



INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC SPEAKING COMPETITION

ON THE 21ST MAY 2009, SEBASTIEN NG KUET LEONG, REPRESENTING MAURITIUS, WON THIS PRESTIGIOUS COMPETITION WITH A FANTASTIC SPEECH ENTITLED "COLOURING GREY MATTER, BRAIN BOOSTING".



Roland Kemp Photography

***SHARMILLA BHIMA ELECTED PRESIDENT OF
THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION MAURITIUS BRANCH***

At the Executive Committee Meeting held on 25th May 2009, Ms Sharmilla Bhima was elected as the new President of the English-Speaking Union - Mauritius Branch.

Ms Bhima holds a B.A (Hons) in Laws (1995) from the University of Reading, U.K and has been a practising barrister for several years. Since August 2007, she became an Associate of Appleby Mauritius.

Ms Bhima joined the ESU in 2001. She has been an active member of the Executive Committee since March 2002 and represented ESU on the board of the "President's Fund for Creative Writing in English" from 2006 to 2008. She attended the ESU International Summer Conference held at Oriel College, Oxford, in 2002.



*Speech of Ms Sharmilla Bhima, President of ESU -
Mauritius on the occasion of the 12th Annual Dinner
held on Friday 17th June 2009*

His Excellency the Rt. Hon. Sir Anerood Jugnauth,
President of the Republic of Mauritius
Lady Sarojni Jugnauth
The Hon. V.K. Bunwaree, Minister of Education,
Culture and Human Resources
The Hon. Yeung Sik Yuen, Chief Justice of Mauritius
Mrs Yeung Sik Yuen
His Excellency Dr J. Murton, the British High
Commissioner
His Excellency Mr. Ganapathi, the Indian High
Commissioner
The Governor of the Bank of Mauritius
Distinguished Guests
Ladies and Gentlemen

Good evening!

In my own name and on behalf
of the Executive Committee of
the English-Speaking Union, I
have the pleasure of welcoming
you to the 12th Annual Dinner of
the English-Speaking Union.



I would be grateful if you would join me and rise in
order to pay tribute to Cardinal Margeot who passed
away this morning.

First of all, I wish to extend the apologies of our
patron, Sir Victor Glover, and Lady Glover, who
cannot be with us tonight as they are abroad, but who
are indeed with us in spirit.

I hope you will pardon my digression at the very start
of my address to you when I say that tonight as I
stand before you I realise how formidable a task I
have.

I am before an exceptional audience. I can see
before me people whose examples and speeches
have been my inspiration and in many ways my
heroes and heroines. I have before me a formidable
host of established speakers and writers!

A wind of change is blowing!

A wind of change is blowing at the ESU.

The past year has been eventful.

It witnessed the departure of several members within
the Executive Committee namely:

- Mr Sanjit Teelock who stepped down as
President but remains as the Master of
Ceremony of all ESU's competitions;
- Mrs Meena Seetulsing (Vice-President);
- Mr Parmaseeven Veerarago (Secretary);
- Mrs Deborah de Chazal (Treasurer);
- Mr Surendra Bissondoyal, (Member); and
- Mrs Lina So, our Executive Officer.

We thank them for their dedication and commitment
during the past years and wish them continued
success for their future endeavours.

We are pleased to announce that we have now the
following persons serving on the Executive Committee
comprising:

- New President - Ms Sharmilla Bhima
- Mr Prem Burton, new Vice-President;
- Mrs Ghurburrun-Akaloo (daughter of late Sir
Rabindra Ghurburrun our 1st Patron) - New
Treasurer;
- Mr Rajen Gangoosingh appointed as the New
Secretary of the ESU ; and
- Mrs Pratima Devi Beedasy (New member).

And, indeed this year was marked by the exceptional
achievement of Mr Sebastien Ng Kuet Leong at the
International Public Speaking Competition 2009.

What can I say on this that would be news to you?

Well, we, at the ESU, modestly speaking, we would like
to think that this achievement is just us the ESU. And, the
culmination of long years of hard work and dedication of
the ESU!

