

**LAUNCHING OF THE LINCOLN'S INN ALUMNI
ASSOCIATION, MAURITIUS**

16 NOVEMBER 2012, MARITIM, BALACLAVA

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to this evening's function: the launching of the Lincoln's Inn Alumni Association Mauritius.

Let me first of all, extend a special welcome to our distinguished overseas guests, Sir Michael Wright, Julian Goose and his wife Susan, Joanna Robinson, Jerome Lynch, Caroline Harrison and Anthony Moore.

The timing of this launching could not have been better. Indeed, it so happens that our present Chief Justice, Attorney General, and Speaker of the National Assembly, all called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn. Over and above these, our list of alumni include three sitting judges of the Supreme Court

including the Chairperson of the Institute of Judicial and Legal training. On a broader note, the former judge Droopnath Ramphul and a former Prime Minister in the person of Sir Anerood Jugnauth are amongst eminent personalities we count as alumni. At present there are 103 practicing members of the Bar which makes Lincoln's a popular Inns of court for Mauritian barristers trained in the United Kingdom. This is therefore the ideal occasion to set up a live forum for our alumni.

The world we live in today is fast changing with the frantic pace of technology. This is being reflected in the way we go about carrying out our trades and professions. In Mauritius, we need to keep pace with the changes that are taking place in the legal world. We need to raise our legal standards and measure ourselves with the best in the world. And what better opportunity for us to learn from the expertise of our colleagues from Lincoln's inn who practise in the world's most respected legal centre. This alumni can play a small but important part in

cementing relationships with other alumni in other parts of the Commonwealth.

Lincoln's Inn must obviously bring fond memories for all of us who have been there. We each have our own anecdotes and stories to tell. Walking through the main gate, alongside the manicured lawn and in to the splendour of the Grand Hall, one could easily understand why it is considered as a jewel of London's architectural heritage. Quite apart from the romanticism of the setting, most of us who were homesick and sunsick in the grey months of winter in London readily identified with Dickensian description of the Great Hall in Bleak House :(I quote): ***"The raw afternoon is rawest, and the dense fog is densest, and the muddy street are muddiest , near the leaden-headed obstruction, appropriate ornament for the threshold of a leaden-headed old corporation, Temple Bar. And hard by Temple Bar, in Lincoln's Inn Hall, at the very heart of the fog, sits the Lord Chancellor in his High Court of Chancery"***.

The library with its creaky staircase also brings back lovely memories. Many of us would remember this elderly gentleman, sitting at his reserved window table, Lord Denning. He would always spare a moment to be photographed with an overseas student.

For all these reasons, Lincoln's Inn is obviously close to my heart.

There is something more I must confess. Dinners were a golden opportunity for me to meet urmila, now my wife. I would simply go through the booking register to see the dates which she had booked for her dinners and would coincide my dining dates with hers. I would sit next to her and pretend our meeting was sheer coincidence. We were married after we were called to the bar.

Ladies and Gentlemen, let me thank you for sparing your valuable time to make tonight a success. I hope that this will be the beginning of an exciting endeavour.

16.11.2012