

## **DECLARATION OF ASSETS LEGISLATION (NEW) - INTRODUCTION**

**(No. B/102) Mr P. Jhugroo (Second Member for Mahebourg & Plaine Magnien)** asked the Rt. hon. Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Affairs, Minister for Rodrigues and National Development Unit whether, in regard to the disclosure of assets and liabilities on assuming and vacating office, he will state if consideration will be given for the introduction of a new piece of legislation to make it a mandatory requirement not only for Honourable Members but also for –

- (a) high officials of Government;
- (b) advisers to Government, and
- (c) chief executives of parastatal and private institutions wherein Government is a majority shareholder and, for same to apply in respect of assets and liabilities in Mauritius and abroad.

**The Prime Minister:** Madam Speaker, as the House is aware, the Government Programme 2015-2019 already provides for the introduction of a new Declaration of Assets Bill with a view to curbing fraud, corruption, malpractices and irregularities in all aspects of public life and restoring our national values.

My Government will come up with such a Bill as soon as it is ready.

**Mr Ganoo:** Can I ask the Rt. hon. Prime Minister to ensure that when the new law will be presented to the House, if his Ministry could see to it that the definition of the word ‘assets’ is widened so as to include other types of property. As we know that today, in our law, “assets” is defined restrictively! Therefore, can he see to it that this new definition of “assets” is incorporated into the new Bill?

**The Prime Minister:** We will give due consideration to that.

**Mr Uteem:** Can I also ask the Rt. hon. Prime Minister when looking into this new Bill, to give consideration to the possibility of making those declarations of assets public because in the past we had a problem and it is filed with ICAC, whether it has to be laid before the Speaker or not?

**The Prime Minister:** Well, I don’t think it would be proper to make all the declarations, which have been issued, public. It will depend whether the circumstances of any particular case warrants as to make it public.

**Mr Baloomoody:** To carry on from the question of my friend, hon. Ganoo, apart from the definition of ‘assets’, can we enlarge the definition of the surrounding persons, the advisers - the MPs who will have to declare their assets -as well, not to limit it only to children and parents?

**The Prime Minister:** Well, I don’t think we should include advisers. I don’t see it is necessary.

**Mr Bérenger:** I did not catch the answer from the hon. Prime Minister as far as making public the declaration of assets of elected Members and so on. The law that we passed in the past, it was in the law that it would be made public, then supposedly there was a *cafouillage* between ICAC and the Speaker’s Office and so on. On a question of principle, can we have it from the hon. Prime Minister that whatever shape the new piece of legislation on the declaration of assets of Members of Parliament is concerned, those declarations of assets will be made public as it was under the previous law?

**The Prime Minister:** As far as Members of Parliament are concerned, I have no objection.

**Mr Ganoo:** I have a last question. In fact, it was the hon. Prime Minister himself who in 1987 when he was then Prime Minister in this House, of this country, that a Declaration of Assets Act was brought before the Assembly whereby all Members of this House were under the obligation to make their assets public by laying a copy of the affidavit with the Clerk which was laid in the Library of the House so that anybody could have access to that affidavit. The last Government in 2011 sneaked in a provision in the Local Government Act 2011 to do away with this necessity for MPs to make their declaration of assets public. This is why we urge the Rt. hon. Prime Minister to come back to the initial provisions of legislation so that all the MPs should declare their assets publicly.

**The Prime Minister:** The Local Government Act is different. The Bill we are bringing will be very different from that and I just said, insofar as hon. Members of Parliament are concerned, there is no problem.

**Madam Speaker:** Next question, hon. Uteem!

## **HIGHLANDS - SATELLITE CITY**

**(No. B/103) Mr R. Uteem (First Member for Port Louis South & Port Louis Central)** asked the Rt. hon. Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Affairs, Minister for

Rodrigues and National Development Unit whether, in regard to the project for the creation of a satellite city in Highlands, he will state where matters stand.

**The Prime Minister:** Madam Speaker, I wish to inform the House that the project for the construction of a satellite city at Highlands was initiated by my Government in September 2004 and was to be implemented in two phases of 1000 and 2000 *arpents*, respectively.

My vision at that time was to create a state-of-the-art urban development pole to accommodate a mix of business facilities which would have supported the new growth cluster around the Ebène Cybercity, Moka and St Pierre.

I wish to inform the House that, it is still the firm intention of my Government to implement this project.

I am informed that subsequently, following a tender exercise, a Transaction Adviser was appointed in February 2008, by the State Land Development Company Limited, for an *Urban and Knowledge Development* Project on the identified site at Highlands.

Several road shows were organised, both locally and internationally, between July and November 2008, to promote the project. Another tender exercise was thereafter launched with the assistance of the Transaction Advisor, for the selection of a potential firm to implement the project.

In 2009, the then Government decided to set up –

- (i) a Steering Committee under the aegis of the Prime Minister's Office to oversee the selection process and negotiate with the shortlisted qualified applicants, and
- (ii) a Project Implementation Committee, under the aegis of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, to look into the policy issues related to the Project.

However, in December 2010, after having organised all these road shows, paid Rs33.8 m. for transaction advisory services and Rs4.7 m. for marketing expenses and others, the then Government decided not to go ahead with the project.

In 2013, the Government announced that the phase 1 of a new integrated project comprising a Knowledge, Medical and Innovation Hub covering an area of 218 *arpents* would be launched by the State Land Development Co. Ltd (SLDC) on the same site at Highlands.

During the same year, the SLDC, following an open tender exercise appointed a consultant, for a contract sum of Rs4.2 m. for the design, construction and supervision of this new project.

This Government does not intend to proceed further with the project as decided in 2013. We are for the project as it stood initially.

**Mr Uteem:** Madam Speaker, answering to PQ B/819, the then hon. Prime Minister of the previous Government stated that his office has reviewed the Highlands project and I quote

–

“The findings of this review are that from the perspective of the private promoter/developer, the Highlands project would have been a mega bonanza.”

And he went on to cite the figure of Rs15.7 billion. So, may I know from the Rt. hon. Prime Minister what measures will be taken to ensure that there is no repeat of that mega bonanza when the contract will be allocated, if it is allocated?

**The Prime Minister:** We certainly won't follow with the said past.

**Mr Uteem:** Answering to the same PQ, the former Prime Minister expressed concern about moving the administrative centre from Port Louis to Highlands because, I quote –

“It will also impact negatively on the psyche of the inhabitants and residents of Port Louis, adversely affecting downwards the value of property and creating a socio-cultural vacuum that in turn will bite deeply into the relevance of the hitherto sacrosanct memorial statues.”

So, may I know from the Rt. hon. Prime Minister that going ahead with the Highlands Project will not have any negative socio-cultural impact on the inhabitants of Port Louis?

**The Prime Minister:** Well, we will make sure that this won't happen.

**Mr Mohamed:** Could the Rt. hon. Prime Minister, apart from the issue of the socio-cultural impact he talked about, what about the economic impact of moving the Government business all over to Highlands? Would this not have a negative impact on the economic life of the capital city?

**The Prime Minister:** I do not share this view.

**Mr Uteem:** May I know from the Rt. hon. Prime Minister - because I was not party to the previous Government when he proposed to go ahead with the Highlands project - whether that project also included the moving of Parliament?

**The Prime Minister:** Moving of?

**Mr Uteem:** Parliament to Highlands?

**The Prime Minister:** I must say that I do not know.

### **ROAD ACCIDENTS (FATAL) - REPORTED CASES**

**(No. B/105) Mr A. Ameer Meea (Second Member for Port Louis Maritime & Port Louis East)** asked the Rt. hon. Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Affairs, Minister for Rodrigues and National Development Unit whether, in regard to fatal road accidents, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Police, information as to the number of reported cases thereof, since January 2013 to date, on a yearly basis, indicating the additional measures, if any, taken to prevent the recurrence thereof.

**The Prime Minister:** Madam Speaker, I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that the number of reported cases of fatal road accidents since January 2013 to date is as follows –

<b>PERIOD</b>	<b>NUMBER OF CASES</b>
January to December 2013	119
January to December 2014	125
January to 26 February 2015	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>261</b>

I am also informed by the Commissioner of Police that a series of measures are being implemented to curb road accidents. These include sensitisation sessions on road safety and causes of road accidents, roll over simulator to stress on the importance of using seat belts, road block operations and installation of speed cameras around the island.

The Government is deeply concerned by the alarming rate of road accidents, including fatal ones that continue to happen on our roads. I am informed by the Ministry of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport that a new Road Safety Strategy 2015-2020 will be developed that will address key areas such as speeding, drink driving and that will maximise the safety of vulnerable road users such as pedestrians, cyclists and particularly motorcyclists. The aim is to reduce the number of persons killed and seriously injured by one third by the year 2020. That Ministry also proposes to put in place a new system for the issue of driving licence to motorcyclists.

Madam Speaker, the Government Programme 2015-2019 has mentioned that a fairer and more socially equitable system will replace the actual one in regard to the speed cameras, traffic monitoring and sanctions. In this respect, Government has already taken a decision to abolish the penalty point system which includes the Driving Licence Counterpart and has come up with a new sanctioning mechanism for serious road traffic offences. The Ministry of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport is currently working on the legislative amendments and the proposed measures will be ready for implementation within the shortest possible time.

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Madam Speaker, there is a complete lack of policing around 'Cross Here'. We have witnessed there have been several accidents, including fatal accidents on 'Cross Here'. Therefore, can I ask the Rt. hon. Prime Minister what urgent actions does Police consider in order to protect pedestrians from those accidents?

**The Prime Minister:** It is very difficult to have one officer posted at each 'Cross Here' all over the island. It is almost impossible. That is why there is this sensitisation process going on. People must be alert, whether pedestrians, drivers and everybody using the road.

**Mr Mohamed:** Could the Rt. hon. Prime Minister consider the possibility of asking the Commissioner of Police to increase the number of vehicles and Police Officers patrolling the Dual Carriage or the Highway, all the way from the South to the North, because very rarely do we really see on a constant basis or consistent basis, vehicles of the Police patrolling and even chasing cars, but what we do see are Police Officers stopping only motorbikes and motorcyclists on the Highway, and not cars as such?

**The Prime Minister:** I will pass on this information to the Commissioner of Police.

**Mr Ameer Meea:** On the issue of 'Cross Here', it is noted that in Europe, even in India, there are lights, *les lumières clignotantes qui sont mises sur les passages cloutés*. Therefore, can I suggest that such things be installed here, in Mauritius, especially at night, so that those flashing lights can attract the attention of motorcycles approaching the 'Cross Here'?

**The Prime Minister:** That is I suppose to draw the attention of drivers that there is a 'cross here' in front. Is it that?

*(Interruptions)*

Well, we may consider that.

**Mr Uteem:** Every year, in this House, we ask the same questions about the number of fatal accidents and the numbers are not going down. Can I ask the Rt. hon. Prime Minister if he can have a full-fledged study carried out to find out why there are fatal accidents? Is it because of the design of the road? Is it because of consumption of alcohol? Is it because of speedy? Because then, we will have real facts, data, on the real cause of the fatal accidents and then from then take on measures instead of just having *ad hoc* reactions like points permit or whatever.

**The Prime Minister:** Well, there may be so many reasons. In some cases, certain parts, of course, the design of the road is sometimes responsible. But, people should be aware of that and take more precaution on reaching such spots. We cannot get rid of all these roads and build new roads all over the place. This is almost impossible.

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Mohamed!

**Mr Mohamed:** Can the hon. Prime Minister consider revisiting the driving tests completely so as to modernise them as to a standard that exists in Europe? That could itself be a possibility that those who are testing are themselves not tested enough as to their ability to test.

**The Prime Minister:** Well, I do not know how far the hon. Member is right, but, this again, I will pass it on to the Commissioner of Police.

**Madam Speaker:** Next question, hon. Baloomoody!

**POLICE ACT – AMENDMENT**

**(No. B/106) Mr V. Baloomoody (Third Member for GRNW & Port Louis West)** asked the Rt. hon. Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Affairs, Minister for Rodrigues and National Development Unit whether, in regard to the Police Act, he will state if he will consider the advisability of introducing amendments thereto to provide for Police Officers to be personally liable for acts done contrary to law and to the Police Standing Orders.

**The Prime Minister:** Madam Speaker, no person is above the law and like any citizen of Mauritius, a Police officer who commits any breach of the law of the country, is solely and personally liable for prosecution under Criminal Law.

However under Civil Law, in accordance with Article 1384 of the *Code Civil Mauricien*, any act or omission by a Police officer which is contrary to the law, will result in the State being vicariously liable as “*Committant*” so long as the wrongdoing has been committed by the Police officer in the execution of his duties.

As regards Standing Orders, these are made by the Commissioner of Police as per Section 6 of the Police Act and they contain instructions and directives to be observed by Police officers in the performance of their duties. Every Police officer is bound to comply with Standing Orders or any administrative directions issued by the Commissioner of Police. As a general rule, Standing Orders are intended to regulate the internal procedures of the Police Force, and breaches thereof may give rise to disciplinary action being taken against Police officers. A breach of Standing Orders would not, per se, give rise to civil liability.

Nevertheless, there exists the possibility of a breach of Standing Orders leading to the State being liable pursuant to Article 1384 of the Code Civil, to the extent that such breach amounts to a wrongdoing by the Police officer which causes damage or prejudice to a person or a corporate entity and that the Police officer acted in the execution of his duties.

