

**PASSING OUT PARADE
TRAINEE POLICE CONSTABLES**

GYMKHANA SPORTS COMPLEX

VACOAS

Saturday 17 December 2016

10.30 HRS

SPEECH

BY

The Rt Hon Sir Anerood Jugnauth GCSK, KCMG, QC

PRIME MINISTER

**The Secretary to Cabinet & Head of the Civil
Service,**

The Secretary for Home Affairs,

Members of the Diplomatic Corps,

The Commissioner of Police,

**The Mayor of Vacoas/Phoenix,
Members of the Police Force,
Trainee Police Constables and their family
members,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen**

I am greatly privileged to associate myself with the Passing Out parade of 546 Trainee Police Constables, 457 male Officers and 89 female Officers, who were enlisted in July this year, and have now completed the basic foundation training for new recruits.

I am pleased to note that amongst the 546 Trainee Police Constables, 26 are from Rodrigues island and 1 from Agalega.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to seize this opportunity to congratulate the new Police Constables for, firstly, embracing this noble profession and secondly, having successfully completed the intensive 22-week training programme. Their smart turn-out today demonstrates that they have transcended the rigidities of training and are now ready to serve our motherland with honour, dedication and pride.

I am aware that those 22 weeks spent during the training period were very hard for our young Trainees Constables, the more so as they were away from their close relatives. However, thanks to the support of the senior Police Officers and trainers, and of course, of their respective families, as well as their own drive and determination, they have been able to overcome all hurdles on their way and achieve the goals by successfully completing the training. The training acquired, be it in the field of police duties, paramilitary or marine duties, must have molded them into professional officers ready to deliver service excellence to the community.

I have been informed by the Commissioner of Police that over and above the normal training Trainee Police Constables have also had the opportunity to participate in a number of extra- curricular activities and civic duties such as visits to orphanages, convents and ashrams, the Mauritius Prison Service and hospitals. The aim underpinning such laudable activities was to inculcate in them a culture of service and care towards the needy and the downtrodden of the society.

They were also engaged in “Operation Field Hour”, where, under the guidance of trainers, they have been exposed to real policing situations such as patrolling and enforcing adherence to road safety measures. This must have been a golden opportunity for them to understand and acquire problem solving techniques for handling difficult and unexpected situations on the road.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As Prime Minister and Minister responsible for Defence and Home Affairs, it is one of my most important responsibilities to ensure that all citizens of this country live in a safe and secure environment.

I must say that during the past two years, my Government has constantly demonstrated its determination and commitment to the preservation of law and order in the country.

It is no secret that our external environment is fast changing and characterised by an ever-growing confluence of world- scale challenges.

I have in mind transnational organised crimes, money laundering, drug trafficking and terrorism, amongst others. These threats must be addressed in a proactive manner. This is why we are investing heavily into the Mauritius Police Force so as to ensure that it is properly equipped and have access to modern and state-of-the-art technology to effectively deal with these types of emerging challenges with a view to ensuring the required level of safety and security in the country.

During the past two years, the budget allocated to the Police has increased by 10%, from Rs 7.9 billion in financial year 2015/2016 to Rs 8.9 billion in financial year 2016/2017.

Our objective is to modernise the Mauritius Police Force and transform it into a service driven organisation with customer care and quality service being top priorities.

It is in this perspective that state-of-the-art equipment such as Offshore Patrol Vessels, Fast Interceptor boats, vehicles and motorcycles and other technological tools, have been procured to enable Police Officers to discharge their duties and responsibilities more efficiently and effectively.

The commissioning, last week only, of the fast patrol vessel CGS Victory and of two Chetak helicopters donated by the Government of India, further demonstrates our commitment to ensuring that the Police Force is adequately equipped to meet up emerging security challenges.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I firmly believe in the continuous professional development and capacity building of our Officers for providing quality service to our citizens, and in this respect, I am constantly encouraging Police Officers to avail themselves of opportunities for training and capacity building offered by friendly countries such as India, China, the United States, France, Egypt and Russia, among others.

I seize this opportunity to convey my deepest gratitude to these countries and express the wish that the Mauritius Police Force continues to benefit from such training possibilities.

I also wish to highlight that funds have already been allocated in the 2016 – 2017 Budget to kick start the Police Academy project. This long awaited Academy will provide Police with all the appropriate infrastructure and related training facilities, so that it becomes a Centre of Excellence in the field of policing in the region.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The introduction, by next year, of the Police and Criminal Evidence legislation, will bring a paradigm shift in the system of criminal justice of Mauritius. It will not only protect the Police from all kinds of baseless allegations but it will equally empower them to perform their duties in a more professional and accountable manner.

