

**Speech of Hon. (Mrs) L.D. Dookun-Luchoomun  
Minister of Education and Human Resources,  
Tertiary Education and Scientific Research**

**Launching of L'Ecole de Partage**

**19 May 2016**

**Protocol**

**Distinguished Guests**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**Members of the Press**

It is indeed a pleasure for me to be amongst you this morning for the official launching of the Beachcomber Training Academy and the L'Ecole de Partage that will operate under its aegis..

I believe congratulations are in order for the Academy for having played an important role as a training institution since 1997 and its contribution to the Education and Training Sector through the provision of training in different fields, most notably in Hospitality & Tourism, Management and Language, amongst others.

We must recognise the long way the BTA has come since its beginnings. Such has been its training reach that it is today operational at different sites, namely, Victoria Hotel, Le Cannonier Hotel, Le Mauricia Hotel, the Royal Palm Hotel, Plaisance Catering, Shandrani Hotel and Trou Aux Biches Hotel.

***Have I missed any other? I hope not.***

**Ladies and Gentlemen,** we are here talking of a wide geographical coverage from the North of the island down to the South.

No wonder, then, that over time, the Beachcomber Training Academy has come to assume new responsibilities and helped the country in broadening its human resource capacity base. It adds to the credit of

the Beachcomber Group that has made major in-roads in the education and vocational training sector.

By offering award and non-award courses on an apprenticeship mode of delivery, it has offered both youth and adults the chance to be ready for the job market and be employable, especially in the Hotel and Tourism Sector.

L'Ecole de Partage is likely to be another jewel in the Group's crown. This flagship project is part of the powerfully growing wish to share experiences acquired and good practices learnt at the Beachcomber Group through workshops. L'Ecole de Partage becomes then an excellent initiative that seeks to promote mentoring within the Group. Such a sharing of experiences among peers along with the other efforts deployed by the Group is today leading to the construction of the 'patrimoine Beachcomber'.

***Bravo and keep up the good work.***

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

It is conventional wisdom that economic growth is dependent on the level of skills available in a country. The securing of higher skills also holds the key to productivity, competitiveness and the improved earning capacity of our workforce. This emphasis that is placed on human resource development is no doubt a prerequisite for sustainable economic growth.

It is a domain that necessitates priority attention of government policy and public funding.

And that is exactly what this Government is doing.

We are all too aware of the challenges that pertain to the demand and supply gap of the skilled workforce. We are also fully alive to the fact that our training institutions have to fully develop the capacity to

deliver demand-driven training services so as to have an increasing pool of workforce with technical know-how.

And the demands for a trained and trainable manpower are very likely to grow now that new thrust areas of development have been announced as part of the Vision 2030 elaborated upon by the Prime Minister.

**Distinguished Guests,**

Much has already been written about the 3 M's that are the main capital of the organization-- Man, Machine and Material.

Machines and materials are relatively easy to invest in. These are the hardware part. The human entity is however a different story altogether. In his case, we speak of capacity building and development. That has indeed become part of the global conversation today. There is hardly any country in the world that does not place a premium on the need for training. It has become one of the most significant parts of an organization's overall development strategy-- and this, despite the fact that the benefits emanating from training are intangible

Nonetheless, training and HRD have to be sustained because they are system- enabling and help to achieve the objectives of both workers and those of the organizations.

**Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I think we will all agree that both private sector investment in training and public sector investment in training are never mutually exclusive. Both target our labour force and act as enablers in making Mauritians, especially young Mauritians, employable in new sectors of the economy, to have more fulfilling jobs and, ultimately, to be competitive at international level.

I would suggest therefore that a degree of complementarity be the end result targeted. Mauritius is much too small a country to go in for duplication of training programmes and courses.

As Minister responsible for the portfolio of Human Resources, it is part of my mandate to seek the right fit, the match between needs and provisions and also to bring training close to where the trainees are.

I am also very much conscious of the fact that it takes work-ready diploma holders of high quality to spearhead the development of the country into a knowledge-based and skills-driven economy.

This explains why the concept of Polytechnics will soon become part of the common parlance.

You most probably know that there are today three polytechnic campuses raring to go at Réduit, Montagne Blanche and Pamplémousses. These polytechnics are certainly different from the vocational institutions operating under the umbrella of the MITD.

For one thing, the MITD Diplomas are targeted at career skills, supported by knowledge, while those of Polytechnics would be targeted at specialised knowledge, supported by skills. This would guarantee that the graduate can function and innovate independently.

For another, Polytechnics are to be seen as part of the **further education** process and not as part of the vocational system and, very importantly, as an alternative to the university rather than an alternative route to university.

### **Ladies and gentlemen,**

The reason I am expatiating on Polytechnics today is very simple. One of them, namely that situated at Montagne Blanche, will specialize in Tourism, and Hotel Management, including Cruise Tourism as well as in Events Management and Destination Marketing.

Now, the setting up of polytechnics is investment –heavy and my Ministry would certainly ensure that partnerships are struck with private providers such that there is a win-win situation for both.

I would therefore warmly wish that the Beachcomber Group starts exploring the possibility of striking up a sound partnership with the Polytechnic once the latter starts its operations—and that will be very soon.

It is my profound conviction that the forging of close symbiotic relationships are the future for institutions engaged in training, capacity building and human resource development.

**Let me end with this item on my wish list.**

Let me also reiterate my warm congratulations to the Beachcomber Group. I believe we will all have to applaud the fact that, by enabling individuals to be trained, the Beachcomber Training Academy will continue to invariably empower our current and future workforce to use their skills creatively and innovatively for the benefit of our economy.

I know that the Beachcomber Training Academy will leave no stone unturned in its quest to achieve excellence in the provision of its specialised services.

I have therefore the pleasure and privilege to now officially launch the Beachcomber Training Academy and L'Ecole de Partage.

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