

HIGHLIGHTS OF CABINET MEETING – FRIDAY 23 FEBRUARY 2024

1. Cabinet has taken note that the Sugar Insurance Fund (Reduced General Insurance Premium) Regulations 2024 would be promulgated with a view to exempting sugar cane planters and *métayers* producing up to 60 tonnes of sugar from the general and fire insurance premiums payable to the Sugar Insurance Fund Board for crop 2023.

2. Cabinet has agreed to the promulgation of the Civil Aviation (Amendment of Schedule) Regulations 2024 and the Civil Aviation (Amendment of Schedule) (No. 2) Regulations 2024 in relation to passenger fees.

3. Cabinet has agreed to the renewal of the Memorandum of Understanding on the collaboration between the Government of the Republic of Mauritius and the Singapore Cooperation Enterprise of the Republic of Singapore for a further period of 36 months. The following areas of cooperation would be covered under the Memorandum of Understanding -

- (a) Public Transportation;
- (b) Education;
- (c) eGovernment, ICT and Innovation;
- (d) Public Security;
- (e) Infrastructure Planning and Development;
- (f) Urban Planning and Development;
- (g) Renewable Energy and Sustainable Development;
- (h) Transport Planning and Removal of Congestion;
- (i) Supply Chain Management and Operations;
- (j) Water Management;
- (k) Port Management;
- (l) Public Sector Investment Programme;
- (m) Training and Capacity Building;
- (n) Public Sector and Parastatal Reform;
- (o) Aviation; and
- (p) Trade and Investment Promotion

4. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of a Protocol to amend the Double Taxation Avoidance Convention between the Government of the Republic of Mauritius and the Government of the Republic of India in order to comply with the Base Erosion and Profit Shifting minimum standards of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

5. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of the *Protocole d'entente pour la mise en oeuvre de L'Accord de Paris sur le climat* and the *Convention de Partenariat Fexte Tripartite* with the *Agence Française de Développement* (AFD).

The *Protocole d'entente pour la mise en oeuvre de L'Accord de Paris sur le climat*, which would be signed by the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development, the Ministry of National Infrastructure and Community Development and the AFD, would set out the terms and conditions for technical assistance to the Land Drainage Authority in the following areas –

- (a) dissemination and implementation of the Land Drainage Master Plan;
- (b) carrying out a feasibility study for the implementation of a flood management project in Flacq; and
- (c) developing a strategy to improve soil permeability, including guidelines for the spatial restructuring for areas particularly vulnerable to flooding.

The *Convention de Partenariat Fexte Tripartite* which would be signed by the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development, the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, the AFD and the *Bureau De Recherches Géologiques et Minières*, provide for the conduct of hydrological surveys in Rodrigues to improve underground water resource management.

6. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Blue Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping and the Directorate General of Lighthouses and Lightships (DGLL) of the Republic of India. The DGLL would assist Mauritius in the promotion of the “e-navigation” concept of the International Maritime Organization in Mauritian waters, through the use of advanced aids to navigation systems, such as the Differential Global Positioning System and virtual aids to navigation using the Automatic Identification System. The DGLL would also promote capacity building in the field of aids to navigation, through technical workshops, seminars and training.

7. Cabinet, inter alia, took note of the intervention of the Prime Minister at the 37th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union held on 17 and 18 February 2024, on the situation in Palestine where he highlighted that Mauritius voted in favour of a resolution adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2022 requesting the International Court of Justice to give an advisory opinion on the ongoing violation by Israel of the rights of the Palestinian people. Mauritius had made a written submission to the International Court of Justice and would also participate in the oral proceedings.

Cabinet further took note that on 22 February 2024, Mauritius made oral submissions to the International Court of Justice which was currently holding hearings in the context of the United Nations General Assembly request for an advisory opinion on the legal consequences arising from the policies and practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.

8. Cabinet has taken note that 11 para-athletes participated in three international para-athletics meetings, namely the Sharjah International Open Para Athletics Meeting, the Khorfakkan 1st World Para Athletics International Meeting and the Dubai World Para Athletics Grand Prix from 04 to 15 February 2024.

Mauritius won a total of 46 medals, including 17 gold, 14 silver and 15 bronze. Three para-athletes, namely Noemi Alphonse, Anais Angeline and Eddy Capdor set five African records. Two para-athletes, namely Roberto Michel and Cedric Ravet set six National records.

9. Cabinet has taken note that following the christening ceremony of MV Peros Banhos on 28 February 2024, the vessel would depart from Port Louis harbour on 01 March 2024 and reach Rodrigues on 03 March 2024. A welcoming ceremony of MV Peros Banhos would be organised on that day at Port Mathurin, comprising, inter alia, a water salute by accompanying tugs of the Mauritius Ports Authority of Rodrigues and prayers on the wharf by priests of different faiths.

10. Cabinet has taken note that the Request for Proposals for the Urban Terminal Project at La Vigie, Curepipe, would be launched shortly. The Ministry of Local Government and Disaster Risk Management would invite proposals from promoters having the necessary experience, expertise and resources for the development and operation of an integrated Urban Terminal at La Vigie, Curepipe.

