

## **HIGHLIGHTS OF CABINET MEETING – FRIDAY 28 FEBRUARY 2025**

1. Cabinet has taken note of the situation following the passage of cyclone Garance. 166 evacuee centres were open across the island. 248 families took refuge in 31 evacuee centres. The Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity made arrangements for the evacuees to be provided with basic necessities.

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2. Cabinet has agreed to the introduction of the Finance and Audit (Amendment) Bill into the National Assembly. The object of the Bill would be to amend the Finance and Audit Act to provide for -

- (a) the introduction of Performance-Based Budgeting so as to -
  - (i) link funds with results and outcomes, and improve operational efficiency in Government administration; and
  - (ii) enforce greater fiscal responsibility, accountability and transparency;
- (b) the preparation of estimates of expenditure based on programmes and sub-programmes on a 3-fiscal year rolling basis, specifying the resources to be allocated, the outcomes to be achieved and outputs to be delivered;
- (c) the appropriation of the estimates of expenditure for the first year by the National Assembly; and
- (d) the preparation of estimates of revenue on a 3-fiscal year rolling basis.

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3. Cabinet has agreed to the introduction of the Bail (Amendment) Bill into the National Assembly. The object of the Bill would be to amend the Bail Act so as to delimit the respective powers of the Director of Public Prosecutions and those of the Commissioner of Police with regard to matters pertaining to the release on bail of a defendant or detainee in order to bring about certainty in this area of the law.

Accordingly, the Bill provides that the Commissioner of Police would have the sole discretion not to object to the release on bail of a defendant or detainee before a Court. However, where an application is made before a Court for the release on bail of a defendant or detainee and the Commissioner of Police has the intention to object to such release, he shall seek the advice of the Director of Public Prosecutions thereon and the decision to object or not to object to such release shall rest solely on the Director of Public Prosecutions.

In addition, the Bill provides that where a Magistrate orders the release on bail of a defendant or detainee, the power to apply to the Supreme Court for an order setting aside the determination of the Magistrate to release the defendant or detainee on bail shall henceforth rest solely on the Director of Public Prosecutions, in lieu and stead of both the Director of Public Prosecutions and the Commissioner of Police.

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4. Cabinet has taken note that the Professional Quantity Surveyor's Council (Fees) (Amendment) Regulations 2025 would be promulgated to provide for the amendment of the annual fee payable by professional Quantity Surveyors.

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5. Cabinet has taken note that the Food (Amendment) Regulations 2025 would be promulgated to extend the transition period of six months from 01 March 2025 to 01 October 2025 in respect of the following –

- (a) New labelling requirements to include nutritional components;
- (b) Payment of fees for pre-market approval;
- (c) Clearance of food by the Food Import Unit;
- (d) Maximum permissible level of fatty acids; and
- (e) Food Safety Management System.

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6. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of a –

- (a) Memorandum of Understanding between the Financial Crimes Commission of the Republic of Mauritius and the Central Bureau of Investigation, Republic of India; and
- (b) Memorandum of Understanding between the Financial Crimes Commission of the Republic of Mauritius and the Directorate of Enforcement, Republic of India.

The objectives of the Memoranda of Understanding would be, inter alia, to -

- (a) share with each other, either voluntarily or upon request by the other party, relevant information on anti-corruption and anti-money laundering strategies;
- (b) undertake joint activities and collaborate where appropriate, in each Party's efforts to detect and prevent money laundering and corruption and exchange ideas, knowledge, skills, technological abilities and experience in the application of international standards in the fight against corruption and money laundering cases;
- (c) assist and provide technical assistance to each other, where necessary (including the attachment of officers), share knowledge, skills, experience and best practices on corruption prevention and anti-corruption education;
- (d) share knowledge on effective investigative techniques and best practices to carry out information gathering and intelligence operations for the purpose of detecting money laundering and corruption-related offences; and
- (e) enhance capacity through the holding of joint trainings, projects, workshops, seminars and conferences.

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7. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of a Technical Agreement on the Sharing of White Shipping Information between the Indian Navy and the Mauritius Police Force. The establishment of the Technical Agreement on the Sharing of White Shipping Information would set out the modalities for the sharing and reciprocal protection of such information between the Indian Navy and the Mauritius Police Force.

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8. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of a Credit Facility Agreement between the Government of Mauritius and the State Bank of India to finance projects being implemented by the Central Water Authority under the Pipe Replacement Programme, with the objective of enhancing the efficiency of the water distribution network and reducing non-revenue water.

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9. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service in New Delhi, India, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade of the Republic of Mauritius. The Memorandum of Understanding would provide for both parties to, inter alia –

- (a) exchange information on structure and content of training programme for diplomats;
- (b) identify experts in mutually agreed areas; and
- (c) promote contacts and exchange of diplomats, faculty members, and experts.

