

HIGHLIGHTS OF CABINET MEETING – FRIDAY 14 OCTOBER 2022

1. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent official visit of the Prime Minister to Rodrigues in the context of the celebration of the 20th anniversary of Rodrigues' autonomy. The Rodrigues Regional Assembly (RRA) is organising a series of activities almost on a daily basis from 01 to 23 October 2022. Prior to the celebration of the 20th anniversary, the Prime Minister participated in one of the activities on 11 October 2022, namely the Official Ceremony for the naming of Sir Anerood Jugnauth Square. The RRA had, in recognition of the outstanding contribution of Late Sir Anerood Jugnauth as the architect of Rodrigues' autonomy and in ensuring its advancement in various sectors of its economy, decided to name the green space in front of the Mauritius Commercial Bank in Port Mathurin after Late Sir Anerood Jugnauth.

On the same day, the Prime Minister was also invited as Chief Guest by Air Mauritius to mark the commemoration of the 50 years of operations of the airline in Rodrigues. During his address on that occasion, he, *inter alia*, highlighted the important role played by Air Mauritius in the socio-economic development of Rodrigues and particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. He also paid a visit to the bereaved family of Late Mr Jean Daniel André, a renowned athlete and one of the first Mauritians to participate in the Olympic Games held in Los Angeles in 1984.

On 12 October 2022, the Prime Minister participated as Chief Guest, in the Official Ceremony of the 20th Anniversary of the Rodrigues' autonomy at Jean Daniel André Stadium, Camp du Roi. During that event, he addressed the audience and, *inter alia*, enumerated the various stages in the development of Rodrigues since it acceded to the status of autonomy. He also underlined the various priorities that required urgent attention and in respect of which, close collaboration would be needed between the RRA and Government. The Official Ceremony was followed by a light and sound cultural show.

2. Cabinet has taken note that the following Public Procurement Regulations as recommended by the Procurement Policy Office would be promulgated -

- (a) Public Procurement (Amendment) Regulations 2022;
- (b) Public Procurement (Amendment of Schedule) (No. 2) Regulations 2022; and
- (c) Public Procurement (Electronic Bidding System) (Amendment) Regulations 2022.

These Regulations would give effect to the measures, relating to public procurement, announced in Budget Speech 2022/23 and its Annex.

3. Cabinet has taken note that the Fisheries and Marine Resources (Exploratory Licence) Regulations 2022 would be promulgated with a view to regulating the issue of exploratory licences and attached conditions to private vessels owned by companies for the assessment of untapped marine fisheries resources in the Exclusive Economic Zone. Exploratory licences would be provided following an Expression of Interest and would be accompanied with various conditions.

4. Cabinet has agreed to the National Co-operative College signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Co-operative University of Kenya. The primary objective of the Memorandum of Understanding would provide the means for cooperative efforts between both institutions to allow the academic interchange of postgraduate fellows, graduate and undergraduate students, academic and research information between the two institutions.

5. Cabinet has agreed to a Mauritian delegation proceeding to Réunion Island for the First Session of the Mauritius-Réunion Joint Commission (*Commission-Mixte*) to be held on 03 and 04 November 2022. The *Commission Mixte* would be preceded by a Senior Officials' Meeting on 03 November 2022. The objective of this First Session of the *Commission Mixte* is to enhance relations between Mauritius and Reunion Island and to give more visibility to the cooperation activities undertaken by both islands.

6. Cabinet has taken note that the Embassy of Côte d'Ivoire, would organise on 27 and 28 October 2022, an event entitled Côte d'Ivoire Days in Mauritius under the theme “*Côte d'Ivoire – Maurice: Tisser des partenariats novateurs pour une croissance partagée*”.

The objective of the event is to revitalise the economic bilateral relations between Côte d'Ivoire and Mauritius. The event would be a platform for business exchanges between the private sectors of both countries in various areas, including financial services, tourism and agri-business. It would also be an opportunity to showcase and promote the culture of Côte d'Ivoire through specific activities.

The event would also comprise a ministerial session under the co-chairmanship of the Minister of State, Foreign Affairs, African Integration and Diaspora of Côte d'Ivoire and the Minister of Land Transport and Light Rail, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade.

