

CABINET DECISIONS – 9 MAY 2014

1. Cabinet has agreed to the transfer of the 31 Supply Teachers, serving in the Pre-Vocational stream of State Secondary Schools since 2004, on the permanent and pensionable establishment of the Ministry of Education and Human Resources.

2. Cabinet has taken note that Mr Keshav Beeharry has been nominated to participate in the 5th Lindau Meeting of the Winners of Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences Meeting to be held in Lindau in August 2014. The Meeting would provide an open exchange of economic expertise and inspire cross-cultural and inter-generational encounters amongst economists from all over the world. Mr Beeharry ranked 5th in Economics at national level in 2009 for the Higher School Certificate and holds a First Class Honours Degree in Economics and Finance at the University of Mauritius. He has been awarded a scholarship by the University of Mauritius and the African Economics Research Council to pursue his postgraduate studies in Collaborative Master's Program in Economics.

3. Cabinet has taken note that the Pamplemousses Campus of the Université des Mascareignes would be named as “the Université des Mascareignes, Swami Dayanand Campus”, that is, as the Institute was known before its integration with the Université des Mascareignes.

4. Cabinet has taken note that, in the context of the implementation of climate change adaptation projects under the Adaptation Fund Board Programme on Climate Change, the Grand Sable Fishermen Association implemented the mangrove plantation project with a view to establishing a natural coastal defence against storm surge in the region of Grand Sables and Quatre Soeurs. The project started in March 2013 and the plants which have been maintained with a survival rate of about 90%, have now reached an average height of 50 centimetres. Given the success of this project, the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, in collaboration with the Ministry of Fisheries, and the support of the Grand Sable Women Planters Farmers Entrepreneurs Association proposes to replicate the plantation of mangroves project. The project would involve -

- (a) sensitisation of the local community on mangrove plantation and its benefits;
- (b) plantation of vetiver as a flood-mitigating crop along slopes to prevent lagoon siltation by mud and sediments carried away during flash floods; and
- (c) cultivation of seaweed and medicinal plants to develop new products such as soaps, pickles, herbal teas and essential oils.

The Association, which participated in the Global Island Partnership 2013 Solution Search Award, was recognised as a best practice partnership by the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development. The Association has won the first prize, known as the Island Bright Spot Award, for its project at Grand Sables.

5. Cabinet has taken note of the initiatives taken by the Ministry of Business, Enterprise and Cooperatives and the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA) to redynamise the Handicraft Sector, namely, implementation of the “Made in Mauritius, Made with Care Label” project, the control of imports of destination products, setting up of a Creative Workshop Incubator and the upgrading of the skills of local craftsmen. The Ministry is also organising a series of workshops on surface painting techniques covering, among others, glass painting, silk painting, 3D outliner, fabric glue techniques, “decoupage” and pottery work.

6. Cabinet has taken note that the 8th International Electoral Affairs Symposium, organized by the International Centre for Parliamentary Studies, would be held in Mauritius in June 2014. The title of the Symposium is “*Building Confidence and Trust in the Electoral Process*”. The Symposium would address key issues, like stakeholders engagement, voter turnout, electoral justice, transparency and integrity of elections, as well as the introduction of voting technologies. The International Centre for Parliamentary Studies, a research institution of the United Nations Public Administration Network, aims at promoting effective policy making and good governance through better interaction among Parliaments, Governments and other stakeholders.

7. Cabinet has taken note of the List of Indicative Priority Fields of Study 2014 – 2015 that acts as a guide to prospective higher education students in their choice of fields of study and a reference document for the award of scholarships, as well as the introduction of new programmes and capacity building at tertiary level. The List contains studies at undergraduate level on Creative Arts, Design and Technology, Entrepreneurial Management, Bio-informatics, Marine Science, Geomatics, Network Engineering, IT with Forensic, Cyber Law and Cybercrime, and at postgraduate level on Fisheries Economics, Quality Management, Anaesthesia, Dermatology, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, amongst others.

8. Cabinet has taken note of development in the preparation of a new regulatory framework for market regulation of information and communication services to meet new challenges, such as dealing with convergence, encouraging innovatory pricing and ensuring sustainable competition through the promotion of a level playing field. The new framework would rest upon the formulation and implementation of three priority guidelines, namely, market definition, Significant Market Power identification, and obligations to be imposed on Significant Market Power operators.

