

**Press launch of National Productivity and Quality Excellence Award (NPQEA
2022/23)**

**Speech of the Minister of Industrial Development, SMEs and Cooperatives, Hon.
Soomilduth Bholah**

NPCC – 01 December 2022

**Mr. Sujoye Busgeet, Chairman of the NPCC,
Mr. Ashit Gungah, the Executive Director of the NPCC,
NPCC Council Members,
Members of the press,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,
Good morning!**

I am delighted to be here today for the press launch of the National Productivity and Quality Excellence Award (NPQEA).

This Award comes at a very opportune time as companies are now evolving in a highly competitive environment with the long lasting impact of COVID-19 and geopolitical tensions. There is a change in the business landscape. Enterprises are continuously searching for new effective approaches to enhancing their management capabilities so as to become more competitive and resilient.

With more than 50 years of industrialisation, the manufacturing industry is a major growth engine for Mauritius with a GDP contribution of 13.3% in 2021. This industry has played an instrumental role in the economic diversification and transformation of Mauritius from a monocrop to a broad-based and

forward-looking economy. Today, Mauritius has consolidated its reputation as a high quality and reliable supplier through a successful combination of trade, investment, and industrialization strategies.

Our economic development strategy focuses on growth through innovation. It's through innovation that we will improve our productivity performance and achieve stronger economic growth and greater well-being for all Mauritians.

The Government is pursuing a number of policy themes. These include:

- enhancing innovation in firms;
- building a skilled and talented workforce;
- strengthening our international connections;
- and supporting economic development in sectors and regions through strong and effective partnerships and networks.

Ultimately, though, we all know where growth comes from – from enterprises and the people in them.

We need all businesses to understand that improving productivity is everyone's issue and that we all need to tackle it together. This means government working in partnership with businesses and private sector organizations to take this agenda forward together.

Today our focus on productivity involves “working smarter”, not necessarily “working harder”. We are talking about how to produce better output, not just about how to produce more output.

Productivity as an engine of growth but also as an instrument of inclusivity, enabling us to continue to prosper whilst reducing unemployment, poverty and inequality.

We are talking about increasing production by investing in knowledge, skills and abilities, or by better combining inputs, thanks to new ideas, technological innovations and new business models.

The only way to promote these changes is through mutual learning and co-operation. And this is exactly what we are trying to achieve today, with the launch of the National Productivity and Quality Excellence Award.

The Award will encourage organisations to share their best operational practices, processes, systems, and initiatives and learn from the experience of others. It provides an opportunity to celebrate the achievements and recognize the efforts put into managing productivity and excelling in businesses.

This is why, I strongly encourage Mauritian companies to participate in the NPQEA. They will help in fostering the culture of excellence and serve as role models to inspire others. We need to ensure that this same spirit of innovation and transformation permeates throughout all segments and sectors of our economy.

Allow me to extend my appreciation to the National Productivity and Competitiveness Council for being a key driver, catalyst and keen advocate

of our productivity drive through initiatives such as the organisation of this Award.

The NPCC is a valued partner that plays a vital role in championing the interests of the Mauritian business community and transforming our industries.

The future of productivity will define the future of the world. The new wave of productivity has to be based on a new concept of inclusiveness and sustainability which is driven by technology and knowledge. And this concept should also be within the reach of SMEs.

Through this Award we are hoping for the best ideas and innovatory proposals from participants.

I know the majority of enterprises are willing and committed to transform themselves and become more productive and competitive. These companies have demonstrated resilience in the face of economic headwinds, and have excelled in their respective industries through the use of technology, innovation and talent management. The previous editions of the National Productivity and Quality Conventions organised by the NPCC bear testimony to this fact.

Some of you may be familiar with the quote '***Knowledge has to be improved, challenged, and increased constantly, or it vanishes***' by Peter Drucker. The NPQEA rests on this very same belief.

Companies in Mauritius possess immense knowledge and capabilities. This knowledge however often remains tacit, within the confines of individual companies and does not get challenged or improved.

The award will provide a platform for companies to showcase their improvement projects and benchmark and learn from each other as to meet the ever increasing challenges in the world market.

Productivity and excellence will be crucial for Mauritius to achieve sustainable growth in the next phase of our economic development.

We need the collective efforts of all our stakeholders if we are to succeed in transforming our industries to achieve such growth.

With these few words, I wish all participants best of luck.

Thank you.

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