However, the truth is that Sebastien is an exceptional
young man whose success not only reflects the
commitment of his teachers and the rector of St Esprit
College, Mr Jacques Malié, but also and importantly the
silent support of his parents. And, somewhere, the ESU,
of course!

To you Sebastien you have set the standards very high
and may not yet have realised the full extent of your
achievement. In many ways you have become the role
model of the youth of today and truly epitomise the
celebrated motto 'Yes, we can'.

We can only say at this stage that we wish you continued
success and pray that you leave your footsteps in
whatever you undertake. And you can rest assured of our
continuing support.

To you the finalists of the National Public Speaking
Competition 2009, reaching the finals is an achievement
in itself that deserves a recognition of its own. Our
message to you tonight is that we have great hope in you
for next year – keep pushing the standards.

Now, a word on our loyal sponsors and well-wishers
amongst which the Government of Mauritius. The ESU is
very grateful to all its members, donors and sponsors
without whose support during the past decade our
mission of Creating Global understanding through
English would have remained engraved in tablets of
stone.

We therefore wish to thank our Sponsors and Donors for
making our 12th Annual Dinner possible namely:

SPONSORS

- ❖ HSBC MAURITIUS
- ❖ AMBULATORIUM LTD
- ❖ FOOD CANNERS LTD
- ❖ CIM FINANCE LTD
- ❖ JADE GROUP OF COMPANIES
- ❖ SCOTT & CO. LTD
- ❖ HAREL MALLAC GROUP
- ❖ TAYLOR SMITH INVESTMENTS LTD
- ❖ MR & MRS DAN BHIMA
- ❖ SHELL MAURITIUS LTD
- ❖ LEAL & CO LTD

DONORS

- ❖ THE BRITISH HIGH COMMISSION
- ❖ BARCLAYS PLC
- ❖ J. KALACHAND & CO. LTD
- ❖ THE STATE BANK OF MAURITIUS

*Address by the President of the Republic on the occasion of
the 12th Annual dinner of the English-Speaking Union*

Your participation tonight and hopefully your continuing support to our mission bring home more than ever the wisdom of our forebears – that no matter how hard the times, education remains a priority within the global village. And indeed investment in education remains the most powerful legacy that can be bequeathed to the younger generation.

Through education we transcend barriers, establish wider networks, accommodate others, project ourselves to greater heights and grow wiser!

To this I shall add that this falls squarely with our mission of Creating Global Understanding through English.

Languages are instruments of communication. They are not to be regarded as barriers that divide people. In fact, they are the links that bind people in the global village.

We would like to think that the English language plays an important role towards this end.

Ladies and Gentlemen, tonight, my address to you would not be complete if I do not express our deep gratitude and thanks to Mrs Lina So, who has been our Executive Officer for the past 14 years. For being a privileged witness to what I will say, her smile and sincerity somehow convinced us all to join the ranks and participate in the ESU events.

In the same breath I wish to thank the newly constituted Executive Committee for their understanding and support.

To you Mr President and Lady Jugnauth, we thank you for your faith in our mission and effort and, for making it to our Annual Dinner every year.

Ladies and Gentlemen enjoy our 12th Annual Dinner the Chinese way!!



The Hon. Minister of Education, Culture & Human Resources

The Hon. Chief Justice

Members of the Diplomatic Corps

The President and Members of the English-Speaking Union

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

It gives us great pleasure, my wife and myself, to be party to the 12th Annual Dinner of the English-Speaking Union. You have chosen a very nice setting for this dinner.

First of all I congratulate the newly elected Chairperson of the Union, Miss Sharmilla Bhima. I hope and I am sure you will serve the Union with dedication and passion, as your distinguished predecessors.

We all live in the same country and I cannot, as President of the Republic, dissociate myself from the talk of the town, which is the outstanding performance of Mr Sebastien Ng Kuet Leong. Every year, the English-Speaking Union has been sending a student to participate in the highly-rated International Public Speaking Competition. As you know, participation is itself a great achievement. The more so that these participants, apart from displaying public speaking skills, also bring back memories of their interactions with other participants.

