

CABINET DECISIONS – 27 SEPTEMBER 2019

1. Cabinet has agreed to the introduction of the Medical Council (Amendment) Bill into the National Assembly after consultations with the Medical Council of Mauritius. The object of the Bill is to amend the Medical Council Act to remove the requirement to the effect that a medical graduate should undergo an entry examination before being registered as a pre-registration trainee.

2. Cabinet has agreed to the promulgation of the Traffic Signs (Amendment) Regulations 2019 with a view to providing for traffic signage and road markings in the context of the operationalisation of the Metro Express. New signage and markings would be placed for the safe interaction of light rail vehicles with other classes of vehicles and road users to better manage the road interfaces at level crossings. The amendments would guide road users on new traffic rules in terms of priority and instruct them to give way when a light rail vehicle approaches a level crossing. The amendments would also require all crossings to be kept clear through road markings to better illustrate delimitation of zones for road traffic at level crossings. Advanced Warning Signs, Informative Signs as well as Coloured Road Markings based on the Vienna Convention on Road Signs and Traffic Signals would thus be implemented.

3. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection would formulate an Industrial Policy and Strategic Plan for 2020-2025 for Mauritius, with the technical and financial assistance of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. The assignment would entail a diagnosis of the industrial set up through –

- (a) the identification of weaknesses, constraints, challenges and opportunities;
- (b) a review of the institutional support and assistance provided under the different incentives/schemes;
- (c) an assessment of the existing investment and export promotion strategies for the manufacturing sector;
- (d) an analysis of the manpower requirements for the next generation of manufacturing activities;
- (e) consultative meetings with relevant public and private stakeholders; and
- (f) the submission of a new Industrial Policy and Strategic Plan.

The assignment would span over the period October 2019 to June 2020.

4. Cabinet has taken note of the setting up of an Observatory at SME Mauritius, in line with the recommendations of the 10-Year Master Plan for the SME sector. The SME Observatory would serve as the main repository of qualitative and quantitative SME data and would have the following key objectives –

- (a) build data collection capabilities and mechanisms for SMEs and entrepreneurship information, including developing a National Entrepreneurship Index;
- (b) identify markets in emerging industries with growth potential and network for its effective realisation;
- (c) assess regulatory and legal frameworks and propose improvements based on good governance principles and international best practices;
- (d) benchmark SME performance at the sectoral and macro level and propose improvements based on best practices;
- (e) set up an effective mechanism to monitor, evaluate and report impact of policies and programmes; and
- (f) feed the Ministry of Business, Enterprise and Cooperatives and Government with relevant data/statistics for evidence-based policy reviews.

5. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding for the Establishment of Representative Offices of Trade and Investment Promotion Organisations in Each Other's Country between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade and the Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China. The Economic Development Board Mauritius would set up an overseas office in Shanghai. The tasks of the Economic Development Board Mauritius Office in Shanghai would be to –

- (a) promote Mauritius as an investment and sourcing destination and as a platform for investing in Africa;
- (b) provide assistance to Chinese companies, entrepreneurs and commercial organisations for doing business in Mauritius, investing in Mauritius and investing in Africa through Mauritius;
- (c) provide assistance to Mauritian companies, entrepreneurs and commercial organisations for doing business and investing in China;
- (d) organise and coordinate trade and investment related missions; and
- (e) establish collaborative relationships with key industry associations.

6. Cabinet has agreed to the enhancement of the Valuation Module under the Land Administration and Valuation Information Management System to enable a more effective and efficient survey and valuation of some 500,000 immovable properties in Mauritius. The enhanced module would bring more equity, fairness and transparency within the property taxation system and would provide a positive impact on the ranking of Mauritius on the “Ease of Doing Business”. The enhanced module would also allow the recording of data on the digital cadastral database by using electronic devices (tablets) for the production of a Valuation Roll for the whole country.

