

Speech of Honourable Deepak Balgobin Minister of Information Technology, Communication and Innovation

Signing of Memorandum of Understand
Cooperation on the Development of a Joint
Satellite between the MRIC and ISRO in the
presence of the Hon. Shri V. Muraleedharan,
Minister of State for External Affairs & Minister
of State for Parliamentary Affairs, Republic of
India

Wednesday, 01 November 2023 at 15.15 hrs
at the Hennessy Park Hotel, Ebene

- **Honourable Shri Muraleedharan, Minister of State for External Affairs & Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs, Republic of India and Special Envoy of the Honourable Prime Minister of India,**
- **Honourable Members of the Parliament,**
- **Her Excellency, Mrs. Nandini Singla, Indian High Commissioner in Mauritius**
- **Excellencies, Ambassadors and Dignitaries,**
- **Mrs Valere-Bolli, Permanent Secretary of my Ministry,**
- **Dr Kaviraj Sukon, Chairperson of the MRIC**
- **Professor Theesan Bahorun, Executive Director pf the MRIC**
- **Heads of Institutions**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen**

Namasté

It is a privilege and honour for me to address you today on this special occasion of the signature of a Memorandum of Understanding with one of the World's most prestigious Space organisation, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).

This will no doubt be viewed as a major landmark for the Mauritius Space Adventure.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On this luminous day, as the skies above, mirror our boundless aspirations, we gather to celebrate a momentous milestone in the partnership between our enchanting island of Mauritius and the vibrant nation of India – Mera Bharat Mahaan.

As Mauritius' Minister of Information Technology, Communication and Innovation, my heart swells with pride and my spirit resonates with gratitude.

Today's signing of this MoU heralds India's magnanimous gift of a satellite to Mauritius - a symbol of faith, a beacon of progress, a celestial bridge connecting our destinies.

It is clear that India does not only consider Mauritius as Chota Bharat but keeps Mauritius close to its heart.

There are numerous evidences of this sacred bond including the invitation of Mauritius to attend the G-20 meeting and the present MoU that we are signing today.

I extend my deepest appreciation to the Government of India, under the visionary leadership of Honourable Shri Narendra Modi Ji, for this unparalleled gesture.

The exceptional welcome that our Prime Minister, Honourable Pravind Jugnauth and all the members of the Mauritian and other delegations received during the G-20 meetings reflects the profound significance of the phrase “Atithi devo bhava”.

You have seen in us potential, and in you, we have found steadfast companionship.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I should highlight that India and Mauritius have been collaborating in space-related activities for a little more than 3 decades through the ISRO’s **Telemetry, Tracking and Command** (TTC) called **ISTRAC** located in Bigara in Mauritius:

Indeed, on December 26, 1986, when the late Sir Anerood Jugnauth, the father of our present Prime Minister, Mauritius and India signed an Agreement which resulted in the establishment of **ISTRAC** Mauritius.

The **Telemetry, Tracking and Telecommand Station** used for Satellites and Launch Vehicles and for cooperation in the field of Space Research, Science and Applications.

Over the years, through ISTRAC Mauritius, there has been several activities organised, including, capacity building: **Remote Sensing and Earth Observation** from India's Earth observation satellites, such as the **IRS (Indian Remote Sensing)** and **Cartosat series**.

These satellites provide valuable data for applications like agriculture, disaster management, and environmental monitoring.

Both countries have collaborated within the framework of regional organizations like the **Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)** to promote the peaceful use of outer space for the development of the Indian Ocean region.

These collaborations demonstrate India's commitment to assisting Mauritius in harnessing the benefits of space technology.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This satellite is not merely a marvel of technology; It is the dawn of new opportunities.

It will weave the fabric of our future, touching every Mauritian life.

Through enhanced connectivity, precise weather forecasting, robust agricultural support, and vigilant disaster management, it shall open doors and illuminate pathways and open a new era of use of satellite data for development.

India, a paragon of technological prowess and a trailblazer in space innovation, has reached out to us with open arms.

Your belief in our shared values and mutual aspirations is like a melodious symphony that echoes across our lands and seas.

The highly successful Chandrayaan-3 mission has made us all proud.

It was even more satisfying to note that third time in succession that ISRO has successfully inserted its spacecraft into the lunar orbit, apart from doing so into the Martian orbit.

We are extremely happy to note that successful launch of the Aditya-L1 spacecraft on 2nd September 2023 which is the first Indian space-based observatory to study the Sun from a halo orbit around first Sun-Earth Lagrange point.

This collaboration transcends mere machinery.

It's a harmonious confluence of minds and dreams, connecting people, fostering education, igniting hope, and propelling Mauritius on a celestial journey toward sustainable growth.

As the satellite soars, it sings a song of unity.

It's a testament to what we can achieve together, a reminder that our bonds are not earthly but cosmic, woven into the eternal tapestry of the universe.

The support we have received today has fuelled our determination, and trust me, your belief in us nourishes our dreams.

Together, we reach beyond the stars; together, we capture the future.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The importance of satellite technology resonates with a melody that harmonizes our development.

It is the rhythm of connectivity, the symphony of progress, the dance of innovation.

In an era where knowledge flows like rivers, our satellite ensures that no part of our nation remains untouched by the gentle waves of information.

It is :

- a lifeline in disasters,
- a guide in agriculture,
- a healer in remote places,
- a sentinel for our environment,
- a mentor for our children,
- a catalyst for our economy,
- and a guardian of our security.

This satellite is a luminous star in our constellation of dreams.

It's not just machinery; it is a verse in the ballad of our progress, a chapter in the epic of our aspirations.

With India by our side, our journey is poetic, our path promising.

Our hearts beat in unison, our eyes fixed on the horizon, filled with hope and determination.

My soul bows in gratitude.

May our partnership blossom like an eternal spring.

And may our friendship resonate like an unbreakable melody.

Thank you.

Dhanyavaad.