

**HIGHLIGHTS OF CABINET MEETING – FRIDAY 13 December 2024**

1. Cabinet has agreed to the-
  - (a) payment of a 14<sup>th</sup> Month Bonus to employees in the public and private sectors deriving a monthly basic salary of up to Rs50,000 to be paid in two instalments as follows -
    - (i) a first instalment of 50 percent in December 2024; and
    - (ii) a second instalment of 50 percent in January 2025.
  - (b) payment of a 14<sup>th</sup> Month Bonus to beneficiaries of basic pensions and CSG retirement benefit as well as public service pensioners to be paid in December 2024;
  - (c) award of a monthly salary compensation of 3.7 percent of the National Minimum Wage, i.e., Rs610 to employees drawing a monthly basic salary of up to Rs50,000 with effect from 01 January 2025;
  - (d) provision of financial support to SMEs, Export-Oriented Enterprises and such enterprises facing financial difficulties as may be approved, subject to profitability criteria, for the payment of the 14<sup>th</sup> Month Bonus and of the salary compensation; and
  - (e) reduction in the retail prices of Mogas (Essence) and Gas Oil (Diesel) by Rs5 per litre as from Saturday 14 December 2024.

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2. Cabinet has agreed to the introduction of the Employment Relations (Amendment) Bill into the National Assembly.

The object of the Bill is to amend the Employment Relations Act to give the Minister of Labour and Industrial Relations the power to make regulations for wage adjustment arising from the introduction or review of national minimum wage in the private sector, including any industry or sector of activity not governed by Remuneration Regulations.

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3. Cabinet has agreed to the introduction of the Special Allowance Bill into the National Assembly to give effect to the decision regarding the payment of the 14<sup>th</sup> Month Bonus to employees drawing a monthly basic wage or salary not exceeding Rs50,000.

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4. Cabinet has taken note of the impact of the passage of the cyclone Chido over Agalega and immediate actions taken to bring assistance to the inhabitants of the island. A Dornier flight left Mauritius this morning to deliver essential supplies, including food and medicine, to Agalega. A Technician from Emtel Ltd also travelled on board the Dornier to restore communication on the island.

The assistance of the Government of India has been sought to deploy a P81 cargo plane from Goa for aerial reconnaissance of both islands and to deliver supplies to Agalega.

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5. Cabinet has taken note of the critical financial situation of the Metro Express Ltd and on the need for urgent actions to redress the Company, the gist of which is as follows –

- (a) as at 30 June 2024, borrowings amounted to Rs17.2 billion;
- (b) foreign exchange loss accounted for some Rs3 billion over the past five years due to the rapid depreciation of the Mauritian Rupee;
- (c) the annual deficit was of the order some Rs300 million due to operating expenses exceeding revenue; and
- (d) an expected average deficit of some Rs2.1 billion yearly was foreseen for the next 10 years.

The Office of the Public Sector Governance will be conducting a governance and financial audit at the Metro Express Ltd.

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6. Cabinet has agreed to the setting up of a Ministerial Committee under the chair of the Minister of Local Government to look into a thorough reform of the entire Local Government System that reflects the present realities and also enables local authorities to respond effectively to the needs of the local community. The Committee would comprise the -

- (a) Minister of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change;
- (b) Minister of National Infrastructure;
- (c) Minister of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity;
- (d) Attorney-General;
- (e) Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade;
- (f) Minister of Youth and Sports;
- (g) Minister of Labour and Industrial Relations;
- (h) Minister of Commerce and Consumer Protection; and
- (i) Minister of Industry, SME and Cooperatives.

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7. Cabinet has taken note of the status regarding the major fire outbreak which occurred recently at the Mare Chicose Landfill and the post-fire monitoring mechanism put in place by the Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change.

As at 08 December 2024, the fire had been completely extinguished. Ambient air assessments were conducted in numerous places and results revealed that throughout the firefighting period, all toxic gases screened were below the detectable limits of the Portable Gas Analyser at time of assessment and was well below the Lowest Observed Adverse Effect Level. The quality of groundwater and surface water would continue to be monitored. A *Comité de Suivi* had been set up on a permanent basis to ensure that –

- (a) the landfilling operations were properly conducted to reduce the risk of fire;
- (b) a proper surveillance be set up; and
- (c) the implementation of the firefighting system being closely monitored.

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8. Cabinet has agreed to the promulgation of the Civil Aviation (Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2025) (Exemption) Regulations 2024 which provide for the exemption from payment of the Passenger Service Charge, the Passenger Solidarity Fee and the Terminal Expansion Fee in favour of the registered participants of the 18<sup>th</sup> Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention 2025, which would be held from 08 to 10 January 2024 in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India.

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9. Cabinet has taken note that the Islamic Cultural Centre Trust Fund (Pilgrimage) (Amendment) Regulations 2024 would be promulgated to provide for –

- (a) an increase in the payment of fee paid by Hadj operators on application for a permit from Rs5,000 to Rs10,000; and
- (b) an increase in the uniform sum of Rs250,000, being security provided to the Islamic Cultural Centre by the Hadj operators prior to the issue of a permit, to the following categories –
  - (i) to a maximum of 100 Hadjis, a security of Rs500,000 ;
  - (ii) to more than 100 but less than 200 Hadjis, a security of Rs750,000; or
  - (iii) to more than 200 Hadjis, a security of Rs1M.

The Islamic Cultural Centre Trust Fund (Pilgrimage) (Amendment) Regulations 2024 would come into operation on 14 December 2024.

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10. Cabinet has taken note of the results of the PSAC Assessment 2024. Out of the 13,866 school candidates of the Republic of Mauritius who took part in the 2024 PSAC assessment for the first time, 10,629 met the requirements for the PSAC representing a percentage of 76.66%.

There were 13,117 candidates who took part in PSAC Assessment 2024 in Mauritius, out of whom 10,034 met the PSAC requirements, that is, 76.5%. As for Rodrigues, 749 candidates took part in PSAC assessment and 595 candidates attained the PSAC requirements, that is 79.44%. Out of the 10 school candidates in Agalega who took part in the PSAC Assessment 2024, four attained the PSAC requirements, that is, 40%.

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11. Cabinet has taken note of the appointment of Mr Condavelloo Dorsamy as Managing Director and Mr Jean Hubert Noël as Deputy Managing Director of the Cargo Handling Corporation Ltd for a period of two years.

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12. Cabinet has taken note of the appointment of Mr Zeinoule Ahbédine Chundoo as part-time Chairperson of the National Housing Development Co Ltd Board.

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13. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the National Transport Corporation Board with Mr Nishad Baig, as the part-time Chairperson.

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