

ADDRESS BY THE HONOURABLE MINISTER OF CIVIL SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS ON THE OCCASION OF THE LAUNCHING CEREMONY OF THE AWARD COURSES FOR HIGHER EXECUTIVE OFFICERS AND SENIOR OFFICERS/EXECUTIVE OFFICERS ON 12 AUGUST 2010 AT 11:00 HOURS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, MAURITIUS.

Mr Fokeer, Director General, University of Technology, Mauritius

Mr Seebaluck, Senior Chief Executive of my Ministry

Mrs Oree, Ag Permanent Secretary of my Ministry

Dr Chittoo, Head of School, School of Business, Management and Finance

Dr Babooa, Registrar, University of Technology, Mauritius

Officers of my Ministry and Staff of the UTM

Representatives of Trade Unions

Resource Persons

Dear Participants

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I thank you all for giving me this opportunity to address you on this very occasion when we are launching the Award Courses for Higher Executive Officers and Senior Officers as well as Executive Officers.

Let me begin with by expressing my appreciation to you, Public Officers present here. You have shown determination to embark on this Award Course inspite of your professional and personal family commitment, and more specifically at this juncture of your career. L'adage français nous rappelle: "**Il n'y a pas d'âge pour apprendre**". You can rest assured of all our support and encouragement in this endeavour, but within the rules of the game set out by the University.

I want to share with you, and all stakeholders present, my vision for a smarter Civil Service. I had the opportunity, during the debate on the Presidential Address in the National Assembly last Tuesday, to express my vision of the Civil Service, which I

consider to be an important pillar sustaining the progress and achievement in building the Mauritian nation.

In the course of the debate, I did mention that it is my vision and earnest wish to put in place a smarter Civil Service. Why the need for a Smarter Civil Service?

The business environment keeps on changing. The needs and aspirations of our people keep on growing. The challenges of the 21st century are becoming more and more complex and daunting. We cannot keep solving the problems of the 21st Century with the solutions of the 20th century. Nowadays, there is no place for 'Business As Usual' in any sector, be it private or public.

This why I am emphasizing on the need for a Smarter Civil Service. I am inspired by the Civil Service in the developed countries and especially that of Britain because our Civil Service

is primarily based on the Westminsterian model. The smarter civil service should be underpinned by the following characteristics. I

call them the 4 P's:-

The first P is,

Pace By pace I mean a Civil Service that provides rapid responses to problems and delivering the right solutions that meet the expectations and aspirations of the Mauritian population.

Ladies and Gentlemen

The second P is,

Passion ,Our Civil Service, through public officers, should be passionate about providing high quality public service for all.

The 3rd P is,

Pride For me Public Officers must take pride in what they do and ensuring that the country is proud of its Civil Service

And the last P is,

Professionalism Public Officers must demonstrate highest degree of professionalism in the way they formulate policies and deliver the services.

The combination of the enduring values – integrity, honesty, transparency, impartiality and accountability - in the Civil Service coupled with the 4Ps, will no doubt pave the way for a Smarter Civil Service. At the beginning of the Century, we are witnessing a return of public sector ethos around the world. Let me tell you that I am confident that the Civil Service is a reliable force which is more important than ever.

My appeal to all of you today is to situate the Award Course, which is more than a training programme, within the framework of the vision of the Government of the day to transform the Civil Service which comprises public officers and all stakeholders, into a Smarter Civil Service.

We are living in an age of expanding opportunity in which rapid technological advances are changing our world at a speed and scale not witnessed since the industrial revolution. We need to actively maintain our competitive edge by anticipating future developments in the wake of unprecedented challenges. To this end, training has become a burning need for the Civil Service because knowledge base is constantly changing. What is leading edge today becomes conventional in some years. So it is imperative that a modern civil service learns and relearns its trade.

It is an undisputed fact that training aims, primarily, to enhance knowledge, sharpen skills and help people to adopt the right and positive attitude.

Here I want to make a special appeal to the whole Civil Service through you on the aspect of attitude.

*We all know the story of David and Goliath. There was a giant who was bullying and harassing the children in the village. One day, a 17 year old shepherd boy came to visit his brothers and asked: “**Why don’t you stand up and fight the giant?**” The brothers were terrified and they replied: “Don’t you see he is too big to hit.”*

*But David said: “**No, he is not too big to hit, he is too big to miss.**” The rest is history. We all know what happened. David killed the giant with a sling. Same giant, different perception.*

Our attitude determines how we look at the set back. To a positive thinker, it can be stepping stone to success. To a negative thinker, it can be an obstacle. Great organizations are not

measured by wages and working conditions, they are measured by feelings, attitudes and relationship.

I am inviting our public officers to adopt the attitude of David and take out the best out of every opportunity that comes to you or your way and at whatever level you are occupying in the hierarchy.

So my earnest hope is that this training should not only enhance your knowledge and sharpen your skills but also allow you to adopt the right and positive attitude at any time, in your life.

I would like to conclude here by sharing with you the advice of the famous French philosopher, Pascal Blaise, I quote:

“Someone once approached him and said: If I had your brains, I would be a better person.”

Pascal replied: “Be a better person and you will have my brains.”

With these words, which are food for thought during your award course at the UTM, I have the pleasure and privilege to declare that the **Award Course** is officially launched now.

I thank you for your attention.