



SEVENTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

PARLIAMENTARY

DEBATES

(HANSARD)

FIRST SESSION

WEDNESDAY 09 JUNE 2021

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MAURITIUS

Seventh National Assembly

FIRST SESSION

Debate No. 10 of 2021

Sitting of Wednesday 09 June 2021

The Assembly met in the Assembly House, Port Louis, at 6.00 p.m.

The National Anthem was played

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

ANNOUNCEMENT

Mr Speaker: Hon. Members, I will invite the House to rise and observe one minute of silence in memory of late Sir Anerood Jugnauth, GCSK, KCMG, QC, PC, former Prime Minister and former President of the Republic of Mauritius.

(Members stood up and observed one minute silence)

Thank you.

Motion! Prime Minister!

MOTION

SUSPENSION OF S.O. 10(2)

The Prime Minister: Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that all the business on today's Order Paper be exempted from the provisions of paragraph (2) of Standing Order 10.

The Deputy Prime Minister seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

Mr Speaker: Hon. Prime Minister!

OBITUARY

SIR ANEROOD JUGNAUTH, GCSK, KCMG, QC, PC - FORMER PRIME MINISTER & FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS

The Prime Minister: Mr Speaker, Sir, it is with a heavy heart and profound sadness, that I address the House and the nation to pay tribute to the memory of Sir Anerood Jugnauth, GCSK, KCMG, QC, PC, former President of the Republic and former Prime Minister, who passed away on Thursday 03 June 2021, at the age of 91.

With the demise of Sir Anerood, the country has lost one of its most illustrious sons, a remarkable and highly respected statesman, who devoted himself to the service of his motherland and, in his own unique way, touched the hearts of his people.

It is indeed a difficult task to do full justice to the memory of such an outstanding and inspirational leader who leaves such a huge legacy.

Mr Speaker, Sir, Sir Anerood was born on 29 March 1930 at Palma, Quatre Bornes. He attended the Palma Church of England School for his primary education and later, the Regent College, for his secondary education.

Destined to become the architect of modern Mauritius, Sir Anerood had very humble beginnings, but those early days of poverty, tribulations and hardships had their own compensation in that they built his ethical and moral foundation. The first lessons came from his father, the second from Professor Basdeo Bissoondoyal, and the third from his school. He, as a youth, naturally imbibed these priceless ethical and moral values and principles to which he was exposed. These forged his character and shaped and guided his life and actions, helping him to withstand all the demanding trials and temptations which came in his way ever since.

Mr Speaker, Sir, in 1948, Sir Anerood took up employment at the New Eton College, where he taught history and geography for about a year. In 1949, he joined the Civil Service as clerk, at the then Poor Law Department, where he served for about eight months before being transferred to the Judiciary. He was first attached to the Industrial Court, from where he was later transferred to the District Court of Rose Hill.

His service at the Judiciary had certainly influenced his choice of career. In 1951, he left for the United Kingdom to pursue his tertiary education in law and in 1954 he was called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn.

This was also the period during which he developed his passion for English football. He was known to be a die-hard fan of Manchester United Football Club, and he would not, if he could, miss any of its matches.

After his studies, Sir Anerood returned to Mauritius in May 1955 and his passion for politics propelled him in the political arena. In 1957, he contested the Village Council Elections in Palma and became a Village Councillor and President of the village. Thereafter, he joined the Independent Forward Bloc and, in 1963, he contested the Legislative Council Elections in the then Constituency No. 14, Rivière du Rempart, and was elected to serve the then Legislative Council.

In 1964, he participated in the Municipal Council Elections for Vacoas/Phoenix and was returned as Councillor to serve the Council.

His participation in the London Constitutional Conference in 1965, held at the Lancaster House, was another momentous occasion in his rich political career. He was part of the Mauritian delegation, led by Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, to that crucial and decisive Constitutional Conference which was to decide on the ultimate status of the colony of Mauritius. Sir Anerood had made considerable efforts to convince Sookdeo Bissoondoyal, his then Leader, to support the pro-independence group at the Lancaster House Conference. Kevin Shillington writes, in a biography of Sir Anerood, and I quote –

“On the final day of conference it was thus left to Jugnauth to put the IFB’s case, and in a very vigorous speech he gave his Party’s unqualified support for Ramgoolam’s formal call for independence. The submissions of Ramgoolam and Jugnauth were the only two speeches made that day in favour of independence. Together, however, the speeches were of sufficient power to create the right impression on the attendant British officials.”

The contribution of Sir Anerood, therefore, helped tilt the balance in favour of Independence. This also paved the way for the formation of an alliance of parties, which regrouped the Mauritius Labour Party, the IFB and the *Comité D’action Musulman*, and registered under the name of Independence Party, which won the 1967 General Elections and ushered Mauritius into the post-independent era.

Mr Speaker, Sir, in November 1965, Sir Anerood was entrusted with the portfolio of Minister of State, a post which he occupied until 08 November 1966. Thereafter, he was appointed Minister of Labour. In April 1967, following political and ideological differences with Sir Seewoosagur, then Premier and Minister of Finance, Sir Anerood resigned both as Minister of Labour and Member of the then Legislative Assembly. He subsequently joined the Judiciary as District Magistrate. In 1969, he was posted to the then Crown Law Office and two years later, in 1971, he was promoted to the status of Senior Crown Counsel.

On 30 September 1971, Sir Anerood resigned as Senior Crown Counsel to engage himself in active politics. Thus, on 07 December 1971, he joined the *Mouvement Militant Mauricien*, and two years later, in 1973, he became the President of the Party.

In 1976, Sir Anerood contested the General Elections in Constituency No. 7, Piton and Rivière du Rempart, under the banner of the MMM and was returned as Third Member to serve the said Constituency. There was a hung Parliament with the MMM winning 34 seats, the Labour Party 28 seats and the PMSD 8 seats. Following a coalition between the Labour

Party and the PMSD, the post-electoral alliance became the ruling Party. Sir Anerood was thus appointed as Leader of the Opposition.

Mr Speaker, Sir, on 11 June 1982, Sir Anerood again contested the General Elections in Constituency No. 7 under the banner of the MMM/PSM Alliance and was returned as First Member to serve the then Legislative Assembly. The 60-0 result of the poll was a historical first. The MMM/PSM Alliance Party had won every contested seat across the country - a score that was unique worldwide in a freely contested multi-party democracy. Thus, Sir Anerood assumed his first Prime Ministership.

However, following certain ideological differences within the Alliance, Sir Anerood founded his own Party, the *Mouvement Socialiste Militant*, the MSM, on 08 April 1983 with the Sun as its evocative symbol. He contested the General Elections of 21 August 1983 in Constituency No. 7 under the banner of the MSM/Labour Party Alliance and was returned as Second Member. The Alliance won the elections and Sir Anerood was, once again, appointed Prime Minister, a post which he would occupy for the next 12 years.

Sir Anerood contested the two successive General Elections of 1987 and 1991, in his usual Constituency under the Banner of the MSM/Labour Party Alliance and MSM/MMM Alliance respectively, and was returned First Member in both elections. Sir Anerood remained at the helm of the Government as Prime Minister until December 1995.

