and know-how in the field of e-Governance including cybersecurity, data protection and postal services;
- (c) cooperation for capacity building and transfer of knowledge and expertise in fields of common interest;
- (d) cooperation in emerging technologies, research and development, satellite communications and space programme; and
- (e) joint organisation of workshops, seminars, conferences, study tours and training sessions, joint working groups in the field of ICT;

5. Cabinet has agreed to the Ministry of Arts and Cultural Heritage designating the following three sites as National Heritage in view of their cultural significance –

- (a) *Bassin Des Esclaves*, Pamplemousses;
- (b) *Marché aux Esclaves*, Pamplemousses; and
- (c) Sattiram (Satron) Building which is located in the compound of Arul Migou Sockalingum Meenatchee Ammen Tirroukovil at Sainte Croix, Port Louis.

6. Cabinet has agreed to the acquisition of a new Offshore Patrol Vessel under the Indian Line of Credit which would provide the required operational capabilities to withstand heavy sea conditions and would have longer endurance than existing vessels. In addition, it would support the conduct of helicopter operations as it would have the necessary platform and hangar to carry an Advance Light Helicopter. It would be designed to have larger carrying capacity and would be equipped to carry greater cargo loads.

7. Cabinet has agreed to the National HIV Action Plan (NAP) 2023–2027, which has been developed by the Ministry of Health and Wellness in consultation with all stakeholders involved in the fight against HIV and AIDS. The World Health Organization provided

technical assistance through the recruitment of an international Consultant, for the drafting of the plan.

The NAP 2023–2027 is aligned with the Sustainable Development Goal aimed at ending AIDS by 2030. The vision of the NAP 2023-2027 is to achieve zero new HIV infections and zero AIDS-related deaths within a setting of an inclusive society free from stigma and discrimination and its mission is to provide high quality HIV prevention, testing, treatment, care and support services to all Mauritians.

A Steering Committee under the chair of the Ministry of Health and Wellness would be set up to ensure the proper implementation of the NAP and the activities contained therein.

8. Cabinet has agreed to Mauritius adopting the Competent Authority Mutual Agreement (CAA) Model and notifying the Depository of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in respect of the right of Mauritius to reserve cases involving Part VII - Anti-Avoidance Provisions and Part XII - Offences of the Income Tax Act from being eligible to arbitration.

The adoption of the CAA would enable the full implementation of Part VI of the Multilateral Convention pertaining to Tax Treaty Related Measures for preventing Base Erosion and Profit Shifting.

9. Cabinet has taken note of the arrangements being made for the breaking of the Guinness World Record of the World Largest Human Image of a waving National flag of the Republic of Mauritius at Anjalay Stadium, Mapou on 24 January 2023.

This activity forms part of various activities which would be organised as from January 2023 to celebrate the 55th Anniversary of the Independence of Mauritius. The activity would require the participation of some 7,800 students from 170 secondary schools in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology, the Special Mobile Force and the Mauritius Police Force.

10. Cabinet has taken note of the status regarding road capital projects being implemented by the Road Development Authority, as at 31 December 2022. For the current financial year, eight projects have been completed, 15 are under construction, a contract has been awarded for one project and 12 other projects are at procurement or preparation stage. These projects include -

- (a) the “Landslide Stabilisation Works at Chamarel” which has been completed on 01 September 2022 and the road was now operational;
- (b) the “Grade Separated Junction to link the proposed Verdun Bypass and St Pierre Bypass” which was expected to be completed by February 2024; and

- (c) the “Construction of Bois Chéri Bypass” project which was expected to be completed in January 2024.

11. Cabinet has taken note that construction works in respect of the Flyover at Quay D Roundabout, Port Louis were ongoing and subsequently, the Motorway M2 would be partially closed between Mer Rouge Roundabout and Quay D Roundabout. A new traffic scheme would be effective from Tuesday 24 January to 08 February 2023 at night time only, as from 20 00 hours to 05 00 hours the next morning. The necessary traffic signs would be displayed and Police would be present to inform and guide road users accordingly.

12. Cabinet has taken note that excavation and drain construction works were ongoing across the Motorway M1 at about 100 metres to the North of the Nouvelle France Roundabout. A new traffic scheme would be implemented thereat from 31 January to 21 February 2023 for works on the Northbound and Southbound lanes. Necessary traffic signs would be displayed to inform and guide road users. Police assistance would also be provided.

13. Cabinet has agreed to the programme of activities for the Commemoration of the 188th Anniversary of the Abolition of Slavery, including a wreath laying ceremony on –

- (a) Monday 30 January 2023 at *Bassin des Esclaves*, Pamplemousses;
- (b) Tuesday 31 January 2023 at the *Monument aux Esclaves*, Pointe Canon, Mahebourg; and
- (c) Wednesday 01 February 2023 at the International Slave Route Monument, Le Morne Public Beach. A cultural programme would also be held at Le Morne Village.

