



THE STATE HOUSE NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2017

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Community outreach programme concluded

At the end of this month, President Danny Faure marked the completion of his community outreach programme, having personally visited all 26 districts in Seychelles and all elderly homes in the country.

President Faure has consistently emphasised the importance of staying in touch with the needs of the people, and seeing the situation in the communities first-hand. Since taking office in October 2016, President Faure has gone on a site visit almost every Friday, starting his district visits less than one month after taking office. The visits soon evolved from community gatherings to active excursions where the President visited citizens in urgent need of social assistance, emergency housing, and proposed sites for further development.

The programme of the President's visit to each district is determined by the District Administrator in consultation with the relevant Member of National Assembly, who together select the cases the President sees. President Faure's delegation include several representatives from relevant Ministries, Departments, and Agencies, to ensure that technicians are on-hand to provide assistance and follow-up accordingly.

Following every district visit, there is a short meeting at the local community centre where a plan of action is finalised and all relevant

stakeholders have the chance to share their feedback. These meetings facilitate open channels of communication and inter-Ministerial cooperation that is essential for continued community development and improving the lives of all citizens.

In September, President Faure visited Bel Air, Perseverance, Anse Aux Pins, Au Cap, Cascade, Pointe Larue, Anse Boileau, Grand Anse, Beau Vallon, and Bel Ombre. He also completed his visits to all the homes for the elderly.



CABINET DECISIONS

6 September 2017

- The recommendations made by the Committee that investigated staff complaints at the National Cultural Centre regarding fungal growth in the building will be implemented immediately. The report, in practice with good governance, is publicly available online.
- The Education Act was amended to encourage parents to take greater responsibility for the education of their children.
- Following extensive public consultation, the new Dog Control Bill is being gazetted.
- Cabinet approved for the construction of 42 temporary housing units, which will be of one to three bedrooms, to be situated at Barbarons.
- Cabinet approved for the reintroduction of the scheme of student loans from Commercial Banks. This is in line with Government's drive to encourage banks to play a more active role in human capacity development.

13 September 2017

- Cabinet approved for the setting up of a Staffing and Recruitment Committee that would coordinate and monitor recruitment within the public service.
- Parastatal organisations will have to pay a graduate housing allowance to returning graduates employed with them.
- A policy on the introduction of a Property Tax was discussed and approved. Consultations will begin soon.
- Amendments to the International Trade Zone Act (ITZ Act, 1995) were approved to put it in line with practices in small island states. A white paper process will be undertaken on the draft amendments.
- Cabinet approved amendments to Excise Tax and Custom Duty for a number of products.
- The Business Tax Act, 2009 will be amended to allow for the implementation of a simpler tax system.
- The Seychelles Revenue Commission will be restructured to improve efficiency and effectiveness.
- Cabinet approved for Seychelles accession to the Madrid Convention which will allow for the protection of trademarks belonging to legal entities in Seychelles and foreign entities with industrial and commercial interests in Seychelles.

27 September 2017

- The 2018 budget allocation for Ministries was approved. Each Ministry will now prepare its Programme Performance Based Budget statements, and the final 2018 Appropriation Bill will be presented to Cabinet on 18 October.
- Proposals for the allocation and management of State Agricultural Land were approved.
- Cabinet approved the development plan for Curieuse Island.
- The Sanitation Master plan for Seychelles was approved.
- Cabinet approved the amendments to the Employment (Amendment) Bill following consideration of feedback from the public consultative process. The Bill will be presented to Cabinet for final approval once all the recommendations have been drafted in legal terms.
- Cabinet approved amendments to the Civil Status Act 1991.
- Cabinet approved legislation for the reactivation of the Unemployment Relief Scheme (URS). Engagement on the URS will be a key condition for social assistance.
- Legislation will be drafted for the introduction of a special pension for certain categories of public officers, as already announced by the President.
- Cabinet approved amendments to the Seychelles Pension Fund Act.
- Cabinet also approved the draft bill and accompanying regulations to harmonise the various categories of business and persons entitled to fuel concessions under the Excise Tax Act 2009.
- Having considered feedback from public consultations, Cabinet approved amendments to the proposed Progressive Income Tax.
- Following the completion of the audit process by the Office of the Attorney General, Cabinet approved the supplementary appropriation for 2016 to be submitted to the National Assembly.
- Cabinet approved the concept of an Inland Clearance Depot (ICD). The ICD will facilitate the clearance of goods at the ports and airport. The Ministry of Finance, Trade and Economic Planning will develop the necessary guidelines and regulations for the implementation of the inland clearance depot.
- In light of disasters associated with climate change, Cabinet approved that government take measures to consolidate the planning for greater resilience to ensure the safety of the population.

