

**NDU - DISTRICT CONTRACTORS**

(No. B/252) Mr S. Rughoobur (Second Member for Grand' Baie & Poudre d'Or) asked the Rt. hon. Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Affairs, Minister for Rodrigues and National Development Unit whether, in regard to the National Development Unit, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain therefrom, the names of the district contractors region-wise for works carried out, over the past three years, indicating in each case –

- (a) the contract value thereof and the variation costs, if any, indicating the authorized limit thereof;
- (b) if procurement procedures were complied with;
- (c) if works were delayed and, if so, if new performance bonds were provided therefor and, if not, why not;
- (d) any sum of money still overdue thereto, and
- (e) if assessments of the quality of the works and procedures observed before disbursement of funds will be made.

**The Prime Minister:** Madam Speaker, I wish to inform that the names of the Zonal Contractors and the works they effected for the National Development Unit during period 2006-2014 were provided as part of my reply to PQ No. B/161. The description of the projects were also given.

As regards the contract value of each project and the variation costs thereof, if any, same are being compiled and will be tabled at the earliest. All additional information requested and pertaining to variations, delays, performance bonds and amount still overdue, will also be provided.

**Mr Rughoobur:** Madam Speaker, will the hon. Prime Minister confirm to the House that under the Emergency Rehabilitation Programme an amount of Rs1,000,376,000 were voted and out of it, one contractor was awarded works amounting to almost Rs742.5 m. and out of these sums, an amount of Rs569.7 m. was awarded by direct procurement? Can the Rt. hon. Prime Minister - I don't know if he has the information - confirm these figures for the benefit of the House?

**The Prime Minister:** I am not really sure about the figures, but the trend has been like that.

**Mr Rughoobur:** When we look at the figures, Madam Speaker, we also note that there has been in June 2013, an advice that the NDU took from the Attorney General's Office where the Attorney General advised the NDU not to go through direct procurement for such huge sums of money. Can the hon. Prime Minister confirm that the then Minister and the Ministry went against the advice of the Attorney General's Office and awarded contracts worth more than Rs500 m. to one of the contractors through direct procurement?

**The Prime Minister:** That is confirmed, Madam Speaker. There was '*pourriture*' everywhere.

*(Interruptions)*

**Madam Speaker:** Last question!

**Mr Rughoobur:** Madam Speaker, I just wanted to have confirmation from the hon. Prime Minister as to whether all the payments that are still due under these direct procurements, investigation will be carried out and that no payments will be effected unless it is ensured that works were carried out as per scope of works and that all the procedures relating to the Public Procurement Act were followed. Will the hon. Prime Minister confirm that the payment will not be released unless the inquiry is completed?

**The Prime Minister:** Yes, that will be so.

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

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. We know that there is an inquiry going on on the NDU, but in previous PQs and in my last intervention at Adjournment concerning Canal Anglais, the hon. Prime Minister stated that there are no funds at the NDU because of various reasons that he gave to the House. Therefore, there is a Budget that is going to be voted. Can I ask the hon. Prime Minister when will the NDU start working again and when funds will be made available, because with recent heavy rainfalls, there are so many works to be done, especially in the Capital?

**Madam Speaker:** Okay, hon. Ameer Meea!

**The Prime Minister:** Well, we will have to wait. I can't answer this right now. The inquiry is on. We will have to see how much we are really indebted, how much we owe, how

much we will have to pay from what we get from the Budget, what will be left, and how it is going to be distributed among all the different Constituencies.

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Jhugroo!

**Mr Jhugroo:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Following the reply of the hon. Prime Minister to hon. Rughoobur, will the hon. Prime Minister consider referring this case to the Police for inquiry?

*(Interruptions)*

**The Prime Minister:** Well, we are having an internal inquiry first and then, if need be, we will ask the Police to inquire.

**Madam Speaker:** Next question, hon. Dr. Sorefan!

#### **SWAMI VIVEKANANDA CENTRE - DRAINS - CONSTRUCTION**

**(No. B/253) Dr. R. Sorefan (Fourth Member for La Caverne & Phoenix)** 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 construction of drains at the Swami Vivekananda Center, awarded through the emergency procurement method, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the National Development Unit, information as to the -

- (a) cost thereof;
- (b) names of the -
  - (i) contractors, and
  - (ii) subcontractors thereof;
- (c) date of award of contract, and
- (d) contractual period thereof, indicating the expected completion and commissioning dates thereof.

**The Prime Minister:** Madam Speaker, as regards the construction of drains at the Swami Vivekananda Centre through emergency procurement, I am informed by the National Development Unit (NDU) that three Works Orders were issued to the Zonal Contractor for that region, namely Safety Construction Co Ltd on 12 November 2013 and an additional Works Order on 31 December 2014.

The details of Works Orders issued on 12 November 2013 are as follows -

- (i) Cut-Off Drain at Swami Vivekananda International Conference Centre for an amount of Rs15,474,860 (Incl. of VAT). The Works apparently started on 13 November 2013 and were scheduled for completion on 31 December 2013. However, they were completed on 15 September 2014 only. An amount of Rs425,000 (Incl. of VAT) was deducted for the delayed completion of the works. The project is under maintenance until September 2015.
- (ii) Culvert at entrance of Domaine Les Pailles for an amount of Rs11,177,338.75 (Incl. of VAT). The Works started on 15 January 2014 and were scheduled for completion on 14 July 2014. However, due to delay caused by Mauritius Telecom to divert its services and by the CEB to relocate one electrical pole thereat, the completion date was revised to 09 October 2014. The Works were however, completed on 12 December 2014 only. An amount of Rs325,000 (Incl. of VAT) was deducted for the delayed completion of works. The project is under maintenance until December 2015.
- (iii) Rehabilitation Works at Dolce Vita Restaurant premises for an amount of Rs3,317,681.00 (Incl. of VAT). The Works started on 13 November 2013 and it was scheduled for completion on 31 December 2013. The completion date was, however, subsequently revised to 05 May 2014 by the Consultant, Mega Design Ltd due to the change in the structural design. The Works were completed on 30 July 2014 only. An amount of Rs432,741.00 (Incl. of VAT) was deducted for the delayed completion of the works. The project is under maintenance until 30 July 2015.

The Works Order issued on 31 December 2014 comprises, *inter alia*, the construction of 1400 mm wide precast drain at the back of Swami Vivekananda International Conference Centre to replace the blocked pipe culvert 900mm diameter. The Works started on 12 January 2015 and was completed on 20 March 2015, within the contractual period. The Works will be handed over to the Municipal Council of Port Louis shortly. The project will be under maintenance until 20 March 2016. The Works Order was for an amount of Rs8,556,177.10 (Incl. of VAT).

Madam Speaker, I am further informed by the National Development Unit that the latter works only with zonal contractors and does not have dealing with sub-contractors.

**Dr. Sorefan:** Madam Speaker, the hon. Prime Minister has mentioned that no subcontractors are involved but, according to my information, the Safety contractor has been given so many works by the ex-Minister of the last Government that he could not comply with and has subcontracted them to a relative of an ex-Minister, Mr Bundhoo?

**The Prime Minister:** Well, that may be so. We will have to inquire into it.

**Madam Speaker:** Yes, hon. Dr. Sorefan!

**Dr. Sorefan:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. May I know from the hon. Prime Minister whether the bridge at the entrance of Swami Vivekananda Centre forms part of that contract and, to my knowledge, this bridge is falling down already before completion and is being 'colmater', as we say in Creole?

*(Interruptions)*

**The Prime Minister:** I won't be surprised.

*(Interruptions)*

#### **SSR INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - MR P. T. - ARREST**

**(No. B/254) 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 arrest of Mr P. T. at the Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam International Airport, in March 2015, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Police, information as to the reasons thereof and table a list of the belongings thereof that had been seized by the Police in the course thereof.

*(Withdrawn)*

#### **GAMBLING REGULATORY AUTHORITY – BOARD MEMBERS**

**(No. B/255) Mr R. Bhagwan (First Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière)** asked the Rt. hon. Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Affairs, Minister for Rodrigues and National Development Unit whether, in regard to the Gambling Regulatory Authority, he will –

- (a) for the benefit of the House, obtain therefrom, information as to
  - (i) the composition of the Board thereof, indicating the terms and conditions of appointment of the Board members thereof and

- (ii) if urgent consideration will be given for the purchase and installation of a central server to better control betting in anticipation of the forthcoming horseracing season and
- (b) if a new Gambling Regulatory Bill will be introduced in the Assembly and, if so, indicate when.

**The Prime Minister:** Madam Speaker, the Board members of the Gambling Regulatory Authority have been appointed in accordance with Section (5) of the Gambling Regulatory Act 2007, as subsequently amended. I am tabling the information as regards the composition of the Board together with the terms and conditions of appointment of the Board members.

I am advised that all the Board members have duly signed the “Declaration Form” provided under Section 5(4) of the Gambling Regulatory Authority Act 2007, as subsequently amended, to the effect that they did not have any direct or indirect interest in any activity, regulated by the said Act, in the previous 5 years as from the date of their appointment as Chairman or member of the Gambling Regulatory Board.

As regards part (a) (ii) of the question, I am informed that, in the wake of the Budget Speech 2013 and further to the amendments brought to the Gambling Regulatory Authority Act, following the Finance (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2012, the Horse Racing Betting Control System, which was located at the seat of the Gambling Regulatory Authority, was transferred to the Mauritius Revenue Authority, in March 2013.

Following this transfer, the Mauritius Revenue Authority has effected several improvements on the server hosting the Horse Racing Betting Control System namely, with respect to -

- (i) recording horse racing betting transactions on the central server, on a continuous on-line basis, by all on-course and off-course bookmakers;
- (ii) resolving the frequent electrical outage, abrupt shutdown of GRA server, data corruption of horse racing transactions and guarantee continuous online recording of betting transactions, and
- (iii) improving compliance of bookmakers with regard to taxes through the use of Business Analytics Tools.