Mr Speaker, Sir, it was the visionary, bold and disciplined leadership of Sir Anerood that saved the sinking economy which he inherited in 1982 and rekindled the waning hope of a whole nation. By creating the right environment of economic leadership, law and order, and discipline, Sir Anerood gave the confidence to all Mauritian entrepreneurs, large and small, that they could take the country forward. And this confidence, projected to the world, attracted international investors who came and participated to make it happen.

Under his able stewardship, Mauritius made huge strides in its economic development, lifting hundreds of thousands of people out of poverty and restoring the economic fundamentals which had been in the red zone for a long time. The post-1983 period saw the beginning of an era when Mauritius evolved from a poor, mono crop agricultural-based economy, into one of Africa's relatively richest countries. The success of the Government policies was recognised and acknowledged, not only by the local population but also by international organisations and financial institutions, so much so that it earned Sir

Anerood the highly deserved and merited attribute of 'Father of the Mauritian economic miracle'.

Mr Speaker, Sir, one of the strongest characteristics of Sir Anerood was his passionate belief in his country, in Mauritius as an independent nation State, freeing itself from colonial reins and taking charge of its own destiny. He translated this passion into leading the process which made Mauritius into a Republic. Thus, he will also be remembered as the architect of the accession of the country to the status of a Republic by championing the enactment of the Constitution of Mauritius (Amendment) Act 1991, which paved the way for Mauritius to become a Republic with the President as the Head of the State. It was indeed another milestone in the constitutional development of our country when, on 12 March 1992, Mauritius acceded to the status of a Republic - a historic transition that bears the indelible imprint of Sir Anerood.

Mr Speaker, Sir, Sir Anerood also stood as candidate for the 1995 General Elections in Constituency No. 7, under the Banner of the MSM/RMM Alliance but was not returned. However, despite the heavy electoral defeat, the only one at any General Election, Sir Anerood, as a true democrat, conceded the defeat promptly and elegantly while maintaining his poise, dignity and composure. He was magnanimous in victory and gracious in defeat - and this is the hallmark of a great statesman.

Mr Speaker, Sir, in the year 2000, he contested the General Elections under the Banner of the MSM/MMM Alliance and was returned First Member for Constituency No. 7 to serve the National Assembly. He was, once again, appointed Prime Minister.

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is no secret that Sir Anerood had a soft spot for Rodrigues and it is under his Prime Ministership that in 2001, the Island made a democratic leap by acceding to an autonomous status within the Republic, with its own Regional Assembly and an Executive Council.

M. le président, Sir Anerood a toujours défendu ses idées et ses convictions avec détermination. Son courage restera gravé dans nos mémoires.

On se souviendra de Sir Anerood comme l'architecte de la République de Maurice, et c'est lui, encore une fois, en tant que bâtisseur, qui fonda la Cybercité d'Ébène en 2001. Grâce à cette infrastructure qui a marqué le début de l'ère du numérique à Maurice, il laissera, aux

futures générations, un héritage qui leur permettra d'exploiter au mieux les opportunités créées par les nouvelles technologies.

Il faut se rappeler que durant les années 80, Sir Anerood s'attellera à la diversification et à la démocratisation de l'économie tout en lançant deux autres piliers économiques que sont le secteur des services financiers et le port franc qui ont contribué significativement au développement socio-économique du pays. Il a propulsé la modernisation des infrastructures publiques à travers le pays et initié la création de la *National Development Unit*, qui aidera à réduire la disparité entre les villes et les villages, sans oublier, M. le président, sa contribution en faveur de l'émancipation de la femme et l'amélioration de la condition féminine en général.

Mr Speaker, Sir, on 30 September 2003, Sir Anerood resigned as Prime Minister to pass on the reign of power to his alliance partner, hon. Paul Bérenger, so as to honour his electoral pledge. In so doing, he amply demonstrated that he was "*un homme de parole*" and that, in public life, some values and principles transcend politics and party. Being true to himself, and his beliefs, he considered it his duty to uphold and promote these values and principles. He was convinced that, the best way for one to leave one's mark on the world, is to work for lofty ideals and to strive for something bigger than oneself. The outpour of sympathy here and from across the world, following his demise, proved him so right.

On 07 October 2003, he was elected by the National Assembly to serve as President of the Republic and was conferred the title of Grand Commander of the Order of the Star and Key of the Indian Ocean. By virtue of his strength of character and upholder of values and principles, he fitted admirably for the role of President and Champion of the Constitution. He greatly enhanced the prestige and stature of the Office by serving with his usual distinction, selfless devotion and his utmost commitment to constitutional values and norms.

On 19 September 2008, he was again elected President of the Republic. However, on 30 March 2012, Sir Anerood resigned from the Office of President of the Republic, in the best interest of the country, to once again, engage himself in active politics.

And in 2014, despite his advanced age of 84, he did not hesitate to put himself anew at the service of the nation. He contested the 2014 General Election in Constituency No.7 under the Banner of *l'Alliance Lepep* and was elected First Member. He became Prime Minister for a sixth mandate.

Mr Speaker, Sir, throughout his long political career, spanning over seven decades, Sir Anerood showed deep respect for the Constitution of the country, for the institutions of the State, for separation of powers and above all, for the rule of law and human rights. As a matter of fact, one of his most enduring legacies, which still arouses the admiration and respect of one and all, is his relentless and epic struggle for the complete decolonisation of Mauritius and for the cause of the Chagossian community. Many thought it a lost cause. Nevertheless, Sir Anerood, in a striking testimony of his dogged determination and tenacity, decided to bring our legitimate claim of sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago to the United Nations General Assembly in 2017, requesting a vote on a resolution to seek an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice. The vote gave him and the country an overwhelming and historic victory. Driven by his unflinching faith, he subsequently decided, at the age of 88, to once again wear his Barrister's gown and make a powerful, convincing and memorable submission at the International Court of Justice for the complete decolonisation of Mauritius and the legitimate rights of the Chagossians. This, as we all know, resulted in the landmark pronouncement in favour of Mauritius. That was the last successful battle of Sir Anerood for his motherland.

Mr Speaker, Sir, Sir Anerood will also be remembered for his contribution to Law and Order and above all, for his ruthless battle against the drug mafia, as evidenced by the two Commissions of Inquiry which he instituted on drug trafficking and the numerous decisive and bold measures he took to tackle the drug scourge in Mauritius, even at the risk of his life.

Mr Speaker, Sir, on 23 January 2017, when he considered that the time was right for him to call it a day, Sir Anerood resigned as Prime Minister, and on the same day, he was appointed Minister Mentor, Minister of Defence, Minister for Rodrigues, a portfolio which he held until November 2019. Thereafter, he retired from active politics.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the achievements and contribution of Sir Anerood in the course of his long and rich political career have been recognised both in Mauritius and abroad.

In 1980, he was conferred with the title of Queen's Counsel by Her Majesty, The Queen.

