

**ADDRESS BY HON D. GOKHOOL,
MINISTER OF INDUSTRY, SCIENCE
AND RESEARCH**

**Consultative Meeting with
Film Industry Stakeholders**

Monday 14 December 2009

at 09 30 hrs

La Petite Canelle, D/Pailles

Mr Christian Nayna, chairman MFDC

Mr S.Ragen, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Industry, Science and Research **Dr Sukon**, Director, Human Resource Development Council

Mrs Ramyead, General Manager, MFDC

Participants

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

A very good morning and a warm welcome to all of you. Let me thank you for joining us in this Consultative Meeting organised to work out a framework for a sustainable film industry in Mauritius. I would like at the outset to thank the participants for their presence.

This is yet another opportunity to reflect together on the new orientations to be given to our local film industry.

Besides, persons of the film industry, we have invited public and private sector organisations which we believe can play a vital role in the development of the sector. I am sure that there is a good blend of

expertise in this forum to stimulate reflection and come up with concrete and realistic proposals on the framework.

Vision for Film Industry

As you aware, we nurture the ambition to develop a vibrant and prosperous local film industry. This is in line with our overall strategy to diversify and modernise our economy by adding new growth poles, to attract new sources of investment and to create new employment opportunities driven by creativity and innovation. You may wish to note that world trade in cultural goods – cinema, photography, radio and television, printed matter, literature, music and visual arts – has quintupled, and Hollywood and Bollywood reach about 6 billion people around the world and today, the global film or entertainment industry generates higher revenues than most other industries.

Mauritius with its unique location in the Indian Ocean, its multicultural society and social stability has all the necessary ingredients to realise our ambition for a local film industry. Inspired by this conviction and notwithstanding our constraints in terms of inadequate resources and low capacity in the area of film production, we engaged on a journey to revitalise this sector as soon as I took the portfolio of this Ministry following the last Cabinet reshuffle in 2008.

In March 2009 a brainstorming session was organised around the theme “The film Industry: The Way Forward.” This workshop provided an important platform for fruitful interaction among the different players on issues affecting development of the film industry and agreeing on converging ideas to spearhead the development of the sector.

This was followed in July 2009 when we met at the Sir Harilall Vaghjee Hall to discuss “The New Perspectives in the Film industry.” That meeting gave us an opportunity to interact again with persons associated with film making and discuss a number of issues related to the development of film industry in Mauritius. Following this meeting, a series of actions have been initiated namely capacity building, organisation of film making competition and film festivals , upgrading of database of film makers and review of the MFDC Act to give a new orientation to the sector.

Budget 2010

You may recall that at para 230 of Govt Programme 2005-2010, the introduction of a new legislation has been announced to encourage the development of cinematographic art through the emergence of a Mauritian cinematographic industry with international partners. Also, in the Budget Speech 2010, at para 190, the development of a creative

art industry is spelt out. The Vice Prime Minister, Minister of Finance has also provided a sum of Rs 10 million to develop a proper framework for the cinema industry.

Government has shown its strong commitment to stimulate the development of the creative arts by the measures announced in the Budgets. This is a great opportunity for all lovers of film and we must join hands and work together to realise the dream of developing a local film industry.

Consultative Meeting

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The holding of this consultative meeting today therefore assumes crucial importance. This exercise today will allow us to set up the foundation of the film industry of tomorrow. You will agree with me that such an important exercise cannot be a one way process and requires dialogue with the players. By organising this working session we want to ensure a sense of ownership of the different stakeholders in the conception of the framework. I know many among our guests in the audience have innovative ideas and could make substantial contribution in the formulation of an effective framework conducive to the development of a modern film industry. I therefore make an

appeal to you all to participate actively in the discussion and contribute with valuable inputs.

To allow for fruitful discussion, it is highly important to proceed in a structured and focused manner. Therefore, I am happy to note that a draft framework has been worked out in consultation with the BOI, MFDC. This draft framework will be presented during his consultative meeting as a guideline for discussion. The framework document should address all the key aspects for the development of modern framework and cover issues important elements such as such as infrastructure, capacity building support schemes.

I must reiterate that this is a working document to facilitate discussion along specific issues and aspects of the film industry. We appeal to you to voice out valuable suggestions and comments so as to allow us to finalise the document and move forward.

NEW LEGISLATION FOR MFDC.

As I did mention in previous speeches the MFDC Bill which dates back 1986 is now being reviewed. The draft legislation is being cleared by the relevant authorities. Basically we want an organisation that will promote the development of the audiovisual industry and

film servicing industry in Mauritius that will encompass a larger number of objectives than that which is presently in force.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Before concluding I would like to reiterate my firm conviction that the film industry has a promising future in Mauritius. I want you to understand clearly the changes that we intend to bring in the film industry setup with the new piece of legislation and the framework that will be discussed today. This platform is, therefore, yet another important one where I hope that new ideas and suggestions will germinate so that at the end of the meeting we have enough materials to set a solid foundation for the film industry in Mauritius.

With these few words, I wish you a fruitful deliberation and now have the pleasure to declare this consultative meeting open.

Thank you for your attention.