

HIGHLIGHTS OF CABINET MEETING – FRIDAY 12 AUGUST 2022

1. Cabinet has agreed to the promulgation of the Environment Protection (Control of Noise) Regulations 2022 and the Environment Protection (Environmental Standards for Noise) Regulations 2022. The Environment Protection (Control of Noise) Regulations 2022 would, inter alia, provide for the following -

- (a) additional powers to an authorised officer or the enforcing agency to serve a Fixed Penalty Notice of Rs10,000 on any person for making or causing noise to be made, emanating from a building or premises, including noise nuisances from a vehicle such as playing of loud music or noise caused by exhaust pipe or modified motor engines;
- (b) where the person making or causing the noise to be made in a building or premises cannot be ascertained at the material time, an authorised officer or the enforcing agency would be empowered to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice of Rs10,000 on the owner of that building or premises who shall be presumed to have made or caused to be made the noise; and
- (c) any person who fails to pay the fixed penalty of Rs10,000 within the prescribed delay, would, upon conviction, be liable to pay a fine not less than thrice the fixed penalty amount.

In the Environment Protection (Environmental Standards for Noise) Regulations 2022, the meaning of “neighbourhood noise” would be reviewed to also include noise emitted from domestic premises as well as from halls, multipurpose halls and wedding halls, used to accommodate various types of events, places of entertainment, mechanical devices or equipment.

2. Cabinet has taken note that the Insurance (Amendment) Regulations 2022 would be promulgated. Amendments to the Insurance Act, including the introduction of a fifth class of business pertaining to Structured Investment-Linked Insurance Business in the First Schedule to the Act, have already been brought through the Finance (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2022.

The Insurance Regulations 2007 are being amended to exempt the structured investment-linked policies, as is the case for an external insurer, from the provisions in Regulation 7(1), which provides that an insurer –

- (a) shall at all times keep invested in Mauritius an amount of at least 50 percent; and
- (b) may invest outside Mauritius an amount not exceeding 50 percent, of its technical provisions in respect of insurance business in Mauritius.

3. Cabinet has agreed to the ratification by Mauritius, of the following two Treaties –

- (a) Treaty between the Republic of the Mauritius and the People's Republic of China on Extradition; and
- (b) Treaty between the Republic of the Mauritius and the People's Republic of China on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters.

The two Treaties were signed on 02 September 2018 in China and when ratified by both parties would pave the way towards effective cooperation between both countries in respect of extradition and mutual legal assistance in criminal matters, on the basis of mutual respect for sovereignty, equality and mutual benefit.

4. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Economic Development Board (EDB) Mauritius and the Trade Promotion Organization of Iran. The Memorandum of Understanding would consolidate EDB's market development and diversification strategies and help to collaborate, inter alia, in the following areas –

- (a) investment promotion in export-oriented manufacturing, light engineering, agro-processing, pharmaceuticals, healthcare, freeport and logistics, ICT, construction, hospitality, education and film industry, amongst others;
- (b) trade promotion with focus on exploring the Islamic Republic of Iran as a potential export market for made in Mauritius products such as textile and apparel, special sugars, processed foods, medical devices and jewellery, amongst others; and
- (c) encouraging Iranian companies to use Mauritius for manufacture of consumer goods for exports and benefit from preferential market access, mainly to Southern and Eastern Africa.

5. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of a Memorandum of Cooperation between the Financial Services Commission and the Mauritius Police Force with a view to establishing a framework for cooperation and coordination. The Memorandum of Cooperation provides for the authorities to collaborate, in accordance with their respective legal framework and obligations, with respect to, inter alia, the following forms of mutual assistance –

- (a) general cooperation efforts in the investigation of offences falling under their purview;
- (b) coordination of their enquiries where there are cross-cutting issues;
- (c) the sharing of knowledge in relation to techniques and best practices for information gathering; and
- (d) the promotion of awareness and the organisation of educational events in relation to the activities of the authorities.

