



### LA JEUNESSE

#### Miss Seychelles...un autre monde 2013

La nouvelle couronnée du concours Miss Seychelles...un autre monde 2013, Agnes Gerry, a été reçue en juin dernier par le Président de la République, à State House Elle était accompagnée de sa première et seconde dauphine, respectivement Isha Hoareau et Lindy Barallon. Le Président a félicité les trois charmantes élues et a eu des mots d'encouragement pour chacune d'elles, notamment pour Agnes Gerry qui aura l'honneur de porter la beauté créole au concours Miss Monde, prévu le 28 septembre 2013, à Bali, en Indonésie.

«Les Seychelles sont très fières de vous. Agnes Gerry, à vous à qui revient la mission de porter les espoirs seychellois au top mondial je compte sur vous pour briller dans le concours de beauté Miss Monde. Profitez au maximum des possibilités et moyens qui sont mis à disposition et saisissez-vous de l'occasion pour développer et fortifier votre estime et confiance en soi. Tous mes vœux de réussite vous accompagnent», a déclaré le Président Michel.

Au cours de la rencontre, les trois beautés seychelloises ont relaté les péripéties de leur participation au concours Miss Seychelles.....Un autre monde 2013 et Agnes Gerry s'est appesanti sur sa prochaine participation au concours Miss Monde.

«Devenir Miss Seychelles 2013 a changé ma vie d'une certaine façon et je suis en train de me faire à ce nouveau titre Avec l'aide des uns et des autres, je sais que je m'en tirerai bien, à la satisfaction de tous. En attendant je suis en train de me préparer pour le prochain concours tout en prenant part aux activités communautaires », a déclaré la reine de beauté seychelloise.



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### CABINET BUSINESS

#### Family Fun Park

Plans for a new Family Fun Park, to replace the existing Children's Playground in Victoria, were approved. They include a food court, toys, electronic and video games, cars, and an artificial ice skating ring. The project is being partly funded by the Government of Seychelles and partly by the Government of Abu Dhabi.

#### Golden Mile Project

The Golden Mile project for the Beau Vallon coastline was approved by Cabinet. The plan includes gardens, walkways, family park with recreational amenities, additional secure parking and restroom facilities, a balance of nature and improved recreational infrastructure along the old Beau Vallon road running adjacent to the beach.

#### Hotel Access

Cabinet received reports of incidents where Seychellois have not been able to have access to public bars and restaurants in hotels, on Praslin and on Mahe. The Cabinet approved plans to conduct consultations with the SLA, and meeting with the hotels concerned to see that the law is applied and the necessary respect is given to Seychellois clients

#### Scholarship Debtors

Cabinet reviewed proposals for measures to recover debt owed by students who completed university studies under a government bonding agreement. It was agreed that new bonding agreements would need to be strengthened.



# The STATE HOUSE newsletter

Office of the President of the Republic of Seychelles



The National Show 2013

## Think Big!

June was the month for big announcements, not only top level changes in Government executive posts but also the creation of the Department of Entrepreneurship Development and Business Innovation, in the Office of the President. This department is expected to drive this sector to a new level of empowerment in line with the announcements made during the President's National Day Address.

“The time has now come for us to empower small and medium enterprises. With the solid foundation we now have following our economic reform, we need to enable Seychellois businesses to develop,” the President had said on 18th June.

The new department is tasked with the mandate to empower, support and encourage the growth of enterprises, various forms of industries, and small businesses. Mrs Maryse Berlouis was appointed the

Principal Secretary for Entrepreneurship Development and Business Innovation. Work is already underway to boost microenterprises. In July, the President Michel visited Zone 18 of the Providence Industrial Estate, where the Government is planning to build a Microenterprise Centre, which will house small business, restaurants, warehouses, car service centres, and specialized workshops.

