

HIGHLIGHTS OF CABINET MEETING – FRIDAY 01 OCTOBER 2021

1. Cabinet has taken note of the initiatives being taken by the Ministry of Tourism and the Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority for the relaunch of the tourism sector in view of the full reopening of the Mauritian borders as from 01 October 2021.

2. Cabinet has taken note that a Digital Vaccination Pass has been developed to provide the population with the opportunity to download and store their digital vaccination pass for verification as and when required by relevant authorities. The vaccination pass has a QR code containing the vaccination details of the individual which may be scanned by authorised institutions seeking the vaccination status of the person. The vaccination pass may be accessed on <https://besafemoris.mu/> by registering the Identity Number and a valid mobile number or through the beSafeMoris mobile application and the MoKloud platform on <https://mokloud.govmu.org/>

For queries regarding the Digital Vaccination Pass, the public is requested to call on 4013060 on weekdays from 08 45 hours to 20 00 hours and during weekends from 08 45 hours to 16 00 hours or to send an email on passvaksinal@govmu.org

3. Cabinet has agreed to the adoption of the National Gender Policy (2021-2030). The objective of the National Gender Policy (2021-2030) is to agree on robust guidelines that would pave the way for Government to integrate gender in all the spheres of development. The Policy is based on fundamental human rights, approaches of equality and non-discrimination, transparency and accountability, respect and dignity, and inclusivity. It would apply to both the state and non-state actors. The Policy would enable all stakeholders to develop their gender policies for implementation at sectoral and institutional levels.

4. Cabinet has taken note of the implementation of schemes for the planters/farmers community by the Food and Agricultural Research and Extension Institute (FAREI), namely –

- (a) the grant for purchase of bird nets – a grant of 75 percent on the cost of purchase of bird nets would be provided to households (for a maximum of five fruit bearing trees) and to orchards (a maximum of 12 rolls per orchard);
- (b) the refund on purchase of sheltered farming net/plastic cover – the purpose of the scheme is to encourage the repairs/replacement of damaged plastic covers and nets in greenhouses and net houses after adverse climatic conditions. A sum of a grant of 50 percent of the cost up to a maximum of Rs50,000 would be provided for the purchase of sheltered farming nets and plastic covers;

- (c) the grant for purchase of packaging and design equipment for agro-entrepreneurs – packaging and labelling would be included in the scheme for the purchase of agricultural/processing equipment so as to support agro-entrepreneurs for the purchase of good quality, innovative equipment and biodegradable packaging; and
- (d) grant for the purchase and installation of Solar Powered Cold Room – a grant of 50 percent up to a maximum of Rs400,000 would be provided to eligible beneficiaries for the purchase and installation of solar powered cold rooms. Registered farmers, cooperative societies, agricultural companies and farmers' associations operating in the agro-industrial sector and engaged in production of food crops on a minimum extent of one hectare and having a maximum annual turnover of Rs5M would be eligible to apply for this scheme.

5. Cabinet has taken note that the Mauritius Cane Industry Authority has published a first post-harvest report on sugar cane crop 2021. The harvest of sugar cane for crop year 2021 started on 14 June 2021. The sugar production is estimated to be around 268,000T.

6. Cabinet has taken note of the participation of Mauritius at Dubai Expo 2020 which is being held from 01 October 2021 to 31 March 2022. The Dubai Expo 2020 would be the first largest international business meet since the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic and would be the world's greatest show. The Dubai Expo 2020 is being organised under the theme "*Connecting Minds, Creating the Future*", being expressed into three sub-themes: '*Mobility, Sustainability, and Opportunity*'. The theme for the Mauritian Pavilion is "*Roots of the Future*".

7. Cabinet has agreed to the revised Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) for the Republic of Mauritius being submitted to the Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The key recommendations for the mitigation sectors include –

- (a) energy: the production of 60 percent of energy needs from green sources by 2030, the total phasing out of the use of coal before 2030, increasing energy efficiency by 10 percent based on the 2019 figures;
- (b) transport: extension of the light rail network by 2022, phasing out of subsidies and incentives for the importation of diesel buses and increase of subsidy for the purchase of electric vehicles; and
- (c) waste: the diversion of 70 percent of waste from the landfill by 2030 including through composting plants, sorting units, biogas plants and waste-to-energy plants.

