

**HIGHLIGHTS OF CABINET MEETING – FRIDAY 01 SEPTEMBER 2023**

1. Cabinet has agreed to amendments being brought to the Quarantine (COVID-19 Restrictions) Regulations 2022, with effect from 04 September 2023, to –

- (i) specify only four institutions where employees need mandatorily to be vaccinated against COVID-19 or need to produce a negative COVID-19 Test Certificate in order to have access to their place of work as follows –
  - (a) educational or training institution;
  - (b) health institution;
  - (c) residential care home/residential care institutions for children victims of violence, abuse and neglect/shelters for women victims of domestic violence; and
  - (d) child care services establishment.
- (ii) it will no longer be mandatory for a person who is tested to be infected with COVID-19 to be self-confined for a period of seven days. The period of self-confinement will henceforth be determined by a registered medical practitioner.

Cabinet has also taken note that the Director of Civil Aviation has extended two NOTAMs up to 31 October 2023 with respect to passengers and crew members travelling to Mauritius and Rodrigues. In that respect, the NOTAM for Mauritius specifies the following conditions –

- (i) filling of All-In-One travel form is recommended prior to boarding but not mandatory for boarding;
- (ii) wearing a surgical or N95/FFP2 mask during the flight is not mandatory but recommended;
- (iii) wearing of mask at the airport is not mandatory but recommended; and
- (iv) any person having been tested COVID-19 positive within seven days of departure shall not be allowed to board a flight to Mauritius.

The NOTAM for Rodrigues specifies the same conditions, except that passengers are not required to fill in the All-In-One travel form.

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2. Cabinet has agreed to the Ministry of Tourism signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on cooperation in the field of tourism with the State of Maharashtra of the Republic of India. The main objective of the proposed MoU is to enhance cooperation in the field of tourism and strengthen the existing friendly bilateral ties between Mauritius and the State of Maharashtra. The MoU provides, inter alia, for cooperation in the following areas –

- (i) capacity building in the tourism sector to enhance tourism related businesses;
- (ii) promotion of the harmonious development of people-to-people relations, through the expansion of reciprocal visits, meetings and marketing campaigns;
- (iii) exchange of information and sharing of experience, know-how and good practices in areas to be agreed by both Parties;
- (iv) promotion of business initiatives and investment opportunities in tourism; and
- (v) conservation of natural heritage and promotion of sustainable tourism.

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3. Cabinet has agreed to the Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology signing a revised Memorandum of Understanding with the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission of United Kingdom to establish the procedures of pre-selection and nomination of individuals for Commonwealth Scholarships. The aim is to establish a more robust and transparent system that outlines all significant aspects of the partnership between the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission and the Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology. Every year, the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission offers two scholarships at postgraduate level to Mauritian Nationals.

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4. Cabinet has taken note that as part of the technical assistance being provided by the European Union (EU) under the Migration EU Expertise initiative to enhance the capacity of the Mauritian authorities to combat Trafficking in Persons, a four-day onsite training would be held from 11 to 14 September 2023, with the objective of training officers of the Mauritius Police Force as well as the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions on the application of the Standard Operating Procedures developed on investigation and prosecution, by creating synergies between theory and practice.

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5. Cabinet has taken note of the activities being organised by the Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity to mark the International Day of Older Persons on Sunday 01 October 2023. The International Day of Older Persons is celebrated annually in recognition of the significant contribution of elders to the socio-economic development of the country.

To commemorate the International Day of Older Persons, a national event would be held at the Swami Vivekananda International Convention Centre, Pailles on Sunday 01 October 2023. The Senior Citizens Council would also organise workshops for the elderly in the four Recreation Centres around the island in the month of October 2023 with a view to sharing knowledge on emerging technologies, health, road safety and security as well as sensitising them on elderly abuse and their rights as senior citizens.