6. Cabinet has agreed to Mauritius adhering to the Second Additional Protocol to the Convention on Cybercrime of the Council of Europe on enhanced co-operation and disclosure of electronic evidence. In November 2021, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted the said Protocol.

The aim of the Protocol is to provide tools for enhanced international co-operation in the field of cybercrime investigations and the collection of evidence in electronic form of a criminal offence for the purpose of specific criminal investigations or proceedings through –

- (a) provisions for direct co-operation with private sector entities (with service providers for subscriber information and with registrars for domain name registration information) in other Parties;
- (b) expedited co-operation in emergency situations; and
- (c) tools for more efficient mutual assistance.

7. Cabinet has agreed on the measures being initiated by the Ministry of Health and Wellness in regard to the introduction of the new National HIV Testing Services and Policy which has been developed with the collaboration of the World Health Organization. The Policy is aligned with the HIV National Action Plan and the UNAIDS Fast Track targets aiming to end AIDS by 2030. The vision encapsulated in the Policy is to ensure an enabling environment where all persons living in the Republic of Mauritius can access quality HIV testing services.

8. Cabinet has taken note that the European Union would provide support to fight online child sexual exploitation through training and capacity building exercises. The support would be given under two ongoing programmes, namely GLACY+ project and OCTOPUS. GLACY is the Global Action on Cybercrime and it is managed by the Council of Europe. The first training sessions would be held towards the end of October 2022.

9. Cabinet has taken note of the Intelligent Information Management for Food Security (INFINITY) project which would be implemented by the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security in collaboration with the University of Mauritius.

The project outcome includes the adoption of information management concepts and techniques like artificial intelligence, automation approaches, and Blockchain Technology, to provide relevant information throughout the food value chain starting from production to sales and including waste management. The project which aims at improving access to information to farmers and Mauritian Agro-Entrepreneurs who are the major stakeholders would be implemented over a four-year period from year 2022 to 2025 and would be funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research of Germany and the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst.

10. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Financial Services and Good Governance would issue the Audit Committee Charter which has been prepared by the Office of Public Sector Governance. The Office of Public Sector Governance has reviewed the Audit Committee Charter, in light of the recommendations made by the National Audit Office on the “*Effectiveness of Internal Control and Audit Committees in Ministries and Departments*”. The revised Audit Committee Charter would be circulated by the Office of Public Sector Governance to all Ministries and Departments for guidance.

11. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the Regional Technical Committee for the “Enhancing Maritime Connectivity Project” (EMCP) held in Mauritius recently. The EMCP is funded by the Government of Japan and the participating countries are the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) Member States. The first phase of the project has been completed. It aims at enhancing maritime connectivity amongst the beneficiary countries through –

- (a) country-level maritime transport diagnoses;
- (b) the development of a Data Service on Shipping and Trade; and
- (c) the design of a Maritime Single Window for the South West Indian Ocean region.

The IOC has prepared a medium-term programme which includes a regional trade data service and a regional maritime shipping service which would be led by a Regional Technical Committee.

12. Cabinet has taken note of the holding of the Oil Spill Response/Incident Command System Training Workshop in Mauritius from 22 to 26 August 2022. A team of trainers from the US Africa Command (AFRICOM) having vast experience in oil spill and casualty response would conduct the training workshop on -

- (a) oil spill response;
- (b) dealing with mass casualty at sea involving a cruise vessel; and
- (c) response to hazardous materials incidents, including radioactive materials.

The overall objective of the training programme would be to further strengthen the capacities of all stakeholders in handling future oil spills.

13. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the working session the Minister of Land Transport and Light Rail, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade had with HE Ambassador Xu Jinghu, Special Representative of the People’s Republic of China for African Affairs. She was recently on official visit to Mauritius as part of an African tour as well as in the context of the celebration of 50 years of diplomatic relations between Mauritius and the People’s Republic of China.

