

**Speech of Hon. Deepak Balgobin, Minister of Information Technology,
Communication and Innovation on the occasion of the launch of the Webinar
Mauritius – India Partnership Programme**

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Mr Shivendra Singh, Vice President & Head, Global Trade Development, NASSCOM

**Ms Sandrine Valere, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Information Technology,
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Dr Drishty Ramdhonee, Head of Services, Economic Development Board

CEOs of IT companies of Mauritius and India,

Distinguished panelists and participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to address this forum in the context of the close collaboration between Mauritius and India in the area of digital communication.

The friendship that exists between our two countries dates back to the time of our forefathers who left India for the green fields of Mauritius.

Today India positions itself as one of the leading giants in the field of Information Technology. And, here today, with the support of an all-weather friend like India, a lot of Government projects, especially in the area of digital technologies, have materialized in our country.

I would like to thank NASSCOM and the Economic Development Board of Mauritius, for jointly organizing this virtual meeting - Mauritius-India Partnership Programme.

Through partnerships and collaborations between Mauritian public and private sector actors and NASSCOM, we can avail of the Indian expertise to develop IOT and AI solutions for our citizens and businesses.

Allow me to say a few words on the business climate in Mauritius. The country is 13th on the Doing Business Ranking of the World Bank. We host good road, rail, port and air infrastructures and we have a literate population.

More importantly, we are a Covid Safe island, thanks to the farsighted leadership of our Prime Minister, Hon. Pravind Kumar Jugnauth. Additionally, the rule of law is well

entrenched in our DNA. So, Mauritius is open for business and happy to welcome business ventures with our Indian counterparts.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The strength of the bond with India will certainly give a new dynamism to the digitalization process in Mauritius especially after the COVID-19 outbreak.

In 2014, the e-Prison System came into operation thanks to the joint collaboration between the National Informatics Centre of India and the Mauritius Prisons Service.

Today the system allows us to manage all penal establishments including those in Rodrigues Island. Currently, the second phase of the project is being executed and this covers major enhancement to the system.

Ensuring that we have a healthy population is one of the critical objectives of government. In this vein, measures to improve the delivery of health care services are very important. Technology can come to help in this area.

In this respect, my Ministry and the Ministry of Health and Wellness, are working closely on the e-Health project to bring a revolution, which will cater for all the public hospitals, and health centers in our country.

With e-Health, patients' records will be available at any site of treatment by a single click. Doctors will then be in the presence of 360-degree perspective of the patients' health history allowing them to make even better diagnosis and treatments.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our collaboration with India has gone very far in the area of education. Since its coming to power in 2014, our Government has been implementing major reforms in the education sector. One of the pillars of the vision of this Government is the provision of tablets to primary schools starting from Grade One.

Since then this facility has been extended to Grade Four. Today our kids are getting the digital tools necessary for the learning paradigm that exploits the potential for audio visuals. India has been instrumental in Early Digital Learning Programme. Tablets have been procured under G2G agreement. And this has brought a new pedagogical work for our children.

My Ministry is working very closely with the Ministry of Education. We have made it possible to deploy High Speed Connectivity for our young kids in primary schools. Our intervention in education goes even further. Very soon, High Speed Connectivity will now be extended to our secondary schools as well.

The Early Digital Learning Programme brings along a transformed culture of learning through modern pedagogies relevant to the brave new technological world of our children. In the same vein, my Ministry through the services of the National Computer Board is running coding classes for upper primary school and lower secondary school children.

We are focusing on ensuring that our young ones are well equipped with the creative thinking and problem-solving skills that are acquired through coding and other technologies that make them capable to face the ever-growing challenges and complexities of this 21st century.

Dear friends,

My Ministry has come up with a multitude of digital platforms for enhancing delivery of services. Nowadays citizens and businesses have access to online Government services from any device and from any location.

Citizens often complain that they have to remember multiple usernames and passwords. In view of assisting them, we have come up with the MAUPASS platform which provides for a single username and password to access Government services.

This platform is ensuring better identity and access management in Government online systems and so reinforcing the trust in the online world.

My Ministry is currently implementing the MoKloud solution which will allow citizens to access their own birth and marriage certificates from their digital safe using their computers, tablets and smartphones anywhere and around the clock.

This initiative is in line with the digital transformation effort in the Civil Service and the vision of a paperless environment. In the long run, the MoKloud platform is expected to include documents like driving licences, academic and professional certificates, corporate and other statutory documents.

Furthermore, to strengthen our cybersecurity posture, my Ministry is in the process of setting up a new Certificate Authority. It will deliver Digital Signatures and Digital Signature Certificates to citizens and businesses for operating more securely in the digital ecosystem.

As the digital ecosystem evolves, cyberthreats are also following at an accelerating pace. In this regard, the Computer Misuse and Cybercrime Act is being reviewed and replaced

by a comprehensive and forward-looking Cybersecurity and Cybercrime Bill to better address security issues.

My Ministry also intends to set up apps in order to facilitate Police Officers work in traffic control for Citizens and Drivers, which will help to interact with the Traffic Police Officers when they are controlled on the streets.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

To conclude, Mauritius is a fertile ground for cooperation in ICT. Businesses of both countries should make the most of this partnership Programme and seize new opportunities especially in emerging technologies for the benefit of our two peoples.

With these words, I thank you all for your kind attention and I declare open the Webinar Mauritius – India Partnership Program.

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