

Welcome Address
by Mr P. Jhugroo, Supervising Officer,
Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms

Talk on ‘Strategies for Improving Performance of the Public Sector’
by Mr S. Thawani, - Wednesday 26 March 2008 at 9 30 hrs
at La Grande Cannelle, Domaine Les Pailles

Mr. Sunil Thawani, Professional in Quality Concepts and Management

Senior Chief Executive

The Director of the Pay Research Bureau, Mr. Appanah

Colleagues Permanent Secretaries

Heads of Departments and Parastatal Bodies and

Senior officials of the Public Service

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you all to this talk; and also to extend a very warm welcome to our special guest, Mr. Sunil Thawani, who is a professional in quality concepts and management from Abu Dhabi, and has kindly accepted to give a Talk this morning on ‘Strategies for Improving Performance of the Public Sector’ for the benefit of Leaders and Managers of public sector organisations. We wish him a very pleasant stay in our country.

Before proceeding, allow me to present the apologies of the Financial Secretary.

Ladies and Gentlemen

We are all fully aware that like many other countries, Mauritius is faced with numerous challenges in the wake of globalization. This era is characterized by fast changes and severe competition from all fronts but we should be alert as well to the fact that it is also an era of tremendous opportunities. For the continued development and growth of our economy, our country has already adopted bold policy measures and it is the responsibility of all stakeholders to ensure that such policies are effectively translated into concrete actions.

Since the implementation of government policies rests largely on the public service, its performance is assessed on the basis of the effectiveness of these policies and on the visible improvements in service delivery, citizens' welfare as well as socio-economic indicators. For public sector performance to be positively rated, the public service must be poised to play fully its role and embark wholeheartedly on the path to excellence.

Both administrative and sectoral reforms are called for to ensure that the public service is equipped with modern systems and procedures – and is imbued by a culture of quality and continual improvement brought in. This is the mission of the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms i.e the development of an integrated approach to Total Quality Management in the public service.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Two major reforms are currently underway namely, the Performance Management System and the Programme Based Budgeting. Both these reforms aim at improving performance of public sector organizations through the setting of clear goals, targets and performance indicators. These reforms are meant to give a sense of direction and purpose to Ministries and Departments, and usher an era of transformation within the public service. In short, these reforms, if implemented successfully, will change the whole landscape of the public service which is set to become stronger, more efficient and effective.

Public Sector change and transformation should be made a priority in all Ministries/Departments and the challenge should be to reform the public service in such a fundamental way that it remains firmly and perpetually equipped to respond to change. This transformation process should be sustainable.

Today, we have to sensitise every public officer of the changing role of the state as emphasised in the Government Programme 2005-2010. I quote:

“The notion of the state as facilitator will be revisited in the context of formulating the policies required to effect the quantum socio-economic changes. The role of the state will re-defined from a Facilitator State to a State Agent of Social Change”

Hence, it is clear that the overall task of public sector organisations is becoming more complex and challenging as a driver, facilitator and catalyst for change.

Mr. Thawani, our distinguished guest, will talk about improving performance of the public sector and enlighten us on the strategies to be adopted to improve public sector performance.

Mr. Thawani has extensive experience in Total Quality Management, ISO 9001:2000 and Six Sigma methodologies. His able project management leadership has enabled several institutions to achieve excellence in their day to day activities, including the Union National Bank of Abu Dhabi which won the Sheikh Khalifa Excellence Gold Award in 2005 and the Dubai Quality Award in 2006.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I thank you for your attention and now have the pleasure to invite Mr. Thawani to address you.