Drug trafficking eradication and law and order are Government’s main priorities, says Prime Minister

The Prime Minister, in his address, spoke about the importance of eradicating the scourge of drug trafficking which he said remains as one of Government’s highest policy priorities with respect to maintaining law and order. The war against the scourge of drug trafficking will be won, he emphasised.

Mauritius, Mr Jugnauth pointed out, has sought the assistance of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to elaborate a National Drug Control Master Plan. The Plan will establish specific actions to address the related problems and shape Government policies on drug issues. It also aims at maintaining and boosting dialogue as well as creating a synergy with stakeholders in order to encourage collaboration with the Government to fight this scourge.
The Prime Minister further recalled that cooperation at the regional and international level is being intensified to combat drug trafficking at our borders. At the level of the Indian Ocean Commission, a coordinated approach among member states is being adopted to combat all forms of transnational organised crimes, including drug trafficking in the region, with the support of the European Union, he observed.

As regards law and order, Mr Jugnauth pointed out that this pressing issue remains on top of Government’s agenda, in particular, with regard to preventing crimes and road accidents. He thus mentioned the Safe City Project. Budget 2017-2018 makes provision for Rs 440 million to implement the Project which involves the installation of Intelligence and Traffic Surveillance cameras in major public areas, along main roads and motorways and principal traffic centres. The Prime Minister moreover paid tribute to all Police Officers who in times of need, crisis, danger and difficulties have lived up to society’s expectations and fully performed their duties of maintaining law and order.

Activities to mark the Anniversary

A series of activities were planned with the launching ceremony held at the Line Barracks on 13 June 2017 comprising the lighting of a Torch which was followed by a march carrying the theme “March for honour and pride”.

Other activities included: Cleaning and embellishment of Police premises; Planting of trees; Hearing test by Rogan Clinic; Walk for Honour and Pride around the island with the Torch; Demonstration by National Coast Guard (NCG) Vessels at Le Caudan Marina; Security Walk at Line Barracks; Mega Blood Donation; Launching of Coffee Table Book highlighting the Memoirs of Police; Police Memorial Day; Naming Ceremony of Police Band Auditorium; Unveiling Ceremony of a monument for guardian of Peace and Security at Line Barracks; Launching of 1st Day Cover commemorating the 250th Anniversary; Reopening of Police Museum at Line Barracks; and Light–Laser Sound Show depicting the history of the MPF.

MPF

The MPF, governed by the Police Act 1974, is responsible for policing on mainland Mauritius, Rodrigues and other outer islands. It is headed by the Commissioner of Police and operates under the aegis of the Home Affairs Division of the Prime Minister’s Office. The MPF is presently composed of about 12 500 Police officers posted in eight Divisions and several Branches among which: Anti-Drug and Smuggling Unit; Passport and Immigration Office; Central Criminal Investigation Division; Paramilitary units - Special Mobile Force and Special Support Unit; Air wing - Police Helicopter Squadron and Maritime Air Squadron; and naval wing - NCG.
A reception was hosted at the State House, Réduit, on 10 August 2017, in honour of Mauritian sportspersons and artists who participated in the 8th edition of the Francophone games last month and to pay tribute to the praiseworthy performance of young footballers at the 2017 COSAFA U17 Cup.

During the ceremony, tokens of appreciation were presented to medallists, Team Captains and National Coaches for their contribution and for having honoured the National Flag during the competitions.

Mauritius won five medals at the Francophone games: Les Frères Joseph (Gold in dance in the culture category), Christiane Legentil (Silver in judo), Bernard Baptiste (Bronze in shot put), Jérôme Caprice (Bronze in 20 km race walk), and Sarah Silva (Bronze in judo).

The Under 17 Football Team won the Silver medal at the Council of Southern Africa Football Associations (COSAFA Cup).

The President of the Republic, Dr Ameenah Gurib-Fakim highlighted that our athletes are the proof that Mauritius has a lot of talents and, if they are well prepared, the country can aim higher in the sporting world to attain greater success. She also underscored that Mauritius must strongly encourage its youth to take up sports activities to remain healthy and stay away from social scourges.
Mont Choisy Le Parc, a project of magnitude and the largest that has been undertaken in this part of the island will create a self-sustained economy and engender more opportunities for the development of the tourism sector.

This statement was made by the Prime Minister, Mr Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, during a site visit held on 14 August 2017 at the Mont Choisy Le Parc which is at its final implementation phases.

Prime Minister Jugnauth expressed his optimism and encouraged the realisation of Mega infrastructural projects by both Government and the private sector to create a positive impact on the socio-economic landscape of the country of which the Mont Choisy Le Parc project is a testimony of the strong collaboration between the public and private sector, he added.

Mont Choisy Le Parc project has necessitated an investment of approximately Rs 8 billion with an injected Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to the tune of Rs 9.5 billion and is directly generating employment for some 2000 persons. A large number of the 200 residential villas has been sold to foreigners and foreign investors, which demonstrates the strong reputation of Mauritius as a safe and internationally trusted location to structure such investments.

