



SPEECH

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

**EVENT: GARLANDING OF THIRUVALLUVAR STATUE –
THIRUVALLUVAR DAY 2026**

**VENUE: MAURITIUS TAMIL TEMPLES FEDERATION
HEADQUARTERS, LECLEZIO STREET, MOKA**

DATE: 16 JANUARY 2026

TIME: 10:30 HOURS

Protocol

Honourable Kugan Parapen, Junior Minister of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity

Honourable Vedasingam Baloomoody, Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly

Honourable Govinden Venkatasamy, Deputy Chief Government Whip

Mr. Darsen Gangadoo, Chairman of Mauritius Tamil Temples Federation

Members of the MTTF

Esteemed representatives of socio-cultural and religious organisations

Distinguished Guests

Members of the Media

All Protocol Observed

Introduction

Vanakkam. A very good morning to you all.

At the outset, allow me to express my sincere gratitude to the Mauritius Tamil Temples Federation, and to all of you, for the kind invitation extended to me on this very auspicious occasion and for the opportunity to make an address.

I am deeply honoured to be invited as Chief Guest at this annual garlanding ceremony of the statue of Thiruvalluvar, as we come together to remember and celebrate a revered Tamil poet, great philosopher and moral visionary - whose wisdom and foresight continue to inspire millions across the world.

While the exact details of his life remain hidden in the mists of time, what survives with irrefutable clarity is his masterpiece, the Tirukkural.

Written over two thousand years ago, this remarkable collection of 1,330 couplets, in 130 chapters, captures the essence of ethical living, social responsibility, and humane conduct.

So, more than a literary work, it is a moral compass, the wisdom of which transcends time, culture, and creed.

The Thiruvalluvar statue of 133 feet stands tall in Tamil Nadu, in honour of his invaluable contribution to humanity.

Significance and Relevance of Teachings

I understand that his immortal work is structured into three enduring sections - virtue (*Aram*), wealth (*Porul*), and love (*Inbam*).

Together, they affirm that a life of true worth is anchored in character, brought to fulfilment through just action, and sustained by compassion.

In this regard, Valluvar reminds us, in simple yet powerful words:

“Virtue is the true wealth; all else is not wealth.”

And again, he teaches:

“Pleasant words are the essence of all goodness.”

These are words which have inspired scholars and leaders alike, including Mahatma Gandhi, who acknowledged its influence on his philosophy of non-violence, peace and harmony.

And perhaps most remarkably, its enduring power lies in its **universality** - capturing the ethical essence common **to all religions** and inviting us to reflect on our shared human responsibility.

In today's complex world, marked by division, uncertainty, conflict, and technological disruption, the values and teachings of Thiruvalluvar must therefore serve as a powerful reminder of what truly matters and must guide our individual conduct, public discourse, and our collective choices.

Thiruvalluvar must remind us at all times that we are all human beings - the children of GOD- and kindness, love, mutual respect and understanding must be our guiding principles in life.

MTTF and shared nation-building

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today's event stands as yet another testament to the unwavering dedication of the Mauritius Tamil Temples Federation towards preserving moral and cultural consciousness and strengthening the bonds of community.

I commend and congratulate the Federation, and all organisers and collaborators, for your steadfast efforts - particularly in ensuring that the teachings of Thiruvalluvar are not merely remembered, but truly lived and transmitted to future generations.

As I enter the second year of my mandate, my foremost mission remains clear: to strengthen national unity and to continue building our nation together.

Within this national effort, our brothers and sisters of the Tamil community continue to make a lasting contribution to the moral, cultural, social, and national fabric of our rainbow nation.

Events such as today's must go beyond remembrance to create space for communities to engage with one another, to share values, and to learn together.

The wisdom of Thiruvalluvar, while rooted in the Tamil tradition, carries values that speak to all communities.

I therefore encourage the Mauritius Tamil Temples Federation to work closely with socio-cultural organisations from other communities.

I also encourage the thoughtful use of technology, social media, and artificial intelligence to preserve, promote, and widely disseminate this knowledge, particularly among younger generations, to reinforce the sense of belonging that unites us as Mauritians.

Our unity in diversity remains our strength. We must now go one step further.

And move beyond multicultural co-existence towards genuine inter-cultural engagement.

As we celebrate Thiruvalluvar today, let us open the doors of culture to our brothers and sisters from other communities.

Our ancestors may have come here on different ships, but today, we are all in the same boat.

Let Thiruvalluvar's spirit inspire us to embrace fully the true ethos of our Republic: **As One People, As One Nation.**

Conclusion

On this realistic yet hopeful note, allow me to end by thanking you all once again for including me in today's commemoration.

May the words, wisdom and vision of Thiruvalluvar continue to guide us and illuminate our paths towards a better society for all.

Merci et bonne continuation.

Thank you for your attention.