9. Cabinet has taken note of the status of the project for the improvement in sea and air transportation facilities in Agalega, which comprises the construction of the jetty and the runway on a Government-to-Government basis with the collaboration of the Government of India.

10. Cabinet has taken note that 88,404 tourists visited Mauritius in April 2014 as compared to 76,223 in April 2013, i.e., an increase of 16.0%. France, Germany, the United Kingdom, South Africa and Reunion Island remain the five tourist-generating markets, accounting for 62% of tourist arrivals for April 2014.

11. Cabinet has taken note that the Association of Medical Councils of Africa, formerly known as Association of Medical Councils of Southern Africa, Pretoria, would hold its 18th Annual Conference in Mauritius in July 2014. The mission of the Association is to establish mechanisms for standardization and harmonization of education, training, professional conduct, management process and information exchange to protect the public and guide the medical and the dental professions.

12. Cabinet has taken note that Pangaea Global AIDS Foundation proposes to include Mauritius on the list of potential candidates for case study development as best practice for HIV service delivery in respect of the Methadone Substitution Therapy Programme. The Pangaea Global AIDS Foundation, an international non-profit organization, works for improving the lives of people living with and most at risk for HIV to ensure equitable access to prevention, testing, treatment and care. The objective of the exercise is to highlight programmes that have shown high levels of uptake and retention in HIV treatment and services.

13. Cabinet has taken note that, as part of the World Health Organisation country project on "Reporting Systems for Disease Vector Control under the Stockholm Convention", the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life would –

- (a) produce a pamphlet on the safe and judicious use of common pesticides in the domestic environment and mandatory precautions to be taken during and after the use of pesticides; and
- (b) distribute an apron with messages relating to pesticides residues in vegetables to housewives during regional workshops to be conducted by the Ministry.

14. Cabinet has taken note of the first report of the Observatory on Ageing, which aims at carrying out scientific policy-oriented research in various aspects of ageing. The priority research areas identified were:

- (a) leisure and recreational needs of the elderly;
- (b) housing and living conditions of the elderly;
- (c) Dementia and Alzheimer's Disease in subsidized Care Homes; and
- (d) elderly abuse.

The recommendations contained in the Report are, amongst others, -

- (a) a more targeted approach to improve the participation rate in the leisure and recreational activities organised by the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions;
- (b) training of health and paramedical professionals in Dementia and Alzheimer's Disease care;
- (c) construction of villages for the elderly with independent housing units for mobile elderly persons, and amenities, such as post office, bank, shops, market, easy access to transport facilities, and 24-hour facility to cater for emergencies; and
- (d) amendment of the legislation to cater for elderly abuse in both the domestic and institutional settings.

15. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping would appoint an Independent Expert to assess the adequacy of remedial measures proposed by the Contractor in respect of the section of the Ring Road that has collapsed. Following the partial collapse of the Road, the responsibility of the Contractor has been established by the Consultant, Arab Consulting Engineer, and the Contractor has undertaken to carry out remedial works. The Independent Expert would, amongst others, -

- (a) review the findings of the Contractor and the Consultant on the cause(s) of the partial collapse of the road;
- (b) assess the adequacy of the proposed reconstruction design and method; and
- (c) propose additional measures, if so required, in consultation with the Consultant or otherwise.

16. Cabinet has taken note that the Fashion and Design Institute and the Central Saint Martins College of Arts and Design, UK, have signed an Agreement on academic collaboration. The Agreement provides, *inter alia*, for the Central Saint Martins College to deliver bespoke, professional training in Mauritius and at its venue in London in the subject areas of fashion, fine art, graphic design (including illustration and animation) and industrial and product design.

17. Cabinet has taken note of the performance of the Export-Oriented Enterprises Sector for the period January to March 2014 as compared to the corresponding period in 2013. Based on provisional exports data, the value of exports reached Rs11.15 billion as compared to Rs10.9 billion in 2013, representing an increase of 2.1%. Increase had been recorded in the value of export of T-shirts (+10.3%), Shirts (+4.1%), Trousers (+20.7%), Jewellery, precious and semi-precious stones (+31%). Increase had also been recorded in exports to France (+17.6%), USA (+25.2%), Italy (+44.6%), Belgium (+25.8%) and Madagascar (+5.6%).

