

HIGHLIGHTS OF CABINET MEETING – FRIDAY 20 DECEMBER 2024

1. Cabinet has agreed to the Municipal City Council election and the Municipal Town Council elections being organised after the National Day Celebrations 2025.

2. Cabinet has taken note that a Coordination Committee had been set up at the level of the Prime Minister's Office to ensure the implementation of reconstruction works on the North and South Islands of Agalega. A first meeting of the Coordination Committee was held on 19 December 2024 where the following salient issues were discussed -

- (a) Extent of the damage in the North and South Islands;
- (b) Reconstruction works;
- (c) Relief efforts;
- (d) Funds would be provided from the Prime Minister's Relief Fund for the repairs and reconstruction works;
- (e) No oil spill had been reported on the AFCONS tug which was grounded near Grande Caze. A Salvage Team would leave for Agalega by Dornier on 20 December 2024. All efforts were being sustained to avoid oil spilling; and
- (f) Two officers from EMTEL would be on board MV Mauritius Trochetia and would bring along solar panels and communication-related equipment to restore communication in the South Island.

The Prime Minister's Office would set up an Agalega Relief Fund for the raising of funds in favour of Agalega.

3. Cabinet has taken note that the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Centre would henceforth operate under the Prime Minister's Office. The cyclone warning system of the Mauritius Meteorological Services would be reviewed.

4. Cabinet has agreed to the promulgation of the National Pensions (Amendment of Schedule) (No. 2) Regulations 2024 with a view to giving effect to the increase in the rates of the Basic Retirement Pension, Widow's Basic Pension, Invalid Basic Pension and Orphan's Pension by Rs1,000 as from January 2025. The payment of the increase in pensions for some 311,000 beneficiaries would be effected on 03 January 2025 through banks and from 03 to 16 January 2025 through post offices.

5. Cabinet has agreed to the promulgation of the Private Secondary Education (Amendment) Regulations 2024 to provide for the criteria for promotion to Grade 12, from five credits to three credits as from January 2025.

6. Cabinet has agreed to the review of the current Comprehensive Grant Formula and the introduction of a new formula for the financing of Grant-Aided Private Secondary Schools for period 2025-2027.

Following representations received from the Federation of Unions of Managers, a Technical Working Group comprising representatives of the Ministry of Education and Human Resource, the Ministry of Finance, the Office of the Public Sector Governance and the Private Secondary Education Authority (PSEA) had been set up to work on the review of the Comprehensive Grant Formula with the following Terms of Reference -

- (a) to hold consultations with stakeholders for a review of the Comprehensive Grant Formula and examine their proposals;
- (b) to examine the shortcomings of the present system of the validation exercise and disbursement of grants by the PSEA and make recommendations for the improvement thereof; and
- (c) to submit its Report for the financing of Grant-Aided Private Secondary Schools for period 2025-2027.

7. Cabinet has agreed to the Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change submitting the first Biennial Transparency Report (BTR1) for the Republic of Mauritius, to the Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

The main components of the BTR1 include a National Greenhouse Gas Inventory Report for the period 2017 to 2022 and a National Report on progress made in implementing and achieving the Nationally Determined Contributions, information related to climate change impacts and adaptation, levels of financial support, technology development and transfer as well as capacity building needs and support and areas of improvement.

8. Cabinet has taken note that following representations received from Heads of School/Rectors and Union of Rectors regarding the inability of schools to proceed with urgent and necessary repairs of amenities and the shortage of certain essential requisites, the Ministry of Education and Human Resource would provide an amount of Rs27.1 M to public primary and secondary schools for, inter alia, the maintenance of schools and procurement of urgent requisites and other ancillary purchases/works.

9. Cabinet has taken note that a Foundational Programme in Literacy, Numeracy and Skills would be introduced in Lower Secondary Schools and would be run over three years as from 2025. The programme would be conducted in secondary schools (public and private), in collaboration with the Mauritius Institute of Training and Development, the Mauritius Institute of Education, the Mauritius Examinations Syndicate and the National Social Inclusion Foundation.

The Curriculum framework for the new programme would constitute of three major parts as follows -

- (a) Functional literacy which would include Numeracy, English Literacy, French Literacy, Scientific Literacy, Digital Literacy and Kreol Morisien/Kreol Rodrigues/Asian Languages/Arabic;
- (b) Life skills and values comprising Social and Emotional Well-being, the Arts, Physical Education and Health; and
- (c) Trade and livelihood skills where the students would be taught culinary skills, Smart Agriculture, Woodwork, Garment Making, Electric Installation and Plumbing.

10. Cabinet has taken note that following representations received, the hours of work of teachers of Municipal/District Council Pre-Schools and Aided Private Pre-Primary Schools had been reviewed to 08 30 hours to 14 30 hours instead of 08 30 hours to 15 00 hours on normal school days as from school resumption in January 2025.

11. Cabinet has agreed to the Mauritius Institute of Education co-hosting the 5th World Curriculum Studies Conference together with the International Association for the Advancement of Curriculum Studies from 24 to 27 June 2025, in Mauritius.

The theme of the conference would be “Curriculum Studies in the post Anthropocene Era” and would cover issues ranging from language in the curriculum, scientific education, artificial intelligence, early childhood and inclusive education curriculum. The conference would play a key role towards the achievement of UN Sustainable Development Goals since the quality of the curriculum and its delivery affects the quality of education across all levels.

12. Cabinet has taken note that the price of sugar for Crop 2024, had been fixed as follows -

- Growing Side - Rs24,060/T of sugar at 98.5% Polarisation
- Milling Side - Rs23,000/T of sugar at 98.5% Polarisation

13. Cabinet has taken note that an Electronic Travel Authorisation scheme was being introduced by the United Kingdom (UK) worldwide for 82 countries, including Mauritius, whose citizens currently do not need a visa for short stays of up to six months or who do not have a UK immigration status. As from 08 January 2025, Mauritian nationals travelling to the UK must have a valid Electronic Travel Authorisation to enter or transit through the UK.

14. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the Mauritius Oceanography Institute Board, with Dr Mitrasen Bhikajee as part-time Chairperson.

15. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the Road Development Authority Board, with Mr Seewoonarain Koonjul as part-time Chairperson.

16. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the Construction Industry Board, with Mr Avinash Shree Mojee as part-time Chairperson.

17. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the Board of the Tourism Authority, with Mr Jose Arunasalom as part-time Chairperson.
