

In this issue...



**Launching Ceremony
of the First Payment
of Negative Income
Tax Allowance**

Launching Ceremony of the First Payment of Negative Income Tax Allowance

The Official Ceremony marking the first payment of Negative Income Tax was hosted at the Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA) Head Office on Friday 24 November, 2017 and the Chief Guest of the event was Honourable Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, Prime Minister, Minister of Home Affairs, External Communications and National Development Unit, Minister of Finance and Economic Development. The ceremony was also attended by Honourable Alain Wong, Minister of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment, Mr. Nayen Koomar Ballah, Chairman of the MRA Board, some beneficiaries of the Negative Income Tax Allowance, MRA Board members, members of the MRA Management Team, local journalists and guests.



In his keynote address, the Honourable Prime Minister stated that the introduction of the Negative Income Tax is testimony to the will of the Government to reduce the gap between the rich and the poor, as outlined in the Government Programme 2015-2019. He also enumerated the implementation of the following measures by the Government which aim at reducing socio-economic inequality: subsistence allowance to the poor under the Marshal Plan against Poverty and increase in old age pension. The payment of the Negative Income Tax, he added, puts Mauritius into the select bracket of countries (United States, United Kingdom and Australia) which implemented same. The Honourable Prime Minister also thanked the staff and the Management Team of the MRA for contributing in making the Negative Income Tax a reality.





The Director-General of the MRA, Mr. Sudhamo Lal, thanked the Honourable Prime Minister for his presence at the MRA Head Office for the ceremony, and for the trust placed in the MRA for administering the Negative Income Tax. Mr. Sudhamo Lal underlined that the MRA is now contributing directly to poverty alleviation in Mauritius, as per its vision of being “a world class Revenue Authority respected for its professionalism, efficiency, fairness, integrity, and its contribution to our economic and social development”.

Some of the 12,000 beneficiaries were present during the Official Ceremony and they were handed over their respective letters of remittance by the Honourable Prime Minister. The beneficiaries expressed their heart-felt thanks to the Prime Minister and said that the Negative Income Tax is a relief to their economic situation.



The Chairman of the MRA Board, Mr. Nayan Koomar Ballah, along with the Director General, Mr. Sudhamo Lal, offered a token to the Honorable Prime Minister to thank him for his first visit to the MRA Head Office in his capacity of Prime Minister, and a bouquet was handed over to Honourable Wong.



Negative Income Tax: MRA hosts FITA centres



The MRA run Free Income Tax Assistance (FITa) centres around the island to facilitate the registration of eligible employees for the Negative Income Tax. 20 FITa centres were operational on Saturday 25 and Sunday 26 November, 2017 and more than 60 officers were on duty in those centres to assist employees. Approximately 2000 persons called in the centres either to seek additional information on the eligibility of the Negative Income Tax or for assistance to fill the online registration. The MRA also sent dedicated teams to the premises of enterprises, namely CMT, Princes Tuna, Shifa Clinic, Palmar Ltd, Outremer Telecom and Esquel Ltd, for the onsite registration regarding the Negative Income Tax.

As at Thursday 30 November, 2017, the MRA had received 25,369 applications and the bank accounts of 18,327 beneficiaries were credited with the Negative Income Tax allowance. The remaining applications are in process.

Employees may also call-in at the MRA Head Office to register themselves for the Negative Income Tax and they should bring along their National Identity Card (and that of their spouse if they are married), the Employer's Registration Number (ERN) of their employer and their Bank Account Number.

Lesotho Delegation



A delegation comprising officials from the Lesotho Revenue Authority (LRA) was on a study tour at the Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA) from Monday 20 to Friday 24, November 2017.

During the visit, the delegates paid a courtesy call to the Director-General of the MRA, Mr. Sudhamo Lal, and they had briefing sessions with the Director, Customs, Mr. V. Ramburun, and Section Heads of the Customs Department.

Presentations were also made on Deferral Regimes, Trade Facilitation, Customs Management System and the delegates also had working sessions with representatives of the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, Board of Investment, Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Ministry of Finance and Economic Development.

Workshops with MRA Stakeholders

In line with its strategic objective of 'Promoting Tax Compliance', the Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA) employs a gamut of initiatives to sensitize the public on their rights and obligations in relation to fiscal matters. One of the initiatives includes hosting regular workshops and, to that end, the MRA organised three working sessions with some of its stakeholders from the private sector.

