



SPEECH

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

**EVENT: 60th anniversary of the incorporation of ISKCON and the
50th anniversary of the historic visit of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupada to Mauritius**

VENUE: Hare Krishna Land, Pont Fer, Phoenix

DATE: 8th August 2026

TIME: 14:00 HOURS

Protocol

His Grace Govardhana Das, Governing Body Commissioner of the
International Society for Krishna Consciousness,

Honourable Ministers and Junior Ministers,

Your Reverences,

Respected Members of the International Society for Krishna
Consciousness,

Distinguished guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

Hare Krishna.

Introduction

It is indeed a privilege to join you this afternoon as we commemorate two remarkable milestones: the 60th anniversary of the establishment of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, and the 50th anniversary of the historic visit of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada to Mauritius.

Thank you for your kind invitation.

Allow me, at the outset, to extend my warm and sincere congratulations to ISKCON Mauritius for preserving, with dedication and humility, the spiritual legacy entrusted to it by its Founder-Acharya.

Today's gathering is more than a commemorative ceremony. It is an opportunity to reflect on the enduring influence and legacy of one individual whose message transcended geographical boundaries, cultures and touched the hearts and souls generations across the world.

To-day, the Hare Krishna movement remains a shining example of an enduring spiritual journey for reconnecting the individual soul with the divine, with a focus on devotion, universal brotherhood, and inner peace.

The Vision of Srila Prabhupada

When Srila Prabhupada founded ISKCON in New York in 1966, few could have imagined that what began as a small spiritual movement would evolve into one of the world's most recognised and respected organisations dedicated to the promotion of devotion, compassion and service to humanity.

The life of Srila Prabhupada is an epic and heroic testimony of service to God through service to humanity.

Within six decades, ISKCON has established hundreds of temples across more than one hundred countries, translated sacred Vedic literature into numerous languages, created educational institutions, developed sustainable farming communities, and provided billions of meals through humanitarian initiatives.

These achievements remind us that spirituality is not confined to places of worship. It also finds expression in dealing with multiple challenges that confront humanity, like feeding the hungry.

Educating children.

Caring for communities.

And in inspiring individuals to live lives guided by integrity, compassion and self-discipline.

Mauritius and a Shared Spiritual Heritage

Mauritius occupies a special place in the history of ISKCON. The visits of Srila Prabhupada in 1975 were not merely ceremonial occasions.

They represented an encounter between a visionary spiritual leader and a young nation seeking to define its own identity after Independence.

His meeting with the Father of the Nation, Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, reflected a shared understanding that national development cannot be measured solely by economic progress.

A truly prosperous nation is equally built upon moral values, mutual respect and social harmony.

Srila Prabhupada recognised something unique about Mauritius. He saw a country where diversity could become strength rather than division.

Where different faiths could coexist peacefully.

Where spirituality could unite rather than separate.

Half a century later, these ideals remain as relevant as ever.

Unity in Diversity

Mauritius has often been described as a mosaic of cultures, languages and religions. Yet what truly defines us is not simply our diversity. It is our ability to transform diversity into national unity.

Every religious tradition represented in our Republic contributes to this shared national fabric by promoting values that transcend differences.

- Compassion.
- Humility.
- Respect.
- Service.

These are universal principles. They are values that strengthen families, reinforce communities and ultimately contribute to national cohesion.

They are values that drive and sustain the ethos behind the Hare Krishna movement.

Temple of Unity

The construction of the Temple of Unity stands as a powerful symbol of this aspiration for unity in diversity.

Earlier this year, during my official visit to India, I had the privilege of visiting a Gurukul at the sacred Tirumala Venkateswara Temple, where I interacted with young students immersed in the study of the Vedas and other sacred scriptures.

It was a deeply enriching experience to witness how ancient wisdom continues to be transmitted from one generation to the next through education, discipline and service.

That visit reinforced my conviction that spiritual institutions do far more than preserve religious traditions. They nurture character, cultivate respect for others, and instil values that enable societies to remain united despite their diversity.

The Temple of Unity embodies that same vision, offering not merely a place of worship, but a living space where future generations can continue to learn, reflect and strengthen the bonds that unite our nation.

It will also be a living reminder of the heroic life of sacrifice, devotion and resilience of Shrila Prabhupad in guiding devotees of Lord Krishna in their spiritual journey and quest.

Lessons for Today's World

We live in an era of extraordinary technological advancement. Artificial intelligence is transforming the way we work.

Digital platforms have revolutionised communication. Scientific progress continues at an unprecedented pace.

Yet amidst these remarkable achievements, humanity continues to confront loneliness, anxiety, conflict, crime and violence, and growing divisions.

This reminds us that technological or material progress alone cannot answer every human need.

As Srila Prabhupada often demonstrated through both his teachings and his example, true progress also requires the cultivation of character.

- Knowledge must be accompanied by wisdom.
- Freedom must be guided by responsibility.
- Prosperity must be balanced by compassion.

These are lessons that remain timeless.

Commemorating History

Today's launch of this Special Day Cover carries significance beyond philately. Postage stamps and commemorative covers become part of a nation's historical record.

They preserve collective memory.

They remind future generations of the individuals and events that have shaped our national journey.

This commemorative issue therefore honours not only the remarkable achievements of ISKCON over six decades, but also the lasting contribution of Srila Prabhupada to the spiritual and cultural life of Mauritius.

It ensures that this important chapter of our history continues to inspire generations to come.

Conclusion

As we celebrate these anniversaries, let us also renew our commitment to the values that have enabled Mauritius to flourish as a peaceful and harmonious nation.

May we continue to choose understanding over misunderstanding, dialogue over division, and service over self-interest.

Allow me to conclude with an ancient Sanskrit ideal that has inspired humanity for centuries:

Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam - The world is one.

This timeless philosophy reminds us that despite our different languages, cultures and beliefs, we are bound together by our shared humanity and our common responsibility to care for one another.

It is a principle that reflects the very spirit of Mauritius: a nation where diversity is not merely tolerated but celebrated, and where unity remains our greatest strength.

As ISKCON commemorates sixty years of spiritual service worldwide and fifty years since the historic visit of His Divine Grace Srila Prabhupada to our shores, may these milestones inspire us all to continue building a society founded on compassion, mutual respect and peace.

I once again congratulate ISKCON Mauritius on these significant anniversaries and wish the organisation every success in its continued mission of promoting spiritual wisdom, harmony and service to humanity.

Hare Krishna.

Thank you.