

Customs Protecting Society through Vigilance and Commitment

*Une douane qui protège la société par
sa vigilance et son engagement*



INTERNATIONAL CUSTOMS DAY 2026

celebration at
Custom House, Mer Rouge



EDITORIAL NOTE

From Collection to Connection: A Transformative Start to 2026

The year 2026 has opened with renewed energy at the Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA), setting the tone for a period defined by innovation, institutional resilience and deeper public engagement. More than a revenue-collecting body, the MRA continues to evolve into a modern institution, one that balances efficiency with empathy and enforcement with education, anchored in trust and partnership with the community it serves.

The observance of International Customs Day 2026 stood out as a defining moment of the month. Held under the theme "Customs Protecting Society through Vigilance and Commitment," the event was both a celebration and a reaffirmation of purpose. It brought together officers, partners and stakeholders in a shared recognition of the critical role Customs plays in safeguarding the nation. Beyond ceremony, it was an occasion to reflect on the growing complexity of the global landscape, where illicit trade, transnational crime and emerging security threats require ever greater vigilance, adaptability and professionalism. The commissioning of a state-of-the-art whole-body X-ray scanner at the Cruise Terminal symbolised this forward momentum, enhancing detection capabilities while signalling MRA's continued investment in cutting-edge border security.

That vigilance is not merely symbolic, it delivers results. A series of targeted operations at SSR International Airport led to major drug seizures, underscoring the effectiveness and resolve of the Customs Anti-Narcotics Section, CANS. These interventions are a stark reminder of the daily risks faced and mitigated, by officers working at the frontline of national protection.

At the same time, the MRA's outlook remains outward-looking. International cooperation continues to be a strategic pillar, illustrated by the Regional Training Workshop on Cybercrime, Virtual Assets and Digital Evidence. Organised with the support of

experts from the United States Department of Justice and the FBI and bringing together participants from Mauritius and Seychelles, the workshop addressed the shifting terrain of financial crime, now increasingly digital, borderless and complex.

Yet, alongside enforcement and collaboration, the MRA is placing renewed emphasis on connection. The launch of the MRA Tax Connect Initiative, driven by the Taxpayer Education and Communication Department, reflects a deliberate move towards a more inclusive and people-centred approach to tax administration. Guided by the principle "Engage. Educate. Empower.", the initiative reaches out to SMEs, professionals, students and emerging entrepreneurs, building understanding, encouraging compliance and nurturing a culture of shared responsibility.

In this convergence of action, technological, operational and human, the MRA's trajectory becomes clear. It is not only collecting revenue; it is cultivating relationships, strengthening trust and redefining its role in a rapidly changing world.



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INTERNATIONAL CUSTOMS DAY 2026

MRA LAUNCHES WHOLE-BODY X-RAY SCANNER TO FURTHER STRENGTHEN BORDER SECURITY



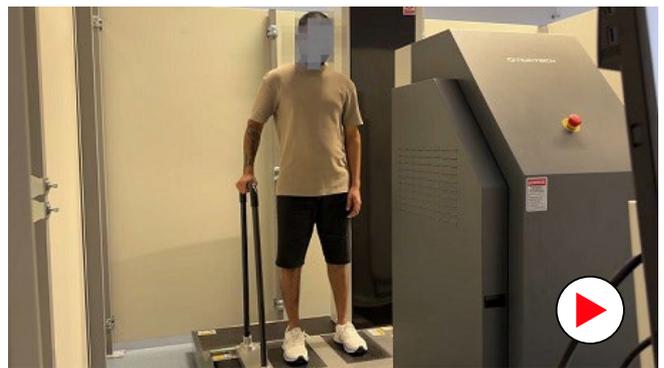
The Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA) marked International Customs Day (ICD) 2026 on Monday, 26 January 2026, at the Regional Training Centre (RTC), Customs House, Mer Rouge, Port-Louis. Celebrated under the theme '**Customs Protecting Society through Vigilance and Commitment**', ICD 2026 highlighted the pivotal role of Customs in preventing illicit trade, fraud, smuggling and other transnational crimes that threaten public health, safety, the environment and national security.

