

HIGHLIGHTS OF CABINET MEETING – FRIDAY 06 MAY 2022

1. Cabinet has agreed to the introduction of the Supplementary Appropriation (2020-2021) (No. 3) Bill into the National Assembly. The object of the Bill is to provide for the supplementary appropriation, by votes of expenditure, both recurrent and capital, in respect of services of Government for the financial year 2020-2021, in excess of the expenditure appropriated by the Appropriation (2020-2021) Act 2020, the Supplementary Appropriation (2020-2021) Act 2021 and the Supplementary Appropriation (2020-2021) (No. 2) Act 2021.

2. Cabinet has agreed to extending –

- (a) the variation of the Public Service Vehicle Licence held by contract bus operators involved in the conveyance of tourists up to 31 December 2022 so as to allow them to convey employees;
- (b) the replacement age of Standard and Executive vehicles used for the conveyance of tourists from 8 to 10 years and from 12 to 14 years, respectively as regards replacement due within financial year 2022/2023;
- (c) as an administrative measure, the delay for the implementation of a Public Service Vehicle Licence in respect of a contract bus, a contract car and a taxi up to 31 December 2022; and
- (d) as an administrative measure, the timeframe to replace a contract bus, a contract car and a taxi up to 31 December 2022.

3. Cabinet has taken note that the Minister of Health and Wellness would make the Dental Council (Medical Institutions) (Amendment No. 2) Regulations 2022 for the recognition and listing of Dr D. Y. Patil Vidyapeeth, Pune in India as a dental institution.

4. Cabinet has taken note that in order to further promote freeport trade and to position Mauritius as a logistics, marketing and distribution hub in the region, the Freeport (Amendment of Schedule) Regulations 2022 would be promulgated to include a new Freeport Zone of an extent of 15,870m².

5. Cabinet has taken note of the logo selected for the 12th edition of the *Commission de la Jeunesse et des Sports de l'Océan Indien* (CJSOI) Games, which would be held in Mauritius from 04 to 11 December 2022.

The Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Sports and Recreation would organise a ceremony for the unveiling of the logo on 06 May 2022 at the Côte d'Or National Sports Complex. A cash prize of Rs25,000 would be awarded to the winner of the logo competition.

6. Cabinet has agreed to an upward revision of bus fares and light rail fares. Appropriate Regulations would be made to that effect.

7. Cabinet has agreed to the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security setting up the Man and Biosphere (MAB) National Committee to ensure the implementation and management of the Black River Gorges – Bel Ombre Biosphere Reserve. The MAB Programme is an intergovernmental scientific programme launched in 1971 by UNESCO aiming at establishing a scientific basis for the improvement of relationships between people and their environment. The MAB National Committee would be chaired by the Senior Chief Executive of the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security.

8. Cabinet has taken note of the main findings and recommendations of the Court of Investigation on the casualty at sea of the tug "Sir Gaetan" on 31 August 2020, chaired by Mr Joseph Gérard Angoh, GOSK, former Puisne Judge.

A Ministerial Committee, chaired by the Prime Minister and comprising the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Local Government and Disaster Risk Management, the Minister of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change, the Attorney General, Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security and the Minister of Blue Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping would be set up to examine the recommendations of the Court of Investigation and come up with the way forward for the effective implementation thereof.

9. Cabinet has taken note of the initiatives currently being taken by the Ministry of Health and Wellness with regard to the upcoming implementation of the Food Fortification Programme in Mauritius. The Mauritius Nutrition Survey 2012 showed that the prevalence of anaemia is highest in females aged 20 to 49 years (33.6 percent), followed by those aged 12 to 19 years (28.5 percent). It is also revealed that iron deficiency with or without anaemia has adverse consequences on human health and development.

In Mauritius, wheat flour is the most commonly consumed staple and is the most appropriate food vehicle for inclusion in a fortification programme. The objectives of a mandatory wheat flour fortification programme, amongst others, are to -

- (a) reduce nutritional anaemia in female adolescents from 28.5 percent to 10 percent as specified in the National Plan of Action for Nutrition 2016-2020; and
- (b) achieve the global nutrition target of reducing anaemia by 50 percent by 2025.

In order to set up a Food Fortification Programme relevant to the local context, technical assistance was sought from the Southern African Development Community. Two consultants from the Food Fortification Initiative, who were in Mauritius in February 2022, have submitted a draft report on the Wheat Flour Fortification Landscape Analysis. The draft Report was being examined.

