



SPEECH

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

**EVENT: Prize-Giving Ceremony - MIE Mathematics Video
Competition 2026**

VENUE: Mauritius Institute of Education (MIE) -Rduit

DATE: 26 August 2026

TIME: 10:00 hours

The Chairperson of the Mauritius Institute of Education (MIE), Mr. Soondrees Sawmynaden,

The Director of MIE, Mrs. Mila Devi Seewruttun-Dosieah,

Members of the Council of the MIE;

Members of the Mathematics Education Department,

Educators,

Prize winners and participating students,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Good morning and thank you for your kind invitation.

Thank you also for the opportunity to make an address on the occasion of the Prize-Giving Ceremony of the **Mathematics Video Competition 2026**, organized by the Mauritius Institute of Education (MIE).

I would like, at the outset, to congratulate the Mauritius Institute of Education, and particularly its Mathematics Education Department, for organising this innovative initiative.

Since its launch in 2023, this competition has provided our young people with an opportunity to discover mathematics in a way that goes beyond textbooks, formulas and examinations - a way that makes the subject come alive and engaging.

This year's theme, **“Celebrating Mathematics through History and Culture,”** is particularly meaningful.

Mathematics and the Competition

Mathematics is defined as the study of numbers, shapes, patterns and logical reasoning.

It has often been perceived as a subject of numbers, calculations and abstract concepts.

But mathematics is much more than that. It is one of humanity's oldest forms of knowledge. It has been developed, refined and transmitted by different civilisations across centuries.

When we study mathematics, we are also studying the ingenuity of human beings- our ability to solve problems, to measure, to build, and to dream.

The geometry of ancient architecture, the mathematical principles behind navigation, the measurement of time, patterns in traditional art, systems of trade and commerce, astronomy, engineering and even elements of our cultural heritage all demonstrate that mathematics has always been part of human civilization and continue to shape every aspect of our daily lives.

The theme of this competition therefore reminds us that mathematics does **not** belong to one country, one culture or one period of history.

It is a universal language, enriched by the contributions of many societies and civilizations across the globe.

Mathematics and Technology

I am particularly pleased that our students have been encouraged to explore this dimension through video storytelling, a medium that is both engaging and accessible to young minds.

This is important because education in the 21st century cannot be confined to the transmission of information.

Our young people must also learn to **question, investigate, create, communicate and collaborate - skills that are essential for success in a rapidly changing world.**

In preparing their videos, these students have had to do much more than solve mathematical problems.

They have had to research, select information, develop ideas, explain concepts, work as a team and use digital tools creatively to produce something original and impactful.

These are precisely the skills that our education system must nurture.

The competition also demonstrates how technology can be used not merely as a tool for entertainment, but as a powerful instrument for learning and expression.

A well-made educational video can make a complex mathematical concept accessible, interesting and memorable and even inspire a lifelong love for the subject.

I therefore congratulate not only the students who are receiving prizes today, but all the students and teams who participated with enthusiasm **and dedication**

To those who have won, I say: **well done. Your achievement deserves to be celebrated and serves as an inspiration to others.**

But to those who did not receive a prize, I would say: **do not consider yourselves losers.** The knowledge you gained, the skills you developed,

the teamwork you experienced and the confidence you acquired are achievements in themselves and **these will serve you far beyond any classroom or competition.**

Tribute to Teachers and Educators

And I would like to pay special tribute to the **teachers and educators** who guided the students throughout this journey.

Behind every successful student there is often a teacher who encouraged a question, inspired an idea, corrected a mistake or simply told a young person, “You can do it.” That encouragement can change life.

The role of the teacher is therefore not simply to impart knowledge. It is to ignite curiosity and develop the confidence to learn and to instil a sense of wonder that lasts a lifetime.

This is especially important in mathematics.

We must encourage our children to see mathematics not as a subject to be feared, but as a subject that enables us to understand the world around us from the patterns in nature to the algorithms that power our digital lives.

On Thursday 20th August, I attended an exhibition on slavery at the Nelson Mandela Centre for African Culture Trust Fund, where an artist, Mr. Emmanuel D’Offay from La Réunion, using Art and Digital Technology, presented an exhibition entitled “Forgotten Saints” which gave a very different perspective of slavery and slaves, from what has been presented in traditional history books.

Today, Artificial intelligence, data science, engineering, architecture, economics, climate science and medicine are showing the way and

mathematics is at the heart of many of the technologies and professions that will shape our future and solve the great challenges of our time.

Digital Transformation

As Mauritius advances its digital transformation and seeks to prepare its young people for a rapidly changing world, strengthening mathematical literacy is therefore not simply an educational objective. It is a national imperative that demands collective effort.

At the same time, we must ensure that our young people remain connected to our history and cultural heritage, for it is this heritage that gives us our identity, our sense of belonging and the foundational groundwork of our civilisation.

The theme of this year's competition brings these two objectives together beautifully. It tells our students that **innovation and heritage are not opposites**; they are complementary just like computers and classics.

We can use modern digital technologies to rediscover and preserve knowledge from the past and build upon it for the future.

Mauritius itself is a wonderful laboratory for such exploration - a place where diverse traditions meet and create something unique.

Our history is the story of different peoples, cultures and traditions coming together. There are mathematical ideas to be found in our architecture, traditional crafts, navigation, agriculture, trade, music, patterns and many other aspects of our shared heritage.

From the geometric designs in our colonial buildings to the rhythmic patterns in our sega music, mathematics is woven into the fabric of our culture.

I would encourage our students to continue asking questions about the world around them:

Why is something designed in a particular way? How was it measured? How did people calculate before modern technology? What mathematical knowledge did previous generations possess, and how can we learn from it?

Every such question can become the beginning of an exciting learning journey - one that connects the past with the present and opens doors to the future.

MIE's Role

I also wish to commend the Mauritius Institute of Education for its continuing role in promoting innovative approaches to teaching and learning.

As the institution responsible for the education and professional development of our teachers, the MIE has an important role to play in ensuring that our education system keeps pace with the needs of our society and prepares our children for a world we can only imagine.

Competitions such as this one demonstrate that learning can be **creative, collaborative, interdisciplinary and enjoyable and when students are engaged, they achieve remarkable things.**

To our young participants, I would like to leave you with one simple message: **Do not be afraid of mathematics. Be curious about it.**

Ask questions. Make mistakes. Try again. Look for mathematics in the world around you. And most importantly, never lose the curiosity that led

you to participate in this competition and never stop believing in your own potential.

You are the generation that will shape the Mauritius of tomorrow.

Your creativity, your digital skills, your ability to think critically and your willingness to work together will be among our country's greatest assets and we have every confidence in your ability to lead us forward.

Closing Remarks

As we celebrate the achievements of our students today, let us therefore also celebrate the teachers who inspired them, the parents and schools who supported them, and the Mauritius Institute of Education for creating this platform for innovation and excellence.

I would like here to insist that the project must be sustained because too often interesting initiatives have had a short shelf life.

May this initiative continue to grow from strength to strength and inspire many more young Mauritians to discover the beauty of mathematics, appreciate its place in our history and culture, and use it creatively to build the future we all aspire to.

I once again congratulate all the participants, the prize winners, the teachers and the organisers of the Mathematics Video Competition 2026.

I wish all our students every success in their future studies and endeavours, and I look forward to seeing the wonderful contributions you will make to our nation and the world.

Thank you for your attention.