

HIGHLIGHTS OF CABINET MEETING – FRIDAY 07 JANUARY 2022

1. Cabinet has agreed to the renewal of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission of UK and the Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology, for a period of three years. The Commonwealth Scholarship Commission offers scholarships at post graduate level to Mauritian nationals on a yearly basis through the Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology.

The Memorandum of Understanding clarifies the existing rules and processes of the Nominating Agency and the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission for promotion of the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission's programmes for the nomination and selection of candidates. The new provisions of the Memorandum of Understanding aim at enlarging the Nominating Agency's commitment towards Commonwealth Scholarship Commission's safeguarding policies as follows –

- (a) parity between the number of men and women to be nominated;
- (b) the use of electronic communication; and
- (c) the signature of a separate legally binding Data Protection Agreement.

2. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Competition Commission of Mauritius and the Competition Commission of India. The Memorandum of Understanding would cover, inter alia, the following areas of collaboration –

- (a) technical cooperation activities related to competition law enforcement and policy;
- (b) training courses on competition law and policy;
- (c) assistance in promoting the understanding of sound competitive policy among government agencies, business communities, bar associations, academic institutions, and other important supporting institutions;
- (d) cooperation in investigations on related competition matters; and
- (e) seek advice and communicate on matters of competition law enforcement and policy.

3. Cabinet has agreed to the List of Indicative Priority Fields of Study 2021-2023 document that has been approved by the Board of the Higher Education Commission. The list serves a four-fold purpose, namely –

- (a) it guides prospective higher education students in their choice of fields of study at tertiary level, with a view to enhancing their competencies and their potential for employability after graduation;
- (b) it assists Higher Education Institutions in the review of existing programmes and in the design of new ones, while also providing a framework for capacity building;
- (c) it acts as a reference document for students applying for scholarships awarded by the Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology such that they may opt for fields of study that are contributory to the development of the country; and
- (d) it guides potential investors in the field of Higher Education with regard to the offer of programmes in areas of scarcity and of national priority.

4. Cabinet has agreed to extend Government support under –

- (a) the Wage Assistance Scheme and the Self-Employed Assistance Scheme to workers and self-employed individuals of the tourism sector in Rodrigues for an additional period of three months after the opening of its borders. An employer would be required to undertake not to lay off any employee during that period, failing which Government may claim back the assistance paid; and
- (b) the Wage Assistance Scheme to employees of bus operators providing public transport for the months of November and December 2021, provided that the employer undertakes not to lay off any worker up to 31 March 2022.

5. Cabinet has agreed to the promulgation of the following Regulations –

- (a) the Construction Industry Development Board (Amendment of Schedule) Regulations 2022;
- (b) the Construction Industry Development Board (Conversion of Grade of Contractors) Regulations 2022;
- (c) the Construction Industry Development Board (Registration of Consultants, Contractors, Service Providers and Suppliers) (Amendment) Regulations 2022;
- (d) the Construction Industry Development Board (Appeal Fee) (Amendment) Regulations 2022; and

- (e) the Construction Industry Development Board (Compliance Notice and Penalty Fees) Regulations 2022.

The Regulations shall be deemed to have come into operation on 01 January 2022.

6. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of a Project Portfolio Document on e-Health initiatives between the Ministry of Health and Wellness and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The following projects are included in the Project Portfolio Document –

- (a) Project 1: Supporting an Inclusive and Multi-Sectoral Response to COVID-19 and Addressing its Socio-Economic Impact in the Republic of Mauritius;
- (b) Project 2: Support to Resilience through Digital Transformation and Capacity Development;
- (c) Project 3: Strengthened Resilience through Digitalisation and Community Engagement; and
- (d) Project 4: e-Health Implementation.

The Ministry of Health and Wellness would adopt a phase-wise implementation of the National e-Health Project. The first phase would consist of the implementation of a Patient Administration System in all public health institutions in Mauritius. Thereafter, the National e-Health Project would be scaled up to include the remaining modules on a priority and cost effectiveness basis and in line with the long-term Digital Health Transformation Strategy Framework to be developed by the UNDP.

