

**CABINET DECISIONS – 23 OCTOBER 2009**

1. Cabinet has taken note of the recommendations of the Committee chaired by the Minister of Public Infrastructure, Land Transport and Shipping on the representations made by Heavy Vehicle Operators following the application of the prohibition measure concerning the use of certain roads in the morning. Taking into consideration the economic implications coupled with the imperatives of road safety and sound traffic management, Cabinet has agreed to:-

- (a) the starting time of the prohibition being brought from 0630 hours to 0700 hours;
- (b) arrangements being made with organisations, such as the State Trading Corporation, the Bagged Sugar Storage Distribution, the Customs Department, the Bulk Sugar Terminal and the Mauritius Container Terminal, to adjust their hours of operation with those of the goods vehicles concerned; and
- (c) tanker lorries conveying petroleum products also operating at night.

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2. Cabinet has taken note of developments in the construction of the SSR International Airport Expansion Project. Construction works are scheduled to start by mid-December 2009 and would last for about 30 months. The project comprises the construction of a new Passenger Terminal with state-of-the-art technology and ancillary facilities, such as new Aircraft Parking Stands, extension to the current car park and the rehabilitation of part of the current Passenger Terminal.

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3. Cabinet has taken note that tourist arrivals for the period January to August 2009 was 548,741 as compared to 608,532 during the same period in 2008. Total revenue for the first eight months of 2009 was Rs 23.1 billion as compared to Rs 28 billion during the same period in 2008.

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4. Cabinet has taken note that, following the bomb blasts on the premises of International Islamic University on 20 October 2009 killing seven people and wounding 30 others, our Mission in Islamabad has confirmed that all Mauritian students in Islamabad are safe. Our Mission is closely following the situation prevailing in Pakistan and reporting regularly on developments to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade. A crisis cell has been set up at the Ministry to address all issues arising thereat.

Cabinet has further taken note that, this morning, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, who had a meeting with the parents of the students, has reassured them of the continued support of Government. Moreover, arrangements have been made for the extension of all facilities to the students who propose to return to Mauritius.

Given the situation in Pakistan, Government reiterates its advice to Mauritians not to proceed to Pakistan for higher studies or on visits.

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5. Cabinet has taken note that, in furtherance of the bilateral relationship between Mauritius and the People's Republic of China, HE Mr Cai Wu, Minister of Culture of the People's Republic of China, would visit Mauritius from 26 to 29 October 2009, during which he would sign an Executive Programme for the years 2010-2012, under the Cultural Agreement between Mauritius and the People's Republic of China. The Programme covers the following sectors -

- (a) Arts and Culture;
- (b) Libraries, Museums and Archives;
- (c) Cultural heritage; and
- (d) Cinema.

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6. Cabinet has taken note of the Long Term Energy Strategy and Action Plan 2009-2025 which would be submitted to the European Commission as one of the pre-conditions for the disbursement of the fixed tranche under the Accompanying Measures in the context of the on-going reform in the sugar sector. The Energy Strategy and Action Plan, a blue print for the development of the energy sector up to 2025, lays emphasis on security of energy supply through the development of renewable energy and reduction of our dependence on imported fossil fuel and focuses on energy efficiency measures in line with Government's vision to promote sustainable development, particularly in the context of the "Maurice Ile Durable" project.

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7. Cabinet has taken note of the activities that the Nelson Mandela Centre for African Culture, in collaboration with the Le Morne Heritage Trust Fund, proposes to organize on the occasion of the "*Journée Internationale Créole*" commemorated on 28 October 2009, viz.-

- (a) an exhibition of photographs from 28 to 31 October 2009 on the theme "**Kontribution kominote kreol dan constricksion nous pei**"; and
- (b) a cultural show with the participation of local artists at Caudan Waterfront, Port Louis on 28 October 2009.