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10. Cabinet has agreed to the Ministry of Industry, SME and Cooperatives signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises of the Republic of India with a view to developing micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the respective countries. The Memorandum of Understanding would provide for cooperation in, inter alia, the following areas –

- (a) capacity building for developing policy and institutional framework through exchange of experts for the development of MSMEs in the Republic of Mauritius;
- (b) partnership projects and cooperation between institutions in both countries, as well as between business enterprises;
- (c) training for improvement of managerial and technical skills for MSMEs; and
- (d) organising exhibitions and trade fairs in the Republic of India and the Republic of Mauritius for marketing the products of MSMEs, and also for displaying the latest machineries and equipment, as well as material inputs required by MSMEs for their production operations.

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11. Government has taken note that the Government of Japan would extend a grant of JPY 1 billion (approximately Rs300 million) under the Japan's Economic Social Development Programme, for the acquisition of a tugboat in order to reinforce the operational capabilities of the Mauritius Ports Authority. An Exchange of Notes which constitutes an agreement between Mauritius and Japan would be signed on 14 March 2025.

The tugboat would be used for port operations and would also be deployed on the high seas when needed for emergency operations by the National Coast Guard. The tugboat would be equipped with the necessary equipment to respond to emergencies, assist in salvage and pollution response on a 24/7 basis.

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12. Cabinet has taken note of the status of road capital projects being implemented by the Road Development Authority. As at 31 January 2025, four projects had been completed, 15 projects were under construction while eight projects were ongoing.

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13. Cabinet has taken note of the holding of the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Inspection Workshop of the International Forum of Independent Audit Regulators, hosted by the Financial Reporting Council from 05 to 07 March 2025 in Mauritius. The Annual Inspection Workshop would offer a platform for regulators worldwide to exchange insights, share best practices, and align inspection methodologies as a means to meet regulatory challenges and the imperatives of audit oversight improvements.

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14. Cabinet has taken note of the holding of the workshop on the circular economy and the role of trade policy in Mauritius for Lithium-ion battery waste on 05 March 2025 in Mauritius. The event would provide a platform for discussion to identify strategic actions to leverage trade and trade policy for strengthening the circular economy. Around 40 participants were expected to attend the workshop and would include representatives from relevant Ministries and the private sector, non-governmental organisations and academics.

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15. Cabinet has taken note of the activities being organised in the context of the International Year of Cooperatives 2025 on the theme "Cooperatives Build a Better World". The United Nations officially declared 2025 as the International Year of Cooperatives, a global initiative aimed at recognising and promoting the invaluable contributions of cooperatives to sustainable development, economic inclusion and community resilience.

To mark the International Year of Cooperatives and to re-dynamise the sector, the Ministry of Industry, SME and Cooperatives in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, would hold several activities which would, inter alia, include the following –

- (a) an essay, drawing and painting competition at national level on the theme: “Cooperatives Build a Better World” and a “*Grande Foire de L’indépendance*” in March 2025;
- (b) a mega blood donation by cooperators and the public at large in May 2025; and
- (c) the celebration of the International Day of Cooperatives in July 2025.

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16. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent participation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade in the 8<sup>th</sup> Indian Ocean Conference in Muscat, Oman.

The Conference was an annual international Forum dedicated to promoting regional cooperation and addressing challenges in the Indian Ocean region. This year's conference under the theme “Voyage to New Horizons of Maritime Partnership” was organised by Oman’s Foreign Ministry in collaboration with the India Foundation and supported by the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Singapore. The Conference provided an opportunity to discuss concrete ways of addressing challenges and issues of vital interest in the fields of maritime security, trade, sustainable development, blue economy and emerging technologies with important partners of the region and call for more constructive partnerships and initiatives.

In the sidelines of the Conference, the Minister had a number of bilateral meetings with his counterparts from India, Kenya, Oman and Sri Lanka. He also met with the Heads of Delegation from France, the United Kingdom and Saudi Arabia.

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17. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent participation of the Minister of Land Transport in the 4<sup>th</sup> Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety, in Morocco. The Conference was centred around the theme “Commit to Life” with a view to accelerating the actions towards a 50 % reduction in global road fatalities by 2030, in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021–2030. The main outcome of the Conference was the adoption of the Marrakech Declaration, which sets clear international commitments for the coming years for Governments, businesses and financial actors, international organisations including the United Nations and the World Health Organization, and other actors in road safety and infrastructure.

In the margins of the conference, the Minister had meetings with, inter alia, the United Nations Secretary General’s Special Envoy for Road Safety, the Director General of the International Road Federation, the Chief Executive Officer of the International Road Assessment Programme, the Head of the United Nations Road Safety Fund and the Director of the Department for Social Determinants of the World Health Organization.

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18. Cabinet has taken note of the –

- (a) appointment of Mrs Honita Prayag-Poonith as President of the Commission for Conciliation and Mediation;
- (b) reconstitution of the Board of Directors of ISM Mauritius Ltd, with Mr Georges Stephan Gua as part-time Chairperson; and
- (c) reconstitution of the Islamic Cultural Centre Trust Fund Board.

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