The working session reviewed the status of the bilateral relations and both sides expressed mutual appreciation for the excellent and friendly ties that exist between the two countries. The Chinese side also renewed its support to Mauritius on the sovereignty of Mauritius on the Chagos Archipelago including at the multilateral and regional levels. The working session was followed by the launch of a commemorative stamp and envelopes as well as a Souvenir Magazine tracing the 50 years of diplomatic history prepared by the Chinese Embassy, in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade and other Chinese civil society organisations in Mauritius.

14. Cabinet has taken note that Mauritius would host the 38th Annual General Meeting of the Board of Governors of the Eastern and Southern African Trade and Development Bank Group (TDB), on 24 and 25 August 2022. Mauritius would be assuming the role of Chairperson of the Board of Governors, in line with the Board of Governors' Rules of Procedure and the provisions of the TDB Charter.

The inauguration of TDB Group Principle Office in Ebène and the launching of the TDB Captive Insurance Company would also be held during the Meeting. The Finance Ministers of 24 Member countries of the TDB have been invited to participate in the Meeting.

15. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Health and Wellness would organise a Conference on Colorectal Cancer Screening on 12 and 13 September 2022. The Conference would involve the participation of experts from the United Kingdom to guide the health care professionals on the design of a sustainable programme for Colorectal Cancer Screening in Mauritius. The main objectives of the Conference would be to -

- (a) design a Colorectal Cancer Screening Programme for Mauritius;
- (b) educate the local doctors on the screening of Colorectal Cancer;
- (c) develop a large-scale screening strategy;
- (d) develop a strategy for encouraging people at risk to be tested and treated; and
- (e) develop ties with world experts who would provide the Ministry of Health and Wellness with updated knowledge on Colorectal Cancer.

16. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Health and Wellness, in collaboration with the International Atomic Energy Agency, would hold a local training programme on "Mosquito Mass Production using Sterile Insect Techniques" from 22 to 26 August 2022. The purpose of the mission is to equip the national team with relevant knowledge and expertise on standard communication skills applied to mosquito Sterile Insect Technique programmes and how to sensitise the population on the Sterile Release Technique.

The training programme would contribute to a reduction in the incidence of *Aedes albopictus* mosquito (vector of Dengue and Chikungunya) and an improvement in the quality of life of residents and visiting tourists. The training also aims at producing, radio-sterilising and releasing large numbers of sterile *Aedes albopictus* male mosquitoes on a sustained basis in a target locality. This measure would eventually lead to the biological reduction of the vector species.

17. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Sports and Recreation would organise a three-day activity to commemorate the International Youth Day 2022 from 12 to 14 August 2022. The International Youth Day is celebrated each year on 12 August around a theme chosen by the United Nations. The theme for this year is "Intergenerational Solidarity: Creating a World for All ages". The Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Sports and Recreation would organise a Youth Meet from 12 to 14 August 2022, at the Côte d'Or National Sports Complex, to mark the Day.

A Youth Summit would also be held at the VIP Lounge of the Côte d'Or National Sports Complex. The Youth Summit is an initiative of the Youth Ambassadors, who operate under the aegis of the Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Sports and Recreation. This Summit would provide a platform for young people to express their views and advocate on live youth matters such as mental health, access to quality education, climate change, environment, and to come up with proposed solutions.

18. Cabinet has taken note of the activities that the Human Rights Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade would organise, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, to mark the World Humanitarian Day 2022 on 19 August 2022, including -

- (a) the Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology has organised an essay competition for students of grades 10 to 13 on the subject;
- (b) the Police Department would organise a Social Outreach Programme at Care Homes, visits to elderly persons and Support Programme with fishermen;
- (c) the Mauritius Fire and Rescue Service would produce a video to showcase the contribution of its officers during the COVID-19 pandemic as well as assistance provided during cyclones and floods; and
- (d) the National Women's Council would carry out a working session on the "*Emergency Preparedness for the Pandemic*", with the participation of the National Human Rights Commission.