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8. Cabinet has taken note of the programme of activities to be organized by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Human Resources, jointly with the Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund, to commemorate the 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Arrival of Indentured Labourers on 2 November 2009, viz., -

- (a) wreath-laying and speeches by eminent personalities;
- (b) multi-faith prayer;
- (c) launching of a “*Bande Dessinée*” and a Special Commemorative Cover; and
- (d) cultural items comprising a drama/"Tableaux Vivants" on the story of “Raja à L’Aapravasi Ghat” written by Miss Brinda Annasawmy, a traditional Bhojpuri song by a local artist and a performance by the cultural group led by Mr Manoj Tiwari, famous bhojpuri singer from Bihar and TV presenter.

Cabinet has further taken note that an eminent personality from India would be the Chief Guest on the occasion.

Cabinet has also taken note that the Hindi Speaking Union, the Mahatma Gandhi Institute, and the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund would organize various activities to mark the occasion.

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9. Cabinet has taken note of the final version of the Education and Human Resources Strategy Plan up to 2020, which incorporates the suggestions and comments of all stakeholders, as well as the general public. The Plan underpins access, quality, relevance and equity in the educational system, emphasizes on new modes of teaching and learning using the state-of-the-art technology, and creates an enabling environment to bridge the digital divide across the educational system.

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10. Cabinet has taken note of the school calendar for primary and secondary schools for academic year 2010, viz., -

	<u>Primary</u>	<u>Secondary</u>
1st Term	Monday 11 January to Friday 02 April (Admission of new entrants to Std I scheduled for Friday 08 January)	Monday 11 January to Friday 02 April (Admission of new entrants to Form I scheduled for Friday 08 January)

2nd Term	Monday 19 April to Friday 16 July	Monday 19 April to Friday 16 July
3rd Term	Monday 16 August to Thursday 04 November	Monday 09 August to Friday 29 October

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11. Cabinet has taken note of the draft Recurrent and Capital Estimates of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly for financial period 01 January to 31 December 2010. The proposed expenditure of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly is Rs1,635 million, i.e., Recurrent Rs 1,183m and Capital Rs 452m.

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12. Cabinet has taken note that the International Association of Cancer Registries, founded in 1966, would hold its 33rd Annual Meeting in Mauritius in 2011. Cancer Registries play an important role in conducting research into the causes of cancer by providing data on patterns and trends in different types of epidemiological studies, planning and monitoring of cancer control strategies and identifying priorities in public health. About 200 foreign participants, comprising Oncologists, Radiotherapists, Pathologists and public health professionals involved in cancer registration would attend the Meeting.

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13. Cabinet has agreed to Mauritius signing the “*Convention d’Entraide Judiciaire et d’Extradition contre le Terrorisme*”, which provides, *inter alia*, a legal framework to African French-Speaking States on the extradition issue regarding terrorism and sets up an annual auto-evaluation process.

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14. Cabinet has agreed to the introduction into the National Assembly of The Trade (Anti-Dumping and Countervailing Measures) Bill which aims at protecting the domestic industry against the negative effects of dumped and subsidized imports. The Bill provides, *inter alia*, for -

- (a) procedures for the initiation and conduct of anti-dumping investigations and the determination of the link between dumping and material injury to the domestic industry; and
- (b) procedures for investigating into subsidization of products determination of link between subsidization and material injury to the domestic industry.

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15. Cabinet has taken note that the second round of negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement with Turkey would be held in November 2009. Mauritius proposes to seek duty-free access on products, such as fabrics, cut flowers, prepared and preserved fish, pasta, jewellery and sugar.

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16. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the bilateral air services talks with the Aeronautical Authorities of The Netherlands held on 13 and 14 October 2009 and the signature of a Memorandum of Understanding providing for, *inter alia*, -

- (a) the principle of single designation for each Party;
- (b) designated airline of each Contracting Party to be allowed to operate seven weekly frequencies with passenger/combination aircraft and seven weekly frequencies with all cargo aircraft on the specified agreed route schedule in any combination and in any order, without restrictions on the aircraft type and configuration; and
- (c) designated airline of each Party to exercise fifth freedom traffic rights on designated routes.