10. Cabinet has taken note of the activities being organised by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare for the International Day of Families commemorated on 15 May. The theme retained by the United Nations for this year is "Families and Urbanisation". The theme retained by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare is "*Avek enn fami ini, nou pou resi*". The Ministry would conduct a sustained media campaign through television, radio and social media on 10 themes.

The Ministry would, in collaboration with –

- (a) the Mauritius Family Planning and Welfare Association, shortly launch a fertility awareness and couple consolidation campaign;
- (b) the Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology, organise mural painting competitions under the theme "*Anou grandi san violans*" for pupils of primary schools and the theme for students of secondary school is "*Violans: Zero Tolerans*"; and
- (c) the Ministry of Tourism, the Ministry of Commerce and Consumer Protection and the Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry, arrange for discounted prices on a wide variety of products in supermarkets, in food outlets, on pharmaceutical products and electronic products as well as discounted prices for entrance and activities in leisure parks. The special prices would be offered from 15 May to 15 June 2022.

11. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare, in collaboration with the European Delegation in Mauritius, had commissioned an updated sector wise Gender Country Profile (GCP) Report with a view to identifying the needs and gaps that should be addressed in the future actions of the EU delegation as well as Government policies.

The Gender Country Profile forms part of the Multi-Annual Indicative Programme of the European Union which is being formulated for the period 2021-2027 for the determination of a country allocation under the new EU financing instrument - Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument. During the drafting of the Report, consultations were held with various stakeholders.

The findings of the study reveal that significant progress has been made towards removing formal barriers to achieving gender equality and that Mauritius continues to make progress in advancing women's and girls' rights. The Gender Country Profile for the Republic of Mauritius includes an updated sector wise gender gap analysis in line with the EU Gender Action Plan (GAP) III which seeks to catalyse progress on empowering women and girls and safeguard gains made on gender equality since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and its Platform for Action.

The Report would be launched by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare in collaboration with the European Union during the European Week, scheduled from 09 to 13 May 2022.

12. Cabinet has taken note of the situation of the COVID-19 pandemic prevailing across the world. Some 515.3 million cases have been reported globally, of which 470 million persons have been successfully treated.

With regard to Mauritius, as at 04 May 2022, there were 252 active cases of COVID-19, out of which eight were admitted at the New ENT Hospital. Over the period 28 April to 04 May 2022, two deaths were attributed to COVID-19.

Cabinet has also taken note of progress in the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme, including the administration of the booster dose in the Republic of Mauritius.

13. Cabinet has agreed to the holding of the next International Conference on Fruit Fly in Mauritius in April/May 2024. The Conference would be organised by the Tephritisid Workers of Europe, Africa and Middle East (TEAM). The TEAM Work group is an international consortium of more than 300 scientists, Governmental officers and stakeholders conducting research on and management of tephritisid fruit flies.

Fruit flies are considered one of the major pest groups affecting production and trade in horticultural produce such as fruits and vegetables. Around 150 international fruit fly researchers from countries in Europe, Africa and the Middle East were expected to participate in the Conference.

14. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the meeting which the Minister of Land Transport and Light Rail, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade had with HE Mr R. Randriamandrato, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Madagascar during his recent visit to Mauritius in the context of Madagascar's chairmanship of the Indian Ocean Commission.

Issues such as food security, the development of an industrial zone in Madagascar, air connectivity and response to natural disasters were, inter alia, discussed.

15. Cabinet has taken note of the official visit of the Minister of Industrial Development, SMEs and Cooperatives to Rodrigues. The Minister had a meeting with the Chief Commissioner and discussed existing and potential areas of cooperation and collaboration. The role and presence of SME Mauritius Ltd in Rodrigues as a service provider to SMEs was also highlighted as well as the importance of having efficient cooperative societies.

The Minister inaugurated the SME Mauritius Ltd Headquarters at Malabar. The refurbished building would enable Rodriguan entrepreneurs to benefit from the same services and logistics as their Mauritian counterparts. He also had a meeting with the staff of the Cooperatives Commission and some Rodriguan Cooperators. The aim of the meeting was to explain the re-engineering of the Cooperatives Division, take cognisance of the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the Cooperative sector and provide insight as to the prospects and avenues available in addressing the challenges in collaboration with the Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

16. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the Pharmacy Council of Mauritius for period May 2022 to April 2025.
