# ALPHA TANGO NEWSLETTER

SCAA

*Seychelles Civil Aviation Authority Newsletter*
*April 2020 • Volume 12 • Issue No. 1*

# Message from the CEO

***Dear colleagues,***

It is with a heavy heart that I write these few words, without a single sound of engines roaring in the background since this morning.

The Seychelles tourism industry started 2020 on a very good note with increase in tourism numbers for the month of January and February compared to same period last year. It was going to be another good year for the country and for SCAA.

SCAA directly benefits from the success of the tourism industry as we earn our revenues from the passengers and flights that come to our airport.

The arrival of COVID-19 has changed everything in a matter of weeks; the virus spreading throughout the world, forcing countries to close their borders to international travel. As a result, tourism has dropped significantly, and airlines have cancelled their flights. SCAA also stands to lose the most from this.

Last week, and in the weeks to come, we will be witnessing a dark episode in the history of aviation. Darkness has befallen our airport; all lights are off, the shops are closed and no sound of aircraft engines... it is so quiet, too quiet.

For us in aviation, it can be a depressing moment because we are in love with this industry, hence why we remain in it for years. No matter how low we may be feeling right now, we must have hope. I believe that the familiar sounds of the engines will be back, people will be back, and our restaurants and shops will be lively... the lights will be on again.

In the meantime, let us join the national efforts to take care of ourselves, to prevent ourselves from catching the virus. The WHO guidelines are very reliable; practicing highest level of hygiene by disinfecting common areas, washing our hands regularly and avoid touching our faces. In addition to this, practice social distancing, and staying home when advised to do so. Our individual efforts will go a long way to help our country win.

Seychelles is a paradise for many; they choose us because of our beauty and safety. Let us continue to maintain safety as our number one priority, to be safe from COVID-19. The closure of our airport to international travel is to keep our country safe for our visitors to come back. We are also using this period to attend to critical works to make our airport better.

Unity is strength, by remaining united in this war against COVID-19, we will help SCAA overcome. With the fall in revenue, it is important to continue maintaining strict control on our costs, to assure job security. They say the world will never be the same again; we should aim for our world to be a better place when we emerge from the COVID-19.

I would like to thank all of you, for the hard work you are doing to keep our people safe and for ensuring our business continuity.

***Mr. Garry Albert***
*Chief Executive Officer,*
*Seychelles Civil Aviation Authority*





# Our new Emergency Operation Centre (EOC)

*The executive team visiting the new Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) on the SCAA premises. The EOC is a central command and control facility responsible for carrying out the principles of emergency preparedness and emergency management functions at a strategic level during an emergency.*

# SCAA Press Conference COVID-19
## Questions & Answers *(26th March, 2020)*

***Is SCAA's business continuity plan in progress since you have an important role to play to ensure that important air cargo can get in?***

SCAA has finalized its business continuity plan; essential services such as Air Navigational Services which provide air traffic control service has taken all of this into account. For other functions we have some staff at the airport working in their office and practicing social distancing. We already have some staff working from home including those who are more vulnerable. Some have decided to take their annual leave and as per recent announcements those with young children are at home. However, the airport remains operational.

***At this point has SCAA done a financial analysis to see the impact of COVID-19 on its operations?***

At this time, international traffic at Seychelles International Airport is forecasted to decline by 46% by end of 2020 compared to 2019. The forecasted overall revenue loss for 2020 is estimated at R231m. However, the situation remains dynamic and we will keep monitoring and updating this information as we go along.

***How will this critical situation have an impact on the projects that you had planned for 2020?***

In the months to come, SCAA will be putting on hold all capital expenditure except for critical ones.

However, we remain positive and hope that as soon as this comes to an end we can initially try to pick up from where we left.

***Do you think SCAA will be able to withstand on its own since most of its revenues are being cut off, or will you need to rely on government for support?***

Thankfully SCAA has its own reserve which will be used to sustain the organization, we are an organization with its own financial autonomy, and we don't rely on government's budget, not even in this situation.