I am informed that this year some 73 students from 42 countries took part in the competition. These participants were school and university students who have won prestigious national public speaking competitions in their own countries. This competition is also an opportunity for the students to understand each other's backgrounds and cultures.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Coming back to the hero of the day, Sebastien, let me assure you that your outstanding success has brought pride to the country.



I am informed that your speech entitled “Colouring Grey Matter – Brain Boosting” was an exceptional and marvellous one. Sebastien, you are today the pride, not only for your parents, teachers, classmates but also for the whole nation. Some time back, the country witnessed the victory of Bruno Julie in sports. Now it's your turn in the field of public speaking. Little by little we see our compatriots coming out of the lot.

This small country of ours needs role models like you. The reputation of Mauritius is further enhanced on the international scene by your outstanding performance. I know a great part of your success is the result of your own hardwork, nevertheless the credit also goes to the English-Speaking Union.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since its inception, the English-Speaking Union has always been headed by persons of high academic and professional background. The Union has been trying over the years to give to the English Language “ses lettres de noblesses”. I know there are other NGOs and organisations which are actively involved in the propagation and upliftment of English Language. I wish to congratulate all of you.

I am also informed that the other activities of the Union are ongoing recurrent features such as the National Spelling Bee Competition, the Commonwealth Essay Competition and the award of scholarship to Mauritian teachers.

With these words, Ladies and Gentlemen, I wish you “Bon Appetit”. 2009 has been a successful year for all of you here. Let's hope that the future will be even more fruitful.

I thank you for your attention.



Sebastien delivered his speech in front of an important audience at the ESU 12th Annual dinner

March 2009 : Sebastien Ng Kuet Leong won the Public Speaking Competition held at the Municipal Council of Curepipe after which he was acclaimed the Winner of the International Public Speaking Competition held in London on 21st May 2009

55 students in Mauritius and 15 in Rodrigues took part in this competition. 9 participants were selected to compete in the Finals of the National competition in front of a judging panel composed of Sir Victor Glover, Kt, GOSK, Mr Craig White, Acting Deputy Chief of Mission of the US Embassy and Mr Julian Peachey, English Services Manager at the British Council:-

- Ms Talya Cader Carim, Queen Elizabeth College
- Ms Darshinee Choytah, Rabindranath Tagore Secondary School
- Ms Zeenath Hossen, Northfields International High School
- Ms Shazia Kawssar Jeetoo, France Boyer de la Giroday SSS
- Ms Marie Stepahie Juste, Marechal College, Rodrigues
- Sebastien Ng Kuet Loeng, College du St Esprit
- Ms Aswina U. Ramjee, R. Seeneevassen SSS
- Mr Akshay Kumar Seeborun, Royal College Curepipe
- Mr Ajaghen Seeneevassen, Royal College Port Louis

Mr Sebastien Ng Kuet Leong of College du St Esprit won the National competition. Ms Aswina Ramjee of Renganaden Seeneevassen SSS was the runner-up.



The Public Speaking Competition, which is an annual event, intended for students aged 16 to 20 years of age, gives not only practical experience in the fundamental skills of public speaking but enables the students across the world to meet, exchange views and form friendship.

The ESU would like to thank all judges, host schools and participants for their huge contribution in making this event a national success. Special thanks are due to the sponsors of the Public Speaking Competition and without whom, it would not have taken place: Star Knitwear Group, Mauritius Housing Company Ltd, the British Council and the Municipal Council of Curepipe. We would also like to thank Mr Sanjit Teelock for his contribution to the event.

IPSC 09 : A Win for Mauritius :

At the International Public Speaking Competition held in May 2009 in London, Mr Ng Kuet Leong's speech enabled our National flag to fly high in this event which gathered 73 participants from 42 countries worldwide.

This is the very first time a Mauritian wins this prestigious competition. Despite his young age, Sebastien Ng Kuet Leong has delivered an exceptional speech entitled "**Colouring Grey Matter, Brain Boosting**" which brought to light the issues associated with Alzheimer disease and how human beings should constantly regenerate and renew their own minds. Sebastien Ng Kuet Leong's victory has placed Mauritius on the world map of English eloquence and he stands today as a role-model to other students.

