My dear countrymen,

Yesterday, at one of my first public appearances, I commended our Police officials and all our health care workers for their heroic actions and for demonstrating patriotism.

It gives me great pleasure to join all the citizens of our country to express our deepest gratitude to all the frontline workers who contributed immeasurably to our success in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic.

Unfortunately, we have also been through hard times as the coronavirus has claimed the lives of ten of our countrymen. They will live on in our memories.

By now, it has become obvious to one and all that the confinement we have implemented was a necessary phase to halt the spread of the coronavirus.

It is thanks to your support that the confinement and other measures we adopted have had such successful outcomes.

We shall now experience a new turning point.
It is true that we have recorded three new cases. They are passengers who were repatriated then put in quarantine and subsequently treated. Hence, these were imported cases. But it remains that there has been no local infection for over a month now.

Mauritius is today among the countries which have performed the highest number of coronavirus tests per 1,000 people. We have carried out more than 110,000 tests.

It is against the background of these data that we have decided to lift the sanitary curfew as from Saturday 30 May at midnight. As from Sunday 31 May, movement restrictions will be eased and most activities are set to resume. Even as we ease restrictions, public gatherings will still not be allowed.

The only way to fully protect each citizen is to stay indoors but this cannot be the case in the long term. This is why the lockdown has been eased in a phased manner.

The pandemic is much more than a global health crisis. It is a human, economic and social crisis as well. Mauritius has not been spared.

Nevertheless, we have successfully managed the crisis and a large number of activities will resume.

However, there are a number of laws and rules which citizens will have to obey as we will have to learn how to live and work in a post Covid world.
Although detailed instructions will follow through normal channels, I can already give some indications about the new conditions that will apply.

Customers will no longer be sorted in alphabetical order to get access to shops; a Work Access Permit will not be required; the elderly and those who suffer from poor health will have to travel outside peak hours; those aged under 18 will be able to move without restrictions; day care centres and nurseries will be allowed to operate; and supermarkets will return to normal operating hours without imposing staggered shopping days in alphabetical order.

The wearing of masks will be compulsory and social distancing will have to be respected as far as possible. Restaurants, coffee shops, food courts, shops and shopping malls will be allowed to resume operation while maintaining good sanitation and hygiene. Food and vegetable markets will be allowed to open according to conditions specified by Municipalities and District Councils.

Local authorities have already arranged for a thorough disinfection of all food and vegetable markets. We advise citizens to continue working from home wherever possible.

Individual sport activities will be permitted under well-defined sanitary conditions. Places of worship will be open to the public. Beaches, fairs, cinemas and nightclubs will remain closed for the time being. Collective sport activities, socio-cultural gatherings, sport and cultural events will not be authorised.

We shall monitor the situation closely and review our decision in two weeks time.
If the coronavirus tests that we continue to conduct yield encourage results and if no new locally transmitted cases are detected throughout the following next two weeks, then all usual activities will be authorised and all public places as well as businesses will be open after Monday 15 June 2020.

Schools will be open on 1st August to prepare personnel, students and parents for the resumption of classes scheduled for Monday 3 August 2020. Our borders will remain closed to non-residents but stranded Mauritian nationals are being repatriated in a controlled manner to protect their health and that of the population.

I am aware that without your sacrifice and patience, we would not have achieved such a victory in our fight against this disease. But, God forbid, if we detect new flare-ups or identify possible sources of infection, we shall have no choice but to impose harsh restrictions again. Hence my appeal to all of you to maintain precautionary actions and wear protective masks, avoid spitting in public spaces, respect social distancing where possible, and wash your hands regularly. Anyone showing Covid-19 symptoms should visit a Covid Testing Centre and should not take the risk of infecting others.

The two-month curfew has severely impacted our economy and if there is a second lockdown it will be even more difficult for our economy to rebound. The National Budget will be presented next week in unprecedented circumstances. An aggressive economic recovery is important and it is essential to avoid widening the gap between different social classes.
If we stand together and in unity, we shall find the strength to lead us back to prosperity. Already, we have seen that, despite the confinement, many young entrepreneurs have embraced the spirit of hard work and innovation to produce masks, PPE and sanitiser. Many have developed home delivery systems. Every Threat Is An Opportunity for our entrepreneurs.

There are many challenges facing Mauritius today. We need constructive actions to overcome the crisis. As your Prime Minister, I am convinced that, together, our people will succeed.

We have an obligation to succeed, not only for our sake but for that of future generations.

Long live the Republic of Mauritius!

Pravind Kumar Jugnauth
Prime Minister

29 May 2020