

## **HIGHLIGHTS OF CABINET MEETING - FRIDAY 16 JANUARY 2026**

1. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Youth and Sports will organise the National Sports Award 2025 on 06 February 2026 at the Côte d'Or National Sports Complex. The National Sports Award will be relaunched with a fresh, inclusive, and transparent framework aligned with international best practices, with no distinction made between Olympic and non-Olympic sports disciplines.

For the 2025 edition, the National Sports Award will feature 14 award categories. The Most Outstanding Sports Performance of the Year, which will be awarded for the first time, aims at recognising achievements at major events of international standing, such as the Olympic Games, Youth Olympic Games, Paralympic Games, Deaflympics, World Championships, and recognised world-level competitions only. Additionally, a special Lifetime Sports Achievement Award will be conferred to a sportsperson in recognition of long-standing contributions to the sports sector.

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2. Cabinet has taken note that the Inter-Ministerial Committee set up under the chair of the Deputy Prime Minister to look into the strategy for port development will hold its first meeting on Wednesday 21 January 2026.

Cabinet has further taken note that following a request from Government, the European Union has agreed to the mobilisation of a Technical Assistance Facility to identify opportunities for European Union - Mauritius partnership for the development and modernisation of the port. In this context, a team of two experts will be in Mauritius for a six-day field mission as from 26 January 2026.

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3. Cabinet has agreed to the organisation of the 9<sup>th</sup> Indian Ocean Conference from 10 to 12 April 2026, in Mauritius, in collaboration with the India Foundation. The Conference will, inter alia -

- (a) provide a high-level platform for dialogue on issues of common interest to Indian Ocean States;
- (b) promote Mauritius as a hub for diplomacy, maritime cooperation and the blue economy;
- (c) foster collaboration on maritime security, trade, climate change adaptation and sustainable ocean governance; and
- (d) strengthen regional and international partnerships.

The theme of the 9<sup>th</sup> Indian Ocean Conference is “The Collective Stewardship for Indian Ocean Governance”. The Conference will comprise an inaugural session, plenary discussions and thematic panels, as well as related side meetings. The plenary sessions will focus over three main themes, namely-

- (a) Freedom of Navigation;
- (b) Maritime Laws and Governance; and
- (c) Maritime Security.

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4. Cabinet has taken note that on 12 January 2026, the United States (US) House of Representatives approved the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) Extension Bill, extending the programme up to December 2028 and renewing duty-free access for eligible African exports. The Bill will now proceed to the US Senate for consideration, after which it will require Presidential approval and signature to enter into force.

Mauritius will continue the active engagement regarding the future US-Mauritius trade relations including the conclusion of a Bilateral Trade Agreement.

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5. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Education and Human Resource is undertaking public consultations on, inter alia, the review of the mode of admission of students in secondary schools, with a view to integrating one of the proposals in the Blueprint for the transformation of the Mauritian Education Sector.

Several consultations have been held with relevant stakeholders, including the *Service Diocésain de l'Éducation Catholique*, the Private Secondary Education Authority, the Mauritius Examinations Syndicate, the Mauritius Institute of Education, the Special Education Needs Authority, as well as the Unions of the primary and secondary education sub-sectors.

A consultative meeting was also held on 15 January 2026 with Ministers, Junior Ministers, Members of the National Assembly, and Members of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. Consultations will be held with the Parents-Teachers Associations, Student Councils, Prefects as well as stakeholders in Rodrigues. In order to further assess public opinion, a survey form has been posted on-line on the website of the Ministry of Education and Human Resource as from today. The deadline for the consultation exercise has been extended up to 13 February 2026.

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6. Cabinet has agreed to the Ministry of Housing and Lands issuing drafting instructions to the Attorney-General's Office for the Mauritius Hydrographic Services Bill, which will have, inter alia, the following objectives -

- (a) to set up the Mauritius Hydrographic Services;
- (b) to regulate hydrographic surveys and charting within Mauritian waters;
- (c) to produce and maintain official nautical charts and publications in accordance with international standards;
- (d) to compile, preserve and manage hydrographic and marine geospatial data and to act as the national custodian of such data;
- (e) to regulate data exchange, access control, and data sharing;
- (f) to ensure the confidentiality and integrity of sensitive hydrographic data in line with applicable laws and protocols;
- (g) to regulate the hydrographers' and nautical cartographers' professions;
- (h) to issue authorisations and permits for hydrographic surveys within Mauritian jurisdiction; and
- (i) to fulfill international obligations.

