

HIGHLIGHTS OF CABINET MEETING – FRIDAY 09 AUGUST 2024

1. Cabinet has agreed to –
 - (a) amendments being brought to 31 existing Remuneration Regulations to provide for wages relativity adjustment for workers drawing a monthly basic wage of up to Rs50,000, whether their wages are prescribed or not in these different Remuneration Regulations; and
 - (b) drafting instructions being conveyed to the Attorney General's Office for new Regulations to be made under the Employment Relations Act to provide for –
 - (i) wages relativity adjustment for workers drawing a monthly basic wage of up to Rs50,000, employed in sectors not governed by any of these Remuneration Regulations; and
 - (ii) a monthly basic wage of a worker holding a diploma or a degree.

As from 01 July 2024, a floor basic wage would be prescribed to the tune of –

- (a) Rs25,000 a month, representing a ratio of 1.5 of the national minimum wage, applicable to occupations which require their incumbents to possess as a minimum a post Higher School Certificate degree; and
- (b) Rs23,000 a month, representing a ratio of 1.4 of the national minimum wage, applicable to occupations which require their incumbents to possess as a minimum a post Higher School Certificate, two years diploma or a post School Certificate three years diploma from a recognised institution.

Financial support would be provided to enterprises facing difficulties in implementing the salary relativity adjustment, namely Export Oriented Enterprises, Domestic Oriented Enterprises and Small and Medium Enterprises.

2. Cabinet has agreed to the implementation of the recommendations of the Pay Research Bureau (PRB) for the payment of an allowance to public sector employees covered by the Bureau, as an interim measure, effective as from 01 July 2024, pending the publication of its main Report. The payment of the interim allowance would lapse with the implementation of the 2026 PRB Report. The PRB made the following recommendations -

- (a) payment of an allowance to public sector employees covered by the PRB, as an interim measure, pending the publication of its Report, which would be effective as from January 2026 and which would address the issue of salary relativity distortion;
- (b) the allowance would be equivalent to 5 percent of basic salary in the Master Salary Scale of the PRB Report 2021, subject to a maximum of Rs2,000;

- (c) part-timers would also be concerned and would be paid on a part-time basis;
- (d) public service pensioners would not be concerned at this stage with the interim allowance; and
- (e) the retirement benefits of any employee who would be retiring between 01 July 2024 and 31 December 2025 would be computed on the basis of his last pensionable emoluments, inclusive of the interim allowance.

3. Cabinet has agreed to the promulgation of the Food Regulations 2024, with a view to providing mainly for adherence to International Standards and improving the ease of doing business, without compromising on the safety and nutritional quality of food.

4. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Special Education Needs Authority and the Wilfrid Laurier University, Canada, to promote research and exchanges in the field of inclusive and special education needs. The objectives of the Memorandum of Understanding would be to –

- (a) collaborate in research and to share best practices in inclusive and special needs education;
- (b) share best teaching practices and pedagogical materials;
- (c) enhance capacity building in special and inclusive education; and
- (d) explore new opportunities for collaborative teaching and research activities, including the development of courses of micro-credentials, supporting new research centres and professional learning activities for teachers, specialised staff and school administrator.

5. Cabinet has agreed to the submission of the Kigali Implementation Plan for Mauritius to the Multilateral Fund of the Montreal Protocol, which primarily includes –

- (a) details on the quantity of Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) imported, used, and installed in refrigeration and air conditioning systems, including the types of imported equipment in various sectors such as tourism, food storage, and food processing; and
- (b) trends in HFCs consumption under business-as-usual scenarios, and proposed measures to achieve a 10 percent reduction in HFCs consumption by 2029, as mandated by the Kigali Amendment under the Montreal Protocol.

The Plan establishes a series of activities and options related to regulatory frameworks, training of technicians, provision of tools and equipment for training centres, and awareness-raising initiatives for the period 2025 to 2029.

6. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security and the Mauritius Revenue Authority on the collection of fees and charges on controlled goods under the Animal Diseases Act. The Memorandum of Understanding would, inter alia, –

- (a) ensure and promote cooperation, collaboration and assistance between both parties;
- (b) manage and maintain a reliable source of data and evidence that might be required for administrative purposes;
- (c) enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the collaboration; and
- (d) assist both parties to fulfil their respective duties and responsibilities in accordance with the laws of Mauritius.

7. Cabinet has taken note that HE Dr Dmytro Kuleba, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, was on official visit to Mauritius on 07 and 08 August 2024 during his fourth African tour where he visited Malawi, Zambia and Mauritius.

During his visit, HE Dr D. Kuleba called on the Prime Minister and discussed opportunities to enhance economic cooperation between Mauritius and Ukraine. He also had a bilateral meeting with the Attorney General, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade to discuss issues of mutual interest, including ways to enhance cooperation between both countries. A Visa Waiver Agreement was signed during the visit and would be beneficial for Mauritian nationals travelling to Ukraine and also bring reciprocity between the two countries.

8. Cabinet has taken note that Ms Leticia Carvalho, a Brazilian national, had been elected as Secretary General of the Council of the International Seabed Authority (ISA) during the 29th Session of the ISA Assembly held in Jamaica. Furthermore, Mauritius was re-elected to the ISA Council for the period January 2025 to December 2028.

9. Cabinet has taken note that the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center was conducting a study entitled "Assessment of Fiscal Risks due to Disasters in Critical Infrastructure Sectors" on behalf of the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure and in consultation with the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Centre of Mauritius, culminating in a Technical Workshop, which would be held on 12 and 13 August 2024. The main purpose of the study would be to gain a comprehensive understanding of how disasters could affect critical infrastructure sectors and lead to financial risks.

The workshop would aim at discussing the proposed analytical framework, work plan, relevant literature and initial findings of the assignment with the concerned Ministries and Departments. The following objectives were intended to be achieved, namely, to –

- (a) brief government officials/departments about the study;
- (b) discuss the proposed approach, processes, and outcome of the study as per the inception report;
- (c) discuss the availability, format, and provision of data;
- (d) deliberate on the ongoing initiatives that could be helpful to the study; and
- (e) seek guidance from ongoing initiatives that could be helpful to the study.

10. Cabinet has taken note of unrest in Bangladesh, UK and Lebanon. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade was closely monitoring the situation and so far, no request for assistance had been received from Mauritians currently in those countries.

11. Cabinet has taken note that, as at 08 August 2024, there were five active cases of Dengue Fever in Mauritius, of which one person had been hospitalised. For Rodrigues, five active cases of Dengue Fever had been recorded and one person was hospitalised.

12. Cabinet has taken note of activities being organised for the International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer, which is celebrated annually on 16 September, to commemorate the signing of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. The Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change would hold the following activities in August and September 2024 –

- (a) a one-day sensitisation workshop on the need for the protection of the ozone layer and the adoption of ozone as well as climate friendly technologies for refrigeration and air conditioning;
- (b) launching of a video competition for the youth on the protection of the ozone layer in August 2024;
- (c) sensitisation sessions and talks to the general public as well as targeted audiences such as women, senior citizens, school community, amongst others;
- (d) television and radio programmes through the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation and dissemination of information to users of the Government Email Services on the theme; and
- (e) sensitisation on ozone layer protection and use of climate-friendly technologies.