ESU would like to encourage future participants to this competition which has been running in Mauritius since 1994. The heats for next year's competition will start at the end of January 2010 and will lead to the National Finals in March. The International Public Speaking Competition will take place in London from 17th to 20th May 2010.

**COMMONWEALTH DAY OBSERVANCE
MARCH 2009**

The English-Speaking Union took the opportunity of marking the Commonwealth Day at the National Final of the Public Speaking Competition held on the 18th of March 2009. Her Majesty the Queen's Commonwealth Day Message was read out by Sir Victor Glover, Kt, GOSK, Honorary Representative of the Royal Commonwealth Society and the six affirmations were read out by Miss Rakshita Vandanna Mungur, Winner of the 2008 Public Speaking Competition.

First Affirmation : We affirm that every person – of whatever colour, class or creed – possesses unique worth and dignity.

Second Affirmation : We affirm our respect for the world and for all living creatures and pledge that we will be its stewards by caring for every part of it,

Third Affirmation : We affirm our belief in justice for everyone and peace between peoples and nations

Fourth Affirmation: We celebrate faith and love as the foundation of all human relationships.

Fifth Affirmation: We affirm that we each belong to our own nation and to the whole human family.

Sixth Affirmation: In marking the 60th anniversary of the modern Commonwealth, we re-affirm our belief in the Commonwealth and its young people as a force for good in the world. We pledge ourselves to its service, now and in the future.

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE
ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION**

The Annual General Meeting of the English-Speaking Union was held on Monday 20th April 2009 at the British Council in Rose-Hill. At this meeting, Mr Sanjit Teelock announced that he would step down as the President of the ESU. Several members of the Executive Committee also resigned: Mr P Veeraragoo (Secretary), Mrs Deborah de Chazal (Treasurer), Mrs M Seetulsingh (Vice-President) and Mr S. Bissoondoyal (Member).

We would like to thank the above members for having served the English-Speaking Union with dedication for many years. Despite leaving the Executive Committee, we are happy that they are staying as members and will continue to assist us in many ways.

At its 55th Executive Committee meeting held on 25th May 2009, the following bearers were appointed to serve the English-Speaking Union for the year 2009 – 2010

Patron	Sir Victor Glover, Kt GOSK
President	Ms Sharmilla Bhima
Vice-President	Mr Mohamad A. Vayid, CMG, GOSK
Vice-President	Prof Jagadish Manrakhan, GOSK
Vice-President	Mr A. Prem Burton
Secretary	Mr Rajen Gangoosingh
Vice-Secretary	Mr Parmanand Nunkoo, OSK, Mr Clive Roger Barnes
Treasurer	Mrs Yajna Ghurburrun Akaloo
British High Commission	H.E. the British High Commissioner, Dr John E. Murton
US Embassy	Mrs Virginia Blaser, Chargée d'Affaires / Mr Craig White, Public Affairs Officer
British Council	The Director, Ms Dawn Long or her representative
Ministry of Education, Culture & Human Resources (Culture Div)	Mrs I. Padaruth-Ruchaia or Ms A. Chummun
Ministry of Education, Culture & Human Resources (Education & HR Division)	Mr S. Narainsamy
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, regional Integration & International Trade	Mr. V. L. Yap, Assistant Secretary
Prime Minister's Office (Home Affairs)	Mrs C. Seewooruthun
Member	Mr Aniroodh Ramjeeawon, PDSM
Member	Mr Brian Colin Davies
Member	Mrs Ida Coombes
Member	Mrs Patricia Day-Hookoomsing
Member	Mrs Pratima Devi Beedasy
Executive Assistant	Mrs Anne-Marie Ahkine

NOMINATE A NEW MEMBER

In the interest of widening the ESU network, we encourage our members to ask your friends and family to become a member.
If everyone introduced just one new member, we would double our membership.