7. Cabinet has taken note that the Income Tax (BEPS) Regulations 2019 would be promulgated. Mauritius signed the Multilateral Convention to Implement the Tax Treaty Related Measures to Prevent Base Erosion and Profit Shifting on 5 July 2017. Mauritius is now required to ratify the Convention and then file with the OECD Secretariat, which acts as Depository for the Convention, its Instrument of Ratification. The promulgation of the Income Tax (BEPS) Regulations 2019 forms part of the ratification procedure.

8. Cabinet has taken note that the Insolvency (Remuneration of Liquidator) Regulations 2019 and the Insolvency (Remuneration of Receiver) Regulations 2019 under the Insolvency Act would be promulgated in order to prescribe new remuneration of liquidators and receivers.

9. Cabinet has taken note of the latest unemployment figures released by Statistics Mauritius. The overall unemployment rate is expected to decline from 6.9% in 2018 to 6.8% in 2019 and compared to 7.8% in 2014. The number of unemployed has gone down to 39,100 in the second quarter of 2019 as compared to 40,500 in the second quarter of 2018. As regards youth unemployment in the country, there has been a substantial drop in the unemployment rate from 27.5% in the second quarter of 2018 to 21.3% in the second quarter of 2019.

10. Cabinet has taken note of the recommendations of the National Remuneration Board (NRB) regarding the employees of the Blockmaking, Construction, Stone Crushing and Related Industries Remuneration Regulations for the review of the terms and conditions of workers employed in this sector and agreed to new Remuneration Regulations being made incorporating the recommendations of the NRB and the Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations, Employment and Training.

11. Cabinet has taken note of activities being organised by the Ministry of Arts and Culture, the Ministry of Tourism, the Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority and the local authorities to mark the celebrations of Divali at national level and at regional level. A National Concert would be organised on Saturday 19 October 2019 at Quatre Bornes Bus Terminal as from 19 00 hours with the participation of local artists and famous Bollywood artists from Zee Network. Three regional concerts would be held on Sunday 20 October 2019 as from 19 00 hours, simultaneously at Triolet Market Place, Flacq Taxi Stand and Place du Vieux Moulin, Rose Belle. The regional concerts would comprise performances of local artists and selected Bollywood artists of Zee Network. 'Antariksh', a Bollywood Group would also perform in the regional concerts.

12. Cabinet has agreed to the Government Online Centre (GOC) and the Computer Emergency Response Team – Mauritius (CERT-MU) operating within specialised departments, under the control of the Ministry of Technology, Communication and Innovation. The operation of the GOC and the CERT-MU within specialised departments, would enable a more effective and efficient service delivery. Given the dynamic ICT landscape, there is need for rapid and proactive decisions for immediate actions by the GOC and the CERT-MU, to resolve major e-government and security issues as well as to maintain the required level of operationalisation of the data centre. The GOC and CERT-MU have gained considerable importance over the years in terms of custodian of highly sophisticated systems, logistics and infrastructure for Government.

13. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade would organise a national workshop to present the findings of a study on the socio-economic impact of the international exhaustion of trademarks for Mauritius, on 07 October 2019. The concept of international exhaustion implies that the right of commercial exploitation over imported branded goods is exhausted once the products have been sold by the trademark owner or with his/her consent on the international market.

14. Cabinet has taken note that in the context of World Heart Day 2019, observed on 29 September, the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life would organise, among others, the following activities –

- (a) an Official Ceremony on 28 September 2019 at Jean Lebrun Government School, Port-Louis, which would include screening exercises, talks, counselling, sensitisation programmes and exhibitions;
- (b) sensitisation programmes on TV and Radio as well as talks on cardiovascular diseases and their risk factors and the importance of diet and exercise in Community Centres, Social Welfare Centres and Government Schools;

- (c) empowerment sessions for Non-Communicable Disease (NCD) patients on cardiovascular diseases and healthy lifestyle at regional level; and
- (d) continuous Medical Education for medical and para-medical staff.

The theme chosen to mark the World Heart Day 2019 is **“My Heart, Your Heart”**

15. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund (SILWF) Committee with Mr Nazir Mohamad Ameen Junggee as Chairperson.