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7. Cabinet has agreed to the Ministry of Information Technology, Communication and Innovation conveying drafting instructions to the Attorney-General's Office for amendments to be brought to the Data Protection Act 2017. The proposed amendments cover, inter alia, the following areas -

- (a) financial independence of the Data Protection Office to make it financially self-sustaining;
- (b) strengthening of enforcement powers so that the Data Protection Commissioner is able to impose administrative fines for any breach of the Data Protection Act;
- (c) setting up of a dedicated Prosecution Unit with Police Officers for effective enforcement to align with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR);
- (d) review of powers of the Data Protection Commissioner to allow for investigative powers;
- (e) provision for written contracts between controllers, processors and sub-processors as this will ensure enhanced accountability chains;

- (f) appeals by an aggrieved person to be made directly to the Supreme Court to avoid any conflict with the powers of the Director of Public Prosecutions under section 72 of the Constitution and to ensure effective judicial redress; and
- (g) inclusion of a new section on data portability similar to the GDPR.

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8. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the second meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Anti-Money Laundering, Combatting the Financing of Terrorism and Combatting Proliferation Financing (AML/CFT/CPF), co-chaired by the Attorney-General and the Minister of Financial Services and Economic Planning.

The meeting reviewed the preliminary findings of the Mid-Term Independent Assessment conducted by an international consultant and gave policy directives to address deficiencies identified in the AML/CFT regime. The Committee took note of key challenges affecting the effectiveness of Mauritius' AML/CFT/CPF framework as identified by the Mock Evaluation. The Committee also took note of progress made in thematic risk assessments, the training delivered by ESAAMLG Experts and efforts towards the operationalisation of the Real Estate Agent Authority. It also discussed proposed reforms under the draft AML/CFT/CPF (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Amendment) Bill, including proposals to regulate cash transactions for second-hand motor vehicles to mitigate money laundering risks.

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9. Cabinet has taken note of the launching of National Consultations for the formulation of Vision 2050. The consultations aim to provide stakeholders an opportunity to provide inputs for the formulation of Vision 2050. Stakeholder engagement will focus on both inclusiveness, through regional engagement, and through thematic discussions, with a view to ensuring broad national ownership of Vision 2050.

The consultations will be conducted from January to April 2026 and will include 12 regional fora across all Municipal and District Councils, targeting a broad cross-section of citizens including youth, students, community leaders, women's groups, non-governmental organisations and economic operators. In parallel, a series of thematic and sectoral dialogues will be organised with selected public and private sector stakeholders, including non-governmental organisations, senior citizens, youth, students, women's groups and academia as well as trade unions, to deepen discussions on critical cross-cutting areas.

The preliminary results of the consultations will be shared by mid-2026, with a draft Vision 2050 document to be made available for public comments in the second half of the year.

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10. Cabinet has taken note of the promulgation of the Road Traffic (Crop Season) (Amendment) Regulations 2026 in view of the extension of the Crop Season 2025-2026 to 31 January 2026.

The Regulations provide that a licence may be taken out in respect of any vehicle for which the issue of a carrier's licence for the transport of sugar cane and sugar cane crop requisites has been approved by the National Land Transport Authority, for a specified period.

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11. Cabinet has agreed to the promulgation of the Medical Council (Medical Institutions) (Amendment) Regulations 2026 to provide for the recognition and listing of 30 additional professional bodies.

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12. Cabinet has agreed to the promulgation of the Consumer Protection (Pharmaceutical Products) (Amendment No. 2) Regulations 2026 to review the implementation date for the application of the subsidy under the Price Stabilisation Fund on selected pharmaceutical products, namely on anti-hypertensive, cardiovascular and anti-diabetic medicines with effect from 01 February 2026.

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13. Cabinet has taken note of the award made by the Employment Relations Tribunal concerning the dispute entered by Government Medical and Dental Officers Association regarding the decision taken in 2022 for provision of specialised services in all hospitals on a 24/7 basis. The Tribunal has awarded in favour of the disputants. The Ministry of Health and Wellness will now examine the award and review the working arrangements of the Specialists/Senior Specialists, accordingly.

