

Award Ceremony of the Public Service Excellence Award

2008

**Address of Dr. the Hon. B. Hookoom, Minister of the Civil Service &
Administrative Reforms on 29 July, 2009 at 14 hrs,
Sir Harilal Vaghjee Hall**

Mr. Seebaluck, Secretary to Cabinet & Head of Civil Service,
Prof. Donald Ah-Chuen, Chairman of the, Panel of the Jury for the
Public Service Excellence Award 2008,

Members of the Panel of Jury,

Mr. S. K. Pather, Supervising Officer of the Ministry of Civil Service
and Administrative Reforms,

Mrs I.M. Oree, Ag Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Civil Service
and Administrative Reforms,

Heads of Ministries/ Departments,

Officers of the participating organizations,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Afternoon!

It gives me an immense pleasure to be here today on the occasion of the **third edition** of the Public Service Excellence Award. I was myself a public officer and today I have the pleasure and privilege to be associated with it as **Minister** of the Civil Service and Administrative Reforms.

The Prime Minister, Dr. the Hon. Navin Ramgoolam, announced the introduction of this Award in 2006 with the stated aim of making it a **powerful tool for creating awareness** on the need for public organizations to achieve excellence. The PSEA has proven itself over its two years of existence. All public sector organizations look forward to participate in this, by now, **well-known annual event**.

It is a secret to no one that public officers play a key role in the development of the country by ensuring a conducive and enabling environment where society and businesses are encouraged to grow and prosper. The PSEA contributes to improving the level of public service delivery by encouraging organizations to adopt a **customer focused approach, a results centered strategy** and more importantly to **operate within an overall Total Quality Management Framework**, keeping in mind the ultimate goal of attaining **organisational excellence**.

The vision of government is '**Putting People First**' and the onus of its success lies largely on the Public Service. It is true that however much is invested in **technology, equipment or infrastructure**, at the end of the day, public services are delivered by **Public Officers**. As a former public officer, I have witnessed the commitment and dedication shown by many public officers to '**serve**' the public. Everyday, thousands of you proudly and diligently '**serve** the country'. However, as public officers, you remain quiet and unnoticed. You just heard testimony to this fact from the Chairman of the Panel of Jury.

Yet, in spite of all the good work done by public officers, very often a negative perception prevails. I invite Public Officers to view criticisms positively and consider them as '**gifts**' in disguise as some may show us the way to self-improvement and excellence.

*Malgre toutes les ditficutttes dans votre parcours de fonctionnaire, je vous encouragerais, mesdames et messieurs, de **persévérer** d'avantage avec beaucoup **d'enthousiasme**. Accomplissez vos taches avec un sens de **professionalisme** afin d'être à la hauteur des aspirations de nos citoyens. Sur ce point, je vous dirais que dans la vie quand on a à faire un choix entre deux parcours ou chemins, ne choisissez pas celui qui vous parait facile à premiere vue. Optez pour la voie difficile. Acceptez le défi. Je suis certain que vous serez comblés de satisfaction et de bonheur à la fin du jour.*

The Public Service Excellence Award is an opportunity for public institutions to recognize and honour deserving organisations. I congratulate all participating organizations for having had the courage and made the necessary effort of participating in the PSEA, in spite of their heavy schedule. I note with satisfaction, that over the years participation in the PSEA has **increased**. This year entries are from various sectors ranging from health, education, agriculture, amongst others. They took up the challenge and have moved confidently on the path towards excellence.

The PSEA allowed them to **showcase** what they are truly capable of and **boosted their performance**. Their participation is a testimony of their **dedication to innovate**. I commend them for the initiative and take this opportunity to invite other organisations to follow suit and to participate in forthcoming editions of the PSEA.

I wish to place on record my thanks to Prof. Donald Ah-Chuen, the Chairman of the Panel of Jury and the other members of the Panel of Jury namely Mrs. Beegun, former Senior Chief Executive, our partner organizations, the University of Technology, Mauritius and the Mauritian Quality Institute as well as the Federation of Unions. They had been entrusted with the difficult and trying task of adjudication - and I thank them for the time devoted to the task which they carried out diligently.

I congratulate the **winner** of the Public Service Excellence Award 2008 and winners of the sub categories. I invite you all PSEA winners and other participants to stay firmly onto the **path of excellence**. You all deserve recognition for having put in the **time, courage** and **effort** in participating in the Award.

Ladies and Gentlemen, to end, I would like to quote the ancient Greek philosopher, **Aristotle**, who said, *I quote:*

We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence then is not an act but a habit.

End quote.

Let us all drive Mauritius forward towards a brighter future!

I thank you for your attention.