

56 *Independence Day*
32 *Republic Day*



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President AHEAD

Inclusion through Education.

Post-colonialism and post-independence, Mauritius has achieved a lot in terms of development, stability and prosperity. The success of the country hinges mainly on education. After 56 years of independence and 32 years of accessing to the status of Republic, it's time for Mauritius to rethink its Education System.

'Inclusive Education' remains a major challenge today. The present education system has served the country well, but the system has now done its time. The country does not need an education system that is rigid, predominantly academic, exams oriented which prepares students for further studies; but an inclusive education system that develops the full potential of every child, equips and prepares individuals to better cope with present and emerging life challenges and become responsible citizens.

The mainstream state schools segregate students on ability. Private schools discriminate on ability, faith, financial capacity and status. The education system is not inclusive in Mauritius. Students who are rejected by the mainstream education system are compelled to join a SEN school which is basically a 'one size fit all' solution, that does not work for all.

The SEN school system is not 'complementary' to the mainstream schools, but it's a system in its own right. SEN schools, recognized by the State, mostly run by NGOs, have limited resources and means. SEN schools are not properly equipped to provide an education environment that is conducive for the child's overall development.

Mauritius needs an education system that works for all the citizens of the Republic without discrimination, irrespective of race, place of origin, political opinions, colour, creed or sex, but also ability; and ensure that every child is not only given access to education, which is predominantly governed by a mono-grade curricula, but also that all children are given equal opportunity, treated equitably and are given the opportunity to express their talents thereby unlocking creativity and innovation.

Education is the gateway to inclusiveness. The Republic of Mauritius needs an inclusive education system which fully aligns itself with the Constitution, Agenda 2030 and is really set to meet Sustainable Development Goal 4, i.e. Quality Education, which aims to 'ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all'.

**Happy Independence Day,
Happy Republic Day 2024!**