***We have heard that there will be days whereby there will be no flights, will there be staff working at the airport on that day or it will be closed?***

The situation at the airport is dynamic, but we will remain operational, but limited to the following:

- Domestic flights operation;
- Aircraft in state of emergency;
- Cargo flights;
- Technical flights;
- Humanitarian/medevac;
- Repatriation flights.

So yes, to cater for all the above we will still have staff working at the airport.

***Why are health staff not wearing masks at the airport?***

Health staff at the airport receive their instructions from the Department of Health. However, from our side we have ensured that our frontline staff and stakeholders have all the necessary gear as well as sanitizers to protect themselves. Our health and safety team has also met stakeholders and advise them on all precautions that they need to take to ensure that we are all on the same wavelength.





***Do you think that it would have been better to close down the airport one or two weeks ago?***

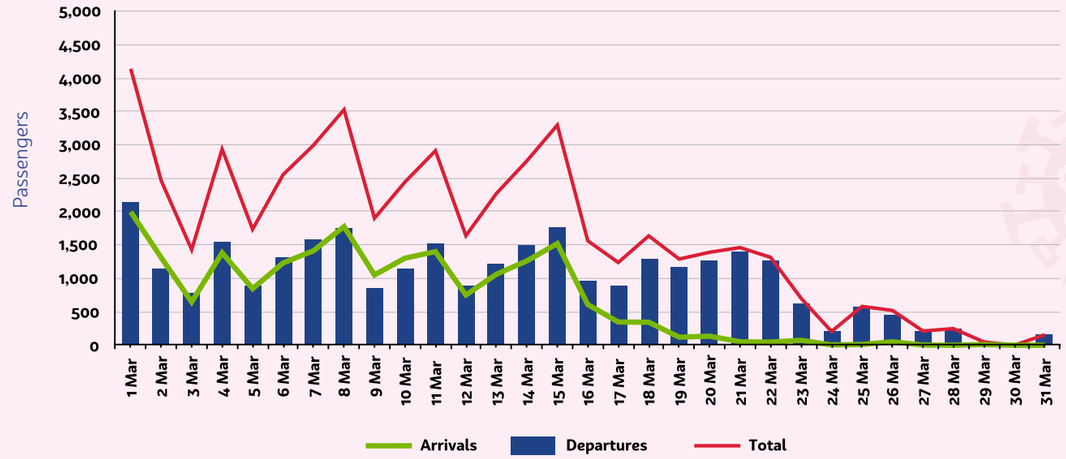
No, at this point there is no requirement to close down the airport as we still have domestic flights, or military patrol flights, and other flights such as those transiting and stopping for fuel and other technical requirements. SCAA, in coordination with the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) and consultation with Public Health Commissioner, has issued a NOTAM (Notice to Airmen) detailing the restrictions in force in respect of passengers and crews as advised by the Public Health Commissioners. Should the government and the office of the Public Health Commissioner eventually require that the airport be closed, then we will comply with the requirement.

***How do you foresee the situation in the forthcoming months for the airport?***

We are confident that as the pandemic situation improves, so will the visitor arrival and operations. SCAA is in constant consultation with relevant partners and will gear up to be ready for this eventuality. Meantime, SCAA will use the opportunity to perform extra maintenance work on the facilities.

# Arrivals & Departures
## March 2020

seychelles international airport



Air Traffic Controllers who are also essential workers took time to applaud to our doctors and nurses as well as other health workers who are also at work during this pandemic.

# Seychelles airport steps up measures during COVID-19

With the ongoing spread of the COVID-19 most commonly known as the Coronavirus, countries around the world are being greatly affected. The Seychelles Civil Aviation Authority has taken steps to ensure that the Seychelles International airport, is handling this crisis with effective and strict precautions.

It is hence emphasizing on the need to establish safety measures for airport staff, and has put in place extensive cleaning and disinfection programs for airport public areas. Airport staff have to disinfect their hands more regularly by using hand sanitizers which have been made available in all strategic locations, and they are being advised to wear masks when there is a necessity to protect themselves and others around them. Staff is also being encouraged to adopt hygienic practices when disposing their personal protective equipment including masks, gloves and aprons. Furthermore, a routine cleaning and disinfection programme has been established in public areas on a daily basis.