In 1984, he was conferred the '*Grand Croix de l'Ordre de la Pléiade*', an honorary order of the *Organisation internationale de la Francophonie* in recognition of his distinguished role in the promotion of the ideals of the organisation. In 1985, he was awarded

the title of Doctor Honoris Causa by the University of Aix-en-Provence and that of Doctor Honoris Causa in Civil Law, by the University of Mauritius.

In 1987, he was elevated to the rank of Privy Councillor by Her Majesty, The Queen. This is a distinguished award which conferred upon him the title of “*The Right Honourable*” for life.

In January 1988, he was awarded the First Class Grand Cordon of the Order of the Rising Sun by the Japanese Government. Later, in the same year, he was elevated to the rank of Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George (K.C.M.G) by Her Majesty, The Queen.

In 1990, France conferred upon Sir Anerood the title of the *Grand Officier de l’Ordre de la Légion d’Honneur* and in 2009, the title of Honorary Doctorate from the Middlesex University was conferred upon him.

In 2020, the Padma Vibhushan Award, which is the second highest civilian award in the field of public affairs, was conferred upon Sir Anerood by the Republic of India, for his continuous efforts towards deepening friendship between India and Mauritius.

Mr Speaker, Sir, as the House is also aware, following the demise of Sir Anerood, the Government of India, as a mark of respect to him, declared the 5th of June, a day of National Mourning throughout India. The whole Mauritian nation was deeply touched by this very telling and significant gesture of sympathy by the Government of India towards Sir Anerood and the people of Mauritius.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi Ji, his Government and the people of India for this tremendous tribute to the memory of Sir Anerood. It is a profound example of the very special relationship between our two countries. I would also like to thank all the foreign dignitaries and all the people from all over the world who expressed their sympathy to Lady Sarojini and my family and to the whole nation, on the demise of Sir Anerood.

Mr Speaker, Sir, Sir Anerood was a man of exceptional qualities who rose from humble beginnings to become one of the country’s most accomplished and acclaimed leaders. His life journey is a perfect illustration of the triumph of perseverance, courage and determination and is a source of great inspiration to our people, especially our youth. In him, we see a true patriot, endowed with an indomitable spirit, who earned his rightful place in

history through the dint of hard work, struggle and faith in selfless service to the nation. He was a man of great vision, driven by the grand and noble ideals to make his country a better place for everybody, just as he made this House a better place with his distinguished presence and valuable contributions. His leadership qualities percolated from the House into Government as he led successive teams of Ministers and other Parliamentarians by allowing them to deliver results to which he held them accountable. He had earned himself a reputation of being a no-nonsense person. He was known for his *franc-parler*, for being truthful, candid and straightforward – qualities that aroused the admiration and respect of his collaborators and opponents alike. But he will be remembered specially for his simplicity and humility. He had deep faith in the universality of man, and believed in the eternal values of the brotherhood of men, all of which made of him a beacon of peace and harmony. He would never treat anybody differently because of his colour, creed or gender. He professed and practised a patriotism that transcended religion and politics. He indeed personified the wisdom of humanism. Throughout his life, he remained connected with the masses, and he will be sorely missed. The scope of his accomplishments and the admiration that he so rightly earned made of him a living legend. A man of boundless energy, he showed us the power of action. We were simply amazed by what he was capable of doing, even at his advanced age, and he discharged all his responsibilities with honour, dignity, grit and determination. Even when out of office, he retained his sharpness of mind and remained an inspiring personality to whom we would look for as a source of wisdom and enlightened guidance.

Mr Speaker, Sir, Sir Anerood won the hearts of all Mauritians by his simplicity and warmth. He could walk with kings and yet keep the common touch of simplicity and humility. His noble feelings and his abiding concern for the well-being of his people and his country will continue to be a source of inspiration for generations to come. Mahatma Gandhi rightly said that “great men never die; it is up to us to keep them immortal by continuing the work they have commenced”.

Mr Speaker, Sir, Sir Anerood was respected across the House and I am sure you will all join me in paying a tribute to this great statesman, who took a tryst with destiny to shape a better future for our country and our people.

Mr Speaker, Sir, Lady Sarojni and my family have lost a pillar. I have lost a much loved father who was my source of inspiration. The nation has lost a son who dedicated almost 60 years of his life serving his country and his fellow citizens.

We can say that from his new abode in heaven, he will continue to bless us all.

As said André Malraux: *“la tombe des héros est le cœur des vivants”*

The country bows to his memory. We shall miss him deeply. May his soul rest in peace.

I thank you, Mr Speaker, Sir.

(Applause)

Mr Speaker: Hon. Leader of the Opposition!

The Leader of the Opposition (Mr X. L. Duval): Mr Speaker, Sir, it is with equal sadness that we learnt of the demise of Sir Anerood. Sir Anerood, six times Prime Minister, many years President of Republic, has had an undeniable prestigious career and has left his mark on this country, in particular, Mr Speaker, Sir, in relation to the economic and social development of the nation for which he will be long remembered.

Mr Speaker, Sir, after winning the 1983 General Election, the PMSD joined Sir Anerood Jugnauth in Government from 1983 to 1988. It was a transformational period for our country, with rapid economic development, which the Prime Minister just rightly now called the economic miracle. Sir Anerood Jugnauth led a very able team, with my own father as Deputy Prime Minister, Sir Satcam Boolell, and a very able Minister of Finance, Vishnu Lutchmeenaraidoo.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I personally met Sir Anerood Jugnauth in 1986 for the first time. It was during a ministerial crisis. I think some Ministers had resigned and my father thought it fit to take me to La Caverne, and I was there as the only young member, surrounded by Ministers. I didn't quite know what I was doing there, but I enjoyed the meeting and the way that he held the meeting.

Then again, Mr Speaker, Sir, in 1987, I was chosen by the PMSD to stand as a candidate for the General Election in alliance with the MSM. I was then a partner of De Chazal du Mée and my other partners thought it very wrong that I should stand and they categorically refused to allow me to stand, which I then communicated to my father who went on to Sir Anerood, and Sir Anerood called all the partners of De Chazal du Mée and told them that Duval had to stand, and they changed their mind very promptly and

encouraged me to stand in the election and we won the seat in the very difficult stronghold, then opposition stronghold of Port Louis.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the PMSD resigned from Government in 1988. Then followed, I must say, an unfortunate and antagonistic period between the MSM and the PMSD, with the regrettable reopening of the Azor Adelaide case, but after a preliminary inquiry, the case was abandoned by the DPP. But I must say this, Mr Speaker, Sir, that in 1995, I was personally a witness to the reconciliation of the two men; and with the help of two persons, which I will mention, Azad Domun and Baby Chuttur, the two men were reconciled in 1995 and the PMSD joined the MSM Government for a short period that year.

To illustrate the pragmatism of Sir Anerood Jugnauth, I would like to say that he agreed to the abolishment of the death penalty in all the subsidiary legislations, although I think it was not of his own liking, but he had agreed to it and also to pass laws for allowing dual nationality for citizens. This to me illustrates the pragmatism of Sir Anerood Jugnauth.

