



## Introduction of the Mobile ID in Mauritius



### The Mobile ID showcases Government's commitment to modernise Mauritius' digital ecosystem, states Minister Balgobin

***“The Mobile ID is not only a technological upgrade but also a bold statement of Government's commitment to modernise our digital ecosystem. It ensures that Mauritius remains at the forefront of innovation and that citizens benefit from convenience offered by Emerging Technologies.”***

The Minister of Information Technology, Communication and Innovation, Mr Darsanand Balgobin, made this statement on August 29 at the Sir Harilall Vaghjee Memorial Hall in Port Louis, during the launching ceremony of the Mobile ID and the 'MWA' Mobile App. (Ed. Note: Pronounce 'moi' as in French, and meaning 'me' in English.

This event was organised by the Prime Minister's Office and the Ministry of Information Technology, Communication and Innovation. The Speaker of the Mauritius National Assembly, Mr Adrien Charles Duval; Members of Parliament; the Regional Vice President Sales (Africa) – Identity & Biometrics, Thales, Mr Remy Muscat; and other personalities were also present at the launching ceremony.

In his address, Minister Balgobin highlighted that, with the implementation of the Mobile ID, Mauritius becomes the first African country and is amongst the first few in the world to bring in a Digital ID Wallet based on international ISO standards. He observed that

citizens can use their mobile ID in lieu of their physical ID as a proof of identity, but nonetheless emphasised that is not compulsory for any person to register for a Mobile ID as per the National Identity Card Act.

He, moreover, underlined that Government has laid the groundwork for a digital ecosystem that empowers every citizen and enhances public services. With the Mobile ID, symbolising the foundation of a more connected, secure, and innovative Mauritius, we are embracing technology that will propel our country forward and ensure that we remain at the forefront of progress in this digital age, he stated.

The Minister indicated that, in order to register for a Mobile ID, citizens must have both a physical ID (the Card) as well as a MauPass account. According to him, citizens wishing to get the Digital Wallet will then have to download the Digital Wallet App 'MWA' from the Google Playstore or the Apple Appstore. They will also have to go through a strong onboard-

ing process which guarantees that only the legitimate holder of an identity is assigned to his or her digital wallet, he added.

Furthermore, Minister Balgobin underscored that, with such an innovative and modern service, a series of advanced security features have been meticulously integrated into the system to safeguard the citizen's data. He thus provided ample details regarding the Mobile ID security, smartphone protection, a Verifier App, privacy and data protection, and an independent security audit.

For his part, Mr Muscat pointed out that, for businesses and Government agencies, the Mobile ID streamlines the business process and this leads to faster business delivery and improved citizen's experience. He also dwelt on security and privacy features of the Mobile ID which ensure that data is always protected through sophisticated encryption mechanisms.

**GIS**

**ED Note:** It is no exaggeration to say that it is the first time that a new online tool has been introduced in Mauritius without the experts of the country alerting public opinion of the risks to our personal data. With the introduction of the digital ID Card the hightech crooks can hack into anybody's computer to copy the info on his digital ID card. No one has bothered to comment so.

# Free access to Internet to young Mauritians of 18 to 25 at Government expense, Good or Bad?

There are those who are for and those who are against.

What do the young people themselves think? No one has asked them



**PM Pravind Jugnauth at launch of Free Internet Scheme**

**The free access to the internet made available to young Mauritian nationals of 18 years of age to the age of 25 is believed to be a good and positive action by the State while there are people who believe it is a dangerous action on the part of the Government.**

The Government is aware of the misuse of the internet which is a daily occurrence in the world among users of all ages. On the occasion of the launch of the free internet project, Prime Minister Pravind Jugnauth warned that while the internet is “a useful tool, it also

comes with risks, hence the necessity to navigate safely and be respectful online.”

On the positive side of the use of the internet, Prime Minister Jugnauth talked of its merits. The internet helps “to improve access to educational resources thereby supporting academic growth; helping young people find employment and exploring new career paths in the information technology sector; as well as enabling access to digital tools, platforms, and information.”

According to the Prime Minister, the free ac-

cess to internet to 18-25 will bring positive results since the internet is an indispensable tool that promotes innovation, productivity, efficiency, and creativity.

But the critics believe that the free access to the young people indiscriminately will increase the incidence of cyber criminality.

Young Mauritians of qualifying have to register with the Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA) for the free internet and name the provider of their choice. The Government of Mauritius is meeting the cost.

## Controversial issue

### Interest-free loan to young people to step on the property ladder

As part of its programme for the next five years, if it is returned to power, the present Government will enable all young people between the ages of 18 and 25 to obtain an interest-free bank loan to enable them to purchase a plot of residential land with a view to building their own houses in due course.

As usual, every single Government action gives rise to a national debate as to whether it is a commendable or not, whether it is feasible or not, and whether it is not pure electoral bribery.

Many newspapers have been saying that the present Government is going to the next general election without enunciating its programme. Now that the Government starts to say what is in store on its programme, the pundits, i.e. those who know all, are calling it “electoralist or electoral bribery.”

