

CABINET DECISIONS – 22 FEBRUARY 2019

1. Cabinet has taken note of the proposed programme of activities for National Day Celebrations 2019. The theme for the celebrations would be '*Dan Linite Nou Avanse*'. The Official Programme would be held at Champ de Mars on 12 March 2019 as from 18 00 hours and would comprise –

- (a) the Flag Raising Ceremony;
- (b) a march-past by the Police Band, Disciplined Forces and Uniformed Organisations;
- (c) a fly-past as well as helicopter display and Queen Elizabeth College Majorettes; and
- (d) a '*Dan Linite Nou Avanse*' show, which would be followed by a popular show by renowned local artists.

Cabinet has also taken note that the following arrangements would be made for those travelling by bus to Champ de Mars two hours before, and two hours after the official celebrations –

- (a) all fare-paying passengers to pay half the normal rate; and
- (b) children aged less than 13 years to travel free of charge.

2. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent official visit of the Hon Prime Minister to Rodrigues. The primary objective of his visit was to personally take stock of the damages caused by Cyclone Gelena as well as actions being taken to redress the situation. He handed over a cheque of Rs35 million from the Prime Minister's Relief Fund to be used by the Chief Commissioner's Relief Fund for reconstruction of damaged houses and infrastructure, cleaning operations and appropriate compensation to planters and fishermen. He also seized the opportunity to have budget consultations with Rodrigues Regional Assembly (RRA) in the context of the preparation of the RRA Estimates 2019-2020 and launched the High Speed Internet via the Mauritius and Rodrigues Submarine (MARS) Cable. He also visited the new arrival Rodrigues Duty Free Shop at Plaine Corail Airport.

3. Cabinet has taken note of the Report of the Fact Finding Committee set up to look into the alleged discrepancy in the weight of Heroin seized and secured by ADSU and the Customs Services chaired by Justice Paul Lam Shang Leen, former Judge of the Supreme Court. The main findings of the Report of the Committee are, inter alia -

- (a) the provisions of section 58 of the Dangerous Drugs Act 2000 and Part VIII of the Police Standing Orders No. 138 have been scrupulously complied with by the designated Exhibit Officer;

- (b) the chain of continuity has been scrupulously recorded at the ADSU Exhibit Room with regard to documents produced, as per the Exhibit Register Book;
- (c) the disparity regarding the reading of the weights obtained by ADSU on 09 March 2017 could be accounted for by use of a handheld scale, the accuracy of which was uncertain albeit that the scale was calibrated; and
- (d) the Committee is satisfied that having regard to the tight security around the six Exhibits at the time when they were removed from the Freight Terminal to the ADSU Headquarters for sealing and weighing, their removal to the ADSU Exhibit Room for safekeeping, their removal to the FSL and back with tight security, there has been no disappearance of the substance found to be heroin by FSL.

The Committee has recommended a series of measures so that in the future no such misunderstanding should crop up especially regarding the handling of drugs by the two Agencies concerned. The Ministry of Defence would follow up with all relevant stakeholders for the timely implementation of the recommendations made in the Report.

4. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Technology, Communication and Innovation has again won the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Champion 2019 in the following two categories for two mobile apps which have been classified in the top five solutions in the world in their respective categories as hereunder -

(a) **Category Access to Information and Knowledge**

Smart Police Application

The Smart Police mobile app provides citizens with a quick access to valuable information such as Police directory, latest news and important communiqués from the Police Force and supports calls to emergency service providers.

(b) **Category ICT applications**

Emergency Alert Applications

Emergency Alert app allows users to receive timely information and updates generated by the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Centre in case of natural disasters like cyclones and flash floods.

In 2018, the Ministry won the WSIS Champion 2018 in the e-Government category for the InfoHighway system.

5. Cabinet has agreed to the drafting of the Combatting of Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill, in line with Financial Action Task Force (FATF) standards and other international obligations.

6. Cabinet has agreed to amendments being made to the Fifth Schedule of the Environment Protection Act 2002, to provide for urgent beach rehabilitation works to be carried out without the requirement of an Environment Impact Assessment Licence following adverse weather conditions. Coastal areas which have suffered degradation after adverse weather conditions would be rehabilitated urgently without the requirement of an Environment Impact Assessment Licence. However, such requests for rehabilitation would have to follow a screening and approval process established by the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development.