THE ESU NEEDS YOUR HELP

*If you would like to support the English-Speaking Union, by become a member or by making a donation, please contact us on:
Tel 208 8591 / Fax: 213 6543 / Email: esumau@intnet.mu*

INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

- The International Relations Summer Conference, Mansfield College, Oxford : 9th to 15th August 2009.
- The ESU and Globe Education Cultural Seminar for Teachers, Shakespeare's Globe Theatre : 9th to 15th August 2009.
- The International Council Meeting, London : 12th and 13th October 2009
- Award Ceremony and Prize giving of the International Public Speaking Competition at Buckingham Palace, London : 12th November 2009

**NATIONAL SPELLING BEE COMPETITION 2009
MAURITIUS**

This year, 117 schools, with a total of 437 participants, took part in the 8th National Spelling Bee Competition, run for students of Form I, II, III and IV,

The Final of the competition took place on Wednesday 27th May 2009 at the Municipal Council of Curepipe.



Our winners received an encyclopaedia from the US Embassy as well as a bank savings account voucher from the Mauritius Commercial Bank.

Our congratulations go to :

- Form I : Shayaan Moussa of St Andrews School
- Form II : Hanaa R. Hosany, Dr Maurice Curé State College
- Form III : Shivangi Beegoo, Dr Maurice Curé State College
- Form IV : Giresha Jagai, Pailles SSS



The English-Speaking Union would like to thank all the under-mentioned persons for their contribution:

- Our team of Pronouncers : Sir Victor Glover, ESU Patron and Mr Craig White, Acting Deputy Chief of Mission of the US Embassy
- Our Panel of Judges for the Final and heats : Mrs Ida Coombes, Mrs M.J. Chan-Liat, Ms Sharmilla Bhima, Mrs Franca Padayatchy, Mr Prem Burton, Mr Rajen Gangoosingh and Mr Parmanand Nunkoo
- Our sponsors : the Embassy of the United States of America, the Mauritius Commercial Bank and the Municipal Council of Curepipe
- All host schools : Droopnath Ramphul State School, Gaetan Raynal State College, Loreto College Curepipe and College du St Esprit.
- All those who attended the Final
- Last but not least, our gratitude to Mr Sanjit Teelock, our Master of Ceremony.

**NATIONAL SPELLING BEE COMPETITION 2009
RODRIGUES**



A 2-day programme was organised for Rodrigues students on 17th and 18th June 2009.

This year, the National Spelling Bee Competition was held at Marechal College. A total of 60 participants from the 5 schools in Rodrigues, namely Grande Montagne College, Le Chou College, Marechal College, Mont Lubin College and Rodrigues College, took part in this competition.

The winners were:

- Form I : Philip Allas from Rodrigues College
- Form II : Gregory Roussety from Rodrigues College
- Form III : Khareena Peermamode from Rodrigues College
- Form IV : Jeremy Edouard from Marechal College



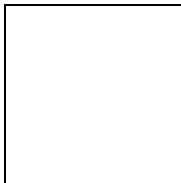
Our thanks to Mr Craig White, Acting Deputy Chief of Mission of the US Embassy, and to Mrs Annick Joseph who flew with us to Rodrigues. Mr White acted as the Pronouncer and Mrs Joseph as our official photographer.

The US Embassy generously offered an encyclopaedia to the winners and a dictionary to all Rodrigues participants. Thank you also to the Mauritius Commercial Bank who offered a Saving Account Voucher to the winners.

A special thank you to the Commission for Education and to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly who sponsored the competition in Rodrigues. We were delighted to welcome Mr Balram Gurriah, Departmental Head and Mr Gaetan Jabeemissar, Deputy Chief Commissioner who attended the competition at Marechal College. We are also very grateful to Mrs V. Emilien of the Commission for Education who assisted us on the jury panel. Our thanks also go to Mr Jean Denis Flore, Rector of Marechal College and Ms Priya Nunkoo, English Teacher. Thank you for your warm welcome. And once again, our thanks to Mr Sanjit Teelock who was the Master of Ceremony.

COMMONWEALTH ESSAY COMPETITION 2009

Watch out for the results
which will be official soon..!!



**A MESSAGE FROM LORD HUNT, CHAIRMAN OF
THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION OF THE
COMMONWEALTH & CHAIRMAN, INTERNATIONAL
COUNCIL**

APPOINTMENT OF NEW DIRECTOR-GENERAL

I am delighted to write with the good news that Mr Michael Lake, CBE, has been appointed to succeed Ms Valerie Mitchell, OBE, as Director-General of the English-Speaking Union of the Commonwealth and Secretary-General of the ESU International Council. Mr Lake has taken up his new post on 20 July 2009.