With the new Agreement, Air Mauritius would take advantage of its code-sharing arrangements with Air France to market seats to points in The Netherlands.

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17. Cabinet has taken note that the Minister of Agro Industry, Food Production and Security would promulgate the Fisheries and Marine Resources (Export of Fish and Fish Products) Regulations 2009 to align our legislation with EU Standards and to cater for records of establishments, approval of establishments according to manuals, approval, suspension or revocation of registration licence of companies, conditions for suspension, appointment of authorized officers, powers of authorized officers, search warrant, compliance notice, forgery, obstruction and new fees structure.

Cabinet has further taken note that the Inspectors of the Food and Veterinary Office of the European Commission would be on mission in Mauritius from 17 to 26 November 2009 to evaluate the control system in place, particularly the implementation of regulations governing the production of fish and fish products intended for export to the EU.

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18. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Agro Industry, Food Production and Security and the Federal Service for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance of the Russian Federation would sign a Memorandum of Understanding on the export of fish, fishery and aquaculture products to the Russian Federation.

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19. Cabinet has taken note that, following the setting up of the Competition Commission in October 2008 and the publication of the Guidelines and Procedural Rules on which anti-competitive cases would be determined, Parts III to IX of the Competition Act 2007 would be proclaimed with effect from 25 November 2009.

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20. Cabinet has taken note that Mauritius has adhered to the International Multilateral Partnership Against Cyber-Threats, the world's first comprehensive partnership against cyber-threats, which would provide -

- (a) real time aggregated early warning system for cyber-threats and critical guidance on measures to be taken;
- (b) access to policy research on cyber-threat-related issues, including cybercrime, cyber-law and child online protection;
- (c) advisory services on policy and regulatory matters relating to cyber-security;
- (d) assistance for training and skills development in cyber-security; and
- (e) assistance to conduct independent ICT security audits on government agencies and critical infrastructure companies.

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21. Cabinet has taken note that the University of Mauritius, in collaboration with the University of Staffordshire, UK, and the University of Technology Jamaica, would organize a two-day International Conference on Forensic Science in Mauritius on 25 and 26 November 2009. The aim of the Conference is to develop education, skills and capacity in forensic awareness and forensic science, particularly in the Southern African Development Community. About 60 participants, local and international, would participate in the Conference.

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22. Cabinet has taken note that the South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Project Regional Cruise Data Analysis Workshop would be held in Mauritius from 2 to 13 November 2009. The Project, spearheaded by the World Bank, aims at collective assessment and sustainable use of the region's common key fisheries resources of the region according to ecosystem approach. The Workshop would enable the establishment of a regional data management system to collect and store information needed to ensure management of regional fisheries.

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23. Cabinet has taken note that, in view of the importance of capacity building in the field of international trade, the “Organisation Mondiale de la Francophonie” and the World Trade Organisation would, jointly, hold a regional workshop on trade-related issues in Mauritius from 11 to 14 November 2009 for the benefit of about 25 officials, involved in multilateral trade negotiations, from the public and private sectors of Mauritius, Comoros, Madagascar, Seychelles and Djibouti.

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24. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the Seventh Meeting of the Project Steering Committee of the Southern African Development Community-Hydrological Cycle Observing System (SADC/HYCOS) Phase II held in Mauritius on 06 and 07 October 2009. The project, which is being implemented by SADC under its Regional Strategic Action Plan on Integrated Water Resources Management, aims at enhancing hydro-meteorological monitoring development and operation of an integrated regional water resources database and website, capacity building within the region and the development of hydrological products. The objectives of the Meeting were to review progress achieved so far and to discuss the implementation of Phase III of the Project under which Mauritius and the SADC countries would receive support for –

- (a) further capacity building to provide for the continuity of the SADC-HYCOS project;
- (b) development of tools and products for integrated water resources management; and
- (c) sharing of hydrological data and experiences in the SADC region.