Mr Speaker, Sir, many years later, our paths crossed again when, in 2014, the PMSD joined the MSM, led into victory, the victory of *l'Alliance Lepep* under Sir Anerood Jugnauth. We left, as you know, at the end of 2016 on a constitutional disagreement, Mr Speaker, Sir.

I would like to offer my very deep personal and sincere condolences to Lady Sarojni, to the Prime Minister and Mrs Kobita Jugnauth, to Mrs Shalini and Mr Kishan Malhotra and to all his close family and friends and, once again, Mr Speaker, Sir, thank you for the occasion to pay tribute to a truly exceptional person.

Thank you.

(Applause)

Mr Speaker: Hon. Deputy Prime Minister!

The Deputy Prime Minister: M. le président, permettez-moi de prime abord, au nom de la Plateforme Militante, de vous remercier d'avoir accordé à chaque parti politique représenté au Parlement le droit de s'exprimer pour saluer la mémoire de Sir Anerood Jugnauth, qui nous a quittés le 3 juin dernier.

M. le président, mes chers collègues ministres, mesdames et messieurs les députés, Sir Anerood Jugnauth était de ceux, avec Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam et Sir Gaëtan Duval, qui

ont incarné les grandes luttes de leur temps et ont changé le cours de l'histoire. Élu de l'*Independent Forward Bloc* en 1963, Sir Anerood Jugnauth quitte l'Assemblée nationale en 2019 : 56 ans, pendant lesquels l'on compte 31 ans de députation, presque 20 ans à la primature, et 9 ans à la présidence de la République ; un record de longévité, depuis l'indépendance, pour ce fils de laboureur et laboureur lui-même pendant un temps, qui ne perdra jamais ce bon sens populaire imprégné d'un franc-parler connu de tous, et qui ne se départira jamais, malgré tous les honneurs qui lui furent conférés, de la simplicité que tous lui reconnaissaient. Je veux saluer en Sir Anerood Jugnauth un grand patriote qui dès son premier discours ici, dans cette auguste Assemblée, affirmera, et je cite –

« We must stop thinking in terms of Hindus, Muslims or General Population; we must try to think in terms of Mauritians because everyone is born in this country. »

Un patriote qui, ministre de Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, participa à la conférence constitutionnelle de Lancaster House pour soutenir et préparer l'indépendance de notre patrie.

Je veux saluer en Sir Anerood Jugnauth le militant arrivé au pouvoir en 1982 en tant que Premier ministre du changement de l'alliance MMM-PSM, qui entamera un combat contre les reliquats du colonialisme, qui permettra l'accession du pays au statut de république, et le militant qui défendra farouchement l'intégrité territoriale de notre pays jusqu'à la reconnaissance par la Cour internationale de Justice de la souveraineté mauricienne sur les Chagos en 2017 et qui plus tard débouchera sur une victoire éclatante que l'on connaît à l'Assemblée générale des Nations unies.

Je veux saluer en Sir Anerood Jugnauth, M. le président, le père du développement économique et de l'industrialisation du miracle économique car Maurice, souvenons-nous, passera d'un PIB, d'un Produit Intérieur Brut, par tête d'habitant, de R 11,813 en 1982 à R 62,573 en 1995 et puis, à R 361,456 en 2017 lorsqu'il quitte la primature, donc à la veille de notre accession au statut de pays à hauts revenus.

M. le président, je veux saluer en Sir Anerood Jugnauth, le réformateur qui, avec le MMM et puis avec le MSM, inscrira l'égalité du genre dans la loi en amendant le Code civil en 1982. Le réformateur qui assurera le succès de la grande réforme éducative qui garantira l'éducation pour tous jusqu'à l'âge de 16 ans, la régionalisation de notre système éducatif et l'abolition du *CPE* tant honni, le réformateur qui assurera l'autonomie de l'île Rodrigues.

Je veux saluer en Sir Anerood Jugnauth le démocrate qui, avec le MMM, amendera la Constitution dès son arrivée au pouvoir en 1982 pour rétablir les législatives partielles et garantir la tenue régulière d'élections nationales, et plus tard permettra l'entrée en opération des radios privées.

Je veux saluer en Sir Anerood Jugnauth, le rassembleur et le bâtisseur d'un pays moderne travaillant tour à tour avec le Parti travailliste, le PMSD, le MMM, l'OPR et d'autres partis et qui a eu à son actif le développement du secteur financier, la modernisation du port, la création de la *Cargo Handling Corporation*, la Cybercité d'Ébène, le développement de l'industrie informatique comme cinquième pilier de notre économie, et j'en passe.

M. le président, l'Assemblée nationale et le pays retiendront de Sir Anerood Jugnauth sa détermination, sa ténacité, sa volonté de faire, dotant le pays d'un leadership fort dont il avait tant besoin à une époque charnière de son histoire.

Sir Anerood Jugnauth, M. le président, n'appartient plus au MSM mais il appartient à la république de Maurice. Au-delà des affections partisans, il appartient désormais à la nation mauricienne tout entière, à tous et à chacun. Rester fidèle à Sir Anerood Jugnauth, c'est préserver les acquis qu'il nous a légués ; c'est faire vivre les valeurs qui étaient siennes ; c'est poursuivre les combats de toute sa vie. Nous nous engageons à suivre la voie qu'il a tracée, et Sir Anerood Jugnauth ne sera jamais oublié.

M. le président, Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam a été le père de l'indépendance, Sir Anerood Jugnauth, le père de la république de Maurice moderne et du développement économique. Il est opportun qu'ils reposent désormais tous deux au Jardin de Pamplemousses. Un géant s'en est allé, laissant dans les cœurs et dans les esprits un énorme vide qui nous afflige tous.

Je présente, dans ces moments pénibles à Lady Sarojini Jugnauth, à notre Premier ministre et mon ami, l'honorable Pravind Jugnauth, à Madame Shalini Jugnauth et à leurs familles respectives, mes plus vives et sincères condoléances.

Merci, M. le président.

(Applause)

Mr Speaker: Hon. Bérenger!

Mr P. Bérenger (First Member for Stanley & Rose Hill): Lorsque Sir Anerood nous a quittés jeudi dernier, c'est une page de notre histoire qu'il a tournée. Il nous a quittés pour rejoindre toute une génération de hautes personnalités politiques, de Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam à Sir Gaëtan Duval, Sir Abdool Razack Mohamed, Sir Veerasamy Ringadoo, Sookdeo Bissoondoyal et Sir Satcam Boolell.

Sir Anerood Jugnauth a profondément marqué notre histoire politique récente. Élu pour la première fois à ce Parlement aux élections générales de 1963, il participa dès 1965 à la conférence historique de *Lancaster House* où se décida l'indépendance du pays. De 1971 à 1983, il fut avec nous au MMM. Tout au long de 1972, il resta aux côtés de Kader Bhayat pour garder vivant les liens entre les détenus de l'état d'urgence et le monde extérieur. Nous avons vécu ensemble le grand moment de 1982 comme nous avons été ensemble pour faire de l'île Maurice une république, pour donner à Rodrigues son autonomie et pour commencer le combat pour notre souveraineté sur les Chagos et Tromelin.