The Mauritius Revenue Authority has also investigated the use of an electronic fiscal device, on a pilot basis, to record betting transactions of bookmakers in a more reliable and secured manner.

The Mauritius Revenue Authority has further informed that a Request for Information is under preparation with a view to seeking consultancy services to conduct a study on “monitoring system for gaming activities” and for preparing the Request for Proposal document for the setting up of Central Electronic Monitoring System. This exercise will take on board the findings and recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry on “Horse Racing in Mauritius” with regard to betting and tax collection. The decision to purchase and install a new central server will be taken on the basis of the results of this exercise.

In respect to part (b) of the question, the Commission of Inquiry on Horse Racing in Mauritius has stated, in its Report, that the Gambling Regulatory Authority Act 2007 provides an excellent statutory backing for the Authority to discharge its duties for the regulation of gambling activities in Mauritius.

However, taking into consideration the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry on Horse Racing and Government’s own assessment of the situation prevailing in the gambling industry, I envisage to come forward with necessary amendments to the Gambling Regulatory Authority Act in order to leave no loophole for the gambling mafia to pursue their illegal activities.

**Madam Speaker:** Yes, hon. Bhagwan.

**Mr Bhagwan:** I have two supplementary questions, Madam Speaker. The first one is: can I ask the Rt. hon. Prime Minister whether he will give directives to the Board members and the Chairperson of the GRA, the newly appointed ones, to declare their assets and liabilities, as we have been doing ourselves, despite the *diverses lacunes dans la loi* pending the coming into operation of a new Declaration of Assets of Act?

**The Prime Minister:** I don’t know whether there is legal obligation for that. I leave it to the members.

**Madam Speaker:** Yes, hon. Bhagwan.

**Mr Bhagwan:** Can I ask the hon. Prime Minister whether the MRA will look actively into the findings, as he has just stated, of the Commission of Inquiry on “Horse Racing in Mauritius” concerning those operators; there is one, ‘SMS Pariaz’ which has been

operating outside the purview of the law, without going to the central server for, at least, four, five or six years?

**The Prime Minister:** I said in my answer that we will be looking into all these.

**Madam Speaker:** Next question, hon. Teeluckdharry.

**GOVERNMENT PRINTING DEPARTMENT - ASSISTANT GOVERNMENT  
PRINTER - POST**

**(No. B/256) Mr K. Teeluckdharry (Second Member for Pamplémousses & Triolet)** asked the Rt. hon. Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Affairs, Minister for Rodrigues and National Development Unit whether, in regard to the post of Assistant Government Printer at the Government Printing Department, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Printing Department, information as to the –

- (a) official and approved qualifications and experience required therefor
- (b) qualifications and experience required in the advertisement in relation to the recent recruitment of the incumbent thereof, indicating the date of advertisement, and
- (c) name and qualifications of the incumbent thereof.

**The Prime Minister:** Madam Speaker, I am informed that, as per the prescribed Scheme of Service for the post of Assistant Government Printer, the post is filled by selection from among officers of the Government Printing Department who hold appointment in a substantive capacity in the grade of Senior Graphic Artist or Printing Officer.

Candidates for the post should possess -

- (i) a diploma in Printing Technology or Printing Administration or Management or Business Administration or in a related field from a recognized institution or an equivalent qualification acceptable to the Public Service Commission;
- (ii) interpersonal and communication skills, and
- (iii) leadership skills.

The Scheme of Service also includes a “Note 1” which provides that, in the absence of candidates possessing the above academic qualifications, selection will be made from amongst officers in the grade of Senior Graphic Artist and Printing Officer who -

- (i) reckon at least five years’ service in a substantive capacity in the respective grade, and

- (ii) possess a certificate in Printing Technology.

In regard to part (b) of the question, I am informed that the vacancy for the post of Assistant Government Printer was advertised on 27 August 2014. According to the Circular, the post was to be filled by selection from among officers of the Government Printing Department as per the prescribed Scheme of Service.

However, I am further informed that the “Note 1” was not inserted in the advertisement as in the absence of qualified candidate; the vacancy would have been re-advertised with the qualifications as provided in “Note 1”.

In regard to part (c) of the question, I am informed Ms Genevieve Taryn Knubley is the incumbent. She was a Senior Graphic Artist holding a Degree in Public Administration and Management and an MBA.

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Jhuboo. Next question!

#### **CHAGOS ARCHIPELAGO - UNITED NATIONS ARBITRAL TRIBUNAL - RULING**

**(No. B/257) Mr E. Jhuboo (Third Member for Savanne and Black River)** asked the Rt. hon. Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Affairs, Minister for Rodrigues and National Development Unit whether, in regard to the Chagos Archipelago, he will state if the Chagossian community will be fully involved in the way forward, following the recent Ruling of the United Nations Arbitral Tribunal.

**The Prime Minister:** Madam Speaker, the Chagos Archipelago, including Diego Garcia, forms and has always formed an integral part of the territory of Mauritius. In fact, all persons born in the Chagos Archipelago, whether before or after 1965, are regarded as being born in Mauritius and are Mauritian citizens.

My Government is deeply sympathetic to the sufferings which Mauritian citizens of Chagossian origin have endured as a result of their forcible removal from the Chagos Archipelago by the United Kingdom which illegally excised the Archipelago from the territory of Mauritius prior to its accession to independence.

Madam Speaker, in reply to the Private Notice Question on 20 March 2015, I had informed the House that my Government would study carefully the award delivered by the Arbitral Tribunal in the case brought by Mauritius against the United Kingdom in respect of the Chagos Archipelago.

I had also indicated that in the coming period, we would define the steps that would now need to be taken to give effect to the sovereignty of Mauritius over the Chagos Archipelago and to all our rights over the Archipelago, including those relating to fisheries, and oil and minerals which the Arbitral Tribunal unanimously affirmed. I had further informed the House of my proposal to chair a committee which would consider the best way forward.

Madam Speaker, the longstanding struggle of Mauritius to effectively exercise its sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago and the right of Mauritian citizens, including those of Chagossian origin, to return to and resettle in the Chagos Archipelago are indissociable.

In this regard, I would welcome any views or proposals which our fellow countrymen of Chagossian origin may have on the way forward with regard to the Chagos Archipelago issue. Such views or proposals can be submitted in writing to my office, and I shall see to it that they are brought to the attention of the Committee which I shall be chairing. The House may wish to know that I have already conveyed this message to Mr Olivier Bancoult, Chairman and leader of the Chagos Refugees Group, who wrote to me following the award delivered in the case brought by Mauritius against the United Kingdom in respect of the Chagos Archipelago.

I am pleased to inform the House that the Committee will meet for the first time next week.

**Mr Jhuboo:** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the Rt. hon. Prime Minister for his answer. Since the Mauritian legal team has made use of several documents provided by Mr Chance, the UK Legal Adviser of the Chagos Refugees Group of Mr Bancoult, we felt that in return Government should keep the Chagossian community fully aware of the way forward. Can the Rt. hon. Prime Minister inform the House which entity is responsible in the following-up of the claim of our legal rights over the Chagos Archipelago? Is it the Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or both?

**The Prime Minister:** I do not follow the question.

**Madam Speaker:** Can you repeat the question, hon. Jhuboo!

**Mr Jhuboo:** I would like to know, Madam Speaker, which entity is responsible in the following-up of the claim of our legal rights over the Chagos Archipelago? Is it the Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or both?

**The Prime Minister:** It is the Government through the Prime Minister's Office.

**POLICE FORCE – VACANCIES**

(No. B/258) 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 the Police Officers from the grade of Police Sergeant to that of Assistant Commissioner of Police, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Police, information as to the number of vacancies that presently exists in each grade, indicating when –

- (a) they will be filled, and
- (b) the competitive examinations for the rank of Police Sergeant and Inspector of Police will be held.

**The Prime Minister:** Madam Speaker, I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that the number of vacancies which presently exist in each grade from Police Sergeant to Assistant Commissioner of Police is as follows –

Grade	Number of Vacancies
Assistant Commissioner of Police	03
Superintendent of Police	27
Assistant Superintendent of Police	08
Deputy Assistant Superintendent of Police	16
Cadet Officer	05
Chief Inspector of Police	11
Inspector of Police	176
Police Cadet Inspector	11
Sub Inspector of Police	23
Police Sergeant	278

In regard to part (a) of the question, I am further informed that procedures have already been initiated with respect to the promotion exercise to fill vacancies from the rank of Inspector of Police up to that of Assistant Commissioner of Police.

In regard to part (b) of the question, I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that once the Budget 2015-2016 is approved, the necessary procedures, including competitive examinations, will be initiated to fill in all the existing vacancies by the end of this year.

### **POLICE FORCE – RECRUITS**

**(No. B/259) Mrs D. Selvon (Second 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 Mauritius Police Force, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Police a list of the recruits, since the last semester 2014 to date.

**The Prime Minister:** Madam Speaker, I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that since July 2014 to 03 April 2015, 666 Trainee Police Constables have been enlisted in the Mauritius Police Force.

I am tabling the list of the recruits.

### **PUBLIC SERVICE – RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES**

**(No. B/260) Mrs D. Selvon (Second 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 public service, he will state if consideration will be given for amendments to be brought to the existing legislation with a view to reinforcing chances of equal opportunities for all, regarding the –

- (a) recruitment procedures, and
- (b) provision of
  - (i) accrued powers to the Equal Opportunities Commission and to the Equal Opportunities Tribunal respectively;
  - (ii) increased facilities and avenues of redress to victims of discrimination or in relation to other complaints, and
- (c) tougher penalties for violations of the law.

**The Prime Minister:** Madam Speaker, the Equal Opportunities Commission was set up to work towards the elimination of discrimination, the promotion of equal opportunities and the promotion of good relations between people of different status. Where complaints on these issues cannot be resolved through conciliation at the level of the Commission, these are referred to the Equal Opportunities Tribunal.

