

**CABINET DECISIONS – 06 NOVEMBER 2009**

1. Cabinet has taken note that, following the recent meeting that the Committee chaired by the Minister of Public Infrastructure, Land Transport and Shipping had with Heavy Vehicle Operators in connection with the application of the prohibition measure on the use of certain roads by heavy vehicles in the morning, it has been decided to review, with immediate effect, the scope of the prohibition measure, such that, **it no longer includes the motorway M1 southbound, i.e., from Quay D to Curepipe**. Moreover, Police would ensure a rigorous and strict control over the movement of the heavy vehicles over that stretch of the motorway, particularly during peak hours, to deter and sanction reckless and irresponsible driving, speeding, overloading and non-respect of the proper use of lanes.

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2. In line with the policy of Government to develop Mauritius as a regional knowledge hub, Cabinet has agreed to the introduction into the National Assembly of the Open University of Mauritius Bill which provides for the establishment of the Open University of Mauritius as a focal point and responsible for setting standards for the provision of open and distance learning. The University will, at local level, link up with Governmental and inter-governmental institutions, as well as the private sector, to support an enabling environment for the provision of education and training at certificate, diploma, graduate, post-graduate and research levels. At the international level, it will create partnerships with key institutions worldwide to deliver programmes of open and distance learning. The University would comprise, inter alia, a Confucius Institute and a Language Institute for the promotion of languages.

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3. Following representations received to the effect that importers of second-hand vehicles tamper with mileage and chassis of the vehicles, Cabinet has taken note that the Minister for Consumer Protection and Citizens Charter would, shortly, promulgate regulations to provide for harsher penalties for such offences, including suspension of import licences.

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4. Cabinet has taken note of measures being taken by the Ministry of Women's Rights, Child Development and Family Welfare to sustain empowerment of women entrepreneurs and combat poverty and unemployment, viz., –

- (a) holding of Women Entrepreneurship Development Programmes throughout the country with a view to providing core knowledge on the start-up and management of enterprises;
- (b) organization of the Sectoral Entrepreneurship Development Programme to encourage women entrepreneurs to exploit new businesses in key sectors of the economy;

- (c) reinforcing the Women Business Incubators where women entrepreneurs are offered comprehensive support for a period of one year to grow and sustain their enterprises;
- (d) setting up of sales outlets at and marketing of women's products through the National Women Development Centre; and
- (e) promoting buyer/seller meetings.

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5. Cabinet has taken note of activities organized by the Ministry of Women's Rights, Child Development and Family Welfare to mark the International Day Against Violence Against Women, commemorated on 25 November, viz., –

- (a) the launching of an "Audit Report" on the services provided and the shelters for women and children victims of abuse and domestic violence run by the Ministry;
- (b) launching of -
  - (i) a set of pamphlets on domestic violence;
  - (ii) the "OASIS" Association for survivors of domestic violence;
  - (iii) the Area Domestic Violence Committee;
  - (iv) the "Men as partners" Project;
  - (v) a Zero Tolerance Club;
- (c) holding of an interactive forum on strengthening marriage relationship; and
- (d) the organization of sensitization campaigns to break down the taboo of domestic violence.

The theme chosen by the Centre for Women's Global Leadership for this year is "**Commit – Act – Demand: We CAN End Violence Against Women!**".

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6. Cabinet has taken note that the airfare in respect of Hajj pilgrimage would cost Rs 40,800 instead of Rs 42,900, i.e., a reduction of Rs 2,100. Organisers are invited to pass on the windfall gains to Hajjees.

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7. Cabinet has taken note that the Minister of Public Infrastructure, Land Transport and Shipping would promulgate the Road Traffic (Construction and Use of Vehicles) Regulations with effect from 6 November 2009. The Regulations provide for, inter alia, conditions for the use of gas in lieu of fuel to comply with the required norm, carrying of hazardous substances, new specifications for registration plate, seating arrangements in buses, wear of seat belts on rear seats and penalty for the use of hand-free mobile telephones when driving. A moratorium of up to 2 February 2010 would be given to owners of vehicles,

particularly heavy vehicles, to comply with the requirements, such as the installation of the speed limit device.

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8. Cabinet has taken note that, in line with its strategy to combat communicable diseases, the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life proposes to set up a Comprehensive Disease Surveillance Centre, based on the US Public Health model, with a view to reinforcing surveillance, detection and control of epidemic-prone communicable diseases, like chikungunya, dengue and influenza A(H1N1).

The Strategy on Communicable Diseases, prepared by the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life, aims at –

- (a) ensuring a state of preparedness with trained manpower, protocol, guidelines and Standard Operating Procedures for promptly responding to any outbreak that poses a threat to our national health security;
- (b) planning and coordination of programmes and services, as well as developing policies and guidelines, to prevent or control communicable diseases; and
- (c) improving service planning for communicable diseases through research and development programmes.

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9. Cabinet has taken note that the licences of four discotheques have been suspended for non-compliance with fire and security measures and that the Tourism Authority is regularly monitoring security measures in night clubs and discotheques, as well as hygiene in restaurants.

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10. Cabinet has taken note of activities organized by the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology, in collaboration with the National Computer Board, to mark the Computer Security Day, commemorated on 30 November, viz, –

- (a) organisation of a Workshop on “Data Protection and Business Continuity Management” for the benefit of business executives, senior management and information security professionals and an “ISO 27001 information Security standard” Workshop for Chief Information Officers, Business Continuity Managers and IT Security Auditors of public and private organisations;
- (b) Computer Security Awareness activities during the month of December 2009; and
- (c) campaigns on information security awareness targeting public officers.

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11. Cabinet has taken note that the Cargo Handling Corporation Ltd. would, as from 15 November 2009, implement new tariffs for captive cargo as recommended by Messrs KPMG Advisory Services and Messrs Fisher Associates, UK, while maintaining the competitiveness of Port Louis harbour, and positioning Port Louis as a major hub for transshipment trade in the region. Shorehandling charges have not been revised since 1979, whilst the stevedoring charges were last adjusted in 2000.

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12. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the Board of the Mauritius Research Council with Professor Soodarsun Jugessur as Chairperson.

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