It would seem that most trade union leaders have expressed their reservations on this Government initiative. One leader is worried that it is an announcement only to lure the electorate. It will never be implemented as has been the case concerning other election promises in the past. Another leader

says that this announcement is short of details as to its operation. Another observer says that the Government will sink further under the burden of debts in paying the interest on the loans taken by over 250,000 young people for the purchase of their plots of land for future house construction.

One observer says that the Government’s encouragement to young Mauritians to buy and build their homes in Mauritius will discourage brain drain among them.

For one economists, this government measure will encourage young people to embrace the debt culture while for another economist argues that an increase in demands for housing may result in an increase in the price of immovable property. One would have thought that an intreat in housing construction should bring down prices rather that inflating prices.

**For the Government it is purely an initiative to encourage young people to get on the property ladder for a better future.**

Postcard from Vienna

# Salzburg and The Sound of Music

## From Mylene (Japan)

### (Part 3)



During her annual holidays in England where she maintains a home in Liverpool, Mylene (from Japan) visited Austria and India. Of her visit to Austria, she has sent us an impression of her trip which has appeared in our publication as Postcard from Vienna (Parts 1 and 2). We are now pleased to publish her final instalment as Postcard Part 3 that tells us of Vienna's city of Salzburg which offered the backdrop to the famous musical "The Sound of Music."

Mylene's narrative brings back vivid memories of the Swinging Sixties in Central London when it was a wonderful time to be in the metropolis with the presence of the Beatles, The Rolling Stone, Cilla Black, Petula Clark, Sandy Shaw, etc, etc: Good Grief, what an era!

I went to see The Sound of Music on stage at the Palace Theatre in Cambridge Circus along the Charing Cross in 1964. The show made its debut in 1961 and would run for several more years.

It was made into a film in March 1965. Like many filmgoers of the time,

I saw the film several times. But to this day, I'll say I was more impressed by the stage version when you could feel the whole theatre vibrating with the sound of music. This is a fast moving musical with frequent change of sceneries which were simply fantastic, creating the impression of the field open air, the inside of the castle, the lakeside, the convent routine, the wedding scene etc. Sixty years later it's all very vivid in my memory and I thank Mylene for reviving them.

The Swinging Sixties in Soho in the West End of London, What a time: The Whisky à Gogo night club, the Striptease joints (most famous of them was the Raymond Revue Bar), the tabletop dancing (a stark naked girl dancing on your table while you are sipping beer), Young country girls lining up the streets. By George, *où sont mes 20 ans!*

Today, it's all about drugs. In the old days, it was about something else!

**Editor**



**The Mirabelle Palace**

Sure, Salzburg is Mozart's hometown, but for the 991,000 tourists who flood the city every year (that's from 2022 stats), it's all about the Von Trapp family.

I grew up watching The Sound of Music, but not everyone has, so here's a quick rundown:

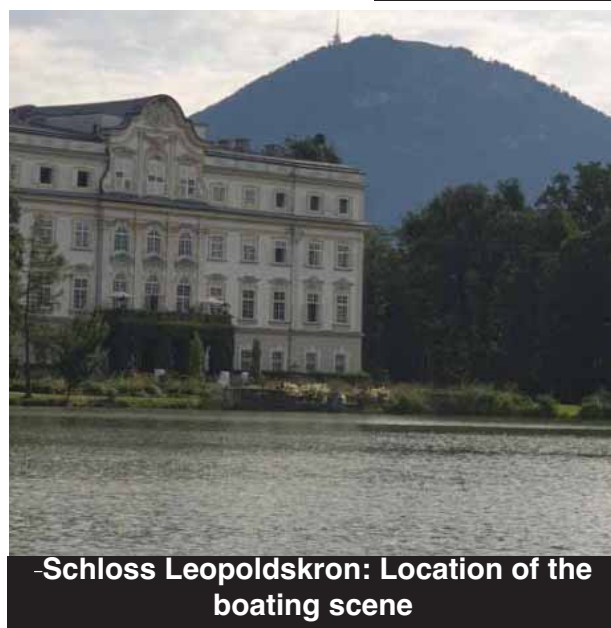
The Von Trapp family was led by a strict widower captain with seven kids. Maria Kutschera, a young novice nun, was sent to take care of them for two years. She later wrote The Story of the Trapp Family Singers, which became the inspiration for a Broadway musical and later the film, in 1965.

157,000 live in Salzburg making this place a serious tourist magnet. Honestly, though, I think the bus drivers at Salzburg station might have had enough of us. I swear, they're the rudest bunch I've ever dealt with. But I'll leave it at that.

