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Mauritian Overseas Gazette



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Views expressed by contributors are their own

This publication is a magazine, not a newspaper

President Gokhool urges public officers to become innovators and agents of change

“The future does not belong to institutions that react to change but to those who anticipate it and shape it, and the public servant of tomorrow cannot be merely an administrator of procedures, but must also become an innovator, a problem solver, a facilitator of change, and a guardian of public trust.”

This was the gist of the message of the President of the Republic of Mauritius, Mr Dharambeer Gokhool at the Public Service Excellence Award Ceremony for Editions 2023 and 2025.

The event was organised by the Ministry of Public Service and Administrative Reforms at the Auditorium of the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Institute of Public Service and Innovation in Réduit.

The Minister of Public Service and Administrative Reforms, Mr Lutchmanah Raj Pentiah; the Minister of Local Government, Mr Ranjiv Wochit, the Minister of Arts and Culture, Mr Mahendra Gondeea; the Junior Minister of Local Government, Mr Mohammad Fawzi Allymun; the Member of Parliament, Dr Farhad Ismaël Aumeer; and other personalities were present at the event.

The Award aims at recognising and rewarding outstanding and innovative initiatives undertaken by public sector organisations to enhance service delivery and strengthen excellence within the public service.

In his address for the occasion, President Gokhool underlined that the theme chosen for the 2025 Edition, ‘Delivering results and building trust through an innovative, sustainable and people-centric public service’, reflects an important national imperative, since without results, trust weakens and without trust, even the most ambitious policies struggle to inspire confidence. “Trust must be earned through action, integrity, and consistency in the delivery of public services,” he added.

The President recalled that citizens increasingly expect institutions to be responsive, transparent and efficient, and that services should be timely, accessible, and centred around human needs, and delivered with a smile. He pointed out that modern public service is no longer measured solely by procedures or systems but by the positive experience of citizens.

According to Mr Gokhool, across the world successful institutions are moving towards models that are more connected, data driven, responsive, people-cen-

tric and customer-friendly. He thus called on the public sector to leverage innovation which can simplify lives, strengthen trust, and place human dignity at the heart of governance.

The President further advocated the use of technology which, he believed, could become a powerful tool for inclusion, efficiency and national progress when guided by human values.

For his part, Minister Pentiah emphasised that public service is about moral commitment and a conscious decision to place the common good above personal convenience. “It is an understanding that behind every file processed, every policy drafted, every citizen assisted, there lies a human story and expectation,” he stated.

The Minister reiterated that the works of the public service officer should alleviate hardships, create dignity, restore trust, and sustain the fabric of society, emphasising that the enduring strength of a nation depends on the integrity and competence of its public institutions.

The Minister further underscored that excellence is not an abstract concept but a daily discipline. According to him, the Public Service Excellence Award is not only a celebration of achievement, purpose, performance and service, but also a tribute to those who have chosen the path of public service. “Tonight, we are honouring men and women whose dedication often falls far from the spotlight but yet whose work change the daily lives of citizens in profound and enduring ways,” he said.

Winners and Prizes

The Public Service Excellence Award is open to four categories: Ministries/Departments, Disciplined Forces, Local Authorities, and Parastatal Bodies. Winning institutions receive trophies, certificates and cash prizes. The grand winner in each category is awarded Rs 60,000, while silver and bronze awardees receive Rs 45,000 and Rs 30,000 respectively.

The ex aequo Gold Award winners for the 2025 edition in the Ministries/Departments category were the Cardiac Unit of Victoria Hospital and the Haemo-



President Gokhool addressing the Public Service Excellence Award Ceremony

dialysis Unit of Sir Anerood Jugnauth Hospital.

The Cardiac Unit was recognised for introducing device pace therapies that significantly streamlined processes and improved service delivery for heart-failure patients. The Haemodialysis Unit was rewarded for its holistic health-promotion initiatives, which fostered a more therapeutic environment and encouraged greater participation by diabetes patients in their own care.