Our legal framework is already such that in case a Police officer commits a “*faute personnelle*”, he is solely and personally liable, and the vicarious liability of the State will only be triggered where the Police officer has committed a “*faute de service*”. The need to amend the law as mentioned by the hon. Member, therefore, does not arise.

**Mr Baloomoody:** The hon. Prime Minister just mentioned that it is the Government who is sued as ‘*Committant*’, but the Police officer gets away scot-free. It is the taxpayers who pay the sum. Does he consider it proper for taxpayers to pay damages to people when Police officers are abusing their rights and authorities?

**The Prime Minister:** I have just said when the Police officer is a liable personally, where there is vicarious liability, the State also is responsible. I do not see what we can do more than that.

**Mr Baloomoody:** Can I ask the hon. Prime Minister why should the Police officer or public officers, in that matter, be protected with the prescription of two years? Does the hon. Prime Minister not consider it fit that each and every citizen of this country should be liable to the law if they breach the law and there should be no protection? Why should public officers, especially the Police, be protected for two years and we cannot prosecute the Police officer after two years?

**The Prime Minister:** There must have been good reasons why this has been included in the law.

**Mr Baloomoody:** Can't we amend this law in order not to protect these public officers who are flouting the law?

*(Interruptions)*

**The Prime Minister:** I just learned from my colleague here that it used to be six months before; it has been amended to two years. Does the hon. Member want it to be 20 years?

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Mohamed:** The hon. Prime Minister is totally right, Madam Speaker, when he says that once upon a time it was six months and it has moved to two years. This whole idea of it having moved to two years shows that there was the need, in actual fact of increasing the time from six months to two years. Could the hon. Prime Minister, therefore, not consider and take it on advisement, whether there is the possibility of increasing the two years, let us say, to five years, because there are innocent victims who happen to not be able to enter an action within the time frame because of many reasons, sometimes medical or legal issues? Could he not consider that just to help those innocent victims that, once again, we could increase it or double it to four years - if he could take that on advisement, please?

**The Prime Minister:** We will consider that.

**Madam Speaker:** Next question, hon Ganoo! Hon. Ganoo, please get prepared for your question. I said, time permitting, the hon. Prime Minister will reply to Parliamentary Question B/122.

## **BASSIN ROAD – FOOTBALL PITCH - CONSTRUCTION**

(No. B/122) **Mr A. Ganoo (First Member for Savanne & Black River)** asked the Minister of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport whether, in regard to the construction of a football pitch at Bassin Road, he will state the -

- (a) contractual start and completion dates thereof, indicating if there is any delay in the completion thereof;
- (b) name of the contractor therefor, and
- (c) costs thereof.

**The Prime Minister:** Madam Speaker, with your permission, I shall reply to PQ B/122.

I am informed by the NDU that the contractual start and completion dates for the construction of a football pitch at Bassin Road are 12 September 2014 and 11 March 2015 respectively.

However, due to the prevailing bad weather in November/December 2014 and also because of end of year business closure, there has been a delay in completion thereof. Works are now expected to be completed by end of April 2015. Liquidated damages will be applied as per contractual obligation for any unaccounted delay.

As regards to part (b) of the question, the contractor for the project is Super Builders Co. Ltd.

With regard to part (c) of the question, the contract amounts to Rs7,994,167.50 (inclusive of VAT).

**Mr Ganoo:** Was there any bidding process before this tender was allotted to the contractor?

**The Prime Minister:** I am not sure, but the situation at the NDU is, I must say, really rotten. The NDU is indebted to the tune of one and a half billion!

*(Interruptions)*

And the contractors who are there keep on getting new contracts without any tendering! It has been a real mess!

*(Interruptions)*

**Madam Speaker:** Does the hon. Member have a supplementary on this issue? Yes, hon. Ameer Meea!

**Mr Ameer Meea:** On the basis of what the hon. Prime Minister just said, can I ask the hon. Prime Minister what action is being taken to remedy the situation at the NDU?

**The Prime Minister:** There is going to be an enquiry first and then we will consider what action will be taken.

**Mr Ganoo:** Do I understand the hon. Prime Minister to say that in this case the contractor will be made to pay liquidated damages?

**The Prime Minister:** That is what I have been told.

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Members, the Table has been advised that Parliamentary Question Nos. B/109, B/111, B/127, B/130, B/131 and B/132 have been withdrawn. Parliamentary Question No. B/116 addressed to the hon. Minister of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms will now be replied by the hon. Minister of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection. Parliamentary Question No. B/135 addressed to the hon. Minister of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms will now be replied by the hon. Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Energy and Public Utilities.

Hon. Quirin!

#### **SPORTS MEDICAL UNIT - STAFF**

**(No. B/108) Mr F. Quirin (Fourth Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière)** asked the Minister of Youth and Sports whether, in regard to the Sports Medical Unit, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain therefrom, a list of the athletes who have received treatment thereat, since January 2014 to date –

- (a) indicating if a sports medical doctor is attached thereto on a permanent basis and, if not, why not, and
- (b) give a list of the staff attached thereto, indicating their respective duties.

**Mr Sawmynaden:** Madam Speaker, the Sports Medical Unit of my Ministry has attended to 1020 requests for treatment of athletes since January 2014 to date. I am circulating a list specifying the number of cases dealt with by the Sports Medical Unit sportswise as well as the number of medical coverages during that period

As regards to the services of a Sports Medical Doctor at the unit, I have to inform the House that since the departure of one Dr. D. on 20 July 2012 there is no Sports Medical Doctor attached to the unit on a full time basis.

With a view to providing the required medical treatment to the athletes, my Ministry has enlisted the services of a Doctor on sessional basis.

Madam Speaker, following my visit to the Sports Medical Unit on 30 December 2014 and after consultation with my officers, a request has already been submitted to the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life for the services of 4 Medical/Sports Medical Doctors and a Nutritionist to be made available to my Ministry.

Furthermore, in the context of the preparation of pre-selected athletes for the forthcoming Indian Ocean Island Games, the services of 32 massage therapists/physiotherapists, 2 nutritionists and 2 psychologists have been enlisted on sessional basis since January this year.

As regards part (b) of the question, I am circulating the list of staff posted at the unit together with their respective job descriptions.

**Mr Quirin:** Madame la présidente, j'ai moi-même évoqué dans cette Assemblée à plusieurs reprises dans le passé l'absence d'un médecin spécialiste du sport et là je constate dans la réponse du ministre, que jusqu'à présent, il n'y a pas de médecin du sport basé en permanence. Est-ce que le ministre ne compte-t-il pas, vu l'imminence des jeux des îles, trouver quelqu'un pour être basé en permanence. Je comprends qu'il a trouvé un médecin, mais qui sera là *on and off*, si je comprends bien sa réponse. Je pense qu'il serait souhaitable, Madame la présidente, de trouver un spécialiste du sport basé en permanence qui s'occupera des athlètes d'une façon régulière.

**Mr Sawmynaden:** Madam Speaker, as mentioned in my answer, following my visit on 30 December, my Ministry has already queried with the Medical Council to have the list of doctors who are specialised in the sport sector. We have got the list and we are working on it and in collaboration with my colleague, the Minister of Health and Quality of Life, we are looking forward to have, at least, one doctor to be on a full time basis at the Medical Unit to assist all our athletes participating in the Indian Ocean Games.

**Mr Quirin:** Madame la présidente, par rapport aux équipements qui se trouvent au centre médico sportif, peut-on savoir quand est-ce que ces équipements ont été renouvelés pour la dernière fois ?

**Mr Sawmynaden:** Unfortunately, I don't have this information with me, but I will table it so that the hon. Member can have a look at it.

### **MBC – EMPLOYEES - SALARIES**

**(No. B/109) Mr P. Jhugroo (Second Member for Mahebourg & Plaine Magnien)** asked the Minister of Technology, Communication and Innovation whether, in regard to the employees of the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation recruited during the period 2009 to date and drawing salaries of over Rs100,000, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Corporation, a list thereof, indicating the respective –

- (a) post occupied;
- (b) date of recruitment;
- (c) qualifications, and
- (d) salaries and terms and conditions of employment.

*(Withdrawn)*

### **STATE LAND - LEASE**

**(No. B/110) Mr P. Jhugroo (Second Member for Mahebourg & Plaine Magnien)** asked the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Housing and Lands whether, in regard to the plots of State land leased to individuals/companies and others, since July 2005 to date and which have been sold to foreigners, he will give a list thereof, indicating in each case the –

- (a) location thereof;
- (b) extent thereof;
- (c) lessors/purchasers thereof, and
- (d) total selling price thereof.

**The Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Housing and Lands (Mr S. Soodhun):** Madam Speaker, hon. Members would surely understand that the compilation of the requested information is a time-consuming exercise.

My Ministry is compiling the information and same will be placed in the Library of the National Assembly at the earliest possible.

### **TRUTH AND JUSTICE COMMISSION - RECOMMENDATIONS**

**(No. B/111) Mr G. Lesjongard (Second Member for Savanne & Black River)** asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism and External Communications whether, in regard to the Truth and Justice Commission, he will state whether the main recommendations contained in the report thereof have been implemented and, if so, give details thereof and, if not, why not.

*(Withdrawn)*

### **WTO TRADE FACILITATION AGREEMENT - RATIFICATION**

**(No. B/112) Mr P. Jhugroo (Second Member for Mahebourg & Plaine Magnien)** asked the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade whether, in regard to the World Trade Organisation Trade Facilitation Agreement concluded in Bali from 03 to 06 December 2013, he will state if Mauritius had intended to ratify same and, if so, indicate the measures that have been taken in relation thereto as at to date.

**Mr Sinatambou:** Madam Speaker, insofar as Mauritius is concerned, I am informed that we have always been in favour of a Trade Facilitation Agreement given the contribution that such an agreement could bring to removing bottlenecks and impediments to trade on our export markets, particularly in the region.

Insofar as the World Trade Organisation Trade Facilitation Agreement is concerned, Cabinet, at its meeting held on 13 February 2015, agreed to deposit with the World Trade Organisation the instrument of acceptance of the protocol amending the Marrakesh Agreement.

The instrument of acceptance itself has been sent to our mission in Geneva on 27 February 2015 and has been deposited with the Secretariat of the World Trade Organisation the very same day.

The agreement will enter into force when two-thirds of the World Trade Organisation members have accepted the protocol.

**Madam Speaker:** No supplementary? Next question, hon. Uteem!

### **BANK ACCOUNTS OUTSIDE MAURITIUS - HOLDERS**

**(No. B/113) Mr R. Uteem (First Member for Port Louis South & Port Louis Central)** asked the Minister of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms whether, in regard to the Mauritians holding bank accounts outside Mauritius, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Financial Intelligence Unit and the

Financial Services Commission respectively, information as to whether they have initiated any inquiry in relation thereto.

**Mr Bhadain:** Madam Speaker, I am informed that currently there is no exchange control or any legislation in Mauritius that prevents a citizen from holding a bank account outside the country.

Of course, the Financial Intelligence Unit and the Financial Services Commission, they enquire on holders of such bank accounts only in cases of suspicious financial transactions.

Now, Madam Speaker, the question of the hon. Member is quite broad inasmuch as it refers to all Mauritians holding bank accounts outside Mauritius. Be that as it may, recently the media has made mention of a list of names published on the database of the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ), and who may have bank accounts outside Mauritius, I am informed that the Financial Services Commission (FSC) has queried the licensees and approved officers whose names appeared on the list. The inquiry is being pursued and the FSC shall take appropriate regulatory actions if and where necessary.

The ICIJ database includes, amongst others, the names of entities that were not licensed by the FSC at that matter in time also.

As regards the Financial Intelligence Unit, section 20 of the Financial Intelligence and Anti-Money Laundering Act allows the FIU to exchange information on the basis of the reciprocity and mutual agreement. In this context, the FIU is a member of Egmont Group of FIU's since 2003 and exchanges of information as I outlined with the groups principles of exchange of information are being conducted. These principles are in place to secure the integrity of the analysis which is carried out by the FIU and disclosing the status of same ongoing or otherwise, of course, will be prejudicial to the work that they are doing.

**Mr Uteem:** Madam Speaker, earlier in February, a French whistleblower, a former HSBC employee downloaded Swiss leaks information on cable, setting out a list of people who have been suspected of evading taxes and regulatory provisions in their local countries, This has given rise to –

- (i) in England, the British lawmakers announced they would open an inquiry on HSBC and the leaks, and also

- (ii) in India, India will investigate a new list containing names of Indians suspected to have parked untaxed wealth in foreign banks, the Minister Arun Jaitley has said.

So, being given the concern which has been raised in other countries, is the Government proposing to set up an inquiry or, at least, ask the Regulatory Authorities to set up an inquiry to see whether there are Mauritians involved in, at least, this HSBC leaked documents?

**Mr Bhadain:** Yes, Madam Speaker, as I have stated, the FSC is actually conducting this exercise of querying all the licensees in relation to that and, of course, if there are any issues which would come out of that exercise and the FSC is of the opinion that things have to be looked in greater depth, that will certainly be done because this Government is all about transparency and good governance.