United Nations General Assembly 2017

President Danny Faure joined over 100 world leaders in New York on Monday 18 September 2017 ahead of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), where he made his first appearance as Head of State. This year's UNGA's theme was "Focusing on people: striving for peace and a decent life for all on a sustainable planet".

In his address to world leaders on Thursday 21 September 2017, President Faure said, "This theme calls for good governance, transparency and accountability which are the foundation for the prosperity and security of a nation. Indeed, they put the rights and aspirations of the people at the centre of development where prosperity is shared by all."



Informing the UNGA of current political events in Seychelles where a President from one party is working in cohabitation with a parliament dominated by the opposition, President Faure emphasised, "We must create the necessary space within society where diverging views and ideas can flourish and be respected. Doing so helps promote unity, tolerance, and respect among our citizens."

President Danny Faure also urged the international community to take immediate actions to prevent, prepare, adapt, and recover from increasingly destructive climate-related disasters. "We cannot afford to renege on our collective commitment to travel the moral path for the sake of humanity," he said, echoing his words at the COP22 climate summit in Morocco last year.

The President also shared Seychelles' innovation in sustainable development financing through its debt-for-adaptation swap, and blue bonds that will be issued by the end of this year. Both measures seek to develop Seychelles' Blue Economy and resilience to climate change. President Faure reiterated Seychelles' commitment to pioneering methods to implement Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14 and other interlinked SDGs.

ACTIVITIES OF THE PRESIDENT

Judge Fiona Robinson sworn in as Justice of Appeal

Judge Fiona Robinson was sworn-in as Justice of Appeal during a swearing-in ceremony held at State House on 6 September 2017. Judge Robinson was appointed Judge of the Supreme Court in January 2013. She replaces Judge January Henry Msoffe, whose term of office in the Seychelles Court of Appeal ended on 14 August 2017.

Her appointment follows recommendations made to President Danny Faure by the Constitutional Appointments Authority pursuant with Article 123 of the Constitution of the Republic of Seychelles.



President Faure Receives Miss Seychelles Another World 2017



President Faure received Miss Seychelles Another World 2017, Miss Hillary Joubert, at State House on Friday 8 September. Miss Joubert was accompanied on her courtesy visit to State House by First Princess, Miss Petra Tamatave, and Second Princess, Miss Sarah Jumaye.

The President commended all contestants of the 2017 pageant for their courage and confidence to join and urged them to use their gifts and talents to make positive change and to continue bringing joy, hope, and inspiration to other young Seychellois girls.

Third Leader's Forum of 2017

President Faure meets with the Leaders of the National Assembly before the start of each session in the spirit of co-habitation. On Monday 11 September 2017, he met with the Leader of the Opposition, Mr Wavel Ramkalawan, and the Leader of Government Business, Mr Charles Decommarmond. They were joined by the Designated Minister, Mrs Macsuzy Mondon, and the Acting Attorney General, Mr David Esparon. The meeting focused on the Government's calendar of priority legislation for the third term, including the 2018 Budget process. The leaders also discussed other matters of national interest.

Meeting for African Ministers of Health of SIDS

President Faure received a delegation visiting Seychelles to attend the Meeting for African Ministers of Health of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) at State House on Tuesday 26 September 2017. This was ahead of the President's official opening of the meetings, where he spoke about the importance of collaborative efforts in combating public health issues. "Generating greater understanding and innovating together helps us advance all of our countries at the same time," said President Faure.

This is a forum initiated by the World Health Organisation to address the common challenges related to health faced by SIDS.



It enables 5 countries in the Africa region (Cape Verde, Comoros, Mauritius, São Tome and Principe, and Seychelles) to exchange views and experiences as SIDS and to build resilience and sustainability. Accompanied by the Seychelles Minister for Health, Mr Jean-Paul Adam, members of the delegation included Minister of Health and Quality of life of Mauritius, Dr Mohammed Anwar Husnoo, Minister of Health of Cape Verde, Dr Arlindo Nascimento do Rosario, the Secretary General for Ministry of Health in Comoros, Mrs Moinour Ahmed Said Hassani, Director of the Central Hospital in Sao Tome et Principe, Dr Celsio Junqueira, and the Director of Cabinet, Head of Malagasy Delegation, Professor Willy Frank Randriamarotia.

