Mauritius will implement priority projects by drawing on the line of credit of USD 500 million granted by India following the two-day State visit of the Prime Minister, Mr Pravind Jugnauth, to India on 26 and 27 May 2017.

This line of credit will be used to finance projects in line with the vision of the Government to make Mauritius a country that is well integrated in the global economy, ready to take on the challenges and seize the opportunities ahead while catering to the needs and aspirations of its people, highlighted the Prime Minister during a joint press conference with the Indian Prime Minister, Mr Narendra Modi, on 27 May 2017, at the Hyderabad House, in New Delhi.

Mr. Jugnauth expressed his appreciation with regards the noble gesture on behalf of the Indian Government which he said bears testimony to the long-standing relations of kinship and the close collaboration between the two countries. He also conveyed his heartfelt gratitude to the Government of India for its continuous unflinching support in the pursuit of our legitimate right to exercising sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago.

He recalled that Mauritius has one of the most extensive expanses of ocean, over which the country
exercises certain rights. However, he emphasised the need to ensure that the sea lanes are safe and secure and that regular patrolling is conducted to combat illegal activities such as piracy, illegal fishing in our territorial waters and trafficking. The Prime Minister also explained that Mauritius and India have, accordingly, developed a strong bilateral cooperation in the field of defence and security.

For his part, the Indian Prime Minister reiterated the full support of his Government in respect to the implementation of major projects undertaken by the Government of Mauritius and also expressed his appreciation with regard to the leadership demonstrated by Mauritian Prime Minister on the important issue of renewable energy.

In the margin of the visit, several agreements were signed between Mauritius and India in various spheres of cooperation. They are namely: Long term collaboration in education, training and research in various sciences and technology between the Mauritius Oceanography Institute and the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, India–National Institute of India; the International Solar Alliance Agreement to reduce dependence on fossil fuels, and; the construction of a new runway and a jetty in Agalega, which will enhance the economic development of the island.

In a business meet held on 26 May 2017 between the captains of business communities from India and Mauritius, on the theme “Mauritius: Your Preferred Regional Investment and Business Platform”, Prime Minister Jugnauth reiterated that Mauritius is strategically located at the cornerstone of India and Africa.

He stressed on the preferential access to a vast consumer base of 400 million consumers that our memberships with the SADC and COMESA regional economic communities provide, as well as the wide array of bilateral investment treaties and double taxation agreements with a number of African economies.

Mr Jugnauth further invited the Indian business community to replicate, in Mauritius, the same enthusiasm and buzz it displays in bringing to fruition the initiatives of the Indian Govern-
New measures will be implemented in the ongoing fight against cancer, namely the extension of the programme of human papillomavirus (HPV) immunisation to schoolgirls of Forms One to Three, and a new cancer centre in Solferino with modern equipment and facilities to diagnose and treat cancers.

The announcement was made by the Minister of Health and Quality of Life, Dr Anwar Husnoo, on 4 May 2017 at the launching of an Open Day on Feminisation of Cancer at the National Women Development Centre in Phoenix.

The HPV vaccine forms part of the Expanded Programme of Immunisation in line with World Health Organisation recommendations. The vaccination, which guards girls against the four strands of HPV most associated with cervical cancer, was introduced for schoolgirls of Standard V in August 2016.

The report of the National Cancer Registry underlined the feminisation of cancer with an increase of 6.7% in the number of new cases for female in 2015, compared to 1.3% in males. Hence, among the 2 489 new cases of cancers registered in 2015, 1 082 were males and 1 407 were females. In 2014, the figures were 1 068 for men and 1 319 for women. The five main commonest cancers in female in Mauritius are breast, colorectal, cervix, uterus and stomach.

The Open Day of Feminisation on Cancer Day, organised by the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life in collaboration with the Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare for members of Women Associations and schoolgirls, is a pilot project implemented by Government in a bid to enhance the quality of life of women and will be replicated across the country. It aimed at raising awareness on cancer and its risk factors, and the preventive measures to reduce cancer risks. It featured talks on cervical and breast cancers; video clips; panel discussions with the participation of eminent specialists; and screening for women and girls.