**Mr Bhagwan:** Can the hon. Minister inform us who is actually heading the FIU, who has been appointed at the head of the FIU?

**Mr Bhadain:** The current Director of the FIU is Mr Guillaume Ollivry, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** Next Question, hon. Uteem!

#### **DBM – EMPLOYEES – TERMINATION OF CONTRACT**

**(No. B/114) Mr R. Uteem (First Member for Port Louis South & Port Louis Central)** asked the Minister of Finance and Economic Development whether, in regard to the Development Bank of Mauritius Ltd., he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain therefrom, information as to -

- (a) the number of staff members thereof whose employment have been terminated since 2010 to date, indicating the aggregate compensation paid thereto, and
- (b) where matters stand regarding the proposed restructuring thereof.

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** Madam Speaker, with regard to part (a) of the question, I am informed that in the context of the restructuring of the Development Bank of Mauritius Ltd, procedures were initiated by that Bank for a Voluntary Retirement Scheme in July 2011.

I am informed that during the period November 2012 to September 2014, 74 staff have opted for the VRS at a total cost of Rs79 m.

With regard to part (b) of the question, I wish to inform the House that various attempts in the past to restructure the DBM have failed, including a strategic partnership with two Indian financial institutions.

The Government has reconstituted the Board of Directors of DBM which has the task of proposing a new restructuring plan.

**Mr Uteem:** Madam Speaker, the hon. Minister of Finance just mentioned that, at least, 74 people took the Voluntary Retirement Scheme and that was done in the context of the DBM being restructured. Now, the hon. Minister has just announced that we are not going to go ahead with the strategic Partner, will the DBM consider reintegrating those people who had been misled into opting for voluntary retirement on the basis that the Bank was going to close down?

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** Well, the Bank will probably close down but the strategic partner, the Bank of Maharashtra, has not received the green light from the Reserve Bank of India for investing in the bank. So, the project of a strategic partner has been giving up in view of this.

**Mr Baloomoody:** During his visit to Rodrigues, the hon. Minister of Finance mentioned that there will be a Bank of *Petite et Moyenne entreprise*. Is it the Bank of DBM there who will be converted into a *Petite et Moyenne Entreprise* because the hon. Minister did not, unfortunately through his visit, met any of the staff of the DBM there and there is some concern about this?

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** Alright, agreed! Well, there has been a proposal at one time to convert the Bank of Development into an SME's Bank, but after consultation with the Ministry of Finance and the officers there at the Ministry, we have come to the conclusion that we will need a special SME's institution that is not a Bank to go ahead with the project of SME Bank. So, the Bank of Development will stay as such. The new Board will have to decide on its future and we are setting up, therefore, a financial institution that will be under the financial sector to cope with the project for the small scale sector.

**Mr Uteem:** Madam Speaker, answering to a PQ No. B/64, the then Minister of Finance, hon. Duval, stated that as regard its banking operation, DBM is loss making and this year it is Rs2.3 billion worth of deposit that are due for repayment and this is one of the issues that is troubling the Development Bank of Mauritius. So, may I know from the hon.

Minister whether the financial situation of DBM has improved and that it is now in a position to reimburse the deposits?

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** I don't know of any financial institution under my Ministry which is working. So, the DBM has been losing a lot of money ...

*(Interruptions)*

... DBM is losing money and there are two issues there. Firstly, we are paying some Rs390 m. of interest on loans. So, we have decided to reduce the loans of the DBM by the end of the year to 0, which implies, therefore, major reimbursement mainly to the National Pension Fund.

So, we are proposing to sell non-strategic assets of the DBM among which shares in SICOM which might be bought over by the National Pension Fund for refunding most of the debt of the DBM, in which case as from 2016, I hope we will have a clean balance sheet at the DBM.

**Mr Ganoo:** Can I ask the hon. Minister in case the DBM will be closed down, what will happen to the employees of the DBM? Can they be redeployed in the new SME bank?

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** In the hypothesis that the Board decides on the closure of the bank, we have envisaged two possibilities: firstly, that there be redeployment of the staff in the Civil Service and secondly, naturally the SME financial institution will recruit those who are eligible.

## **SECONDARY SCHOOLS - DIGITAL TABLETS**

**(No. B/115) Mr R. Uteem (First Member for Port Louis South & Port Louis Central)** asked the Minister of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Science Research whether, in regard to the distribution of digital tablets to students, she will state -

- (a) the number thereof returned as broken or defective;
- (b) if all the secondary schools have internet connections, and
- (c) where matters stand as to the distribution thereof to students this year.

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Madam Speaker, I am informed that out of 24,111 Tablet PCs distributed last year in 155 State and Private-aided Secondary Schools, 2,304 Tablet PCs have been reported faulty during the period May 2014 to November 2014 as per the Service Level Agreement signed between my Ministry and Mauritius Telecom. There is a warranty

period of two years on all Tablet PCs procured and users encountering problems with their Tablet PCs may call at the six after-sales outlets of the Mauritius Telecom around the Island.

With regard to part (b) of the question, I wish to state at the very outset, that the device has been provided with digital resources on both online (on the internet) and offline (in the tablet PC itself) basis. All State and Private Secondary Schools already have internet connections. However, there is no WIFI connectivity in secondary schools except, 2 model schools, that is, the Gaetan Raynal State College and Mauritius College where WIFI connectivity is available in Form V classrooms.

The provision of WIFI in all State and Private-aided Secondary schools is being catered into by the Ministry of Technology, Communication and Innovation. I am informed that as far back as in August 2014, a tender for upgrading the internet connectivity to at least 10 MB and the provision of WIFI connectivity in Form IV and Form V classrooms for all colleges was launched by the then Ministry of Information and Communication Technology. The evaluation of bids has been completed at the level of the Central Procurement Board, but, the contract has not yet been awarded since two bidders have made applications for review before the Independent Review Panel. This matter is being followed up by the Ministry of Technology, Communication and Innovation. The next meeting of the Independent Review Panel is scheduled on 13 March, 2015.

As far as part (c) of the question is concerned, I am informed that in September 2014, a tender for procurement of 23,400 Tablets intended for Form IV students and educators of 2014 was launched. The closing date was on 27 November, 2014 and bids were opened on the same date. The bid evaluation exercise is currently under way at the level of the Central Procurement Board and it is expected that the distribution to students who are now in Form V and educators may start around July 2015. However, it is expected that by that time the issue of availability of WIFI in schools would be sorted out so that optimum use of Tablet PC would be made.

**Mr Uteem:** Madam Speaker, being given the number of tablets that had been returned after the distribution of last year, has the Bid Evaluation Committee or has the Ministry issued guidelines to ensure that there is no repeat and that appropriate software is on these tablets?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** In fact, the tablets that were repaired have been given back to the students after repair, but measures have been taken to ensure that proper specifications are given to get good tablets for the students.

**Mr Uteem:** Does the tender extend also to the provision of education software to be used on these tablets or is it just limited to the supply of tablets?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** The tablet already contains software but lessons are now being provided by the M.I.E. and, in fact, the M.I.E. is preparing resource material for these tablets.

**Mr Jhugroo:** Madam Speaker, can the hon. Minister inform the House what was the cost for one Digital tablet and whether students were asked to pay any insurance and, if so, can we know what amount?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** The cost of the tablets for year 2014 was Rs134,349,018 and the students were made to pay a sum of Rs650 in order to ensure that in case of theft or major damage to the PC, the PCs would be replaced, but they would have to ensure that they have proper evidence that major damage or theft has occurred.

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** On the same point I was going to ask in relation to this insurance. We have had people especially in my Constituency who have come to me and said that: 'you know, Rs650 is a lot of money.' So, this year, is the Government considering whether to exempt, at least, those who are at the lower rung of the social ladder from the payment of this sum of Rs650?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Students whose parents benefit from social aid do not normally pay this amount.

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Jhugroo!

**Mr Jhugroo:** The hon. Minister replied earlier, I think, the amount paid was around Rs180 m. for...

*(Interruptions)*

Rs138 m. for 24,000 tablets. I think that it will cost around Rs750 for one tablet. How come we are giving free of charge to students, one tablet that cost Rs750, when they had to pay for insurance of...

*(Interruptions)*

**Madam Speaker:** Sit down, hon. Jhugroo! Allow the hon. Minister to reply.

*(Interruptions)*

Allow the hon. Minister to reply. Yes, hon. Minister.

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** It will cost much more than Rs700, around Rs5,000.

**Madam Speaker:** Okay! Next question, hon. Rutnah!

### **STC – PETROLEUM PRODUCTS - BETAMAX LTD.**

**(No. B/116) Mr S. Rutnah (Third Member for Piton & Rivière du Rempart)** asked the Minister of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms whether, in regard to the circumstances surrounding the allocation of the contract for the transportation of petroleum products by Betamax Ltd., he will state if Government is proposing to refer the case to the Police for inquiry and, if so, when.

**The Minister of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection (Mr A. Gungah):** Madam Speaker, in my reply to PQ No. B/73 of last week, I informed the House that on 30 January 2015, Government had decided to refer the case to the Police.

I am advised by the Commissioner of Police that an enquiry has been instituted into the matter by the Central Criminal Investigation Division and that the enquiry is in progress.

**Madam Speaker:** Yes, hon. Mohamed!

**Mr Mohamed:** On the same issue of Betamax Ltd., would the hon. Minister inform the House when will the arbitration process - because according to the contract that linked both parties, STC and Betamax Ltd., I am informed that there is a clause that talks of arbitration - start and could the hon. Minister give us a date because I am sure that all members of the public, the Mauritians at large, would like to know where the responsibility really lies? So, when would the arbitration process start?

**Mr Gungah:** Madam Speaker, if the hon. Member can come with a substantive question, I can reply, because it does not relate to the question that has been put by hon. Rutnah!

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Rutnah!

**Mr Rutnah:** In relation to the enquiry itself, can the hon. Minister confirm whether at today's date the Police have either secured documentary evidence and/or uplifted electronic evidence from the State Trading Corporation or from any other relevant Ministries concerned with this whole saga?

**Mr Gungah:** Madam Speaker, as far as I am informed, statements are being taken from all the persons involved into the matter right now.

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. The Betamax saga, as my hon. friend just mentioned it, started with an Interministerial Committee leading to a recommendation and a report by an independent accounting firm. So, may I know from the hon. Minister whether the Police will also enquire and take statements from sitting Members of this House who were in that Ministerial Committee who recommended the nation to pay this sum of money to Betamax?

*(Interruptions)*

No, it's hon. Xavier-Luc Duval!

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Gungah:** Madam Speaker, I think the Police Department knows how to proceed in the matter.

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Mohamed!

**Mr Mohamed:** Could the hon. Minister following his last answer where he says that the Police would know what to do, consider the possibility of he, himself, going to help the Police identify those now Ministers who were then also party to this supposed Betamax saga and, in fact, do his duty as a citizen to give their names and help that they go and give a statement?

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Gungah:** Madam Speaker, if need be, we will be doing it. But, it is for the Police to decide about that.

**Madam Speaker:** So, hon. Members, I will suspend the sitting for one and a half hours for lunch!

*At 12.59 p.m. the sitting was suspended.*

*On resuming at 2.41 p.m. with Madam Speaker in Chair.*

**Madam Speaker:** Yes, hon. Rutnah!

**TERTIARY EDUCATION COMMISSION (TEC) - EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR -  
APPOINTMENT**

(No. B/117) **Mr S. Rutnah (Third Member for Piton & Rivière du Rempart)** asked the Minister of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Science Research whether, in regard to the Executive Director of the Tertiary Education Commission, she will

—

(a) for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commission, information as to his -

(i) terms and conditions of appointment, including the salary, allowances and other benefits drawn;

(ii) experience in quality assurance and regulatory framework, and

(b) state if the Delhi University, India, has set up a disciplinary committee against the latter and, if so, indicate if -

(i) the Commission had been informed thereof prior to his appointment;

(ii) his contract has been renewed and, if so, indicate the terms and conditions thereof, and

(iii) his replacement is being contemplated.

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Madam, Speaker, with your permission, I wish to reply to PQ B/117 and PQ B/144 together as they are both related.

With regard to PQ B/117 part (a) (i), I am informed by the Tertiary Education Commission that following an advertisement in January 2013 and a selection exercise by TEC, Professor A. K. Bakhshi, former Executive Director of TEC was offered appointment to the post of Executive Director on 18 July 2013 on a contract basis of one year which could be renewed for a second period of one year at the end of which it could be again renewed for a third and final year. He assumed duty on 14 October 2013. After the one year, the contract was extended on a month-to-month basis with effect from 14 October 2014. His appointment has been terminated on 28 February 2015.

The terms and conditions of employment of the Executive Director include a monthly salary of Rs144,000, a special allowance of Rs56,000 as well as a gratuity, bonus,

rent allowance, luggage allowance and air tickets for himself and his spouse from and to India at the start and end of his contract. A copy of the Terms and Conditions is being tabled.

With regard to part (a) (ii) of the question, I am informed by Tertiary Education Commission that Prof. A. K. Bakhshi has been in the fields of academics and research and is a former Vice Chancellor (Allahabad, India). He has also been Head of the Department of Chemistry, Director of the Institute of Lifelong Learning (ILL) and also Director of Centre for Professional Development in Higher Education (CPDHE) at the University of Delhi.