Terminal Management is working closely with duty Public Health Officers to ensure visitors and returning residents are channelled in correct lanes for body temperature checks, whilst ensuring that the process does not greatly impact on arriving passengers, immigration and baggage reclaim processes" "Whilst the health authority is engaged in protecting our border through temperature screening, we also have our role to play at the airport to ensure the safety of the 12000 passengers on average going through the airport per week. The health of airport staff remains a priority as they are key players in handling those passengers and ensuring the cleanliness of airport facilities, said Mr Garry Albert, the Chief Executive Officer.

The World Health Organisation, said that businesses should have contingency plans in place in case Coronavirus arrives in the community and take care to disinfect workplaces regularly. We are hence taking this very seriously, and ensuring that we comply to all international standards being issued by International Civil Aviation Authority (ICAO) and the WHO" said Mr. Albert.

The SCAA has also been intensifying hygiene promotion campaigns and training of airport staff and stakeholders about Coronavirus.

It is worth noting that flight movements at the airport has gone down due to the fact that several countries have gone under lock down.





## A quiet airport

Staff who are still going to work have described the airport as so quiet with less flights coming in. On Sunday March 29th, 2020 it was announced on the SCAA's Facebook Page that the Seychelles International Airport will be closed for international flights until April 15th, 2020 for the exception of the following: repatriation flights of foreign nationals from the Seychelles, Emergency diversions and special mission flights that are specifically approved like cargo and medevac.

Air Belgium's special flight on Tuesday March 31st left Seychelles with over 150 foreigners' guests onboard.

For the time being no Seychellois and foreigners are allowed to come in.

## Some staff share their thoughts

Coming to the Airport at 8:00am is as if you're the only one at work. It feels like a public holiday and the terminal is dark (next time I will carry a torch) especially when walking down from the check in desks to the Domestic Terminal. It is so quiet and most of the time I am a sole person around. I can run a 200m straight – no obstruction.

***P.Esparon***

Though the vibrant operations of the airport has ground to a halt, I remain optimistic given the right circumstances, our busy operations will return.

***E.Frost***

Airport is like a ghost town right now, all the shops, except Skychef and restaurants are closed and you can hardly see people going up and down the concourse area. In the office you could hardly hear any giggle in the corridor, as most of our colleagues are either working from home, on annual leave or special leave, there has been a total turn around overnight. The mood dropped, it is depressing at times, since we are usually, up and down, all hyped up every day.

Things are just changing quickly, so you have to go in keeping an open mind that you may not do the exact thing you thought you were going to do today. It is such an uncertain time for everyone, but we remain positive, that all of this will be over soon and we will be back to normal.

***S.Amice***

It's very hard to put to words how it feels to walk through the domestic terminal on the way to our office to find all the lights off, no one sitting down waiting for their flight to Praslin.

We'd normally see tourists sitting having a coffee and a meal waiting for their flights, watching the news on the outlet TVs. If anything, it feels eerie, like something you'd read about in a book, somewhere abandoned and of no use. It's a sad time for aviation, and the halls clearly show it.

***M.Mondon***

Depressing... Feels like you're walking through No Man's Land.

***W.Leon***

# Staff shares life in quarantine

The bedroom at Beau Vallon Bay Hotel where Benneth spent his 14-day quarantine

Alpha Tango talks to CNS staff in quarantine, Benneth Labrosse, who was in South Africa on a two month training when the outbreak happened. Benneth arrived home from South Africa on a special Air Seychelles morning flight on Thursday March 26th. The procedures upon his arrival was not the norm, he was not going through the arrival lounge and there weren't any family members waiting for him outside, instead he would be going in quarantine for 14 days. This meant that he would be in isolation to help in the fight against the spread of Covid-19!

Upon disembarking, all passengers were advised to keep at least 2 metres from each other as they moved down the staircase of the aircraft. Health officials were at the foot of the staircase to take their temperature and health form and then immigration took their passports. They didn't have to bother about their luggage as well, all the logistics was taken care of. They just had to get on a bus and were escorted to the Perseverance quarantine centre.

