

HIGHLIGHTS OF CABINET MEETING – FRIDAY 26 JUNE 2026

1. Cabinet has taken note of the findings and recommendations of the Board of Inquiry, chaired by Mr Paul Lam Shang Leen, former Puisne Judge of the Supreme Court of Mauritius, set up to inquire into the circumstances surrounding the death of detainee Andy Selmour at Melrose Prison on 09 December 2025.

The Board of Inquiry completed its assignment and submitted its inquiry report on 01 June 2026 pursuant to section 20(1) of the Public Inquiries Act 2025. The Report identified major systemic deficiencies within the prison system, including acute shortage of staff, staff demotivation, frustration, indiscipline, drug trafficking, alleged corruption, failure of rehabilitation programmes, deficiencies in medical response procedures, absence of emergency medical protocols, weaknesses in prison administration and oversight mechanisms.

The key recommendations of the Board of Inquiry aimed at transforming prison administration and preventing future tragedies include –

- (a) immediate strengthening of staffing levels at Melrose Prison;
- (b) comprehensive reform of prison management and leadership structures;
- (c) improved classification of detainees for rehabilitation programmes, and review of various regimes and privileges attached thereto;
- (d) introduction of modern rehabilitation programmes, vocational training and structured activities for detainees;
- (e) enhanced anti-corruption mechanisms and stricter controls against contraband and drug trafficking;
- (f) establishment of clear emergency medical protocols and improved prison healthcare services;
- (g) greater psychological support and proactive welfare services for detainees;
- (h) creation of independent disciplinary and complaints mechanisms;
- (i) strengthening of oversight bodies, including the Board of Visitors and National Preventive Mechanism;
- (j) review of remand policies and increased use of alternatives to imprisonment;
- (k) establishment of a Criminal Justice Committee comprising relevant stakeholders to address overcrowding, delays and systemic prison issues; and

- (l) shift towards a rehabilitative prison culture grounded in dignity, professionalism, accountability and respect for human rights.

The Board of Inquiry concluded that the death of detainee Andy Selmour exposed profound institutional weaknesses within Melrose Prison and highlighted the urgent need for reform within the prison system of Mauritius, and stressed that meaningful reform would require strong political will, institutional accountability and sustained commitment from all stakeholders involved in the criminal justice system.

A Committee will be set up under the chair of the Secretary for Home Affairs to examine the inquiry report and ensure implementation of the recommendations made therein.

In accordance with section 21 of the Public Inquiries Act 2025, a copy of the Report will be laid before the National Assembly.

2. Cabinet has agreed to the introduction of the Criminal Code (Amendment) Bill into the National Assembly. The object of the Bill is to amend the Criminal Code to provide –

- (a) notwithstanding any other enactment, that it shall not be a defence for a person charged with the offence of rape that he was, at the time of the offence, civilly or religiously married to the complainant, and to provide for harsher penalties in aggravating circumstances where the complainant was, inter alia, subject to acts of domestic abuse; and
- (b) for harsher penalties for the offence of murder, attempt at murder, manslaughter and attempt at manslaughter in aggravating circumstances where the victim was, inter alia, subject to acts of domestic abuse.

The amendments have been rendered necessary as a consequence of the new provisions relating to acts of domestic abuse that have been provided for in the Domestic Abuse Bill (No. VIII of 2026).

3. Cabinet has taken note that following the assent of the Certificate of Character Act 2026 by the President of the Republic on 08 May 2026, the Certificate of Character Regulations 2026 will be promulgated.

The Regulations will provide for an application for a Certificate of Character to be made to the Director of Public Prosecutions in such form as the Director of Public Prosecutions may approve.

The Certificate of Character Act 2026, together with the Certificate of Character Regulations 2026, will come into operation on 01 July 2026.

4. Cabinet has taken note that following consultations with the Corporate Council on Africa, the US-Africa Business Summit 2026 which was scheduled to be held from 26 to 29 July 2026, is now proposed to be held from 06 to 09 December 2026 in Mauritius.

5. Cabinet has taken note that on 23 June 2026, the Council of Ministers of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, held under the chairmanship of His Majesty the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia, authorised the Minister of Islamic Affairs, Dawah and Guidance, or a Deputy to discuss and sign a draft Memorandum of Understanding on mosque support between his Ministry and the Ministry of Arts and Culture of Mauritius.

Discussions are being pursued by the Ambassador of Mauritius in Saudi Arabia with the Saudi Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Dawah and Guidance.

6. Cabinet has agreed to the Ministry of Health and Wellness signing a Clinical Training Framework Agreement with the International Institute of Medicine and Management (IIMM) Studies (Mauritius) Limited. The aims of the Clinical Training Framework Agreement are, inter alia, to -

- (a) establish a structured collaboration to facilitate the clinical training of medical students from IIMM Studies (Mauritius) Limited at the SSRN Hospital, specialised hospitals and Primary Health Care Centres;
- (b) ensure that the clinical training is carried out under appropriate supervision, in line with the guidelines of the Ministry of Health and Wellness and the Higher Education Commission; and
- (c) set out the responsibilities of the Ministry of Health and Wellness, IIMM Studies (Mauritius) Limited and the students, as well as the terms and conditions for the conduct of the training.

7. Cabinet has taken note that the Mauritius Revenue Authority will co-host the workshop on Mid-term Evaluation Meeting from 06 to 08 July 2026 for Operation DEMETER XII on the illegal trans-boundary movement of waste controlled under the Basel Convention. The workshop aims to assess the progress and effectiveness of Operation DEMETER XII which is a global enforcement initiative led by the World Customs Organization in partnership with the Basel Convention and the United Nations Environment Programme. This initiative aims to clamp down the illicit cross-border movement of hazardous waste and environmentally sensitive chemicals.

The Mauritius Revenue Authority will also co-host the Capacity Building for Tax Inspectors Without Borders on Criminal Tax Investigation from 20 to 24 July 2026. The training aims to review the activities and performance of Regional Intelligence Liaison Office East and Southern Africa and assess Member administrations' progress in combating illicit trade and transnational customs offences. It also intends to promote regional cooperation and coordinated enforcement actions among Customs administrations.