As regards part (b) of the question, according to TEC, prior to the contractual appointment of Prof. Bakhshi as Director on 14 October 2013, the Commission was not aware of any disciplinary committee set up at the Delhi University of India against him. In a correspondence dated 17 October 2013, the Head of Mission, Mauritius High Commission, New Delhi informed that according to a letter from the President of the Society for Values and Ethics in Education dated 09 October 2013, the Executive Council of Delhi University had apparently initiated disciplinary action against Prof. A. K. Bakhshi who despite being on leave from Delhi University had accepted the nomination as Executive Director of TEC. This issue was also raised in the local media.

According to record available at TEC, though there is a record in the minute sheet that a letter was issued to Prof. Bakshi on 21 October, 2013 to seek his explanation, no copy of the letter sent nor the reply thereto is available on the file given that the original copy was handed to the then Legal Officer of TEC and cannot be traced. Further, according to records available in August 2013, University of Delhi had asked Prof. A. K. Bakhshi to show cause as to why disciplinary action should not be initiated against him. Notwithstanding this matter, in a letter dated 19 September 2013, the University of Delhi gave Professor Bakshi approval to join the Tertiary Education Commission as Executive Director subject to his availability in the matter of show cause notice as and when required by the University.

As for the part relating to the renewal of the contract, I am advised that the initial contract starting on 14 October 2013 which was for one year was subsequently renewed by the TEC Board on a month-to-month basis as from 14 October 2014 on similar terms and conditions.

With respect to PQ B/144, I wish to inform the House that, the employment of the Executive Director of TEC, on a month to month basis has been terminated with effect from 28 February 2015; the post will be advertised shortly. In the meantime, arrangements have

been made for a senior officer of TEC to act as Officer-in-Charge for the smooth running of the organisation pending the appointment of a full-fledged Director.

**Madam Speaker:** Yes, Hon. Rutnah!

**Mr Rutnah:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Firstly, in an answer to a question of my friend, hon. Uteem, last year, Minister Jeetah stated the following –

“I suggested that we appoint the person subject to a quarterly review - the person, reference made to Prof. Bakshi - to assess his performance, but then we did not get into recruitment procedure, etc., but I am interested in the quarterly assessment performance.”

Now that we know that his contract was being renewed on a monthly basis, is there on record of any quarterly basis assessment of this person?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Madam Speaker, I would like the hon. Member to let me know which question he is referring to. Which Parliamentary Question is he referring to?

**Madam Speaker:** He just mentioned. Can you repeat it?

**Mr Rutnah:** For the benefit of the House, I am referring to PQ B/962, last year, a question put by my friend, hon. Uteem and it reads as follows –

“May I know from the hon. Minister – he mentioned himself....

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Rutnah, can you just tell the hon. Minister whether the question was addressed to her or it was to the precedent Government?

**Mr Rutnah:** It was last year.

*(Interruptions)*

**Madam Speaker:** You got it.

**Mr Rutnah:** I am referring to a question last year. I am trying to ascertain whether when the Minister gave the answer last year in relation to the question put by hon. Uteem, whether the quarterly review was carried out, now that we know that the contract of this gentleman was renewed on a monthly basis.

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** I will look into the matter. I do not have the information right now.

**Mr Uteem:** Madam Speaker, the hon. Minister just mentioned that there is a legal opinion. So, may I know from the hon. Minister the name of the legal adviser who gave that opinion and whether any effort has been made to try to get back those documents from him?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** I have just answered to the hon. Member that I do not have that particular information. I will look into the matter and come back with the information.

**Mr Rutnah:** Can the hon. Minister confirm in the light of the answer she gave that the professor was, in fact, Head of Department of Chemistry with qualification in Science rather than in legal matters and what criteria were put to recruit someone with no legal background in a regulatory oriented job?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Madam Speaker, I'll just give the Scheme of Service. According to the Scheme of Service - I will just give you the advertisement and the profile of the ideal candidate: professional with a standing track record, well versed in custodian of the academia, fully conversant with present and future trends in the fast developing tertiary education sector worldwide, experience in management and development of knowledge industry, top leadership qualities, capacity to deliver in line with Government policy, the provision of the TEC Act and the TEC corporate vision strategies and objectives.

So, nowhere in the Scheme of Service or the advertisement, there was any mention or requirement for legal background for the post of Executive Director of TEC.

**Mr Rutnah:** Does the hon. Minister now agree that this was actually a tailormade job specification to suit someone?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Madam Speaker, I have no information showing that this was a tailormade scheme though I do agree that we have had a lot of problems with the former Director.

**Mr Uteem:** Madam Speaker, the hon. Minister just mentioned that there is now an Officer-in-Charge for TEC, may I know from the hon. Minister whether the TEC Board has been reconstituted or if not, when does she propose to reconstitute the Board?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** The Board is being reconstituted and very soon the Board will be sitting.

**Madam Speaker:** Next question, hon. Bhagwan!

**DAUGUET & SIGNAL MOUNTAIN - HEALTH TRACKS - UPGRADING WORKS**

**(No. B/118) Mr R. Bhagwan (First Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière)** asked the Minister of Environment, Sustainable Development and Disaster and Beach Management whether, in regard to the Dauguet and the Signal Mountain Health tracks, he will state, in each case –

- (a) when it was opened to the public;
- (b) if his Ministry is proposing to carry out upgrading works thereat and, if so, indicate when, and
- (c) if consideration will be given for the installation of lightning and toilet facilities thereat.

**Mr Dayal:** Madam Speaker, with regard to part (a) of the question, I am informed that the Dauguet Health Track was opened to the public on 09 September 2001. As far as Signal Mountain Health track is concerned, I am informed that joggers were already using the track well before the project was completed in August 2006.

With regard to parts (b) and (c) of the question, following concerns raised by hon. Roubina Jadoo-Jaunboccus and hon. Rajesh Anand Bhagwan, site visits have been effected at Dauguet and Signal Mountain Health tracks and I was personally involved with it. It has been observed that maintenance works had not been undertaken for quite some time and there is a lack of lighting and toilet facilities.

Madam Speaker, with a view to promoting a healthy lifestyle and enhancing quality of life, my Ministry would be adopting a holistic approach to all these issues and will implement a project for the rehabilitation of the health tracks and for the provision of basic amenities, including lighting and toilet facilities very soon.

In fact, the idea is to convert both health tracks into major attractions. This initiative would encourage adults, youth, students, children and tourists to visit these sites and make use of the facilities.

I would also wish to refer the hon. Member to my reply to Parliamentary Question B/86 on the subject of lighting at the Signal Mountain.

**Mr Bhagwan:** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. Minister for his reply. Can he also explore the possibility of involving the inhabitants of both regions as far as the watch - initially there was a Dauguet watch and a Mountain Signal watch - for the people of the region is concerned and to oversee and have a look on the security aspect and other

aspects concerning the amenity? Can he consider again the setting up of these two committees especially with the people of the region?

**Mr Dayal:** This is a very valid proposal and I will look into it because at my Ministry we are very much concerned with getting communities involved in all our projects. Therefore, this is already in the agenda and we will be looking into it.

As far as security is concerned, we have already attended to this issue.

**Mr Uteem:** Madam Speaker, there have been previous Parliamentary Questions on these two sites. The hon. Minister at one point said that there is going to be basic amenities and, in the same answer, he says that he is going to make that into major attraction. I would like to know from the hon. Minister what is the budgeted amount for each project, when it will be started and when he expects this basic or major attraction to be completed?

**Mr Dayal:** Madam Speaker, I must enlighten the House that basic facilities were not catered for by the previous Government. *C'est l'élémentaire!* It has been observed that maintenance works had not been undertaken for quite some time and there is a lack of lighting and toilet facilities. With a view to promoting a healthy lifestyle and enhancing quality of life, we are catering to that. My Ministry will implement a project for the rehabilitation of the Health Tracks and for the provisions of basic amenities including lighting and the setting up of toilet facilities very soon. In fact, the idea is to convert both health tracks into major attractions. This initiative would encourage adults, youth, students, children and tourists to visit these sites and make use of the facilities. We have the budget requirements, we don't have exactly the amount, but we have the funds and we are going for the project on a priority basis.

**Mr Bhagwan:** For the security of these joggers, can I make a request to the hon. Minister to have the environmental Police to have a permanent watch on these two sites especially at times when people are going there in the afternoon and in the morning?

**Mr Dayal:** As a matter of fact, this has been attended to. But, the point that I want to highlight here is that no maintenance was done and we are seeking assistance from the Special Mobile Force to have special cleaning exercises.

*(Interruptions)*

**Madam Speaker:** One last question on this issue!

*(Interruptions)*

Order, please! One last question on this issue, hon. Mahomed!

**Mr Mahomed:** Madam Speaker, may we have an idea from the hon. Minister when actually the work will start?

**Mr Dayal:** The work has already started.

*(Interruptions)*

**Madam Speaker:** Next question, hon. Ameer Meea!

### **RICHE TERRE - FIRE STATION HEADQUARTERS AND TRAINING CENTRE**

**(No. B/119) Mr A. Ameer Meea (Second Member for Port Louis Maritime & Port Louis East)** asked the Minister of Local Government whether, in regard to the Mauritius Fire and Rescue Services, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain therefrom, information as to –

- (a) if the building presently housing the Port Louis Fire Station is in a derelict state, thus representing hazards and, if so, indicate if remedial measures will be taken for the restoration thereof, and
- (b) where matters stand as to the proposed construction of a new Fire Station Headquarters and Training Centre at Riche Terre, indicating the expected start and completion dates thereof.

**Dr. Husnoo:** Madam Speaker, I wish to thank the hon. Member for putting this question which illustrates the unprofessional manner in which the previous Government has been running the affairs of this country.

In fact, Madam Speaker, the building housing the fire station has been deteriorating and has been left in a state of utter abandonment. The previous Government and the City Council of Port Louis were both aware of the state of the building and the threat and hazard that it represents to the occupants and the firefighters. However, nothing has been done.

I am informed that according to a Structural Investigation report from the Ministry of Public Infrastructure, Land Transport and Shipping dated as far back as December 2006 and a report of the Occupational Safety and Health Unit of the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms dated October 2009, the building housing the Port Louis Fire Station is unsafe for its users and beyond economic repairs.

It is inadmissible that since 2006 no remedial action has been taken and the situation has been allowed to deteriorate. The City Council of Port Louis which is the owner of the building has also failed in its contractual duty to undertake the necessary repairs to the building which is being rented by the Mauritius Fire and Rescue Services, in spite of repeated requests.

This Government, being a caring and responsible one, will not remain indifferent to this state of affairs. In fact, I am convening the Lord Mayor, the Chief Fire Officer of the Mauritius Fire and Rescue Services and other stakeholders to a meeting very soon to see how best we can address this problem.

In fact, it is envisaged to prepare a comprehensive plan for the complete renovation and/or reconstruction of the building which will include the commissioning of the consultancy services to address issues such as the nature and the extent of repairs required, the planning of works without disrupting the activities of the fire station, the structural proposal taking into account the geological condition of the site and cost estimates. In parallel, we may also consider the acquisition of the land by the Government for this purpose.

With regard to part (b) of the question, I am informed that a plot of land of the extent of 16 *arpents* and 30 perches at Riche Terre has already been vested in my Ministry for the construction of a fire station, the Head Office of the Mauritius Fire and Rescue Services and a training academy. Given the massive financial investments to the order of half a billion rupees to be made, it has been decided that these projects be implemented in the context of an integrated development plan for the Jin Fei site and also in the context of any future harbour and port development.

**Mr Ameer Meea:** In his reply, I heard the hon. Minister stating that the building is beyond repairs and then he enumerated on the repairs that need to be done. Am I right that the building will be repaired and the Fire Services will stay there or are they being relocated?

**Dr. Husnoo:** As I say, according to the report, the building is unsafe and beyond economic repairs but, we are going to look into it. We are going to have a committee to look into it and see whether we are going to repair the building – I think that it is a bit difficult – or to put a new building there. But, if we have to do that, we have to make sure that the Fire Services can still have a place around there so that it can cater for that duration when the work is being carried out. So, we will have to make a place for them adjacent to it so that they can continue with the rescue services in Port Louis.

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Madam Speaker, this issue has been long on the cards and why I am insisting is that the hon. Minister himself says that according to a report it is clearly stated that the building is beyond repair! Now, he will make another committee that will look into the repairs? When are we going to decide what we will do whether to pull down the building and build a new one or we are going to move it out of Port Louis?

*(Interruptions)*

**Dr. Husnoo:** No, I have said the building is unsafe for its users, sure, and beyond economic repairs as it is. But, we have to be careful; we cannot just close the Fire Services here and leave Port Louis without protection. We can't do that! We are going to repair the building. Nothing has been done, as you know, since 2006. We are going to look into it; we are going to hopefully put up a new building depending on what we find on the survey. But, at the same time, we have to cater for the protection of the City of Port Louis. So, we have to find where to accommodate the fire station during the repairs period. We cannot just leave Port Louis unprotected!