En ce moment de douleur et de tristesse, toutes mes pensées vont à sa fille et à son fils, et surtout, surtout à Lady Sarojini.

Merci.

(Applause)

Mr Speaker: Hon. Ganoo!

The Minister of Land Transport and Light Rail, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade (Mr A. Ganoo): Mr Speaker, Sir, it is with great sadness and an enormous sense of shock that the nation learnt of the demise of Sir Anerood Jugnauth on 03 June last. My heartfelt and deepest condolences go out to Sir Anerood Jugnauth's family and, in particular, to Lady Sarojini, the hon. Pravind Jugnauth and Mrs Kobita Jugnauth, and the sister of our Prime Minister and their families. These are difficult times for them, Mr Speaker, Sir. The nation mourns with you Lady Sarojini and hon. Prime Minister, as we pay tribute to this remarkable man, who devoted nearly 60 years of his life to the service of our country.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I have had the privilege of knowing him, sharing his experience, inspiring myself from his work ethics and admiring his commitment to his fellow citizens for more than 40 years. And I am proud to have been associated with this political giant and the

most illustrious political stalwart of this country as I know that his like will not be seen soon again.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the 20 years of difference between us meant nothing because we both had hailed from the same legal and political background. I first met Sir Anerood Jugnauth in the 70s when he had just left the Judiciary to practise as a Barrister, and I was a young Barrister fresh from the Middle Temple and from the UK. During the years, I recall having had the honour to appear against him in a few cases but also to appear with him as his junior when our then supporters, our *militants*, had regularly to face trial in cases of a political nature. I had the opportunity at that time to appreciate and to learn from his talents as a Barrister and his skills as a searching and ruthless cross-examiner.

Then came the milestone of 1982 when Sir Anerood became Prime Minister and Leader of the House. I was then elected as the Speaker of the new Legislative Assembly, thus becoming his first Speaker. During my short term of Office which lasted nearly one year, Mr Speaker, Sir, never had he attempted in any way, to influence me in my function as the then Speaker of the House.

The early days of his Prime Ministership were certainly not a bed of roses, but all of us who had lived these days with him would remember the composure, the stoicism and the ingenuity he demonstrated, which, in fact, paved the way for the statesman he was to become.

Our path met again in the early 90s and 2000s when I had the privilege of serving him as Attorney General and Minister of Justice, and in 2000 as his Minister of Public Utilities respectively. In my capacity as Attorney General, I had the immense pleasure of working closely with him to amend the Constitution to make of Mauritius a Republic. By so doing, he displayed his independence of mind and his commitment to make of Mauritius a stronger democracy, in order to strengthen the democratic foundation of the country.

I can vouch, Mr Speaker, Sir, that it was his idea to amend Section 47 of the Constitution, thus making it impossible for any Government, even with a three quarter majority to change the democratic nature of our Government. The Landmark Privy Council Judgment in the case of the State v A R Koyratty, in fact, reproduces the statement of Sir Anerood Jugnauth, which he made in the debate of 1991 when the Constitution was being amended. This is what this judgment said –

“The overriding purpose was made crystal clear when in the Parliamentary debates, as reported in Hansard on 09 December 1991, the Prime Minister, Sir Anerood Jugnauth, stated”,

and the judgment quotes and reproduces what Sir Anerood said in this very House. This is what he said –

“Today, we are taking that exercise a little further...the present Government also wants to establish firmly the democratic basis of our Constitution by making it practically impossible to amend Section 1 of the Constitution.”

Section 1, we remember talks about Mauritius being a democratic country. And Sir Anerood goes on to say –

“Let it not therefore be said that this Government does not cherish democratic principles.”

Mr Speaker, Sir, I also recall that during my tenure of office as Minister of Public Utilities, the inauguration of the Midlands Dam, which was initiated by his Government in the early 90s. I remember choosing 29 March 2003, the date of his birthday, to inaugurate this first post-independence Dam.

Mr Speaker, Sir, many years ago, Sir Anerood Jugnauth started the challenging journey to shape the destiny of our nation. During this long and distinguished career, his work became his passion; he set the highest standards for himself and for others too, showing political talent, firm determination, dedication and honour, indomitable courage in adversity, clear-sighted vision, steadfastness of purpose, pragmatism, and yet staying simple and humble in manner. And with these qualities went a zest for his life which made him young at heart and in spirit.

Mr Speaker, Sir, Sir Anerood Jugnauth has left an extraordinary legacy behind, one which will remain with us for generations to come. Indeed, his passion for making our country a much better place to live, than when he first found it, remains a lasting tribute to his sense of duty. We will all miss him, a consummate professional, a mentor, a counsellor, a confident, a stern father figure, but also a friend and a shoulder to lean on for he had humanity to the innermost core of his heart, and this endeared him to our people and especially to the women of this country for whom he championed their cause relentlessly.

Mr Speaker, Sir, during my several years as a politician, I have also known him as a political adversary within and outside this House. I always had a lot of respect for him in spite of his legendary sarcasm and cynicism. He was an outspokenly dreadful orator and his hard words would, without fail, knock the Opposition out of their senses. I recall how, one day, during a hot and passionate debate in the House, after all the Members of the Opposition, including me, had strenuously and forcefully made our case in this very House, Sir Anerood, as the Prime Minister, rose to wind up the debate, and in his usual candid, articulate, masterly and towering way, he rebutted all our arguments, turned the table, which left us dumbfounded. We left the Chamber on that day a bit confused; elections were not far away. On our way, we looked at each other, and I remember, a Senior Member of the Party told us: “*Kouma pou al manz ar sa mons la, la ?*” So, Mr Speaker, Sir, that was Sir Anerood Jugnauth, a combination of political acumen and public affection, which I believe stemmed from his humble beginnings.

I remember, Mr Speaker, Sir, how in my first electoral campaign of 1982, I was participating in a public meeting at Palma, his place of birth. As the last orator, he mesmerised the audience when they listened to that village boy who was destined to accede to the supreme public position of the country in a few months. And his audience nearly melted in tears when he narrated how in this very village he had walked to school barefooted.

Mr Speaker, Sir, Shakespeare had in his Twelfth Night said –

“Some men are born great; some achieve greatness and some have greatness thrust upon them.”

Sir Anerood belongs to those who achieved greatness. He was a self-made man who toiled hard and for that he deserves our utmost respect and appreciation.

Mr Speaker, Sir, Hegel had stated that –

“Nothing great in the world has ever been achieved without passion.”

SAJ’s greatness has been achieved by his passion for the good of humanity and the love of his country. But for us the political class, to my mind, SAJ has taught us that political leadership is not about giving resounding speeches and flamboyantly displaying shallow, witty comments or smart criticisms, but about achieving and getting things done for the good of the people. This was a man of action, of conviction, of results guided by sound practicality.