7. Cabinet has taken note of the school calendar for primary and secondary education sectors for academic year 2023 which would be as follows –

Primary

First Term	Second Term	Third Term
<p>Monday 09 January to Friday 31 March</p> <p><u>Monday 09 January</u> New Entrants admitted to Grade 1</p> <p><u>Tuesday 10 January</u> Resumption of all classes</p>	<p>Monday 17 April to Friday 14 July</p>	<p>Monday 14 August to Friday 3 November</p>

Secondary

First Term	Second Term	Third Term
<p>Monday 09 January to Friday 31 March</p> <p><u>Monday 09 January</u> New Entrants admitted to Grade 7</p> <p><u>Tuesday 10 January</u> Resumption of all classes</p>	<p>Monday 17 April to Friday 14 July</p>	<p>Monday 7 August to Thursday 26 October</p>

8. Cabinet has taken note that the Public Procurement (Competitive Negotiations for Procurement of Unfinished and Remaining Works) Regulations 2022 would be revoked and replaced by the Public Procurement (Competitive Negotiations for Procurement of Road Reinforcement for Unfinished and Remaining Works) Regulations 2022 and would provide for the procedures to be followed by the Central Water Authority (CWA).

The Public Procurement (Amendment of Schedule No. 2) Regulations 2022 would exempt the CWA from the Public Procurement Act for the procurement of road reinforcement with respect to the unfinished and remaining works for the on-going project for the fixing of appurtenances, construction of chambers, household connection works, laying and commissioning of pipelines and other ancillary works thereto in and around the area of Rose Hill.

9. Cabinet has taken note that the commercial operation of the Metro Express Phase 2C, from Curepipe to Phoenix, has been successfully launched on Monday 10 October 2022. Metro Express Ltd has recorded a significant increase in ridership since the launching of the operation from Curepipe to Phoenix. With the new traffic configuration in Curepipe, an intensive sensitisation and communication campaign would continue to assist road users.

10. Cabinet has taken note of the activities being organised by the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security in the context of the World Food Day 2022, celebrated on 16 October. The theme chosen by the Food and Agriculture Organization for this year is "Leave No One Behind". The Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security has retained the theme "Safe Food for a Healthy Tomorrow". The following activities would be organised –

- (a) a fair/exhibition at the Farmer's Service Centre, Saint Pierre on 16 October 2022 with the participation of the Small Farmers Welfare Fund, the Food and Agricultural Research and Extension Institute, the Agricultural Services, the Forestry Services and the Agricultural Marketing Board; and
- (b) a programme at Caudan Arts Centre on 21 October 2022 for the launching of -
 - (i) a book on agro-processing with respect to the various protocols for the production and management of value-added products;
 - (ii) an E-Commerce Market Platform which would serve as an online medium for the sale of fresh vegetables and fruits; and
 - (iii) a new tomato variety which would be beneficial to farmers in terms of yield and pest resistance.

11. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Health and Wellness would commemorate the Ayurveda Day on 19 October 2022 at the Ayurvedic Clinic, Lady Sushil Ramgoolam Mediclinic, Belvédère, in collaboration with the Association of Ayurvedic Physicians and the High Commission of India. The main objectives for the commemoration of the Ayurveda Day are to encourage the practitioners and students of Ayurveda and to increase the awareness about Ayurveda in society.

Various activities would be organised to sensitise the general public on the benefits of Ayurveda and its contribution in building a healthier society, including -

- (a) radio/television programmes in Creole and Bhojpuri to create awareness about Ayurveda and Ayurvedic Services provided by the Ministry of Health and Wellness;
- (b) opening of the Dhanvantari Ayurvedic Medicinal Garden at Ayurvedic Unit of Lady Sushil Ramgoolam Mediclinic, Belvédère; and
- (c) free distribution of medicinal plants to the public.

12. Cabinet has taken note of the activities being organised by the Ministry of Industrial Development, SMEs and Cooperatives in the context of the International Credit Union Day which would be celebrated worldwide on 20 October 2022. The theme would be "Empower your financial future with a Credit Union". The following activities would be organised –

- (a) a gathering of members of Cooperative Credit Union Society at the National Co-operative College, Terre Rouge, on 26 October 2022. The aim would be mainly to raise awareness on the work of Co-operative Credit Unions in Mauritius and to give them an opportunity to show their engagement; and
- (b) sensitisation programmes on radio and TV would be held on the need for Credit Unions to promote accountability and transparency in their daily operations.