**Mr Mohamed:** Madam Speaker, I have heard the hon. Minister say that there was a report in 2006, and if I am not mistaken, he was a Member of Parliament representing Port Louis in 2006 until 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010. Now, that he is Minister and did not do anything for that issue or put any questions in Parliament on that issue when he was Member of Parliament and a backbencher, can he now give us a date and a timeline when will this new committee be meeting? Who will be the members of that committee and when will they finish their work? When will he start implementation since he said that nothing has been done. How fast can he run?

**Dr. Husnoo:** I am glad that the hon. Member asks the question. Firstly, I was a Member of Parliament, but I was not the Minister of Local Government, nor was I a member of the Cabinet at that time. There you are. Thank you. That's number one.

Secondly, you were there for 10 years, as you said, and you have not done anything. Now, you are trying to blame me. That's usual. It's a usual thing. You have not done anything about it and you're trying to blame me now.

*(Interruptions)*

**Madam Speaker:** Order! Order please!

*(Interruptions)*

Order please!

**Dr. Husnoo:** We are going to look into it. I promise you that, but give me time. I have been here for only two months.

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Mohamed no questions from the Opposition!

*(Interruptions)*

**Dr. Husnoo:** Give me time. We are going to look into it. We are going to have a meeting. We are going to look into it and we're not going to sit as the last Government has done for the last five years.

*(Interruptions)*

No way! I am not like you! What I promise, I am going to do it.

**Madam Speaker:** Next question. Hon. Ameer Meea!

#### **VACOAS – SMF MUSEUM - RENOVATION**

**(No. B/120) Mr A. Ameer Meea (Second Member for Port Louis Maritime & Port Louis East)** asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism and External Communications whether, in regard to the Museum of the Special Mobile Force, at Vacoas, he will state since when it has been closed to the public, indicating –

- (a) if consideration will be given for renovation works to be carried out thereat and, if so, give details thereof, and
- (b) when the re-opening thereof to the public is contemplated.

**The Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Energy and Public Utilities (Mr I. Collendavelloo):** Madam Speaker, with your permission, I shall reply to this question.

I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that the SMF Museum was closed to the public in December 1997 on account of water leakages through the roof and the walls. It may be noted that since 2009, the site has been put at the disposal of the Ministry of Tourism and External Communications and subsequently handed over to the Tourism Authority, which has carried out renovation works amounting to some Rs1.4 m.

As regards parts (a) and (b) of the question, I understand that the Ministry of Tourism and External Communications is in presence of a request from the Prime Minister's Office

concerning the handing back of the site on account of the project for its transformation into a Regimental Museum. This request is under consideration.

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Can I ask the hon. Minister whether this museum will be vested to the Ministry of Environment?

**Mr Collendavelloo:** I understand we are going to put there all the old uniforms which used to be worn for centuries. It is going to be a historical museum. The hon. Member will note that this building used to house the Police Band, but then the inhabitants were not happy about the music reaching the houses and apparently the noise even went very far. So, it was closed down.

**Madam Speaker:** Any other questions? Hon. Ganoo is not there for PQ B/121. So, we will proceed with B/123.

### **MILITARY ROAD - STATE LAND - SQUATTERS**

**(No. B/123) Mr S. Mohamed (First Member for Port Louis Maritime and Port Louis East)** asked the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Housing and Lands whether, in regard to the eighteen families squatting State lands at Route Militaire, Plaine Verte, since last year, he will state where matters stand regarding the arrangements made by his Ministry for each of these families to obtain a plot of land.

**The Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Housing and Lands (Mr S. Soodhun):** Madam Speaker, 18 families were initially found squatting at Military Road along the Ring Road Phase 3 alignment. In 2011, it was decided that they be relocated in the vicinity outside the limits of the Ring Road. Lease agreements were drawn in respect of 14 of these 18 families. The remaining four families have, unfortunately, not shown any interest in securing a lease agreement and they have not submitted relevant documents so far.

The National Empowerment Foundation (NEF) was requested, in January 2012, to assist the squatters who qualify for support under the relevant scheme operated by the Foundation. In 2014, the NEF informed that, because of the topography of the site, the cost of infrastructural works on the site would be excessively high. The NEF, therefore, requested that an alternative site be identified for the relocation of the squatters.

My Ministry has identified another plot of State land near the Cité Martial market fair, behind “Islamic Centre for Disabled Children” for the relocation exercise. Planning-wise, the

site has been found to be suitable for residential development. The families concerned were informed about the new site and they are agreeable to be relocated there.

I have personally met the families in my office on 29 January 2015 to explain to them the arrangements being made for their relocation.

A Coordination Committee with all relevant stakeholders has been set up under my Chairmanship to monitor the implementation of the project. It has been found that a geotechnical investigation of the site should be carried out to determine whether soil conditions are appropriate for the proposed residential project. In this connection, a request has already been made to the NEF.

If the geotechnical investigation shows that the site is suitable, infrastructural works would start. Thereafter, individual leases would be drawn up for the beneficiaries.

**Mr Mohamed:** Madam Speaker, at some time last year, I, myself, accompanied the former Minister of Housing and Lands with the NEF to identify a plot of land, maybe the hon. Minister would know exactly what I am talking about since I know he went to the spot, immediately next to the Islamic Centre for Disabled Children behind Canal Anglais that hold an area of land. Is this the same plot of land that we are talking about where some geotechnical tests have to be carried out? This is what I would like to know, first of all.

**Mr Soodhun:** Exactly the same.

**Mr Mohamed:** With your permission, Madam Speaker, can I ask the hon. Minister, since this is the same plot of land that I had identified to the officers of his Ministry and once the geotechnical works are carried out and things are fine and since it is immediately next to the building that has been put up by the Islamic Centre for Disabled Children, can the hon. Minister confirm whether the infrastructural costs will be borne by Government as far as the retaining wall is concerned, if it needs to be built?

**Mr Soodhun:** I don't have this information with me, but I am going to communicate it to my hon. friend.

#### **AIR MAURITIUS LTD/EMIRATES AIRLINE – OPEN SKY POLICY**

**(No. B/124) Mr S. Mohamed (First Member for Port Louis Maritime & Port Louis East)** asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism and External Communications whether, in regard to the agreement signed between Air Mauritius Ltd. and Emirates Airline in relation to the open sky policy, he will state where matters stand.

**The Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Energy and Public Utilities (Mr I. Collendavelloo):** Madam Speaker, I regret being unable to answer that question. Air Mauritius Ltd. is a company listed on the Stock Exchange and governed by the Companies Act and its Constitution. I would not, therefore, be in a position to disclose information relating to its commercial matters.

I know, however, that Air Mauritius and Emirates signed a Memorandum of Agreement on 16 December 2013.

**Mr Mohamed:** I thank the hon. Minister for his answer. Now, my question, true it is, talks about the agreement between Air Mauritius and Emirates. But, there is another part of the question, which I believe does not at all concern Air Mauritius or Emirates, and, that is, precisely the policy of Government in relation to the open sky policy. Now, what is the stand, therefore, of Government? I am not interested in knowing the *les tenants et les aboutissants* and all the details of the agreement between Air Mauritius and Emirates. But what of, therefore, the open sky policy of Government? Are we proceeding with it or are we halting it?

**Mr Collendavelloo:** If that is the question, I am sure the hon. Member could redraft his question on a next occasion. This is not the way that I have read it. I am very sorry. Perhaps, I cannot understand the ambit of the question which he asked. I read in regard to the agreement signed between the Air Mauritius and Emirates Airlines. If my hon. friend would ask a question on the open sky policy and what is the open sky policy of Government, I am sure we would be most happy to oblige.

**Mr Mohamed:** I can understand that the hon. Minister is not the substantive Minister, and I take under advisement his suggestion to redraft the question but, may be, I could just simplify matters. I understand, once again, he is not the substantive Minister, but the question is very simple. With regard to open sky, are we going to restrict it or are we not going to restrict it?

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Shakeel Mohamed, I am sorry! Your question relates to an agreement signed between Air Mauritius and Emirates Airline in relation to the open sky policy. So, may be, you should come with another question.

**Mr Uteem:** If I may ask the hon. Minister, in relation to this agreement, whether the Government was party to the agreement and whether any commitment was given in the name

of Government in this agreement with respect to competition, exclusivity, code sharing between Air Mauritius and any other airline?

**Mr Collendavelloo:** Can I rebound in the same way that I answered to your hon. colleague, to come with a substantive question on whether Government was a party and then he will, I am sure, give you all the details.

**Madam Speaker:** Next question!

#### **MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND QUALITY OF LIFE - VACANCIES**

**(No. B/125) Mr S. Mohamed (First Member for Port Louis Maritime & Port Louis East)** asked the Minister of Health and Quality of Life whether, in regard to each of the parastatal bodies and/or institutions falling under the aegis of his Ministry, he will state the vacancies existing thereat since 11 December 2014 to date, that will be filled by -

(a) way of advertisement calling for qualified candidates, and

(b) means other than public advertisement which call for qualified candidates to be interviewed therefor.

**Mr Gayan:** Madam Speaker, there are three parastatal bodies that fall under the aegis of my Ministry and they are the Mauritius Institute of Health, the National Agency for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Substance Abusers, commonly known as NATReSA and the Trust Fund for Specialised Medical Care. There is one institution, the Mauritius Family Planning Association which is also under the Ministry.

With regard to parts (a) and (b), the information requested is being compiled and will be placed in the Library.

**Mr Mohamed:** With regard to all those places that have been referred to by the hon. Minister, are there any of those institutions that have filled vacancies recently, ever since December 2014 and if the answer is, yes, which would those institutions be?

**Mr Gayan:** Well, if the hon. Member wants a specific answer to a specific question, he must come with a specific question; but, if he is referring to something which happened last week, I am afraid that he is out of order.

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Minister, either you can reply, you say you have got the reply or you can't reply and you say you don't have the reply!

**Mr Gayan:** Madam Speaker, when I said the question is out of order, it is because there was another ...

**Mr Mohamed:** Is the hon. Minister taking a point of order? If he is going to take a point of order, can the hon. Minister do it in a proper way?

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Gayan:** I can say that I am not going to reply to this because it is out of order.

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Shakeel Mohamed! Hon. Minister, please sit down!

**Mr Gayan:** I am sorry!

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Minister, I just told you, either you have the reply to the supplementary question which has been asked by the hon. Member or you don't have. If you don't have the reply, you say you don't have it now, you will come at a later stage with it.

**Mr Gayan:** I do not have the answer!

**Mr Mohamed:** Can I be more specific, was there a vacancy at the Trust Fund for Specialised Medical Care recently and was it filled up by advertising or by other means? If the hon. Minister does not have the answer or does not want to give the answer, I will bow by the decision of the Chair.

**Mr Gayan:** Well, my answer is the same, I don't have the answer.

**Mr Mohamed:** Is the hon. Minister telling us that when he was saying just now what happened last week, he was not aware what he was talking about or was he referring to something else, or is he saying now that he is not aware of what the answer is, simply because he does not want to give the answer?

**Mr Gayan:** What is the question? I don't know, it is a multiple question, come with one simple question!

**Mr Mohamed:** The simple question is: was there a vacancy at the Trust Fund for Specialised Medical Care recently and has it been filled up? This is the same issue which the hon. Minister is referring to when he said last week. That is exactly what I am referring to and he is exactly aware of what I am referring to, but he does not want to answer and going round about, and refusing to answer.

**Mr Gayan:** Madam Speaker, if the the hon. Member is right that last week there was a question on the very same subject, then according to Standing Order 22, paragraph 1 (b), it is out of order.

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Minister, the question from the hon. Member is clear. If you don't want to answer, you say clearly that you don't want to give a reply to this question.

**Mr Gayan:** My answer, Madam Speaker, is that the answer was already provided last week.

**Mr Mohamed:** That was not an issue that was canvassed at all. The question is: was it by advertising or any other method was used? Simple! Since he seems now to, all of a sudden, remember what we are talking about.

**Mr Gayan:** Well, there are lots of methods of recruitment, Madam Speaker. You can have an open advertisement, there can be a head hunting or there may be other ways; but, in this particular case, there was a Cabinet decision and that Cabinet decision was implemented.

**Mr Mohamed:** Why wasn't the method that is so well spoken of by the hon. Minister of Finance, whom I congratulate for, that is, calling out *pour un appel de candidature* - it is totally right, and I commend him for that? Why wasn't that method used?

**Mr Gayan:** Government is Government, Government decides.

**Mr Mohamed:** Does the hon. Minister propose to, at least, pay attention to the excellent methods that are proposed by the hon. Minister of Finance, and the hon. Prime Minister, that of calling for *candidature* and the best possible candidates? Does he propose to take that into account with regard to the other institutions he referred to?

**Mr Gayan:** Madam Speaker, there are various methods of recruitment and Government decides on the method of recruitment for any particular post. Government is not tied to any specific way of advertising. There may be, for example, advertising. Lots of people talks about advertising, advertising in the local press, international press, in specialised journals. Where do we advertise? By *l'affiche*, what to do? No, this is why I say Government is Government, Government decides in the best interest of the country who is best.

**Mr Mohamed:** I totally understand the difficulties being faced by the hon. Minister in answering that question, and I am very compassionate. What I would like to know, therefore, Madam Speaker, is the following. My question is addressed to him, now if he

wants to use Government as a *paravent*, fair enough. But, the question is: is there, in this Republic, any other candidate that could be better than the one he is trying to appoint, and hiding behind Government in order to make that appointment?

