

HIGHLIGHTS OF CABINET MEETING – FRIDAY 03 FEBRUARY 2023

1. Cabinet has agreed to Regulations being made to repeal and replace the current Newspapers and Periodicals Employees (Remuneration) Regulations by the Media Employees (Remuneration) Regulations, which provide for the review of wages and conditions of employment in that sector. The Newspapers and Periodicals Employees (Remuneration) Regulations were last reviewed in 2001.

2. Cabinet has taken note that in the latest edition of the Economist Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index, published in January 2023, out of 165 independent states, Mauritius was ranked among the only 24 countries in the world considered as 'full democracy' and is the sole State to be classified as such in Africa.

3. Cabinet has taken note that the Education (Amendment) Regulations 2023 would be promulgated to provide for the award of the Sir Anerood Jugnauth National Scholarships to the first ranked boy and the first ranked girl on the Economics side at the Cambridge Higher School Certificate (HSC) Examinations.

4. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of two Addenda to the Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology and the Educational Consultants of India Ltd for the implementation of Phase IV (Grade 5) and Phase V (Grade 6) of the Early Digital Learning Programme project. Each Addendum provides for the supply and commissioning of tablets and related devices. Provision has, inter alia, been made for the supply of the system software and the hosting of a Classroom Management Software on a cloud server.

5. Cabinet has taken note of the impact of the recent torrential rainfall in Mauritius on the agricultural sector and the assessment carried out to determine the extent of losses caused to plantations and livestock. The Food and Agricultural Research and Extension Institute and the Small Farmers Welfare Fund were closely monitoring the situation and continuing their assessment. With respect to sugarcane, the Mauritius Cane Industry Authority had informed that there is no significant damage to sugarcane plants.

Cabinet has also taken note of the arrangements being made by the Agricultural Marketing Board for the supply of vegetables, coconuts and lemons for the forthcoming Thaiposam Cavadee and Maha Shivaratree festivals.

6. Cabinet has taken note that the National Innovator Hall of Fame, a competition to be organised by the Mauritius Research and Innovation Council, would be launched in February 2023. This award aims at recognising the efforts of innovators from the Republic of Mauritius, through an open competition, and appreciating how their contributions might positively impact on the daily lives of citizens. The objectives of the competition would be to -

- (a) recognise and reward local outstanding innovators;
- (b) fuel innovation and creativity among the local people;
- (c) gauge the level of innovation and creativity in the Republic of Mauritius; and
- (d) catalyse the innovation culture in the younger generation.

7. Cabinet has taken note that World Seagrass Day would be organised on 01 March 2023 at Poste Lafayette. World Seagrass Day was declared by the United Nations General Assembly on 22 May 2022, following a resolution on the need to emphasise the conservation of seagrass in marine environments.

In that context, the Ministry of Blue Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping would carry out sensitisation and educational programmes at eight places around the island targeting school children, fishers and coastal communities under a project financed by the United Nations Environment Programme Nairobi Convention, under their scheme "Implementation of the Strategic Action Programme for the Protection of the Western Indian Ocean from land-based sources and activities".

8. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the official visit of the Minister of Land Transport and Light Rail, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade to Rodrigues from 23 to 25 January 2023 in the context of the elaboration of the National Human Rights Action Plan 2023 – 2030 and the preparation of the next Universal Periodic Review Report.

The main objective of the visit was to invite inputs from the various Commissions of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly on issues pertaining to human rights in view of the drafting of these two major documents.

9. Cabinet has taken note of the situation of the COVID-19 pandemic prevailing in Mauritius. As at 02 February 2023, there were 10 active cases of COVID-19, out of which five were admitted at the New ENT Hospital. Over the period 26 January to 02 February 2023, no death was attributed to COVID-19.

10. Cabinet has taken note that there was no suspected case of mpox in Mauritius during the period 26 January to 02 February 2023.

11. Cabinet has taken note of the renewal of the contract of Mr Hariduth Chand Ramgoolam as Director of the Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund.

12. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the Board of the National Library with Mr Anish Khugputh as part-time Chairperson.
