

Independence 2025

Address of Prime Minister Dr Navinchandra Ramgoolam to the nation on 12 March 2025

(The speech has been translated from Creole)

57 years ago, after long struggle, Mauritius got its independence, its freedom. Two things that are most precious in life are health and freedom. On 12 March 1968.

When Mauritius obtained its independence, the country was poor.

Mauritius had no resources except sugar. There was no electricity in several villages. There was no water supply in many localities. The local people had to fetch water from public fountains. There was no structure as we see today. The great majority of the population had no education. There was the problem of overpopulation with a high rate of unemployment and people were living in poverty. Two eminent economists, Nobel prize winners, said that Mauritius was doomed to failure. The country would not survive.

With vision and determination our leaders of the time made great efforts and sacrifice, we have built our country, brick by brick. We have succeeded in developing our country and chart the future. We made progress and challenge the two eminent economists.

Unfortunately, all progress made since independence has been destroyed during the last ten years. Instead of going forward, we have been going backward. A mafia regime had taken hold of the levers of power for the benefit of one family. They have destroyed our economy, distorted the figures to create the impression that the country was moving forward. Our rupee had lost 4.65% of it value. Everything that you consumed had automatically become more expensive.

Public funds had been used to purchase sophisticated equipment to spy on all Mauritians. They did a repression without precedent: arrest people and plant drugs in their houses, they arrested people on false charges and they threw money about, as money politics, money they did not own. They allowed drug barons to do as they pleased. Our Parliament, the temple of democracy, had become the laughing stock of everyone, with a Speaker who acted as a goal-keeper for the Prime Minister to the extent of tricking the draws for parliamentary questions from the Opposition. At international level Mauritius had been named an autocratic country. There was corruption without limit, national unity was in peril.

The mafiosi had taken hold of the government of Mauritius. They were treating it as a personal property. Last year, I posted a message on Facebook for the National Day on 12 March. I told you that it was urgent that every Mauritian should become aware that fundamental change was needed. It was not easy to uproot the mafiosi but the Mauritian people have shown patience. And for the 10 November election, with your pen and your cross you have changed the political scene and send them to the dustbin of history.

The people of Mauritius is truly an admirable people and today thanks to this admirable people, we have got back our freedom. We have obtained another independence on 11 November 2024. It is above all a victory for our freedom, unity and democracy. I renew our congratulations to the Mauritian people who have removed the mortal danger which was in front of them, and taken back their destiny in their own hands.



We have inherited a country in full decomposition. Everything has to be done again. We are still finding the damage caused by the previous regime during the last ten years. Fortunately, we have a competent and visionary team. Me, and my comrade Friend Paul, and friends Richard Duval, Ashok Subron, we are doing what should be done. We are working flat out to put our country on the rails and rebuild it. I know that there some among you who are impatient. They want to see results immediately. I too want to see results immediately. If we consider the extent of the damage done, you will realise that there is no magic wand. You must give time to time. We wish to do what should be done with respect for the law. No superficial dressing-up as the former regime did.

We have to consider the priorities. We have a work time-table for the next three years. We have to do an audit of the situation which the former regime has left to us. We have already done an assessment which is catastrophic and we have already taken the first measures to rectify the situation. Let's give you an example. We have had to reduce the price of petrol and diesel by the maximum in the present context. During the previous regime, in spite of the fact the price of fuel was coming down they increased prices.

We have made the Bank of Mauritius independent. We have stabilised the value of the rupee which was affecting the cost of living. In-

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PM's address

flation has been reduced by 2.6% in January. Recently the Minister of Commerce announced the price of pilchards and medications are going down.

As we announced, we have reintroduced three credits for admission to HSC. No young people will now be abandoned. We have amended the FCC legislations, and have given to the DPP its constitutional rights. We have reinstated rule of law. Now police is operating without taking orders from La Cuisine. Telephone and social network tapping has stopped, without police breaking into your house at night to stop you or to plant narcotics in your house or in your car.

The population is already seeing how the MBC has changed. It has no longer a propaganda objective as before. Viewers receive independent and impartial information. The population sees how Parliament is functioning, as a true temple of democracy. Voting rights have been restored to the citizens so that they may choose their own councillors in the local administration. New electors will be able to register 15 days before the issue of the electoral writ, not as before. Vote counting will be done on the same day to stop boxes being carried away to be kept until the next day. Police and FCC have already begun to carry out investigations without political interference.

As soon as elected, we have had to deal with a catastrophe at Mare Chicose. We have had to take immediate action to save the environment.

Those last ten years have done a lot of harm to our reputation at international level. The previous regime did ignore Africa and yet this is the continent of the future. I made my first overseas trip to Addis Ababa for the African Union summit. I made contact with Presidents and Prime Ministers. We have revoked the deal which the old regime did on the Chagos. We are not going to have any ambiguity regarding our sovereignty over the Chagos. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi did us a great honour in accepting to be the Chief Guest for our 57th anniversary of our independence celebrations in spite of his limited time.

The PM Modi has consolidated the special relations that exist between our two countries, connected by history, culture and also geography. Our two countries share the same ocean. Today, we have signed eight agreements

which will enable us to give a boost to our economy and strengthen our fight against crimes, will help to replace all the damaged water pipes of the CWA, promote our SME, train our police force to be more efficient, provide training to members of the civil service and diplomats, revive our blue economy. SADEQ, an organisation vital to us, had suspended our membership owing to the negligence of the old regime. We have had to correct their mistakes and pay the dues so that we do not lose our place in SADEQ.

Next month, French President Macron will pay us a visit on his way from the African Summit Conference in Madagascar.