"Upon arrival, we were briefed about the rules of being under quarantine and what was expected of us and how this will work. When they were allocating rooms, I was told that I will be heading to Berjaya Beau Vallon Beach Hotel since the Perseverance centre was fully occupied" said Benneth.

Benneth, who is expected to remain in the hotel until Thursday April 14th, said he is well and his room is comfortable and spacious. His temperature is being taken twice a day by health officials. "During the day I keep myself busy by doing some exercise, and since we have free WiFi I also watch movies and read. We get our meals on time and I talk to my family especially my son every now and then" said Benneth.

## Measures against COVID-19 in our workplace

### Ensure workstations are clean & hygienic

**Surfaces (e.g. desks and tables) and objects (e.g. telephones, keyboards) need to be wiped with disinfectant regularly.**

**Encourage regular disinfection of commonly touched surfaces such as door handles, kettles, fridge and microwaves.**

**Disinfectant can be prepared as follows (1 portion bleach, 9 portion water or as indicated on label).**

**Avoid sharing personal items & office stationeries.**

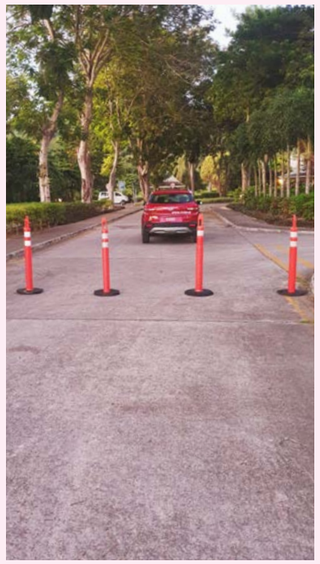




# Praslin Airport closed, to open in May

Praslin Ile de Palmes airport will be closed until next month. This decision took effect, after Air Seychelles announced that it is temporarily suspending its domestic services to the island. The airport shut its doors after the last flight on Thursday 09th April, and plans to reopen on the first day in May when domestic flight operations resumed. It may however open temporarily to accommodate any adhoc commercial flights from any local operator, emergency diversion and medivac flights subject to one-hour prior notice.

Hence there will continuously be a skeletal presence of aviation security and airport fire and rescue services personnel on the airport at all times during this period.



# Smart Watches

***From Analogue watches to Digital watches and now SMARTWATCHES!***

***#digitaltips***

Technology advancements have evolved drastically over the recent years mostly relating to changes in the functionality of products. The same way traditional mobile phones have become smartphones, watches have now evolved to smartwatches.

## *Therefore, we wonder why smartwatches?*

Smartwatches are wearable devices with features like a smartphone alongside its basics functions as a watch. It is synchronised with a smartphone so that it can be used for attending phone calls, accessing notification alerts such as text messages, emails and social media notifications. In addition, it is used for monitoring health (blood pressure, sleep, heart rate, physical activity such as running, swimming and cycling etc..) It also includes features such a GPS, calendar, stopwatch, alarm, music, reminders and many more.

Smartwatches are now known to be one of the most innovative gadgets and one of the highest technology products of the 21st century. It was predicted that by 2021, smartwatch shipments would increase at an annual rate of 18 percent and may reach 70 million-unit sales.

The most popular brands of smartwatches are categorised in terms of their characteristics. Apple Watch and Samsung Gear are very common amongst most users because of their many smartwatch options such as checking the time, making and receiving calls and text messages, checking caller IDs, viewing the calendar, browsing emails and mobile apps.

Similarly, Fitbit and Xiaomi contain the same options but they are commonly used for fitness and wellness whereby people can monitor their steps, calories burnt and the distance they've walked or ran during the day. It also monitors heart rate and tracks one's sleep. Moreover, Garmin and TomTom are brand examples of smartwatches for sports and adventure as they are used for fitness monitoring, outdoor activities *(swimming, golf, cycling)* and GPS.