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14. Cabinet has taken note that Dr Mohamed Yakub Janabi, World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Director for Africa will be on official visit to Mauritius from 18 to 22 January 2026, in the context of the International Health Symposium 2026 organised by the Charles Telfair Education Campus.

The visit of the WHO Regional Director also forms part of his inaugural programme to engage with all Member States in the WHO African Region and aims to further consolidate the strong collaboration between the WHO and the Government of Mauritius by identifying key avenues for enhanced cooperation.

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15. Cabinet has taken note that a delegation from Crossrail International Ltd, a public body of the United Kingdom (UK) government's Department for Transport, engaged through the UK's Green Cities, Infrastructure and Energy Programme, will effect a Country Visit to Mauritius from 19 to 23 January 2026, to provide technical assistance to the Government of Mauritius.

The technical assistance trails from the wider UK-Mauritius Strategic Partnership Framework within the Growth, Trade and Investment Agenda, and Crossrail International Ltd will, therefore, support the Office of the Public Sector Governance to undertake an Operations and Maintenance review of the Metro Express Limited.

The country visit will fundamentally be in relation to the wider benefits of infrastructure schemes and in particular, the Light Rail System of the Metro Express Ltd and other appropriate infrastructure projects.

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16. Cabinet has agreed to the implementation of an Information Security Management System (ISMS) by Ministries and Departments based on standards developed by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). The ISMS will establish the following controls -

- (a) Organisational Controls, which focuses on governance, policies, third party management and access;
- (b) People Controls, which addresses human factors through measures such as training and security awareness;
- (c) Physical Controls, relating to controls for the protection of physical assets and environments; and
- (d) Technological Controls, ensuring information security continuity in IT and communication systems.

The implementation of an ISO-certified ISMS across Government is expected to bring significant operational, governance and strategic benefits.

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17. Cabinet has agreed to Mauritius jointly publishing, with the International Trade Centre, the discussion paper entitled "Trade and Climate Change in Mauritius".

In June 2023, Mauritius was selected as a beneficiary of the Climate Competitiveness Project, funded by the European Union and implemented in partnership with the International Trade Centre, along with seven other countries. The project aims to support developing countries' engagement in the Trade and Environmental Sustainability Structured Discussions at the World Trade Organization by working with six countries and/or country groupings to assess the role that trade and trade policy can play in helping them meet climate mitigation and adaptation objectives.

The discussion paper examines the impacts of climate change on trade, the role of trade in supporting climate policy objectives and potential market opportunities arising from the green transition. The paper identifies opportunities for Mauritius to position itself in the growing market for green goods and services by leveraging sustainability standards in key export sectors such as sugar, seafood, clothing, essential oils and tourism. It further highlights the importance of multilateral engagement at the World Trade Organization, regional cooperation with neighbouring island States, and targeted unilateral measures, supported by aid-for-trade and climate finance with a view to addressing market access risks, renewable energy challenges and circular economy initiatives.

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18. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of Memoranda of Understanding between -

- (a) the Ministry of Health and Wellness and Medanta Hospital, Gurugram, India; and
- (b) the Ministry of Health and Wellness and Sri Kauvery Medical Care Limited.

The objectives of the Memoranda of Understanding are as follows -

- (a) strengthening of specialised healthcare services through structured collaboration;
- (b) provision of capacity building to Mauritian healthcare professionals and technical assistance for upgrading of local health facilities;
- (c) access to advanced treatments not available in Mauritius; and
- (d) promotion of cooperation in high-specialty fields such as neuro-intervention, transplantation, bone marrow transplant, paediatric surgery, cardiac electrophysiology, while ensuring continuous medical education and streamlined referral services for Mauritian patients.

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19. Cabinet has agreed to the Ministry of Tertiary Education, Science and Research signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London to foster international collaboration to position Mauritius as a regional hub for knowledge and innovation.

