

HIGHLIGHTS OF CABINET MEETING – FRIDAY 06 MARCH 2026

1. Cabinet has taken note that HE Dr Patrick Herminie, President of the Republic of Seychelles will be on State Visit in Mauritius from 11 to 14 March 2026, on the occasion of the National Day Celebrations 2026. The President of the Republic of Seychelles will be the Chief Guest at the Flag Raising Ceremony at the Champ de Mars, Port Louis on 12 March 2026. During the visit, the President will, inter alia, -

- (a) pay a courtesy call on the President of the Republic of Mauritius;
- (b) have a *tête-à-tête* with the Prime Minister, followed by a Delegation Level Meeting ;
- (c) witness the exchange of agreements and make a joint statement to the Media;
- (d) attend the State Banquet;
- (e) participate in a Wreath Laying Ceremony and Tree Planting at Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam Botanic Garden; and
- (f) visit the Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Site and the Intercontinental Slavery Museum.

Cabinet has agreed to the signing of the following Agreements, Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) and Programme of Cooperation which will be exchanged during the State Visit –

- (a) Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Mauritius and the Government of the Republic of Seychelles on Access for Seychelles Vessels to the Mauritius Fishing Zone pertaining to the promotion and implementation of responsible fishing by Seychelles vessels in the Mauritius Fishing Zone based on the principle of non-discrimination between the different fleets fishing in those waters;
- (b) Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Mauritius and the Government of the Republic of Seychelles on Access for Mauritius Vessels to the Seychelles Fishing Zone relating to the promotion and implementation of responsible fishing by Mauritius vessels in the Seychelles Fishing Zone based on the principle of non-discrimination between the different fleets fishing in those waters;
- (c) MoU between the Republic of Mauritius and the Republic of Seychelles in Agriculture, Sanitary and Phytosanitary Issues for the establishment of a long-term relationship that utilises the Parties' complementary research expertise, impact pathway skills and institutional and capacity development strength;

- (d) MoU between the Mauritius Fire and Rescue Service of the Government of the Republic of Mauritius and the Seychelles Fire and Rescue Services Agency of the Government of the Republic of Seychelles to foster cooperation with a view to creating the necessary framework and mechanisms to allow a better understanding of issues common to both States related to fires and other emergencies;
- (e) MoU between Statistics Mauritius of the Republic of Mauritius and the National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Seychelles on Cooperation in the Area of Statistical Development to establish a practical framework for cooperation between Mauritius and Seychelles with regard to improvement in the production and dissemination of high-quality official statistics and to strengthen institutional relations as well as capacity building;
- (f) Twinning MoU between Le Morne Heritage Trust Fund of the Republic of Mauritius and the National Heritage Resource Council of the Republic of Seychelles which defines the general framework for cooperation through twinning and the base of an economic, social and cultural heritage management partnership between the two regions and parties concerned; and
- (g) Programme of Cooperation in the fields of Arts and Culture for the Years 2026-2029 between the Government of the Republic of Mauritius and the Government of the Republic of Seychelles which encourages the exchange of information on cultural policies and promotes activities relating to folklore and tradition between Mauritius and Seychelles.

2. Cabinet has taken note that in response to the recent escalation of hostilities and mounting tensions throughout the broader Middle East, following the intervention of the Prime Minister with the Saudi Authorities, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade established direct contact with Mauritian citizens across the Gulf region with the support and coordination of the diplomatic Missions in Riyadh and Islamabad, and the Mauritius Consulate in Dubai. An alert notice was issued on 28 February 2026 with a view to conveying the emergency contact details of the Missions and the crisis cell of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade. The notice also advised all Mauritians to defer any travel to Iran and countries of the Gulf region.

Around 121 Mauritian nationals, who are in Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia have established contact with the Mission in Riyadh in view of their return to Mauritius. Through robust partnerships and consultations with Emirates and other airlines, rapid protocols were activated. 20 Mauritian nationals, mainly pilgrims, departed Jeddah for Mauritius on 02 March 2026. In addition, 39 Mauritian nationals safely returned to Mauritius on 03 March 2026 via Nairobi.