SITE VISITS

Bel Air and Perseverance



Anse Aux Pins and Au Cap



Cascade and Pointe Larue



Grand Anse Mahe and Anse Boileau



Beau Vallon and Bel Ombre



Elderly Homes



ACTIVITIES OF THE OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT

Launching of the Science, Technology and Innovation Policy and Strategy 2016-2025

Vice-President Meriton attended the official launching of the Science, Technology and Innovation Policy and Strategy for 2016-2025 on Monday 25 September, at Eden Bleu hotel.

The Vice-President has always emphasised the importance of developing policies and implementing programmes that respond to the needs of society and improve the lives of people. This policy document is the result of collaboration between the National Institute of Science, Technology and Innovation (NISTI) and a number of committed science-minded partners.

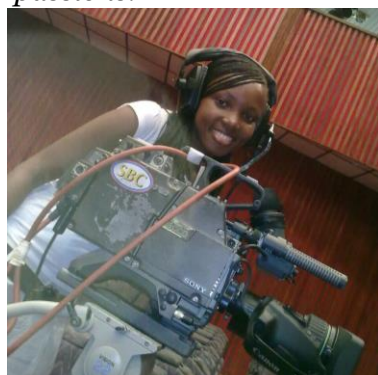
The National STI Policy and Strategy highlights the importance of Science, Technology & Innovation in the socio-economic advancement of Seychelles.



Vice-President Meriton urged all educational institutions to do their utmost in promoting an appreciation of science and technology, a powerful tool for the attainment of national development objectives inclined towards producing an educated, knowledgeable and skilled workforce.

SPOTLIGHT

Every edition of the State House e-newsletter aims to give attention to a particular individual or cause whose work and aspirations are inspiring. This month we focus on Vanessa Marie, a young technical operator (camerawoman) working at SBC who is passionate about art, creativity, and pursuing her passions.



Vanessa grew up at Sweet Escott in Anse Royale, where she did all her schooling. As a young girl, she was shy and reserved, but found a way to express herself through art. “Life is art and life is my inspiration,” says Vanessa. Following a course at SHTTC in tourism and tour guiding, she decided to pursue her passion and did the Textile Design course at the School of Visual Arts as a mature student. She excelled, and graduated in 2010 winning several prizes including the President’s Cup. Her courses were key to her getting out of her comfort zone, as they built up her confidence to express herself and her creativity.

“I will say that the person I am today, the work I am doing today is thanks to the combination of the Tourism and Tour-Guiding and Textile Design course. I am not afraid to be me,” says Vanessa. “In life, you can achieve anything you want, you just have to believe in yourself and your abilities. Be the best you can be every single day.”

Vanessa has been working as a Technical Operator in the Technical Services Department at SBC for 7 years now. “I wanted to do something that was creative and adventurous. Upon completing my studies at Visual Arts, I saw the captivating adverts on SBC and a friend helped me apply. I got lucky, and following a 6 months training course, I made it. At first it was difficult but I was not a technical person, but with the help of my friends, work colleagues, and trainers, I made it.”



She is the only woman in her department, and though she sometimes hears unpleasant comments, she gets a lot of praise and encouragement from colleagues, friends, and family. **“I get no special treatment, and I shouldn’t. I carry my equipment just like the men do. I love my job and I love my camera. It’s demanding and challenging, but I get to go to a lot of places and meet new people all the time – it’s a job full of adventure and discovering.”** Her focus is now to reach the 10-year milestone and develop her skills as technology is constantly evolving. She has ambitions to become a producer in the future. “I feel very privileged to be the only camera-girl working at SBC but I would like to encourage and see other females to take up this job as a career. **Don’t allow yourself to be intimidated by men, but instead come and challenge them,**” she says.



Vanessa describes herself as a simple person with her own style. She loves trousers, and wears them to work every day – “dresses are reserved for very, very special occasions” she laughs. When she’s not being a tour guide, drawing, painting, or writing short poems, she is capturing moments with her camera. “Every day I am using my creativity to compose good pictures to be shown on television where everyone sees my work of art. Never settle for the comfort zone because no dream is too small or too big. The only person who can stop you from being who you want to be and doing what you want to do is yourself.”

