

HIGHLIGHTS OF CABINET MEETING – FRIDAY 10 JANUARY 2025

1. Cabinet has taken note of figures published by the Bank of Mauritius regarding the status of the Gross Official International Reserves of the country as at end December 2024. The figures indicated an increase of around Rs81.3 billion in the Gross Official International Reserves for the period December 2023 to December 2024.

Cabinet further noted that these figures did not, however, reflect the real state of the economy and that they were in fact gross figures.

- (i) The figures included higher deposits of Commercial Banks which did not belong to the Bank of Mauritius;
- (ii) The figures also included international loans from international Banks and one foreign country, contracted by the Bank of Mauritius which led to an increase in the national debt, and these would have to be reimbursed; and
- (iii) The figures did not take into account the depreciation of the Rupee by 6.3% in 2024, which led to an artificial increase by Rs25 billion of the Gross Official International Reserves.

Cabinet noted that it was thus misleading to state that the above showed that the economy was doing well.

2. Cabinet has taken note of the prevailing situation regarding Human Metapneumovirus and the preparedness measures in place in Mauritius. Public health surveillance had been enhanced through thermal scanning within the arrival lounge and reinforced screening activities by Public Health and Food Safety Inspectors at both airport and seaport for incoming passengers from China. Enhanced public health surveillance was being exercised in respect of incoming passengers from countries neighbouring China, namely Singapore, Hong Kong, Japan and South Korea.

The Communicable Diseases Control Unit of the Ministry of Health and Wellness was closely monitoring the situation in line with the existing Operational Plan on Influenza. The following actions were also being taken –

- (a) issue of circulars to public hospitals and private health institutions to create awareness and call for preparedness amongst health personnel;
- (b) monitoring of stock of basic personal protective equipment, including sanitizers, as well as pharmaceutical products;
- (c) a sensitisation campaign through talks on radio and TV to inform the public of the basic precautionary measures to be taken on influenza-like illnesses; and
- (d) reinforcement of PCR testing capacity of the Central Health Laboratory to strengthen laboratory surveillance.

3. Cabinet has taken note that the Education (Amendment) Regulations 2025 would be promulgated to provide for the review of the qualifications requirements for the recruitment of educators in the secondary sector with a view to facilitating the recruitment of qualified educators.

4. Cabinet has taken note that the year 2024 had been characterized by record-breaking dry spells resulting in a gradual depletion of water resources. The active storage of main reservoirs as at 09 January 2025 was 41.1%. The Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities in collaboration with the Central Water Authority and the Water Resources Commission was working on a plan to address the situation, which would be communicated to the public in the days to come.

5. Cabinet has taken note of the results of the Primary School Achievement Certificate (PSAC) Re-Assessment 2024. Out of 1,331 school candidates of the Republic of Mauritius who were eligible for the re-assessment exercise, 1,143 candidates sat for the re-assessment and 430 candidates met the requirements of PSAC. The overall percentage of pupils having achieved PSAC in 2024 after the re-assessment exercise stood at 79.47%.

6. Cabinet has taken note that following the passage of cyclone Chido over Agalega in December 2024 and damages caused to primary and secondary schools in Agalega, repair works were being effected. Classes for primary students would resume on 13 January 2025 whereas classes for secondary students would resume in the third week of January 2025.

7. Cabinet has agreed to the holding of an international conference on the UNESCO Routes of Enslaved Peoples, organised by the Ministry of Arts and Culture in collaboration with the UNESCO, from 03 to 05 February 2025 at the University of Mauritius in the context of the commemoration of the 190th Anniversary of the Abolition of Slavery. The conference would aim at providing a platform for scholars of the region to engage in critical discourse about the enduring silences of the past and to showcase their findings on slavery and slave trade.

8. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Information Technology, Communication and Innovation was working on the formulation of a comprehensive blueprint for the ICT sector for the next five years, which would demonstrate Government commitment to advancing the country's ICT landscape. The strategic document would serve as a guiding framework for policy development, infrastructure expansion and technological innovation across all sectors.

9. Cabinet has taken note that the Data Protection Office would organise a workshop on 28 January 2025 to mark Data Protection Day which is celebrated worldwide on the same date each year. The workshop would serve as a platform for reminding data controllers and processors of both public and private bodies on the need and importance to comply with the different provisions of the Data Protection Act and assess the implementation status thereof in Mauritius. A professional training course would be delivered by the Data Protection Office, followed by the award of a professional certificate to all attendees.

10. Cabinet has taken note of the holding of the following activities organised by the Ministry of Arts and Culture in collaboration with the Embassy of the People's Republic of China and the China Cultural Centre to celebrate the Spring Festival at national level -

- (a) National Gala Show at the J&J Auditorium on 18 January 2025, organised by the Ministry of Arts and Culture in collaboration with the Embassy of the People's Republic of China and the China Cultural Centre with performances by the Hangzhou Opera and Dance Drama Theatre;
- (b) Banquet followed by a cultural show with the artists from Hangzhou Opera and Dance Drama Theatre on 19 January 2025 at the SVICC organised by the Federation of Chinese Societies and the United Chinese Associations; and
- (c) Parade on 25 January 2025, organised by the United Chinese Associations in collaboration with the Embassy of the People's Republic of China, the China Cultural Centre and the Municipal City Council of Port Louis in the streets of Port Louis.

11. Cabinet has taken note of the setting up of a technical committee to look into representations received from workers who have to take leave due to closure of schools and child day care centres during heavy rainfall warnings. The technical committee would examine the request for special leave to workers to look after their child during those days and come up with recommendations.

12. Cabinet has taken note of appointment of Mr Naushaad Khalid Malleck, as part-time Chairperson of the Real Estate Agent Authority Board and the reconstitution of the –

- (a) Board of the Metro Express Ltd, with Dr Pradeep Mahesh Kumar Soonarane as part-time Chairperson;
- (b) Board of the Beach Authority, with Mr Yogendranaden Ananda Rajoo as part-time Chairperson;
- (c) Board of Directors of the Mauritius Multisports Infrastructure Ltd, with Mr Michael James Kevin Glover, CVO, as part-time Chairperson; and
- (d) Sports Arbitration Tribunal, with Mr Raj Kishore Ramsaha, as part-time Chairperson.
