

CABINET DECISIONS – 23 AUGUST 2013

1. Cabinet has agreed to the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security, in collaboration with the Agricultural Research and Extension Unit (AREU), implementing the Field Operations, Regrouping and Irrigation Project (FORIP) Scheme for non-sugar cane planters, i.e., fruit, flower and vegetable growers, in line with Budget Speech 2013. Currently, FORIP is being implemented in the Sugar Cane Sector to support small sugar cane planters to mitigate the effects of price cut in the sugar industry. Regrouped planters would, amongst others, benefit from funding for land preparation and other agricultural infrastructure works, such as irrigation networks, construction of access tracks, and construction of drains. Beneficiaries would be eligible to a grant of 80% of the total cost of land preparation works, up to a maximum of Rs40,000 per arpent, in case land preparation operations include fine derocking. Only regrouped planters would benefit from the Scheme.

2. Cabinet has taken note that, for the period January to July 2013 as compared to the corresponding period in 2012, the value of exports of the Export-Oriented Enterprises Sector has increased from Rs26.48 billion to Rs27.36 billion, i.e., by 3.3%. Increase has been recorded in the value of exports of yarns and fabrics (+19.1%), shirts (+10.0%), fish and fish preparations (+11.0%), jewellery and precious and semi-precious stones (+14.1%) and medical devices (+5.6%).

3. Cabinet has taken note that 30 students, including one international student from Bangladesh, have been enrolled for the Medical Undergraduate programme being run at the University of Mauritius, in collaboration with the University of Geneva. The clinical training would be done at Dr A.G. Jeetoo Hospital. The University of Geneva would provide advice and academic support for curriculum development, training of academic and clinical coordinators who would supervise the clinical training.

4. Cabinet has taken note that, in line with the objective of Government to consolidate Mauritius as a knowledge hub, and with a view to assisting students, ACCA Mauritius has decided to offer a waiver on the registration and the first annual subscription fees, amounting to a total of GBP 158, to all students who wish to embark on ACCA training. Mauritius has the highest density of ACCA members and students per head of population in the world and is, therefore, well poised to further strengthen its Accountancy and Financial Sector. In 2011, one Mauritian student won the World Prize in Advanced Audit and Assurance.

5. Cabinet has agreed to the Pay Research Bureau being appointed to act as Salary Commission to review the salaries and conditions of service of employees of the ex-Mauritius Sugar Industry Research Institute and the ex-Mauritius Sugar Authority opting to join the PRB, as well as for those opting to maintain their present conditions of service.

6. Cabinet has taken note of developments in the preparation of the Third National Communication on climate change for Mauritius. The main objectives of the National Communication, also known as the National Report on Climate Change, are to –

- (a) provide the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change with relevant information on climate change actions to assess compliance of Parties with international obligations and decisions;
- (b) guide policy makers in the planning of climate change related actions;
- (c) serve as policy guidance to international funding agencies, such as the Global Environment Facility, the Green Climate Fund and the Adaptation Fund Board, for the timely provision of financial support; and
- (d) share information on climate change by Parties in a consistent, transparent and comparable manner taking into account national specificities.

7. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Arts and Culture and the African World Heritage Fund would organise a Risk Preparedness Workshop from 2 to 27 September 2013. The aims of the Workshop are to increase knowledge and skills in conservation, and enhance networking among heritage practitioners and communities in order to deal with on-site challenges at World Heritage properties.

8. Cabinet has taken note that the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, in collaboration with the Ministry of Fisheries, would hold a Regional Workshop on Seafood Safety and Aquaculture Management in Mauritius. The main objective of the Workshop is to showcase the Mauritius Competent Authority Seafood as a concrete example in its endeavour to meet and adapt to the requirements of international markets for aquaculture produce. Participants from Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Norway, Reunion Island, the Seychelles, South Africa and Tanzania, would attend the Workshop.

9. Cabinet has taken note that, subsequent to the establishment of the National Agricultural Products Regulatory Office, the employees of the former Tea Board would be redeployed in the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security and parastatal bodies falling under the purview of that Ministry. The employees would be allowed to opt to carry forward their privileges and benefits, such as vacation leave, passage benefits and sick leave, or be paid certain benefits. The length of service of an employee who is being redeployed would be considered as continuous service, and their pension benefits would be paid by the Tea Board Pension Fund, which would continue to operate as a closed Fund.

10. Cabinet has taken note that, with a view to protecting local food crop production, the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security would amend the First and Second Schedules to the Mauritius Agricultural Marketing (Controlled Products) Regulations to control the following products -

Fresh Whole Garlic
Garlic Seeds
Dry Whole Onions
Onion Seeds
Fresh Whole Potatoes
Potato Seeds

11. Cabinet has agreed to Mauritius adhering to the Charter for African Cultural Renaissance, with certain reservations. The Charter aims at preserving and promoting tangible and intangible cultural heritage, namely languages, history, culture, arts, handicrafts, traditional knowledge and know-how for humanity with a view to strengthening the role of culture in promoting peace and good governance and developing values of the African Cultural heritage.

12. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of -

- (a) the Board of the Mauritius Museums Council with Mr Hassam Gorah Beebeejaun, CSK, as Chairperson; and
- (b) the Advisory Council for Occupational Safety and Health with the Director, Occupational Safety and Health, Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment as Chairperson.