“To develop the economy, you need small business in order to develop the spirit of entrepreneurship, which will grow and develop the economy... they need affordable spaces to develop their businesses, and this centre will allow them to do that.... There has been a lack of affordable work space as rental prices in the country are too high. This will address the situation, and provide small entrepreneurs a chance to flourish and to encourage them to take ownership of the economy,” said Mr. Michel.

Construction of the Government-funded 3,500 square-metre Microenterprise Centre will start soon, and it is expected to be completed by 18th June 2014.

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

I was very impressed with this year's National Show and its participants. Not only was it even bigger and better than those of previous years but also more innovative, more creative; an encouraging showcase of where our economy is heading and also the results of our hard work, resilience and determination to build a new Seychelles.



It shows us that hard work pays off. It shows that even if you start a small business with very little, it can grow and you can grow with it. The possibilities are endless if you have the support and the right mindset.

The more we develop our small and medium sized industries, the less we will depend on imports for some of the products we need, and this will reduce our vulnerability to external market fluctuations. We also need to continue to develop the air and maritime links with our neighbours in the Indian Ocean, the 'circle of friends,' which I have spoken about, which will also ensure that we have a more stable economy, as we boost trade with those who are closest to us, and benefit from the reduction in costs that is associated with this.

This is one of the main currents of the Blue Economy concept; to take ownership of our ocean also means to fully exploit our sea lanes for the benefit of our people, so that we remove our sense of isolation, and become more connected to the economies of the region. We can also do much more to develop our fisheries industries, our sea-based tourism as well as new areas for protection of marine reserves.

I always ask our Seychellois workers, our children, to seize all opportunities.

The world is aware of what we have already accomplished together. We now want to attain a new level of higher productivity, better quality services, better products, more rewards.

Our children, our grandchildren, will inherit a Seychelles that will be even better than today.

## HERITAGE

### 'Seychelles State House – Centenary of Inauguration'



A new book entitled 'Seychelles State House – Centenary of Inauguration' was presented to President Michel to mark the centenary of the building in May. President Michel had commissioned the book, which was prepared by the Minister for Tourism and Culture, Alain St Ange, the writer and chief Seychelles Tourism Board copywriter and consultant, Mr. Glynn Burridge as well as other staff from the Seychelles Tourism Board and Department of Culture, in a joint partnership to design this coffee table book.

The President described State House as an integral part of our patrimony and that it bears testimony of the rich history of Seychelles.

"The publication of this excellent book is timely and I think it is a big contribution to the documents that already exist on State House and I hope that in the future there will be more to come, more publications on the different aspects of the State House and also the history relating to State house," he commented.

In this 84-page publication, readers will see many rare photographs depict various aspects of the country's history, its evolution as well as different architecture of the foremost office of the land, complemented by a history of the building and its status over a one hundred year period, as a barometer of political and social change in the islands, and witness to their colourful history.



Lina Dufrene and Marilia Fanchette, former State House staff, with the President at the book launch.

## LEDIKASYON

### Klib 'Wildlife' Sesel

Pou komemor Lazournen Later le 22 Avril, ban etidyan ki form parti 'Wildlife Clubs of Seychelles' ti ganny ankouraze pour ekrire en kart postal pour Prezidan Larepublik avek en mesaz spesyal ki zot ti ava kontan dir li an se ki konsern lanvironman. Sa ti ganny organize par Fondasyon bann Zil Sesel.

Serten sa bann etidyan ti ganny sans zwenn avek Prezidan James Michel dan en pti rankont organize State House, e la zot ti personnelman prezant li avek sa bann kart postal. Prezidan Michel ti remersye sa bann etidyan pou zot mesaz e sizesyon e i ti ankouraz plis zenn pou zwenn sa klib.



### Meyer etidyan lannen 2012

Prezidan i zwenn avek bann etidyan k'in fer pli byen dan zot letid, parey Martin Roucou, en travayer Seypec, ki ti ganny pri pou pli bon etidyan 2012 Kolez Nasyonal Maritim Irland, ler i ti konplet son degre 'Bachelor' dan 'Marine and Plant Engineering'.