In the Disciplined Forces category, the Mauritius Prison Service received the Gold Award for its chicken meat production project at Petit Verger Prison, implemented as part of its rehabilitation and skills development programme for detainees.

The Mauritius Research and Innovation Council secured first place in the Parastatal Bodies category for its National and Regional Innovation Challenges initiative, aimed at fostering innovation, transparent governance and customer-centric public service delivery.

The winners of the 2023 edition were also announced. The Centre for Gastroenterology and Hepatology at Dr Abdool Gaffoor Jeetoo Hospital won first prize in the Ministries/Departments category; the Mauritius Prison Service topped the Disciplined Forces category; the City Council of Port Louis won in the Local Authorities section; and the Open University of Mauritius received the award in the Parastatal Bodies category.

KYOTOGRAPHIE 2026

INTERNATIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY FESTIVAL
IN KYOTO

From 18 April to 17 May 2026, Kyoto, the ancient capital of Japan, was transformed into one vast photography gallery. Temples, machiya townhouses, museums, and traditional spaces were used to display the work of artists from at least eight countries, including Japan.

The festival's theme was "EDGE", exploring borders, transition, identity, social tension and the spaces between worlds. Artists from Japan, Kenya, South Africa, Palestine, France, United Kingdom, Guatemala contributed remarkable works, but I am going to focus on just two, Fatma Hassona and Thandiwe Muriu.

FATMA HASSONA - THE EYE OF GAZA - PALESTINE



Copyright Fatma Hassona

Fatma Hassona was known as, **The Eye of Gaza**. She was only 25 when she was killed in an attack by the Israeli Defence Force (IDF), along with six of her family members.

As a photojournalist she documented everyday life in Gaza. Her work showed Gaza not only as a place of conflict, but also as a place filled with life, tenderness and beauty.



Copyright Fatma Hassona

Hassona captured ordinary moments, children playing, families together, and people going about their daily lives. She portrayed Palestinians holding on to their dignity and humanity amid war and hardship.

Her exhibition, **The Eye of Gaza**, introduced many visitors to life inside country. Her photographs have been exhibited internationally and remain an important visual record and part of her legacy.

THANDIWE MURIU - KENYA

Thandiwe Muriu is a Kenyan photographer known for her bold, colourful portraits that celebrate African identity, beauty and culture in a fresh and vibrant way. Her style combines fashion, portraiture and African traditions.

Her best-known series, **Camo**, uses brightly patterned Kitenga fabrics - colourful cotton fabrics widely worn in East Africa - to blend her subjects into the background, creating playful optical illusions.



Copyright Thandiwe Muriu



Her photographs have been exhibited worldwide and have helped bring a contemporary African perspective into spaces that traditionally showcased mainly Western art and fashion imagery. At **Kyotographie 2026**, her vibrant portraits created a fascinating contrast with Kyoto's historic architecture.

In bringing these artists into Kyoto's historic spaces, **Kyotographie 2026** created a dialogue between Japan and the wider world, including Palestine and Africa, voices and stories that deserve far greater presence in mainstream art.

 **Kelvin MacKenzie** @kelvmackenzie · 4h

At around 7pm last night I took the Jubilee line from Waterloo to Westminster. In my carriage all 14 seats were taken up by passengers of colour. I was the minority. Is this a sign of multi-cultural London working or our capital being quietly tak... Show more

A Rejoinder: To the likes of Kevin MacKenzie, we say Shut Up and Put Up, in the words of a former PM.

This is your karma for the Crimes against Humanity your forefathers committed during the periods of colonisation and slavery. On the blood of other people, they built the British Empire. Now you have got the British Empire in your backside, you are moaning !!!

P.C.

The Rodrigues Newsletter

*From Paul Draper,
Port Mathurin*



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Greetings once again from Rodrigues.

