

CABINET DECISIONS – 13 JUNE 2014

1. Cabinet has taken note of the difficulties being encountered by applicants of the Slab Roof Grant Schemes following the implementation of new procedures as from July 2013. Following a proposal of the Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Development, Cabinet has agreed that, henceforth, all applications for grant under the Schemes should be made at the Citizens Advice Bureaux and would be assessed by the NHDC based on the income of the applicant and his or her spouse/partner only, as used to be the case previously. This procedure would allow early assessment of cases and quick defrayment of the grant.

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2. Cabinet has taken note of developments in the setting up of a Driver Education and Testing Centre. The Centre would, amongst others, provide formal training programmes designed to help drivers and riders develop respectful and responsible attitudes and improve driving competency, and carry out the testing for the issue of driving licences. The Centre would comprise a road circuit with the usual traffic features, a special circuit for wet weather braking exercises for motorcycle riders, a purpose built area to conduct training, and a track for racing. Works are expected to start in May 2015.

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3. Cabinet has taken note that the Project Plan Committee has recommended eight projects to the tune of Rs1.35 billion for inclusion in the Public Sector Investment Programme. The projects include the construction of the Mauritius Police Academy, a swimming pool at Camp Garreau, Flacq, and housing units, with associated infrastructure, at Cottage, Baie du Tombeau, Glen Park, Chebel, Pointe aux Sables, and Khoyratty.

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4. Cabinet has taken note that the UNDP has recognized the Mangrove Plantation Project at Quatre Soeurs and Grand Sables as an excellent example of climate change adaptation that advances conservation and utilizes innovative solutions to develop economic opportunities to empower communities. The Projects have won the Island Bright Spot Award as part of the Global Island Partnership 2013 Solution Search. In view of the positive effect of the project, the United Nations, through the UNDP, has showcased the project at the UN Headquarters in New York in the context of celebrations of the World Environment Day on 5 June 2014. The storyline of the project has also been posted on the website of the UNDP.

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5. Cabinet has taken note that, with the coming into operation of the Terre Rouge-Verdun Road, the Verdun-Trianon Link Road, the Bagatelle-Valentina Link Road, and the widened Motorway M1, there is a remarkable improvement in traffic fluidity. The Ministry of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping has, subsequently, reviewed the scope of the Road Decongestion Programme and decided to proceed, on a priority basis, with the construction of the Ring Road Lot 2 (including the tunnel), the A1-M1 Link Road and Bridge, and the grade separation of the Dowlut, Phoenix and Jumbo roundabouts. Moreover, with the prospect of an imminent implementation of the Mauritius Light Rapid Transit Project as an alternative mode of transport, the network would only need to be extended by the projects to ensure a more significant, long term and durable improvement in traffic fluidity in the Curepipe-Port Louis conurbations.

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6. Cabinet has taken note that a proposal would be made for the inclusion of an item – **“Indenture labour Route Project”** on the Agenda of the 195<sup>th</sup> Session of the Executive Board of UNESCO scheduled for October 2014. The Indenture Labour Route Project will complement the Slave Route Project, which is already being implemented by UNESCO. Both the slaves and the indentured labourers relate to the movement of a mass of people based on inter-cultural exchanges across the continents.

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7. Cabinet has taken note of the Report of a Study on the Employment Service of the Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment, carried out by Consultants from “Pole Emploi, Reunion” and of the measures being taken to enhance the services offered by the Department. The main recommendations in the Report are, amongst others, -

- (a) the setting up of mechanisms for the effective diagnostic and follow up on jobseekers from the time of registration up to their placement;
- (b) the adoption of an aggressive approach towards employers for using the services of the Employment Information Centres for recruitment of jobseekers; and
- (c) the implementation of an integrated and centralized “one stop-shop” on information pertaining to the labour market, training, placement, support agencies and facilities to jobseekers.

In order to further enhance the Employment Service, a dedicated website, - www.mauritiusjobs.mu - would be launched on 18 June 2014 to provide an interactive platform to jobseekers and employers. The website would enable the posting of vacancies arising in different sectors of the economy directly by employers, as well as vacancies in the public sector. The website would also provide information on employability, skills, CV writing and related issues.