7. Cabinet has taken note that Mauritius would host a Meeting of the Early Childhood Education and Development Cluster on 21 and 22 March 2019, in collaboration with the African Union Commission and the African Early Childhood Network. The objectives of the Meeting are to –

- (a) establish a Technical Committee of the Early Childhood Education and Development (ECED) Cluster with clearly defined Terms of Reference;
- (b) develop a 2019-2020 Work Plan for the Technical Committee with priorities, activities and expected outcomes;
- (c) share experiences and updates on ECED in Member States; and
- (d) renew commitment from partners and members of the ECED Cluster.

Some 30 international delegates from the African Union Member States, Regional Economic Communities, civil society organisations, the Academia and other partners working in ECED, would participate in the Meeting.

8. Cabinet has taken note that the 150th Anniversary of the setting up of the Periodic Table of Chemical Elements would be commemorated by the Rajiv Gandhi Science Centre. The year 2019 has been proclaimed as the “International Year of the Periodic Table of Chemical Elements” by the United Nations. The activities that would be organised during the year include –

- (a) a travelling exhibition on the Periodic Table which would be touring secondary schools;
- (b) Junior Mobile Science events in primary schools where teachers and students would develop science projects which would be put on display for other students and parents;
- (c) lectures and science shows by famous scientists as well as the projection of films to create an awareness of the importance of science;
- (d) seminars and discussion forums targeting teachers, students and the public on the general topic “Chemistry, Science and Society”; and
- (e) sky observation programmes around the theme “Elements in the Universe”.

9. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Energy and Public Utilities and the Minister of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection to India where they participated in the 13th International Oil and Gas Conference and Exhibition, Petrotech 2019. Petrotech is a biennial international oil and gas conference and exhibition organised under the aegis of the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas of India and provides a platform for stakeholders to meet, deliberate and exchange on the future of the oil and gas sector. The theme for 2019 was “**Shaping the New Energy World through Innovation & Collaboration**”. Two Ministerial sessions were held. The Deputy Prime Minister made a statement on the theme “**Collaborating for a Sustainable and Secure Energy Access for All**”. The Minister of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection made a statement on the theme “**Energy for All: Affordability, Accessibility and Livelihood**”.

In the margins of the Conference, the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection had meetings with Hon Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas and with the delegation from the Republic of Sudan.

10. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Local Government and Outer Islands, Minister of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare to Egypt where she participated in the Africa Ministerial Pre-Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) Consultative Meeting in the context of the 63rd Session of the CSW scheduled in March 2019. The Ministerial Consultation was organised by the African Union Commission in close collaboration with UN Women, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and the United Nations Development Programme. The objectives of the Africa Pre-CSW Ministerial Consultation were to –

- (a) discuss and agree on a common platform for Africa at the CSW 63 Meeting;
- (b) provide clear messages linking the provision of social protection systems to that of access to public services and sustainable infrastructure;
- (c) come up with issues for lobbying prior to and during the CSW 63 Meeting; and
- (d) learn from Member States on their challenges and achievements with regard to the above-mentioned themes.

Following the meeting, an Outcome Document comprising key messages and strategies for a unified African position was adopted, highlighting, among others, strategies for gender responsive social protection measures, public services, infrastructure and basic utilities.

11. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Tourism to Seychelles where he participated in the 10th General Assembly of the Vanilla Islands Organisation. The General Assembly meeting examined and approved, inter alia, the budget, calendar of activities and promotional projects of the Vanilla Islands Organisation. The Minister stressed that the Vanilla Islands Organisation should focus on

promoting and marketing the Vanilla Islands as an attractive cruise destination. The importance of enhancing the tourism product to increase spending from tourists and developing a coherent strategy to get cruise passengers out of the vessels and for cruise vessels to stay at least 24 hours at each port when cruising the region, were also emphasised. The Assembly noted that cruise ship passengers visiting the Indian Ocean Region increased steadily from 14,094 in 2014 to reach 49,342 in 2018. The Assembly also approved the conduct of a study on the impact of cruise activities on the Vanilla Islands by the University of Mauritius and *L'Université de la Réunion*.