Regarding the public service, appeals concerning recruitment procedures of public officers, including all matters pertaining to discrimination and equal opportunity are dealt with by the Public Bodies Appeal Tribunal. This Tribunal has the power to hear and determine any appeal made by any public officer against any decision of the Public Service Commission pertaining to an appointment exercise or to a disciplinary action taken against that officer.

It is to be pointed out that since a decision of the Public Service Commission may only be reviewed by the Supreme Court or the Public Bodies Appeal Tribunal, the Equal Opportunities Commission cannot exercise any of its powers under the Equal Opportunities Act with respect to the Public Service Commission.

Madam Speaker, in regard to part (b) of the question, section 27(3) (b) of the Equal Opportunities Act provides for the Commission to submit to the Attorney General proposals for amendment to the legislation if required. I am informed by the Attorney General's Office that in 2013 and 2014, the Chairperson of the Equal Opportunities Commission had made proposals to the Attorney General for amendments to be brought to the legislation. These include, *inter alia*, the amendment to be made to the Constitution to enable the Equal Opportunities Tribunal to entertain cases involving the Public Service Commission. The proposals were examined at the level of the Prime Minister's Office, and it was recommended at that time not to proceed with piecemeal amendments, but to adopt a holistic approach and examine the policy and legal implications thereof before taking a decision.

Madam Speaker, there are clear lines of demarcation between the roles and responsibilities of the three institutions and there may be a risk that any amendments to the Equal Opportunities Act in order to enable the Equal Opportunities Commission to investigate into complaints regarding decisions made by the Public Service Commission would create an overlapping with the existing role of the Public Bodies Appeal Tribunal and this would not be in the public interest. It is therefore not proposed to proceed with the amendments referred to in the question.

**FINANCIAL SCANDALS - MRS N. S.**

**(No. B/261) Mr S. Rutnah (Third Member for Piton & Rivière du Rempart)** asked the Rt. hon. Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Affairs, Minister for Rodrigues and National Development Unit whether, in regard to the financial scandals in which Mrs N. S. is allegedly involved, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Police, information as to if measures have been taken to secure her return to assist in the inquiries, indicating if the assistance of the investigating authorities/or law enforcement agencies of European countries where she is suspected to be currently residing, under the Mutual Legal Assistance, has been sought and if our Embassies and Consuls have been requested to co-operate therewith.

*(Withdrawn)*

**Madam Speaker:** The Table has been advised that PQ B/265 has been withdrawn. Time is over!

With regard to questions addressed to hon. Ministers, the Table has been advised that Parliamentary Questions B/281, B/282, B/283 and B/294 have been withdrawn.

Parliamentary Question No. B/284 addressed to the hon. Minister of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms will now be replied by the hon. Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism and External Communications. Parliamentary Question No. B/287 addressed to the hon. Minister of Finance and Economic Development will now be replied by the hon. Minister of Environment, Sustainable Development and Disaster and Beach Management. Parliamentary Question No. B/297 addressed to the hon. Minister of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment will now be replied by the hon. Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Housing and Lands.

Hon. Members, the hon. Minister of Youth and Sports has to attend an official function and he has made a request for his questions to be called out of turn. I have acceded to his request. The same request has been made by the hon. Minister of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment and I have acceded to his request too. So, now I will call upon hon. Quirin for Parliamentary Question No. B/271!

**IOIG 2015 – ATHLETES - DOUBLE NATIONALITIES**

**(No. B/271) Mr F. Quirin (Fourth Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière)** asked the Minister of Youth and Sports whether, in regard to the forthcoming Indian Ocean Islands Games 2015, he will –

- (a) for the benefit of the House, obtain from the sports federations, information as to if athletes possessing double nationalities are being invited to form part of their respective selection therefor and, if so, will he obtain and table a list thereof, indicating in each case, the –
  - (i) other nationality held, and
  - (ii) performance level thereof, and
- (b) state if his Ministry is agreeable thereto.

**Mr Sawmynaden:** Madam Speaker, I am informed by the sports federations that there are 21 athletes possessing double nationalities who have been preselected for the forthcoming Indian Ocean Islands Games 2015.

I am circulating a list of these athletes giving details of their nationalities and their performance.

As regards part (b) of the question, in the event any of these athletes are selected for the Indian Ocean Islands Games of 2015, my Ministry will ensure that they are the best in their respective category and discipline and also that they do not contravene the provisions of the charter of the Games.

**Mr Quirin:** Madame la présidente, peut-on savoir même si ces athlètes qui je suppose ont réussi les minimas dans leurs pays respectifs, ne serait-il pas souhaitable qu'ils viennent aussi à Maurice participer à une épreuve de sélection avant les jeux des îles?

**Mr Sawmynaden:** Madam Speaker, those athletes are only pre-selected. That does not mean that they will be selected for the Indian Ocean Islands Games. All the selection will be based on performance. So, once they perform they will be selected.

**Mr Quirin:** Madame la présidente, j'aimerais que le ministre nous dise s'il est au courant qu'il y a un boxeur nommé Samuel Kistohurry qui est actuellement en France et qui a fait une demande pour intégrer la sélection nationale de boxe en vue des jeux des îles. Peut-on savoir si la fédération a répondu favorablement à cette demande ?

**Mr Sawmynaden:** Madam Speaker, I don't have an answer to this question. I will look into the matter with the federation and will give an answer to the hon. Member.

**Madam Speaker:** Yes, hon. Leader of the Opposition!

**Mr Bérenger:** The hon. Minister made reference to the forthcoming Indian Ocean Islands Games. Is he aware that there is already big trouble on the issue of Mayotte taking part as a department of France, which has been a problem in the past, but now Mayotte is legally a department of France and there is big trouble already brewing, is he aware of it and is Mauritius helping to find a way forward?

**Mr Sawmynaden:** Actually, the president of the *Comité International Olympique* who is part of the committee of the Indian Ocean Islands Games is looking into the matter very closely and we are monitoring. Definitely, if there is any help, we will help.

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

#### NATIONAL SPORTS ACADEMY – SETTING UP

(No. B/272) **Mr F. Quirin (Fourth Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière)** asked the Minister of Youth and Sports whether, in regard to the project for the setting up of a National Sports Academy, he will state where matters stand.

**Mr Sawmynaden:** Madam Speaker, I have to inform the House that neither this Government nor *l'Alliance Lelep* had made any reference to the setting up of a National Sports Academy. However, one of the measures announced in the Government Programme 2015-2019 is the setting up of a high-level football academy in the context of the consolidation of the professionalisation of football in Mauritius. The project has already been enunciated in the electoral manifesto of *l'Alliance Lelep*.

Madam Speaker, I presume that the hon. Member is referring to the project for the setting up of a National Sports Academy which was provided for in the political manifesto of the defunct *Alliance Parti travailliste/MMM*.

However, if the hon. Member has in mind the setting up of a Football Academy, I would refer him to the reply I made to my Parliamentary Question No. B/164.

**Mr Quirin:** Madame la présidente, je dois rappeler au ministre que j'ai fait référence au *National Institute of Sports* qui, d'ailleurs, figure en bonne place dans le *Sports Act*. De ce fait, le ministre peut-il nous informer - vu que c'est un projet qui date de pas mal d'années, qui a régulièrement figuré dans les différents *estimates* et budgets qui ont été présentés, ici

même, à l'Assemblée nationale - s'il y a eu des travaux préliminaires qui ont déjà été effectués par rapport à ce projet et de bien vouloir nous les indiquer?

**Mr Sawmynaden:** Madam Speaker, I think no one is agreeable to the Sports Act and in my speech, last week, I did mention that we are reviewing the Sports Act and I invited the hon. Member to give any suggestions. I think I am not going to reply on something that we are going to amend. The best is that after amending the Sports Act, we can see whether we are going ahead with the National Sports Academy as in the Sports Act.

**Mr Quirin:** Donc, Madame la présidente, le ministre est en train de confirmer qu'il n'est pas d'accord avec la mise sur pied d'un *National Institute of Sports*? Est-ce que c'est ce qu'il veut dire?

**Madam Speaker:** But he has already replied, hon. Quirin!

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Quirin:** Madame la présidente, cela figure dans le *Sports Act*. Comme il vient de préciser qu'il va amender la loi, cet institut figure dans le *Sports Act*. C'est pour cela que je fais référence à la réponse du ministre.

**Mr Sawmynaden:** As I mentioned, Madam Speaker, we are going for the amendment of the Sports Act and if the National Sports Academy is still into it, definitely we will consider for the best interest of sports.

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Bhagwan!

## GROS CAILLOUX – HOUSING PROJECTS

**(No. B/286) Mr R. Bhagwan (First Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière)** asked the Minister of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment whether, in regard to Gros Cailloux, in Petite Rivière, he will state when were the housing projects thereat initiated, indicating the –

- (a) name of the consultant appointed therefor, giving details as to the –
  - (i) procedures followed for the recruitment thereof, and
  - (ii) quantum of fees paid out thereto, and
- (b) number of housing units built, indicating the –
  - (i) size, and

- (ii) cost thereof;
- (iii) number thereof delivered and occupied to date;
- (iv) expected date of delivery and of allocation of the unfinished ones;
- (v) criteria used for the allocation thereof, and
- (vi) if structural defects have been noted in relation thereto and, if so, indicate if remedial actions have been taken.

**Mr Roopun:** Madam Speaker, thank you for having called this Parliamentary Question out of turn. I am tabling part of my reply to the question as a long list of details has been requested for. I wish, furthermore, to thank the hon. Member for this question as it provides me with an opportunity to underscore the travails this project has been subjected to.

In December last, immediately after assuming duty, I effected an informal site visit accompanied by the Permanent Secretary of my Ministry to take stock *de visu* as to why these houses had not yet been allocated.

It was noted that all on-site and off-site works were completed and the houses which appeared as being completed were lying idle. I immediately queried the NEF on this matter and was informed that the contractor had been requested to attend to a list of snags identified by the MHC and same were to be completed by the end of January 2015.