As we go through May in the GPL School, the Easter holidays are now just a memory, but with the excitement of having welcomed visitors from overseas visit the School on the last day of term, which meant that we could all gather together and meet one another and then have a sit-down lunch to which everyone was invited. GPL School and Care-Co Workshop. .

Who were the visitors?

Well, they were members of my family from the UK, who have followed the progress of the work here and in Mauritius down the years, and at last were able to put into context things and people they had only partially been able to before.

This was not entirely a first meeting with many of us here as many of the members of the Care-Co work force have been able to visit the UK and take part in the Care-Co participation at the National Honey Show, where we have been entering our Honey into the Competitions there are winning prestigious awards down the years.

So, Eleanor, my niece, Tarek her husband and Tommy, (their son) were now able to see it all 'for real' .

We also had some more good news for the school for the new GPL Football team. Some of our older pupils at the GPL Centre and some former ones, aided abetted by some parents have organized a Football team of mainly hearing impaired pupils and some former pupils, were able to take part in the Mauritius Handisports, Football for the Deaf , in Mauritiusand they came second!

Now, five of these youngsters have been selected to be members of the Mauritius team that will be playing overseas in an international competition we are told, will be held in Algeria at some time in the future.

Over to Care-Co...

In the Care-Co workshop , Birgit is going ahead with new developments that are part of the ENSAMN Project that Care-Co is engaged in concerning the growing of more melliferous plants, and the setting up of 'Pilot' Beekeeping Projects in areas and institutions This is with the aim of spreading knowledge and skills to practice beekeeping skills and then pass on to others.

At Care-Co Birgit has organized some special functions for International Bee Day – in May this year.

There will be an event which is to held at the Care-Co Beekeeping and Honey Department, with entry free and open to all, but especially for people with disabilities and women who may be interested and wish to enroll in training courses. Rodrigues is very 'green' at the moment, as there has been plentiful rainfall during the previous months, and no cyclones or droughts or other weather events that might have negatively affected the rate of growth of all the flora of Rodrigues.

This bodes well for the Honey season which is due to start at the end of the year.

With the help of Charles, the Care-Co department is ready and the beekeepers with disabilities who are employed at Care-Co and getting prepared, and hoping very much that the situation will continue to be promising.

We hope to be participating in the UK National Honey Show again this year, and are preparing our honey for entry into the various classes indicated in the Schedule of the Honey show.

Once again I apologize for sending you our news in such a printed 'NEWS' circular, but assure you that if you mail me at any time, I will reply personally.

Thanks

Paul

Mauritius Diaspora Engagement Strategy

Mauritius Pushes New "Diaspora Engagement Strategy" Have you heard of the Mauritius Diaspora Engagement Strategy?

This scheme offers incentives to professionals, entrepreneurs and investors living abroad to invest, mentor start-ups, and return for short-term or permanent placements. Incentives can include fast-tracked residency permits and tax exemptions.

Officials say the plan seeks to "connect the Mauritian mind and capital abroad with opportunities at home".

The scheme may benefit skilled professionals or retirees seeking to contribute to Mauritius without uprooting entirely.

Find out more: Diaspora for Development Brief

(https://diasporafordevelopment.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/CF_Mauritius.pdf)

A Question of Blood

**“Moi aussi pena colon dans mo di san”
says Joanna Berenger
(Me too, no colon in my blood)**



In her reply to Reza Uteem’s rhubarb in the National Assembly, “Pena Colon dans mo Di San”, la Bérengère of the Mauritian Parliament replied “Moi aussi pena colon mo di san”.

Joanna is certainly right in her assertion. The colons who came to take possession of

the island in the 18th century in the name of the King of France and named it *Isle de France* were corsairs and pirates. The King allowed those colons to appropriate all the lands and to rule the “colony” in his name. Those colons set up the necessary administra-

tion. The Metropolitan Government sent public servants to the colony to serve in the administration. Among those public servants, in the course of time, were the Bérenger family. Yes, the Bérenger family are of French extraction but they were subservient to the colons who are known to this day, as Les Grand Blancs. This reminds us that among the cane-cutters originally from India to work on the sugar plantation, there are “Les Grand’ Nations et Les P’tits Nations”.