Mr Speaker, Sir, let me end this tribute to SAJ by reiterating my deepest, sympathy to the Prime Minister, to his family and by borrowing from Jawaharlal Nehru's eulogy to Mahatma Gandhi, and I quote –

“He has gone, and all over the country there is a feeling of desolation and forlornness. All of us sense that feeling and I do not know when this will dissipate. And yet, together with that feeling, there is also a feeling of proud thankfulness that we owe to this mighty person.”

Bhai Anerood, thank you for all you have done for our nation. Rest in peace.

I thank you, Mr Speaker, Sir.

(Applause)

Mr Speaker: Hon. Dr. Boolell!

Dr. A. Boolell (First Member for Belle Rose & Quatre Bornes): Mr Speaker, Sir, it is with humility that I pay tribute to a dedicated family man, a political giant and a leader since 1983 who had influenced the history of this country. The consolidation of his leadership was, according to Sir Satcam Boolell, in his book ‘The Love of My Country’, largely due to the, and I quote –

“(…) astuteness of Sir Seewoosagur who, with the Labour Party behind him, rushed to the rescue of Anerood Jugnauth and his group of faithful and in the General Election that followed in 1983.”

The role played by Harish Boodhoo was not negligible either; Sir Gaëtan Duval was always close to extending the helping hand. As Prime Minister, Sir Anerood Jugnauth gave considerable leeway to his Ministers to define policies. The Ministers, then, were the shapers and movers of policies. Many of the Senior Ministers were from the alliance made up of the Labour Party and the PMSD. It is equally true for the MMM when it concluded an alliance with Sir Anerood Jugnauth's Party in 2000.

No conductor, Mr Speaker, Sir, of an orchestra becomes a maestro without the collective effort of his players. Sir Anerood Jugnauth deservedly earned the title of maestro, and I say maestro not Rambo. It was not thrust upon him; he deservedly earned the title. The defining moment of his political career was the stand he took before the International Court of Justice; it was unprecedented. As a fatherly figure donning the lawyer's gown, he stood

tall and dignified before the lawyers and the panel of judges of the International Court of Justice (ICJ). He put across the legitimate claim of our Republic over the Chagos Archipelago, as defined in Section 1 of our Constitution. On 25 February 2019, the ICJ concluded that, and I quote –

“(...) the United Kingdom is under an obligation to bring to an end its administration of Chagos Archipelago as rapidly as possible (...)”

was, indeed, a feather in Sir Anerood Jugnauth’s cap and scarf.

May I remind the nation that the contribution of past Prime Ministers in the decolonisation process had been remarkable too. The young boy, who grew up in Palma, perhaps in his inner thoughts, had a tryst with destiny. He was 10 years old when he accompanied his father to listen to the sermons of Basdeo Bissoondoyal on Hindu scriptures.

As we say, Mr Speaker, it is the stars above us which sometimes govern our destiny, but Anerood Jugnauth, through the dint of hard work, shaped his future. He attended secondary school after some persuasion from his cousin Lall, and Sir Anerood took the rung of the social ladder with courage and determination. Education, Mr Speaker, Sir, is the best investment for empowerment and democratisation. Free education is a right in our great little country; so, indeed, say all of us.

Sir Anerood Jugnauth never looked back and by blazing the trail got large followers to break the glass ceilings. Even at Le Réduit, his political instincts were overpowering. The lessons to be learnt from Sir Anerood Jugnauth are relentlessness, endurance and the art of persuasion. He displayed combativeness and resilience at an age when others would gladly have retired and enjoyed the fruits of a hard earned labour. But, instead, he chose to descend into the arena and fight yet another electoral battle. Only death would extinguish his fighting spirit. Sir Anerood Jugnauth was not lured by power to forsake his principles but was smart to position himself in every opportunity before the sunset. He made it a point for Mauritians to know more about his past so that they would identify more readily with him.

Despite his tenacity, he had two legitimate soft spots: his great love for Lady Jugnauth and soccer. Government or family matters could wait a little bit when big matches were on. Lady Jugnauth remained the pillar of his strength, a life partner, a great partner with the common bond of affection and shared values; they stood together and were an exemplary

couple. Sarojini Jugnauth has never been too discrete or forward but a shadow who never overshadowed her partner for life.

My relations with Sir Anerood Jugnauth were more sour than sweet, but the respect was mutual. I went to see him a few times to make representations and, on one occasion, called on him to redress a grievance of award of scholarships to two deserving cases. The matter was swiftly resolved; justice prevailed. Sir Anerood Jugnauth was a swift mover and never half measures, but had the courage also to acknowledge when mistakes were made. His accessibility gave him the edge and he grasped every opportunity to consolidate his hold over the electorate.

As Prime Minister, not only was he the first amongst the equals, but he acted with a tight fist as and when required to convey strong signals; his leadership was uncontested. There is no predictability, Mr Speaker, Sir, and reliability in the dynamics of politics and the landscape changes, and who knew better than Sir Anerood Jugnauth, in moments of needs, common interests and values prevail and Prime Ministers come together. There were some interesting piques between Sir Anerood Jugnauth and Navin Ramgoolam. At the end of the day, all politicians are mere mortals, but the human touch makes the difference. The life of a great leader has no beginning nor ending. He or she fights to recover what has been lost and found. The life of Sir Anerood Jugnauth was, to a large extent, beauty in simplicity. Yusuf Mohamed, a seasoned politician and lawyer and former Minister, would agree that Sir Anerood Jugnauth never campaigned in poetry, but truly governed fearlessly in prose.

He had the team when the challenges were daunting, and opportunities were indeed nothing. Is it a tryst of destiny that Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam and Sir Anerood Jugnauth have to meet again under better auspices at the Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam Botanical Garden in the shade of *Le Château de Mon Plaisir*? Many untold stories of unity may unfurl for the sake of our great little country.

Time is indeed a healer, Lady Sarojini Jugnauth; the memories live on. May I, Mr Speaker, Sir, through you, humbly convey my heartfelt condolences to the Prime Minister, Mrs Kobita Jugnauth, Mrs Shalini Malhotra and her husband, all the grandchildren, Lady Jugnauth, the close relatives of the family and all the supporters of Sir Anerood Jugnauth.

May God bless his soul!

(Applause)

Mr Speaker: Hon. Collendavelloo!

Mr I. Collendavelloo (Third Member for Stanley & Rose Hill): Mr Speaker, Sir, I speak today in homage to Sir Anerood Jugnauth, inspired as I am by these words of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry –

« *On ne voit bien qu'avec le cœur. L'essentiel est invisible pour les yeux.* »

Our eyes always miss the essential; it is our heartbeat that counts. This is why it is daunting to appraise the life and career of this man whose imprint is so deeply ingrained in all sectors of Mauritian life.

We are gathered here today to convey our respect for an admirable man who, from very modest beginnings, rose to hold the highest positions in the country. Acclaimed internationally, he was in receipt of numerous prestigious awards, but he always retained a life of simplicity and humility. His unfailing discipline and rigour always guided him in his responsibilities. We have seen him in victory, we saw him in defeat, we saw him in times of success as well as in times of failure, but after each fall, he got up with stoic spirit and persevered on his trajectory. This was because he was imbued with a sincere desire to serve his country. This is the image of Sir Anerood Jugnauth that shall remain in our minds; that of a leader with an unbreakable sense of patriotism.