Prezidan Michel ti osi zwenn avek Ms. Kavinia Karunakarane ek Ms. Stephanie Cadeau. Sa de etidyan in resevwar pri pour fer pli byen akademikman, lefet ki tou le de ti ganny A's dan tou zot size kot lekol pour Letid Avanse (SALS) pour 2012.



### Football education

In May, President met with Patrick Viera, former Manchester City football player who won numerous championships in both England and Italy, as well as the World Cup with France in 1998 and the European Championship. He had also played for Arsenal, AC Milan, Juventus and Cannes.

Mr Viera was in Seychelles to lead a series of soccer clinics for young Seychellois athletes who wish to further develop their talents in this sport.

This forms part of a 10-year partnership which was signed by Etihad Airways, Air Seychelles' equity alliance and Manchester City football Club (MCFC). This programme, together with the Seychelles Football Federation (SFF), will enable training in football that will help the youth to become better footballers. They spoke about the positive role that football and other sports create in order to promote new values for the Social Renaissance programme

The President also held a meeting with the new Seychelles Football Federation Chairman, Mr. Elvis Chetty, who presented the President with the SFF Strategic Plan for the year and also briefed him on future projects for football development in Seychelles. The President thanked SFF for developing such positive and concrete plans for football in Seychelles and said that he appreciated the work it is doing, in good collaboration with the Government.



## HONNEUR

### Callixte D'offay : Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur

L'Ambassadeur Callixte d'Offay, Conseiller diplomatique auprès de la présidence de la République des Seychelles a été élevé au grade de Chevalier de l'Ordre de la Légion d'Honneur par la République Française.

Il a été décoré par Madame Geneviève Lancu, ambassadrice de France aux Seychelles lors de la fête nationale française, le 14 juillet 2013. Suite à cette décoration, le Président James Michel a adressé un message de félicitations à son conseiller dans lequel il s'est réjoui de cette distinction prestigieuse qui honore toutes les Seychelles qui en tirent une légitime fierté, une distinction qui, selon lui, constitue une juste récompense de la carrière remarquable de M. d'Offay dans la diplomatie seychelloise.

«Je me réjouis de cette décoration et j'en tire une grande fierté d'abord, parce que vous la mériter, ensuite parce qu'elle honore vous et vos proches et, au delà, toutes les Seychelles dont elle traduit l'amitié et la proximité avec la France. Pendant toute votre carrière vous vous êtes consacré au renforcement de cette amitié et aujourd'hui vous en êtes récompensé. Une récompense qui rejaillit sur nous tous», a écrit le Chef de l'Etat seychellois.

Cette décoration est en effet une reconnaissance du travail accompli par l'Ambassadeur d'Offay dans le cadre des différentes responsabilités diplomatiques qu'il a assurées en Europe, à l'Unesco, l'Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie, l'Organisation des Nations unies pour l'Alimentation et l'Agriculture (FAO) et comme Secrétaire général de la Commission de l'Océan Indien (COI).

## HOUSING

### New Condominium Project

In July, President James Michel visited the site for one of the major housing developments projects being proposed at the north coast of Île Perseverance.

The new condominium project is targeting young professionals and graduates, either returning from overseas, or recently graduates from the University of Seychelles, as well as young professionals without a degree, who fall within the specified income category for the condominium project.

"This project will alleviate the demand for housing for young professionals, where they will have the chance to buy their own home for the first time... we want them to stay and contribute to the development of the country, and we will have other projects to encourage them to do so," said President Michel.

The site represents around 22,000 sqm and the project has been designed by BerLouis Mondon Design Studio, will comprise of three-bedroom,



Au cours de la cérémonie, l'Ambassadeur Lancu a rapidement brossé les actions remarquables de l'Ambassadeur d'Offay au nombre desquelles elle a souligné la promotion de la paix et la démocratie, notamment la médiation de la SADC et la COI dans la résolution de la crise à Madagascar, la consolidation de la visibilité de la COI sur la scène internationale et la lutte contre la piraterie maritime.