The objective of the Memorandum of Understanding is to facilitate collaboration between public higher education institutions and the SOAS in the following areas -

- (a) joint degree programmes, professional development programmes, executive course, joint research initiative and co-supervision of PhD projects;
- (b) exchange of non-confidential information including exchange of teaching and research documentation; and
- (c) exchange of faculty members for research, lectures and discussion.

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20. Cabinet has taken note that the Mauritius Revenue Authority will host -

- (a) a Regional Training Workshop on Cybercrime, Virtual Assets and Digital Evidence, jointly organised and facilitated by the US Department of Justice, Office of Overseas Prosecutorial Development, Assistance and Training and the US Federal Bureau of Investigation, from 19 to 23 January 2026; and
- (b) a Regional Seminar on Developing a Risk-Based Compliance Plan for Customs, organised by IMF AFRITAC South, from 02 to 06 February 2026.

The Regional Workshop on Cybercrime, Virtual Assets and Digital Evidence will enhance the investigative and prosecutorial capacities of Mauritian and regional institutions. It will strengthen cross-border cooperation, improve the handling and admissibility of digital evidence, and build skills to effectively investigate and disrupt cyber-enabled and transnational financial crimes. Moreover, it will reinforce Mauritius' position as a regional hub for combating cybercrime.

The Regional Seminar on Developing a Risk-Based Compliance Plan for Customs aims to support Customs Administrations in -

- (a) understanding the concept and importance of an Integrated Risk Management (IRM) approach as part of Customs Governance;
- (b) identifying the key component required to implement an effective Integrated Risk Management Framework;
- (c) developing a risk-based compliance improvement plan, using IMF's Fiscal Affairs Department technical note as a foundation;
- (d) establishing, monitoring, evaluating and refining effective selectivity criteria; and
- (e) enhancing the flow and use of risk information across enforcement and compliance units, including mechanisms for acting on intelligence and reporting outcomes.

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21. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent participation of the Minister of Health and Wellness in the Second Global Summit on Traditional Medicine in India, organised by the World Health Organization (WHO) in collaboration with the Government of India.

The WHO Global Summit on Traditional Medicine focused on the role of traditional medicine through scientific validation, regulatory frameworks, health system integration, innovation and sustainability.

During the visit, discussions focused on the significant progress made towards the establishment of a Centre of Excellence on Traditional Medicine in Mauritius, with the technical, institutional and financial support from the Government of India. The Centre will be a regional hub for evidence-based integration of traditional medicine into the public health system, research, education and training for Mauritius, Africa and Small Island Developing States.

The Minister participated in various inter-ministerial meetings and discussed with the Minister of Ayush, reaffirming Mauritius' position as a strategic partner of India in traditional medicine, health systems strengthening and capacity building.

The Minister discussed future collaboration under the WHO Global Traditional Medicine Strategy 2025-2034, including regulatory harmonisation, research partnership, human resource development and knowledge exchange. The Minister also had discussions with the Director of the All India Institutes of Medical Science to explore the possibility of cooperation in the medical field.

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22. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent visit of the Minister of Local Government to Nanchang City, Jiangxi Province, China. The Minister conducted a series of economic, educational, and institutional exchanges in the context of the World Green Development Investment and Trade Expo and China Green Food Expo which is an international event, focusing on green development, digital empowerment, and low-carbon economic cooperation and attracts regional and international participation from government bodies and the public and private sectors alike.

The primary objectives of the visit were to participate in a high-level international green development platform, engage with Chinese state-owned and central enterprises on concrete cooperation opportunities, explore the possibilities of education and cultural cooperation to support long-term bilateral relations and assess the feasibility of translating cooperation intentions into implementable projects. The Minister also participated in the China (Jiangxi) – Africa Investment and Cooperation Exchange Event. In the margins of the visit, the Minister carried out working sessions with several major Chinese enterprises.

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23. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent participation of the Junior Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade in the Second Edition of Business Forum on the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) in Marrakesh, Morocco, under the theme 'Together for an Efficient Implementation of the AfCFTA'.

In his intervention during the forum, the Junior Minister highlighted several key elements, notably the importance of preserving special and differential treatment for developing countries and least developed countries, in order to guarantee inclusive and sustainable development.

The Junior Minister also participated in the panel discussion titled 'Status of the AfCFTA Implementation and Prospects' along with other African ministers.

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