The event brought together the Honourable Dhaneshwar Damry, Junior Minister, Ministry of Finance, Mr. Tej Kumar Gujadhur, Chairperson of MRA, members of MRA Board, Mr. Rohit Ramnawaz, the Director-General of MRA, Customs officers and key stakeholders. The occasion served both to commemorate achievements and to reinforce institutional collaboration. ICD 2026 also reaffirmed Mauritius' steadfast commitment to the principles of the World Customs Organization (WCO) and its standing as a secure, reliable and competitive trading country.

Strengthening Border Security through Advanced Technology

A major highlight of the ceremony was the official unveiling of a state-of-the-art whole-body X-ray scanner, representing a significant enhancement to border security and Customs' detection capabilities.

This advanced technology strengthens the Authority's ability to identify contraband and illicit items and reflects the MRA's determination to remain ahead of evolving threats while safeguarding the integrity of Mauritius' borders.



The International Customs Day 2026 once again demonstrated MRA's resolve to protect national interests and uphold international Customs standards. The Authority remains committed to fostering a secure and enabling environment for trade while combating the adverse effects of illegal activities on society. In this spirit, the MRA extends its appreciation to all stakeholders, partners and individuals whose continued collaboration supports a safer and more compliant Customs landscape.

The Chief Guest, Hon. Dhaneshwar Damry, Junior Minister at the Ministry of Finance, officially inaugurated the Whole-Body X-Ray Scanner, marking a substantial milestone in the enforcement and security capabilities of Customs.



Hon. Dhaneshwar Damry, Junior Minister, Ministry of Finance

In his keynote address, Hon. Damry emphasised the Government's commitment to designating 2026 as the Year of the Economy, underscoring the importance of integrity, accountability and efficiency in driving sustainable development. He outlined the Government's vision to create employment opportunities and promote inclusive growth, while prioritising the fight against illicit funds and drugs, improving healthcare facilities and strengthening the economy through key indicators such as economic growth, tourism earnings and inflation control.



Hon. Damry further highlighted the critical role of the Mauritius Revenue Authority and Customs in safeguarding borders, facilitating trade, combating illicit finance and ensuring robust revenue collection.

He also underlined the importance of increasing market movements to enhance connectivity with Africa, noting the Port's strategic role in strengthening regional connectivity and doubling traffic over the next decade to support national economic growth.

Mr. Rohit Ramnawaz, Director-General of the Mauritius Revenue Authority, reaffirmed MRA's full alignment with the Government's strategic vision. He recalled that the MRA is responsible for collecting nearly 90% of national budget revenues, thereby playing a central role in financing public security, infrastructure development and major socio-economic initiatives.



Mr. Rohit Ramnawaz, Director-General, MRA

Mr. Ramnawaz also emphasised the strategic contribution of Customs to economic growth through effective trade policy implementation, facilitation of legitimate movement of goods and people and management of the trade supply chain. These efforts directly enhance Mauritius' competitiveness and attractiveness as a regional trade and investment hub.

He further noted the Authority's commitment to service quality, transparency and trade facilitation, while upholding the highest standards of integrity and ethics. According to him, *"The tangible outcomes of these efforts are evident in the substantial improvements in cargo clearance efficiency, with average clearance times of 19 minutes for green-channel sea cargo and 8.3 hours for red-channel declarations, underscoring the robust risk management and facilitation measures in place."*

Mr. Ramnawaz also reiterated MRA's firm resolve to combat drug trafficking through close collaboration with other government agencies. Between January and December 2025, Customs recorded 120 drug seizures with an estimated street value of Rs. 8.3 billion, including a historic seizure of 433.1 kg of cocaine, valued at approximately Rs. 6.5 billion, following a joint operation with the National Coast Guard and the Anti-Drug and Smuggling Unit. This success illustrates the effectiveness of intelligence-led enforcement and inter-agency cooperation.