Such developments have contributed significantly in boosting the economic growth in the construction sector which has increased to 7%. FDI which stood at 46% in 2016 and investment in the private sector which was at 6.2% last year are also projected to rise.

Furthermore, the Board of Investment has approved 38 similar projects, involving a massive investment of approximately Rs 30 billion generating an FDI flow of about Rs 45 billion for the economy.
Four new Schemes to boost Cooperative Societies

The Cooperative Movement is being modernised, empowered and further strengthened so as to be more viable. To that end, four new schemes for the Sector were launched, on 1st August 2017, jointly by the Ministry of Business, Enterprise and Cooperatives and the Cooperative Development Fund.

The New Schemes
The Scheme for the acquisition of IT facilities paves the way for an e-Cooperatives Movement. Cooperatives will benefit from a grant of 50% up to a maximum of Rs 18 000 for the procurement of a computer or laptop. The Scheme will improve IT facilities for cooperatives and assist cooperatives in undertaking online transactions and reducing paperwork. The objective is also to encourage young people to join the sector.

The Education Scheme for training will promote the Continuous Education Development programme for cooperators by allowing them to keep pace with developments in the cooperative sector and ensure capacity-building. The Scheme will provide for namely:

- Financial assistance to a maximum of Rs 10 000 for a local training course.
- Support, for a course abroad, will be extended as follows: 20% cost of air ticket to a maximum of Rs 6 000 for each cooperative society; and, An ad hoc allowance of Rs 300 daily to a maximum if Rs 9 000 for each society in the event board and lodging facilities are provided by the receiving training institution or Rs 500 daily to a maximum of Rs 15 000 for each society in the event board and lodging facilities are not provided.

The Market Fair for Cooperative Societies Scheme will provide a platform, at regional and national levels, for cooperators and consumers to interact and encourage the development and sale of quality cooperative products. A financial assistance to a maximum of Rs 100 000 for each market fair and a maximum of three market fairs yearly will be provided to the Tertiary Society or the Cooperatives Division of the Ministry.

As regard the Upgrading of Cooperative Societies Scheme, it makes provision to support cooperatives in terms of procurement of state-of-the-art equipment and product development. The Scheme will finance partly the cost of the equipment to a maximum of 70% of its cost up to Rs 20 000 for each Cooperative Society.

IDC-CIO Summit 2017

The International Data Corporation, in collaboration with the National Computer Board, organised the IDC-CIO Summit 2017 in Mauritius on 16 August 2017. The theme of the Summit was “Enabling Dynamic Change for the Digital Era”.

The Summit presented proven IT strategies for developing business and also consider the following issues: highest-priority IT investment areas for the years ahead; preparing business for success in the digital era; and technologies which are being embraced for gaining a competitive edge.
50th anniversary of Air Mauritius

PM announces construction of Second Passenger Terminal

“The construction of a second passenger terminal in 2019 and developing an airport brand are the key driver projects towards steering a strong national airline into achieving the vision of a modern Mauritius.”

The Prime Minister, Mr Pravind Jugnauth, made this statement during the cocktail ceremony on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Air Mauritius on 11 August 2017.

In his keynote address, the Prime Minister congratulated Air Mauritius for its 50 years of existence while lauding its enormous contribution to the economic development of the country. Air Mauritius, he said, accompanied Mauritius during its golden years when economic development became synonymous with air connectivity and helped bring the country closer to its main markets thus giving a new impetus to key sectors of the economy.

He referred to the national carrier as a symbol of national pride and stressed that it is a testimony of successful private and public partnership collaboration in the interest of the country.

According to him, four quintessential ingredients will enable the company to achieve new heights. They are namely: a renewal of fleet, which will soon be strengthened with the acquisition of two new airbuses A350, one by end October and the other one by end November this year and six additional airbuses over the next five years; a quality of service that will make it an airline of choice; achieve economic sustainability in the face of erratic economic cycle; and become relevant to its customers.

The Air Mauritius Foundation was launched by Mrs Kobita Jugnauth on the occasion. It aims at promoting arts and culture, conservation of natural heritage and environment, empowering youths by contributing to the development of sports and encouraging excellence in education.
The Rodrigues Student House (RSH) to the tune of Rs 50 million was inaugurated by the Prime Minister, Mr Pravind Jugnauth, on 12 August 2017 in Vacoas.

The RSH will enable Rodriguan students to evolve in a better environment while encouraging more students from Rodrigues to pursue their tertiary studies in Mauritius at affordable costs.

The foundation of this modern building, comprising all necessary amenities with 45 rooms to accommodate full-time Rodriguan students, was laid on 28 September 2015.

The RSH has been set up to provide accommodations to the increasing number of students from Rodrigues coming to Mauritius every year for their studies. Statistical data of Rodrigues’ education sector show that for the past five years, the success rate for SC examinations is 73.4%, whilst the figure for HSC stands at 75%.

