

## **HIGHLIGHTS OF CABINET MEETING – FRIDAY 30 MAY 2025**

1. Cabinet has taken note that a meeting had been chaired by the Prime Minister on 29 May 2025, in the presence of the Deputy Prime Minister, the Attorney-General, senior officials and three representatives of the Chagossian community to discuss arrangements to be put in place for a high-level delegation visit to the Chagos Archipelago.

The Prime Minister would lead the high-level delegation which would comprise, inter alia, the Deputy Prime Minister, the Attorney-General and the Minister of Gender Equality and Family Welfare as well as representatives of the Chagossian community. A technical committee would be set up to look into the organisational aspect of the visit.

The Inter-Ministerial Committee set up to look into the implementation of projects on the Chagos Archipelago would be chaired by the Prime Minister and would comprise the Deputy Prime Minister, the Attorney-General, the Minister of Gender Equality and Family Welfare and three representatives of the Chagossian community.

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2. Cabinet has taken note that the Local Government Service Commission was proceeding with the filling, as a matter of priority, of 2,245 existing funded vacancies in the Workmen Class/Minor Grades to ensure no disruption in the essential services of Local Authorities, following the termination of the temporary employment of the 1,463 employees. The Local Government Service Commission has published the vacancies in the Workmen's Class/Minor Grades for Local Authorities on the website of the Commission and in the press, as from 28 May 2025.

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3. Cabinet has taken note of measures being implemented by the Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change, the Ministry of Housing and Lands and the District Council of Black River to authorise the 55 operators identified after consultation with the District Council of Black River to carry out activities on *Île aux Bénitiers*. Activities on the islet are expected to resume as from Monday 16 June 2025, subject to all amenities being installed thereat.

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4. Cabinet has taken note of the current political situation in Rodrigues.

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5. Cabinet has taken note that, as at 29 May 2025, the water storage levels in the main reservoirs stood at 84.3% of their capacity. At the request of the Irrigation Authority and the Mauritius Chamber of Agriculture, the Water Resources Management Committee had decided to lift restrictions on sugarcane irrigation with effect from 31 May 2025 as follows –

- (a) sugarcane irrigation would resume temporarily across the island; and
- (b) an additional 15,000 m<sup>3</sup> of water per day would be supplied three days a week to the Irrigation Authority for irrigation of new sugarcane from La Nicolière System for an initial period of one month.

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6. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Islamic Cultural Centre Trust Fund and the Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Dawah and Guidance of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia regarding the donation of an amount of \$6 million by the Saudi Authorities.

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7. Cabinet has agreed to instructions being conveyed to the Attorney-General's Office for the drafting of the Wetlands Bill. The Republic of Mauritius is a Contracting Party to the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (also known as the Ramsar Convention) since 30 September 2001. Being a signatory of the Ramsar Convention entails commitment to preservation of wetlands through –

- (a) national plans, policies and appropriate legislation;
- (b) regular wetland inventory and public education; and
- (c) categorisation and classification of wetlands and their effective management.

With a view to addressing all issues pertaining to wetlands, the Wetlands Bill would provide for the protection and management of all wetlands. The Bill would, inter alia, -

- (a) define the Authority responsible for wetlands;
- (b) define and classify all wetlands;
- (c) define the types of development together with the conditions which would be allowed on wetlands and their buffer zones, in accordance with the various categorisations as defined;
- (d) provide for the setting up of a Ramsar Committee with statutory powers to issue clearances for development and sustainable use of wetlands;
- (e) identify and propose potential Ramsar Sites;
- (f) provide for the setting up of an enforcement authority with prosecution powers; and
- (g) provide for the offences and penalties as appropriate in relation to illegal development on wetlands.

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8. Cabinet has taken note of the promulgation of the Environment Protection (Control of Single Use Plastic Products) (Amendment) Regulations 2025, which would extend the moratorium by one additional year, that is, up to 14 January 2026, for the banning of the following non-biodegradable single use products –

- (a) plastic bowls and plastic cups used solely for the packaging of food products such as dairy products; and
- (b) plastic trays used solely for “Modified Atmosphere Packaging” of food such as fresh meat and pre-cooked/cooked food products like meat, burgers, seafood and cheese.

