20 Years of Public Officers Welfare Council

_Inauguration of Civil Service House_

_and_

_Launching of Souvenir Magazine_

_Friday 21.12.2012- 1730 hrs_

_Minister’s Speech_

Hon. Anil Kumar Bachoo, Vice Prime Minister, Minister of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping

Hon. Devanand Virahsawmy, Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development

Hon. Lormus Bundhoo, Minister of Health and Quality of Life

Mr. Seebaluck, Senior Chief Executive of my Ministry

Permanent Secretaries

Mr. Ruhee, President Public Officers Welfare Council

Board Members, Public Officers Welfare Council

Representatives of Trade Unions

Representatives of Staff Welfare Associations

Staff of my Ministry

Good Evening!
It’s a privilege and honour for me to address you at the inauguration of the Civil Service House while we are celebrating the 20th anniversary of the Public Officers Welfare Council.

The Public Officers Welfare Council was set up in 1992 and aims at promoting employee welfare. Government supports welfare initiatives and makes financial provisions to that end. Over the past 20 years, the Public Officers Welfare Council has been organising different sports, leisure, literary and recreational activities with the participation of Staff Welfare Associations of line ministries.

These activities provide an appropriate avenue for civil servants to consolidate their ties with colleagues with whom they normally interact at work. Our aim is to create a community of motivated civil servants conscious of the effective contribution of each co-worker towards a positive work climate. Such a work climate may benefit both the service and service providers. We have no doubt that when
workers feel comfortable within their own work team, there is win-win for all parties.

Ladies and gentlemen, it has always been a legitimate ambition of the council to have its own club house. And, I am pleased to share with you that Le Club Flamboyant, an affiliate of the POWC catering for the welfare of retired civil servants and those who are above 55 years, wrote to the Hon. Bachoo on 03 December 2003 proposing for the provision of a building to be converted into a club house. This request made some nine years ago has borne fruit today.

Hon. Bachoo was then the Minister for Public Infrastructure Minister. As fate would have it, he is today the Vice Prime Minister and Minister responsible for public infrastructure and he is among us to mark this event by his presence.

The project idea goes back to nearly a decade and it could not see the light of day earlier. I should tell you that when I assumed the responsibility for Civil Service and Administrative Reforms last year, I decided that this project
should materialise. Today we have the results. This is an ideal site for a club house, ladies and gentlemen.

I am grateful to my three colleagues, Hon. Bachoo, Hon. Virahsawmy and Hon. Bundhoo, present at this ceremony. They have positively responded to my Ministry’s requests in view of this project and today we have a completely refurbished infrastructure with keep-fit equipment. I am convinced that civil servants will make good use of the facilities.

Ladies and gentlemen, as we are practically on the eve of a new year, it is also a time for us to look behind and reflect on what we have realised over the past 12 months.

I do feel proud that we have, in fact, seen the publication of the report of the Pay Research Bureau well before time and the report of the Errors, Omissions and Anomalies is due within three months. Civil Servants have been paid their year-
end bonus without any problem. We are also proceeding with our reforms.

We have also set up a Help Desk and published *Update*, a magazine for public officers. The second issue is due in January 2013. We have set up the Civil Service College and we are progressing with the Human Resource Management Information System.

We are reviewing our processes with regard to schemes of service and implementing projects in different ministries and departments under the Work Environment Enhancement Programme.

Another project that is very dear to me is a Gym for civil servants. My ministry set the ball rolling some time back and I am happy that my colleague, Hon. Bundhoo, has joined in. The gym is proposed at the 8th floor of the Emmanuel Anquetil Building and it will be operational soon. I understand that the
proposed premises are at the moment being put to good use by the commission on Errors, Omissions and Anomalies.

Distinguished guests, ladies and Gentlemen, we are promoting sound employee relations, safety and health at work, work-life balance and government has institutionalised an equal opportunity mechanism over and above the Public Bodies Appeal Tribunal.

All these, tend to prove that this government led by Dr Navinchandra Ramgoolam is positively working towards set objectives in line with the government programme.

What government expects from civil servants is service with a sense of dedication in view of positive measurable outcomes for our stakeholders and citizens at large.

Ladies and gentlemen, I request representatives of Staff Welfare Associations to inform their members of this new service and I hope that civil servants will meet regularly at
this club house and help to ensure that the infrastructure is well maintained.

Before ending I wish you and your families a **merry Christmas** and a **very prosperous new year**. I thank you for your attention.