A series of activities were organised by the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life to mark World No Tobacco Day 2017 observed on 31 May.

A competition on short film/video with the aim of raising awareness on the harmful effects of tobacco smoking and a sensitisation campaign on the ill effects of tobacco were organised.

On the same occasion, the Global Youth Tobacco Survey Report 2016 was launched.

The theme chosen by the World Health Organisation for this year was “Tobacco – a threat to development”.

World No Tobacco Day 2017
A sound business and investment climate is fundamental to the economic development and prosperity of the country. In this context, the Business Facilitation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2017 which aims at further facilitating the conduct of business in Mauritius, while at the same time maintaining the required due diligence and control, came into force on 20 May 2017.

The amendments brought to the legislative framework were prerequisite for the removal of constraints in relation to permits, licences, authorisations and clearances to improve the ease of doing business.

The Business Facilitation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill, he pointed out, is to address certain weaknesses that need urgent solutions and issues which require legislative amendments. In parallel, Government has been proactive in improving the doing business environment by re-engineering business processes.

The ease of doing business, underlined Mr Jugnauth, is a key determinant of the competitiveness of nations, especially for small open economies like Mauritius which are highly dependent on exports for growth and on FDI to bring in new technology and expertise. Business facilitation is also crucial to boost up domestic private investment and to allow micro, small and medium sized enterprises to grow, said the Prime Minister.

Furthermore, he stressed on the need for a more business friendly environment to encourage the development of a new class of entrepreneurs.

The Prime Minister also pointed out that this legislation ensures that regulations are business friendly and that firms, in particular, start-ups, do not face bottlenecks and red tape, and that costs of investing and operating a business in Mauritius are globally competitive in line with the objective of the Government in improving the country’s ranking in the Ease of Doing Business worldwide.
Mauritius and the Singapore Cooperation Enterprise (SCE) signed on 8 May 2017 at the Treasury Building in Port Louis a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the renewal of collaboration for a period of 36 months.

The signature of the MoU lies in the context of the visit of the Deputy Prime Minister and Coordinating Minister for Economic and Social Policies of Singapore, Mr Tharman Shanmugaratnam, to Mauritius. The signatory for the Mauritian side was the Secretary to Cabinet and Head of Civil Service, Mr N. K. Ballah, and Singaporean side was represented by the Chief Executive Officer of SCE, Mr Kong Wy Mun.

The Prime Minister, Mr Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, and the Minister of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport, Mr Nandcoomar Bodha, were also present.

The MoU, which has been renewed till April 2020 aims to provide a wide scope of collaboration between various Singaporean agencies and Mauritius in the fields of infrastructure planning, public security, renewable energy, water management, and Civil service and parastatal reforms, amongst others. The Government of Mauritius has engaged SCE for transaction advisory and management services and for the potential implementation of the Metro Express project.

In a statement after the signing ceremony, the Prime Minister reaffirmed Government's commitment to deliver world class sustainable transportation solutions for Mauritius.

The Metro Express, he said, should be affordable and viable while adding that it is important to take into consideration future maintenance costs. He pointed out that Singapore, which has a great experience in the light rail system, will help Mauritius to find sustainable solutions to address this issue.

The Metro Express, which will span over 26 km from Curepipe to Port Louis, will comprise 19 rail stations as well as integrated bus interchanges. The project aims to: reduce traffic congestion, encourage public transport use, upgrade quality of public transport, ease mobility within urban areas, improve the image of Mauritius, stimulate inward investment, support economic development, develop industries and job creation, create opportunities for future expansion, and improve residential amenity.

Mauritius is inspired by the success of Singapore in many sectors while stressing the need to tap into their experience and learn from their mistakes, stated Mr Jugnauth. He also added that the bilateral cooperation between Mauritius and Singapore is strengthening.

