

Institution of Engineers Mauritius

Celebrating 69th anniversary of IEM

Engineers Day - Annual Dinner, 13th September 2017

Speech by H.E Barlen Vyapoory, Vice-President of Republic of Mauritius

President of the Institution of Engineers Mauritius, Mr. Raj Prayag

British High Commissioner Mr. Keith Allan

Distinguished Engineers

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am very pleased to be with you tonight to celebrate the 69th anniversary of your association – the Institute of Engineers in Mauritius. The road travelled by the Institution of Engineers Mauritius from its creation as the Association of Professional Engineers of Mauritius in 1948 and its remarkable achievements in laying the foundation for regulating the engineering profession is indeed remarkable and praiseworthy.

In 1965 IEM sponsored the Bill that led to the enactment of the Council of Registered Professional Engineers Act which defines the practice of engineering as "the advising on, the reporting on, the designing of or the approval of" engineering designs and works.

IEM has continuously been promoting excellence in the practice of Engineering at National level through its various activities, its newsletters, its conferences, talks and various high level Continuous Professional Development (CPD) courses as well as of course, its yearly journals.

I am very pleased to learn that within one year since I was here at this time last year, IEM has taken another historical major step towards taking the Engineering Profession to yet a higher level of excellence.

IEM's initiative to create the **National Engineering Accreditation Board** as a potential member of the Washington Accord needs to be recognised. Leading the way so that the Universities in Mauritius may run accredited Engineering Degree courses will take Mauritius another step nearer to becoming an Educational Hub of Excellence in the Region.

This achievement will make Engineers graduating from Mauritian Universities at par with accredited degrees awarded by the very best universities in Europe, America, Asia, Australia and South Africa among others.

Upon becoming a member of the Washington Accord, Mauritius will be the second Country in Africa, after South Africa, to be a member of the Washington Accord and to be able to carry out accreditation of Engineering Degrees run by African Universities.

I am glad to learn that IEM had competed with some 40 countries for a 40,000 pounds sterling grant from the Royal Academy of Engineering of UK and was one of the fourteen institutions selected.

I am also very happy to learn that IEM had most successfully completed the Africa Catalyst Project and has made great stride in capacity building in the field of accreditation. IEM has initiated some 25 professionals for this, and one of them has recently participated in the accreditation of Engineering Courses at the University

of Pretoria as part of the Engineering Council of South Africa. This is an excellent success story in South – South collaboration.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The impact of producing accredited engineering degrees will be multi- pronged. Degree holders will become internationally recognized, engineers can seek employment at international level. International Engineering Consultancy Firms will recruit Mauritian Engineers. All this represent a great advantage to them as Mauritius provides preferential access to the African Continent through our membership of SADC and COMESA.

International students will come to study engineering in Mauritius and this can only be beneficial for Mauritius, as it portrays Mauritius as a place of renown for education at tertiary level.

It is also very comforting to see that the Engineering Profession is forward looking and proactive to the present and future challenges.

This brings me nicely to speak about the theme of this Year's IEM's Annual Journal which is **DRIVING FOR CHANGE**.

Last year, I was fascinated with the lead that the Institution of Engineers had taken in ushering the debate for a **Mauritius of 2050**.

The theme of **Driving For Change** for this year's Journal is a natural sequence to last year's theme.

I have listened very carefully to the speech of the president of IEM and I have also read through some of the papers in your journal to be launched and I am pleased and reassured that we have in this Country, Engineers who are also leaders of innovation and change, fully aware of the future Challenges. It is comforting to see that the leaders of tomorrow are here today to show the way forward.

A number of challenges are of immediate concern to engineers. For the years ahead, our country will require innovative modes of land transport which are safe, fast and cost effective. Mauritius will need security for water supply as Climate Change will impact the weather with resulting droughts and floods. Our food security will also be in jeopardy. New modes of food production will be needed using controlled environment and less water for irrigation. Mauritius also needs security for energy production and distribution. What will be the sources of future energy? Will energy be produced from sea waves, wind farms at sea?

We should recognize that successful efforts are being made to harness the sun's energy through photo-voltaic cells.

I would urge you all to inspire yourselves by reading the various papers in this year's IEM journal.

In conclusion let me thank you all for inviting me to join in the celebration of the 69th anniversary of your Association and to thank you and congratulate you for the valuable service that you bring to the nation.

THANK YOU