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9. Cabinet has taken note that following the reporting of the case of illegal residential care home, namely Fieldview Care Home, six residential care homes, suspected of operating illegally, had been reported to the Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity.

An Inter-Ministerial Committee chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister took note of actions taken against Fieldview Care Home and a contingency plan for the relocation of residents of any illegal residential care homes detected in the future. The Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity is working on a Protocol in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Wellness, especially on cases of abuse perpetrated on elderly persons or where they require urgent medical attention.

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10. Cabinet has taken note of complaints received regarding motor vehicles emitting excessive noise, particularly during night time. The National Land Transport Authority would issue a *Communiqué* to remind the public of the provisions under the Road Traffic (Construction and Use of Vehicles) Regulations 2010 and invite all road users to act responsibly and contribute to maintaining a peaceful environment for all.

The Road Traffic (Construction and Use of Vehicles) Regulations 2010 provide, inter alia, that no person shall use any motor vehicle in such a manner that it causes excessive noise which could have been avoided by exercising reasonable care. As such, owners and drivers of motor vehicles should ensure that their vehicles operate within acceptable noise levels. The use of modified exhausts, poorly maintained engines, or reckless driving that results in excessive noise constituted a breach of the relevant provisions of the Road Traffic (Construction and Use of Vehicles) Regulations 2010.

The following measures would be taken to enforce the legal provisions relating to noisy vehicles –

- (a) the three Vehicle Examination Stations would ensure closer monitoring and stringent verification of vehicles, particularly those suspected of having modified exhaust systems; and

- (b) the Police would conduct more crackdown operations around the island and the number of contraventions established/prohibition notices issued would be widely communicated to the public.

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11. Cabinet has taken note of the holding of a Stakeholders' Workshop on Legislative Implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention on 10 and 11 June 2025, organised by the Implementation Support Unit of the Biological Weapons Convention and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs. The objectives of the workshop would be to, inter alia, –

- (a) enhance the knowledge of stakeholders at the national level on rights and obligations under the Biological Weapons Convention;
- (b) review the existing national legislative framework and explore opportunities to strengthen legislation and address identified gaps;
- (c) explore the role of the National Contact Point in the Biological Weapons Convention implementation process and identify opportunities to improve multisectoral coordination;
- (d) review strategic trade controls and opportunities to integrate control lists into existing legislative and regulatory frameworks;
- (e) review biosafety and biosecurity legislative and regulatory frameworks; and
- (f) strengthen national cooperation, coordination and engagement on issues related to the Biological Weapons Convention implementation.

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12. Cabinet has taken note of the activities being organised in the context of the World No Tobacco Day 2025 on the theme “Unmasking the Appeal: Exposing Industry Tactics on Tobacco and Nicotine Products”. This year’s World No Tobacco Day campaign aims at revealing the strategies used by the tobacco and nicotine industries to make their harmful products enticing, particularly to young people.

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13. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent participation of the Minister of Tertiary Education, Science and Research in the Education World Forum 2025, in London. The theme of the Education World Forum 2025 was “From Stability to Growth: Building Stronger Bolder Better Education Together”.

The Minister engaged in fruitful discussions with King's College Hospital, NHS Foundation Trust and King's Academy to explore areas for Healthcare sector transformation through world-class professional development and upskilling of our health professionals through specialised training programmes. Strategic discussions were held with the London South Bank University, particularly as regards innovative micro-credentials and apprenticeship programmes which the university can bring to equip our students with industry-relevant skills.

A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between Kingston University and Polytechnics Mauritius Ltd which would bring AI and digital technology education to Mauritius, contributing to the digital transformation of the country across sectors. The Quality Assurance Agency-UK and the Mauritius Higher Education Commission signed a Memorandum of Understanding which would provide for a collaboration aiming at supporting Mauritius' ambition of becoming a regional education hub with internationally recognised standards.

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14. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund Committee, with Mr Selvanaden Mootoosamy as part-time Chairperson.

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