Mr. Rajendra Gupta Ramnarain, Acting Director of Customs, reaffirmed Customs' commitment to protecting society from drug-related threats. He stated that *"Over the past year, the Customs Anti-Narcotics Section (CANS), in close coordination with the Anti-Drug and Smuggling Unit and other enforcement agencies, intercepted more than one tonne of dangerous drugs. These efforts have successfully disrupted criminal networks and prevented immeasurable harm to our communities."*



Mr. Rajendra Gupta Ramnarain, Acting Director of Customs

He added that this achievement reflects MRA's sustained vigilance and collaborative approach in safeguarding the nation.

The MRA's accomplishments continue to demonstrate its dedication and effectiveness in fulfilling its mandate, reinforcing its essential role in advancing Mauritius' socio-economic interests.



WCO Certificates of Merit 2026

The Mauritius Revenue Authority warmly congratulates all recipients of the World Customs Organization (WCO) Certificate of Merit, awarded during the 2026 International Customs Day celebrations. These certificates recognise individuals and partners who exemplify the highest standards of Customs service through vigilance, integrity, professionalism and an unwavering commitment to protecting society.

External Awardees

- Mr. Moonesawmy Sadasiven, Chief Inspector, Anti-Drug and Smuggling Unit (ADSU)
- Mr. Ruhomaun Kevin, Director, National Parks and Conservation Service

Internal Awardees

- Mr. Oozeer Mahmad Noor, Director, Operational Services Department
- Mr. Ramkissoon Geerjanand Panday, Director, Objections, Appeals and Dispute Resolutions Department
- Mr. Teeluckdharry Amick, Assistant Director, Taxpayer Education and Communications Department
- Mr. Rammaya Sam, Team Leader, Deferral Regimes, Customs Dept.
- Mr. Conhye Rakesh, Technical Officer, Surveillance and Enforcement, Customs Dept.
- Mr. Doma Chooramun, Technical Officer, Airport Cargo Operations, Customs Dept.
- Mr. Moonesawmy Tamodren, Technical Officer, Seaport Operations, Customs Dept.
- Mr. Ramachundren Vimen, Technical Officer, Excise Unit, Customs Dept.
- Mr. Salabee Dhiraz, Technical Officer, SSRIA Passenger Terminal Operations, Customs Dept.
- Mr. Halkhoree Hemraz, Customs Officer II, Seaport Operations, Customs Dept.
- Mr. Mungur Nirmal, Customs Officer II, Customs Anti-Narcotics Section, Customs Dept.
- Ms. Juggoo Hemna, Customs Officer I, Customs Anti-Narcotics Section, Customs Dept.



WCO Certificates of Merit 2026



REGIONAL TRAINING WORKSHOP ON CYBERCRIME, VIRTUAL ASSETS AND DIGITAL EVIDENCE

ENHANCING INVESTIGATIVE AND PROSECUTORIAL EXPERTISE TO COMBAT CYBERCRIME AND FINANCIAL CRIMES



Strategic Context and National Ambition

Mauritius is consolidating its role as a Centre of Excellence and an International Financial and Regional Training hub for Africa. This ambition is supported by a stable and well-regulated financial ecosystem, strong governance and institutional frameworks and a unique geopolitical location that enhances its role as a gateway between Africa and the rest of the world. Consistent with this ambition, the Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA) hosted a Regional Training Workshop on Cybercrime, Virtual Assets and Digital Evidence from 19 to 23 January 2026.

Official Launch and Distinguished Participants

The launching ceremony took place on Monday, 19 January 2026, at the Integrated Customs Clearance Centre (ICCC), Le Chaland Road, Plaine Magnien. The event was graced by Hon. Dhaneshwar Damry, Junior Minister, Ministry of Finance, Chief Guest, along with Mr. Tej Kumar Gujadhur, Chairperson, MRA Board, MRA Board members, Mr. Rohit Ramnawaz, Director-General, MRA, Mr. Craig Halbmauer, Chargé d’Affaires, US Embassy, Mr. Rampersad Sooroojally, Commissioner of Police, Mr. Titrudeo Dawoodarry, Acting Director-General, Financial Crimes Commission, amongst other personalities.

