

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

**Convocation Ceremony of the Open  
University of Mauritius**

**Mahatma Gandhi Institute Auditorium  
Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2023 at  
14.30pm**

- **Dr Om Nath Varma, Chairman of the Board of the Open University of Mauritius,**
- **Members of the Board of the Open University of Mauritius,**
- **Dr Kaviraj Sukon, Director-General of the Open University of Mauritius,**
- **Chairpersons and Directors,**
- **Heads of Departments,**
- **Academic and non-academic staff of the Open University of Mauritius,**
- **Dear Graduands, Families and Friends,**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**Good afternoon to you all.**

It is with great pride and pleasure that I stand before you today as we celebrate the culmination of your hard work and dedication.

I extend my heartfelt congratulations to each and every one of you who have reached this pivotal moment in your academic journey.

Today marks a significant milestone not only for you but for your respective field as a whole.

Your expertise and knowledge will play a pivotal role in shaping the future of our society.

Today marks the collective accomplishments of students who have shown immense dedication, perseverance, and a thirst for knowledge.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I have been informed, during these six sessions, 1500 students are graduating from the Open University of Mauritius.

It is a good sign that the vast majority of the students are already employed.

As graduates of the Open University of Mauritius, you have had the unique advantage of experiencing education facilitated by technology.

You have learnt within a system that is, in itself, a product of a changing workplace – one that is digital, global, and continuously evolving.

This experience has not only equipped you with knowledge but also with adaptability – a quality that is increasingly becoming the hallmark of professional success.

An increasing number of workplaces are using technological tools and Artificial Intelligence.

In every field, AI is not merely a tool but a collaborator that enhances human capabilities.

It is a canvas where our creativity and innovation paint the art of the possible.

We must recognize that AI and technology are not just disruptors; they are enablers.

They enable us to tackle complex problems, from climate change to healthcare, with more precision and efficiency.

They allow small businesses to thrive by providing them with tools that were once the exclusive domain of large corporations.

They democratize education, much like the Open University has done, making learning accessible to all.

But, as future Leaders and Innovators, you must remember that technology is only as good as the purpose we assign to it.

It is imperative that we steer this powerful force towards creating a more equitable, sustainable, and prosperous world for all.

The flexibility and adaptability that Open University offers to working students is the ability to work and learn at the same time.

In today's rapidly evolving technological and economic landscape, lifelong learning is not just a choice but a necessity.

By enrolling in universities, professionals not only arm themselves against the relentless tide of automation and obsolescence but also unlock doors to career advancement, enhancing their relevance in a competitive marketplace.

This pursuit transcends mere job security, fostering critical thinking, broadening horizons, and fuelling personal growth.

In a world where staying static equates to moving backward, continuous education is the catalyst that ensures both professional longevity and personal fulfilment.

In essence, to thrive in this dynamic era, one must embrace the mantra:

***"Never stop learning."***

Each one of you, whether receiving a diploma, an undergraduate, postgraduate, or Ph.D. degree, has demonstrated a level of commitment that is truly commendable.

**Ladies and Gentlemen and dear Graduates,**

The Government, in collaboration with educational institutions and the Private Sector, is committed to fostering a culture where innovation thrives.

Our vision for Mauritius is to create a smart ecosystem that is conducive to growth and is a hub for Technology and Excellence in the region and beyond.

As you step into the world, I urge you to carry the torch of innovation and knowledge with responsibility.

Use the tools of technology and the insights of AI to carve paths that lead to a future that is not only technologically advanced but is also kind and just.

Moreover, to the undergraduate students, you have successfully laid the foundation for your careers.

As you embark on this new chapter, remember that your determination and resilience have equipped you with the necessary tools to thrive in an ever-evolving landscape.

Embrace the challenges that lie ahead, for they are the stepping stones to your success.

To the postgraduate students, your commitment to advancing your expertise has set you apart as trailblazers in your respective fields.

Your relentless pursuit of knowledge and your unwavering dedication to excellence serve as beacons of inspiration to those who follow in your footsteps.

Your contributions will undoubtedly redefine the boundaries of technological innovation, leaving an indelible mark on the world of ICT.

And to the esteemed Ph.D. students, your remarkable journey of research, innovation, and scholarly inquiry has propelled the boundaries of knowledge.

Through your insightful contributions to academia, you have elevated the standards of research excellence.

Your accomplishments serve as a testament to the power of intellect, perseverance, and the relentless pursuit of truth.

Dear Graduands,

As you step into the world as graduates of the Open University, I urge you to remember the privilege of education.

With it, comes a responsibility to use your knowledge and skills for the betterment of society.

The world faces complex issues, from climate change to technological advancements.

Your education equips you to not only navigate these challenges but also to be active participants in solving them.



I wish you all the best on your journey into the future as you search for opportunities to help you reach your full potential.

May your career ahead be filled with success, fulfilment, and innovation.

I am confident that each and every one of you will achieve great heights and that your contributions will shape a brighter future for all.

**Congratulations once again, to you, your lecturers, your mentors, your families and friends also!**

The future is now in your hands.

I am thrilled to see the incredible advancements you will bring to our world.

**Thank you.**