

CABINET DECISIONS – 27 MARCH 2015

1. Cabinet has taken note of the setting up of a National Advisory Council, under the Chairmanship of the Secretary to Cabinet and Head of the Civil Service, to provide strategic oversight and facilitate collaboration among the relevant agencies for the smooth elaboration and implementation of the Vision 2030 Blueprint. The Council would report to the Prime Minister, who is the Chairperson of the Vision 2030 High Powered Committee that has been set up to look into future economic development and planning at national level. The Vision 2030 Blueprint would be a comprehensive and coordinated national economic development strategy that would set out agreed and concerted policy actions, and identify the critical economic and social infrastructure needed to support long-term growth.

2. Cabinet has agreed to the validity of the old National Identity Card being extended to 30 June 2015 as some 15,000 citizens have not registered for the new Identity Card. Government is awaiting the judgment on the case before the Court to take a decision on the maintenance of biometric data.

3. Cabinet has agreed to the Employment Rights Act and the Employment Relations Act being reviewed as announced in Government Programme 2015-2019. The main objectives of the review would be to –

- (a) consolidate the fundamental rights of workers, ensure better protection of workers' jobs, and promote employment creation;
- (b) streamline all conditions of employment prescribed in the various Remuneration Regulations in one piece of legislation;
- (c) reinforce freedom of association and negotiating rights in line with ILO Conventions; and
- (d) reinforce the dispute settling mechanism for a timely and more effective settlement of disputes.

4. Cabinet has agreed to the integration of Human Rights Education in the curriculum of secondary schools in line with the Human Rights Council Resolution of 2008. The main objective of the Human Rights Education curriculum is to enable students to develop their full capacities, and positively contribute to an understanding of the global culture of human rights. It involves teaching and learning that strongly encourage the participation of students as active learners in their schooling, empower teachers to enhance existing lesson plans by enabling students to critically reflect on human rights issues, and mould values and attitudes that help promote a culture of human rights.

5. Cabinet has agreed to the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Energy and Public Utilities amending the Ground Water Regulations 2011 to introduce a specific tariff for the use of brackish ground water for aquaculture purposes, repeal the provision regarding the payment of a monthly charge for water abstracted for such purposes, and provide for a penalty for the abstraction of ground water in excess of the authorized volume.

6. Cabinet has taken note that the Nomination Dossier of Bhojpuri Folk Songs would be resubmitted for inscription in the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The Mauritian Sega is already listed on the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. With the listing of elements of Intangible Cultural Heritage, States Parties have the responsibility to implement safeguard measures, and preserve and promote the elements and their visibility.

7. Cabinet has taken note that the Financial Services Consultative Council, set up under the Financial Services Act 2007, would meet on 27 March 2015 to consider, among others, Double Taxation Avoidance Agreements. The Council is chaired by the Minister of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms pursuant to section 12(2) of the Act. The Council comprises, *inter alia*, the Governor of the Bank of Mauritius, the Financial Secretary, the Chairperson of the Financial Services Commission and other persons of high calibre and international repute. The objective of the Council is to act as a think-tank, serve as a platform for discussions on latest concepts and international trends in the field of financial services and global business, and formulate suggestions and ideas for the development of the financial services and global business sectors.

8. Cabinet has taken note of the activities that would be organised by the Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations, Employment and Training to mark the International Labour Day 2015, observed on 1 May, namely –

- (a) an exhibition depicting the history of the Labour Department and the activities of the Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations, Employment and Training;
- (b) a Workshop on the “*Implementation of the Occupational Safety and Health Management System*”;
- (c) a Workshop on “*Re-engineering of the Labour Inspection System*”; and
- (d) recreational activities.

Arrangements have been made for all workers and their families to benefit from concessionary rates at Leisure Parks, Cinemas, Hotels and Restaurants and Shopping Malls.