« Par cette haute distinction, la France marque son appréciation pour le remarquable parcours de Callixte d'Offay et son engagement sur les dossiers qui nous tiennent mutuellement à cœur dans cette zone de l'océan Indien », a-t-elle déclaré.



two-bedroom and one-bedroom apartments with the largest costing around R1.5 million along with infrastructure to serve the estate.

To note, this project is a public private partnership with developer Green Island Construction Company, whereby the developer will finance and build the project without the need for government financing through the capital budget. Construction work is expected to start in October this year, and is expected to be completed by the end of 2015.



## BLUE ECONOMY

### President calls for 'fair deal'

"The Blue Economy is our shared opportunity, and our shared responsibility... Sustainability for islands is all about our ability to use our oceanic space as opportunities for development."

With these words, President James Michel presented one of the key messages for the AIMS Regional Preparatory Meeting for

the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS), which was also attended by the UN Under-Secretary General for Economic and Social Affairs, Mr Wu Hong-bo, who is also the Secretary General of the Conference on Small Island Developing States. Mr. Michel urged all small islands developing states to push forth a strong common agenda for economic development and regional partnership, as well as seeking a new sense of momentum to promote the cause of SIDS. The President noted that SIDS must create a framework that provides a platform for concrete action, and that this involves the partnership of larger nations that influence the global development agenda.

President Michel spoke about the diverse opportunities in the development of the blue economy including new energy possibilities, biodiversity conservation, climate change adaptation, and providing increased food security, in order to fight against climate change, build new trade links, as well as creating a sustainable space for tourism.



## UNGA President

President Michel met with the President of the United Nations General Assembly, Mr. Vuk Jeremic, who came to address the AIMS Regional Preparatory Meeting in July. The President congratulated Mr. Jeremic on his dynamic presidency of the UNGA during the last year, where the interests of the developing world were often brought to the forefront of its discussions.

The President of the UNGA commended Seychelles for the progress it has made in its economic and social development, and added that Seychelles is making a strong impact with its work within the United Nations system.

"Seychelles is a small country but a very visible country in the international community...I think the Seychelles balanced very well the interests of various countries, like in the fight against piracy... in development issues, renewable energy and the blue economy... You do have a good image in the United Nations," said Mr. Jeremic.



## New Zealand MFA

The President met with the New Zealand Foreign Minister, Mr. Murray McCully. President Michel thanked New Zealand for attending the AIMS Preparatory Meeting, and added that it would be an opportunity to enhance the excellent relations between Seychelles and New Zealand. Mr. Michel and Mr McCully agreed to strengthen dialogue between the two countries.

"I am delighted to be here and so far my visit has been very productive... From a bilateral point of view, I wanted to come because I've heard the success story of the Seychelles. The way in which you have overcome significant adversity and challenges in recent years. The way in which you have confidently gone about building a successful country and I was keen to establish stronger ties between our two countries..." said Minister McCully.



## VP's views

In a drive to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the public administration system and improve service delivery, as a government, we have over the past years, actively implemented a variety of economic and administrative reform measures.

Through these reform programmes, the need has been strongly felt to integrate all our efforts and resources in order to achieve focused results in the short, medium and long term. We are fully committed to use best practices that will enable our country to achieve its goals and objectives in what is becoming more and more a competitive economic environment, while at the same time being aware of the challenges and opportunities that this brings.

In response to this, the Department of Public Administration has embarked on a reform programme to design, introduce and successfully implement a Results Based Management System across the entire public sector. Results Based Management (RBM), also known as Performance Management or Outcome Measurement, has been adopted because it is an approach that best links performance measures to the intended results of a programme or project.

It ensures that human and financial resources stay focused on the achievement of results throughout the performance cycle. It is a process through which results are formulated, programme / project achievements are monitored, decision making is better informed, reporting is facilitated and transparency and accountability are ensured. In short it calls for institutions to take responsibility for initiating actions and show the results of these actions as outcomes that have institutional and national impact as intended or planned process in motion.