It is important that Mauritius to find its place at the international level in order to help us to revive our economy and our development. There is nothing that can replace the personal high-level contact in international relations.

Measures to revive the economy have already begun. In two weeks' time we are going to present to you our new Budget, a precise occasion for a new orientation of our economy. We have to take measures so that Moody's does not scale us down.

With sacrifice, support and perseverance of everyone we can get out of the precipice to which the previous regime has driven us. I am confident that hand in hand, in solidarity, we shall succeed in rebuilding Mauritius. We have a dream team who are working d'arrache pied. I have already established our freedom. Our democracy is functioning. Our unity is essential to succeed.

I have a special thought for the Mauritian diaspora worldwide. We need your expertise. We need your competence to combine with the efforts of the compatriots.

My dear compatriots, I would like before ending, make a commitment to the whole Mauritian population, a promise that approximately every 100 days I will come before the people to explain how we are progressing, how the job is moving forward, what projects we are undertaking. In other words to keep you informed of what government is doing which is a way to tell you that everything will be done in all transparency.

During these celebrations, Veena and myself, we have a special thought for all those are suffering. We wish them courage.

We also wish all Mauritians, all Rodriguans, all Agaleans, all Chagossians, and the Mauritian diaspora a Happy Freedom Celebration.

The Wheel of Fortune



Prime Minister Pravind K. Jugnauth welcoming Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Mauritius on his first State visit to the island in 2017



Eight years later, during his second State visit to Mauritius, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi receiving ousted Prime Minister Pravind K. Jugnauth as a ordinary citizen.

**There is a time for everything under Heaven,
A time to be UP and a time to be Down.**

In the Animal Kingdom

Please Sir, I want some food, Not eaten for days.

In the Animal Kingdom, creatures have been devouring creatures on Planet Earth since their first appearance. In the course of time, the creatures known as human beings left the Jungle but the Jungle never left them.



Picture: Courtesy Banksy Art Gallery
on the Internet.

It is sometimes questionable as to how can any Power sitting in his Heaven up there in the sky and beyond . . . and watch the killings going on in the Animal Kingdom.

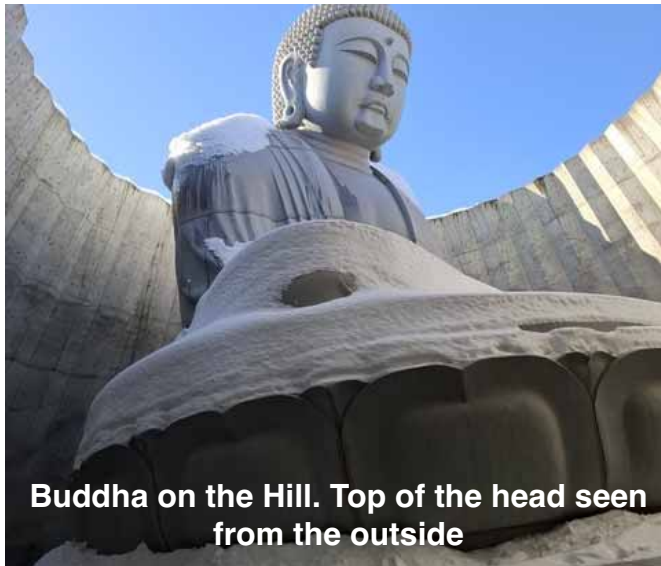
It is understandable when the **sharks** in the oceans devour all other fishes, it is understandable when the **vultures** in the air devour the smaller birds, it is understandable when the **beasts in the forests** devour the weaker animals of that forest. But that there should be a combination of the characteristics of the vultures, of the sharks and of the beasts (and snakes) within the Creator's favourite product known as **Man** is beyond understanding.

Does a Being really exist up there in the sky watching over the goings-on on Planet Earth for the centuries that Man has been here?

An invitation to Hokaido, Japan

The Hill of the (Hidden) Buddha

from Mylene



Buddha on the Hill. Top of the head seen from the outside



Giant Moai Statues line the entrance



Stonehenge in Japan



A place for prayer



Giant Moai Statues line the entrance

Not Easter Island, not Stonehenge but a cemetery in Hokkaido, Japan

As you enter Makomanai Takino cemetery, you are greeted by rows of Moai statues, the largest of which stands at an astonishing 9.5 metres high and weighing 120 tons. As you proceed along this extensive line of 40 colossal Easter Island figures, a view of Stonehenge appears in the distance.

The stone creations at the Hill of the Buddha are truly captivating, but the centrepiece is undoubtedly the magnificent 13.5-metre tall Buddha statue. This remarkable structure designed by the renowned Japanese architect Tadao Ando - who is my favourite building designer - sits gracefully at the heart of the cemetery.

Ando once posed a thought-provoking question. "How does a statue become a more solemn, attractive figure?"

His response is reflected in the way the statue is surrounded by a hill of lavender in the summer and cloaked in snow during the winter months.

What adds to the intrigue of this installation is that from outside of the hill, only the head of the statue is visible, embodying Ando's belief that "our imagination is piqued by what

we cannot see."

Visitors must pass through a 40-metre tunnel that opens into a roofless hall where the Buddha watches over them, framed by a glimpse of sky above.

The Concept: Showing the whole by showing only a part. Why build Moai statues and Stonehenge in a Japanese cemetery?

According to Ando, who hails from Osaka and has no formal architectural education but has designed celebrated buildings globally, "These were built here so that the proof of your and your ancestor's life can be handed down to future generations."

A Japanese saying: Reality cannot compete with Imagination