19. Cabinet has taken note that HE Ms Louise Mushikiwabo, Secretary-General of the *Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie* (OIF), would be on official visit to Mauritius from 07 to 10 September 2022. The visit would be an opportunity for the Secretary-General to brief Mauritian dignitaries on the full breadth of OIF multilateral cooperation activities and to discuss specific areas of partnership between Mauritius and the OIF. She is also expected to have an exchange on preparations for the incoming Summit of the OIF to be held in Tunisia, in November 2022.

20. Cabinet has taken note of the names of storms and cyclones which would be used in the South-West Indian Ocean during the Cyclone Season 2022 - 2023. The list of names of cyclones is valid from 01 July 2022 to 30 June 2023.

21. Cabinet has taken note of the visit of the Jawaharlal Nehru Manipur Dance Academy and the Hussain Brothers to Mauritius from 14 to 18 August 2022 and from 20 to 23 August 2022, respectively, in the context of the 75th Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations between the Republic of Mauritius and the Republic of India. During their visit, the artists of the Jawaharlal Nehru Manipur Dance Academy would give three performances of "Raas Lila" and "*Martial Arts of Manipura*", on -

- (a) Monday 15 August 2022 at the Indira Gandhi Centre for Indian Culture (IGCIC) Auditorium, Phoenix;
- (b) Tuesday 16 August 2022 at the Mahatma Gandhi Institute Auditorium, Moka; and
- (c) Wednesday 17 August 2022 at the Serge Constantin Theatre, Vacoas.

The Hussain Brothers, namely Ustad Ahmed Hussain and Ustad Mohammed Hussain, two renowned ghazal singers from Jaipur, Rajasthan, would give a unique performance on Sunday 21 August 2022 at the IGCIC Auditorium.

22. Cabinet has taken note of the status regarding the filling of vacancies in Ministries/Departments as well as in the Local Authorities for the financial year 2021/2022 as at 30 June 2022.

23. Cabinet has taken note of the contents of the 2020 Report on "Statistics in Mauritius: A Gender Approach", which has been prepared by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare in collaboration with Statistics Mauritius. It is based on sex-disaggregated data for the year 2020, collected on the demographic characteristics relating to health, education, economic characteristics, public life and decision making, disability, poverty and social welfare, gender-based and family violence, and crime and security, amongst others.

The Report would be disseminated to all stakeholders, including policy makers, researchers, academicians and students

24. Cabinet has taken note of the situation of the COVID-19 pandemic prevailing across the world. Some 592.6 million cases have been reported globally, of which 564.4 million persons have been successfully treated. With regard to Mauritius, as at 10 August 2022, there were 210 active cases of COVID-19, out of which 30 were admitted at the New ENT Hospital. Over the period 04 to 10 August 2022, four deaths were attributed to COVID-19.

25. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the participation of the Minister of Youth Empowerment, Sports and Recreation in the 10th Commonwealth Sports Ministers Meeting held recently in the margins of the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham, UK. The theme of the meeting was “Creating an Inclusive and Resilient Sport Sector: Enhancing the Contribution of Sport to the Sustainable Development Goals”. The Meeting focused on how to maximise sports potential and to better bounce back from the COVID-19 pandemic. The issues discussed included –

- (a) accelerating the Implementation of Key Policies to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
- (b) Human Rights and Inclusivity in Sports;
- (c) promoting Investment in Sports; and
- (d) showcasing Innovation in Sports.

The Minister made a statement on the actions undertaken by Government to promote sports and physical activity to combat non-communicable diseases among the population.

As regards the 2022 Commonwealth Games, Mr Richarno Colin won a silver medal in Boxing (Light Welterweight). Mauritius has won, for the first time, a total of five medals.

26. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the National Women’s Council, with Mrs Sangheeta Saulick, as part-time Chairperson.