The key recommendations for the adaptation sectors include -

- (i) infrastructure and disaster risk reduction: enhanced protection of infrastructure, through a better understanding of disaster risk and implementation of a disaster risk strategy and greening of buildings;
- (ii) water: improved forecasting, management protection and quality of water resources, procurement and installation of rainwater harvesting systems and for Rodrigues, strengthening the development of rainwater harvesting and small desalination plants; and
- (iii) agriculture: development of an integrated strategy and policy to foster adoption of integrated Pest and Disease Management practices, investment in water infrastructure to support irrigation projects and development of a policy framework to enhance access to and productive use of water in the agricultural sector.

8. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in the field of education between the Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology and the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China. The Memorandum of Understanding is geared towards cooperation in the field of Technical Education, Special Education Needs and Tertiary Education and the collaboration would, inter alia, provide an opportunity for –

- (a) exchanges between higher education institutions and education experts of both countries as well as sharing of knowledge for a cross-fertilisation of ideas;
- (b) allocation of 35 scholarships to Mauritian students at undergraduate and post graduate levels on a yearly basis;
- (c) both sides to work on the mutual recognition of qualifications; and
- (d) continued support in the teaching of Modern Chinese language by providing assistance to the Mauritian teachers of Modern Chinese and deploying Volunteer Chinese Teachers in a bid to address the scarcity of such teachers in Primary Schools.

9. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Blue Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping and the Republic of Namibia. The objective of the Memorandum of Understanding is to set up a framework for the enhancement of cooperation in the field of inland fisheries management and marine aquaculture. It would provide, amongst others, for mutual cooperation in the following areas –

- (a) aquaculture research and development;

- (b) marine aquaculture (culture of fish, oyster, seaweed and abalone species and techniques, seed production and feed production and management);
- (c) training and human resource development;
- (d) exchange of information and technology transfer;
- (e) development of innovative fishing techniques; and
- (f) collaboration on monitoring, control and surveillance and to combat Illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing in their respective Exclusive Economic Zone through information sharing.

10. Cabinet has taken note that an Order would be issued by the Commissioner of Police, by way of a notice, to prescribe under the Police Act, the new uniform of the Mauritius Police Force.

11. Cabinet has taken note that the Minister of Health and Wellness has made the following Regulations –

- (a) the COVID-19 (Restriction of Access to Specified Institutions, Places and Premises) (Amendment No. 2) Regulations 2021 to allow for parents or guardians to accompany their children or wards for vaccination even though they themselves are not vaccinated;
- (b) the COVID-19 (Horse Race Meeting at Champ de Mars) (Amendment No. 7) Regulations 2021 to allow for the holding of horse race meetings for the month of October 2021; and
- (c) the Consolidated COVID-19 Regulations 2021 which would include all the provisions contained in the previous regulations as well as new ones. The Regulations provide, inter alia, for the reopening of health clubs, sports centres, cinema halls, social and municipal halls, places of worships, restaurants and food courts, among others. The Regulations also allow for persons attending certain functions such as weddings, funerals and religious ceremonies to be increased from 50 to 100 persons at a time. They would also include additional specified institutions, places and premises where it would now be mandatory for persons to be vaccinated to have access to.

12. Cabinet has taken note that three repatriation flights would be effected to Rodrigues during the month of October 2021. The passengers would be tested, inter alia, for COVID-19 prior to their departure and would undergo quarantine in Rodrigues.

13. Cabinet has taken note of the activities being organised by the Ministry of Arts and Cultural Heritage in collaboration with the Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund to commemorate the 187th Anniversary of the Arrival of Indentured Labourers in Mauritius on 02 November 2021. A solemn commemoration would be organised, comprising, inter alia, –

- (a) the annual ‘Yaj’ performed at the Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Site by the Aapravasi Ghat Indian Indenture (Girmitya) Arrival Celebrations Committee in collaboration with the Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund on 02 November 2021 from 08 00 hours to 09 00 hours;
- (b) the wreath laying ceremony by dignitaries, which would be held at the Trou Fanfaron Wharf next to the Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Site, as from 10 00 hours on the same day; and
- (c) the official launching of the Heritage Week at the Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Site, after the wreath laying ceremony. The Heritage Week would be opened to the public from 08 November to 12 November 2021 at the Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Site.

