

“We don’t have an ideological divide between parties in this country” – Meetarbhan

In an event billed as ‘Youth Challenging the Political System’, the Institute of Social Development and Peace (ISDP) invited panellists across the socio-political spectrum to discuss crucial issues on Saturday 6 August. Among those present were Milan Meetarbhan, former ambassador to the United Nations, Rabin Bhujun, managing editor at ION News, Rajen Bablee, executive director at Transparency Mauritius, Maneesh Gobin, MP for the *Alliance Lepep* and Reaz Chuttoo, trade unionist.

Speaking candidly about the issue of party funding, Chuttoo was very critical of the current political class. “We are facing a qualitative degradation of the political class in Mauritius,” he said. “Nowadays, even if you lose an election, you can still be a winner with all the funding you receive during political campaigns.”

As for Bhujun, he argued that the legal system did not offer the adequate structure to regulate party funding. “Our laws for party funding are fourth-world grade; they are a mockery,” he said. Bablee said that the lack of legal structure was also due to the fact that many politicians operate in a



Roukaya Kasenally, panel chair and lecturer at the University of Mauritius, Rabin Bhujun, managing editor at ION News, Reaz Chuttoo, trade unionist and Rajen Bablee, executive director at Transparency Mauritius.

parallel system. “The political class has created a system of its own,” he said. “The same laws don’t apply to them.”

As the discussion switched to party structures, Gobin suggested that the current structure in the *Alliance Lepep* worked. “The leaders of the three parties need to compromise but they make it work,” he said. In his intervention, Meetarbhan argued the exact opposite. “When they invited me to come to speak

as part of this panel, they said I would have 10 minutes to talk about party structures,” he said. “I thought it would take me only 10 seconds because there is no party structure in Mauritius.”

According to Meetarbhan, the issue with our political system starts at its very core. “We don’t have an ideological divide between parties in this country,” he said. “Is it possible to have a party structure if there is no policy or ideological debate?” ■



Susan Coles, Australian High Commissioner, during the workshop.

Workshop for women entrepreneurs in Mauritius

The Australian High Commission and the *Association Mauricienne des Femmes Chefs d’Entreprise* held a workshop on ‘Matching of Mentors and Mentees for Women Entrepreneurs in Mauritius’ at the Emtel Innovation Centre in Ebène on Tuesday 9 August.

As part of the workshop, a manual written by Diane Tompson, oceanic regional commissioner for the World Women Heads of Enterprises (FCEM) and Aline Wong, regional commissioner for the FCEM, was launched. Entitled “Women’s Economic Empowerment in the Indian Ocean”, the manual was distributed to those present. The coaching and mentoring programme for women entrepreneurs will also be launched in Madagascar and Comoros later this month. ■

World-renowned Indian musician a fan of Mauritius

North Indian musician Ustad Shujaat Hussain Khan’s recent concert at the Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre, attended by hundreds of Mauritians, was a success. According to Immedia, the organiser, the artist seems to have a soft spot for Mauritius, having performed on our shores several times. Those he delighted with his talent are already looking forward to his next performance. ■



Ustad Shujaat Hussain Khan.