In view of the fact that the deadline of end of January was not met by the contractor, I convened a meeting on 05 February where both the NEF and the project manager were present and gave instruction to impress upon the contractor to expedite matters and complete all outstanding works by end of February.

I was then informed by the MHC that upon completion of the outstanding works; the latter will have to submit a practical completion certificate before formal handing over of the site is effected.

It was only on the third meeting held on 18 March that it was revealed that the contractor has still not completed the remedial works whereas the retention money has already been released by the NEF without prior approval of the MHC.

To date, the contractor has still not effected any remedial works. This state of affairs is, to say the least, Madam Speaker, appalling and I have already instructed the Permanent

Secretary to refer this matter to the ICAC and I am informed the latter is already in presence of a formal request made by my Ministry.

On the other hand, my Ministry, in collaboration with the MHC, is exploring ways and means to have outstanding works completed by end of May.

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

**Mr Bhagwan:** Can I ask the hon. Minister if he could give the name of the contractor and when he was allocated the contract?

**Mr Roopun:** In fact, this forms part of the written reply. The works have been entrusted to T&T construction on 12 September 2011 and the construction period was to be 10 months.

**Mr Bhagwan:** Has the attention of the hon. Minister been drawn - I draw his attention this morning - that there are structural defects on all the roofs/slabs of the remaining houses which have not yet been allocated? And even those which have been allocated to flood victims of the flash floods in Port Louis.

**Mr Roopun:** Madam Speaker, I asked MHC, but they confirmed that there are no structural defects on the constructions.

**Mr Bhagwan:** Will the hon. Minister agree to have a site visit with all the MPs of the constituency, at least, to see *de visu* that the information which has been given to him is wrong information?

**Mr Roopun:** If need be, we will arrange for a site visit.

**Mr Bhagwan:** Can I make a request to the hon. Minister that, pending all the procedures of allocation of houses which were meant for the poor people, at least, the NEF sees to it that there is some order there; that the region is clean, all the set-up infrastructure is being maintained, and even the children's playground which has been left there for months without being used?

**Mr Roopun:** It will be looked into, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Rughoobur!

#### **SIT - MANAGEMENT - INQUIRY**

(No. B/266) **Mr S. Rughoobur (Second Member for Grand' Baie & Poudre d'Or)** asked the Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security whether, in regard to the Sugar

Investment Trust, he will state if consideration will be given for an inquiry to be carried out on the overall management thereof during the tenure of office of Mr R. B. as acting Chief Executive Officer thereof.

**Mr Seeruttun:** Madam Speaker, I am informed that Mr R. B. joined the Sugar Investment Trust in October 2005 as Chief Operating Officer. His contract of employment was renewed for a period of three years in 2010 when the appellation of the post was changed to Chief Executive Officer. The contract was not renewed at its expiry in 2013, but Mr R. B. continued to stay in employment at the Sugar Investment Trust until his resignation in February last.

On 14 January 2015, the Board of the SIT decided to suspend Mr R. B. with immediate effect, as it has come to light that he has committed a number of irregularities in the performance of his duties. A disciplinary committee was accordingly set up to hear his defence with regard to the following charges –

- (i) he deliberately bypassed a Board decision by granting salary increases in December 2014 ranging between 34% and 111% to a number of employees, that is, at rates higher than what was approved by the Board, which was 27%;
- (ii) in November 2013, he appointed an employee as team leader up to December 2014 against payment of a monthly allowance of Rs32,500 without seeking the approval of the Board;
- (iii) he has, on his own, and without seeking approval of the Board, granted allowance to two members of the staff for the period November 2013 to December 2014 for a total amount of Rs660,000 without seeking the approval of the Board;
- (iv) on 15 December 2014, he willfully and criminally commit an act of forgery in a private writing, and
- (v) in December 2014, he willfully and without authority made use of the premises of the SIT for the holding of political activities during the last general election.

At the hearing of the disciplinary committee, on 18 February, Mr R. B. submitted his resignation and undertook not to enter any case against the SIT for payment of compensation, subject to the management of the SIT not taking any legal action against him. His resignation has been accepted by the Board. But at the Annual General Meeting of the SIT held on 12

February 2015, the shareholders present strongly requested for the institution of a Commission of Inquiry on the Management of the Trust in particular with regard to –

- (a) the agricultural *morcellement* project at Ile d’Ambre;
- (b) the Aurea residential *morcellement* project;
- (c) the construction of the CORE building;
- (d) the acquisition of the NG Tower at Ebene, and
- (e) the recruitment of staff.

An internal audit, with emphasis on these complaints, is being currently carried out at the SIT. A decision will be taken in the light of the report as to whether an inquiry should be carried out into the management of Mr R. B. during his tenure of office at the SIT.

**Mr Rughoobur:** Madam Speaker, after taking note of the answer of the Minister, I think the House will unanimous agree that this is simply unacceptable.

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Member, what is your question?

**Mr Rughoobur:** Madam Speaker, can the Minister confirm whether there were a few abuses that were undertaken? Because in 1994, the SIT had almost 7,000 *arpents* of land, and in 2015, as a date, the SIT holds less than 200 *arpents*. Can the Minister confirm this?

**Mr Seeruttun:** Madam Speaker, it is indeed the case that, when the SIT was created, they had 7,000 *arpents* of land but, to date, they have only 2,479 acres left.

**Mr Jhugroo:** Would the hon. Minister refer this case to the Police for further inquiry, being given that we have heard several *maldonnes*?

**Mr Seeruttun:** Madam Speaker, I have just said in my reply that an internal inquiry is being undertaken. So, further to that, we will see whether the matter will be referred to the Police.

**Mr Gobin:** Will the hon. Minister confirm that, out of the numerous charges that were laid against Mr R. B., one was clearly that of forgery? What’s the need of any further internal audit when the charges are already laid? At least, why not refer this particular charge to the Police right now, and then, eventually, if any other criminal matter comes up, refer the rest to the Police?

**Mr Seeruttun:** Madam Speaker, as you probably know, the decision rests with the Board of the SIT. But I will look into it myself, so that the suggestion made here will be taken into consideration.

**Madam Speaker:** I suspend the sitting for one and half hour for lunch.

*At 1.04 p.m. the sitting was suspended.*

*On resuming at 2.36 p.m. with Madam Speaker in the Chair.*

### **RDA – DISTRICT CONTRACTORS**

**(No. B/267) 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 Road Development Authority, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain therefrom, the names of the district contractors region-wise for works carried out over the past three year, indicating –

- (a) the estimated value of each contract and the actual value of works undertaken in the different districts;
- (b) any approved variations in each contract awarded and the authorized limit as per the Public Procurement Act 2006, and
- (c) the region where the highest value of works were executed and the reasons thereof.

**Mr Bodha:** Madam Speaker, with regard to PQ B/267, with your permission, I am tabling the required information in respect of parts (a) and (b) of the question. As regards part (c) of the question, the House would not be surprised that the highest value of contracts executed was in Zone 4 (Districts of Moka and Flacq).

Madam Speaker, RDA is responsible for the construction and maintenance of main roads and maintenance works are works which are carried out on also some existing roads. As these are of a repetitive nature, they have, over the years, been executed using rates contracts. For that purpose, the RDA divided the country into four Zones as follows -

North (Districts of Pamplemousses and Riviere du Rempart);

East (Districts of Moka and Flacq);

Central (Plaine Wilhems, Black River and Port Louis);

South (Grand Port and Savanne)

District Contractors were last appointed by the RDA in 2012 under a Maintenance and Minor Works contract. They were as follows -

North	-	General Construction
East	-	Colas
Central part of Mauritius	-	Gamma Construction
South	-	Transinvest

The contracts became effective on 26 April 2012 and they were to last 15 months. Given that there was no standard bidding documents, an exercise was carried out by the PPO, the CPB and the RDA to devise an appropriate document which was floated at the end of December 2013.

The actual variations on the contracts are as follows -

North:	6.9%
East:	20.7%
Central:	12.2%
South:	11.55%

Then there was a Framework Agreement which became effective on 31 July 2014. The contractors who have signed the Framework Agreements are as follows -

Zone North:	General Construction, Colas and Gamma Construction
Zone East:	General Construction and Colas
Zone Central:	Gamma and Transinvest
Zone South:	Gamma and Transinvest

**Mr Rughoobur:** Again with RDA as well, similar to NDU the hon. Minister will confirm that under the Emergency Rehabilitation Programme, contracts through direct procurement were awarded worth Rs523 m.. But *pire*, in this case, will the hon. Minister confirm that there was no approval from the Ministry of Finance when those works were executed?

**Mr Bodha:** Well, I cannot confirm whether there was an approval from the Ministry of Finance, but I think and we know that, as regard to works done by the RDA and at the NDU, there is a backlog of more than Rs1 billion. Just to take an example, in the East where

Colas was the constructing company in the District of Flacq, the sum was supposed to be between Rs100 m. to Rs350 m. and it ended up being Rs600 m.

**Mr Rughoobur:** The hon. Minister just mentioned that most of the works were carried out in the region of Moka and Flacq. Will the hon. Minister look into it that, from now on, there is a better distribution of the budget that is awarded to the RDA? And will the hon. Minister make a survey in the northern region where the coastal areas have a high concentration of tourists, and also to look into the possibility of asphaltting the roads - works that are executed normally by the RDA?

**Mr Bodha:** Madam Speaker, I can assure the hon. Member that there will be a fair distribution of the budget. As regards coastal roads, I think he is right; I have seen it myself. I have received a number of complaints. In fact, I have requested the hon. Minister of Finance to give us a budget for the resurfacing of '*Chemin 20-pied*', which is the by-pass in the North and is used by many road users, including those who are in the tourism industry. I have also received a number of complaints as regard to roads leading to the main hotels which are in a very bad state. We will do whatever we can because we have to see to it that we have the best road system to service the tourism industry.