Three flights have been scheduled by Emirates for the Dubai–Mauritius route from 05 to 07 March 2026. Out of the 72 Mauritian nationals currently registered in Dubai, approximately 80% are expected to depart Dubai on these flights by 07 March 2026. Arrangements are also being made for one Mauritian national who is currently in Iran to travel to Mauritius via Turkey.

Reaffirming its diplomatic stance, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade issued a Communiqué on 03 March 2026, calling for an immediate cessation of hostilities and the resumption of dialogue between the involved parties. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade also expressed its official appreciation to the United Arab Emirates and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for their invaluable logistical and diplomatic support in facilitating the repatriation of Mauritian nationals.

3. Cabinet has taken note of the recommendations of the Inter-Ministerial Committee on the Strategy for Port Development under the chair of the Deputy Prime Minister which met on five occasions and during which discussions were held with the representatives of the Prime Minister’s Office, the Economic Development Board, the Mauritius Ports Authority, the Cargo Handling Corporation Ltd, the private sector and the Trade Unions of both the Mauritius Ports Authority and the Cargo Handling Corporation Ltd. Discussions were focused on key strategic themes, including review of the port governance model, acquisition of port equipment, training and employee relations, opening of share capital to Shipping Lines as well as the implementation of the Island Container Terminal Project which was raised by the Prime Minister during his recent mission to India. It was unanimously agreed that there is extreme urgency to devise a new strategy for the survival of the port.

Cabinet has agreed to the Inter-Ministerial Committee pursuing negotiations with two strategic shipping lines for the latter to enter the capital of the Cargo Handling Corporation Ltd alongside Government, as minority shareholders. The shipping lines will then bring commercial discipline, operational expertise, provide mobile cranes as required, critical direct incentive to route vessels through Port Louis and grow traffic volumes. Discussions with Trade Unions will also be pursued.

Cabinet has further agreed to the Mauritius Ports Authority refocusing its role as the sole authority to regulate and control the port sector and provide marine services; and the Cargo Handling Corporation Ltd as the unique operator of the Port.

4. Cabinet has agreed to drafting instructions being conveyed to the Attorney-General’s Office for the inclusion of Road Rage incidents in the draft Road Traffic (Amendment) Bill.

Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Land Transport will collaborate with Cerebro Ltd and Etiquette Africa, a pan-African initiative dedicated to fostering a culture of respect and a civility non-profit organisation promoting behavioural excellence and civility across the African continent, for the conduct of a National Survey on Road Civility and Behaviour.

The objective of the survey is to capture the experiences, perceptions, and attributes of motorists, pedestrians and public transport users to, inter alia, measure the perceived level of civility and identify key friction points on Mauritian roads and to evaluate perceived public responses and etiquette in accident scenarios. The survey is expected to provide insights that can guide public awareness campaigns, policy refinement and infrastructural planning. Specifically, the survey will delve into the daily commuting experience of citizens and capture their perceptions and experiences across a range of critical scenarios.

5. Cabinet has taken note of allegations of malpractices against Mr J. Arunasalom, Chairperson of the Mauritius Tourism Authority and has decided that –

- (a) an enquiry be carried out into the allegations made; and
- (b) actions be initiated for the suspension of Mr J. Arunasalom, with immediate effect.

6. Cabinet has agreed to the introduction of a new scheme under the National Solidarity Fund (NSF) for the payment of an allowance for a period not exceeding two months to victims of domestic violence residing in shelters. The scheme will be applicable to victims of domestic violence who are issued a Protection Order from the Court Magistrate, and residing in shelters run by Non-Governmental Organisations recognised by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare. Assistance will be granted for the first two months of stay of the victim in a shelter.

The objective of the scheme is to promote the economic empowerment of victims of domestic violence. It will be a critical step towards helping them to regain their autonomy, security and dignity in the society. It will also play a transformative role by allowing victims to address their immediate personal needs and create a pathway for their long-term stability. The eligibility criteria, guidelines and mode of operation for the new scheme have been worked out by the NSF.