In an effort to keep up the positive trend, more scholarships are being awarded to Rodriguan students so as to provide them with more educational opportunities.

Furthermore, the RSH will enable Rodriguan students to gain more exposure by coming to Mauritius and be able to share and learn from other cultures by participating in various activities.

According to Prime Minister Jugnauth, Government is determined to safeguard the future of youngsters and is totally committed to the education sector, which is a high priority on Government’s agenda. He also recalled that students are already benefitting from 100% subsidy for the School Certificate (SC) and Higher School Certificate (HSC) examination fees, and encouraged them to attend school regularly to continue benefitting from same.
Water sector: Pipe laying works launched at rivière du rempart

Government is investing massively in the water sector and the upgrading of infrastructure namely the replacement of old leaking pipes across the island so as to ensure access to clean water on a 24/7 basis.

The pipeline renewal programme of the Central Water Authority (CWA) is in line with its water reform project to achieve regular water supply and reduce losses in the water distribution system.

Present at the launching of the Rivière du Rempart Water Supply Project on 4 August 2017, the Prime Minister, Mr Pravind Jugnauth, recalled that some Rs 5.6 billion have been earmarked so that the CWA can execute the pipeline renewal programme to address the issues hindering the distribution of water supply.

These works will ensure that by 2018, 80% of the population will have access to clean water on a regular basis, he added.

The Rivière du Rempart Water Supply project comprises the replacement of overused pipelines stretching over 15 km and the construction of a reservoir of 6 000 cubic meters at Mon Loisir.

A sum of Rs 122 million will be disbursed for this project. The works will be implemented in six phases and is expected to be completed by end of 2018.

Furthermore, the water reform project will help CWA achieve regular water supply and reduce losses in the water distribution system due to leakages and shabby pipelines.

Other projects of the CWA include: upgrading and construction of new Service Reservoirs and new Treatment Plants, construction of Steel Water Tanks, duplication of Boreholes and installation of Containerised Pressure Filtration Plants.
Small and Medium Enterprises are laying foundations to contribute to green economy. This eco-conscious change will help to achieve a sustainable global economy, hence redefining the way business is conducted. In this context, a SEED Mauritius Dialogue Forum was held on 8 August 2017 at the Labourdonnais Hotel, in Port-Louis.

The Dialogue Forum focused on different possibilities to harness the full potential of enterprises’ solutions to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals as well as supporting Mauritius’ endeavour towards an inclusive and green economy.

In Mauritius, the natural resources are fast declining and with the rising material costs, there is an urgent need of greening the business sector through the development of green skills so as to shift to a low-carbon economy.

The greatest global challenge is to meet growing consumer demands while managing increasingly overburdened natural resources. Government is, therefore endorsing the development of a new breed of eco-entrepreneurs and SMEs who wish to adopt this initiative of going green.

Mauritius has signed the Switch Africa Green (SAG)-Seed Partnership to enable Government foster the development of new entrepreneurial firms. It will also help creating the required innovations to respond to sustainable development needs and help the country at large.

**Switch Africa Green-SEED**

SEED is a global partnership for action on sustainable development and the inclusive green economy. SEED supports the activities of innovative small and growing enterprises. Six countries namely Burkina Faso, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius, South Africa and Uganda are currently benefiting from the support of SEED.

**Mauritius endorses Agreement to the setting up of Tripartite Free Trade Area**

Mauritius will sign the Agreement establishing a Tripartite Free Trade Area among the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the East African Community (EAC), and the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

The Tripartite Free Trade Area aims at promoting economic and social development of the region as well as create a large single market with free movement of goods and services to promote intra-regional trade.

The objective of the Tripartite Free Trade Area which represents an integrated market of 26 countries, with a combined population of 632 million people, i.e., 57% of the Africa’s population, and a total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of USD1.3 trillion in 2014, is to enhance the regional and continental integration processes.
The objectives of the conference were, among others, to have a clearer understanding of the changing organisational, workplace, socio-cultural, entrepreneurial and investment environment in Africa today.

The conference also aimed to indicate ways and means to enhance people's wellbeing, as well as measures that would help create employment, the building of viable businesses, and the provision of a sustainable investment climate.

Some 55 academics and researchers from the United Kingdom, Sweden, South Africa, Kenya, Australia and Mauritius attended the conference.

Mauritius hosted two African Union Commission meetings during the period 28 August to 02 September 2017. The meetings attended by some 240 delegates, are namely, Experts Meeting on the implementation mechanism of the Draft Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons; and Experts Meeting on the finalisation of the Draft Protocol on Statelessness in Africa.

The Experts Meeting on the implementation mechanism of the Draft Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons aimed at developing a roadmap and establishing a task force to guide the African Union Commission on the implementation strategies.

The deliberation of the Experts Meeting on the finalisation of the Draft Protocol on Statelessness in Africa was intended for its submission to the Specialised Technical Committee on Legal and Judicial Affairs.