

FIGHT AGAINST FINANCIAL CRIMES

- **FBI brings its expertise**
- **AML/CFT Unit of MRA achieves milestone in 126 cases worth 2.8 billion rupees**

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the US Embassy, in collaboration with the Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA), launched a workshop entitled "*Investigating and Prosecuting Complex Financial Crimes*" on September 23, 2024, at the Custom House in Mer Rouge, Port-Louis. This workshop, spanning from September 23 to 27, 2024, regroups participants from Mauritian agencies, including the Financial Crimes Commission (FCC), Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA), Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU), Mauritius Police Force (MPF), and the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP). It aims at enhancing collaboration and information sharing among Mauritian agencies in their fight against financial crimes, particularly money laundering and its evolving threats in the digital age.



Mr. M. Sudhamo Lal, G.O.S.K, C.S.K, Director-General of MRA, inaugurated the event as the Chief Guest. In his keynote address, Mr. Lal articulated the significant risks posed by money laundering to crucial sectors such as banking, legal, accounting, and real estate. He underscored the emerging challenges presented by cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin, which facilitate

sophisticated money laundering activities. *"The global threat of money laundering is real and demands innovative tools and techniques for detection and prosecution,"* emphasized Mr. Lal.

He further applauded Mauritius for its high compliance level with the 40 recommendations established by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), which delineates international standards for combating money laundering and financing terrorism.

Highlighting recent achievements, Mr. Lal announced that the Anti-Money Laundering/Combating the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) Unit of the Fiscal Investigations Department had successfully concluded investigations into 126 cases, totaling 2.8 billion rupees for the financial year ended June 30, 2023. Moreover, for the subsequent period ended June 30, 2024, a total of 281 assessment notices were issued amounting to 1.8 billion rupees.

His Excellency Henry V. Jardine, US Ambassador to the Republic of Mauritius & Seychelles, highlighted the importance of inter-agency cooperation in confronting financial crime. *"This workshop presents a chance to enhance interaction and networking among various Mauritian agencies. Strengthening those connections is vital as criminal networks exploit gaps in communication,"* he noted.

Ambassador Jardine underscored the need for law enforcement to remain adaptive in the face of rapidly evolving criminal methods. He emphasized the essential role of prosecutors from the very early stages of investigations, stating, *"Collaboration between investigators and prosecutors is a proven strategy that has yielded successful outcomes across the globe."*

Ms. Leah Tanner, Supervisory Special Agent from the FBI, expressed her appreciation for the enthusiasm shown by the investigators tackling the complexities of financial crimes. She recognized the unwavering dedication and commitment of the officers from the Mauritius Revenue Authority, Mauritius Police Force, Financial Intelligence Unit, and Financial Crime Commission who participated in the workshop, highlighting their vital role in the fight against financial crime.

The opening ceremony also featured the presence of Ms. Carine Charlette-Katinic, Director of the Financial Intelligence Unit and Mr. Rashid Ahmine, Director of the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, illustrating the collective effort towards a more robust and united front against financial criminality in Mauritius. The workshop's collaborative spirit signals a proactive step towards enhancing Mauritius' capacity to combat financial crimes effectively in an ever-evolving landscape.