Empatica Embrace and CleverCare are also smartwatch brands that are mainly used for medical and health purposes such as monitoring nervous system, heart rate and sleep track. It provides emergency and inactivity alerts as well as medication and task reminders. Smartwatches have also become a fashion technology product for consumers. This is due to its visibility in terms of its brand, style and available options. Generally, a 'watch' is regarded as a type of an accessory also known as a luxury jewellery, therefore one's perception of purchasing a smartwatch would be for its attractiveness and uniqueness of the product. As a wearable device, people relate to smartwatches as more of a fashion-like product rather than a technology because of the image and impact it has on a consumer's behaviour towards it, i.e. wearing a smartwatch enables the consumer to feel advanced, modern and upgraded in relation to their purchase in technology.





## *Spotlight on...*

# *Rose-Marie*

## *Private Secretary to the CEO*

***How long have you been working at SCAA?***
One year and 3 months

***How did you first learn about the organization?***
I have always known about the SCAA. I had just never thought that one day I would be working for that organization. It came as a surprise when the CEO told me that we were moving from Department of Civil Aviation, Ports and Marine to here.

***What are three words you'd use to describe SCAA?***
Dynamic, Rewarding and Collaborative

***How will you define excellence?***
Being a volleyball player, I strive to excel through determination, discipline, and team spirit. I view excellence as a set of both personal and shared beliefs – a way to focus and exert discipline. It is delivering the best of yourself in everything that you do.

***Where is the best place you've travelled to and why?***
The USA. This is because the people are really kind and friendly. There is a lot to do and see from big cities like New York and Washington DC to national parks such as Great Falls. There is also the diverse cuisine, the TV shows, and of course, the shopping! Most of all, I love the United States because there is no country you could go to that would compare on every level.

***Where is your favourite place to be?***
My favourite place to be is at home relaxing.

***What is the one thing you cannot resist?***
I love a good curry and red wine.

***Do you have any hidden talents?***
No, I don't think so.

***What is your greatest fear?***
My greatest fear is to wake up one day and not be able to do the simplest things I am used to doing every day for my family and myself.

***What is your ideal pet?***
A Labrador retriever

***Any life quote you want to share?***
"The first step towards getting somewhere is to decide that you are not going to stay where you are" – J.P. Morgan

***Do you have a question that someone else can answer in the next spotlight?***
What three words would your friend use to describe you?

# Airports Safety Week Trivia winners at Labriz Silhouette Resort

Some Trivia winners with their lucky ladies at Labriz Silhouette Resort & Spa

***First place and second place winners of the Airport's Safety Week Trivia went to Labriz Silhouette Resort and Spa last month.***

David Confait and Terry Chetty from the CNS Team won first place and received a night stay for two at the resort on Silhouette Island, whereas Pitter Elizabeth and Jason Denise also from CNS won second place and got a day trip for two to the same resort.

The Safety Week activity was held last year whereby the Seychelles International Airport joined other African Airports to commemorate the Airports' Council International Airports' Safety Week held in September.
The top scorer of this competition who is from Praslin Airport, Thalia Uzice won a Bird Island Trip for Two. Ms Uzice was part of the team who won the third place in the Trivia Competition and her trivia partner was Steven Labiche. They both won the Mason's Sunset Cruise for two.

Several other activities were organised by the SCAA's Aviation Safety Team such as poster competition and online crossword puzzles. The winners of the poster competition have also won night stay and say trip to Silhouette they are in first place Paul Quatre, second place Isabelle Morin and third place Fred Bamboche. With such interesting prizes we hope that more SCAA staff will join in this year's Safety Week activities!

Staff having some fun in the Silhouette Resort swimming pool.