## LINYON AFRIKEN

### Komemorasyon 50 tan OAU-AU

Ti dan en seremoni State House le 26 Me ki Ansyen Prezidan France Albert Rene ti alim flanbo Linyon Afriken pour komemor senkant an legzistans lorganizasyon Linite Afriken, ki sa lannen pe fet 50 tan. Pandan sa seremoni, bann personnaz k'in zwe en rol dan lendepandans Sesel ek kreasyon OAU, ti ganny onore.

Pli tar sa menm mwan, Prezidan Michel ti asiste Some Linyon Afriken, Addis Ababa, Etyopi pour bann gran selebrasyon laniverser sa lorganizasyon.

Pandan sa Some, Prezidan ti fer resorti ki pandan sa moman selebrasyon zot devret osi vwar ki fason sa lorganizasyon i kapab amelyore. Prezidan Michel ti felisit Linyon Afriken pour zot lakomplisman par egzant pou promot linite e amelyor lavi bokou dimoun atraver kontinan Afriken. I ti fer resorti ki Linyon Afriken i bezwen etansifye son kompetans pou anmenn stabilite e osi met dimoun o sant devlopman. Prezidan Michel ti osi demande ki ban pei Afriken i pran plis 'ownership' zot lekonomi, ki pe ogmante, e pou revwar vre potansyel lekonomi ble dan sa parti lemonn.



"Lafrik pe an se moman benefisy e avek en logmantasyon dan lekonomi. Me, nou bezwen plis pei Afriken pou pran 'ownership' zot lekonomi. Nou pa kapab koz lo transformasyon Afriken kot i pe pran an men son lekonomi, san ki nou regard seryezman nou losean.....Bann loportinite ki nou eritye dan nou lanmer i la pour nou, e ansanm nou bezwen kree bann fason pou nou devlop sa potansyel. Nou bezwen asire sekirite losean e nou bezwen pran responsabilite nou losean. Pour akonpli sa, nou bezwen donn plis latasyon nou lekonomi ble, » Prezidan Michel ti fer resorti.



A lafen sa some, Prezidan Michel ti dir ki Linyon Afriken in vwar ki losean i annan osi bokou potansyel e larises, ki kapab benefisy kontinan Afriken enkli bann pti leta zil. I ti dir ki sa i ava devlop sekter maritim dan bann pei Afriken ki a kapab fasilite konnektivite rezyonal.

### AUC Chairperson praises Seychelles

In June, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, undertook a 3-day official visit. She congratulated Seychelles for its very high level of human development as well as its achievements in environmental conservation. Dr Dlamini-Zuma said Seychelles should be an example for other countries and are "an inspiration to all."

"I am pleased to see that Seychelles has an active diplomacy within the African Union and we appreciate your active advocacy and contribution to the discussions," said Dr Dlamini-Zuma. She added that the 'Seychelles success story' needed to be shared with other members of the African Union, where exchanges of best practices could aid the development of much bigger nations.

Dr Dlamini-Zuma with Mr Michel

## LAGRIKILTIR

### Travay ansanm pou anmenn sekter lagrikiltir lo en lot nivo

An Me, Prezidan Michel ti kontinyen son bann vizit dan diferan landrwa travay e safwasi i ti vizit plizyer seksyon ki tonm anba responsabilite Minister Resours Natirel osi byen ki plizyer laferm ki pe ede dan devlopman lagrikiltir dan Sesel.

Ti en loportinite pou Prezidan Michel vwar ki pe vreman arive dan sa sekter, ki osi ganny trouve koman pilye lekonomi Sesel, bann amelyorasyon k'in annan baze lo diferan mezir kin ganny met an plas e vwar fason pou fer sa sekter bouz pli devan dan son devlopman.