Following changes brought to the Finance Act 2017, the MRA organised a workshop in collaboration with Rogers Group at Verandah Resorts on Tuesday 14 November, 2017. The aim of the session was to sensitize MRA stakeholders on the implications of the fiscal changes to promote compliance and the MRA resource persons were Mr. D. Seetloo, Section Head, Large Taxpayer Department (LTD), Mr. M. Oozeer, Section Head, Operational Services Department (OSD) and Mr. N. Tacouri, Section Head Medium and Small Taxpayer Department (MSTD).



A similar session was also organised, in tandem with Espitalier Noël Ltd (ENL), on Wednesday 22 November, 2017 at the Vivea Business Park and a considerable number of ENL staff turned-up for same. The workshop kick-started with a presentation by Mr. N. Tacouri, Section Head, MSTD, and it was followed by presentations by Mr. M. Oozeer, Section Head, OSD, Mr. D. Seetloo, Section Head, LTD, and Mr. M. Hannelas, Director, LTD. The audience was appreciative of the interactive sessions and thanked the MRA resource persons for their presentations.



Last but not least, the collaboration between the MRA and the Mauritius Export Association (MEXA) resulted in the organisation of a workshop at the Palms Hotel on Wednesday 29 November, 2017. The topics on the agenda for the session were the Negative Income Tax, Corporate Tax Incentive, Refresher on Investment Tax Credit and issues related to export manufacturing companies, and these were addressed by Mr. D. Ramdin, Director OSD, Mr. D. Seetloo, Section Head LTD and Mr. F. Oozeerally, Section Head LTD.



Taxation: Aspects of Judicial Review



The Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA) invited Mr. Rajesh Ramlohl, Deputy Solicitor General at the Attorney General's Office, as a Guest Speaker for a working session on selected aspects of judicial review in relation to taxation. The session was held at the MRA Head Office on Monday 06 November, 2017 and the aim was to shed light on certain aspects of judicial review from the tax perspective.

Staff from the Operational Services Department (OSD), Medium and Small Taxpayer Department (MSTD), Large Taxpayer Department (LTD), Objection, Appeal, Dispute and Resolutions Department (OADR) and Customs Department was invited to attend the workshop, in the presence of members of the MRA Management Team. The session concluded with the usual Questions and Answers between the resource person and the audience.

MRA Training Academy: Training on Brand Identification & Profiling and Targeting Techniques



A five-day workshop on Brand Identification & Profiling and Targeting Techniques was organised by the Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA) Training Academy at the MRA Custom House, Mer Rouge. The objective of the training was to enlighten the participants on new techniques of identifying brands and to target illicit trafficking of goods. MRA Customs officers, Officers from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade and Police officers were shortlisted to attend the training, in line with their responsibility of border protection.

During the Opening Ceremony, the Director, Customs, Mr. V. Ramburun, emphasised that continuous training with regards to Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) is a sine qua non factor which helps border agency to track and eliminate illicit trade. He also urged the participants to make the most of the training, which started on Monday 13 November and ended on Friday 17 November, 2017.



The training was dispensed by four resource persons, namely Mr. O. Persand, Team Leader MRA Customs, Mr. West, Mr. Pereira and Mr. Schoeman.

Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes



The 10th annual meeting of the Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes was held in Cameroon from Wednesday 15 to Friday 17 November, 2017. The meeting was attended by delegates from seventy-eight jurisdictions and Mauritius was represented by Mr. M. Hannelas, Director, Large Taxpayer Department of the Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA). The hosting of the forum testifies the growing importance of tax transparency and exchange of information work for developing countries, in particular for those on the African continent.

During the meeting, delegates acknowledged the benefits after the first exchanges of financial account information under the Global Forum's AEOI, welcomed the progress reported in the first public AEOI Implementation Report and adopted the Plan of Action for Developing Countries Participation in AEOI designed to help developing countries identify a suitable timeline and subsequently implement and benefit from AEOI.

The Global Forum also released six additional Peer Review Reports (Curaçao, Denmark, India, Isle of Man, Italy and Jersey) and this brings the number of second round reviews to a total of sixteen reports. The launch of the Global Forum's Africa Initiative for the next three years was also on the agenda and it aims at providing assistance to implement AEOI in African countries. The next Global Forum meeting will take place in October or November 2018 in Uruguay.

Fight against Money Laundering: Collaborative Training



From Tuesday 07 to Friday 10 November, 2017, a traineeship on the 'Fight against Money Laundering' was organised by the Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA) and the Customs Administration of Reunion Island at the MRA Custom House, Mer Rouge. This training is a continuation of a previous course on 'Exchange of Information' which was conducted earlier by both parties. The participants in 'Fight against Money Laundering' training were officers from the MRA, the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU), the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) and the Mauritius Police Force (MPF). A certificate was handed-over to participants during the closing ceremony on Friday 10 November in the presence of resource persons and Mr. V. Ramburun, Director, Customs.