**Mr Gayan:** Well, I am not aware of that.

**Madam Speaker:** Last question on this issue, hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** The hon. Minister has just stated 'Government'. But, can the hon. Minister inform the House, the country and the nation that, under his pressure, that Government approved that appointment of Executive Director of the Trust Fund for Specialised Care?

**Mr Gayan:** No Government acts under pressure and certainly not a Government under Sir Anerood Jugnauth.

### **FISHERMEN – REGISTRATION CARD**

**(No. B/126) Mr S. Rughoobur (Second Member for Grand' Baie & Poudre d'Or)** asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the fishermen, he will –

- (a) give a list thereof holding a Fisherman's Registration Card, indicating the measures he proposes to take against holders thereof who are no longer involved in fishing activities;
- (b) liaise with the Beach Authority to ensure that a specific and adequate space is earmarked for the regular maintenance of their boats, and
- (c) state if he proposes to recruit additional officers to combat illegal fishing at sea and to take other remedial measures in relation thereto.

**Mr Koonjoo:** Madam Speaker, with your permission I am tabling a list of 2,070 fishers who hold a Fisherman's Registration Card.

The measures taken by my Ministry to trace out fishermen who are no longer involved in fishing activities are as follows -

- (i) The activities of fishermen are being constantly monitored by Officers of the Fisheries Protection Service of my Ministry at the fish landing stations and during patrols at sea. Whenever a fisherman is found no longer involved in

fishing activities for a consecutive period of six months, his fisherman card is automatically cancelled;

(ii) All reported cases of alledged inactive fishermen are fully investigated and upon confirmation that the fisherman is not involved in fishing, his fishermen card is cancelled;

(iii) The collaboration of the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions, is solicited when the need arises. In fact, my Ministry provides to the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions a detailed list of registered fishermen and requests that Ministry to submit information on any case of contribution to the National Pension Fund made by an employer other than my Ministry in respect of any registered fisherman. On obtaining information from the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions, any doubtful case is fully investigated where there is a justifiable ground to do so.

With regard to part (b) of the question, my Ministry has already agreed to the proposal of the Beach Authority for fishermen to use some beaches for repairs of boats. Eight sites have already been agreed with the Beach Authority. We are informing the fishers, accordingly.

As regards part (c) of the question, my Ministry is in the process of recruiting additional Fisheries Protection Officers with a view to strengthening action to combat illegal fishing in our lagoon.

Other remedial measures being implemented by this Ministry to combat illegal fishing include the following -

- (a) the strengthening of collaboration between the officers of my Ministry and the officers of the National Coast Guard so as to provide a 24-hour surveillance service at sea;
- (b) increasing the number of flying squad from 5 to 8 units and equipping them with appropriate facilities so that they can intervene promptly in order to deter illegal fishing.

I would also wish to inform the House that my Ministry is presently preparing a new Fisheries and Aquaculture Bill and provision is being made under this new piece of

legislation to better equip officers of the Fisheries Protection Service so that they would be able to combat illegal fishing more efficiently.

Thank you.

**Madam Speaker:** Yes, hon. Rughoobur!

**Mr Rughoobur:** Madam Speaker, I would like to ask the hon. Minister if his Ministry is envisaging issuing registration cards to fishermen in the near future, because I know that as from 2010 it is Government's policy not to issue any further fisherman registration card. I would like to know whether he is envisaging changing that policy and, at least, to replace those cards that have been taken back from those fishermen who have abandoned the profession?

**Mr Koonjoo:** Yes, Madam Speaker, we are actually trying to review, because there is a huge demand from the fishermen section. Since 2010, there was a stop put for issuing new cards. The problem is that we have got some people who are no more there and their cards are still there.

The second thing is that there are a good number of people, almost 504, if I am not mistaken, who have requested for new cards. We are studying the problem and maybe in the future we will see to it that new cards are issued. There is also a demand by the fishermen in a committee which I met twice in the last couple of months. They are agreeable to the proposition that those who are not using or who are unable to use, their cards should be taken and given to other people. We are working upon that, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Ramful!

**Mr Ramful:** May I ask the hon. Minister what are the criteria that the Ministry look at when registering new applications?

**Mr Koonjoo:** I don't have the criteria as such, but, as usual, the Ministry has been operating like that since many years and if there is anything new, we will have to look into that.

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Rughoobur!

**Mr Rughoobur:** The fishermen are nowadays really facing big difficulties when they have to maintain their boats. So, I would request the hon. Minister to liaise with the Beach Authority so that they can accelerate on procedures and find a place for them so that they can maintain their boats. This is first.

Secondly, if the hon. Minister can liaise with the National Coast Guard so that they be more flexible because there are lots of contraventions these days. They don't have a place to maintain their boats. So, I would request the hon. Minister to please look into that.

**Mr Koonjoo:** Madam Speaker, I just replied that it has already been done. There are eight beaches which were identified with the Ministries concerned and we have agreed to allow these places where the fishermen can safely repair their boats or keep them there in bad season.

**Madam Speaker:** Last question on this issue!

**Mr Rughoobur:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Just a last question! I just wanted to clarify from the hon. Minister, you have got a batch of fishermen, there was a course running last year for off lagoon fishing and I am made to understand that for off lagoon fishing, you have got a special registration card for fishermen. I know that part of the course has been completed, but they need to do the practical.

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Rughoobur, please ask your question!

**Mr Rughoobur:** I would just ask the hon. Minister to please look into this off lagoon fishing course that was conducted and if he could try to ensure that they complete their course at least, the practical part, and they get their card soon. Thank you.

**Mr Koonjoo:** Madam Speaker, I will definitely do it. Thank you.

**Madam Speaker:** Okay. Next question, hon. Rughoobur!

#### **INDIAN OCEAN ISLAND GAMES – NATIONAL FOOTBALL TEAM**

**(No. B/127) Mr S. Rughoobur (Second Member for Grand' Baie & Poudre d'Or)** asked the Minister of Youth and Sports whether, in regard to the setting up of the Mauritius Football League and the recruitment of a new *Directeur Technique National*, he will state -

- (a) if his Ministry is proposing to carry out a survey of the quality and adequacy of infrastructure available in municipal and district council areas, indicating if -
  - (i) consideration will be given for the upgrading thereof, and
  - (ii) his Ministry has signed any agreement with the local authorities for the management and maintenance thereof, and
- (b) the composition of the technical team in charge of preparing the Mauritius national football team for the forthcoming Indian Ocean Island Games to be held in August 2015.

*(Withdrawn)*

#### **NTC – BUSES – ACQUISITION & MAINTENANCE**

**(No. B/128) Mr S. Rughoobur (Second Member for Grand' Baie & Poudre d'Or)** asked the Minister of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport whether, in regard to the National Transport Corporation, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain therefrom, in respect of the past five years, information as to -

(a) the total amount of money -

(i) invested in the acquisition of new buses, indicating the -

(A) names of the respective suppliers thereof, and

(B) sources and modes of financing thereof;

(b) paid to private companies for the maintenance of buses, if any, indicating if facilities are available for in-house maintenance of the buses and, if not, why not, and

(c) if copy of the audited reports in relation thereto will be tabled.

**Mr Bodha:** Madam Speaker, with regard to part (a) of the question, I am informed that the National Transport Corporation has, for the last five years, purchased buses as follows -

In March 2009, 8 minibuses for the sum of Rs12 m.

In 2010, 36 standard buses for around Rs94 m. and 10 minibuses for the sum of Rs26 m.

In 2011, 63 buses for the sum of around Rs180 m.

In 2013, 44 standard buses for around Rs117 m. and 27 minibuses for the sum of Rs69 m.

In 2014, 2 semi-low floor buses for a sum of around Rs7 m.

All the buses were acquired from ABC Motors except for the last two semi-low floor buses which are of the make Yutong from China, the other buses purchased from 2009 to 2014 were of the make Nissan.

As regards funding, all the purchases were effected out of lease and loans as follows -

In 2009, a sum of Rs11.9 m. was leased from SBM.

In 2010, loans of around Rs90 m. were obtained from SBI and Rs26 m. from Bank One.

In 2011, loans of around Rs88 m. and Rs87 m. were obtained from SBI and SBM, respectively.

In 2013, a loan of Rs195 m. was obtained from SBM. And in 2014, the NTC purchased the two semi-low floor buses from its own funds.

As regards part (b) of the question, Madam Speaker, I am further informed that all buses purchased from 2009 to 2014 are maintained by ABC Motors, in accordance with a maintenance contract agreement and an amount of around Rs93 m. has been disbursed for the last five years.

*(Interruptions)*

I am also informed that in-house facilities are available for the maintenance of buses and a total sum of around Rs895 m. has been spent over a period of 5 years for the maintenance of the remaining 329 buses, giving an average cost of maintenance in-house at around Rs2.7 m. per bus whereas the cost of maintenance - this is being outsourced - is around Rs489,000 per bus. Outsourcing of maintenance of buses is, therefore, more cost effective than carried out in house.

As regards part (c) of the question, I wish to inform the House, Madam Speaker, that the last audited report of 2012 has already been tabled here and it does not make any mention of the newly purchased buses. I am informed that the 2013 report is still under preparation and will be tabled in due course.

**Mr Rughoobur:** Madam Speaker, as regards the maintenance of buses, the fact that huge fleet is today being outsourced to a private contractor, I just wanted to know from the hon. Minister if he has got garage facilities and other resources at the CNT and if there has been an analysis made to ensure that whether in terms of cost effectiveness, the measures that has been taken to outsource is correct or else while the hon. Minister is outsourcing the fleet with private contractors, what the hon. Minister is doing with the existing resources that he has in-house?

**Mr Bodha:** Madam Speaker, I think the hon. Member got me wrong. It costs five times more to do the servicing in-house than outside. It is Rs2.7 m. per bus at the CNT and Rs489,000 at the ABC Motors. It is five times more to do it in-house.

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** Can the hon. Minister let us know what is the latest situation concerning the Blue Line buses? We still remember the cases of fatal accidents. What is the present status and how many are in service and where the actual Blue Line buses are being maintained?

**Mr Bodha:** The Blue Line buses, from what I have here, were run by buses which were bought in 2007. So, they are buses which are being maintained at the garage of the CNT itself. In fact, we are going to see the possibility of renewing the fleet and to come with semi-low floor buses.

**Mr Rughoobur:** Very often we have got this issue of non-publication or delay in publication of financial accounts. Would the hon. Minister look into the possibility of the CNT, and I am sure in other cases as well, that there are quarterly management accounts that are prepared so that we can better assess the performance of these CNT or other organisations?

**Mr Bodha:** Madam Speaker, the hon. Member is perfectly right. I will look into the matter.

**Mr Jhugroo:** Madam Speaker, after hearing the answer from the hon. Minister, I understand maintenance per bus per year is around half a million rupees. Can he explain to this House, what is the cost of doing the maintenance for a new bus in one year because we have got cars, lorries or buses, we know we have fuel change, oil change, fuel filter change, oil filter change, pay for servicing and brakes and this will cost Rs500,000 per year. How does he explain this?

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Jhugroo, allow the hon. Minister to answer!

**Mr Bodha:** Madam Speaker, it is a very technical question, but I will try to answer. From what I have been told the 188 Nissan and the 2 Yutong buses are maintained and serviced by the local ABC Motors company. The scope of maintenance consists servicing at every 5,000 kilometres interval with the works involved mainly in the following items: change of engine oil, valve and then you have a second general servicing every 40,000 kilometres and then you have periodic parts replacement. So, the average of the Nissan and the Yutong buses is about Rs40,000 per month.

**Mr Uteem:** Madam Speaker, in this House we have had the opportunity of asking questions about the Blue Line buses and other buses. Is the hon. Minister satisfied with the procurement process used by CNT for the acquisition and maintenance of these buses and if not, what he proposes to do?

**Mr Bodha:** Madam Speaker, the Government is not satisfied at all. We have had many questions in Parliament here about the procurement of buses and how it has been delayed. They have been answered. We had many questions, we had many replies; we have to look

into the matter to see to it that we have the best buses at the best prices. In fact, the Ministry of Finance at the last budget has put a subsidy of Rs1 m. for each semi-low floor buses and I think this subsidy will still be there because we need to have a new public transport based on new buses and the CNT has to show the way as regards the quality of service and the quality of management.

**Mr Bhagwan:** Can the hon. Minister inform the House who is the Chairperson of the National Transport Corporation these days and whether a new Board is being reconstituted?

**Mr Bodha:** Presently, the Board is being chaired by the Senior Chief Executive of my Ministry and as regards the management, we have a team management, but we are going to come forward with a new management and a new Board very soon.

**Mr Jhugroo:** Can the hon. Minister explain to this House why the maintenance for buses is five times more than what is being paid to ABC Motors? Is it because management had bought *pièces de rechanges* for million and million of rupees which are not being used and lying down in the garage of CNT? Is it true what I am telling in this House, Madam Speaker?

**Mr Bodha:** I think the hon. Member has enlightened the House properly. I have been given 17 reasons why maintenance should not be done at the CNT and 10 reasons why they should be done outside. I am going to table all the reasons but I think I would say not the proper management of spare parts. We have a number of other problems.

*(Interruptions)*

We have to put the new rules and regulations and I think that the whole management system at the CNT has to be reviewed, Madam Speaker.