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8. Cabinet has taken note that Mr Coomaravel Pyaneandee, Barrister-at-Law and Chairperson of the Loïs Lagesse Trust Fund has been elected to serve on the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities for a four-year term, i.e., from January 2015 to December 2018.

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9. Cabinet has agreed to the ratification of the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155) of the International Labour Organisation. The Convention, amongst others, -

- (a) calls for the formulation and implementation of a coherent national policy aimed at preventing accidents and injury to health with a view to minimizing, as far as is reasonably practicable, the causes of hazards inherent in the working environment;
- (b) imposes on employers the obligation to ensure that workplaces, equipment and processes under their control are safe and without risk to health; and
- (c) empowers workers to report situations which present imminent hazards at workplaces.

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10. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment and the International Organisation for Migration would sign a Memorandum of Understanding outlining the basis for cooperation towards the implementation of programmes that contribute to the management of labour migration of Mauritian citizens and of foreign workers coming to Mauritius. The International Organisation for Migration, an organisation committed to humane and orderly migration, as well as respect of human rights and well-being of migrants, would, amongst others, -

- (a) provide technical support to the Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment in the development and implementation of labour migration projects;
- (b) carry out market assessments and promotion missions to identify employment, placement and training opportunities in targeted countries in need of foreign labour; and
- (c) provide technical support in fostering bilateral, regional and international dialogue and agreements on labour migration.

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11. Cabinet has taken note of the organization, in August 2014, of the Model African Union Summit with the participation of students of tertiary educational institutions. The objectives of the Model Summit are, amongst others, to increase awareness of the role, organization and performance of the African Union, and its various organs; and understand the system of deliberation in the African Union, the implementation of resolutions and the linkages of the African Union with other international bilateral and multilateral agencies.

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12. Cabinet has taken note that sections 18 to 25 of the Construction Industry Development Board Act 2008 would be proclaimed, and the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping would make the Construction Industry Development Board (Registration of Consultants and Contractors) Regulations to regulate the registration of consultants and contractors. Provision is also being made for the provisional registration of foreign consultants and contractors prior to bidding for projects, and for the subsequent temporary registration following the award of a contract. The registration of consultants and contractors would allow for the continuous monitoring of the performance of those operating in the construction industry, and the sanctioning of those who do not perform to the required standards.

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13. Cabinet has agreed to the establishment of diplomatic relations with Kazakhstan, the largest country in Central Asia with a population of nearly 17 million people. Kazakhstan is a member of various international organisations, including the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Eurasian Economic Community, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the Organisation of the Islamic Conference, and has observer status at the World Trade Organisation. The establishment of diplomatic relations with Kazakhstan would help shape a more structured framework for developing trade and economic relations.

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14. Cabinet has taken note that, in the context of the World Hydrography Day commemorated on 21 June 2014, the Ministry of Housing and Lands would organise an open day at the Caudan Waterfront for an offshore capability demonstration of the Inshore Survey Vessel "Pathfinder". Since 2006, 26 Hydrographic surveys have been conducted in our waters; charts of Agalega, Port Louis and approaches to Port Louis, Cargados Carajos shoals, Port Mathurin Harbour, Grand Baie and Grande Rivière Noire have been produced and are on sale at the Ministry of Housing and Lands.

The theme for this year is "**Hydrography – much more than just nautical charts**".

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15. Cabinet has taken note of the activities that would be organized to mark the 27th International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking observed on 26 June, namely -

- (a) a commemorative activity at the Adolphe de Plevitz State Secondary School, Grand Baie;
- (b) a march by 400 students of public and private secondary schools of Grand Baie;
- (c) an exhibition by ADSU;
- (d) a demonstration on control of drugs by MRA Customs; and
- (e) sensitization campaigns on drug abuse.

The theme chosen by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to mark the event is "**A message of hope: Drug Use Disorders are preventable and treatable**".

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16. Cabinet has taken note of the activities that would be organized to mark the United Nations Public Service Day and the Africa Public Service Day, commemorated on 23 June, namely -

- (a) a blood donation at the Esplanade of the Emmanuel Anquetil Building; and
- (b) an essay writing competition on the theme "**The African Charter on Values and Principles of Public Service and Administration contributes to the enhancement of Governance in the Open Government Era. Discuss in the Context of Mauritian Public Service**".

