



## **MOTION**

### **GOVERNMENT PROGRAMME 2025-2029**

*The Minister of Education and Human Resource (Dr. M. Gungapersad):* Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir.

In a testament of hope, Martin Luther King Jr. said –

“You know my friends, there comes a time when people get tired of being trampled over by the iron feet of oppression. There comes a time my friends, when people get tired of being plunged across the abyss of humiliation, where they experience the bleakness of nagging despair.”

Prior to 10 November 2024, the country was facing the situation of despair. This country was being trampled over by the iron boot of the MSM government. Whether it was inside this Parliament or outside, whether it was in day-to-day life or, whether it was on social platforms, on Facebook, this MSM government oppressed the population. Then, two leaders of this country, they put their heads together, their hearts together, in order to unlock the destiny of this country. I have named the present Prime Minister, Dr. the hon. Navinchandra Ramgoolam and the present Deputy Prime Minister – two stalwarts, two great leaders of this country.

For five years, as a Member of this Assembly, under another Speaker who was a loud speaker. This man, each time we had a session, literally humiliated us. Leave aside young Parliamentarians, new Parliamentarians like me, but stalwarts like hon. Paul Raymond Bérenger, stalwarts like hon. Rajesh Bhagwan, hon. Dr. Arvin Boolell! What did they not do in this Parliament to communalise this country? Sitting accommodation so that on MBC you

will see only a few faces – myself thrown at the back purposely; hon. Ritesh Ramful sent somewhere; hon. Wochit sent somewhere else. Understand what I am not saying. What picture they wanted to project to this country? They wanted to demonise certain people. What message

were they sending outside to this country? Like this Prime Minister, Dr. the hon. Navinchandra Ramgoolam often says: imagine for one minute – forget one minute it is too long, 60 seconds – for one second, if that government was inside this Parliament today and we were a few again, what would they not have done? What had they not done to us to break our morale?

And it is important. At this point in time, I read one of the most famous verses of Rabindranath Tagore to this House. Earlier, I would not have done it that much because there were not enough people in this Parliament during last mandate so that you could talk about philosophy, literature, and great minds. Who would listen to you? Laptop eklate? Karo sab? Karo sebo? Savat dodo? Rocco? Serf?

(Interruptions)

You heard a Prime Minister, the previous Prime Minister – I am not going to name him – inculte as compared to the present one, cultured man, man who reads, man who knows what is international diplomacy, who is constructing a bridge with the world. This is what we want, this is the change we are talking about. You just listened to few orators' today. Hon. Fabrice David, it was 03 February 2020 – that is not a coincidence – you and me, we had our maiden speeches on day, and again today, one after the other like two brothers, destiny bringing us again.

Let me read what Rabindranath Tagore wrote in the 35th stanza of his Nobel-winning Gitanjali. You know it, the well versed of this House will know it but I am reading it for the new generation, I want it to be in the Hansard for the future, and let us meditate on what Tagore said. Having been the previous rector of Tagore, this is a book I carry since then, and I do not know how long –

“Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;

Where knowledge is free;

Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls;

Where words come out from the depth of truth;

Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;

Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into dreary desert sand of dead habit;

Where the mind is lead forward by thee into ever-widening thought and action –

Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake.”

This is what we want for Mauritius. We do not want a Mauritius which is fragmented, which is ‘broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls’ of communalism. This is what was happening in this country.

The way hon. Ehsan Juman, the way hon. Shakeel Mohamed, the way hon. Patrick Assirvaden were treated or ill-treated – I do not know, by that government – when they were coming and unearthing scandals in this House, it took a communal touch. Just like hon. Reza Uteem would come and talk about figures, they would give that a touch of communalism.

What didn’t they do to the ladies who were hon. Members of that time? Four days before International Day of Women which we are going to celebrate, let me congratulate Madam Speaker for being a lady who has poise and the way she presides over the affairs of this Assembly. In absentia, if we could applaud that lady for the way she is handling the affairs. That said, let me put a comma. What about the lovely ladies, hon. ladies of this House? Vous êtes la fierté de l’île Maurice.

*Ms Anquetil:* Merci, Mahend!

*Dr. Gungapersad:* What hasn’t hon. Stephanie Anquetil bore and endured; hon. Mrs Navarre-Marie, hon. Mrs Foo Kune-Bacha and hon. Ms Joanna Bérenger? What didn’t they do to break their morale? I salute you, ladies because you stood a loud Speaker; you stood oppression. In spite of being trampled over, you resisted and you showed the way and today, you are here. What were they not saying during their speeches – the different Members of that government? They thought that at one point, they were going to be eternally here.

We understand our friends are leaving for Iftaar. We wish them all the best and to pray for all of us, for humanity.

*An hon. Member:* Thank you.

*Dr. Gungapersad:* What were they not saying – humiliating, session after session, those who were present but, especially the present Prime Minister. I was named on several times. 13, I have counted. A person like me! I come 7th, I think, in the list after hon. Bhagwan, hon. Bérenger, hon. Shakeel Mohamed, and hon. Patrick Assirvaden. An unruly, uncultured person trying to monitor

us. Can you imagine what it is, all the education goes to dogs, inside this Assembly at one moment? What were they teaching the population outside? Somebody today asked me, ‘why couldn’t you be a bit harsher towards the former Minister of Education?’ The culture I come from, the education I have, I know how to respect women, and I will do that.

*Ms Anquetil:* Bravo Mahend!

*Dr. Gungapersad:* Jean Anouilh said something and it is good for those who are involved in domestic violence to note it. Jean Anouilh said, il ne faut pas battre une femme – même avec une fleur. I am a disciple of Jean Anouilh.