Pandan sa vizit Prezidan Michel ti ganny plis leksplikasyon lo diferan servis ki nouvo sant resers Grand Anse, k'in ganny renove e ekipe avek bann nouvo lekipman modern ki pou permet bann teknisyen fer letid pli avanse dan sa domenn e ofer en pli bon servis piblik. I ti kontan pou vwar nivo progre ki bann diferan laferm parey kot Roucou, Anse Boileau ki fer elevaz manze zannimo e kot Jojo ek Jean-Paul Geffroy, Anse Royale, ki tou lede i annan plantasyon fri e legim e i ti felisit zot pou zot travay dir.

Prezidan Michel ti osi fer resorti ki gouvrenman pe esey son mye pou kapab pret larzan bann entrepreneur, espesyalman bann pti biznes dan sekter lagrikiltir e lapas. I ti soulinyen ki pe i bezwen kontinyen ankouraz bann pti biznes pou ki zot kapab envestir e fer siskse. I ti met bokou lanfaz pou ki i annan plis kolaborasyon ant Minister Resours Natirel, Lazans Lagrikiltir Sesel e bann sekter prive pou ki ansanm zot kapab adres bann febles e anmenmtan pou ankouraz bann zenn pou pran en karyer dan sekter lagrikiltir a prennan kont ki pe i bezwen plis teknisyen pou ede amelyor kalite fason plante dan Sesel.



Independence day flag-raising ceremony



## INDEPENDENCE DAY

### The fruits of Independence are sweet

An extract of the President's Independence Day message 2013;

"One of the aspirations of our independence heroes was to give all our children the chance to a good start in life. By providing all our children access to at least 13 years of free education we have realised one of their many dreams. We know today that the foundation for our continued success as a free nation, in this fast changing world, rests on the education of all our children. The fruits of independence are sweet, because we have improved the quality of life of our people.

Independent Seychelles is a lot richer than four decades ago. Richer, especially, in the quality of life that we enjoy. The most important of our many assets is our healthy and educated people. Individual Seychellois are taking the initiative and striving on their own. We have resilience. The success of our economic reform programme taught us how to turn difficulties into opportunities. Ownership of the opportunities is ours. We have stability, a beacon of light and hope in a world all too often riven by conflict. We have become a model of human development, a leader in sustainable development, a world-acclaimed defender of the environment.

Ours is a society of solidarity, compassion, with a comprehensive welfare system, where no one is left behind. Where national unity prevails. Where we can rise above our differences. Where hard work is the order of the day. These are the hallmarks of the New Seychelles."



**DIPLOMACY**  
**Relations with Japan flourish**

President James Michel held bilateral talks with the Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, in the margins of the TICAD V conference in Yokohama, Japan in June. The President commended Japan for developing excellent cooperation and friendship with the countries of Africa and fostering strategic partnerships for economic growth. Mr. Michel noted that Seychelles and Japan enjoy excellent relations as both share the same values in terms of developing their green and blue economies.

"We share the same aspirations, and this has contributed towards fruitful discussions with various agencies of the

**Visite à la Réunion**

En visite officielle à la Réunion, en juillet, le Président James Michel, a invité les autorités de l'île à explorer avec les Seychelles de nouveaux échanges innovants afin de valoriser le potentiel économique et maritime de nos îles.

" Les défis du moment nous invitent à explorer de nouveaux échanges innovants. Que dire, à cet égard, de l'économie bleue! Notre avenir doit désormais s'écrire en bleu car notre océan est une source d'opportunités inestimables. Nous devons envisager son exploitation de façon soutenue et impliquer tous les niveaux d'acteurs, notamment les jeunes", a-t-il dit.

La Ministre de la Fonction publique française Mme Marylise

Japanese government, I would like to express our gratitude for the assistance Japan has given Seychelles for the development of our fisheries sector, particularly artisanal fisheries. This has helped us to develop our self reliance. The project for the 7th Fisheries Grant of the Japanese government for the extension of the Providence fishing port will be of great benefit to our fishermen and the economy," said President Michel.

The Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD V) t ended with the adoption of the 2013 Yokohama Declaration and Action Plan. President Michel hailed the TICAD V a success, especially as many countries of Africa had echoed Seychelles to promote the importance of the blue economy.