The theme chosen by the United Nations to mark the UN Public Service Day is "**Innovating Governance for Sustainable Development and Wellbeing of the People**". The African Union Commission has chosen the theme "**African Charter on Values and Principles of Public Service and Administration: A Tool for Enhancing Governance in the Open Government Era**" to mark the Africa Public Service Day.

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17. Cabinet has taken note of the main findings of a survey carried out by the Humane Society International, in collaboration with the Mauritius Society for Animal Welfare, the Protection of Animal Welfare Society and the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security, to determine the number of stray dogs and owned dogs in Mauritius. The survey indicates that –

- (a) there are approximately 60,000 street dogs, i.e., one street dog for every 20 human residents;
- (b) a large number of the street dogs is owned;
- (c) the estimated number of owned dogs is 246,000;
- (d) 56% of the surveyed household claimed to have one dog or more;
- (e) sterilization rate of owned dogs/street dogs is approximately 30%, that is, well below the sterilization rate of 65-70% necessary to reduce reproductive capacity below the replacement level; and
- (f) many mauritians believe that sterilization is not necessary.

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18. Cabinet has taken note that a delegation from Uganda led by Hon Dr Cos Kamanda Bataringaya, Minister of State for Basic Education, would visit Mauritius from 17 to 21 June 2014. The aim of the visit is to explore the best practices in Early Childhood Development (ECD) currently being implemented, namely, ECD policies and policy guidelines, issues inherent to the sector, funding options, public/private partnerships and the role of Parliament in supporting Pre-Primary Education.

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19. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade to Algeria where he participated in the XVII Ministerial Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement. The theme of the Conference was **Enhanced Solidarity for Peace and Prosperity**. The Conference deliberated on economic and political matters on the international scene. In his statement at the Plenary Session, the Minister raised the issue of the Chagos Archipelago and once again rallied the Movement's continued support in favour of the struggle for the exercise of our sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago, including Diego Garcia. The Conference unanimously supported the démarche of Mauritius and this is reflected in paragraphs 307, 308, 309 of the Final Document. In the margins of the Conference, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade had bilateral meetings with the Head of Delegation of Spain, Venezuela, Kazakhstan, Burundi and India.

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20. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Housing and Lands to Singapore where he participated in the World Cities Summit 2014. The Summit offers a platform for networking, exploring synergies and sharing best practices and solutions for urbanization challenges. The theme of the Summit was "**Liveable and Sustainable Cities: Common Challenges, Shared Solutions**".

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21. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment to Geneva where he participated in the 103rd Session of the International Labour Conference. The Conference discussed, amongst others, -

- (a) Supplementing the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29) to address implementation gaps to advance prevention, protection and compensation measures;
- (b) Facilitating transitions from the informal to the formal economy; and
- (c) The strategic objective of employment.

In the margins of the Conference, the Minister of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment had a meeting with –

- (a) Mrs C. Dumia-Henry, Director of Standards of the ILO, to review labour issues relating to Mauritius;
- (b) the delegation of the Republic of Turkey to discuss avenues of cooperation to facilitate recruitment of Mauritian nationals in the medical, educational and hospitality sector;
- (c) the Director General of the International Organisation for Migration with whom he reviewed the progress made in the area of circular migration; and
- (d) the Minister of Labour and Social Security of the State of Qatar with whom he reviewed progress relating to the agreement signed in February last on regulation of employment of Mauritians in Qatar. It has also been agreed that a team of Labour and Occupational Health and Safety experts from Mauritius would carry out a consultancy on labour administration and occupational health and safety in Qatar to help the Government improve its administration.

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22. Cabinet has taken note of the appointment of:

- (a) Dr Satyabhooshan Gupt Domah, former Puisne Judge, as Chairperson of the Financial Reporting Council; and
- (b) Dr Gowreeshankursing Rajpati as Chairperson of the Sugar Insurance Fund Board.

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23. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of -

- (a) the Board of the Information and Communication Technologies Authority under the Chairmanship of Dr Vimalen Reddi; and
- (b) the Board of the Tertiary Education Commission under the Chairmanship of Mr Eric Ng Ping Cheun.

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