



SPEECH

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

**EVENT: 45TH ANNIVERSARY OF ORCHID SOCIETY OF
MAURITIUS**

VENUE: VOILA HOTEL, BAGATELLE

DATE: 16 AUGUST 2025

TIME: 18:30 HOURS

Protocol

Mr. Serge L'Ecluse, President of the Orchid Society of Mauritius

Past Presidents and all esteemed members of the Orchid Society of Mauritius,

Distinguished Guests,

All Protocol Observed.

Introduction

Bonsoir and Good evening to all of you.

I am very happy to join you, together with my wife Brinda, this evening for the 45th Anniversary celebration of the Orchid Society of Mauritius - a celebration symbolising the continued passion, dedication, knowledge and perseverance of our vibrant community of Orchid lovers.

I thank Mr. Serge L'Ecluse, President of the Society, for his thoughtful reflections, which are both inspiring and insightful.

Orchid Society of Mauritius

I understand that the Society was founded in 1980, and under the guidance and vision of its first President, Dr. Majeed Khadaroo O.S.K., the Orchid Society of Mauritius has been active and has evolved into an institution of national and international recognition.

I have had the opportunity of meeting Mr. L'Ecluse and Mr. Shashi Puddoo at State House and taking stock of some of the Society's remarkable achievements over the years, notably:

- Mini Orchid Shows, annual exhibitions, educational workshops,

- And affiliations with prestigious institutions such as the American Orchid Society, and the Royal Horticultural Society in the United Kingdom.

Allow me, therefore, to pay tribute to Dr. Majeed Khadaroo for laying such a strong foundation, and to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to the current President, Mr. Serge L'Ecluse, the Vice-President, Mr. Shashi Puddoo;

And all past and present members for their tireless efforts in fostering the love for horticulture among our population.

I am confident that you will continue to foster welcoming spaces where people of all ages can learn and experience the joy of cultivating orchids.

I am also looking forward to collaborating with the Orchid Society of Mauritius to put up an Orchid Corner at State House.

Reflections

Dear Friends,

This evening's celebration would be incomplete without reflecting on the deeper meanings behind the remarkable flowers that orchids are, and on why it is more important than ever to cultivate a love for them among our people, especially our children and the youth.

A. Orchids

I know many of you will already be familiar with Orchids and their qualities and attributes.

However, it is always good to remind ourselves that Orchids not only inspire us through their beauty, but also teach us values of love,

patience, care, and resilience — universal qualities that we must instil in our present and next generations.

Across cultures and centuries, orchids have been prized not only for their aesthetic appeal, but also for the messages their colours represent.

For example:

- **Red** for passion, courage, and affection.
- **Orange** for enthusiasm, pride, and joyful achievement.
- **Yellow** for friendship, joy, and the warmth of new beginnings.
- **Green** for renewal, harmony, and fresh opportunities.
- **Blue** for strength, calm, and uniqueness.
- **Purple** for admiration, dignity, and royalty, and
- **White** for purity, elegance, and respect.

So, each flower, in its own way, speaks a universal language —one of resilience and unity in diversity, reflecting the philosophy, ethos, spirit and beauty of our Republic: “As One People, As One Nation, in peace, justice, and liberty.”

It is within this rich diversity of colours and meanings that we find a clear and vivid reflection of our own unique, multicultural, and vibrant society.

Orchids, their cultivation and propagation can play a catalytic role in bringing people together; to work together to strengthen the national fabric of our rainbow nation.

B. Significance in today’s global context

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This evening’s celebration must also be an invitation for us to reflect on the way forward.

Today, we are confronted with unprecedented environmental challenges: climate change, habitat loss, and the declining biodiversity which threatens our ecosystem.

In this context, the work of the Orchid Society must take on even greater significance, intersecting with the urgent need to protect and preserve biodiversity.

With their intricate ecological requirements, orchids can serve as living indicators of environmental health, which can contribute towards ecological awareness, education and advocacy.

So, when we protect and nurture orchids, we are also protecting the ecosystems they depend on, including ourselves and our shared humanity.

I would encourage you to consider initiatives such as:

- Programs to engage children and young people directly through school partnerships, university collaboration and youth competitions;
- Community planting projects in wider communities and our villages,
- Leveraging digital platforms and social media to share knowledge, tutorials, and stories about orchids, and
- Promoting the therapeutic and psychological benefits of engaging with orchids - which can help our youth navigate the harmful effects of social media pressures, drugs, and mental health struggles, and help our elderly population fight loneliness and acquire a sense of purpose and accomplishment.

This list is by no means exhaustive. But I hope it will spark ideas and actions that will continue to enrich both our environment and our communities.

Conclusion

Allow me to conclude by congratulating all past and present members of the Orchid Society of Mauritius once again on its 45th anniversary celebration.

I extend my special congratulations to all Honorary Members who will be appointed this evening, for their unwavering dedication and remarkable contribution to the Society.

I am particularly pleased to be associated with the launch of your Commemorative Bulletin which, I am sure, will serve as a lasting record of your achievements and inspire future generations to continue this important work.

Before ending, I would like to share these thoughts with you:

- Orchids are like little pieces of paradise.
- You can't buy happiness, but you can buy an orchid or plant an orchid and be happy.

I wish you a happy and memorable evening ahead.

May God bless our Republic.

Merci et Bonne Continuation.