#### **IVTB-PHOENIX ROUNDABOUT – TRAFFIC CONGESTION**

**(No. B/268) Dr. R. Sorefan (Fourth Member for La Caverne & Phoenix)** asked the Minister of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport whether, in regard to the IVTB-Phoenix roundabout, he will state the permanent remedial measures that are being contemplated, if any, to address road traffic congestions thereat during peak hours and to allow fluid traffic to and from Petit Camp and from Valentina.

**Mr Bodha:** Madam Speaker I am fully aware that there is a serious and acute problem at the IVTB-Phoenix Roundabout, especially during peak hours.

The Pont Fer Roundabout is a strategic traffic intersection where traffic from Port Louis via the M1, the Lower Plaine Wilhems, the Upper Plaine Wilhems, the West and the South converge. In addition, the Dowlut and Jumbo Roundabouts represent adjacent bottlenecks. Hence, the severe traffic congestion during both peak and off-peak hours.

As a temporary measure to mitigate the traffic congestion, the third lane from St Jean has been extended to bypass the Pont Fer Roundabout and its operation has been found to alleviate the problem significantly. However, this measure gave rise to strong protests from the inhabitants of Petit Camp and Valentina since it prevents, for road safety reasons, direct

access to the motorway via the Pont Fer Roundabout. Consequently, in order not to penalise the inhabitants, the bypass is opened and operated by Police during the morning and peak hours only.

Madam, Speaker, taking into consideration the high traffic volume, the bottlenecks caused by the three roundabouts and the difficulty to access these regions, the construction of a complex interchange which will replace all three roundabouts, is the only feasible solution and is high on the priority list of the Government projects.

Provision has been made in the Budget 2015-2016 for the funding of the preparation of the bidding documents in respect of the grade separation of the Pont Fer, Jumbo and Phoenix Roundabouts which will also connect to the Terre Rouge Verdun Road.

The terms of reference for the consultancy services are being worked out by the RDA for the implementation of the project on a "Design and Build" basis. The calendar is set for the project to start off at the beginning of the next financial year.

The fluidity of the traffic to and from Petit Camp and Valentina will be addressed within the project. Pending its implementation, the present arrangements to alleviate the traffic congestion will be maintained.

**Dr. Sorefan:** Madam Speaker, the hon. Minister has just said that to alleviate the problem we now have Police Officers there, but when we were together in the Opposition, we know very well that Rs55 m. were spent just for that additional lane. Can the hon. Minister consider that, instead of flyovers, to consider the new project now to have underpass under the roundabouts?

**Mr Bodha:** This is a question which requires engineering expertise. I will consider that, but what I can say is that a double level - they call it the spaghetti -flyover has already been designed. The budget is going to be Rs1.9 billion. The feasibility study is being done and this is what we have thought to connect the three roundabouts at two levels and connect also with the Terre Rouge-Verdun coming from the South.

**Dr. Sorefan:** Thank you hon. Minister, but all this 'spaghetti junction' we have it in England and it is unaesthetic. We have this region with very aesthetic views and with these flyovers, I am sure you will destroy them. But with underpass, it might cost slightly a bit more. So, will the Minister consider to go for underpass, which is a normal design?

**Mr Bodha:** I will make this request. I can understand the holistic and aesthetic view of the area, but the problem is whether we can have tunnels at two levels, this has yet to be seen. But, I will definitely ask the experts to see some solutions in that direction.

**Mr Jhugroo:** Madam Speaker, being given that we addressed several PQs in this august Assembly for the past ten years to alleviate the traffic flow at the roundabout of Phoenix, so it is good news that it is starting very soon. So, can the hon. Minister give us a timeframe when this will start and when it will finish?

**Mr Bodha:** The project is to be funded from Government funds and we believe that the works can start at the beginning of the next financial year. All the bidding documents, all the procedures would have been done by then.

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Gobin!

**Mr Gobin:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Can the hon. Minister give fresh consideration to the new set of circumstances which have emerged, namely after having heard the hon. Minister of Finance and Economic Development this morning? I am saying this in the context that in the vicinity of that roundabout is a building called Phoenix Les Halles which, if we have understood from the hon. Minister of Finance and Economic Development, will change hands, the ownership thereof will change hands since all the shareholdings have been transferred, will the hon. Minister, therefore, give fresh consideration of the construction of...

*(Interruptions)*

That's my question, whether a fresh consideration will be given to that.

**Madam Speaker:** Allow the hon. Minister to reply.

**Mr Bodha:** We will consider the matter, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** Next question, hon. Dr. Sorefan!

#### **MOTORWAYS – DECONGESTION – MASTER PLAN**

**(No. B/269) Dr. R. Sorefan (Fourth Member for La Caverne & Phoenix)** asked the Minister of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport whether, in regard to the motorways, he will state if Government proposes to come up with a master plan for the decongestion thereof as soon as possible and, if so, indicate -

(a) when;

- (b) if consideration will be given for the roundabouts to be replaced by traffic lights and underpasses at some roundabouts, wherever appropriate, especially at the Place d'Armes.

**Mr Bodha:** Madam Speaker, I am informed that the preparation of a Master Plan for the decongestion of motorways within the Terre Rouge-Curepipe corridor was initiated by the RDA since 2009. The endeavour culminated into a PPP project with the selection of PLAN Consortium as the Preferred Bidder and Group Five Strabag as a Reserved Bidder in 2012.

However, the contract was not awarded since the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development raised concerns on the financial implications in view of the prevailing economic environment and Government's commitments and priorities. That was in 2012.

Madam Speaker, in the light of several decisions taken by the present day Government in relation to the shelving of the Mauritius Light Rail Transit System, a new definition to the city of Port Louis, smart cities and techno poles, the Master Plan is being reviewed by the Transaction Adviser upon request from my Ministry. In fact, we had a meeting and we have changed the scope of works. The new Master Plan will be presented to Government in two weeks' time, that is, at the end of the week.

The new Master Plan will also address traffic issues in and around Port Louis and in relation to traffic congestion at Place d'Armes, budgetary provision has been made for the preparation of bidding documents for the construction of a new entrance into Port Louis via Decaen Street. Works are expected to start very soon after we have done the design and the bidding procedures.

The decision to replace roundabouts by traffic lights and underpasses at some roundabouts will also be addressed in the new Master Plan for road decongestion.

**Dr. Sorefan:** Madam Speaker, I heard the hon. Minister mentioning advisers. Are they the SPP advisers who were in the last Government and we have paid a lot of money to them and nothing has been executed so far? Are we talking of the same transaction adviser?

**Mr Bodha:** Madam Speaker, we are, but they have reached the end of their contract and, in fact, they came to present the final design according to the contract they had been given with the selection of the Preferred Bidder and the Reserved Bidder. What we have done, in fact, we have told them that we have changed the scope of works, we have reduced them and we are going to have a final presentation in April, and that would be the end of the contract.

**Dr. Sorefan:** Will that cost the Government a bit of more money?

**Mr Bodha:** No. In fact, they had come with a plan which covered the Dream Bridge, the Ring Road Lot II and Lot III. We have reduced the scope of works so that would be the final undertaking with the consultant.

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

**Mr Jhugroo:** Can I ask the hon. Minister to reconsider about the Dream Bridge between Quay D to Caudan?

**Mr Bodha:** Well, in the new master plan, the Dream Bridge is out and the LRT is out. So, we are thinking of, in fact, doing the A1M1, that is, the bridge over the Grand River North West to connect at Sorèze, improve the Ring Road Phase 1 which is being repaired, implement the tunnel and then, do the third leg which will be connecting the end of the tunnel to Mer Rouge with the development of the port. We believe that with this circular design, we should be able to provide for the traffic entering into Port Louis with this new access at Decaen Street and then, going around Port Louis to the Ring Road.

**Madam Speaker:** Next question, hon. Dr. Sorefan!

**Dr. Sorefan:** Regarding Place d'Armes, with the hon. Minister consider here also design of underpass not to jeopardise the scenery?

**Mr Bodha:** We have thought about this idea of having an underpass at Place d'Armes, but it is under water.

*(Interruptions)*

Yes, because the only possibility is to do an underpass on piles. I think technologically this can be done, but it will cost us a lot of money.

**Madam Speaker:** Next question, hon. Dr. Sorefan!

### **PUBLIC HOSPITALS - NEUROSURGERY**

**(No. B/270) Dr. R. Sorefan (Fourth Member for La Caverne & Phoenix)** asked the Minister of Health and Quality of Life whether, in regard to neurosurgery, he will state if same is performed in the public hospitals, and, if so, indicate -

- (a) if it is performed by individual surgeon;
- (b) the number thereof performed, since 2010 to date -

- (i) which have been unsuccessful and referred abroad, and
- (ii) in which the patient has suffered severe consequences like blindness and paralysis, amongst others.

**Mr Gayan:** Madam Speaker, neurosurgery or neurological surgery is a medical speciality concerned with the precaution, diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation of disorders which affect any portion of the nervous system, including the brain, the spinal cord, the peripheral nerves and extra-cranial cerebrovascular system.

I am informed that neurosurgery is performed in public hospitals mainly at Victoria and Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam National Hospitals. A few emergency cases are operated at Jawaharlal Nehru and Dr. Jeetoo Hospitals.

With regard to parts (a) and (b) of the question, I am informed that 2,140 neurosurgeries have been performed by five surgeons since 2010.

It is a common practice worldwide that only one Neurosurgeon operates on his patient, but he is usually assisted by an RMO (Registered Medical Officer) from the Department itself.

With regard to part (b) (i) of the question, I am informed that only one unsuccessful case of neurosurgery which was operated at SSRN Hospital was referred to VIMHANS, New Delhi in July 2013 following initial urgent surgery for decompression of the optic nerve at SSRN Hospital.