"I am very encouraged by the outcome of the conference. I feel we have their support. They realize the importance of the resources of our oceans; the need to take ownership of them and at the same time to protect them, for the benefit of future generations.... In Yokohama, this concept has been much discussed, and it will be developed in the future. Japan has also expressed its support for African ownership of its resources, and its economic future, and this kind of partnership is vital for African renaissance," said President Michel.



President Michel addressing TICAD V

Lebranchu a, pour sa part, qualifié la visite du Président Michel de "moment fort" dans les relations entre les la France et les Seychelles, et l'a inscrite dans la continuité et le renforcement des échanges entre les deux îles.

"Ce socle solide, sur lequel se sont tissés nos liens, a permis l'émergence d'un partenariat multidimensionnel dont nous pouvons être satisfaits qu'il offre encore de nouveaux espaces d'expansion, de nouveaux champs d'actions. ....Vous constituez, dès lors, monsieur le Président, l'incarnation de cette volonté politique. Votre message est non seulement parfaitement reçu, il nous va droit au cœur", a-t-elle dit.

Pendant cette visite, les Seychelles et la France/Réunion ont signé trois accords de coopération portant sur divers secteurs de développement socioéconomique.



Le Président Michel et Ministre Lebranchu à l'ouverture d'une ferme agrisolaire



La France et les Seychelles se félicitent des accords finalisés

**VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF SRI LANKA**  
**Relations Soar to New Heights**

In June, Seychelles welcomed H.E. Mahinda Rajapaksa, President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka for the first time in Seychelles. The four-day state visit marked the 25 years since the establishment of Diplomatic Relations between the two countries, and followed President Michel's state visit to Sri Lanka last year.

During his visit, President Rajapaksa and President Michel discussed in-depth state affairs, major international and regional issues as well as bilateral cooperation projects in various areas such as fisheries, education, judiciary, defense, health, trade and investment, tourism, piracy and small industries development.

"Is it a great pleasure and honour to be here in Seychelles. Your visit to Sri Lanka in August 2012 was a landmark event in our relations. We hope for stronger cooperation and avenues for new relations in other fields as well," remarked President Rajapaksa in the meeting.

President Rajapaksa also confirmed that SriLankanAirlines intends to start flights to Seychelles this year and that the details of these new airlinks will be further discussed in the near future. The two leaders underlined that the airlinks between the two countries will surely be a catalyst for further strengthening the economic partnership.

"The new flights will surely open doorways for business, tourism, cooperation and trade exchanges between Seychelles and Sri Lanka. Seychelles can become a gateway to Africa and other parts of the world. The airl links will be a catalyst to ensure increased cooperation between our two countries," said President Michel.

The two Heads of State witnessed the signing of three



agreements between their two countries of which was the MoU on Defence Cooperation, Bilateral Air Services Agreement and MoU on Vocational training and Youth development. President Rajapaksa visited the Vallee De Mai UNESCO World Heritage Site on Praslin and was very keen to see the real coco-de-mer plants while being given a brief tour of the visitor's center and touring the forest.



## NATIONAL DAY EVENTS 2013

### 20th Anniversary of the Third Republic

#### Wind Farm

The 6MW wind farm project was commissioned on Ile du Port and Ile de Romainville, by the President. The project was developed by Masdar, the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development in close collaboration with the Ministry of Environment and Energy, Public Utilities Corporation and the Seychelles Energy Commission.

“This project will launch Seychelles into the 21st century as far renewable energy is concerned, because as I have always said in the past, we have to move forward into the future and the future is renewable energy,” said President Michel.

#### Anse Royal Hospital

The hospital, which was funded by the People’s Republic of China, was officially opened, and is the second largest in Seychelles, costing 40 million Seychelles Rupees to build, and can accommodate up to 54 patients. It has a rehabilitation and physiotherapy room, a labour room, an accident and emergency unit with a special treatment room and its own reception as well as an operating theatre and X-ray facilities.