For his part, Mr Shanmugaratnam, said that Mauritius needs to take into consideration transport charges in the implementation of the Metro Express project. Maintenance costs and running of the system, revision of charges, and reinvestment are other important factors which need to be addressed, he said. Both Mauritius and Singapore are small countries but the areas of collaboration are vast ranging from the National Identity Card project, education, security, to Civil service, and Metro Express project, Mr Shanmugaratnam added.
MITD and CMAR sign convention to improve technical and vocational training

A convention aiming to bring greater collaboration in the education sector between the Mauritius Institute of Training and Development (MITD) and La Chambre de Métiers et de l’Artisanat de la Réunion (CMAR) was signed on 22 May 2017 at the MITD House in Phoenix.

The convention seeks to convey the relevance of technical and vocational skills in the Mauritian economy and to improve the quality of training provided by the MITD.

The agreement will allow CMAR and MITD to team up in areas like mechanic, agriculture, air conditioning and refrigeration systems as well as construction works.

The agreement is in line with Government’s 2030 agenda which aims at ensuring an inclusive and equitable quality education.

CMAR will provide full technical support to MITD in order to enhance the quality of pedagogical materials and to offer work placement opportunities to the students.

International Day for Biological Diversity 2017

International Day for Biological Diversity 2017, commemorated on 22 May was celebrated by an awareness week organised at the Black River Gorges National Park.

The theme of the International Day for Biological Diversity was “Biodiversity and Sustainable Tourism”.

This initiative of the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security also included the planting of trees in the field gene bank of the National Park.

In line with the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security has elaborated, namely the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2017-2025 and the Protected Area Network Expansion Strategy 2017-2026.

The documents were launched on the occasion of the International Day for Biological Diversity 2017.

The National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2017-2025 presents a global overview on the status of biodiversity and sets out the goals and objectives to achieve in terms of biodiversity and conservation.

On the other hand, the Protected Area Network Expansion Strategy 2017-2026 lays down the programmes to protect, conserve and restore native biodiversity, natural landscapes and ecosystem services to benefit present and future generations.
Government identifies 31 sites to promote aquaculture projects

Floating cage structures allocated to fishermen cooperative societies to encourage aquaculture projects

In a bid to give a boost to aquaculture projects, Government has identified twenty sites for large scale aquaculture projects and eleven for small scale aquaculture activities.

Out of the 11 sites, 10 sites on which floating cage structures have been placed have been allocated to fishermen cooperative societies throughout the island.

Moreover, letters of authorisation have been issued to six promoters to carry out aquaculture projects in six barachois which have been vested in the Ministry of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping against set conditions.

With regards to concessions, five have been granted to the Ferme Marine de Mahebourg, six are in the process of securing the EIA licence, seven sites are committed, and two sites are still available. The extent of sea concessions for aquaculture is regulated under the Fisheries and Marine Resources Act and each aquaculture concession is of a radius of up to 300 meters around the GPS coordinates of a site.

Aquaculture sites for large scale activities are located outside known fishing grounds to limit impact on fishermen operating in these regions. Furthermore, the concessionaires need to consult the fishermen community operating in the region prior to the implementation of any aquaculture project to comply with the requirements of the EIA licence.

Only large scale aquaculture projects require an EIA licence prior to implementation of the project. The EIA ensures that the aquaculture companies take all necessary precautions to prevent any negative impact on the ecosystem.

The activities are monitored by a committee at the level of the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Environment and Sustainable Development and which comprises officers of the Ministry of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping to ensure that the concessionaire is compliant with the conditions set out in the EIA licence. In addition, seabed samples are taken to monitor the impact of marine fish farming on the ecosystem.

GIS Newsletter

May 2017

Government Information Service, Prime Minister’s Office, Mauritius
Mauritius will develop a ‘Sport for All’ Strategy and Action Plan, with the Commonwealth Secretariat’s technical assistance. Getting more people active through sport will make a direct contribution to address the burden of non-communicable diseases in the country, while targeted sport-based initiatives can enhance youth development and community cohesion.

In this context, two Commonwealth experts were in Mauritius with a view to facilitating capacity building workshops and developing recommendations in support of the National Strategy and Action Plan. Several consultations and workshops were scheduled with different stakeholders till 11th May 2017.

The objectives were to undertake a ‘sport for all’ stakeholder mapping process; and identify the strengths and assets of the ‘sport for all’ systems and structures in Mauritius. The report together with recommendations on the Action Plan will be ready by the end of June.