11. Cabinet has agreed to the implementation of the following projects by the National Development Unit –

- (a) construction of drain at Tout Court and Elias Coowar Streets, Wootun;
- (b) construction of drain network at Residence Les Jasmins NHDC, Forest Side - Phase 1; and
- (c) construction of left-hand side cut-off drain at Camp Thorel - Phase 2C.

12. Cabinet has taken note of the status of housing projects and rehabilitation works being implemented by the National Housing Development Co. Ltd. The construction of 138 housing units had been completed at Mare D'Albert and the construction of the remaining 65 units, related infrastructural works and a multipurpose hall was expected to be completed in April 2024. The construction of 115 housing units and associated infrastructure works at La Valette Site 1 and the construction of 108 housing units, a community centre and associated infrastructure works at La Valette adjoining Site 2 were expected to be completed by the end of April/early May 2024.

Rehabilitation works to existing wastewater network and ancillary works had been completed on six housing estates, namely Dagotière (Résidence Les Dagquets and Résidence L'Assurance), Notre Dame (Résidence Baillache), Nouvelle France, Riambel and Tyack. Waterproofing works had been completed at Cité Atlée (Les Jasmins) and Camp Levieux housing estates in November 2023 and December 2023, respectively. Similar works were ongoing at Beau Vallon and La Tour Koenig housing estates and were expected to be completed in March and May 2024, respectively.

13. Cabinet has taken note of the situation following the passage of cyclone Eleanor, namely –

- (a) obstructions had been cleared and all main roads were practicable;
- (b) the Mauritius Fire and Rescue Service intervened on 85 different occasions island-wide;
- (c) 166 evacuee centres were opened on 22 February 2024 and evacuees were present in 37 centres. In the morning of 23 February 2024, all evacuees had left the centres;
- (d) all water treatment plants were currently operational, except for Rivière du Poste and Mont Blanc. All wastewater treatment plants and pumping stations were operational. Faults registered on 66kv and 22kv lines had been cleared and re-energized. Some 62 individual faults across the island were being attended to and were expected to be cleared on 23 February 2024;

- (e) the Airport resumed its operations as from 1845 hours on 22 February 2024 and around 75 flight movements were expected on 22 and 23 February 2024. The Port had been opened to shipping activities at the port terminal and outer anchorage at 0530 hours on 23 February 2024. However, no cargo handling operations could be effected at the container terminal due to swells of about 1m80 which were not favourable for berthing of vessels; and
- (f) a preliminary assessment had been carried out by the Food and Agricultural Research and Extension Institute in the agricultural sector and the estimated damage to food crops cultivation island-wide was around 5 percent, mostly in fine herbs, greens and crops at seedlings stage. There was no impact on greenhouses that were in production. A full survey would be carried out.

14. Cabinet has taken note that, as at 21 February 2024, there were 520 active cases of Dengue Fever in Mauritius, of which 74 had been hospitalised in both public and private hospitals. For Rodrigues, 305 active cases of Dengue Fever had been recorded as at 21 February 2024, of which 10 were hospitalised. The Ministry of Health and Wellness, in collaboration with various stakeholders, was pursuing fogging, larviciding and vector control activities across the island. In addition, a mass sensitisation campaign was being carried out.

15. Cabinet has taken note of the recent visit of Professor Balaji Subramoniam Muthiah, Director of the Balaji Dental and Craniofacial Hospital from India who had been collaborating with the Ministry of Health and Wellness. Since 2005, he has operated on more than 200 complex maxillofacial surgical cases at Victoria Hospital and Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam National Hospital and donated brackets and titanium reconstruction plates for the benefit of Mauritian patients. He was accompanied by Professor Deepak Chandrasekharan who reviewed and treated complex orthodontic cases. During his last visit, Professor Balaji carried out a Continuing Professional Development Event for medical and paramedical personnel, reviewed 79 follow-up as well as new patients and operated on nine complex cases at Victoria Hospital.

16. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent participation of the Minister of Arts and Cultural Heritage in the UNESCO World Conference on Culture and Arts Education in Abu Dhabi. The objective of the Conference was to mobilise political commitment around culture and arts education as a powerful lever to transform learning and shape critical skills for future generations. Member States and Associate Members were empowered through dialogue, to adopt the UNESCO Framework for Culture and Arts Education. The Framework provides a set of guiding principles to be followed for shaping and further institutionalising culture and arts education. The Minister had bilateral meetings, inter alia, with the Director for Cultural Policies and Development and the Assistant Director-General for Culture of UNESCO.

17. Cabinet has taken note of the renewal of the contractual employment of Mr Satish Purmessur as Chief Executive Officer of the Mauritius Cane Industry Authority.

18. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the Medical Negligence Standing Committee with Mr Prasanjeet Seenauth, Barrister-at-Law, as part-time Chairperson.
