

## **HIGHLIGHTS OF CABINET MEETING – FRIDAY 07 FEBRUARY 2025**

1. Cabinet has agreed to the promulgation of the Consumer Protection (Fixed Penalty Notice) (Amendment) Regulations 2025 which would provide for the review of the penalty fees for Fixed Penalty Notice which aimed at deterring trade malpractices and strengthening consumer protection while promoting accountability and safeguarding consumer rights. The Regulations would provide for, inter alia, -

- (a) a graduated penalty structure with tiered penalties based on the number of products involved in violations;
- (b) enhanced enforcement mechanisms;
- (c) increased penalty thresholds;
- (d) correction to frequency of penalty multiplication; and
- (e) refined categorisation of offences for stricter oversight of warehousing practices to enhance accountability.

With a view to allowing the industry to adapt to the updated provisions and to ensuring a smooth transition, the regulations would come into effect on 31 March 2025.

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2. Cabinet has taken note that the Customs (Amendment) Regulations 2025 would be promulgated to provide for amendments to requirements for the appointment of a person as Customs House Broker, who had to succeed in a written and oral examination conducted by the Mauritius Revenue Authority. With a view to being fairer to persons who succeeded in the written examinations, a person would be allowed to take part in three subsequent oral examinations within three years from the date of the first oral examination, instead of two subsequent oral examinations within two years from the date of the first oral examinations.

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3. Cabinet has taken note that following the payment of shared contributions to the SADC Mission in Mozambique and the Democratic Republic of Congo, the SADC Secretariat lifted the sanction on Mauritius imposed thus authorising the country to fully participate in events organised by the SADC.

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4. Cabinet has agreed to the Higher Education Commission signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Tanzania Commission for Universities, which would aim at promoting the development of higher education, academic research and training, through equity of access, high quality learning and research, as well as the efficient use of national resources and innovation. Both institutions would pursue the following main activities of mutual interest –

- (a) exchange of information, including non-confidential policy documents and relevant manuals;
- (b) sharing of good practices and experiences in the field;
- (c) staff development, through the organisation of training activities, and participation of technical staff as observers in regulatory processes;
- (d) use of the partnering institution's list of reviewers and specialists, to strengthen the international dimension of institutional reviews, accreditations and reviews of cross border education;
- (e) identification of fraudulent awarding bodies or accrediting agencies in the Republic of Mauritius and the United Republic of Tanzania; and
- (f) mutual recognition of the partnering institution's standards, regulations and procedures.

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5. Cabinet has agreed to the University of Technology, Mauritius, signing a *Convention Cadre De Coopération* with the *Université de Toamasina*, Madagascar. The *Convention Cadre De Coopération* would aim at fostering collaboration between the two institutions for the development of the following activities of mutual interest, in the fields of higher education and scientific research -

- (a) student and faculty exchange programmes;
- (b) advanced training courses for academic staff and students of either institution;
- (c) joint research projects and scientific activities, including joint organisation of conferences and seminars; and
- (d) promotion and publication of research works.

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6. Cabinet has taken note of the release of the Family Planning and Demographic Yearbook 2023 which provides data on population trends, vital rates, family planning, and health service points for Mauritius and Rodrigues. The salient features of the yearbook include, inter alia, -

- (a) the island of Mauritius recorded a population growth rate of -0.09% in 2023; and
- (b) Mauritius was experiencing a demographic shift with an ageing population due to sustained low fertility rates and increasing life expectancy. In 2023, the number of individuals aged 60 years and above exceeded the number of children under 15 years. Life expectancy had improved from 71.6 years in 1999-2001 to 73.3 years in 2021-2023.

The Ministry of Health and Wellness was committed to enhancing sexual and reproductive health services, including, family planning, through a series of initiatives.

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7. Cabinet has taken note of the activities being organised by the Computer Emergency Response Team of Mauritius (CERT-MU) to mark Safer Internet Day, on the theme "*Too good to be true? Protecting yourself and others from scams online*", namely -

- (a) a National Sensitisation Campaign on 17 February 2025 with the objective of sensitising youngsters and raising public awareness about common types of online scams, namely phishing, fake websites, social media fraud, lottery scams, identity theft;
- (b) train the trainer's programmes on dangers of the internet and online scams to better equip ICT Educators of both Primary and Secondary schools in communicating the overall gist of this campaign to the pupils and students;
- (c) production of two video clips on online scams to raise awareness and educate viewers in identifying online scams; and
- (d) awareness sessions in Community Centres and Women Centres.

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8. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent participation of the Minister of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries in the Extraordinary Summit of the Assembly of the African Union (AU) on the "Post-Malabo Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) Agenda" in Kampala, Uganda.

The objective of the Extraordinary Summit was to deliberate on and adopt a post-Malabo CAADP Strategy and Action Plan for the period 2026 to 2035 with a view to building strong and resilient agri-food systems on the African continent. The Summit concluded with the adoption of the Kampala CAADP Declaration on “Building Resilient and Sustainable Agri-Food Systems in Africa”.

During his intervention in the Summit, the Minister highlighted the significant potential of the CAADP in ensuring food security within the African Continental Free Trade Area which aims to create a single market across the AU. He also stressed the importance of promoting agricultural trade among African countries, and the need to encourage south-south cooperation on a larger scale as Africa can be a breadbasket and ensure food security in the continent.

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9. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent participation of the Minister of Labour and Industrial Relations in the “2<sup>nd</sup> Global Labour Market Conference” held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The objective of the Conference was to discuss and foster collaboration between global leaders, policymakers, worker and employer representatives as well as experts in strategies for labour market resilience in the face of global challenges.

The Minister had meetings with various Ministers of Labour, including the Minister of Labour, Employment, and Social Security of Nepal and the Minister of Investment of Saudi Arabia.

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10. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the –

- (a) Land Drainage Board of the Land Drainage Authority, with Dr Dhirajsing Rughoo as part-time Chairperson; and
- (b) Human Resource Development Council, with Mr Bhooyasheel Akshay Seedoyal as part-time Chairperson.

Cabinet further noted the appointment of –

- (a) Mr William Mario Ayelou as Managing Director of the National Housing Development Co. Ltd;
- (b) Mr Mohammad Shameem Rassool Cadam Ally, as Managing Director of the New Social Living Development; and
- (c) Mrs Shalina Maumondee-Dhallapah as part-time Chairperson of the New Social Living Development Board.

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