9. Cabinet has taken note that the Minister of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions would make Regulations under the National Pensions Act and the National Savings Act to provide for an increase in the rates of pensions payable for the year 2015 for contributory pensions paid by the Ministry, and an increase in the ceiling and floor for the calculation of payment of contributions to the National Pensions Fund and the National Savings Fund.

10. Cabinet has agreed to a full management and technical audit of all projects implemented by the Wastewater Management Authority being conducted with a view to improving project planning, monitoring and supervision, and avoiding unjustified cost overruns.

11. Cabinet has taken note that the 9th International Conference of the Society for Free Radical Research - Africa, and the 4th International Conference of the International Association of Medical and Biomedical Researchers would be held in Mauritius in July 2015. The theme of the Conference is **Translational Science and Drug Discovery: Impact on Health, Wellness, Environment & Economics**. The aims of the Conferences are to promote innovative research ventures that can enhance social and economic development, with focus on areas for the improvement of health in Africa, and foster international development, capacity building and cooperation in scientific education, and agricultural and medical research.

12. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism and External Communications to Berlin where he participated in the 49th edition of the International Tourismus Borse Fair, the world's greatest travel and tourism trade event. The Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism and External Communications had meetings with representatives of airlines, hoteliers, tour operators, tourist magazines, the media, and the Secretary General of the United Nations' World Tourism Organization. The Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism and External Communications also participated in a forum of UK tour operators and hoteliers in London where he explained the new tourism policy of Government, and that more emphasis is being laid on enhancing existing products, and promoting the country's incredible diversity.

At the International Tourismus Borse Fair, Mauritius received seven Awards, namely -

- the Derpart award for "Sustainable Destination Promotion on the German Market"
- the Hotelplan Italia award for "Most Sustainable Tourism Destination 2014"
- the Hotelplan Suisse award for "Best Luxury Hotel Destination"

- the Manta Reisen award for “Best Long Haul Beach Destination”
- the FTI Touristik award for “The most diverse Holiday Destination in the Indian Ocean”
- the Best Tours Italia award for “Best Luxury Destination 2014”
- the Il Diamante award for “Best Beach Destination 2014”

13. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Technology, Communication and Innovation to Spain where he participated in the Mobile World Congress 2015, the largest and most prestigious annual event for the global mobile industry. The theme for this year’s event was “**At the Edge of Innovation**”. The aim of the Congress was to provide a unique platform for the world’s most influential telecommunications leaders to unite and discuss the most pressing issues affecting the future of the mobile industry. The Minister also had meetings with the Senior Vice-President of Samsung, the CEO of Huawei, the Senior Vice-President of Tata Communications, and the Chairperson and CEO of CISCO, who are all interested in investing in Mauritius.

14. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Environment, Sustainable Development, and Disaster and Beach Management to Japan where he participated in the 3rd United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction. The main objective of the Conference was to review the implementation of the "Hyogo Framework for Action" over its 10-year term and develop a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction. The Conference adopted the ‘Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030’, that outlines the global targets that should be achieved in the next 15 years.

15. Cabinet has taken note of the appointment of Mr Ramesh Sunt, Barrister-at-Law, as Ombudsperson for Sports. The Ombudsperson is called upon to enquire into appeals made by persons who feel aggrieved by a decision of the Mauritius Olympic Committee, National Sports Federations, Multisport Organisations, Regional Sports Committees, Sports Clubs, Licensees or any other officials of sports organisations, with a view to reaching an amicable settlement.

16. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of -

- (a) the Board of Governors of the University of Technology, Mauritius with Professor Dr Theeshan Bahorun, GOSK, as Chairperson; and
- (b) the Outer Islands Development Board with Mr Viadianan Bhantoo as Chairperson.

17. Cabinet has taken note of the Annual Report and the Audited Financial Statements of the Town and Country Planning Board for the period ended 31 December 2013. The main functions of the Board are to prepare and review continuously Outline Schemes for each local authority with a view to having planned development of the country and responding to Government policies with respect to economic development, environmental sustainability, and social equity.