How come this country, this Parliament, when the former Prime Minister, peeping Tom – I do not know what type of pleasure he was getting in order to see what the present Prime Minister had or did not have. I cannot understand. I was saying, he had placed a radar, surveillance camera, opposite the house of my good friend, hon. Osman Mahomed, and you imagine with Moustass Leaks. He was trying to peep, to hear; I do not know what was happening in this country.

For this, posterity, the future will recognise these two leaders who stood against the tide of time, who stood against all adversities and they rallied their soldiers, and we said: yes, let us get into that journey. I commend hon. Richard Duval; he looked at the interest of the country and he came forward; the interest of the country came before the family ties. I commend the members of Rezistans ek Alternativ, you had to stand the test of time and you said yes to this alliance. And together, experienced ones and young ones, we stood as candidates.

In my Constituency – the mention was made by hon. Patrick Assirvaden – one Mr Prakash Maunthrooa, in Petit Raffray, said, ‘Nou pou détruire le mythe Gungapersad.’ Humbly, I am saying it. Humbly, I am standing here. Come on, destroy! You are destroyer, we are builders! On est des bâtisseurs! I said it during the campaign, my two co-candidates, colistiers, everywhere I would have political meetings, I said, I have one dream and that dream is to hold in my right hand, the hand of hon. Nitish Beejan and on the left, hon. Ram Etwareea. Parole donnée, parole sacrée et c’est réussi grâce à la circonscription no. 6. Merci à la circonscription no. 6 pour m’avoir élu pour la deuxième fois. Mersi sirkonskription nimerò 6 pour avoir fait confiance a trwa zanfan sirkonskription, a de zanfan Goodlands e enn zanfan Fond du Sac.

Merci l'île Maurice pour nous avoir fait confiance. When I am saying it, definitely like some of you, I also, I am missing my father today, my hero figure who left us four days after the elections.

Now, this MSM thing, c'est important de comprendre son fonctionnement. Et ça n'a pas terminé, avez-vous écouté la conférence de presse du présent leader de l'opposition ? Je ne sais pas quel poste il occupe au MSM. Qu'est-ce qu'il dit ? Letan margozi inn' vini. Popilasyon aksepté manz margozi me pa pou manz fos koze MSM !

This is what this population wants. This population, c'est une population aguerrie. Une population qui a compris ce que ce gouvernement, l'ancien gouvernement MSM, a fait. Can you imagine how many people's lives have been destroyed? Can you imagine how it operates? Can you imagine how it has toyed, it has played, with institutions? Can you imagine how it has sullied the reputation of people? Can you imagine how it has humiliated great professionals? Hon. Dr. Farhad Aumeer is not here in this Assembly. You come and try to attack a professional like him and many others? It is important for this population not to forget the multiple wounds inflicted on the soul of Mauritians.

What we now want is a new Mauritius. What we want is a new tryst with destiny, like Nehru would have said it. What we want is a real change. The best change comes inside our heart, whether it is the heart of the MMM, whether it is the heart of Labour Party, whether it is the heart of Nouveaux Démocrates, whether it is the heart of Rezistans ek Alternativ or whether it is the heart of anyone. We want a change. We want humility to be restored in this country. We want to marry Artificial Intelligence and emotional intelligence. Aristotle rightly said it –

“Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all!”

That government had a Rs1,000 note for every problem of this country. He had different Rs1,000 notes to distribute in order to quell any resistance you had against him. They were just spreading; they were sharing money everywhere. The real problems were swept under the carpet. Today, each Minister, each Junior Minister, each MP, when we move the carpet, we realise tons of dust that have accumulated. Name a Ministry where there is no problem! Name an institution where we don't have problem! For ten years, that little, diminutive Prime Minister asked the question kot monn fote ? Kot tonn fote ? History will tell you! I hope he has enough time to sit back and reflect what harm he has done.

One week before the 57th Independence Day, let all of us reaffirm our faith in our motherland, our brotherhood, those walls that they had built against brothers of different communities, let us trample those walls. Let us embrace each other in love! This is what is the new vision of the educational policies of this Government. We are not only going to feed or to educate the brain; we are going to look after the heart also.

The children of this country, whether they form part of the elite or whether they are slow-learners, we want to embrace them as our kids. This is why some people outside are not understanding it when we came with this philosophy of three credit. We are not saying go and get three credits. Some of our kids will not be able to get five or six credits. Some of our children are not endowed. That is why we were so much against the Extended Programme. We have brought in its place the Foundation Programme.

After three years, these kids are going to get a certificate. You imagine how many children have suffered because of the MSM government? Let me tell the population. Over the past three years, 5,927 students have failed the Extended Programme and have left the system without a PSAC or an NCE Certificate. Congratulations to this Government, to the Prime Minister, to the Deputy Prime Minister and everyone who has supported this project.

Give me a few more minutes just to mention the figures.

The Deputy Speaker: You are already over...

*Dr. Gungapersad:* 5,824 students...

*The Deputy Speaker:* One more minute to conclude, please!

*Dr. Gungapersad:* ... did not get the opportunity to get into Lower 6, thanks to that government. This year, we have around 2,500 students who are joining Lower 6. This is the vision of this Government. We have to care for one and all. This Government definitely has a lot of challenges. We know people outside want results. But a tree does not bear fruits overnight, especially over a land that has been mercilessly destroyed by the toxicity of the MSM government.

We have faith in this population. We have faith in everyone. We say thank you to everyone who has supported. More will join us when they will know that we are genuine in our mission.

Thank you very much.

*The Deputy Speaker:* Thank you. Hon. Members, we are going to break for one hour. This is what has been arranged.