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6. Cabinet has taken note of the activities being organised by the Ministry of Health and Wellness in the context of World Heart Day 2023 which aims at raising public awareness amongst individuals, families, communities and Governments about cardiovascular disease. The theme chosen to mark World Heart Day 2023 is “Use heart, know heart is open-ended”.

The commemoration of World Heart Day 2023 would be an opportunity to further sensitise the population on the alarming cardiovascular death rate which could be prevented through evidence-based life-style modification such as cessation of tobacco use, avoiding harmful use of alcohol, adopting a healthy diet with less salt, fat and refined sugar and consume more fruits and vegetables, practising regular physical activity for weight control and stress management.

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7. Cabinet has taken note of the activities being organised by the Ministry of Health and Wellness to mark World Sexual Health Day 2023 which is celebrated annually on 04 September. The World Sexual Health Day is commemorated to promote a greater social awareness and understanding of sexual health. It aims at encouraging open discussions about sexual well-being, reproductive health, and related issues. It is also an opportunity to address taboos and stigmas surrounding sexuality, to provide accurate information, and to promote healthy attitudes and behaviours.

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8. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent participation of the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology in the Global Smart Education Conference held in Beijing, China. The Conference focused on the theme “Education Transformation and Data Governance”. The Vice-Prime Minister delivered a Keynote Address during the Official Opening Ceremony on the theme ‘Educational Digitalisation and Life Long Learning’. The Vice-Prime Minister also had side meetings with the President of Beijing Normal University and the Co-Dean of Smart Learning Institute of Beijing Normal University.

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9. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent participation of Hon A. Ganoo, GCSK, Minister of Land Transport and Light Rail and the then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade in the BRICS-Africa Outreach and BRICS Plus Dialogue (BRICS Dialogues). The objective of the BRICS Dialogues held under the theme “BRICS and Africa: Partnership for Mutually Accelerated Growth, Sustainable Development and Inclusive Multilateralism” was to have an inclusive dialogue with leaders of Africa, Asia and Latin America on key issues affecting developing economies and identify actions for a more equitable, inclusive and representative World Order. The BRICS Dialogues emphasised multi-dimensional cooperation to create opportunities for developing countries and emerging markets.

The Summit adopted the Johannesburg II Declaration which reflects key BRICS messages on matters of global economic, financial and political importance. The BRICS Summit encouraged multilateral financial institutions and international organisations to play a constructive role in building global consensus on economic policies.

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10. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent participation of the Minister of Health and Wellness in the G20 Health Ministers' Meeting held in Gandhinagar, Gujarat, India. The event served as a platform to discuss and explore opportunities to revolutionise the healthcare landscape, enabling a healthier and more sustainable future to the whole humanity. The final deliberations and culmination of the Health Ministers' Meeting Outcome Document was endorsed by the G20 Health Ministers.

The Minister also had bilateral discussions with, inter alia, the State Minister of Health and Family Welfare, the Minister for Health and Family Welfare of the Government of Tamil Nadu and the Head of Centre for Health and Healthcare of the World Economic Forum. The need for better coordination among countries and sharing of information at the earliest possible for any pandemic preparedness and how digital innovations are effectively leading to efficiency in healthcare delivery was discussed.

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11. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent visit to Rodrigues of Hon T. Hurdoyal, the then Minister of Public Service, Administrative and Institutional Reforms. The objectives of the visit were to –

- (a) take stock of the main issues relating to the Public Service in Rodrigues;
- (b) share with key stakeholders of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly (RRA) the projects and initiatives undertaken by the Ministry of Public Service, Administrative and Institutional Reforms; and
- (c) explore different areas of collaboration in order to realise a common vision for a modern Public Service.

During the three-day visit, meetings were held with the Chief Commissioner, Commissioners, the Island Chief Executive, Departmental Heads and senior officers of the RRA and the representatives of Trade Unions. The e-HR project would be extended to Rodrigues to enable the maintenance of centralised Human Resource database and allow public officers to apply for leave and check their leave balance online.

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