### Panorama Tour of Sound Music Setting

I was super curious to see all the locations and hear the inside scoop, so I hopped on the Original

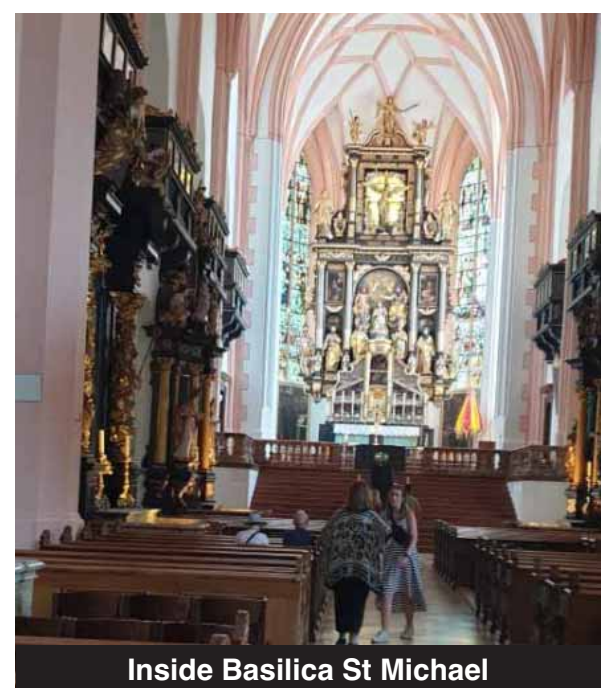
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**Schloss Leopoldskron: Location of the boating scene**



**Basilica St Michael**



**Inside Basilica St Michael**



**Gazebo: An enormous replica was made in Hollywood**

Panorama Tour—and let me tell you, it was totally worth it!

The making of this film kicks off in 1963 when Twentieth Century Fox sent scouts to Salzburg to find the perfect filming spot.

Up until then, all movies were filmed in studios, and the background were completely fabricated by artists who would paint these huge panoramic backdrops, called, backings. (Check out Cleopatra (1963) with Elizabeth Taylor - to know what I'm talking about)

The scouts did a good job and picked out two awesome palaces: Schloss Leopoldskron for the lake scene, and the Mirabell Palace

grounds, where the kids had a blast around the fountain and those iconic do-re-mi steps.

The studio couldn't get permission to film inside, but, a crew got special access to sketch the interior. They captured every tiny detail, and then sent those sketches back to Hollywood, where they built massive sets that looked exactly like the real thing!

Pretty much all the indoor scenes (except one) in the movie—like the gazebo where Liesl Von Trapp and Rolf sing "16 Going on 17" and the catacombs where the family hides from the Nazis—were actually recreated on a soundstage in Hollywood!

When Maria belts out "I Have Confidence," she's coming out of the gates of Nonnberg Abbey, which is where the real Maria was a novice and where she actually married the captain. But, surprise, surprise—they couldn't film inside! So, they shot the wedding scene at the Basilica in Mondsee, just 30 minutes from Salzburg. It was the only spot they got permission to film inside. Yippee!

There's always a difference between movies and real life, right? Well I'm going to bust some myths!

First off, the real Von Trapp family house didn't make it into the movie, but the romantic vibes were totally there! The captain was with the countess, but at the same time, sparks were flying between him and Maria.

In an interview, the real Maria spilled the beans—it was really a marriage of convenience!

After two years, she and the kids were super close, and she loved them just as much as they loved her.

The only way she could stay was to marry the captain. Eventually, she grew to love him, and they had three children. Oh, it melts my heart.



**Nonnberg Abbey. (Turret and abbey) still a working Abbey.**

In the final scene, we watch the family hiking up the Alps, making their way to freedom. They're escaping the Nazis, who had taken over Salzburg and were trying to force the captain to join them.

In reality, they simply crossed the road to the nearby railway station and hopped on a train to Italy, then headed to England before finally settling in Vermont, USA. Perfect timing, too—just a few days later, the Nazis took over and closed off all the exits from Salzburg.

And finally, I hate to say it, but Christopher Plummer didn't sing a single note in the movie!

## Super Typhoon Shanshan

**Shanshan took its sweet time making its way to Japan, first appearing in the Mariana Islands on August 20. It leisurely drifted west-northwest until it finally made landfall (arrival at land) in Kagoshima, on Japan's Kyushu Island around 8 a.m. on August 29.**

Since then, it's been the most intense and longest-lasting typhoon, causing destruction and sadly, some fatalities along the way.

With winds clocking in at a speedy 252 km/h (that's as fast as a bullet train), and dumping a whopping 300mm of rain, Shanshan brought about serious flooding and dangerous landslides, which in turn, caused travel chaos, forced major factories to close, and left many areas without electricity. To make matters worse, over 30,000 people had to evacuate their homes.

The dramatic images captured by the media tell the whole story — buildings wrecked by flying debris, trees ripped from the ground, and cars tossed around like toys.

Japan usually deals with around four typhoons every year, and has earned its stripes as one of the most disaster-ready countries out there.

Proper planning, research, quick responses and effective drills all play a crucial role in minimizing damage and ensuring the safety of Japanese citizens during emergencies. Those regular disaster drills are key in making sure everyone knows exactly what to do when things get serious.

According to the latest report from the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) typhoons are getting stronger and moving further north (or polewards) due to warmer ocean temperatures. Picture it like this: when a typhoon brews over those super-hot waters, it gets a turbocharge of energy. And boom! You've got yourself a mega typhoon on your hands, just like Shanshan.

Even though Japan has some super cool strategies to deal with disasters, they remain vigilant because of the unpredictable nature of climate change.

And we should totally follow their lead and keep focussed on living an eco-friendly life.

**Mylene**