At the same time, my Government has fulfilled its promise of allowing Police Officers to unionize.

Only two weeks back, the Police (Membership of Trade Union) Act was passed in the National Assembly. Police Officers now have the right of association and have a platform to voice out their grievances in so far as their welfare and conditions of service are concerned. I seize this opportunity to make an appeal to all Police Officers so that they make use of this platform in a responsible manner.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear New Recruits,

I cannot delve into the issue of law and order without referring to the sensitive issue of drugs in our country. I am well aware that our younger generation is an easy prey of drug dealers and traffickers, and this is causing much harm to many families and the society at large. While I am encouraging all stakeholders concerned to step up actions to counter the drugs problem, I have also set up the Commission of Enquiry on drugs to look into the whole issue.

This again demonstrates my Government's strong resolve to fight drug trafficking. I reiterate my pledge that I shall not hesitate a single moment to take firm and bold measures to fight the drug scourge.

It is unfortunate and very sad to note that lately, some Police Officers have been involved in drug-related cases.

Regrettably the acts committed by these Officers have tarnished the reputation of the Police Force, undermined the good work carried out by other Officers and eroded some way the trust and confidence which the Mauritian population has in the Police.

I have, on several occasions, stated that no black sheep will be tolerated be it in the Police Force or in the Public Service in general.

I again seize this opportunity to send a strong signal to all those who would have been tempted by easy money and got attracted in illegal or corrupt practices: none of you will get away with such acts and you will have to face the full consequences thereof within the parameters of our law.

By the same occasion, I will press upon the Commissioner of Police to come up in his reform agenda, with other ways for promoting ethical behaviour, professionalism and principles of integrity within the Force.

It is of paramount importance that Mauritian people continue to have confidence and trust in the Police if they are to be partners in Government's shared mission of fighting crime.

Dear Trainee Constables,

I shall now address myself directly to you. Let me immediately remind you of the oath of allegiance that you took on 25 November 2016 to assume your duties and responsibilities without fear or favour, affection or ill-will.

This oath is not a mere recitation of words, but it is imbibed with values, virtues and principles which must constantly guide you in the course of your whole career in the Police Force. You must remain committed to this oath and be always inspired by it in all your actions as a Police Officer.

You have been appointed Trainee Police Constables on the basis of a stringent selection exercise conducted by the Disciplined Forces Service Commission and we are investing heavily for your training so that you can assume your new responsibilities with full confidence.

As the Prime Minister of this country, my expectations of you are high; the Government and the People of Mauritius have high expectations from you as well. I have no doubt that the Commissioner of Police and his management teams have same expectations from you. Similarly, your parents and family members should be looking forward with pride that you all become able, dedicated and seasoned Police Officers.

Your duties and responsibilities, as from today, are to protect the people of our country and their properties, and ensure law and order.

Very soon our country will witness the start of major projects aimed at transforming the socio-economic landscape of Mauritius. For this to happen, it is important for investors and other stakeholders to have a safe environment for doing business in our country. As young Police Officers who are the future of this country, you will have a crucial role to play in ensuring that the desired level of security prevails at all times.

I am conscious that the task ahead for you will not be all too easy. Policing, by its very nature, confers significant responsibilities on your shoulders, but you have to exercise those powers with extreme caution and professionalism, diligently and ethically, within the confines of the law. I urge you to aim at highest standards of excellence in the discharge of your daily duties, and to embrace and uphold principles of honesty, loyalty, hard work and above all, **integrity**. Each one of you should prove yourself perfectly worthy of wearing the police uniform.

The motto that you should always bear in mind is the one which is proudly displayed on the ensign of the Mauritius Police Force, that is, “Loyally we serve”. You must always aim at serving the country with pride and honour.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Before I conclude, allow me, to quote late Nelson Mandela who said in one of his speeches, I quote:-

“A bright future beckons. The onus is on us, through hard work, honesty and integrity, to reach for the stars.”

End of quote.

I hope that these words of Nelson Mandela will inspire you in your career and in your daily life.

On this note, I congratulate all of you for forming part of this beautiful parade. I wish you the best of luck for a successful career in the Mauritius Police Force.

May God bless you all and the Mauritius Police Force.

I thank you for your kind attention.

