Speech by Sir Anerood Jugnauth, Minister Mentor, Minister of Defence and Minister for Rodrigues at the inaugural ceremony of the Indo-Mauritius Urology Conclave 2018

Salle Crépuscule, Radisson Blu Azuri Resorts & Spa Roches Noires

Monday 6th August 2018 – 9 h 30

Honourable Ministers Dr Anwar Husnoo and Prem Koonjoo,

The Second Secretary, High Commission of India, Mr Akash Gupta,

The Director of Health Services, Dr Timol,

Head of International Operations Fortis Healthcare, Mr Sukmeet Sandhu,

Chairperson of the Medical & Surgical Centre Ltd, Mrs Helene Echevin,

Dr Anil Elhence, Organising Chairperson,

Dr Balbir Verma, Organising Secretary,
Distinguished Urologists,

Ladies and Gentlemen

GOOD MORNING TO ALL OF YOU

It is my pleasure to welcome you on behalf of the Government of Mauritius and on my own behalf for this Indo-Mauritius Urology Conclave. I wish all the urologists from India a nice and pleasant stay in our island.

When Dr Balvir Verma requested me to attend this event as Chief Guest and deliver a speech, I accepted the invitation without any hesitation because I know his professionalism and passion as one of the most respected urologists in Mauritius.
I am also fully aware of his desire to promote excellence in his field of medicine and he wants Mauritius to be endowed with the latest high tech medical facilities and services.

Ladies and Gentlemen,
This Urology Conclave comes at an opportune time for Mauritius as we are faced with an increasing number of patients diagnosed with urological problems.

The total number of cases of diseases of the genito-urinary system treated as inpatients in our public hospitals, as per statistical records, stood at 12008 in 2015, 12459 in 2016 and 12476 in 2017.
Clear analysis of data has revealed a rise in patients with renal problems. Attendances in renal specialised clinics have increased from 4,323 in 2015 to 5,791 in 2017. The number of patients on dialysis treatment has also gone up from 1,228 in 2015 to 1,325 in 2017. And the number of death registered due to renal complications increased from 139 in 2015 to 160 in 2017.

As at date, our public hospitals do not have full-fledged Urological Units.

However all patients with urological problems are being treated in the different departments such as:
Moreover, in addition to the existing dialysis units, our main hospitals are being equipped with new and modern dialysis units.
As the Minister of Health and Quality of Life just stated, Government is investing in the appropriate infrastructure & logistics and putting together the required expert resources in our public hospitals to better respond to the expectations of patients.

Indeed, Government is injecting more than Rs 7 billion rupees in the setting up of state-of-the-art ENT Hospital, New Eye Hospital, New Flacq Hospital and a Cancer Centre. The financial assistance generously granted to Mauritius by India in this respect needs to be highlighted.
Ladies and Gentlemen,

These massive public investments stem from our firm belief that investing in health is an investment in the future of the economy and of the people. We want to provide quality health services to everyone, not just for those who can afford it. This principle of fairness and equity is at the heart of all our endeavours as a caring Government.

Besides efforts put up by Government, there is a need to encourage the setting up of new high-tech facilities by the private sector.
To promote investment in the health sector, a number of incentives are already available to investors. Some of the main ones are as follows:

1. Exemption of registration duty on the purchase/lease of land for the construction of infrastructure in the medical field;
2. VAT exemption on medical and surgical equipment;
3. VAT exemption on construction of purpose-built facilities for health services;
4. No customs duty on selected equipment, machinery and furniture;
5. Free repatriation of profits, dividends and capital; and
6. No capital gains tax.
Ladies and Gentlemen, investment in high-tech healthcare facilities are bound to pick up momentum in view of the fact that Mauritius is fast emerging as a medical hub for the region, especially with many countries in mainland Africa registering high level economic growths and fast expanding demand for specialized healthcare services. I therefore invite you to partner with us in making of Mauritius a medical centre of excellence in this part of the world.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Urology is a medical speciality that has made long strides in the recent past in terms of both the technology and expertise.
At present, in Mauritius, minimally invasive procedures for both the stone disease and urological cancers are being performed.

The recently adopted Human Organ Transplant Act has paved the way for our doctors to perform transplants in Mauritius for which our fellow citizens had to travel abroad. Procedures are underway for setting up of a new Renal Transplant Unit at the Jawaharlal Nehru Hospital, Rose Belle.

Necessary provisions have been made in the legislation to safeguard illegal organ trafficking. Well defined, stringent criteria have been laid down for donation of organs.
It must be highlighted that provisions have been made in the legislation for organ transplant to take place in approved health institutions. It is considered that it is important to ascertain organ transplant is undertaken in institution endowed with facilities in line with international norms. There will be a need for proper follow up and necessary rehabilitative care after the surgical intervention to provide for prompt and complete recovery of patients.

It is also important to lay emphasis on benevolent donation of organs as a humanitarian, altruistic cause that serves to save the life of a person affected by chronic renal problems.
Ladies and Gentlemen,
I am confident that this scientific meet will enrich and enhance the knowledge and understanding of all stakeholders in the field of urology and I have no doubt that it will further enrich the existing cordial ties between Mauritius and India.

I wish you a fruitful conclave and look forward to your observations and recommendations with regard to strategies for prevention, detection, care and for alleviating the plight and suffering of patients with urological problems.
Before ending, I invite you to spend some quality time in discovering ‘Little Bharat’ as many Indians call Mauritius ever since late Shrimati Indira Gandhi called this land by that name during her first visit to Mauritius in her capacity as Prime Minister of what we affectionately call ‘Mother India’.

I thank you for your kind attention.