So, the young Joanna is not wrong to say that in her veins there is no colon blood. Incidentally, it’s worth remembering that the family of the likes of Joanna and Daddy Paul were the first Creoles in Mauritius. During the period of the French colonisation, the French nationals living in France were known as Metropolitan French. French people in the colonies were called creoles !!!

Like it or not, this is the origin of the word créole. As a matter of fact, this is confirmed in the modern editions of the Larousse Dictionary that define créole as “Personne d’ascendance européenne née dans une des anciennes colonies européennes de plantation.

Larousse equally asserts that the word applies to “toute personne native de ces régions quelque soit son ascendance. Et voilà, le p’tit hindou, musulman, chinois de l’île Maurice sont tous des créoles sans le savoir.



R.Uteem is wrong to infer that his former MMM mate belongs to the Grand Blanc clic

No, She is not of colonizer’s stock

the island in the 18th century in the name of the King of France and named it *Isle de France* were corsairs and pirates. The King allowed those colons to appropriate all the lands and to rule the “colony” in his name.

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Conclusion

The broadcasting of parliamentary debates has the merits of allowing the public to watch live how the business of the National Assembly is being conducted by those we have been sent there to formulate policies to carry on the affairs of the State.

We find that there is occasionally among the parliamentarians a bit of *dérapiage de langage* and some of them, at times, do get a bit hot under the collar.

The antagonism between Joanna and Reza as flashed from the Assembly has been causing quite a bit of debate on the local radios and on the social media. One radio debate goes so far as to refer to the gentleman behaviour of parliamentarians of the past in comparison to the reckless attacks of some of the present horde of MLAs, though among them are found such veterans as Paul Bérenger.

Bérenger belongs to the old vintage and yet his behaviour in the Assembly has in the past been qualified as “voyouterie” by a former Speaker. To say that the *Parlement* in ancient days was a rose garden is not necessarily correct. The younger generation of journalists have probably never heard of the “After Dinner Speeches” in the House of the colonial era.

Re: the shouting match between Joanna and Reza, it is believed that the girl has scored more sympathy than the boy. Some even believe that with the political alliances and counter-alliances typical of Mauritius, it is not unlikely that Joanna may well one day be the first Mauritian woman PM. Her coach, Daddy Paulo, is monitoring her. Thanks to a coalition he was made PM.

P.C.



The coaching: Papa Piti



Reaction of Iran

The underdog always receives more sympathy than the bullies

This is what an Underdog like Iran is doing to the two Bulldogs who have vowed to destroy the country’s regime. The US is desperate for a settlement and is issuing fake statement after fake statement.

Ashok Subron, Social Security Minister



Was he the chap who, on the campaign trail, said that the elderly should not pay any income tax for they have done so the whole of their working life? Now that he is in power we do not hear a word about this promise.

The previous regime abolished the property tax for home owners in the towns. This minister recommends a form of it to raise funds to build social housing.

VOLTAIRE AVAIT RAISON



- 1. Le voleur ordinaire : c’est celui qui vous vole votre argent, votre portefeuille, votre vélo, votre parapluie...
- 2. Le voleur politique : c’est celui qui vous vole votre avenir, vos rêves, votre savoir, votre salaire, votre éducation, votre santé, votre force, votre sourire...

• La grande différence entre ces deux types de voleurs, c’est que le voleur ordinaire vous choisit pour vous voler votre bien, tandis que le voleur politique, c’est vous qui le choisissez pour qu’il vous vole.

• Et l’autre grande différence, qui n’est pas des moindres, c’est que le voleur ordinaire est traqué par la police, tandis que le voleur politique est le plus souvent protégé par une escorte de police.



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