High-calibre Workshop

Virtual assets offer transformative opportunities for the financial sector, but they also introduce complex challenges that demand specialized expertise, advanced tools and coordinated inter-agency responses. Strengthening the capacity of enforcement authorities is essential to effectively detect, seize and confiscate illicit funds, disrupt criminal networks and safeguard the integrity of the financial system.



In line with this vision, the Regional Training Workshop on Cybercrime, Virtual Assets and Digital Evidence strengthens the financial centre’s effectiveness by providing a dynamic platform for building expertise, fostering collaboration and equipping authorities with the knowledge and practical tools needed to confront emerging threats in the rapidly evolving digital financial landscape.

International Expertise and Institutional Representation

The workshop was facilitated by experts from the United States Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), bringing valuable international expertise and practical insights into cybercrime and virtual asset-related threats. A total of 44 participants attended, including 10 from Seychelles and 34 from Mauritius, representing various institutions such as the Attorney General’s Office, Bank of Mauritius, Financial Crime Commission, Financial Intelligence Unit, Financial Services Commission, Judiciary, Mauritius Police Force, Office of the Director of Public Prosecution and the Mauritius Revenue Authority.

Mauritius as a Digital Bridge Between Asia and Africa

In his keynote address, Hon. Dhaneshwar Damry, Junior Minister, Ministry of Finance, highlighted the Government’s commitment to strengthening Mauritius as a leading International Financial Centre (IFC). He emphasised the need for a dedicated cybersecurity centre to strengthen the prevention and detection of financial crimes amid evolving global threats.



Hon. Damry further emphasized the importance of preparedness for the 2027 Financial Action Task Force (FATF) review, noting that effective financial crime risk management is central to maintaining the sustained effectiveness of the national AML/CFT framework and its enforcement. He stressed that Mauritius takes its international obligations seriously and remains fully committed to strengthening its regulatory and institutional frameworks through ongoing engagement with relevant stakeholders.

Economic Outlook and Policy Direction

On the economic outlook, he stated that 2026 will be a year of transformation, performance, job creation and inclusion, reflecting the Government’s focus on sustainable growth. He noted stabilised inflation, a strong tourism rebound, increased economic growth and higher exports as key indicators of progress.

For his part, Mr. Rohit Ramnawaz, Director-General of MRA, stated that *“as Mauritius positions itself as a transparent, credible and well-regulated financial centre, the country’s reputation depends not only on a strong legislative framework but also on its ability to detect wrongdoing, conduct effective investigations and support successful prosecutions”*. He added that credibility is earned through consistent, professional and lawful action and that the MRA aligns with the government’s mission to promote the financial centre.



Mr. Ramnawaz emphasized that traditional investigative methods must be complemented by digital forensics, advanced data analytics and close coordination with law enforcement and prosecutorial authorities. He pointed out that maintaining chain of custody, evidential integrity, admissibility and clear presentation in court is essential to achieving justice.



Regional Cooperation and Legal Adaptation

Highlighting the borderless nature of cybercrime, Mr. Ramnawaz stressed the need for regional cooperation, citing Mauritius' engagement with colleagues from Seychelles as a reflection of their shared responsibility to align operational approaches and build trusted professional networks. He reaffirmed Mauritius' commitment to strengthening its institutional response to cyber-enabled threats, while underscoring the need for a continuous review of the legal framework to keep pace with evolving risks.

International Partners' Perspectives

Mr. Jeffrey D. Rees, Program Manager at the FBI and Mrs. Kristina Cervi, Attorney Advisor at the Office of Overseas Prosecutorial Development, Assistance and Training (OPDAT), spoke about the importance of tailor-made training for the prevention of financial crime in both Mauritius and Seychelles, with particular emphasis on the Cybercrime, Virtual Assets and Digital Evidence workshop.



