

HIGHLIGHTS OF CABINET MEETING – FRIDAY 05 MAY 2023

1. Cabinet has taken note of the Judgment of the Special Chamber of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) of 28 April 2023, establishing a binding international maritime boundary between Mauritius and Maldives in the Chagos Archipelago region. The Judgment is of great significance as it constitutes further recognition of Mauritius as the only State which has sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago, including Diego Garcia. It has also confirmed that archipelagic baselines can be drawn from Blenheim Reef for the purpose of establishing the exclusive economic zone of Mauritius and given significant weight to Blenheim Reef in the delimitation of the maritime boundary between Mauritius and Maldives.

2. Cabinet has agreed to the signing a Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Health and Wellness and the Tata Memorial Centre, Mumbai, India to provide –

- (i) necessary diagnosis and treatment of patients suffering from various types of cancers which cannot be diagnosed or managed locally in Mauritius and require overseas treatment;
- (ii) technical support, know-how and training to the medical, nursing and technical personnel for establishing new services such as bone marrow transplantation and other services for the wellbeing of cancer patients at the National Cancer Hospital; and
- (iii) required training to the pathologists and technologists to strengthen diagnostic services in cancer, particularly in molecular pathology.

3. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on Academic Cooperation between the Mauritius Institute of Education (MIE) and St Mary's University, Twickenham, UK. The main objective of the Memorandum of Understanding is to develop a collaborative and learning provision for postgraduate studies in the field of education and to facilitate the entry of self-funded students of MIE to a relevant degree programme of St Mary's University as follows –

- (a) MA Education Programme with four specialist strands, namely –
 - (i) Leadership and Management in Education;
 - (ii) Learning and Teaching in Higher Education;
 - (iii) Quality Assurance in Education; and
 - (iv) Mentoring, Coaching and Supervision in Education; and
- (b) Professional Doctorate in Education Programme

4. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the visit of Shri Devendra Fadnavis, Deputy Chief Minister of the State of Maharashtra, India and his delegation in Mauritius on 28 and 29 April 2023. The visit aimed at strengthening of the Mauritius-Maharashtra relations and the People-to-People relations. During his visit, the Deputy Chief Minister announced that -

- (i) the State of Maharashtra would donate an amount of Rs45 million for the construction of a multipurpose complex at the Maharashtra Bhawan;
- (ii) scholarships would be provided every year to ten students in different fields;
- (iii) a Special Desk in the State of Maharashtra would be opened with a view to consolidating the Mauritius-Maharashtra relations; and
- (iv) the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Tourism and the State of Maharashtra would be explored with a view to boosting tourist arrivals.

5. Cabinet has taken note that a World Customs Organisation (WCO) Financial Intelligence Compendium Workshop on Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing would be held from 30 May to 02 June 2023. The Workshop would be hosted by the Mauritius Revenue Authority and the WCO Anti-Money Laundering-Counter-Terrorism Financing Programme in collaboration with the Egmont Group of Financial Intelligence Units (FIUs). The objectives of the Workshop are to -

- (i) deepen the cooperation between Customs and FIUs regarding Anti-Money Laundering/Combating the Financing of Terrorism activities;
- (ii) enhance the joint Customs and FIUs analysis of suspicious financial and trade activities; and
- (iii) foster the development of targeted intelligence to counter currency smuggling and trade-based money laundering.

6. Cabinet has taken note of the activities being organised by the Ministry of Health and Wellness in the context of the World No Tobacco Day 2023, celebrated on 31 May every year, to raise awareness on the harmful and deadly effects of tobacco use, exposure to environmental tobacco smoke and to discourage the use of tobacco in any form. The theme chosen for this year is "We need food, not tobacco".

On 31 May 2023, the Public Health (Restrictions on Tobacco Products) (Amendment) Regulations 2022 would come into effect to provide, inter alia, for, -

- (a) the introduction of plain packaging in the Republic of Mauritius in terms of labelling, package design and health warnings;
- (b) restriction on sale within a radius of 200 metres of educational institutions, sports and leisure facilities for new tobacco vendors;
- (c) enforcing restrictions on advertising/promotion/sponsorship related to tobacco products, including online advertising; and
- (d) enforcement of powers of search, inspection and seizure of non-complying tobacco products.

7. Cabinet has taken note of the holding of the sixth edition of '*Pédaler en Sécurité*' on Saturday 03 June 2023, to celebrate World Bicycle Day. The event would be organised by the Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Sports and Recreation, in collaboration with the Mauritius Recreation Council, to –

- (a) promote cycling as an affordable, enjoyable, and environmentally friendly mode of transport, that also contributes to the person's physical fitness;
- (b) raise awareness on the precautions that should be taken while riding a bicycle; and
- (c) sensitise the population on the need to protect the natural environment

8. Cabinet has taken note of the situation of the COVID-19 pandemic prevailing in Mauritius. As at 03 May 2023, there were 116 active cases of COVID-19, out of which 24 were admitted at the New ENT Hospital. Over the period 27 April to 03 May 2023, four deaths were attributed to COVID-19.