Mr Speaker, Sir, who could have believed that at the age of 84 in 2014, he would have embarked in a political campaign and led the *Alliance Lepep* to a landslide victory, just because he was convinced that he had a just cause to fight? He had given his word to fight for his country, and this he did to the very last. He was *un homme de parole*.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the people of Rodrigues will forever remember him for the setting up of the Regional Assembly, giving dignity and recognition to the Rodriguan population. Until then, Rodrigues had been no more but a mere geographical expression. None other than Sir Anerood Jugnauth would, at the age of 88, have had the courage, strength and tenacity to take up his lawyer's garb before the duly constituted international bodies to fight for the completion of our struggle for independence. He did all this for the Chagossian people, for the complete independence of Mauritius, for Africa, and for universal human rights, the more so against the most powerful nations of the world.

Mr Speaker, Sir, Sir Anerood did not hesitate to reinforce women's participation in political and economic life. The introduction of the Sex Discrimination Act in 2002, the

ratification of two fundamental Conventions of the International Labour Organisation on Equal Remuneration and Discrimination are some examples, the reforms of the *Code Civil* in the 1980s as well.

During his mandates, substantial improvements were made to improve conditions of work. It is in 2001 that the End of the Year Gratuity Act was enacted to make the payment of the end of the year bonus a permanent feature. The Welfare Funds for EPZ workers, tourism sector workers, seafarers, bus industry employees were all of his making.

In 2014, he relentlessly waged a campaign to increase pension benefits to the underprivileged. And we should not forget the Companies Act of 1984 which put our economy on the path of modernity. He will also be remembered for having agreed to abolish the death penalty. He will be remembered also for some controversial pieces of legislation, but which remained in our Statute Book over the years.

I also have to mention the strong will and determination with which he led the country to the status of Republic. Our country was fortunate to have such a man of strong leadership and sense of purpose. He had the daring to stand against any authority or directive that did not serve the interests of the country. He would never allow himself to become the hostage to anyone. As an attentive listener, his decisions were based on lucidity, rationality and judiciousness.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I grew up in La Caverne, not far from Sir Anerood. I remember how until 1982, he would go to Vacoas market every Friday afternoon. His wife, Lady Sarojini, was my school teacher in 1956. I have personally known Sir Anerood since I joined the Bar in 1978. I have known him as a colleague, a leader, as well as an opponent. We have always shared a relationship based on brotherhood and respect. He loved his profession. He loved his political and social struggle, but, above all, he loved his family, his wife, Lady Sarojini, his children, Pravind, now the Prime Minister, and daughter Shalini, and his grandchildren. But how can I not mention his love for football? I can still remember the day when he sneaked out of Parliament in 2001, a few minutes before dinner time; he returned half an hour late after dinner, and that was extremely unusual for him. He was in an extremely short temper. Upon being asked what had happened, he angrily retorted, '*Manchester finn perdi*', and he kept muttering comments on the match to the then Deputy Prime Minister who remained unimpressed by these manifestations of dissatisfaction.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I conclude with these words of Saint- Exupéry, which epitomize the essence of Sir Anerood Jugnauth -

« Etre homme, c'est précisément être responsable. C'est sentir, en posant sa pierre, que l'on contribue à bâtir le monde. »

In the name of the ML and of my two ML colleagues, hon. Nazurally and hon. Rawoo, and in my personal name, I would ask you to convey to Lady Sarojini and to all the family the warmest expression of our sympathy and condolences.

Thank you, Mr Speaker, Sir.

(Applause)

Mr Speaker: Hon. Léopold!

Mr J. B. Léopold (Second Member for Rodrigues): Mr Speaker, Sir, thank you for giving me the opportunity to address the House, on behalf of the people of Rodrigues, of OPR party and its Leader Louis Serge Clair, also the current Chief Commissioner of Rodrigues, to pay tribute to late the Rt. Hon. Sir Anerood Jugnauth, former Prime Minister and President of the Republic of Mauritius.

Mr Speaker, Sir, before going any further, allow me to join my fellow hon. friends to send the deepest condolences of we, the people of Rodrigues, to his wife, his son, his daughter, the whole family, friends, and the Mauritian nation.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the Republic has lost a great man and Rodrigues has lost a great friend. I will not elaborate on the very long career of late Sir Anerood Jugnauth. His legacy as the longest serving Prime Minister in this very House is much testament of the great vision of the man and of the trust that the people of Mauritius had for him.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I certainly associate myself with all the party representatives in this House to commemorate the extraordinary life and unique contribution of Sir Anerood Jugnauth for his country. We have heard so many things said, in this House, on his personal achievement and style of doing politics.

Tonight, it is with an immense honour, but with such a heavy heart, that I am paying tribute to this great man, to his friendly and political legacy towards Rodrigues Island and its people.

Last Saturday, as the country bid goodbye to SAJ, many of my fellow constituents told me of their deepest sense of despair at the loss of such an important figure for Rodrigues. Many have spent almost the whole day in front of their television. Someone even said that it was as if *“la mort kot nou, dans nou lakour.”*

Mr Speaker, Sir, pardon me, if I am being repetitive, the people of Rodrigues have really lost a great friend. And, I have a special thought for our Chief Commissioner whom I know is very much affected by the demise of Sir Anerood Jugnauth and who deeply regrets that he was not able to pay his respects to this great friend of his, in person.

A special thought also for my hon. friend, PPS Francisco Francois. I know he really wanted to be here to pay tribute and I know that Sir Anerood Jugnauth as well had a particular affection for him. And also, of all the honour my friend had working closely with Sir Anerood Jugnauth who himself long held the portfolio for Rodrigues.

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is a secret for no one that Sir Anerood Jugnauth was not a person out on political correctness. In fact, people admired him for his humility and frankness, we understood.

The Rodriguan population had no doubt of the affection of Sir Anerood Jugnauth for it which were often reiterated during his countless visits to Rodrigues, be it as President, Prime Minister, or other official capacities he held, as well as privately.

His contribution while serving the people of Rodrigues in his numerous capacities is innumerable and same paved the way to an autonomous and sustainable Rodrigues island.

Mr Speaker, Sir, Sir Anerood Jugnauth first visited Rodrigues in March 1982. What struck many at that time is that, he was so well aware of the situation prevailing in Rodrigues during that period and was also well aware of the wish of the Rodriguan people for a decentralised system of Government.

On 19 March 1982, in his first public speech held at La Ferme Rodrigues, under the political coalition MMM/PSM, to the Rodriguan people, he said and I quote –

“Ena beaucoup quique chose qui pe passer à Rodrigues aujourd’hui qui a pe crée enn mécontentement, qui a pe crée enn frustration, chez le peuple Rodriguais. Nou ti a fine capave évite li camarade.”

He further stated, and I quote –

“Bann frere ek soeur dans Rodrigues zot ena capacité, bizin donne zot locassion pou qui zot occupe zot zafaire.”.