**Mr Mahomed:** In fact, hon. Jhugroo has already asked the question that I wanted to ask. But then, can we know more specifically from the hon. Minister – I know he mentioned a committee and new management of the CNT - what will be done to address the issue in the long run?

**Mr Bodha:** The issue, Madam Speaker, is to address the whole issue of the fleet because today it is such a pity.

*(Interruptions)*

Because at one point in time, Madam Speaker, the CNT was seen as the pride of the nation. We remember the 100 buses bought by Professor Sarathi. It showed the way. It had the

standards as regards work conditions and quality of service and I think that we have to review the whole management, the whole fleet and come forward in such a manner that the backbone of the public transport will be the CNT.

**Mr Mohamed:** Madam Speaker, the hon. Minister has spoken of huge amounts of money that they spent when it should not have been spent most probably on maintenance and I also heard hon. Jhugroo talked about his surprise and mine as well of the amount of money that has been spent on maintenance. Now, yes, it is an issue of management having to be looked into again, but isn't there the need? And here, my request to the hon. Minister is that he should look into the possibility of setting up a serious enquiry, once again, why not, by hon. Bhadain! By looking into the possibility that there may have been some wrong doing there.

*(Interruptions)*

He has got the strength to carry on and on and on. So let us give it to him.

*(Interruptions)*

But he will go until three this time!

**Madam Speaker:** Okay, hon. Mohamed!

**Mr Mohamed:** So, maybe we could continue and have a proper enquiry to establish why the maintenance has cost so much. Who are the culpable parties? Who are the culprits? And if ever people have to be taken to task and matters reported to the Police, they should be reported to the Police in order to ensure that such issues do not happen again.

**Mr Bodha:** The hon. Member is right, Madam Speaker. I think this is what the Government is doing, everywhere we have to do it. In fact, in 2009, Deloitte and Touche were requested to do a report and they did it in 2009. There was a restructure plan of the CNT which was approved by Government in 2013, but all the problems still remain. So, we have to have an indepth analysis of what is the situation at the CNT today, because from what I have heard, we have an overdraft.

**Mr Jhugroo:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. After questions asked by my friend, hon. Mohamed, will the hon. Minister - when sending this case to the Minister of Good Governance - look into indepth with regard to the purchase of spare parts, because millions and millions of rupees have been spent for so many years and after that refer this case to the Central CID?

**Mr Bodha:** We will do that, Madam Speaker.

**Mr Mohamed:** Madam Speaker, on a point of order! If I may be allowed, I speak under your correction, Madam Speaker. I think it is a very interesting and important question. The fact that Mr Rughoobur here puts it - maybe he could clarify *mon antenne* and maybe I am wrong – I want to know if he is still heading Atics, if he is also in charge of another group and whether he is the CEO of Kalis Investment that has Kalis foundation included therein. So, here, it would be, in my humble opinion, I speak under your correction and forgive me if I am wrong to raise it. Since he is himself involved directly with the company that would be a competitor of Sarako plus he is involved in Kalis Investment that includes the foundation and CSR issues, it would be taking undue advantage of his position as a Member of Parliament hereby conflictual to put such a question. I am in the hands of the Chair.

**Madam Speaker:** Yes. Let me make it clear to any hon. Member of this House that, according to the Standing Orders, anybody who has an interest and comes with a question has to declare his interest. So, if the hon. Member has an interest in this, he should, first of all, declare his interest.

**Mr Rughoobur:** Madam Speaker, let me inform the House that immediately after my election, I have resigned as shareholder, as Director of Kalis Investment and all the companies within the Kalis Investment, Atics as well.

**Madam Speaker:** All right! Can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Energy reply?

### **BAMBOUS - SOLAR PARK PROJECT**

**(No. B/129) Mr S. Rughoobur (Second Member for Grand’Baie & Poudre d’Or)** asked the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Energy and Public Utilities whether, in regard to the Solar Park Project in Bambous, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Central Electricity Board, information as to –

- (a) the amount paid monthly to Sarako Ltd. for electricity generated and exported in the grid since the commissioning of the installations;
- (b) if the Environment Impact Assessment Licence in respect thereof makes provision for a Corporate Social Responsibility Fund and the construction of a tourist boutique for women entrepreneurs of Bambous and of the vicinity thereof by Sarako Ltd. and, if so, indicate where matters stand, and

- (c) if copy of the agreement between Sarako Ltd. and the Central Electricity Board will be tabled.

**The Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Energy and Public Utilities (Mr Collendavelloo):** With regard to part (a), Madam Speaker, I am informed by the CEB that the monthly amount paid to Sarako PVP Co. Ltd. varies from Rs11 m. to Rs15 m., depending on the kilowatt hour supplied by the plant. A total amount of Rs154 m. inclusive of VAT has been paid over the period February 2014 to January 2015. I am tabling the details of the monthly payment, if I may.

With regard to part (b), I am informed that no condition pertaining to Corporate Social Responsibility Fund and the construction of a tourist boutique for women entrepreneurs of Bambous has been included in the EIA Licence issued on 19 August 2013. However, I am informed that the EIA Report submitted by the promoter mentioned several socio-economic measures, including the setting up of a tourist shop and artisanal market place. I am not aware of any such projects as having been implemented by the promoter.

As regards part (c), I will very soon table a copy of the energy supply purchase agreement signed between Sarako and CEB.

*(Interruptions)*

Because it is not with me.

**Mr Rughoobur:** I just wanted to know from the Vice-Prime Minister what are the measures that are being taken, since he mentioned himself, that in the EIA Report the condition was that they had to, I think, construct a tourist shop and other amenities as well, what are the measures that will be taken so that the Ministry ensures that the contractor does go ahead with the construction of these tourist shops and other amenities?

**Mr Collendavelloo:** Well, they put it in their report, but it was not included in the conditions of the EIA Licence. So, it was the Environment Committee that decided not to include it as a condition for giving an EIA Licence.

**Mr Bérenger:** I am given to understand that Sarako, the plant, is not performing with maximum efficiency. Can I know whether the hon. Vice-Prime Minister has looked into the problems causing that and what remedial action is being taken?

**Mr Collendavello:** Well, I have had two conflicted answers to this question, and I am yet to ask my technical officer to investigate and I shall come with a statement to the House on this matter.

**Mr Rughoobur:** In regard to the extent of land that was awarded to Sarako, I wanted to know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister if the whole plot of land has been used or only a part of it and whether that part that is not currently being used, will the hon. Vice-Prime Minister inform the Minister of Housing and Lands to proceed with taking it back?

**Mr Collendavello:** The hon. Member is right. A large part of the land is not being used. My hon. colleague will take care of this very quickly.

**Mr Bhagwan:** Can I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister to have the Technical Officers of his Ministry to have a site visit, together with those of the MPI and Agriculture, because a lot of damages has been done in the area where all these solar panels have been fixed in an unprofessional manner, from what I have seen myself and also from what experts have told me? Can I make request to the hon. Vice-Prime Minister, at least, to have a full enquiry be done by technicians, at least, to see that there is no harm which has been done, not only to the environment, but to the whole, *sur les flancs de cette région*?

**Mr Collendavello:** In spite of the huge political differences which separate me from the promoters of Sarako, I have in all fairness to say that I am not in possession of such reports. However, I shall again ask my technical officers to revisit the issue and to report to me. Up to now, I have not had that sort of information.

**Mr Bérenger:** If you would allow me, since reference has been made to damage to the environment, now we are a tourism country. Earlier on, I heard the hon. Vice-Prime Minister say that we are going to go full scheme ahead if this is the expression with renewable energy. I do not know if the hon. Vice-Prime Minister has taken care to look from up there when planes are coming in and out of Mauritius, what a terrible eyesore this is and this is one. If we multiply this by how many such spots without due care, we are going to damage our tourism product dangerously. So, can I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister, especially with forthcoming projects, to look at this aspect carefully?

**Mr Collendavello:** That is a big question! Do we want to pollute our country with coal and oil? Do we want to have solar panels to save on oil imports? That is the huge debate. If we are not going to have oil, coal, solar panels, wind turbines because they are ugly, we are not going to have electricity. So, admittedly, it is an eyesore, we need to balance all this, and

that is what the Ministry of Environment is for. They have to look at the impact which these solar panels may have on the environment.

If I may go further, we have buildings like the MCB Ltd. which are not eyesores through the use of solar photovoltaic; others are eyesores because they do not take the care of looking at the environment.

**Mr Rughoobur:** May I know from the Vice-Prime Minister what is the amount that has been paid out of the *MID* Fund to the contractor since the commissioning and before commissioning as well?

**Mr Collendavelloo:** My hon. friend is very far from his question now. I am sure, if he comes with a substantive question I will give a reply, but I need notice of that.

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Shakeel Mohamed!

**Mr Mohamed:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. The hon. Vice-Prime Minister has stated that the condition or what was promised in the report as far as those tourist boutiques for women entrepreneurs at Bambous form part of a report or commitment on the promoters' part, but not as part of one of the licencing conditions. Having said so, even if this is the case, could he not consider that his Ministry would approach the promoters and insist that whatever commitment they may have taken, even though if it does not form part of the licensing conditions and permits, that they do comply with their commitments and do go ahead with what they promised they themselves would do?

**Mr Collendavelloo:** And then they will insist on getting the rest of the land which they are not using, just to put a tourist kiosk. I would rather let my colleague of the Ministry of Housing and Lands recover that extra plot of land which we need to, for instance, relocate the squatters or do other matters there. The hon. Members of Constituency No. 14 will note that there is an acute squatter problem in the area. I must say that probably I made an error when I said that the conditions of the EIA report are not repeated in the EIA licence. As a matter of fact, they are not. But legally, are they bound by what they have in the EIA report is another issue.

**Madam Speaker:** A last question on the issue, hon. Osman Mahomed!

**Mr Mahomed:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am not too sure whether this would warrant a more substantive question, but I will give it a go nonetheless. This is the biggest renewable energy project the country has experienced so far. Insofar as integration onto the

grid is concerned, may I have an indication from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister how is this faring, because this will be an important experience for us going forward in the domain of renewable energy?

**Mr Collendavelloo:** Of course, a substantive question will be welcomed. Offhand, according to CEB the grid is saturated. But the grid cannot be saturated, from what I hear and what I have read, the grid can be converted into a smart grid which would accommodate all these renewables. Apparently, with Sarako Ltd. they have saturated the grid. Sarako energy goes to La Chaumière substation which spreads this electricity in the area. Apparently, it provides some 50% of all the electricity required in the hotels. But, on a substantive question, I would be most delighted to assist.

### **SSR INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - NEW TERMINAL - CONTRACT**

**(No. B/130) Dr. R. Sorefan (Fourth Member for La Caverne & Phoenix)** asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism and External Communications whether, in regard to the new terminal of the Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam International Airport, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from Airport Terminal Operations Ltd., information as to —

- (a) if it was a design and built project contract and, if so, indicate the time taken for the execution of the design thereof;
- (b) if galvanized metal frames were used;
- (c) the thickness of the metal roofing;
- (d) the type of curtain wall glass fixed;
- (e) amount of variations cost claimed and paid, and
- (f) table copy of the contract in relation thereto and, if not, why not.

*(Withdrawn)*

### **SSR INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT – CONSTRUCTION – AUDIT TRAIL**

**(No. B/131) Dr. R. Sorefan (Fourth Member for La Caverne & Phoenix)** asked the Minister of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms whether, in regard to the Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam International Airport, he will state if he will consider probing into the ACONEX website, with the permission of the Officer-in-Charge of

the SSR International Airport, for an audit trail and follow-up of the documents that had been filed in relation to the construction thereof and table copy thereof so as to throw light on the opacity or transparency of the project.

*(Withdrawn)*

### **SSR INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - SECOND RUNWAY - CONTRACT**

**(No. B/132) Dr. R. Sorefan (Fourth Member for La Caverne & Phoenix)** asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism and External Communications whether, in regard to the construction of the second runway at the Sir Seewoosagar Ramgoolam International Airport, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from Airport Terminal Operations Ltd., information as to the –

- (a) name of the contractor therefor;
- (b) cost of the project thereof, and
- (c) variation costs thereof, if any, indicating –
  - (i) if works have been executed as per the contract, and
  - (ii) who certified the recommendations for payment.

*(Withdrawn)*

**Madam Speaker:** Next question, hon. Quirin!

### **NATIONAL SPORTS FEDERATIONS - SPORTS ACT - COMPLIANCE**

**(No. B/133) Mr F. Quirin (Fourth Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière)** asked the Minister of Youth and Sports whether, in regard to the National Sports Federations, he will state if all of them are complying with the Sports Act and, if not, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from each of them, information as to the reasons therefor.

**Mr Sawmynaden:** Madam Speaker, since I took office as Minister on 17 December 2014, I am having consultations with all stakeholders. During the meetings I have had with National Sports Federations, most of them have expressed their inabilities to comply with the provisions of the Sports Act, particularly Sections 11, 12, 13 and 14 of the Act which relate, among others, to required number of Regional Sports Committees and clubs.

The Mauritius Olympic Committee and the Registrar of Associations have already been invited to submit their proposals to amend the Act. The National Sports Federations will shortly be invited to submit their proposals as well. Once all the proposals are received, they will be examined at the level of my Ministry and a decision will be taken as to whether there is a need to amend the Act or otherwise.