With regard to part (b) (ii) of the question, I am further informed that the same patient as mentioned at part (b) (i) of the reply, Mr M. J., 35 years old, who was referred abroad for pre-operative embolization and definitive treatment in the form of complete excision of the tumour, had lost vision in both eyes on his return, but there is no evidence of any paralysis.

**Dr. Sorefan:** Thank you, hon. Minister. You are talking about only one neurosurgeon worldwide. This is not true. I come from England. It is a teamwork of neurosurgeons. Some neurosurgeons come here to gain experience.

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Dr. Sorefan, please ask your question. Don't make a statement, please!

**Dr. Sorefan:** I have to clarify a bit that in Mauritius, foreign doctors come and get experience on their own and there is one case that you have mentioned, he is blind, because he did basal cranial surgery. Will the hon. Minister come with a specific guideline that certain

tumours of the brain should be taken at certain level by neurosurgeons and the rest go abroad? Don't open here and send abroad, it's too late and he just happens to be - I will say it in this House - my nephew. They did the wrong surgery with him; one surgeon going in the basal of the brain has caused havoc to that young man with two children. So, I don't want that to happen to others. Please, come with a guideline! If they can't do it, they must send him abroad, they must not poke their nose into it and cause havoc to that 100% human being!

**Mr Gayan:** Well, Madam Speaker, I have taken good note of what the hon. Member has said, but I am informed that in the case of any adverse emergency or incident happening to the neurosurgeon who is carrying out the operation, help is always available because there is always a team of neurosurgeons who are in the hospital premises all the time. That is my information, and help can be obtained from the other hospitals within a short time and during that time the patient remains attended by the anaesthetic team and the Registered Medical Officer. But in the case which has been mentioned, I must say, Madam Speaker, that this patient had complained of headache and left eye blindness and severe visual impairment of the right eye since the end of May 2013; that was pre-operation. But unfortunately something went wrong and he had to be sent overseas. I am sure that, in ideal circumstances, to the best, you have, at least, two neurosurgeons carrying out an operation of this nature because it is dealing with the brain or the spinal cord, it is very serious.

**Dr. Sorefan:** Will the hon. Minister consider of introducing an apparatus that is called Gamma Knife, which uses gamma rays without opening the skull, a non-invasive surgery? It costs some money; you enter in the morning and you leave in the afternoon without any consequences and you do not have to open the brain. Will the hon. Minister consider of procuring one such apparatus?

**Mr Gayan:** Madam Speaker, I am sure that we can entertain that suggestion of the hon. Member, but I must also say that, in the hospital services today, we have four neurosurgeons who are Mauritians and one is from overseas. Most of them have either retired or on the point of retiring. So, what I am doing? In fact, that's what I mentioned in my intervention on the Budget, that we need to build capacity and the only way to build capacity is to get the young ones to be trained in these specialised areas. Unfortunately, the training for neurosurgery takes a long time. Not many people are interested, but we will have to do it. If we cannot get the Mauritians to do it, then we will have to import specialists from overseas. I am also concerned that many operations dealing with the brain surgery and

neurosurgery have to go overseas when we could have them operated in Mauritius if we had the expertise and we have to build the expertise.

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

**Mr Jhugroo:** Madam Speaker, after listening to the answer of the hon. Minister; would he consider to have a specialised neurosurgery unit like the one we have for the cardiac patients at Trust Fund for Specialised Medical Care?

**Mr Gayan:** Neurosurgery is already, Madam Speaker, considered a specialised care system. We have a team at Pamplémousses and another team at Victoria and in emergency cases...

*(Interruptions)*

The problem is that if there is a serious road accident, let's say, in the North then everybody will be taken down to Victoria; it might take long. So, I think that, because of the nature of those operations, it is best to decentralise in my opinion.

#### **FORM IV STUDENTS – DIGITAL TABLETS**

**(No. B/273) Mr F. Quirin (Fourth Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière)** asked the Minister of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Science Research whether, in regard to the project for the allocation of digital tablets to the students of Form IV, she will state if all the students of Form IV have been allocated with a digital tablet, including those of the prevocational sector and, if not, indicate the reasons therefor.

**The Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security (Mr M. Seeruttun):** Madam Speaker, with your permission I am going to reply this question.

The Tablet PC project was implemented by the Ministry in 2013 following a measure announced in the Budget Speech 2013 to allocate Tablet PCs to all Form IV students and educators of State and Private-aided Secondary schools, and also to Year 4 students of the pre-vocational schools.

The process of the procurement of Tablet PCs for Form IV students and educators of the year 2013 started in July 2013, but due to lengthy tendering procedures, the award of the contract was made in December 2013 with delivery, commissioning and registration of the Tablet PCs taking place from January to June 2014.

The distribution of the Tablet PCs to students could, therefore, be effected only as from July 2014 and since, at that time, the Form IV students of 2013 had already moved to Form V, it was decided to distribute the tablets to the Form V students of 2014.

The students of the pre-vocational sector who were in Year 4 in 2013 were not allocated the Tablet PCs given that, at the time of distribution, they had already left the pre-vocational schools in October 2013. As regards to students who were in Year 4 in 2014, since at the time of the distribution in July 2014, they were nearing completion of their studies, no Tablet PC was distributed to them.

Madam Speaker, the 2014 procurement exercise for Tablet PCs, which started in September 2014, has not yet been completed due to two challenges received on the tender exercise upon notification of award to all bidders.

Since my Ministry currently has a stock of 2263 Tablet PCs, and so as not to penalise this year's Year IV students of the pre-vocational schools, my Ministry will proceed with the distribution of these Tablets to the students during the second term of this year.

As regards the distribution to Form V students and educators of 2015, that is, Form IV of 2014 and educators, same will be effected once the issue of challenge is sorted out and the contract is awarded.

**Madam Speaker:** Next question, hon. Barbier.

### **ROCHE BOIS - PIG BREEDING**

**(No. B/274) Mr J. C. Barbier (Fifth Member for G.R.N.W & Port Louis West)** asked the Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security whether, in regard to pig breeding in the region of Cocotterie, in Roche Bois, he will state if the relocation thereof to St Martin is being contemplated and, if so, indicate when.

**Mr Seeruttun:** Madam Speaker, I am informed that the site at St Martin is saturated and the existing waste disposal system does not allow for additional breeders to be accommodated there.

My Ministry is proposing to establish specific breeding zones across the island and once the land has been identified and all facilities set up, consideration will be given to the relocation of pig breeders operating outside St Martin and Bassin Requin.

**Mr Barbier:** Madam Speaker, this is not the first time I am raising this issue in this august Assembly and I was told some time back that once the site will be made available at St

Martin, these breeders will move there. I am surprised today that there is no more land available. So, may I ask the hon. Minister to give a top priority to this problem? Today life is becoming very, very impossible in this area where the region is becoming more and more densely populated. May I ask the hon. Minister to give an urgency to this matter and to see to it that site be available for the transfer of pig breeding outside the residential zone?

**Mr Seeruttun:** Madam Speaker, I must inform the House that, following the outbreak of the disease of the African Swine Fever in the year 2007, those pig breeders who were in Roche Bois and in its vicinity were asked to be transferred to St Martin. There were 77 pig breeders and of those 77 pig breeders only 71 opted to move to St Martin and 6 were not keen to move to St Martin. To date only 26 have moved and are doing breeding activities at St Martin; the rest is still yet to be moved to St Martin. There is some resistance of some breeders to move to St Martin. But like I said of the 77 initially, 71 agreed to move to St Martin but they have not all moved over there yet. With regard to the new breeders who have come after that outbreak of the African Swine Fever, those new breeders won't be considered to be moved to St Martin because that area is now already allocated to whoever was interested in that activity during the time that we set up that region for pig breeding purposes.

**Madam Speaker:** Yes, hon. Ameer Meea!

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Thank you, Madam Speaker, I am sure the hon. Minister is well aware that this relocation process has long been in the cards and couldn't be performed yet for several reasons. Can I ask the hon. Minister if he could advise his officers to perform a new survey - an updated one - on the number of pig breeders actually in the Roche Bois region? Many of them have stopped their activities, but those of them who are still there are reluctant to move outside this region. As you know, it is a densely residential area; therefore, can I ask the hon. Minister if he could look urgently into the matter?

**Mr Seeruttun:** I will look into it, Madam Speaker.

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

#### **FISHERS – PROFESSIONAL CARDS - ISSUE**

(No. B/275) **Mr J. C. Barbier (Fifth Member for G.R.N.W & Port Louis West)** asked the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the fishers, he will –

- (a) give a list thereof registered as such over the past five years for mainland Mauritius and Rodrigues respectively
- (b) state the number of application for the issue of a professional fisher card received, since January 2015 to date ,and
- (c) state Government policy in relation to the issue of fisher professional cards.

**Mr Koonjoo:** Madam Speaker, with your permission I am tabling a list of registered fishers year wise since 2011 for mainland Mauritius.

I am informed that with regard to registered fishers in Rodrigues, the list is still being compiled by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and will be tabled in due course.

Madam Speaker, with regard to part (b) of the question, I wish to inform the House that since January 2015 to date, 20 applications have been received in my Ministry for the issue of professional fisher cards.

With regard to part (c) of the question, the policy of the previous Government since 2010 had been not to issue any new fisher card. However, I have reconsidered the issue and I have already set up a committee with the following objectives –

- (i) to assess whether each and every registered fisher is a *bona fide* fisher;
- (ii) to deregister *mala fide* fishers;
- (iii) to monitor closely the activities of each applicant for a fisher card over a period of six months, and
- (iv) to consider any new applications to fisher card for only off lagoon fishing.

**Mr Barbier:** I think the hon. Minister is on the right track and is doing the right things. But may I know whether there is a change in number over the past five years, that is, the number of fishers we had five years back is not the same today? The hon. Minister just tabled the list, but what about the movement from year to year, does he have this information so that we may base on that to know how many new cards can be issued to those who are waiting for so long?

