



## **SPEECH**

**His Excellency Mr Dharambeer Gokhool G.C.S.K., President of the  
Republic of Mauritius**

**EVENT: OPENING CEREMONY OF OPEN-AIR CHESS CORNER**

**VENUE: GYMKHANA GOLF CLUB,  
VACOAS**

**TIME: 13:00 HOURS**

Honourable Dharmarajen Nagalingum, Minister of Youth and Sports,  
Honourable Ministers

Mr Vimarsh Aryan, Deputy High Commissioner of India

Miss Divya Deshmukh, International Master and 2024 FIDE World  
U20 Girls Chess Champion

Mr Hurrynarain Bhowany, President of the Mauritius Chess Federation

Mr Koshik Reesaul, President of the Gymkhana Golf Club

Esteemed Mauritian Chess Players,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

ALL PROTOCOL OBSERVED.

Good afternoon.

Thank you for inviting me to the official inauguration of the Open-Air  
Chess Corner at the Gymkhana Golf Club.

It is a milestone - not only for our chess community but also for all  
Mauritians – as it is graced by the distinguished presence of Miss Divya  
Deshmukh, International Master, 2024 FIDE World U20 Girls Chess  
Champion and Gold Medallist at the 45th Chess Olympiad.

Miss Deshmukh's track record is a testimony of values of passion, hard-  
work, discipline, resilience and excellence.

Thank you, Miss Divya Deshmukh, for being part of an event that aims to promote Chess among Mauritians.

I understand that our Mauritian Chess players were at the FIDE World Junior Girls Chess Championship in Gujarat, India, last year, when you expressed your desire to come to Mauritius.

On behalf of all Mauritians, I extend a warm welcome to Miss Deshmukh and congratulate her for her unflinching efforts and well-deserved victories.

Her rise to the pinnacle of the chess world at merely 19 years of age, is a testament to her exceptional talent and relentless pursuit of excellence. Champions are not born—they are made through perseverance, resilience, and a passion for what they do, with continued support from those around them.

Miss Deshmukh's success story symbolises the great possibilities that the youths, especially girls and young women, can achieve when their dreams are supported at various levels: personal, social, institutional, national, and international.

I take this opportunity to express immense gratitude to all organisers and sponsors in Mauritius, notably the Mauritius Chess Federation, the Gymkhana Golf club, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the High Commission of India, the Currimjee & Jeewanjee Group, and Indian Oil, and congratulate them for coming together to turn Miss Deshmukh's request to visit our Island into a reality.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Mauritius recognizes the significance of fostering and valuing talent and the potential that young minds hold, by giving them the opportunity to flourish.

I am not very familiar with the Chess discipline, but it has much to do with our philosophy of life itself.

Chess is not merely a game of strategy; it reflects principles of life—of making calculated decisions, anticipating challenges, overcoming them and achieving victory in battles.

But it's not always about winning. Sometimes it's simply about learning. And so is life.

I commend the Mauritius Chess Federation for having introduced this game in 40 primary schools and 23 secondary schools by donating chess equipment, training educators so that children take interest in and

gain knowledge of it, and for promoting it among children who are differently-abled.

It is crucial that chess, as well as other games and sports that inculcate skills, values and knowledge beyond the academic, become an integral part of our educational system.

With highly qualified national arbiters, instructors, two FIDE Masters, 10 candidate Masters and over 360 registered chess players, I am confident that the noble mission and good work you have undertaken, will continue.

This initiative bears witness to our principles of nurturing potential, supporting growth, and embracing diversity, and our ability to come together as one people and one nation for the better.

As the President of the Republic of Mauritius, I am committed to promoting holistic development of our youth, and it is through initiatives like these that we can inspire the next generation of leaders.

I hope that this Open-Air Chess Area will add value to the Gymkhana Golf Club, which has long been a hub for sports, culture, and recreation

and will serve as a space that will allow people from all walks of life to engage with one of the world's most ancient and intellectual games.

Through this Open-Air Chess Area, we are not only creating a space for healthy competition but also fostering a community of learners, thinkers, collaborators and strategists, in a spirit of unity and camaraderie.

On this note, I wish our chess players good luck for the simultaneous display. I hope that this will be a time of learning and collaboration, and will strengthen our ties with the global Chess community.

I commend Miss Divya Deshmukh for her passion and dedication to promote Chess among young girls in Mauritius, and I invite her to take full advantage of our Mauritian hospitality.

I congratulate you all for this laudable initiative once again.

Thank you for your attention.