18. Cabinet has taken note of the activities that would be organised to commemorate the World Telecommunication and Information Society Day 2014, namely –

- (a) Workshop on “Broadband for Sustainable Development”;
- (b) ICT Awareness campaigns;
- (c) Broadband Internet Access, free of charge, at Public Internet Access Points in all Post Offices in Mauritius and Rodrigues;
- (d) free entrance to the Postal Museum; and
- (e) showcasing the Intelligent-Mauritius Partnership Programme at the Head Office of the Mauritius Post Ltd where the public can use smart phones, tablets and laptops to have access to free WiFi.

The theme of this year’s World Telecommunication and Information Society Day is **Broadband for Sustainable Development**.

19. Cabinet has taken note of the activities that would be organised by the Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare in the context of the International Day of Families 2014, observed on 15 May, namely –

- (a) holding of a Consultative Meeting on the Family for the benefit of religious organisations participating in the Shared Faith Belief Programme to fight against gender-based violence, particularly domestic violence;
- (b) award of certificates to some 110 religious leaders who participated in a Training of Trainers Programme on Pre-Marital Counselling; and
- (c) a Family Fun Day.

20. Cabinet has reviewed the current situation with regard to influenza in the country and the vaccination campaign against seasonal flu currently being implemented by the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions and the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life. According to the World Health Organisation, influenza has an annual attack rate between 5%-10% in adults and 20%-30% in children. The Centre for Disease Control estimates that 8.5% of all pneumonia and influenza deaths and 2.1% of all respiratory and circulatory deaths are influenza-related. During the month of March 2014 as compared to March 2013, an atypical increase in the circulation of influenza viruses had been noted. The positivity rate of respiratory secretions for influenza viruses also showed a significant rise. As at 27 April 2014, 1,176 samples had been processed at the Virology department of the Central Health Laboratory, out of which 152 had been tested positive for Influenza A(H1N1), 63 for A(H3N2), 30 for influenza virus B and 87 for influenza. The vaccination campaigns against influenza carried out by the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions and the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life are ongoing.

21. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Education and Human Resources to Reunion Island where he participated in the First Regional Conference on Education organized by the Académie de la Réunion. The main objectives of the Conference were to have in-depth discussions on “*Enjeux et politiques éducatives*”, and develop a strategy for cooperation in education at the regional level. The Conference also aimed at reinforcing cooperation between countries in the region and promoting exchanges and partnerships. In the margins of the Conference, the Minister of Education and Human Resources had meetings on areas of cooperation in the field of education with the Préfet de la Réunion and representatives of different countries present.

22. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Fisheries to the Netherlands where he participated in the Summit on Global Oceans Action for Food Security and Blue Growth. The main objectives of the Meeting were to:

- (a) identify solutions to ocean threats that can be replicated at speed and scale to deliver healthy oceans for every country;
- (b) identify financial mechanisms and mobilize partnerships to better fulfill international obligations; and
- (c) use the solutions and the shared understandings across important ocean themes to serve as inputs to the post-2015 sustainable development agenda.

23. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection to the Seychelles, in the context of the “Mauritius-Seychelles Business Forum” and the “Mauritius Exhibition and Trade Fair”. The main objective of the Mauritius-Seychelles Business Forum was to discuss challenges and opportunities to strengthen business linkages between the Seychelles and Mauritius. The Mauritius Exhibition and Trade Fair was an occasion where businessmen in the Seychelles could see and buy Mauritian products, as well as conclude business deals. During the visit, four Memoranda of Understanding on better collaboration to strengthen economic and trade ties were signed between -

- (a) the Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Seychelles Chamber of Commerce and Industry;
- (b) Enterprise Mauritius and the Small Enterprise Promotion Agency of Seychelles;
- (c) the State Trading Corporation of Mauritius and the Seychelles Trading Company Ltd; and
- (d) the State Trading Corporation of Mauritius and the Seychelles Petroleum Company Ltd.

During the visit, the Minister of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection paid a courtesy call on HE Mr James Michel, President of the Republic of Seychelles, and had a meeting with Mr Jean-Paul Adam, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Pierre Laporte, Minister of Finance, Trade and Investment, and a working session with Mr Peter Sinon, Minister of Natural Resources.

24. Cabinet has taken note that Mr Daniel Jean Maurice Allet, CSK, has been appointed Chairperson of the Mauritius Ports Authority.

25. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of –

- (a) the Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Board with Mrs Danielle Tow Yin Wong Ng, CSK, former Director of the Mauritius Export Association, as Chairperson; and
- (b) the Board of the Tourism Employees Welfare Fund with Mrs Marie Ghislaine Henrison, as Chairperson.