7. Cabinet has agreed to the promulgation of the National Pensions (Non-Contributory Benefits) (Amendment) Regulations 2026. The objective of the Regulations is to pay in full the basic pensions under the National Pensions Act, to beneficiaries whose stay in public hospitals is in excess of three consecutive months, excluding inmates of Brown Sequad Mental Health Care Centre.

8. Cabinet has agreed to the promulgation of the Customs Tariff (Amendment of Schedule) Regulations 2026 which provide for the implementation of customs duty reductions by Mauritius in view of its preferential market access commitments under -

- (a) the sixth round for the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement with India; and
- (b) the second round for the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement with the United Arab Emirates.

9. Cabinet has agreed to the updated National Oil Spill Contingency Plan (NOSCP) of the Republic of Mauritius (2025), which adopts the Incident Command Structure for managing an oil spill response.

The NOSCP (2025) adopts a new tiered response whereby the environmental sensitivity of an affected area and the severity of impact in case of an oil spill are taken into consideration. The Plan makes provision for the establishment of environmental pre-spill baseline data collection to assess and monitor post-spill damage to the environment and to support claims for compensation against damage to the marine ecosystem as well as the determination of clean-up endpoints to assess whether the clean-up response has achieved the desired results. The strategies to be adopted for oil spill response and recovery are also defined.

10. Cabinet has agreed to Mauritius endorsing, on a voluntary basis, the Declaration on Information Integrity on Climate Change, which was launched at the 30th Session of the Conference of Parties (COP30) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) held in November 2025 in Brazil.

The purpose of the Declaration is to combat climate misinformation, denialism, and attacks on climate communicators by establishing shared commitments for Governments, technology platforms, media and academia to promote accurate, evidence-based climate information, protect journalists/scientists and foster media resilience for effective climate action. Under the Declaration, signatories commit to the following –

- (a) promote the integrity of information related to climate change in line with international human rights law, including freedom of expression standards;
- (b) support the sustainability of a diverse and resilient media ecosystem to ensure accurate and reliable coverage on climate and environmental issues;
- (c) support the inclusion of information integrity commitments into Action for Climate Empowerment Agenda under the UNFCCC;

- (d) promote informed and inclusive climate action by advancing equitable access to accurate, evidence-based and understandable information for all; and
- (e) foster cooperation and capacity building to address threats to information integrity, safeguarding those reporting and researching climate issues.

11. Cabinet has taken note that on 20 February 2026, the United States Supreme Court ruled tariffs imposed under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act as being unlawful. Consequently, the United States Administration has introduced a universal 10% for a period of 150 days, with a possible increase to 15%. On 02 March 2026, the United States Administration's 2026 Trade Policy Agenda confirmed Agreements of Reciprocal Trade as its primary market-access tool. Mauritius is following up with the United States Administration for negotiation on that issue. A formal letter will be sent to the United States Trade Representative to confirm our interest and readiness to discuss an Agreement on Reciprocal Trade, highlighting concrete steps already taken by Mauritius to address trade imbalance. A high-level delegation made up of high-level officials and the private sector will proceed to the United States in the months to come to secure high-level engagements.

12. Cabinet has agreed to the guidelines on best practices for roadside weed management using herbicides in Mauritius. The guidelines provide detailed instructions across several critical domains. The guidelines also address critical environmental concerns such as water contamination, soil degradation, development of herbicide-resistant weeds and recommendation on alternatives such as bio-herbicides in sensitive zones.

The guidelines emphasise the establishment of untreated buffer zones to protect the environment from herbicide contamination. Specific recommended buffer zones mentioned in the guidelines comprise –

- (a) water bodies (rivers and canals): A buffer of at least 100 feet is recommended near rivers, aligning with the provisions of the Rivers and Canals Act, for the control of activities near such water bodies; and
- (b) agricultural zones: A minimum 10-meter untreated buffer is recommended around agricultural zones.