Mr. Jeffrey D. Rees, Program Manager at the FBI and Mrs. Kristina Cervi, Attorney Advisor at OPDAT

Mr. Craig Halbmaier, Chargé d'Affaires at the U.S. Embassy, highlighted the ongoing collaboration between the U.S. Government, Mauritius and Seychelles, aimed at the shared goal of combating financial crime and boosting economic growth.



Mr. Craig Halbmaier, Chargé d'Affaires at the U.S. Embassy

Strengthening Regional Capacity and Trust

The successful organisation of this regional workshop reaffirms Mauritius' commitment to strengthening regional cooperation, enhancing institutional capacity and positioning itself as a trusted hub for specialised training in combating cybercrime and financial crimes in Africa and beyond.



FROM COLLECTION TO CONNECTION

THE TRANSFORMATIVE VISION OF TAX CONNECT

Engage. Educate. Empower

In an era where public institutions are increasingly called upon to foster trust, transparency, and meaningful engagement, the Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA) is taking a bold and forward-looking step through the Tax Connect Initiative. Conceptualised by the Taxpayer Education and Communication Department (TECD), this flagship programme represents a strategic shift from traditional tax collection approaches to a more human-centred model of connection, education, and partnership.

Tax Connect is grounded in a simple yet powerful philosophy: sustainable compliance is best achieved not through enforcement alone, but through informed, engaged, and empowered taxpayers.

Building on the success of Tax Clubs in schools, the initiative expands this engagement model to key segments of the taxpayer community, including SMEs, professionals, manufacturing companies, start-ups, and future taxpayers at HSC level.

What distinguishes Tax Connect is its structured, data-driven, and segment-specific approach. Through monthly thematic activities, targeted workshops, digital outreach, and collaborative platforms, the initiative seeks to address real concerns, demystify tax obligations, and create a continuous dialogue between the MRA and taxpayers. This is not merely a communication exercise, it is a deliberate effort to reshape tax culture in Mauritius.

Following consultations across departments, a dedicated Tax Connect Committee has been established to oversee the implementation of the programme. Significantly, the Committee is chaired by the Director of the Operational Services Department, reflecting the institutional importance and cross-functional commitment attached to the initiative. With representation from key departments, the Committee ensures that Tax Connect is both operationally grounded and strategically aligned.

The initiative's one-year action plan for 2026 demonstrates an impressive level of foresight and coherence. From empowering SMEs and engaging women entrepreneurs to fostering tax awareness among students and strengthening partnerships with professionals, each month is designed around a clear theme and measurable outcomes.

Robust monitoring mechanisms, including monthly reports, quarterly reviews, and a comprehensive end-of-year evaluation, underscore MRA's commitment to accountability and continuous improvement.

Ultimately, Tax Connect is more than a programme; it is a paradigm shift. By moving "from collection to connection," the MRA is positioning itself not only as a regulator, but as a trusted partner in national development. Through education, engagement, and empowerment, Tax Connect holds the promise of nurturing a culture of voluntary compliance, one built on understanding, respect, and shared responsibility.

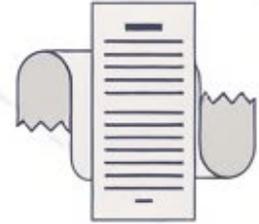
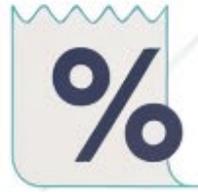
Ultimately, Tax Connect is more than a programme; it represents a strategic evolution in the way the Mauritius Revenue Authority engages with its stakeholders.

The initiative harmonises collection with connection, recognising that effective revenue mobilisation and meaningful taxpayer engagement are intrinsically linked.

