

**CABINET DECISIONS – 18 SEPTEMBER 2009**

1. Cabinet has taken note that, on the occasion of the 109<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary of Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, Father of the Nation, UNESCO has decided to issue a set of Gold, Silver and Bronze Commemorative Medals on 21 September 2009 in Paris in the presence of Dr the Hon Navinchandra Ramgoolam, GCSK, FRCP, Prime Minister.

Among the Commemorative Medals released by UNESCO, in the past, are those in honour of Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Confucius and Marie Curie for their imprint on the history of their countries.

These medals would be used as from 2010 by both UNESCO and Mauritius for ceremonial and honorary purposes.

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2. Cabinet has taken note that, in view of the forthcoming closure of the Richelieu Livestock Feed Factory, subsidy on livestock feeds would be increased from Rs 1,500 to Rs 2,000 and the Scheme reviewed to better assist small and needy cow and pig breeders to have access to feeds from the two local manufacturers of livestock feeds. The Scheme targets 1400 registered cow breeders and 500 pig breeders.

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3. Cabinet has taken note of measures taken by the Ministry of Agro Industry, Food Production and Security to monitor levels of pesticide residues in fresh vegetables and fruits to mitigate possible adverse effects on consumer's health, viz., -

- (a) conducting farm gate surveys for pesticide control;
- (b) pooling of laboratories, namely MSIRI, the Faculty of Science of the University of Mauritius, the Mauritius Standards Bureau and the National Environment Laboratory, for analysing larger samples of vegetables and fruits for a broader range of pesticides;
- (c) stepping up training of planters and sprayermen and promoting the adoption of good agricultural practices; and
- (d) sensitizing consumers on precautions to be taken prior to consuming vegetables and fruits and on the need to avoid purchasing such produce from doubtful sources.

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4. Cabinet has taken note that the life-size statue of Sir Charles Gaëtan Duval, GCSK, QC, would be unveiled on 7 October 2009 in the yard of the Municipal Council of Beau Bassin-Rose Hill.

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5. Cabinet has taken note that the Very Very Important Person (VVIP) node, under the Pan African e-Network Project, has come into operation in Mauritius to facilitate communication through videoconferencing among Heads of State of the African Union. The Pan African e-Network Project is an initiative of the former President of India, Dr A. P. J. Kalam, to connect all the 53 nations of the African Union by satellite and fibre optic network to provide effective tele-education, tele-medicine, Internet, videoconferencing and Voice Over Internet Protocol (VoIP) services, as well as to support e-Governance, e-Commerce, infotainment, resource mapping and meteorological services.

Under the Pan African e-Network Project, Mauritius has, so far, benefited from the following:-

- (a) a tele-medicine centre, set up at the Cardiac Centre, Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam National Hospital, Pamplemousses;
- (b) a tele-education centre, set up at the Mauritius College of the Air, Réduit; and
- (c) the VVIP node, set up at the Prime Minister's Office, Port Louis.

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6. Taking into consideration various representations received, Cabinet has agreed **not** to implement Summer Time.

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7. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Education, Culture and Human Resources, in collaboration with Mauritius Telecom, the National Computer Board, the Government Online Centre and the Mauritius College of the Air, launched the "Edu-Web", i.e., the Educational Webcasting Project, on 15 September 2009. The Educational Webcasting enables interaction with all partners in the education sector through a live web broadcast system. This project would revolutionize traditional teaching and communications methods and chart out the roadmap for the optimum utilisation of Information and Communication Technologies for the delivery of quality education.

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8. Cabinet has taken note of developments in the implementation of the project for the upgrading of Dr A. G. Jeetoo Hospital, which comprises the construction of a modern 550-bedded hospital of international standard, the rehabilitation of some existing buildings and the provision of the necessary medical furniture and equipment.

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9. In view of the fact that several complaints have been received from various quarters regarding the current system of examination of motor vehicles and as announced in 2006-2007 Budget Speech to the effect that the process of testing vehicles at the National Transport Authority would be improved, with the possibility of contracting out such services, Cabinet has taken note that the Minister of Public Infrastructure, Land Transport and Shipping would promulgate Regulations for the grant of licences to authorized examiners for the establishment and operation of private stations for the examination of motor vehicles. The private stations should, however, be equipped with the latest technologies and manned by qualified staff. In order to facilitate vehicle owners, it is proposed to initially grant licences to four private operators who would be located in different parts of the country.

