

Speech of Honourable Deepak Balgobin,
Minister of Information Technology,
Communication and Innovation

Corporate launch of the
Mauritius Digital Promotion Agency
and the Digital Lab on the Go (DLOG)

Hennessy Park Hotel, Ebene
Thursday, 25th April 2024

- **Mr Doonunjoy Dassaye, Permanent Secretary of my Ministry,**
- **Mr Anand Soburrun, Chairman of the MDPA**
- **Board members of MDPA,**
- **Dr Suraj Juddoo, Executive Director of the MDPA**
- **Heads of Ministries and Parastatal bodies,**
- **Chairpersons and Directors,**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Good Morning to you all.

Let me begin with an inspiring and insightful quote in the present context. Steve Jobs once said, and I quote: *“It's not a faith in technology. It's faith in people.”* (unquote)

With faith in our people, we are spearheading the making of a Smart and Intelligent Mauritius which will be instrumental in the transformation of our country into a high-income economy and an all-inclusive Information Society.

It is important to continue to build a nation of committed citizens capable of meeting the challenges of the future.

For this transformation to keep happening, we need to inculcate the essence of emerging technologies and continuously upskill our community.

If we wish for our country to be in the league of high-income countries like Singapore and Estonia, we need to have a vision of a digitally inclusive knowledge-based society, driven by constant innovation and harnessing of emerging technologies.

With this vision in mind, we have restructured the former National Computer Board to a new entity, the “Mauritius Digital Promotion Agency” (MDPA).

MDPA will have a broader mission, that is, to lead Mauritius towards a world class digital economy and making technology widely accessible to all, permitting the cross sections of our societal fabric.

The institution will comprise various departments to achieve its mandate, which has been revised so as to respond to new needs and challenges.

I seize this opportunity to thank the Board and the Management team of the MDPA in enabling the implementation of forthcoming ambitious and citizen-centric projects.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The MDPA has been established mainly to:

- 1) Foster growth of the ICT sector through skills development,
- 2) Achieve basic ICT proficiency among all population groups,

3) Formulate policies with respect to ICT development, promotion and application.

I am pleased to learn that the MDPA has successfully implemented the Digital Lab on the Go project (DLOG), formerly known as the Cyber Caravan.

The project's aim is to digitally empower citizens by providing a multifaceted approach to harness the full potential of new technologies.

The Digital Lab will be visiting schools and as from June, some 7,000 students will benefit from the project.

In addition to the student community, the Digital Lab will also be moving to various locations such as Elderly Day Care Centers, Women Centers and Youth Centers.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This Government, led by the Honourable Prime minister, is constantly investing in new strategies to take our ICT sector to new heights.

In doing so, we are continuously moving forward to adapt, innovate and reaching out for new opportunities to make Mauritius safer and stronger than ever before, poised to look at the future with confidence.

I firmly believe that our country will continue to make formidable progress and position itself as the beacon of the African region and will be recognised as one of the most digitalised country.

This Innovative journey has already started with the implementation of the MoKloud project which is in line with the Digital Mauritius 2030 Strategy.

This Government Cloud is the Citizens own Digital Safe where each citizen can store online digital versions of their birth and marriage certificates and many other official documents.

The MoRendezVous online platform is another major initiative that has enabled citizens to schedule appointments from their mobile phone, thus gradually eliminating the traditional queuing system.

The most recent initiative of the Ministry is the ChatBot Project which stands out as a testament to our dedication to enhancing public services.

By integrating ChatBots into the Government portal and Ministries' websites, we have streamlined interactions with the public, fostering efficiency and accessibility.

The success of our Humanoid, MAIA, at major events reinforces our innovative approach to public engagement, in a technology driven economy.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today, at a time when people expect more from Government, more than 130 e-services are offered and accessed through the Government Portal.

Being able to provide an amplitude of online services implies having the required **infrastructure**.

My Ministry has left no stones unturned to modernize its infrastructures to make it more reliable, energy efficient, secure, fit-for-purpose and above all, inclusive.

Safety is regarded as a key factor in this digital era.

To consolidate appropriate safeguards to prevent threats and attacks in our digital ecosystem we have introduced the Mauritius Cyber Threat Information Sharing Platform (MAUSHIELD).

The platform has enabled various organisations to improve their cybersecurity posture, minimize risks and prevent cyber-attacks.

I am pleased to share with you that MAUSHILED has been awarded ITU's WSIS 2023 Champion and received a silver medal for the Public Service Excellence Award 2022.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In the same line, I wish to seize this opportunity to invite you all to the Mauritius Emerging Tech EXPO 2024 which will be held from the 8th to the 12th of May.

This event will gather all key players in the ICT sector in Mauritius from both Public and Private sectors and a number of renowned international delegates from the IT sphere as well.

I also seize this opportunity to thank the Board and the Management of the MDPA for driving of the Agency to achieve its objectives and wish them lot of success in this innovative journey.

With these few words I now have the pleasure to reveal the new branding of the Mauritius Digital Promotion Agency and the launch Digital Lab on the Go.

Thank You very much for your attention.