13. Cabinet has taken note of the endorsement, by the Global Environment Facility, of a grant to the tune of USD4,532,164 in respect of the project entitled "Realising Energy Savings and Climate Benefits of Implementing Mandatory Energy Auditing in the Republic of Mauritius."

The project primarily aims to address the fundamental challenge of Mauritius' heavy dependence on imported fossil fuels. Following the coming into operation of the Energy Efficiency Act in 2011 and subsequent introduction of the Energy Efficiency (Energy Consumer and Energy Audit) Regulations 2017, energy audits have been mandated for large public and private sector entities. However, the effective implementation of these energy audits has faced persistent barriers.

The project has been designed to address the barriers in an integrated way, creating a sustainable ecosystem that will enable and incentivise the full implementation of the national energy audit scheme. The project directly supports the national target of increasing overall energy efficiency by 10% by 2035 relative to a 2019 baseline. The successful implementation of the project is expected to yield approximately one million tonnes of direct avoided CO2 emissions over the lifetime of the measures implemented.

14. Cabinet has agreed to the introduction of export permits for second-hand motor vehicles to the African region and to amendments being brought to the Consumer Protection (Export Control) Regulations 2000.

The Ministry of Commerce and Consumer Protection will introduce an export permit for the exportation of the used vehicles and relevant conditions will be applicable.

15. Cabinet has agreed to the designation of the Old Prison Buildings, located in Maillard Street, Port Louis, as a National Heritage. The Old Prison Buildings constitute one of the largest and most significant colonial prison complexes constructed in Mauritius. The prison remained operational for around 114 years and was officially closed in 1953 by the British Government. The buildings were constructed through the labour of apprentices, prisoners and some ex-indentured labourers, thereby bearing testimony to significant phases of the colonial, penal and labour history of Mauritius.

Although part of the prisons complex was destroyed in the late 1990s, substantial elements remain intact, including the detention centre, the female wing, prison cells and the gallows used for executions. The structures which remain represent rare and tangible evidence of the colonial penal system at that time. In view of its scale, age, rarity and historical associations, the site satisfies the criteria of cultural and historical significance under the National Heritage Fund Act. Its designation as National Heritage would ensure statutory protection and facilitate appropriate conservation of the site.

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

Since the last meeting, a number of activities have been completed, namely the Terrorist Financing Risk Assessment of Non-Profit Organisations and the National Strategy for Combatting Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism. Some of the actions required, such as the updates relating to the National Risk Assessment on Money Laundering/Terrorism Financing, the Proliferation Financing National Risk Assessment and the Risk Assessment of Legal Arrangements are progressing well and are expected to be finalised in the coming months. Significant progress has also been made in the setting up of a Centralised Information Management System and the operationalisation of the Real Estate Agency Authority.

A comprehensive action plan has been developed by the National Committee on AML/CFT/CPF to address the shortcomings identified in the Mid-Term Independent Assessment ahead of the Mutual Evaluation scheduled in 2027.

17. Cabinet has agreed to the Mahatma Gandhi Institute and the Rabindranath Tagore Institute jointly signing a Memorandum of Understanding with Sofia University, St Kliment Ohridski, Bulgaria. The Memorandum of Understanding provides for the following avenues of cooperation -

- (a) student and staff exchanges;
- (b) academic programmes;
- (c) joint research activities;
- (d) exchange of academic materials and information;
- (e) scholarly activities such as seminars, conferences, and symposia; and
- (f) short attachments for academic, management, and administrative staff.

18. Cabinet has agreed to the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities of the University of Mauritius signing a Student Exchange Agreement with the Faculty of Arts and Science of the *Université de Montréal*.

The Agreement is a focused, operational instrument establishing a structured Student Exchange Programme between the two Faculties. Eligible students enrolled in full-time at their Home Institution may undertake a full-time, non-degree study stay at the Host Institution for one to two study sessions, without paying tuition fees at the Host Institution. The Agreement provides for one exchange spot per study session on each side, while maintaining a balance of student flow.