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10. Cabinet has taken note of developments in the appointment of the Utility Regulatory Authority Board, set up under the Utility Regulatory Act with a view to, inter alia, -

- (a) implementing the policy of Government relating to applicable utility services;
- (b) granting, varying and revoking licences in respect of a utility service;
- (c) enforcing the conditions laid down in an undertaking authorisation;
- (d) regulating tariffs and other charges levied by a licensee in accordance with any rules specified in the relevant Utility legislation; and
- (e) mediating or arbitrating disputes between a customer and a licensee, or between two or more licensees.

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11. Cabinet has taken note of the Key Performance Indicators that Government should implement before for the disbursement of funds under the fourth Trade and Competitiveness Development Policy Loan and has agreed to the submission to Development Partners of the Letter of Development Policy outlining -

- (a) progress in the implementation of the reform programme and policy measures initiated since financial year 2006-2007 with a view to securing transition from reliance on trade preferences to global competitiveness and setting a stage for a robust growth; and
- (b) the Agenda for the future which draws on measures announced in the Additional Stimulus Package and July to December 2009 Budget.

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12. Cabinet has taken note that the SADC Science, Engineering and Technology Week would be held in Mauritius from 19 to 25 October 2009 when the following activities would be organized –

- (a) an Exhibition on developments in the Science and Technology fields;
- (b) a Science and Education Fair; and
- (c) a Forum on the theme "**Harnessing Science and Technology for Socio-economic Development**".

The main objectives of the Science, Engineering and Technology Week are, inter alia, to:

- (a) increase understanding and appreciation of the importance of science, engineering and technology;
- (b) stimulate youngsters in studying science and mathematics; and
- (c) disseminate scientific and technological advances.

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13. Cabinet has taken note of the programme of activities organized by the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Senior Citizens Welfare & Reform Institutions to mark the UN International Day of the Elderly on 1 October 2009, viz. –

- (a) inauguration by the Prime Minister of the "Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam Recreation Centre for Senior Citizens" at Belle Mare.
- (b) launching of an Almanach of Benefits and Services provided to senior citizens, a guide on "Sécurité des Aînés" and an "Album of Centenarians";
- (c) presentation of a sketch entitled "Valeur Grand Dimoune";
- (d) distribution of baskets of foodstuffs to about 500 elderly persons living alone;
- (e) Drama Competition on themes related to elderly persons; and
- (f) Craft Sales Exhibition by senior citizens.

The theme of this year's celebrations is "**Celebrating the 10th Anniversary of the International Year of Older Persons: Towards a Society for all Ages**".

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14. Cabinet has taken note that the 69<sup>th</sup> International Committee Meeting of the Service Civil International would be held at the Recreation Centre for Senior Citizens, Pointe aux Sables from 9 to 13 December 2009. The aim of the Service Civil International is to promote world peace, social justice and sustainable development. About 80 participants from Eastern and Central Europe, Asia and the Pacific Region, as well as from local NGOs, would attend the Meeting.

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15. Cabinet has taken note that the signing ceremony of the Interim Economic Partnership Agreement between the European Commission and the ESA Member States was held on 29 August 2009 in Mauritius.

Mauritius would derive the following benefits from the Agreement -

- (a) duty free and quota free access to EU markets;
- (b) cooperation for the development of Tourism sector, Private sector, Environment, Fisheries and Investment; and
- (c) more flexible Rules of Origin on several products.

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16. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the mission of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade from 3 to 4 September 2009, to New Delhi, India, where he participated in the Ministerial Meeting entitled "Re-Energising Doha – A Commitment to Development". The objectives of the Meeting were to develop a broad-based consensus on how to remove the obstacles on the path of the Doha Development Agenda multilateral trade negotiations and provide a structural roadmap to negotiators to rekindle the stalled multilateral negotiating process at the WTO.

In the margins of the Meeting, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade had a meeting with the Hon Anand Sharma, Minister of Commerce and Industry of India, with whom he raised issues such as sugar, tropical products, fisheries and the problems faced by banana producing countries.

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17. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the mission of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade from 7 to 8 September 2009 to Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo, where he participated in the 29<sup>th</sup> SADC Summit of Heads of State and Government. The Summit discussed the following issues:

- (a) the political situation in the region, namely in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Zimbabwe and Madagascar;
- (b) the implications of the global economic crisis on the region;
- (c) the implementation of the economic integration agenda, in particular the achievement of the SADC Free Trade Area and the Customs Union;
- (d) the Dar-es-Salaam Declaration and Action Plan on Agriculture and Food Security in the context of the rising food prices and global economic crisis; and
- (e) HIV and AIDS.

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18. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the Board of the Nelson Mandela Centre for African Culture Trust Fund with Mrs Danielle Turner as Chairperson.

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