

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

On the occasion of
Workshop Digital Proficiency Programme

Thursday, 23rd May 2024
Telecom Campus, Ebene

- **Honourable Leela Devi Dookhun-Luchoomun, Vice-Prime minister, Minister of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology,**
- **Mr Doonunjoy Dassaye, Permanent Secretary of my Ministry**
- **Mr Anand Soborrun, Chairperson of the MDPA**
- **Dr Suraj Juddoo, Executive Director of MDPA**
- **Heads of Ministries, Departments & Parastatal Organisations,**
- **Representatives from various associations,**
- **Entrepreneurs,**
- **Dear Students,**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Good Morning to you all.

Today marks a momentous occasion as we come together to launch our new Digital Proficiency Course, a vital initiative aimed at empowering every member of our community with essential digital skills.

In an era where technology permeates every aspect of our lives, it is imperative that we equip ourselves with the knowledge and capabilities to navigate this digital landscape confidently and effectively.

The era of Industry 4.0 has already begun and Government's across the world are adopting new and emerging technologies such as, artificial intelligence, robotics and many advanced tools to improve the productivity and quality.

In the same line, the Government has been steadfast in its efforts to develop a comprehensive framework Artificial Intelligence, recognising the transformative potential of AI across various sectors. This initiative involves extensive collaboration with international experts, local stakeholders, and industry leaders to ensure that the strategy is both innovative and inclusive.

I am proud to announce that the Government's efforts have been recognized internationally. The latest report published by Oxford Insights on "Government AI Readiness Index" placed Mauritius first in Africa and 62nd globally on the list of countries who are most prepared to use Artificial Intelligence.

Our aim is to position the nation as a leader in AI adoption and development in the African continent.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

According to the World Economic Forum, “The fourth industrial revolution will make 75 million jobs obsolete by the year 2022. But also create 133 million new jobs, a net gain of 58 million jobs.”

In a bid to meet the digital challenges and adapt to the digital-led economy with new laws and regulations, the Mauritius Digital Promotion Agency, formerly known the National Computer Board, has been restructured with a new mandate, that is to introduce the culture of Innovation in various spheres of the economy.

Mauritius has made significant strides in establishing its digital ecosystem with the Government welcoming digital transformation and aiming to embed the use of technology in day-to-day life of its citizen.

Government’s support to the ICT sector needs to be frequently re-examined. In the same vein, the Internet and Computing Core Certification (IC3) course towards an innovative and up-to-date digital literacy and proficiency training for the citizens.

Technology is a constantly evolving industry, and some topics covered under the IC3 since 2006, have become. Therefore, the Digital Proficiency Course,

an up-to-date and innovative digital literacy training, has replaced the IC3 course.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The ability to work with and adapt to changing technology is becoming integral to almost all professions. In a rapidly changing job market, educating young people is not sufficient.

The youth need enhanced skills that make them employable and adaptable.

Digital skills, therefore, will be crucial for employability going forward.

Hence, the Digital Proficiency Course, which is a 45 hours duration course, has been crafted with the aim to:

- Empower citizens with latest Digital Skills for social and professional development.
- Enhance Productivity for Workers and Businesses
- Enhance Employability for School Leavers and Jobseekers
- Foster the adoption of e-services, e-commerce, e-banking activities and e-services

In order to harness a Smart and Innovative Culture, it is important to inculcate the essence of ICT fundamentals and essential digital skills for our community.

Five (5) key modules have been carefully designed in the DPC program, namely:

- IT Fundamentals,
- Office Productivity Tools,
- Online essentials,
- Digital Transactions and Security,
- Privacy and Cyber law.

This new digital training programme with e-learning facilities is now accessible at a discounted price of 1,100 rupees per participant.

Those who wish to be certified in Digital Proficiency will also have the possibility to opt for the online or computer-based examination at a subsidized rate of 1,000 rupees per candidate.

In addition, a dedicated pool of freelance ICT trainers will be involved in dispensing this mass ICT training outside the school streams.

Participants will be able to register for the Digital Proficiency Course training by means of an Online Registration System with payment facilities.

The target audience includes students where this programme will be integrated in the curriculum for Grades 7 to 9, working professionals, senior citizens, self-employed and entrepreneurs.

Message for the Senior Citizens

Mesdames et Messieurs,

Mo adresse moi a ban grand dimounes ki la azordi, bane entrepreneurs ek bane dimoune ki p rode travail, sa cour la pou aide zot aprane servi l'informatique ek bane nouveaux technologies.

Zot pou comprend mieux kuma faire bane transaction online, lor internet, en toute securité, surtout bane grand dimounes.

Li pou aide ban entrepreneurs pou servi ek applique l'informatique dans zot travail pou rane zot la vie plus facile.

Informatique pou aide zot gagne pliss le temps pou fer ban lezot activités dans zot business.

Alors, vine suivre sa cours la pou ki sa kpav aide zot, facilite zot la vie tout les zour.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This initiative is more than just a course.

It is Government's commitment to bridging the digital divide and empowering every member of our society, regardless of their age.

For our youth, it is an opportunity to gain the skills necessary to thrive in a digital world, to innovate, and to lead.

For our elders, it is a chance to engage with technology confidently, enhancing their independence and enriching their daily lives.

This course symbolises our dedication to fostering an inclusive digital culture where everyone has the tools to succeed.

I wish to thank the Honourable Vice Prime Minister, Mrs Leela Devi Dookhun-Luchoomun for her support in this initiative.

I thank you all for your presence this morning, for your participation and support.

Let us embark on this transformative journey, united by our shared vision of a digitally proficient society.

Thank you for your attention.