14. Cabinet has taken note that the COMESA Competition Commission would organise an awareness and stakeholders’ capacity building workshop on 9 and 10 February 2023 in Mauritius. The core mandate of COMESA Competition Commission is to enforce the provisions of the COMESA Competition Regulations with regard to trade between Member States and promote competition through monitoring and investigating anti-competitive practices of undertakings within the Common Market and mediating disputes between Member States concerning anti-competitive conduct.

The aim of the workshop is to build capacity for the officials of the Ministry of Commerce and Consumer Protection, the Competition Commission Mauritius, the Judiciary, the Bar Association and other business and consumer associations in Mauritius in order to enhance their understanding on the application of regional and national competition and consumer protection laws.

15. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the visit of the Minister of Health and Wellness to hospitals in Mumbai and Indore, India. Prior to attending the 17th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention and the 7th edition of the Invest Madhya Pradesh – Global Investors Summit in Indore, the Minister had the opportunity to lead a delegation to carry out visits in hospitals in Mumbai and Indore.

In Mumbai, visits were effected at the Tata Memorial Hospital, the R.R.A Podar Central Ayurveda Research Institute, the Navi Municipal Hospital and Apollo Hospital. He also visited the Government Ashtang Ayurved College and Hospital in Indore.

During the visits, focus was laid on priority areas, namely advancing cancer treatment, Ayush services, digital health implementation, training of the health personnel and future collaboration with Indian health institutions.

Cabinet has also taken note that the Ministry of Health and Wellness has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Apollo Hospital Navi Mumbai to officialise the sending of Mauritian patients for treatment at that Hospital.

16. Cabinet has taken note of the activities being organised by the Ministry of Health and Wellness in the context of World Cancer Day 2023, observed on 04 February, namely –

- (a) the launching of the activities on 06 February 2023 at Camp Fouquereaux Football Playground where screening and counselling for Non-Communicable Diseases would be carried out;
- (b) radio talks and TV programmes on MBC TV on the theme of the World Cancer Day, that is “Close the care gap”;
- (c) the dissemination of information to the population at large on the causes of cancer in order to raise awareness about the potential risk of cancer as well as distribution of pamphlets at worksites and the community;
- (d) talks and sensitisation campaigns at Community Health Centres, Women Centres, Social Welfare Centres, schools; and
- (e) screening for breast and cervical cancer at Community Health Centres, Women Centres, Social Welfare Centres.

17. Cabinet has taken note of the situation of the COVID-19 pandemic prevailing in Mauritius. As at 18 January 2023 there were 42 active cases of COVID-19, out of which 07 were admitted at the New ENT Hospital. Over the period 12 to 18 January 2023, no death was attributed to COVID-19.

18. Cabinet has taken note that there was no suspected case of mpox in Mauritius during the period 12 to 18 January 2023. Some 1,000 units of JYNNEOS vaccines against mpox reached Mauritius on 16 January 2023.

19. Cabinet has taken note that the results of the School Certificate examinations 2022 were made available online through the CIE direct platform to all candidates on 18 January 2023. Out of a total of 15,474 school candidates who took part in the 2022 School Certificate examinations, 12,145 were successful resulting in a percentage pass rate of 78.49 percent for the Republic. 13 Secondary Schools (having at least 10 candidates) have secured a 100 percent pass rate.

20. Cabinet has taken note of the Stamp Issue Programme for Year 2023. The Stamp Advisory Committee has recommended the issue of seven postage stamps for the year 2023 under three different themes, namely –

(a) Theme 1 – Anniversaries and Events

- (i) a stamp to commemorate the 250th Anniversary of the First Newspaper of Mauritius;
- (ii) a stamp to commemorate the contribution of Philibert Commerson (1727 – 1773), a French botanist;
- (iii) a stamp to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the State Bank of Mauritius (SBM) Ltd, operational in Mauritius since 1973;

(b) Theme 2 – Diplomatic Relations

A commemorative stamp to mark the 75th Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations between the Republic of Mauritius and the Republic of India in 2023; and

(c) Theme 3 – Fauna

Three stamps for a definitive series to be issued in the context of the World Post Day as a single release and would feature the pictures of extinct species of Mauritius and Rodrigues.

21. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the Mauritius Meat Authority Board with Mr Kevin Ragoonath Ragnuth as part-time Chairperson.

22. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the National Remuneration Board with Mr Woopendre Punchcoory Gungah as Chairperson and Mrs Disha Fowdar-Seesurrun as Vice-Chairperson.
