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## PRESS RELEASE

The number of recorded cases of chikungunya is showing a slight drop in Mauritius. Measures taken by the government are giving satisfactory results and the disease is totally under control. There is therefore no cause for alarm.

The Director-General of the World Health Organisation, Dr. Lee Jong-wook, who is visiting Mauritius right now, has acknowledged this fact. During a press conference held on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2006, the Director-General of WHO observed that the danger concerning the spread of chikungunya in Mauritius has been overplayed, which has given rise to some concern, mainly abroad.

Dr. Lee Jong-wook specified that the disease has not spread, but that precautions should be maintained.

Moreover, the situation in Mauritius is totally under control. The country has just welcomed Indian cinema megastars on the occasion of the Zee Cine Award 2006. This event has been a resounding success, and big stars such as Sharukh Khan, Rani Mukherjee, Salman Khan, Rekha, Akshay Kumar and Feroz Khan attended this award ceremony.

The Indian artists stayed in Mauritius for three days and left on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2006.

Besides, Mauritius is getting ready to welcome the President of the Indian Republic, Mr. Abdool Kalam. He will be the chief guest for the celebration of the 38<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the independence of Mauritius on the 12<sup>th</sup> March. The Indian President will reach Mauritius on the 11<sup>th</sup> March.

Mauritius is hosting right now two groups of journalists of TUI Nordic from Finland and Sweden. Twenty-two journalists are shooting documentaries on Mauritius within the framework of a tourist promotional campaign.

Teams of journalists from the French magazine Tour Hebdo and the Italian newspaper La Repubblica are also currently in Mauritius.

Other events scheduled in Mauritius: the African Athletic Championship and a seminar of Christian Dior. Around 300 representatives of Christian Dior will be in Mauritius from 31 March to 5 April 2006 to participate in this seminar.

It is to be noted that the tourist industry is growing rapidly. Latest statistics published today indicate a rise in the number of tourist arrivals. An increase of 15.1% has been recorded in February 2006 compared to the same period last year.

**07 March 2006**