7. Cabinet has taken note that necessary arrangements were being made by the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security and the Agricultural Marketing Board in respect of supply of vegetables and coconuts for the forthcoming Thaipoosam Cavadee through the outlets of the Agricultural Marketing Board, in addition to the usual market supply.

The Agricultural Marketing Board also intends to import three tons of beans and cabbage respectively from India and the consignments are expected by 14 January 2022.

8. Cabinet has taken note that the Rodrigues Regional Assembly has been dissolved on 6 January 2022. The writs of elections have been issued. The Nomination Day has been fixed for 22 January 2022. The taking of the Poll and Counting of Votes would be held on 13 February 2022.

9. Cabinet has taken note that the State of Mauritius has obtained two 'A' grades in its implementation of recommendations linked to the treatment of asylum seekers, refugees and stateless person residing in Mauritius and its efforts linked to juvenile justice in respect of its Interim Report under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights submitted to the Human Rights Committee on 08 November 2019. Mauritius is the only country which has received two A's and is the only one from the African Continent that has received top grades for their implementation of selected priority recommendations by the Human Rights Committee.

10. Cabinet has taken note of the situation report following the recent heavy rainfall in Mauritius, particularly in the region of Beau Bassin/Rose Hill and a Committee chaired by the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Local Government and Disaster Risk Management would look into the problem of water accumulation in the area of Beau Bassin/Rose Hill and come up with remedial measures.

11. Cabinet has taken note of the situation of the COVID-19 pandemic prevailing across the world. Some 298.3 million cases have been reported globally, of which 256.8 million persons have been successfully treated.

With regard to Mauritius, as at 05 January 2022, there were 678 active cases of COVID-19, out of which 12 were admitted at the New ENT Hospital. Over the period 29 December 2021 to 05 January 2022, 13 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. As at 06 January 2022, 952,305 persons had received a first dose of vaccine (representing 75.2 percent of the population). 914,505 persons were fully vaccinated (representing 72.5 percent of the population). 195,862 persons had received a booster dose (representing 15.8 percent of the population). Some 400,000 doses of Pfizer vaccine have been received on 31 December 2021.

12. Cabinet has taken note that the NOTAM for Rodrigues has been extended up to 15 February 2022. Two weekly domestic flights would be effected to Rodrigues as from 12 January 2022 and the passengers would have to undergo seven days paid quarantine in Rodrigues.

Cabinet has also taken note that the NOTAM in respect of the passengers from South Africa and eight Southern African countries has been cancelled.

13. Cabinet has taken note of the online participation of the Minister of Labour, Human Resource Development and Training, Minister of Commerce and Consumer Protection in the Special Ministerial Plenary of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) Partnership Summit 2021 held recently. The CII Partnership Summit 2021, jointly organised by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry of Government of India and the CII, is an annual event and has evolved as a leading global platform for discussions on India's economy and external economic and partnership engagement. The CII Partnership Summit captured perspectives of leading experts across major themes such as geopolitical and strategic developments, international trade and multilateralism, economy and finance, investments, technology disruptions and cooperation in healthcare.

In his speech, the Minister underlined the special links that exist between Mauritius and India. He stressed on the role of India as a main partner in terms of investment and trade. He added that the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Partnership Agreement (CECPA) would also boost investments and open access to new markets for Mauritian exporters both in goods and services.

In his address, HE Mr Piyush Goyal, Chairman, CII Partnership Summit 2021 and Minister of Commerce and Industry, Textiles, Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution stressed on the importance of strengthening trading relationships and working together as trusted partners, particularly amid the COVID-19 pandemic, in order to have a positive impact on economies and lives of people.

14. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the Executive Council of the Marathi Speaking Union with Mr Niteen Bappoo as President.
