

**Address of  
Hon (Mrs.) Leela Devi Dookun-Luchoomun, GCSK  
Vice Prime Minister,  
Minister of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology  
Launch of ITET Beau Vallon  
Technical Education Centre**

Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2024

**My colleague Ministers here present  
Hon. Hureeram and Hon. Toussaint;**

**Hon. Kavi Doolub; Chief Whip of the National Assembly;**

**His Excellency Ambassador Henry V. Jardine; U.S Ambassador to the  
Republic of Mauritius and Seychelles;**

**Ms. Marie Joelle Sandrine Valere**

**Senior Chief Executive of my Ministry;**

**Chairman and Director of ITET;**

**Council Members of ITET;**

**Captains of Industry**

**Staff of ITET**

**Distinguished Guests**

**Members of the Press**

**Good afternoon to you all.**

I am delighted to be among you at Beau Vallon this afternoon for the launch of this new ITET technical education centre.

This launch today testifies to the fulfilment of a commitment taken by Government. In effect, in the Government Programme 2020-2024, item 33 stated and I quote,

***“ in line with education reform policy, an Institute of Technical Education will be set up to create opportunities and pathways for students to pursue studies in technical education”.***

I am very pleased that, after bringing the relevant legislation to the National Assembly, we see today its translation into concrete action and reality – a brand

new technical education centre of ITET being launched in the South of the island.

This is the 6<sup>th</sup> Centre that will operate under the aegis of the ITET.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

Way back in 2015, as part of our Education Reform agenda, we made it a point to highlight the significance and, especially, the recognition to be given to technical education, and this with a view to building the “*human capital that will spearhead the transformation of the Republic into a knowledge-based, skills-driven economy.*”

Sadly, few were those who espoused our conviction that the technical education ecosystem had to be overhauled, re-branded and modernised to prepare for the skills of tomorrow. Some detractors had even been --and still are-- very vocal over the change in the number of credits needed to accede to the A-level studies just as much as they objected to the need for creation of other pathways and a broader palette of choice for learners.

Yet, we persevered.

The hand which aims to do right does not shake.

Today, international organisations like the OECD, The World Bank, UNESCO, UNEVOC, the World Economic Forum are constantly spelling the need for a multi-tier approach to skilling and the need to revamp and reinvigorate the TVET ecosystem to prepare for the jobs of today and tomorrow. The figures are telling enough. According to OECD 2022 report, 80% of jobs have not yet been created, of which 75% will be related to information technology and more than 50% will not necessarily require a university credential but a more skills-based approach.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

Meeting such expectations requires a reorientation of the education system.

Let me take just one case in point as an illustrative focus.

We have always realized that students systematically wish to make informed choices on their desired areas of study, their jobs and careers. In parallel, they would preferentially opt for an education that will help them to get there.

The call is for proper guidance. They need to get exposed to all aspects of education, including more applied education, that sow the seeds for technical and technology education as early as at the secondary school level.

This is why my Ministry has been bold to anticipate and plan accordingly. We have now introduced Technology Education in a few schools across the island in Grade 10 for a School Certificate nationally developed by the University of Mauritius. This track will run alongside the Cambridge School Certificate and provides a more competency based and project centric approach to teaching and learning.

The program comprises a number of carefully chosen subjects and concentrations that will prepare youngsters for the future economy.

Obviously, such new areas beg the questions ‘What Next?’ ‘Where do the students go from there?’ ‘What are the pathways?’

This was precisely why the policy document “Inspiring Every Child” made it a point to highlight, and I quote,

***“Learning pathways will be established with articulation of TVET with secondary and tertiary education along with the introduction of Polytechnics. The goal is to have TVET recognised as a prestigious mode of learning capable of attracting quality trainees.”*** . End of Quote.

The fulfilment of this objective happened in 2017 with the setting up of Polytechnics Mauritius and their successful programmatic operations to address human capital development for the middle management layer in industry.

At this juncture, Distinguished Guests, allow me a moment to explain our take on the concept of pathways.

Pathways are not just about routes traced for upward mobility and progression in an academic journey. To drive Mauritius' next phase of development towards a high-income status economy, there is a pressing need to establish clear skill sets and career pathways across all occupations in the labour market, including in emerging sectors. The objective is simple: irrespective of where you are in life

– in secondary school, in academies, in vocational or technical or higher technical education; whether you are in early career, mid-career or mature and seasoned workers, pathways should exist for the next step in life. Each stop should lead to the next step in a lifelong learning journey.

Thus Pathways have been created among institutions within the technical education ecosystem to string opportunities from the MITD to the ITET, the Polytechnics and eventually the University.

In short, ladies and gentlemen, our objective is to put in place a holistic framework in which policies speak to one another with a unified voice promoting a future-ready Mauritian Education & Training (E&T) strategy.

**Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I am happy to note here that a Memorandum of Understanding will be signed today between U.S-based Madison Area Technical College and the Institute of Technical Education and Technology. This will clearly bring American community college expertise into the education and training ecosystem in Mauritius. I have been told that the US Embassy has played an instrumental role in facilitating this collaboration and we are grateful to you, Excellency, and to the staff of your embassy for your current and ongoing support.

I am confident that the curriculum development and academic programme sharing contributed by Madison College will trigger ITET to be future-focused and distinctive in its offer to the Mauritian population and beyond.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The ITET emerges as a beacon of innovation and progress within the education and training ecosystem. In today's dynamic economic milieu, industries seek more skilled technicians and technologists across emerging sectors. The very nature and fabric of work is changing and so should our education system.

ITET will serve as a hub for nurturing talents in fields such as Artificial Intelligence, Financial services, Food Security, Green Construction, Renewable energy, among others. Institutions are required to skill the learners for tomorrow, make them respond to industry's future demands.

In addition, they must see to the proper cultivation of ‘soft skills’ to ensure students communicate effectively, think critically and creatively and hit the ground running.

Small wonder that the soft skills have been labelled the “power skills”.

Let me end by congratulating the ITET Council and the team for this launch today. The adventure has just begun, and I wish you perseverance and luck in this journey.

Today, as we inaugurate this Beau Vallon centre, I would like to reaffirm my commitment to fostering vibrant learning environments that inspire and empower all students to unlock their full potential.

This Government, a responsible Government, recognizes that each individual possesses unique talents and capabilities and it's our responsibility to nurture and cultivate them. Together, let us embark on a journey filled with boundless opportunities and endless possibilities.

With these words, it brings me great joy to officially inaugurate the ITET.

***I thank you for your kind attention.***