

## **Speech for Minister**

***ADDRESS BY THE HONOURABLE A. K. GUNGAH, MINISTER OF CIVIL SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS ON THE OCCASION OF THE AWARD OF CERTIFICATES TO SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES OF THE AWARD COURSES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, MAURITIUS ON WEDNESDAY 09 JUNE 2010 AT 1400 HOURS.***

**Mr Fokeer, Director General University of Technology, Mauritius**

**Mr Seebaluck, Senior Chief Executive of my Ministry**

**Dr Babooa, Registrar, University of Technology, Mauritius**

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

**Officers of my Ministry and staff of the UTM**

**Resource Persons**

**Representatives of Trade Unions,**

**Awardees,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is a great pleasure for me to be in your midst this afternoon for the Award of Certificate ceremony. This function has a special significance for you as it is the culmination of your long journey of hard work and sleepless nights. It's my privilege to share this pleasure with you. But I am sure that many of you have also had wonderful learning experiences and delightful memories from this university course.

I would like to congratulate you, successful awardees, for your courage to embark on a demanding university course despite the obligations of your full-time job and other family commitments. I am sure you have had to make sacrifices to adjust to your new role as university students. Despite having to juggle between your coursework and your other obligations, you did not lose hope. Your intelligence and maturity have had the upper hand and you have made it through.

As public officers, you are surely aware that my ministry invests a lot on the training and development. Training has become an integral part of our working life because as the environment keeps on changing we have to train our people. To stay competitive we continuously need to unlearn obsolete habits and relearn new ones to be able to adjust to these new situations which come with more and more daunting challenges.

I am told that among the 64 officers belonging to the General Services who are receiving their certificates this afternoon there are 41 Senior Officers and 23 Confidential Secretaries. I am pleased to find also that those who could not make it the first time persevered to get through at their second attempt. Bravo to them for their courage and perseverance. This reminds me of John Quincy Adams, the 6<sup>th</sup> American President who once said,

I quote:

***“Courage and perseverance have a magical talisman, before which difficulties disappear and obstacles vanish into air.”***

End of quote

The Award Courses, which started in 2004 following the PRB Report of 2003, have been revisited in line with the recommendations made in the PRB Report. 2008. Following consultations with the UTM and the employees' unions, relevant modules have been

included to acquaint the trainees with the latest concepts and trends in Public Sector Management. I am sure that successful completion of these courses has enhanced your overall capabilities and level of performance.

With globalized competition, the Mauritian civil service should live up to the expectations of the citizens, be more customer-centric and provide value for money services. To be able to achieve these targets there is no better way than to train our workforce. This training that you have just completed at the UTM is not an end in itself but is just a stepping stone towards further learning and growth.

I am sure that most of you have completed this course with the aim of becoming more efficient, more skillful and more knowledgeable. But the most important thing about all this is whether you can reflect on how much of this new knowledge and skill you have transferred or you can transfer to your workplace and whether you have undergone a change in mindset.

Training and development does not only mean the amount of knowledge you have acquired but how this new knowledge will enhance your ability to do things that you have to do when it ought to be done, whether you like it or not. You would concur with me that every rupee that you receive is public money and we are accountable for it. Every rupee we waste is one rupee less for critical sectors like health, education or poverty alleviation.

You are all aware that the Performance Management System will be implemented across the Civil Service by the end of this year. This is a

moral obligation towards all our stakeholders. Performance at work will be assessed and monitored in accordance with the targets set under the Programme-Based Budget of Ministries/Departments. Subsequently, pay rise, rewards and other pecuniary benefits will be performance-related. Therefore, it is imperative that we start revisiting our ways of doing business now.

Before ending, I would like to put on record my appreciation of the collaboration that exists between the UTM and my Ministry since the beginning of this decade when MIPAM merged with the UTM. The UTM has become one of our privileged partners in the provision of training to public officers. This relationship built on trust has enabled us to explore various avenues and possibilities of collaboration. Just to name a few: there have been tailor-made training programmes for Public Officers at all levels, Induction and Refresher Courses, full time Award Courses and placement and traineeship opportunities granted to UTM students following higher studies in Public Administration and Management..

Furthermore, I cannot refrain from mentioning my Ministry's recognition of best performance by rewarding the top students in each cohort of both the BSc and the MSc in Public Sector Administration and Management. This shows our continued support to encourage and motivate our officers as well as other students to embark and excel in public sector management courses. Life has become a continued process of learning and character building. Failure is for the one who dares not. Success is reserved but for the one who dares and wills.

With these words, ladies and gentlemen, I thank you for your attention.