An outreach exhibition on ‘Indenture: History and Heritage’ would also be organised from 29 October to 02 November 2021 by the Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund in shopping malls.

14. Cabinet has taken note of the activities being organised by the Ministry of Arts and Cultural Heritage in collaboration with the National Art Gallery and the Mauritius Museums Council at the Natural History Museum on 06 October 2021. The following activities would be organised –

- (a) the launching of the website of the National Art Gallery followed by a Virtual Exhibition “*Rencontre Annuelle des Arts 2021*” at La Citadelle;
- (b) the vernissage of a Contemporary Art Exhibition on the theme “*Résonances*”. The exhibition at the Natural History Museum would be opened to the public from 07 October to 15 October 2021 from 09 00 hours to 16 00 hours excluding Sunday 10 October 2021;
- (c) the launching of Dodo Augmented Reality Experience which is an enhanced version of the physical world through the use of digital virtual elements, sound and other sensory stimuli; and
- (d) the symbolic remittance of cheques to two Artists whose artworks have been selected under the COVID-19 Artists Support Plan 2021.

15. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of a request for technical assistance under the Stolen Assets Recovery (StAR) Initiative following the publication of the Report of the Commission of Inquiry on the disposal of shares of BAI Company (Mauritius) Ltd in Britam Holdings Ltd (Kenya). The United Nations and the World Bank are willing to support Mauritius by developing the capacity of investigators and prosecutors and advising them on asset recovery strategies while assisting them in establishing relationships with relevant overseas jurisdictions to facilitate international cooperation.

16. Cabinet has taken note of the situation of the COVID-19 pandemic prevailing across the world. Some 234.1 million cases have been reported globally, of which 211.3 million persons have been successfully treated.

With regard to Mauritius, as at 30 September 2021, there were 1,418 active cases of COVID-19, out of which 33 were admitted at New ENT Hospital including five on ventilators. Over the period 23 to 30 September 2021, 19 deaths were attributed to COVID-19.

Cabinet has also taken note of progress in the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme. As at 30 September 2021, 858,856 persons had received a first dose of vaccine (representing 67.8 percent of the population). 800,316 persons had been fully vaccinated (representing 63.2 percent of the population). Johnson and Johnson vaccines have been sent to Agalega on board MV Mauritius Trochetia on 29 September 2021 for administration to the inhabitants.

17. Cabinet has taken note of the activities being organised by the Ministry of Local Government and Disaster Risk Management and the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Centre to mark the International Disaster Risk Reduction Day, commemorated on 13 October. The theme for this year is '*Substantially enhance international cooperation to developing countries through adequate and sustainable support to complement their national actions for implementation of the present (Sendai) Framework by 2030*'. The Ministry would organise the following activities –

- (a) a symbolic ceremony on 13 October 2021 at the Council Hall of the Municipal City Council of Port Louis;
- (b) a three days' workshop by the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure of India from 11 to 13 October 2021 to raise awareness and generate traction, commitment, and action on the importance of disaster resilient infrastructure;
- (c) sensitisation campaigns on disaster risk reduction and management across the island, and particularly in flood prone regions by Local Authorities, Police and Mauritius Fire and Rescue Service, and for people with disabilities;
- (d) MBC TV and Radio programmes in collaboration with the Citizen Support Unit, Land Drainage Authority, on 05 and 12 October 2021; and
- (e) simulation exercises and refresher courses of the Community Disaster Response Programme across all 12 Local Authorities from 11 October to 16 October 2021.

18. Cabinet has taken note of the activities that the Ministry of Health and Wellness would organise to mark World Mental Health Day 2021, observed on 10 October, namely –

- (a) the launching of activities at Mahebourg Hospital on 09 October 2021, including presentation of pamphlets on the following themes: schizophrenia, suicide, depression, bipolar disorder and anxiety;
- (b) capacity building of medical and para-medical staff of Brown Sequard Mental Health Care Centre on 11 October 2021; and
- (c) radio and TV Programmes to sensitise the population on mental health issues.

The theme for this year is “Mental Health in an Unequal World”.

19. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the Board of Trustees of the Media Trust with Mr Chayman P. Surajbali, PMSM as Chairperson.