**Mr Koonjoo:** Madam Speaker, for the information of the hon. Member, in 2011, there were 2,214 fishers; in 2012: 2,160 fishers; in 2013: 2,136 fishers; in 2014: 2,082 fishers and in 2015, at at now, it is 2,065. There is an outstanding demand for 148 fishers at present and we are working on that to distribute the cards, but we have to see that the fishers make their applications and they have certain conditions to satisfy before they are registered.

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Jhugroo, do you have a question on fishers?

**Mr Jhugroo:** Can I ask the hon Minister whether he can see to it if he can do something for the fishermen of Constituency No. 12 because since several years they are looking for fisher cards?

**Mr Koonjoo:** Yes, Madam Speaker, that will be done in the same exercise.

**Mr Ganoo:** I heard the hon. Ministry replying that at his Ministry the number of applicants for a new fisherman card is only 148. Therefore, can I ask him why is it that the fisherman card will be granted only for offshore lagoon fishing?

**Mr Koonjoo:** Madam Speaker, we are working on that, because people who go outside lagoon are despatched with special boats. Those who are fishing inside the lagoon can go with small boats and all other devices. So, we are looking into that. We will see to it that people who are willing to go off lagoon and in lagoon are both supported with the same facilities.

**Mr Ganoo:** Can I ask the hon. Minister, therefore, to consider this possibility that when the cards will be distributed to the fishermen the Ministry considers also giving them the possibility of fishing inside the lagoon because for years now the number of lagoon fishermen has been dwindling? 10 years ago, there used to be 4,000 fishermen and now we just heard that the figure has been reduced by about 100% and has come down to only 2,000. The Ministry has implemented a policy of replenishing the lagoons during the past 10 years, therefore why not consider the possibility of allowing the fishermen to fish inside the lagoons when the new cards will be distributed to fishers?

**Mr Koonjoo:** Madam Speaker, my Ministry is looking into all these factors and I want to give a new impulsive to the fishing sector. I have got it in mind, we are working upon that and in the future we want to make the fishing sector a very attractive sector where more jobs will be created. Not only that, we are also looking forward to put some restrictions on the issue of licences to foreign fishing vessels. We have got an area of more than 2.3 million kilometres of ocean, in our ocean we have plenty of fish and in spite of that Mauritius is suffering from the consumption of fish. I want to make Mauritius a healthy country where people will have more fish to eat which is good for health. We are working upon that at my Ministry and definitely we will come forward with a serious plan after this Budget.

*(Interruptions)*

**Madam Speaker:** No, no, I think we should pass on to the next question. Hon. Barbier, next question! We have canvassed the issue!

#### **POINTE AUX SABLES – BUS TERMINAL – CONSTRUCTION**

**(No. B/276) Mr J. C. Barbier (Fifth Member for GRNW & Port Louis West)** asked the Minister of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport whether, in regard to Pointe aux Sables, he will state if consideration will be given for a modern bus terminal to be constructed thereat for the benefit of the inhabitants thereat and of the users thereof.

**Mr Bodha:** Madam Speaker, I wish inform the House that the construction of a bus terminal at Pointe aux Sables is included in the list of priority projects for my Ministry. We are fully aware of the fact that the location of the existing bus stand in that region is a major source of hazard and inconvenience for the inhabitants.

I am informed that the project plan for the construction of a bus terminal at Pointe aux Sables has already been prepared and land has also been identified, but it seems that we have some land swapping issues with the Ministry of Housing and Lands and I will look into the matter.

**Mr Barbier:** May I ask the hon. Minister to give us a time frame now because this project is so long overdue?

**Mr Bodha:** The time frame will depend upon the availability of funds. First of all, we will have to finalise the project plan, address the issue of the swapping of land and then we will go to the Ministry of Finance.

**Mr Armance:** Can I ask the hon. Minister whether he will consider enlarging the main road to and from the new bus terminal, because the road is actually very narrow and we have noted that we have several accidents recently?

**Mr Bodha:** I will look into the matter.

#### **POINTE AUX SABLES-PETITE RIVIERE – ROAD WIDENING**

**(No. B/277) Mr J. C. Barbier (Fifth Member for GRNW & Port Louis West)** asked the Minister of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport whether, in regard to the road linking Pointe aux Sables to Petite Rivière, he will state if consideration will be given for the widening thereof to avert risks of accident.

**Mr Bodha:** Madam Speaker, the Pointe aux Sables road which is B31 extends from Albion Road at Petit Verger to the bus terminal at Pointe aux Sables which is about 2.6 kms long and its width ranges from only 4 meters at some places to about 5.5 metres. It is very narrow by normal standards.

The Road Development Authority has already worked out a preliminary design and the project will be included in the new master plan taking into account the upcoming projects like the smart city being proposed at Bambous and the Coromandel Bridge A1M1 which will attract traffic from the A3, that is, that road in the west whilst also taking into account the proposed development of a ferry service from Pointe aux Sables to Port Louis.

**Mr Barbier:** May I draw the attention of the Minister that my question is about the road linking Petite Rivière to Pointe aux Sables, but may I ask, in the same trend, to the Minister whether he would consider also the possibility of enlarging the coastal road of Pointe aux Sables from the bus terminal to Grand River North West?

**Mr Bodha:** I will look into the matter and I will ask the RDA, in fact, to see to it because we agree that it is too narrow in many areas so we will have to realign it and enlarge it. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** Okay, next question hon. Osman Mahomed!

### **SAMOA - SIDS - THIRD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE**

**(No. B/278) Mr O. Mahomed (Third Member for Port Louis South & Port Louis Central)** asked the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade whether, following the Third International Conference on the Small Islands Developing States, held in Apia, Samoa, from 01 to 04 September 2014, he will state if his Ministry has set up a standing committee to coordinate the implementation of the actions taken under the various related and cross cutting themes discussed thereat and, if so, indicate the progress achieved and the outcome thereof.

**Mr Sinatambou:** Madam Speaker, the Mauritius delegation at the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS) was led by the then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade and comprised the then Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development as well as other officials.

Madam Speaker, the hon. Third Member for Port Louis South and Port Louis Central, hon. Mahomed was himself a member of the delegation. As the hon. Member should

therefore be aware, the main outcome of the Third International Conference on the Small Islands Developing States was the adoption of an Accelerated Modalities of Action, otherwise known as the Samoa Pathway. This was endorsed on 14 November 2014, by the United Nations General Assembly.

I am informed that on 19 September 2014, it was approved by Cabinet that the ad-hoc Core Group, set up prior to the Samoa Summit for coordination purposes, be converted into a Standing Committee in order to follow up on the implementation of the Samoa Pathway.

I am also informed that under the previous Government, two meetings were held on 13<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> October 2014, but that the committee then went on sleep mode.

However, since the advent of the new Government in December 2014, four meetings have been held and, I understand that a fifth meeting will be convened this month.

In this regard, Madam Speaker, let me highlight a number of implementing measures taken by and/or implemented under the stewardship of a standing committee to date.

First of all, a training programme on climate finance is currently being held for officers of relevant ministries, the private sector and non-government organisations (NGOs). This programme was, in fact, inaugurated not later than yesterday itself and will last from 06 to 10 April 2015. This training programme is in line with paragraph 37 of the Samoa Pathway.

There is also the 2050 Pathway Calculator which is designed to assist the country in proactive planning for our future energy efficiency strategy. This is in line with paragraph 49 of the Samoa Pathway and was launched a few weeks ago. There is also work which is being pursued as regards the setting up of a climate finance skills hub which is in line with paragraph 44 (d) of the Samoa Pathway.

The SIDS Dock Statute which is an institutional mechanism designed to facilitate the development of a sustainable energy economy with Small Islands Developing States is also currently being worked upon in line with paragraph 50 (c) of the Samoa Pathway.

Work is also being done as regards the 21<sup>st</sup> conference of parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change which is scheduled for December 2015. This is in line with paragraphs 31 to 46 of the Samoa Pathway.

**Mr Mahomed:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I believe what the Minister referred to a sleeping mode was due to the general elections and then the change of

Government. May I ask the hon. Minister the dates of the four meetings and if there is any time frame that has been set going forward?

**Mr Sinatambou:** No, I must say that I am not referring to elections because elections were in December and the first two meetings were in October. It was indeed on sleep mode, but maybe it was the *coze cozer* period! As for the four meetings, Madam Speaker, they were held respectively on 05 January 2015, 19 January 2015, 22 January 2015 and 31 March 2015. These are the four meetings and the fifth meeting is scheduled some time in April.

**Madam Speaker:** Yes, hon. Leader of the Opposition!

**Mr Bérenger:** Being given that this Samoa meeting and the work that is being done, all this is part of a build-up towards the December Paris United Nations Conference which will be crucial and, a few days ago, a deadline was met for all countries to put in their offers, what they are going to do individually at the level of each country. There was a deadline. Can I know whether Mauritius has put in its commitments?

**Mr Sinatambou:** With all due respect, let me allow myself, Madam Speaker, to however correct the hon. Leader of the Opposition. What is being done is not a build-up to COP21 of December 2015. No, Madam Speaker! All the work which is being done under the Samoa Pathway is about the three international conferences on Small Islands Developing States. The first one was in 1994 in Barbados. The second one was in 2004 in Mauritius and the third one was in Samoa in 2014. Therefore, these are the three ten yearly conferences which are held for Small Islands Developing States and whatever build-up regarding COP21 is not under the Samoa Accelerated Modalities of Action. But, if the hon. Leader of the Opposition would like to come up with a Parliamentary Question regarding COP21 which is about climate change, this is a matter for the Ministry of Environment and I would request him to come up with a substantive question as this deadline has nothing to do with the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action under Samoa.

*(Interruptions)*

I know a little bit more than you on this one!