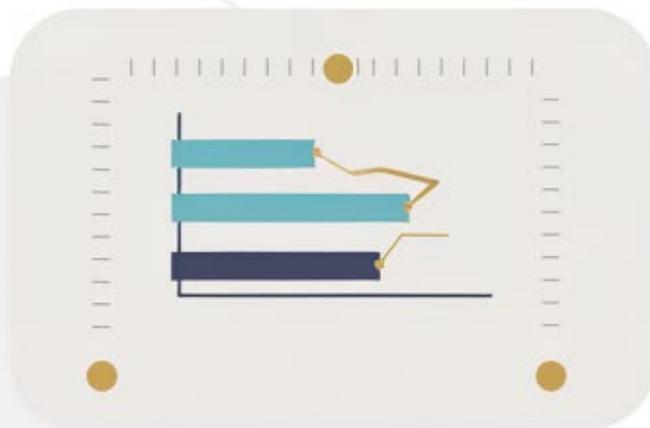
By fostering a culture rooted in education, dialogue, and mutual respect, the MRA further consolidates its role as both a responsible authority and a trusted partner in national development. Tax Connect thus embodies a forward-thinking approach, one that deepens collaboration, strengthens confidence, and nurtures a sustainable culture of voluntary compliance built on shared responsibility and enduring partnership.

The logo for Tax Connect features the word "TAX" in a bold, dark blue, sans-serif font above the word "CONNECT" in a larger, bold, dark blue, sans-serif font. The letter "O" in "CONNECT" is replaced by a stylized, golden-yellow circular icon with a vertical line through its center, resembling a plug or a connection point.

Engage. Educate. Empower



Better understand the VALUE ADDED TAX (VAT) system



1. What is VAT?

VAT (Value Added Tax) is a tax charged on taxable goods and services supplied in Mauritius by VAT-registered persons.

2. Who must register for VAT?

Any business with an annual turnover exceeding Rs. 3 million must compulsorily register for VAT with the Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA).

3. What law changed the VAT registration threshold?

The Finance Act 2025 reduced the VAT registration threshold from Rs 6 million to Rs 3 million.

4. What must a VAT-registered person do?

A VAT-registered person must:

- Charge VAT on all taxable supplies
- Issue VAT invoices for sales made after registration
- Submit VAT returns and pay VAT to the MRA
- Keep **business records** for at least 5 years

5. When must VAT be charged?

VAT must be charged at the time the supply is made and declared in the correct VAT return.

6. How often must VAT returns be submitted?

- Quarterly- if taxable turnover does not exceed Rs 10 million
- Monthly- if the VAT-registered person chooses to do so.

7. What are the quarterly VAT periods?

- January to March (ending 31 March)
- April to June (ending 30 June)
- July to September (ending 30 September)
- October to December (ending 31 December)

8. When must VAT returns be submitted?

VAT returns must be submitted within 20 days after the end of the month or quarter.

If the due date falls on a weekend or public holiday, submission is allowed on the next working day.

9. How are VAT returns and payments submitted electronically?

VAT returns and VAT payments are submitted online through the MRA website www.mra.mu. When both the VAT return and payment are made electronically, they can be submitted by the end of the following month.

10. What is a VAT invoice?

A VAT invoice is a legal document that must be issued for every taxable supply made by a VAT-registered person.

11. What details must a VAT invoice contain?

A valid VAT invoice must include:

- Supplier's name, address and VAT registration number
- Date of issue
- Description of goods or services supplied
- Value of the supply
- Amount of VAT charged, among other information

12. What happens if a business does not register for VAT?

Failure to register for VAT is an offence and may result in fines and imprisonment.

13. What penalties apply for non-compliance?

Late VAT return: Rs 2,000 per month (maximum Rs 20,000)

Small enterprises (turnover does not exceed Rs. 10 million) : maximum Rs 5,000

Late payment of VAT: 10% penalty on the amount of tax payable is applicable if payment is effected after the due date.

Small enterprises: 2% penalty

Interest: 1% per month on unpaid tax from the date the tax remained unpaid to the date of payment.

14. What does the MRA advise VAT-registered persons?

MRA advises all VAT-registered persons to regularise their VAT practices and fully comply with the VAT Act. Failure to comply will result in enforcement action.