“Anse Royale has another landmark to be proud of today; a modern hospital with the tools and facilities to serve the people of Seychelles and give confidence in the health system. It is another important contribution for our social development efforts and will elevate the level of healthcare provision for our people.” said President Michel.

#### Ile Perserverance Creche and Primary School

The school was officially opened to mark the 20th anniversary of the Third republic. It has 300 students from all the districts and 40 members of staff, and at full capacity it can accommodate over 700 students. It has a modern and multi-coloured architectural design, and is the first of its kind in Seychelles. The project was financed partly by loans from BADEA (Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa), OFID (OPEC Fund for International Development) and the Government of Seychelles, and cost a total of 48 million Seychelles Rupees.

#### Palais de Justice

The new judiciary building houses the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeal of the Seychelles. The 6 million US dollar project was funded by the People’s Republic of China and built in partnership with the Government of Seychelles. The Palais de Justice, with more than 5,000 square metres, has 10 court rooms that host a range of advanced technology including security video surveillance, internal broadcast and PA systems, electronic information and video panels for visitors and staff, video and audio recording and playing systems for court proceedings, computers systems connected to outside servers, and ability to connect to video-links from international locations.

#### National Show

With over 200 businesses taking part in the National Show organised as part of activities to celebrate the 20th National Day anniversary of the Third Republic, the event showcased the progress the country has made since 1993. ‘Celebrating 20 years of achievement’ was the theme chosen by the National Day organising committee for the show at the Roche Caïman sports complex. The show was officially opened by Vice-President Danny Faure.



## PRESIDENT’S NATIONAL DAY ADDRESS

#### New SME Loan Scheme

The President announced that the Ministry of Finance will introduce a programme to enable entrepreneurial Seychellois to set up their businesses within a reasonable period, without difficulty accessing credit and without bureaucratic constraints. The programme will cover loans of up to SR3 million. It will apply only to businesses in the productive sector. Interest on loans will vary from 5% to 7%, and the repayment period will be between 5 and 7 years, with a six-month grace period on repayments. The applicant’s personal contribution will not exceed 2.5% of the value of the loan. To enable them to facilitate the launching of their businesses, they will benefit from tax concessions for a certain period. Government will also provide workshop facilities free of charge for a period of six months. After that they will pay a reasonable rent for the space they occupy. Land has already been identified at Providence for the necessary infrastructure. Work will start during the first half of 2014.

#### Smart Subsidy for Housing

The President said the Government is addressing the issue of access to bank credit for housing construction. Presently, it is too complicated, particularly considering the criteria and the interest rates that the commercial banks charge to secure a loan. To resolve this situation, Government will introduce a new programme called Smart Subsidy. This is a new partnership between government, the commercial banks and the Housing Finance Corporation (HFC) which will benefit certain categories of applicants who are either building or buying a house for the first time. Under the Smart Subsidy programme government will give a subvention to applicants whose individual salaries or combined incomes are between SR6,000 and SR20,000. The level of subvention

will depend on the salary levels of qualifying applicants. Applicants with earnings of between the minimum wage and just below SR6,000 will also be considered for the subvention on an exceptional basis if their personal contributions meet other criteria. For those who do not fall in this particular category, the Government will aid them to have their own homes through existing programmes. The President also announced that from August 2013, the HFC will resume the disbursement of loans, while at the same time it will increase the second housing loan levels from SR200,000 to SR300,000.

#### Salary Review

The President announced Government would develop a comprehensive plan to ensure that the salaries of all Seychellois workers are reviewed, taking into account the country’s economic capacity. This will apply for all salary levels, including the national minimum wage. This will ensure that both public and private sector workers will benefit. The Ministry of Finance will set up a mechanism to help the private sector absorb the salary increase. This salary increase will take effect early in 2014. This will be in addition to the salary increases that were implemented from 1st July



Special guest of the National Day Parade, Secretary General of United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), Dr. Supachai Panitchpakdi, with President Michel

