



SPEECH

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

**EVENT: BHOJPURI GAMMAT FESTIVAL 2025
BY FEDERATION OF HINDU
ORGANISATIONS**

**VENUE: MAHATMA GANDHI INSITITUTE
AUDITORIUM, MOKA**

TIME: 11:00 HOURS

Protocol

Honourable Anil Bachoo G.O.S.K., Minister of Health and Wellness

Honourable Ministers and MPs

His Excellency Mr. Anurag Srivastava, High Commissioner of India

Mr Suresh Ramburn, President of the Federation of Hindu Organisations

Mr. Vishal Gungaram, and other esteemed members of the Federation of Hindu Organisations

Our esteemed Artists and dear lovers of Bhojpuri

Distinguished Guests

All Protocol Observed

Introduction

Good morning, aur aap sabhi ko mera namaskar aur shubh kamnayein.

With your permission, I shall make my address partly in Bhojpuri, in English and in Kreol.

Let me start in Bhojpuri

Sab upasthit mahanu bhawon ke prati aur sab koi jo log aaj ke Bhojpuri Gammat Mahautsav mein aal hawaja,hamaar pranaam aur sak koi ke bahut shaandar Swagat.

Aaj ego bahut khushi ke din ha

**Ham sabhan log mil jul ke ek saath, Bhojpuri Gammat me bhag
lewathain sa**

**Sab koi key bahut dhanyavad dewa thai aur appan shubh
kamnayein pesh karathain**

**Asha rakhatain ki agey mein bhi ki eissay thyohaar mana nein ke
aur mauka milega**

**Hammar se agey,kai mahanu bahwon ke vichar suneney ke hamni
ke mauka milal.**

Ta ham ussab vichar phir nahin daurahab

Appan kuch do teen baat tolog ke samney rakhab.

Brief Historical Recap and Tribute

**Sab koi janey la ki Bhojpuri hamni key desh key itihass se joral
ba.**

Bhopuri bhasha hamni ke key purwaz logon key virasat ha

Hamni key sanskritic virasat ke ego abheen ank .

**Aur hamni ke desh ke swatantrata aur paragati mein ego bahut
mahatwa poorn yog daan ba**

**Hamni ke chahey la ki jon log hamni ke beech mein ab nai hawan
ja, aur jo log aaj Bhojpuri ke prachar prassar se jurey hawaan
sa,oon saab logon ke prati, ham sab ke aur se abhari prakat
karathain**

Asha karathaïn ki Bhopjpuri Bhasha, sanskriti aur kala, agey dinon mein aur bahut pragati kari.

Milestones

Today’s event upholds the Gammat tradition and is a vibrant expression of Mauritian cultural identity.

A form of popular folk theatre that combines humor, satire, music, and storytelling.

More than a performance, Gammat reflects the values, experiences, and resilience of a people who have contributed immensely to our independence and nation building, not only through their sweat, blood and tears;

but also by their unity through their Bhojpuri language, their music, songs, dance, dramas, paintings and literature and other forms of colourful cultural expressions like the very popular Geeta Gawai without which today’s Indian Weddings ambiance would be dull and without spice.

As we celebrate the richness of Gammat today, it would be remiss not to acknowledge the towering contribution of the late Sona Noyan, a legendary figure often hailed as the “King of Gammat” in Mauritius.

Through his sharp wit, powerful voice, and poignant social commentary, Sona Noyan brought the realities of daily life to the stage in a way that was both entertaining and enlightening.

His art transcended performance; it was a means of reflection and truth-telling that resonated deeply with Mauritians across generations.

His legacy remains a source of inspiration, and his name continues to be associated with authenticity, humor, and the enduring spirit of Gammatt.

We also lost Mr Chandradave (Basant) Soopaul another legendary artist who carried the Bhojpuri traditional singing.

Let us today honor their memory by ensuring that this cherished tradition continues to grow and evolve.

- How can we forget the Queen of Bhojpuri –Rambha Ramtohl with her internationally famous “Zubeda loto lekey jai-Shehar ke lizinwa mein joli joli Chokri.”
- How can we forget the legendary Bahal Gowry, who left us recently with his “Donne to la main, prend mo la main-Chala basawey nation Mauricien.”
- The Bhojpuri Boys, and so many other highly creative Bhojpuri and popular artists.

I would also like to mention the commendable contributions of Mrs. Sarita Boodhoo, who has been at the head of the Bhojpuri Speaking Union and has helped to popularize Mauritian Bhojpuri on the international scene.

I am naming a few of the legends as a sample as the ambassadors of Bhojpuri.

Consider it as a collective tribute to all the heroes and heroines of the Bhojpuri language, culture and identity.

I salute them all and wish them good luck.

Events and Progress

I would also like to mention a few other events that testify to the vibrancy of the Bhojpuri language in Mauritius:

- The setting up of the Bhojpuri Speaking Union in 2010 and our tribute to former Minister Mukeshwar Choonee, who brought this Bill to Parliament.
- The edition of short films in Bhojpuri by MFDC.
- The inclusion of Geet-Gawai in the UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage List in 2016. (PM Modi was welcomed with a lively Geet Gawai performance on 12th March 2025)
- The setting up of the Geet Gawai School and the Geet Gawai Training School.
- The holding of a Joint event by Indian High Commission and Ministry of Arts and Culture in 2017 to celebrate the 100 years of Gandhiji's Champaran Satyagraha Movement.
- The holding of the International Bhojpuri Mahautsav in Mauritius in 2024, with the presence of 20 countries and 134 International delegates.

Let us not forget our Bhojpuri diaspora spread across the continents.

And of course, Mother India, who continues to support all our cultural initiatives and projects including the Bhojpuri bhasha

Much progress has been achieved in the preservation, documentation, and the popularization of Bhojpuri nationally, regionally and internationally.

We now have to build a strong resilient future full of hope and prospects for the Bhojpuri bhasha

The Future

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today, with the progress of globalisation, technological transformations and language policies introduced by various governments for mainstream languages, ancestral languages are on the decline, impacting on languages like Bhojpuri.

There is a marked decline among our youth.

According to Ethnologue Guide, there is a total of some 7139 languages in the world, but it is estimated that one language dies every 2 weeks, and more than half of the world's languages could disappear by the end of the century.

The writings are on the wall and all lovers of the Bhojpuri language should heed this advance notice and address the challenge in a bold, creative and innovative manner.

Use of AI in promotion of Bhojpuri

One very surprising but strong ally they can find is Artificial intelligence-AI. One concrete example is the speech to text and simultaneous translation which is now possible with AI.

Creating Digital archives and repositories, making transcription, language learning are all now possible with AI.

I myself use Google translate when preparing my speeches.

If we don't know how to use AI, we must learn it and use it.

Multilingualism and Co-existence

In the Mauritian context, we must try to avoid language conflicts because when languages co-exist, they can help each other to survive and thrive.

- Example of an inadvertent promotion of Bhojpuri- **Refer to Minister Jyoti Jeetun's use of Bhojpuri.**

A project that can help languages to survive is an Institute of Languages, which could promote a multiplicity of languages.

Conclusion

Languages like Bhojpuri can continue to play a catalytic role in the future development of our country and in nation building.

But it is time to rethink its future by adopting new approaches and new tools and technologies.

On this realistic and optimistic note, I would like to conclude and extend to all of you my congratulations and good wishes.

Thank you for your attention.