19. Cabinet has taken note of the holding of a workshop on the Chagos Archipelago Marine Protected Area (CAMPA) from 31 March to 02 April 2026 organised by the Department for Continental Shelf, Maritime Zones Administration and Exploration of the Prime Minister's Office in collaboration with the Zoological Society of London. The workshop aims at bringing together national stakeholders, international practitioners and technical specialists to exchange knowledge and practical experience to inform the planning, implementation and long-term management of CAMPA.

The workshop will be of significant importance for the establishment and future management of CAMPA. It will support the development of shared technical understanding, build national capacity, and promote the adoption of best international practices in marine protected area governance. Particular emphasis will be placed on strengthening capacity-building, enhancing institutional coordination, and leveraging modern technologies for surveillance, enforcement, research and monitoring, thereby laying a sound foundation for the effective and sustainable management of CAMPA in the future.

20. Cabinet has taken note of the present situation regarding infectious diseases in Mauritius and the public health and sanitary measures being taken to control the spread of the diseases. The Minister of Health and Wellness has chaired a multi-sectoral meeting on 23 February 2026 with relevant stakeholders to take stock of the actions being taken and to emphasise on further action required to reinforce sanitary measures.

The Ministry of Health and Wellness has released sterile *Aedes albopictus* males in Triolet, Roches Brunes and Beau Bassin with a view to controlling the mosquito population. Rodent control activities are regularly carried out at all public health institutions, medical stores, Sea Port and selected premises at the Airport.

Mist blowing and larviciding activities are being strengthened to eliminate mosquito larvae at identified breeding sites. House to house inspections and indoor residual survey are ongoing. Cleaning campaigns of bare lands are being conducted in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change and the Ministry of Local Government.

21. Cabinet has agreed to the Drains Infrastructure Construction Ltd proceeding with the implementation of the project "Construction of drain at Morcellement Domah under Phase 1 - Construction of cut-off drain at the upstream periphery over a stretch of 250 metres".

22. Cabinet has agreed to the Drains Infrastructure Construction Ltd proceeding with the construction of culvert across Higginson Road as part of the implementation of the project "Flood Mitigation Measures at L'Unité".

23. Cabinet has taken note of the activities being organised by the Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities in collaboration with the *Agence Française de Développement*, in the context of World Water Day 2026 which is observed on 22 March every year. The theme for this year is “Water and Gender - Where Water Flows, Equality Grows”.

A calendar of activities, geared toward raising awareness of stakeholders on the importance of water as a *sine qua non* resource to sustain life, has been prepared comprising -

- (a) an awareness session at the Rehabilitation Centre of the Petit Verger Prison;
- (b) a tree planting initiative at La Nicolière Water Treatment Plant aiming to link water conservation to environmental sustainability by promoting greenery around key water infrastructure;
- (c) an educational tour for school students at La Marie and Bagatelle Water Treatment Plants, aiming at building early awareness of water treatment, conservation and environmental responsibility;
- (d) Public Open Days at La Marie and Bagatelle Water Treatment Plants to promote transparency and public trust by allowing citizens to observe water treatment processes, quality control measures, and the expertise behind safe water supply; and
- (e) a seminar on the theme of World Water Day highlighting the vital role in water management, public health, household decisions and community resilience.

24. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent visit of the Minister of Education and Human Resource to Rodrigues regarding progress achieved under the Foundation Programme in Literacy, Numeracy and Skills.

The Minister participated in a roundtable discussion organised by the Deputy Chief Commissioner of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, along with the Departmental Head (Education), Rectors, Deputy Rectors and Senior Educators of the Secondary Schools. The deliberations focused on the philosophy of the Foundation Programme, the importance of the Foundation Programme School Monitoring Committee and recruitment of one Coordinator to monitor the teaching and learning of the foundation programme in Rodrigues.

25. Cabinet has taken note of the appointment of Ms Bhawna Atmaram as part-time Chairperson on the Committee of the President’s Fund for Creative Writing.