Three areas have been identified as priorities for the National ‘Sports for All’ Strategy and Action Plan:

- **Promotion** - Promoting the benefits of ‘sports for all’
- **Coordination** - Coordinated planning and delivery of sports for all in Mauritius
- **Workforce Development** - Developing the ‘sport for all’ workforce in Mauritius

A range of stakeholders were consulted namely representatives of key line Ministries (Health, Education and Gender), national sports organisations, including the National Olympic Committee, National Paralympic Committee and the Mauritius Sports Council, along with a cross-section of front line staff from the education, youth and sports sectors.

The consultations focused on the current status, and potential to enhance, ‘sports for all’ participation levels and the associated contribution to national development in Mauritius.

Government’s vision is to increase the number of Mauritians who are actively engaged in quality sports, physical activity and physical education on a regular basis. The aim is to craft a fitter and healthier Mauritius and enhance the contribution of sport to health, education, gender and youth development outcomes in the country.
NPCC TO HELP LOCAL MANUFACTURERS ABIDE BY THE HIGHEST MANUFACTURING NORMS

Following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the National Productivity and Competitiveness Council (NPCC) and the Association of Mauritian Manufacturers (AMM) in May 2017, the NPCC is now empowered to help local manufacturers abide by the highest manufacturing norms while assisting them at the same time in uplifting their operations through the NPCC’s Enterprise Transformation Programme.

The Enterprise Transformation Programme of the NPCC is an in-plant consultancy solution with practical training to continuously improve the effectiveness in both the private and public sectors.

Under this initiative, the NPCC works with the company to improve the performance of its staff and processes. It also assesses the business needs and assists the company in aligning the staff and processes so that in turn the business can deliver results and secure significant gains.

The NPCC and the AMM have worked on a partnership convention during the period 2017/2018. Under this convention, businesses that do not succeed in obtaining the “Made in Moris” label will be proposed by the AMM to work with the NPCC. The NPCC will then help the enterprises in areas where improvements are needed, after which they will be able to make a fresh application for the “Made in Moris” label.

The AMM has launched the “Made in Moris” initiative so as to promote locally manufactured products and to encourage Mauritians to consume products manufactured by local companies. Companies which apply for the “Made in Moris” label undergo an audit by inspection, verification, testing and certification company, SGS. If the company is not able to meet requirements, it is then referred by the AMM to the NPCC for an intervention.

Launching of second Mauritian Collection of Ducere African Children’s Stories

The second Mauritian collection of Ducere African Children’s Stories that form part of the African Children’s Stories Project, was launched on 11 May 2017 at the Mahatma Gandhi Institute, Moka.

This collection of the African Children’s Stories Project consists of eleven stories of different genres, ranging from stories with a moral tinge, fantasy to fiction. The stories will be published and distributed in various African countries. Some 17 African countries have taken part in the project.

The principal aim of the project for the African Continent relates to the preservation and sharing of African literary heritage and oral traditions and to ensure the provision of culturally appropriate reading materials to African children.
Government is aiming to boost the apicultural sector by launching a Bee reserve zone and an organic honey production on 28 May 2017 at Les Salines, Petite Rivière Noire.

This initiative of the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security aims to further encourage beekeepers to fully explore and expand this potential domain. The apiculture is expected to become an important sector of the economy and contribute in job creation and economic growth.

This project is in line with Government's commitment towards promoting sustainable agriculture and safe food production in the country.

With regards to promoting apiculture in Mauritius, an agreement was signed last year between the Ministry Agro-Industry and Food Security and the International Centre for Insect Physiology and Ecology. In this context, 17 000 melliferous plants have been planted in bee reserve zones in Bras d’Eau and Petite Rivière Noire. This measure aims to increase the productivity of honey and enhance the ecosystem.

On the same occasion, the Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security, Mr Mahen Seeruttun handed over organic beehive and beekeeping kits to beekeepers. Last year, some 185 beekeepers were trained in beekeeping and 210 beekeepers received kits comprising organic beehive, hat and veil, smoke and hive tool.