Michael Lake was educated at Humphrey Davy School, Penzance and at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst. He was commissioned in the British Army and served in Germany, Northern Ireland, the Middle East and the Far East in a variety of roles. On leaving the British Army in 1996, he was appointed Director General of Help the Aged, one of the leading charities in the United Kingdom, with roots in international disaster relief and with both national and global roles in the fields of research, policy development and campaigning, and community work. In 2008, the charity raised circa. £80 million, primarily from public donation.

In April 2009, having managed a merger with Age Concern, another leading UK charity, Michael was appointed as a director of the Princes Charities Office, the managing structure for HRH The Prince of Wales charities group. In addition to those responsibilities, he has served on the boards of Help Age International: the Network Housing Association, the council of the Pensions Advisory Service, the Benevolent and Strategy Committee of The Royal British Legion and the Disasters Emergency Committee. He is currently on the Boards of the Charity Aid Foundation and Charity Bank. He is Chairman of the British Gas Energy Trust of the UK Age Research Forum and of the International Longevity Centre. He is also a non-executive director of Golden Charter Limited. He was appointed CBE in 1996.

Michael is married to Christine, a primary school teacher, and he has three daughters. His leisure interests include most sports and he enjoys ball games, particularly golf. He has a keen interest in the visual arts and collects West Cornwall post-impressionists. He is Chairman of the management company of the Chelsea Arts Club.

Michael looks forward to meeting members of the ESU family.

The Rt Hon The Lord Hunt of Wirral MBE, PC

POEM BY MRS MARIE JOSEPHE CHAN-LIAT

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

There was a time...
English Language was my worst nightmare
My poor vocabulary drove me to despair
Comprehension of this foreign language so formidable
I cried out for help how to jump over this hurdle

There was a time...
Rarely exposed to the spoken English
Imagine the complete confusion of mind
People frowned upon the wrong intonation
Laughed at the funny accent and pronunciation
I felt trapped inside a labyrinth with no apparent exit
Whom to blame? Who's the real culprit?

Those were the days...
Through mockery and cruel laughter I'd found
Words of same family needn't always have the same sound
Alley, barley, convey don't relate
To honey, money, donkey ...
Just as drought to brought
What about love and dove?
I have a cough but I knead a dough...

These are present days...
People don't laugh at me anymore.
I feel safe to speak English with an accent.
People all over the world communicate even more
The English Language has conquered all the barriers
Spoken English is a precious mean to relate among
foreigners.

TO : ESU SCHOOL MEMBERS

1) Visiting Speakers to Schools : ESU is delighted to inform our School members that as from January 2010, our Speakers will be able to address Upper classes students on matters of general interest. Interested schools are invited to contact our office on 208 8591.

2) Teachers who wish to help students, from Primary to lower secondary level, with learning difficulties may request a copy of a Precision Teaching Pack. The programme aims at increasing reading and spelling and uses of high frequency words. Pack will be sent by email to interested teachers. Please call us on 208 8591.

3) The DVD of the International Public Speaking Competition 2009 will be available shortly. Schools interested to purchase a copy are invited to contact us on 208 8591. This will help future participants to improve their public speaking skills and prepare for next year's competition.

**TO : SCHOOLS WHICH HAVE NOT YET JOINED THE
ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION**

We would like to invite schools which have not yet joined the ESU to become a member. ESU is financially dependent on the generosity of all its members to be able to carry out its mission. By becoming a member, you will be supporting us and you will have the possibility to nominate two (2) participants at our next Public Speaking Competition. Please contact us on 208 8591 for an application form.

The President and Members of the Executive Committee of ESU-Mauritius would like to convey its most sincere congratulations to Mr Michael Lake upon his appointment as Director-General of the English-Speaking Union of the Commonwealth and Secretary-General of the ESU International Council. We would like to assure him of our full commitment in carrying out our shared objective : Creating global understanding through English.