### **MAURITIUS GYMNASTICS FEDERATION – SUM ALLOTTED**

**(No. B/134) Mr F. Quirin (Fourth Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière)** asked the Minister of Youth and Sports whether, in regard to the Mauritius Gymnastics Federation, he will -

(a) state the –

(i) date of recognition thereof by his Ministry, and

(ii) sum allocated thereto by his Ministry for financial year 2014, and

(b) for the benefit of the House, obtain therefrom –

(i) information as to the names of the office bearers thereof, and

(ii) a breakdown of the expenses incurred for financial year 2014.

**Mr Sawmynaden:** Madam Speaker, the Mauritius Gymnastics Federation had a temporary recognition on 17 March 2014 and was fully recognised on 02 December 2014. For period ending 31 December 2014, an amount of Rs388,095 has been disbursed to the Federation.

As regard to part (b) of the question, I am circulating the information.

**Mr Quirin:** Madame la présidente, j'aimerais savoir du ministre quels sont les clubs qui sont affiliés à cette fédération et de préciser si ces mêmes clubs sont reconnus par son ministère tel que stipulé dans le *Sports Act*.

**Mr Sawmynaden:** Madam Speaker, I don't have the names of all the clubs that are listed and which are affiliated with the Mauritius Gymnastics Federation but, definitely, I will give it to the House to be circulated to the hon. Member.

**Mr Quirin:** Madame la présidente, l'honorable ministre est-il au courant que cette même fédération de gymnastique a tenu son assemblée générale le 28 février dernier au centre de Jeunesse de Flacq. Est-ce qu'il est au courant de ça ?

**Mr Sawmynaden:** Madam Speaker, on Saturday the Federation made a request as usual to have its activity on that day and after that it conducted a meeting, whether it is an *assemblée générale*, I do not know because there has been no notice to my Ministry.

**Mr Quirin:** Madame la présidente, le ministre peut-il demander à ces officiers d'enquêter et de voir si cette même assemblée générale s'est tenue selon les dispositions du *Sports Act* ?

**Mr Sawmynaden:** Madam Speaker, as I mentioned before we do not know whether they have done *une assemblée générale* or not, because the last *assemblée générale* that they did was on 19 July 2014 and the term of office was for four years. So, we will definitely enquire into that and inform the House accordingly.

**Mr Quirin:** Entre-temps, Madame la présidente, je vais déposer sur la table de l'Assemblée une copie de la convocation du secrétaire de la Fédération adressée aux clubs en vue de cette assemblée générale, et je suppose que cela pourra aider l'honorable ministre à enquêter pour voir si cette assemblée générale s'est tenu selon les dispositions du *Sports Act*.

Dans cette même voie, Madame la présidente, j'aimerais que l'honorable ministre informe la Chambre s'il est au courant que des chèques avaient été tirés à l'ordre de l'actuel président de cette fédération, représentant le budget pour l'organisation d'un stage qui n'a finalement pas eu lieu.

**Mr Sawmynaden:** Yes, actually I have been informed by my Ministry. I know that there are lots of fishy things going on as well in this Federation and we are definitely looking into the matter.

*(Interruptions)*

**Madam Speaker:** Next question, hon. Bhagwan!

### **CT POWER PROJECT - PROMOTERS**

**(No. B/135) Mr R. Bhagwan (First Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière)** asked the Minister of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms whether, in regard to the CT Power Project, he will state if he will initiate procedures for the conduct of a full forensic inquiry thereof in relation to the -

(a) promoters thereof;

- (b) shareholding thereof;
- (c) amount of money transferred to Mauritius to date, and
- (d) name of the beneficiaries thereof.

**The Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Energy and Public Utilities (Mr I. Collendavelloo):** With your permission, Madam, I will reply to this question myself since I can refer to what I have said earlier this morning in answer to the Private Notice Question. For the moment I am dealing with the contractual matters before I consider whether it should be referred to my colleague, the Minister of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms.

With regard to the promoters, I understand that the promoters are CT Holdings Ltd., Malaysia with Mr Soopramanien Mariappan holding 90% of the shares and Mr Steven Chay Kwong holding 10% of the shares. CT Holdings Ltd. owns CT Power Holdings Ltd., which itself owns Mauritius CT Power Ltd.

The shareholding of Mauritius CT Power Ltd., a Mauritian company is as follows -

Company	Class of Shares	Percentage of Shares
CT Power Holdings Ltd.	A	58 %
Central Electricity Board Investment company (a subsidiary company of the Central Electricity Board)	B	26%
CT Power Holdings Ltd.	C	16%

As regards to the 26% shares of the Central Electricity Board Investment company, this would be effective only after the execution of an Implementation Agreement between Mauritius CT Power Ltd and the Government and this has not been done.

From available records at my Ministry and at the Central Electricity Board, there is no evidence of any amount of money having been transferred to Mauritius.

**Mr Bhagwan:** Can I know from the hon. Minister whether the forthcoming inquiry - which he has informed us will be undertaken - will also cover the money received *au vu et au su de tout le monde*, in canvassing people by one or two sociocultural organisations; one is Mr Dulthamun and others in the whole region of Albion, distributing money and also

equipment through their *bureau phantom* at Ébène? Will the inquiry also include that aspect of distributing money?

**Mr Collendavelloo:** Forthcoming inquiry is not the term that I have used. What I have said is that I am looking at the moment at the contractual aspect of the matter before considering whether to transfer the matter to my hon. Colleague. I do not want to rush into it. I do not want to rush and accuse people of corruption left, right and centre without having, at least, some *prima facie* evidence. Of course, I know of all the facts to which the hon. Member is making allusion, but I need to be responsible before I act.

**Mr Bhagwan:** Can, at least, the hon. Minister give the assurance to the House and also to the population that nobody will get scot-free, even going back to the financing of electoral campaigns back from 2005 where the promoters paid for the posters of the then *Alliance Sociale*? I think one hon. Member knows exactly what I am saying.

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Bhagwan, refrain from making these comments!

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Bhagwan:** The hon. Minister has not replied to what I have stated.

**Mr Collendavelloo:** All these allegations will need to be investigated. I am not going to leave these matters. But I am not in charge of investigating acts of corruption. I want to remain within the four corners of my terms of reference and then I shall transfer to wherever they have to go.

**Madam Speaker:** Next question, hon. Bhagwan!

#### **FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES – LORRIES - PURCHASE**

**(No. B/136) Mr R. Bhagwan (First Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière)** asked the Minister of Local Government whether, in regard to the Fire and Rescue Services, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain therefrom, since 2008 to date, information as to the number of –

(a) lorries purchased, indicating;

(i) the detailed costs thereof;

(ii) the countries of origin thereof ;

(iii) if all the lorries are operational and, if so, since when and, if not, why not, giving details thereof and the type of ladders fitted thereto, and

(iv) if all the lorries fitted with high rise ladders are fully operational and, if not, why not, and

(b) mobile pumps purchased, indicating -

(i) the costs thereof, and

(ii) if they are operational and, if so, since when and, if not, why not.

**Dr. Husnoo:** Madam Speaker, the information requested by the hon. Member at part (a) of the question is being placed in the Library.

With regard to part (a) (iii) of the question, I am informed by the Mauritius Fire and Rescue Services that all five firefighting vehicles procured as at date are operational except the turntable ladder purchased in January 2013, which has been put off the run since 12 February 2015 due to a fault in the jacking system control panel. Necessary arrangement is being made with the supplier for repairs. There are, however, some legal difficulties in this issue and the matter is being looked into by the State Law office.

As far as part (a)(iv) is concerned, I am informed that all lorries purchased and fitted with high rise ladder are operational except the turntable ladder.

As regards part (b) of the question, my attention has been drawn to the fact that mobile pumps are also known as Water Tenders and the information has been placed in the Library, as indicated earlier.

**Mr Bhagwan:** I thank the hon. Minister for his reply. Especially, I will come to that particular lorry that you have just mentioned and which has not been used. Can the hon. Minister, at least, ask specialised agencies of Government which are doing a lot of inquiries to go in depth into the purchase of that particular lorry? Who recommended that lorry and whether the procedures for purchase were being followed? What was the cost to the taxpayers for the purchase of that lorry?

**Dr. Husnoo:** As far as the cost, it is Rs35 m. In fact, as I told you, there is some legal problem in this and the problem has been referred to State Law Office and obviously we are going to follow it.

**Mr Bhagwan:** Can we have some idea as to what are these legal problems that the hon. Minister is stating?

**Dr. Husnoo:** Firstly, it is the problem about maintenance cost. Initially, in the bid document, the maintenance cost was Rs400,000 per year. But, suddenly, last month or I think it was just about one month ago, the agent in Mauritius has increased it to Rs900,000. Although, in the bid document, the maintenance cost was Rs400,000 per year, now they say it is Rs900,000. It is just because of this. This is compounded by the fact that there has been some problem with the joystick. He said that if we don't pay him at the new rate, he won't repair the lorry. So, it is this problem that we have referred to the State Law Office.

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Jhugroo, you have a question!

**Mr Jhugroo:** Can the hon. Minister confirm whether in year 2011, five lorries have been bought by Fire and Rescue Services, model: mane, which could not be used during the flashflood of 30 March 2013 due to its wrong design and oversize?

**Dr. Husnoo:** I am sorry; I won't be able to answer this question. I need to get information on that. I will look into it.

**Mr Bhagwan:** Madam Speaker, I have one last question. Can the hon. Minister, at least, order an inquiry and see with the relevant authorities whether they has been connivance between the then Minister – I won't mention names – and the suppliers? Whether the Minister met the suppliers here or outside and whether they has been direct connivance with the suppliers prior to the purchase? From my information, it was a tailor-made specification which was made for the purchase of that lorry and even civil servants were not involved in the preparation of these details?

**Dr. Husnoo:** I am sorry I don't have any exact information on what the hon. Member is asking, but obviously, we are going to look into it. If need be, we are going to refer it to my colleague. Thank you.

**Mr Uteem:** With respect to the purchase of lorry, being given that now we have high-rise buildings in Mauritius, may I know from the hon. Minister as at now, how high the ladder of the lorry can go up to, till what floor, is it adequate for high-rise in Mauritius?

**Dr. Husnoo:** The latest one, the one that we have problem could have gone to about 10 storeys high, but that is the one that we have problem now, but the remaining one can go to about five storeys. But I have discussed it with the Fire Services and they told me that they can manage. In case of fire, they would be able to manage. I have discussed it with the Fire Services.

**Madam Speaker:** Last question on this issue, hon. Jhugroo!

**Mr Jhugroo:** Thank you Madam Speaker. Can I know from the hon. Minister whether a lorry that was bought by the Ministry for outer islands, Agalega, a big and oversize lorry - which could not be sent a year before – is still in Mauritius or whether it had been landed there in Agalega?

**Dr. Husnoo:** I am sorry again I won't be able to answer this question. I will look into it and inform the hon. Member.

### **CUREPIPE – FORUM - MARKET FAIR**

**(No. B/137) Mrs M. Sewocksingh (Third Member for Curepipe & Midlands)** asked the Minister of Local Government whether, in regard to the proposed construction of a new market fair at Forum, Curepipe, he will state where matters stand.

**Dr. Husnoo:** Madam Speaker, I am informed that the Municipal Council of Curepipe has, following the recommendation of GIBB (Mauritius) Ltd which was appointed to evaluate the State of the Forum, decided to construct a multipurpose building on the site of the Forum which will accommodate, among others, a new market fair.

I am also informed that this project, estimated to cost Rs100 m. and to be financed to the tune of Rs40 m. from the Government contribution and Rs60 m. by the Council has been approved by the Project Plan Committee. The project has been included in the public sector investment programme.

I am further informed that a bidding exercise was conducted in May 2014 by the Council, for the appointment of a consultant and the bids received are being evaluated at the level of the Central Procurement Board. It is expected that an award to the successful bidder will be made by the end of this month.

**Ms. Sewocksingh:** I would like to thank the hon. Minister for the answer. May I know from the hon. Minister why this project is taking a lot time as a sum of money has already been earmarked in a previous budget?

**Dr. Husnoo:** Well, actually there is a bidding process that I mentioned and unfortunately it takes time with the bidding process, but it is in progress and we are continuing with it.

**Ms. Sewocksingh:** I would also like to know from the hon. Minister whether the fair will be reconstructed, restored or restructured?

**Dr. Husnoo:** Actually, Madam Speaker, there were two options for the bidding, either to repair the forum as it is, that's one option or to build it anew. But now, we are going to go for the second option because when we look at the price of repairing and the price of reconstructing a new one, they are more or less the same. It is about Rs70 m. So we are going to go for building anew because that has many advantages as well, it is going to last hopefully longer and secondly, it is going to provide more stalls.

**Ms. Sewocksingh:** I have a last question, Madam Speaker. I would humbly request the hon. Minister to see to it that the work is being held as soon as possible because this is creating a big problem not only for the people who are using the fair but also there is a big problem of traffic over there?

**Dr. Husnoo:** I can assure the hon. Member that we are going to look into it.

**Madam Speaker:** Time is over! The Table has been advised that PQ Nos. B/139 and B/143 have been withdrawn.