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25. Cabinet has taken note of the performance of the ‘Export Oriented Enterprises’ Sector for the period January to September 2009 as compared to the same period in 2008, viz. –

- (a) total exports have picked up to reach Rs 26,477 million, i.e., an increase of 3.1%;
- (b) exports in Textile and Clothing Sector increased from Rs 17,013 million to Rs 17,446 million, i.e., an increase of 2.5%;
- (c) in the non-textile sector, the value of exports of fish and fish preparations registered an increase of 17.1%; and
- (d) the value of exports of Optical Goods increased by 42.5%.

Cabinet has further taken note that the United Kingdom, France and USA still remain the main export markets.

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26. Cabinet has taken note that the Minister of Social Security, National Solidarity and Senior Citizens Welfare & Reform Institutions would promulgate the National Pensions (Increase in Pension) Regulations 2009, the National Pensions (Pension Points) Regulations 2009, the National Pensions (Industrial Injuries) Regulations 2009 and the National Pensions (Amendment to Schedule) Regulations 2009 which provide for the annual increase in Contributory Pensions, Disabled Pension and Survivor's Pension to prevent erosion of the purchasing power of the pensioners.

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27. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the mission of the Minister of Industry, Science and Research to South Africa from 21 to 23 September 2009 at the head of a delegation of 27 enterprises operating in sectors, such as textile and clothing, printing and publishing, agro-industry, chemicals and construction, to participate in the Buyers Sellers Meeting organised by Enterprise Mauritius in Cape Town, South Africa. The aim of the Meeting was to reposition Mauritius in the South African market. About 500 buyers attended the Meeting, and –

- (a) three companies obtained confirmed orders worth about Rs 2m for immediate shipment;
- (b) two South African businessmen are currently visiting Mauritius to explore the possibility of establishing joint-ventures in the Printing and ICT Sectors; and
- (c) more than 600 business contacts were established by the participants.

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28. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the mission of the Minister of Women's Rights, Child Development and Family Welfare to Egypt on 13 and 14 October 2009 where she participated in the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation - Women's Forum, which had as theme "**China-Africa Women in Partnership for Facing Challenges & Striving for Common Development**", and aimed at -

- (a) consolidating and enhancing friendly relations between women of China and those of Africa; and
- (b) strengthening cooperation in gender equality and women's advancement in line with its Action Plan.

The Forum concluded with the adoption of a "**Declaration of Women's Forum of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation**".

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29. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the mission of the Minister of Education, Culture and Human Resources to France from 4 to 10 October 2009, where he participated in -

- (a) the 7<sup>th</sup> Session of the Assembly of Ministers of the Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ), a key driver of educational policy reforms; and
- (b) the 35<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

The Minister had –

- (a) a meeting with Mr René Couanau, Mayor of St. Malo, in connection with the Commemoration of the Bicentenary of the Naval Battle of Grand Port in 2010; and
- (b) a working session at the University of Bordeaux to explore further collaboration in the field of Higher Education, especially medical studies.

In the margins of the General Conference of UNESCO, the Minister of Education, Culture and Human Resources had bilateral meetings in the field of Education with -

- (a) the Hon Jean Olsen Julien, Minister of Culture and Communication of Haïti;
- (b) Mr R. P. Agarwal, Indian Secretary for Higher Education; and
- (c) Mr Alain Madelin, former French Finance Minister.

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30. Cabinet has taken note that Infotech 2009 organised by the National Computer Board would be launched on 17 November 2009 at the Swami Vivekananda International Convention Centre. The main objectives of the event are to provide information on developments and achievements in the ICT sector in Mauritius and the region and create awareness on energizing technologies.

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31. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of –

- (a) the Board of the Central Water Authority with Professor Anwar Hussein Subratty as Chairperson; and
- (b) the Board of Residential Care Homes with the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Senior Citizens Welfare & Reform Institutions as Chairperson.

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