



SPEECH

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

EVENT: CELEBRATION OF EID MILAD-UN-NABI

VENUE: STATE HOUSE, LE REDUIT

DATE: 26 AUGUST 2026

TIME: 15:00 HOURS

His Excellency Mr. Robert Hungley, Vice President of the Republic and Mrs. Hungley;

The Honourable Mrs. Arianne Navarre-Marie, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Gender Equality and Family Welfare,

The Honourable Mrs. Shireen Aumeeruddy-Cziffra, Speaker of the National Assembly,

Honourable Ministers, Junior Ministers,

The Former Vice President of the Republic, Mr. Raouf Bundhun,

Honourable Members of the National Assembly,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

As Salamu Alaykum. Good afternoon.

Thank you for having responded to our invitation.

I extend a special welcome to His Eminence Dr Sayyid Mohamed El Hassani from the Kingdom of Morocco, General-Secretary of the Cherifian Council (Arab Maghreb).

Yesterday, I had the opportunity to participate in the national celebration of Eid Milad-un-Nabi at the Aleemiah College, and thereafter, at the Sunni Mosque in Mare d'Albert.

It is therefore with great pleasure, and in this continuing spirit of celebration and reflection, that I, together with my wife, Brinda, welcome you today to the State House.

Since assuming Office in December 2024, I have expressed my wish to be a people's President - a President of proximity.

A key Presidential responsibility, as you may be aware, is to promote and consolidate our national unity, while respecting our diversity.

In that spirit, I have sought to make the State House a space of encounter - where our communities, institutions, people from all walks of life, our faiths and traditions, and our shared national aspirations can meet.

It is therefore fitting that Eid Milad-un-Nabi, like other important religious festivities, finds its place not only within the corners of the State House, but also within the heart of the Presidency.

The State House is not simply a symbol of constitutional authority; it also embodies the ethos of our people's quest to live together – As One People, As One Nation.

I do not know of many countries where a President can share in the celebrations and traditions of so many communities.

This is a unique and defining expression of who we are as Mauritians.

Universal Message and Values

We have gathered to remember and celebrate the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), who has left an indelible footprint on the history of humanity at large.

Much has already been said about his life and legacy.

I would like to share two reflections that I believe speak particularly strongly to our times and to our Mauritian experience, at a time where our society is going through extremely challenging times.

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) himself was born at a time when society was undergoing profound challenges and transformation.

But he faced the realities of his time with courage, patience and resilience, and through his example, brought a lasting change rooted in compassion, justice and dignity.

This is precisely why we must be inspired by his life and teachings.

The first reflection I want to share concerns the universal dimension of his message.

In his Farewell Sermon, the Prophet spoke of the sanctity of human life, justice, human dignity and equality of all people.

His well-known reminder that “no Arab is superior to a non-Arab, nor one person over another on the basis of colour or origin, except through righteousness and good conduct”, offers a reflection on the equal worth of every human being.

It is a message that transcends faiths and traditions, through values that we all recognise: dignity, compassion, justice, knowledge, responsibility and service to others.

In a world that often struggles with division, the real test of these values lies not only in how we treat those who are close to us, but also in how we treat those who are different from us and whom we may find difficult to understand.

Education - Iqra and Holistic Learning

The second reflection is education.

The first word of the Qur'an revealed to the Prophet was “Iqra” - meaning “Read”, a value that resonates naturally with our own national endeavour in education.

The Prophet's encouragement to seek knowledge, for both men and women, reflects this enduring spirit of curiosity and learning.

Indeed, his well-known saying of ‘seeking knowledge from the cradle to the grave’ emphasizes that learning is a lifelong journey.

This must invite us to collectively reflect on what education should mean today.

More than academic achievement - to nurture the mind, character, values and sense of responsibility of the whole person.

And in an age of abundant information, social media and artificial intelligence, this becomes even more important.

Not only from the position of the high office I hold, but also from my lifelong experience as an educator, I remain convinced that education is the most powerful force for shaping individuals and society.

This must therefore be our shared endeavour - for families, schools, communities and all of us in positions of responsibility.

Interculturalism

This is also where our Mauritian experience becomes particularly meaningful.

We have long shown that religious diversity and national unity can co-exist.

But I believe we must aspire to something deeper: to move from multiculturalism to inter-culturalism.

From simply living alongside one another, to sharing, learning from one another and celebrating what each tradition, culture, language and commemoration brings to our common life.

Our pluralism has given us many identities and traditions. Over generations, these have come together to shape a common identity: Mauritian.

We may have come on different ships, but today, we are all on the same boat.

This is one of our greatest strengths.

And at a time when societies elsewhere are increasingly divided along lines of identity, faith and belonging, Mauritius has something

important to share in line with Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)'s teachings:

“Difference need not become division.”

Faith and Governance

Distinguished Guests,

At the International Council Meeting of Religions for Peace in June, I underscored my conviction that faith and governance are not adversaries, but complementary partners in building a more just, compassionate and cohesive society.

I reiterate that conviction today.

The challenges before us - drugs, gender-based violence, pressures on families and young people, and the erosion of trust - cannot be addressed by any one institution alone.

They require a collective awakening of our moral conscience.

These are not only questions of policy but of values, human relationships and the kind of society we wish to leave to the next generation.

Our task is therefore not simply to act within our respective spheres, but to bring these responsibilities together for the common good.

Presidential Responsibility

As President of the Republic, nation-building remains central to my responsibility.

And as Head of State and Guardian of the Constitution, I am entrusted with upholding the principles that bind us together - our democratic institutions, fundamental rights, equality and the dignity of every citizen.

Mauritius has shown that our differences can coexist with a strong sense of belonging.

We have promoted multiculturalism in a spirit of unity.

Let us now go one step further and share our cultures with our neighbours and promote the spirit of interculturalism.

On this special occasion, let us remind ourselves that we are not united because we are the same.

We are united because, despite our differences, we recognise one another as part of the same national community.

Closing Remarks

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today's gathering gives us an opportunity not only to remember the life and teachings of Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, but also to reflect on the values we must uphold, every moment, every day, in our own lives and society.

Let us therefore strengthen our unity, deepen our intercultural understanding, and make our diversity a source of enrichment and pride- **As One People, As One Nation.**

In closing, allow me to thank all those who have contributed to making this gathering possible.

I extend my warmest wishes to the Muslim community and to all Mauritians.

Eid Milad-Un-Nabi Mubarak. Thank you for your attention.