MRA Football Festival: 'Bater Boule' does it again!



The 'Bater Boule' Team won the Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA) Annual Football Festival which was held on Saturday 11 November, 2017 at the Mauritius Gymkhana Football Grounds. The Football Festival is a traditional tournament that the MRA organises for its staff and this year, eleven teams were registered for the competition. In the preliminary round, the 7-a-side teams were batched in three groups and the winners and runners-up were promoted to the next rounds.

'Bater Boule' completed the first round by topping its group and it progressed in the tournament by defeating its opponents in the Quarter and Semi Final rounds. In the final, 'Bater Boule' was opposed to 'Ready to Attack' and 'Bater Boule' won the match on penalty shoot-outs.

After being crowned Champions in 2014 and 2016, the 'Bater Boule' Team won the Champions Trophy for an unprecedented third time in 2017. The players of the 'Bater Boule' Team were: Mr. A. Dabee, Mr. L. Jaguessar, Mr. Y. Bholah, Mr. K. Sunnotah, Mr. S. Dulmeer, Mr. G. Ramma, Mr. Y. Itnac, Mr. L. Kisten, Mr. N. Qoraishi, Mr. I. Fazalkhan. The Champions Trophy and gold medals were handed-over to the winners by Mr. V. Ramnundun, Director, Human Resources and Training Department (HRTD).



FMSC Athletics Meet: MRA wins Gold, Silver and Bronze medals

The Fédération Mauricienne des Sports Corporatifs (FMSC) Athletics Meet was held on Friday 10 and Sunday 12 November, 2017 at the Germain Comarmond Stadium, Bambous. Eighteen MRA staff participated in the Athletics Meet and the medals won are as per the below table:



Category	Name of Participants	Awards
Discuss	Ms. I. Larche	Gold Medal
3000 M Race	Mr. K. Mangar	Gold Medal
3000 M Race	Mr. H. Khelawon	Gold Medal
Javelin	Ms. A. Ramluchumun	Silver Medal
800 M Race	Mr. K. Daby	Silver Medal
Shot put	Ms. A. Ramluchumun	Silver Medal
3000 M Race	Mr. M. Behary	Bronze Medal
Shot put	Mr. D. Chateau	Bronze Medal
Discuss	Mr. D. Chateau	Bronze Medal

MRA Swimmers win 21 medals

The Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA) won twenty-one medals in the FMSC Swimming Competition held on Sunday 26 November, 2017 at the Serge Alfred Swimming Pool, Beau Bassin. Eleven MRA staff participated in the annual competition and other organisations namely Barclays, Waste Water Management, Accenture, State Bank, Eclosia, Medine and Air Mauritius also took part therein.



The medals won by the MRA are as follows:

S.N	Medals	No. of Medals
1	GOLD	6
2	SILVER	7
3	BRONZE	8
	TOTAL	21

Category	Name of Participants	Medals Won	No. of Medals Received
50 M Nage Libre Dames D3	MOOTIEN Pamela Gladys	GOLD	1
50 M Brasse Dames D3	MOOTIEN Pamela Gladys	GOLD	1
50 M Dos Dames D 3	MOOTIEN Pamela Gladys	GOLD	1
50 M Nage Libre Dames D2	BALGOBIN-DABYSING Purnima Devi	GOLD	1
50 M Brasse Dames D2	BALGOBIN-DABYSING Purnima Devi	SILVER	1
50 M Dos Dames D2	BALGOBIN-DABYSING Purnima Devi	GOLD	1
50 M Brasse Dames D2	MAMOOJEE Amira Bibi	BRONZE	1
50 M Dos Dames D2	MAMOOJEE Amira Bibi	BRONZE	1
50 M Nage Libre Hommes H3	MUNGROOSING Devkumar	SILVER	1
50 M Brasse Hommes H3	MUNGROOSING Devkumar	BRONZE	1
50 M Dos Hommes H3	MUNGROOSING Devkumar	GOLD	1
50 M Dos Hommes H2	KHELAWON Harris	SILVER	1
50 M Dos Hommes H1	ZACHARIE Rony	BRONZE	1
4X50M Nage Libre Dames (Relais Open)	MOOTIEN/DABYSINGBALGOBIN/ MAMOOJEE/BHURUTH	BRONZE	4
4X50M Nage Libremixtes (Relais Open)	SEEPARSAD/MUNGROOSING/MOOTIEN/ BALGOBIN-DABYSING	SILVER	4
	TOTAL		21