It was at this same public meeting that he tossed the word ‘autonomy’ for the first time to the Rodriguan people, a status to which the OPR party was wishing since 1976.

On that 19 March 1982, the Rodriguan population heard late Sir Anerood Jugnauth state that he himself and the political authorities of the time were bringing all their energy together to fulfil the wish of the Rodriguan people, into giving Rodrigues its autonomy. The House will recall that it was under his Prime ministership, following the general elections of June 1982, that the first Rodriguan OPR’s very own Louis Serge Clair, formed part of Cabinet of the Central Government of Mauritius and was entrusted with the portfolio for Rodrigues. *“Une action qui constituait un pas géant dans la promotion de la démocratie régionale.”* The people of Rodrigues have not forgotten. And we also remember the renewed trust that late Sir Anerood Jugnauth placed anew in the OPR following the general elections and in the meantime, the MSM party had been created.

In 1987, as Parliament and the country embarked on the vision of Sir Anerood Jugnauth of making Mauritius a Republic, he entrusted the portfolio of the Ministry of Rodrigues and Outer Islands to Serge Clair, *dans cet esprit d’une même république à venir et d’une seule nation* so as to bring that inclusiveness throughout the territory.

History will recall the paradigm shift Sir Anerood Jugnauth continuously brought to the administration of Rodrigues, the establishment of the Rodrigues Local Council in 1992, as a first instance. History will also recall that, in 2000, the MSM/MMM Government, under his leadership, made Rodrigues a duty free zone.

Furthermore, on the symbolic day of 01 February 2001, during his official visit to Rodrigues, along with his then Vice-Prime Minister, hon. Bérenger, Sir Anerood Jugnauth announced that his Government is definitely giving Rodrigues its autonomy. To mark his seriousness to the Rodriguan people, a delegation was immediately sent to Trinidad and Tobago to examine the decentralised system thereat.

The people of Rodrigues witnessed his commitment to value and whenever possible enhance Rodriguan capacities when late Antoinette Prudence and late former Judge Robert Ahnee were preferred by the competent instance to advise the Government on the new decentralised form of Government for Rodrigues.

On Tuesday 20 November 2001, at half past two in the afternoon exactly, Sir Anerood Jugnauth presented the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Bill in this House, in Second Reading, and it was a roll-on landmark for history again. Sir Anerood Jugnauth was present in Rodrigues on 12 October 2002 for the establishment of the First Rodrigues Regional Executive Council in his capacity as Prime Minister; officiated at the establishment of the Second and Third Regional Assembly in his capacity as Guardian of the Constitution, on Saturday 16 December 2006 and Saturday 11 February 2012, respectively, as well as for the reconstitution of the Executive Council in January 2011. He constantly showed his interests in the success of Rodrigues and often was the guest of honour at Rodrigues Day celebrations.

In fact, he never missed an opportunity to congratulate and encourage the Rodriguan people on their capacity to manage the decentralised system of governance and be an integral part of a prosperous Republic of Mauritius. And these anniversaries allowed him to be up close with the whole Rodriguan population. Little did we know that, as he visited the Island several times in 2019, including the Rodrigues Day whereby it was his last visit to Rodrigues, the wave at the door of the plane was a final farewell '*à la terre Rodriguaise*'.

Sir Anerood Jugnauth has departed from our physical world, but he lives on in the heart of every Rodriguan.

Mr Speaker, Sir, soon after the announcement of his death, the Executive Council of Rodrigues took the decision to organise an official salute at La Residence, which is now the seat of the Executive Council, where Sir Anerood Jugnauth resided when he visited Rodrigues along with Lady Sarojini in the early 80s; there was no hotel in Rodrigues at that time.

A Condolence Book was also placed thereat and many Rodriguan residents have welcomed this opportunity to pay their respects for this great man.

Furthermore, Mr Speaker, Sir, the Rodrigues Regional Assembly has been recalled on this Thursday 10 June to pay tribute to that exceptional man, who so immensely contributed to the development of Rodrigues.

The Leader of *Organisation du Peuple Rodriguais (OPR)*, Louis Serge Clair, always refers to Sir Anerood Jugnauth as a role model, with whom he has worked as Minister for 10 years. He always recalls how he learnt a lot from the man and constantly prompts us to

adhere to the good principles he learnt from Sir Anerood Jugnauth. Myself, I often hear him say, I quote –

“SAJ a toujours dit : ‘pas met néné dans l’administration, dan la police, dan PSC ek dan Judiciaire.’

Sir Anerood Jugnauth will be, in many ways, sorely missed by the Rodriguan people. He has constructively impacted on the evolution of Rodrigues and left an indelible impression on the Rodrigues of yesterday, of today and tomorrow.

Sir Anerood Jugnauth’s footprints on Rodrigues are cast in stone for generations to come. Sir Anerood Jugnauth loved Rodrigues and this has, time and again, been evidenced in his bold decision for the prosperity of the Island within a strong Republic and our people now look forward to you, hon. Prime Minister, to keep this special affection alive.

Mr Speaker, Sir, on behalf of all the people of Rodrigues, I would like to present again, my sincere condolences to Sir Anerood Jugnauth’s family, especially to Lady Sarojini and the Prime Minister of the Republic of Mauritius and reassure them of our affection and prayers at this difficult time.

Thank you, Mr Speaker, Sir.

(Applause)

Mr Speaker: Thank you.

Hon. Members, I wish to associate myself with the kind words, observations and expressions of condolences conveyed by Members from both sides of the House.

Hon. Members, as Speaker, I would like to add a few words of homage to the memory of Sir Anerood Jugnauth.

I am sure, many of those who had the opportunity of knowing Sir Anerood Jugnauth would wish to join me in this endeavour.

I have had the singular privilege of knowing Sir Anerood since my early age. Sir Anerood had always been a great humanitarian. He was imbued with a great sense of compassion and humility. He grew up in difficult times. Later, as a politician, he committed himself to the upliftment of the Welfare State and the empowerment of women in the country. The reason why he drove his policies towards the betterment of the population with particular attention to children and the elderly.

Under his Prime Ministership, I had the distinct opportunity to serve the House as a Member of Parliament and Parliamentary Private Secretary, and much later as Ambassador to the Republic of Egypt and afterwards to the United States of America.

During his parliamentary service, Sir Anerood Jugnauth would have been known for his intellectual capabilities in the mastery of his brief and ability to present arguments. Sir Anerood Jugnauth also attached scrupulous importance to parliamentary discipline and etiquette.

Hon. Members, on this note, I thank you for your kind attention and participation. I will convey the tribute paid by the House to late Sir Anerood Jugnauth and the expressions of condolences to the bereaved family, to his spouse, Lady Sarojini Jugnauth, his son, the hon. Prime Minister and his family, his daughter, Mrs Shalini Malhotra and her family.

I thank you once more for your attention. The House stands adjourned.

At 7.38 p.m., the Assembly rose and stood adjourned, as already resolved, to Friday 11 June 2021 at 5.00 p.m.