13. Cabinet has taken note that the North West University, South Africa, and the Open University of Mauritius would jointly organise the Social Science International Research Conference in hybrid mode, from 19 to 21 October in Mauritius. The theme of the Conference is "Navigating Social Sciences Research amidst unprecedented disruption, challenge and crisis: looking to the future" and it would cover various subjects such as Technology Innovation and Integration, Business Management, Corporate and Public Governance, Human Resources, Economics, Finance, Sociology, Marketing, Sports and Leisure. The main objectives of the Conference are to -

- (a) serve as a platform for the development of leadership capacity and scholarship;
- (b) strengthen research culture and broaden academic perspectives for collaboration with international faculties and partners; and
- (c) empower and encourage Doctoral students to present their research and interact with experienced scholars.

14. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security would hold a "*Salon de L'Agriculture*" from 16 to 20 March 2023 at the Côte d'Or National Sports Complex in collaboration with the Economic Development Board, as announced in Budget Speech 2022/2023. The theme chosen for the "*Salon de L'Agriculture*" is 'Safe Food Today for a Healthy Tomorrow'.

The event would comprise, inter alia, a symposium of presentations on diverse agricultural themes, an exhibition on production/value addition techniques and a fair of agricultural products, as well as equipment and machinery. The symposium would be a platform to gather both local and international stakeholders with a view to sharing experience as well as discussing and proposing actions that would support the endeavour of increasing local production and reducing reliance on imports of food stuffs.

In addition to the symposium, an agricultural exhibition/fair would be organised with the participation of the Food and Agricultural Research and Extension Institute, the Agricultural Services, the Agricultural Marketing Board, financial institutions, service providers in the agricultural sector, agro-processors, cooperatives and the Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative Limited.

15. Cabinet has taken note that the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) Commission for Africa (CAF) has unanimously adopted a proposal for Mauritius to host the 2023 Meeting of the CAF in 2023. The Ministry of Tourism would liaise with the UNWTO Secretariat to agree on dates.

16. Cabinet has taken note of the monthly demand and supply planning for electricity generation by the Central Electricity Board (CEB) for the years 2022 and 2023, particularly for the forthcoming summer period. The CEB has already planned a number of actions in order to ensure availability of adequate generation capacity to meet the country's power demand during the upcoming summer months.

The Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities in collaboration with the Energy Efficiency Management Office (EEMO) and the CEB, has carried out energy efficiency awareness campaigns on radio and TV to sensitise the population and major energy consumers on the need to save energy in the coming summer season. Such campaigns would be repeated. The EEMO would also conduct sensitisation and communication programmes on energy efficiency labelling and encourage purchase of energy efficient appliances.

17. Cabinet has taken note of actions being taken by the Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Sports and Recreation regarding the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Report of the Office of Public Sector Governance entitled "Lapses in Contract Management and Grant Disbursements at the Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Sports and Recreation". An Action Plan has been worked out with the inputs and collaboration of the stakeholders concerned.

18. Cabinet has taken note of the situation of the COVID-19 pandemic prevailing in Mauritius. As at 12 October 2022, there were 24 active cases of COVID-19, out of which 12 were admitted at the New ENT Hospital. Over the period 06 to 12 October 2022, three deaths were attributed to COVID-19.

19. Cabinet has taken note that there is no suspected case of Monkeypox in Mauritius.

20. Cabinet has taken note that for the period 01 September to 12 October 2022, 16 fatal road accidents have occurred, out of which 11 involved drivers aged less than 35 years, representing 69 percent of the drivers involved. An analysis of the road traffic accidents reveals that the recent accidents involved mainly youngsters and two-wheelers.

The Ministry of Land Transport and Light Rail would embark on an intensive road safety campaign during the months of November and December 2022. Campaigns would be conducted on the MBC TV and radio and private radios, to reduce the number of road crashes, injuries and fatalities on the roads. Extensive crackdown operations would also be carried out by the Police during this period targeting mainly speeding, driving under the influence of alcohol, drugs and intoxicating substances.

21. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Arts and Cultural Heritage to Mexico City where he attended the UNESCO World Conference on Cultural Policies and Sustainable Development (MONDIACULT 2022). The MONDIACULT 2022 is the largest World Conference devoted to culture for the past 40 years, which was attended by around 2,600 participants from 150 State Parties.

During the Conference, the following decisions were taken –

- (a) adoption of the Declaration on Cultural Policies and Sustainable Development by State Parties, including Mauritius;
- (b) creation of a virtual museum of stolen cultural property with the assistance of INTERPOL. The museum would serve as an educational and pedagogical tool to enable the public at large to learn and research about the history of the cultural property; and
- (c) organisation of a World Forum on Cultural Policies every four years by UNESCO as from 2025 onwards.

In the margins of the Conference, the Minister had meetings with the Deputy Director of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre and the Assistant Director General of UNESCO.