Furthermore, MRA encourages persons in business and VAT registered persons to consult MRA website for resources which are made available to them such [VAT rulings](#), [guides](#) etc.

USEFUL LINKS

- [Simplified VAT Registration:](#)
- [Communicue](#)
- [Press release](#)
- [Guide:](#)
- [Explanatory video:](#)

RELENTLESS AT THE BORDERS

MRA INTERCEPTS DANGEROUS DRUGS WORTH Rs. 557 MILLION

The Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA), acting through its Customs Anti-Narcotics Section (CANS), intensified its border control operations in January 2026, resulting in several major drug seizures at SSR International Airport.

These operations underscore the Authority's sustained vigilance and operational effectiveness in combating transnational drug trafficking.

TOTAL IMPACT – JANUARY 2026

Total street value	Rs. 557 Million
Main substances	Synthetic cannabinoids • Hashish • Cannabis • Other dangerous drugs
Location	SSR International Airport

MAJOR SEIZURE 1

Suspected Synthetic Cannabinoids

Street Value: Rs. 258 Million

Date: 13 January 2026
Quantity seized: 17.2 kilograms of dangerous drugs
Profiled passenger: British national
Concealment method: Illicit substances hidden inside two protein sachets contained in two suitcases
Findings: Green and orange pastes later identified as synthetic cannabinoids
Status: The suspect was handed over for further investigation and a formal enquiry is underway.



Safeguarding the nation

The series of successful interceptions in January 2026 reflects the Mauritius Revenue Authority's commitment to securing the country's borders against illicit trafficking.

Each seizure represents a decisive intervention

MAJOR SEIZURE 2

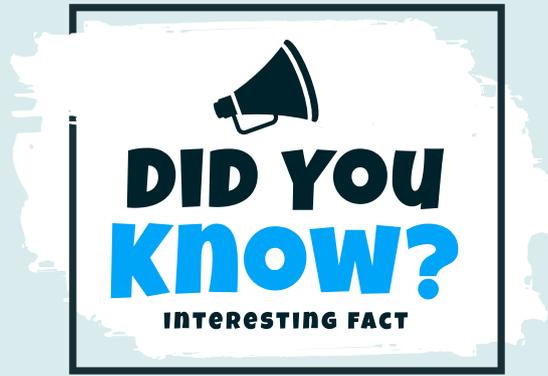
Hashish and Cannabis

Street Value: Rs. 168 Million

Date: 21 January 2026
Profiled passengers: Two female passengers of French nationality arriving from Paris Charles de Gaulle
First passenger
Findings: 52 rectangular bags containing hashish. 18 plastic bags containing cannabis.
Second passenger
Findings: A significant quantity of cannabis. A substantial amount of whitish powder suspected to be dangerous drugs.



to protect public health, preserve social stability and disrupt organised criminal networks. Through sustained vigilance and intelligence driven operations, the MRA continues to stand as a critical line of defence in safeguarding Mauritius from the threats posed by dangerous drugs.



SCANNERS

Scanners are non-intrusive inspection tools which are being used by MRA for clearance of goods at the Port and Airport. In addition of being pre-requisites for security requirements according to the WCO SAFE Framework of Standards, scanners help customs in detecting offences (undeclared, restricted or prohibited goods) and also in profiling cargo that really require examination.

The benefits of using scanners are reduction in dwell-time, expedited clearance of legitimate goods and the promotion of the seamless movement of goods through secure international trade supply chains.

MRA currently owns 23 scanners as of today



PURPOSE OF THE SCANNERS

- Scanning of loose Cargo
- Scanning of Container
- Scanning of Mails, Parcels and Packets
- Scanning of luggage (Mainly passengers, crew members)
- Full Body Scan
- Scanning of Cargo



The number of drug seizures effected by the Customs Anti-Narcotics Section (CANS):

- January to December 2025 is 120 and the street value of the drugs seized is Rs. 8,379,724,279.
- January 2026 is 9 and the street value of the drugs seized is Rs. 557 Million.



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