# SCAA bids farewell to six retirees

Rolderick Larue (in front row), Jean-Joseph Laurence (yellow tshirt), Flocel Bristol (blue tshirt), Lucie Andre cutting the cake , lineda Samson next to her, Violaine Cedras last one. (From left to right then)

> *"I thank each and everyone of your years of service in the organization, I wish you all success and good health."*
>
> **- CEO, Garry Albert**

***Six retirees, three women and three men met CEO Albert to at the beginning of the year. Lineda Samson, Rolderick Larue, Lucie Andre, Jean Joseph Laurence, Violaine Cedras and Flocel Bristol received words of encouragement and success.***

### *Ms. Lineda Samson*
Ms. Samson started her career in aviation as an Air Traffic Control Officer at the age of 23 years. She developed in her field to eventually attain the post of Manager ATM (Operations) within the Air Navigation Services Department.

### *Mr. Rolderick Larue*
Mr. Larue, better known as Dede, was part of our dedicated and brave Fire Service team. He joined the Service when he was almost 30 years of age. Through out his time with the SCAA he moved up in rank to finally attain the post of Sub Officer. Many of our existing Fire Fighters no doubt have reach to where they are now under the guidance and training of one of our oldest Fire Fighters.

### *Mrs. Lucie Andre*
Prior to her retirement from the post of Senior Housekeeping Supervisor, Mrs. Andre spend her tenure with the SCAA within the Housekeeping Section. Over her 47 years of service, she is described as someone who was helpful, ready to assist at any given moment.

### *Mr. Jean Joseph Laurence*
Mr. Laurence formed part of the Maintenance team as a Labourer. A post he occupied through out his 10 years of service. Mr. Laurence retired from the Authority at the age of 62 years.

### *Ms. Violaine Cedras*
Ms. Cedras, a Praslin resident, formed part of the Praslin Housekeeping team. Her journey with the SCAA, which was then DCA, first started in 1979 until 2008 whereby she resigned. She re-joined the SCAA family in 2012 until her retirement.

### *Mr. Flocel Bristol*
Mr. Bristol is another Maintenance team member who retired as from January this year. Similarly to his colleague, he was working as a Labourer. A post which he held for almost 6 years, prior to his retirement at the age of 63 years.

# Anse Major Trail

It was a pleasant morning. All my tiredness of work had vanished due to the excitement for trekking the Anse Major trail. Reaching the La Scala car park all seemed quiet with a few staff patiently waiting to start the walk.

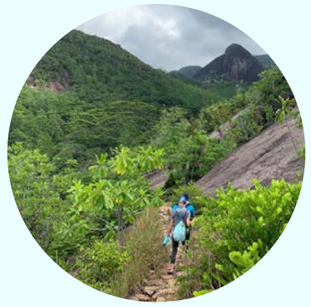
With the arrival of the staff bus, and personal vehicles the car park went from just a few cars, to chock-a-block, as if SCAA's owned car park. The first grouping for the year looked so promising with the massive influx of staff. The excitement rushed to another level. With the head count completed, water, fruit juices, snacks and fresh fruits distributed, to boost up energy we started our well-planned adventure. Inter mixing with other colleagues from other departments, it all brought a sense of togetherness amidst workplace dynamics. Passing by the spectacular boulders stretching out to the turquoise sea, cameras and mobile phones saw their first appearance with a few clicks here and there.

Trotted across the lush green foliage with the fieriness of the prevailing sunshine, a little music from Georgino's bluetooth speaker, added a touch of animation to the walk. Adding a little pace we passed by different nationalities enjoying a portion of our utopia, likewise Indian workers, undertaking water distribution ground works, was also taking advantage of the sublime tranquility of the place.

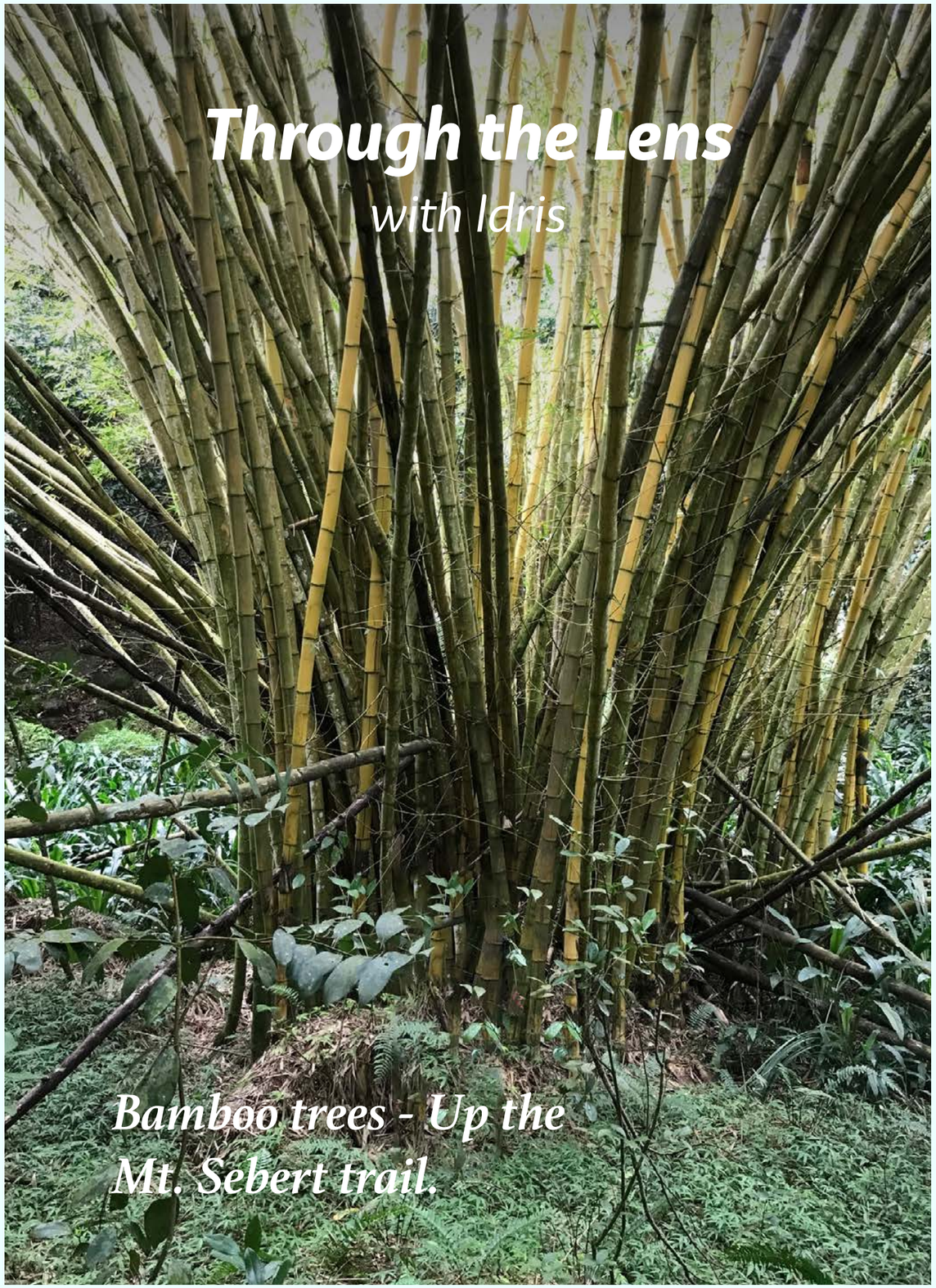
Reaching Anse Major, the beach was already occupied by a few visitors, relaxing in the warm powdery sand and some enjoying the warmth of the Indian Ocean. Amongst the first group setting foot on the beach, all settled for a little snack and rested under the shadow of the Takamaka tree. The less athletics soon made appearance, with tiresome legs hopping to finally put an end to the exhausting walk.

The more agile accompanied the CEO uphill following the trail to Anse Du Riz, with the scorching sun and feeble feet the group did not proceed further. We instead paused for some beautiful pictures, with a million-dollar view, by our talented camera man Mr. Paul Quatre. After enjoying the view for a few minutes, we proceeded down the steep trail and make way back to La Scala car park.

*Contributed by Mr Fred Bamboche, HR*



# Through the Lens
## with Idris



*Bamboo trees - Up the Mt. Sebert trail.*

# ALPHA TANGO

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