**Madam Speaker:** Okay. Yes, hon. Osman Mohamed, next question!

#### **DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT - RECOMMENDATIONS**

**(No. B/279) Mr O. Mahomed (Third Member for Port Louis South & Port Louis Central)** asked the Minister of Environment, Sustainable Development and Disaster and

Beach Management whether, in regard to the recommendations made by the consultants in 2012 for the Development of an Inundation, Flooding and Landslide National Risk Profile, Maps, Strategy Framework and Action Plans for Disaster Risk Management for the Republic of Mauritius, he will state where matters stand as to the implementation thereof, indicating the timeframe set therefor, if any.

**Mr Dayal:** Madam Speaker, the consultants had submitted their final report in 2013 with key recommendations. They had proposed that same be implemented within a timeframe of two planning cycles. The first planning cycle being from 2013 to 2018 and the second cycle from 2019 to 2025.

Based on those recommendations, the following actions have been taken –

- (i) a National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Centre (NDRRMC) was set up in 2013 to serve as a national platform on Disaster Risk reduction. This Centre is also responsible for coordinating the implementation of the recommendations in the report;
- (ii) regarding the need to reduce risk in areas prone to very high and high-risk and the need to adopt a sound development strategy, the NDRRMC had consultations with stakeholders concerned, including the Ministry of Housing and Lands. In the first instance, it was proposed to develop high resolution danger zone maps. Further consultations will be held on this matter. In the meantime, my Ministry is developing toolkits for the Local Authorities based on the vulnerability maps produced by the Consultants which will help Local Authorities in identifying risk areas to guide sound development;
- (iii) several measures are being taken by my Ministry to preserve our natural environment, including Environment Sensitive Areas. Moreover, the EPA will be amended this year to provide for the better management of our environment;
- (iv) with a view to embrace a culture of risk, in September 2014 an international consultant was hired through the UNDP to prepare school safety plans and to ensure the integration of DRR in primary and secondary schools curriculum. The report of this study has been referred to the Ministry of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research for appropriate action;

- (v) with regard to emergency response, my Ministry is at present finalising the National Disaster Scheme (NDS) 2015, which defines the roles and responsibilities of all relevant stakeholders before, during and in the aftermath of specified disasters;
- (vi) the report also highlights the need for a consistent Spatial Data Infrastructure for conducting risk assessment. The Ministry of Housing and Lands has initiated action for the development of a National Spatial Data Infrastructure with the assistance of the Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development (RCMRD) from Kenya;
- (vii) the NDRRMC has embarked on the implementation of a national Multi-hazard Early Warning and Emergency Alert System. This system will allow the sending of emergency notifications, messages to all first responders and the public about impending hazards;
- (viii) as regards the recommendation for the setting up of an emergency fund and insurance scheme, the NDRRMC has been working very closely with the Indian Ocean Commission under the ISLANDS project on a programme 'Financial protection for our people and our economy against natural and climatic disasters'.

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Minister, can I know how long is your reply?

**Mr Dayal:** Only a couple of seconds.

**Madam Speaker:** If you have got two or three more pages, then it is better to circulate.

**Mr Dayal:** No, it is the last page, Madam Speaker.

As part of the programme, a report on 'Building capacities for increased public investment in integrated climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction' has been produced. I wish to inform the House that my Ministry is organising a national workshop on 13 April 2015 whereby this report will be presented.

Madam Speaker, I wish to inform the House that implementation of the recommendations involves billions of rupees and requires participatory, multi-agency and multi-stakeholder engagement. A copy of the report has been circulated to all stakeholders concerned with the adoption of the 'Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-

2030' in March 2015, my Ministry will ensure that the recommendations of the consultants are implemented in line with the new Framework.

### **ECOLOGICAL AGRICULTURE ACTION PLAN**

**(No. B/280) Mr O. Mahomed (Third Member for Port Louis South & Port Louis Central)** asked Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security whether, in regard to the proposed preparation of an Ecological Agriculture Action Plan, in line with *Maurice Ile Durable*, as decided by Government in March 2013, he will state where matters stand, indicating if a list of the pesticides, chemical fertilizers, fungicides, insecticides and herbicides which can be withdrawn from the market, either immediately or in a phased manner, is available and, if so, indicate the actions, if any, taken or that will be taken in relation thereto.

**Mr Seeruttun:** Madam Speaker, I am informed that a High-Level Steering Committee was set up in August 2013 at the level of the Ministry to work out a list of pesticides which could be withdrawn from the market, either immediately or in a phased manner, and to prepare an Ecological Agriculture Action Plan for both Mauritius and Rodrigues. A list of 20 pesticides was consequently identified for withdrawal and safer pesticides/bio-pesticides were proposed as alternatives. I am tabling the list of pesticides which have been recommended for withdrawal.

Upon the recommendation of the High-Level Steering Committee, the Dangerous Chemicals Control Board, which operates under the aegis of the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life, decided to stop issuing permits for the importation of three pesticides in January 2014 and six pesticides in January 2015. These pesticides are highlighted in the statement I am tabling.

This new Government, Madam Speaker, is conscious of the abusive use of pesticides in agricultural production, and the problem will be tackled in a holistic way. My Ministry will now be implementing the bio-farming/organic farming projects where the use of agrochemicals in agricultural production will be minimised.

As regards the withdrawal of additional toxic pesticides from the market, this is currently being worked out by my Ministry, and the specific timeframe for the total ban of these products from the market will be established.

Madam Speaker, I am also informed that, in regard to the preparation of an Ecological Agriculture Action Plan for Mauritius and Rodrigues, technical assistance from FAO has been solicited.

**Mr Mahomed:** Would the hon. Minister clarify, for the benefit of the House, whether the list that he has just tabled will be active, meaning all these pesticides will be immediately banned in the country?

**Mr Seeruttun:** Madam Speaker, I have just mentioned that all those pesticides that are on that list have already been banned. So, no import permit is granted for the importation of those pesticides.

### **SIC – BUILDING - PURCHASE**

**(No. B/281) 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 purchase by the State Insurance Company Ltd. of a building located in Ebene from Arushi Development Co., he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the company, information as to the –

- (a) total purchase price thereof
- (b) total amount of money paid in relation thereto, and
- (c) date of delivery thereof.

*(Withdrawn)*

### **CRIMINAL CASES - FOREIGN STATE - MUTUAL ASSISTANCE**

**(No. B/282) Mr R. Uteem (First Member for Port Louis South & Port Louis Central)** asked the Attorney General whether, in regard to criminal cases, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain information as to the number of request made on behalf of the State of Mauritius to the competent authorities of a foreign State for mutual assistance in proceedings commenced in Mauritius in relation thereto, since 2003 to date on a yearly basis, indicating in each case, the –

- (a) nature of the assistance sought and obtained, if any, and
- (b) outcome thereof.

*(Withdrawn)*

**MPCB LTD – BOARD - COMPOSITION**

(No. B/283) 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 Mauritius Post and Co-operative Bank Ltd., he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain therefrom, information as to the –

- (a) composition of the Board thereof;
- (b) names, qualifications and terms and conditions of appointment of the General Manager thereof, and
- (c) aggregate amount of non-performing loans thereof, since 2010 to date.

*(Withdrawn)*

**AIRPORTS OF MAURITIUS LIMITED – RECRUITMENT & CONTRACT  
ALLOCATION - INQUIRY**

(No. B/284) Mr P. Jhugroo (Second Member for Mahebourg & Plaine Magnien) asked the Minister of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms whether, in regard to the Airports of Mauritius Limited, he will state if his Ministry will consider initiating inquiries in respect of all the decisions taken by Mr S. P., former Chief Executive thereof, wherein the approval of the Board thereof were not sought, especially with regard to recruitment and contract allocation and at the conclusion thereof, if so required, for the referral thereof to the Independent Commission against Corruption and to the Police.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Madam Speaker, I am replying to PQ B/284. The information requested by the hon. Member is being compiled as appropriate and will be forwarded to the Ministry of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms for any action deemed necessary.

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

**PARASTATAL BODIES & GOVERNMENT-OWNED COMPANIES –  
CHAIRPERSONS & BOARD MEMBERS**

(No. B/285) 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 parastatal bodies, Government-owned companies and private companies wherein Government is a majority shareholder, he will state if Government has

approved a new set of guidelines in relation to the Chairpersons and to the Board Members thereof and, if so, in each case, give details thereof regarding the payment of salaries, allowances and other fringe benefits attached thereto, including the enjoyment of office car facilities and of office space.

**The Minister of Technology, Communication and Innovation (Mr P. Jugnauth):** Madam Speaker, following Cabinet's approval, the Ministry of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms issued a circular letter on 13 February 2015 to all Ministries and Departments informing them of a clear line of demarcation between the roles of Chairpersons and Chief Executives Officers to be adopted in public sector organisations.

As regards parastatal bodies, the fees payable to Chairpersons and members of Statutory Boards and Committees fall under the purview of the Pay Research Bureau.

Regarding the Government-owned companies and those not governed by the PRB, Government has approved that part-time Chairpersons and other members of Boards be categorised in four groups and the monthly fees payable to them be revised as follows –

- Chairpersons, ranging from Rs30,000 to Rs70,000;
- Vice-Chairpersons, ranging from Rs20,000 to Rs45,000, and
- Board members ranging from Rs10,000 to Rs25,000.

Furthermore, transport facilities will be provided to the Chairperson for attending Board meetings as well as official functions.

Concerning office space, the Chairperson makes use of the Board room of the organisation for meetings, but he is not provided with a permanent office in view of the part-time nature of his office.

**Mr Bhagwan:** Can we know from the hon. Minister whether he has a list of all the full-time Chairmen?

**Mr Jugnauth:** I have a list of the institutions concerned that fall under the different categories, namely A, B, C and D. But I am not aware of full-time Chairpersons. I know the Chairpersons are part-time. But I can provide, of course, a list of those Chairpersons.

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

#### **PLASTIC BAGS - BAN**

**(No. B/287) Mr A. Ameer Meea (Second Member for Port Louis Maritime & Port Louis East)** asked the Minister of Finance and Economic Development whether, in regard to the banning of plastic bags, as announced in the last Budget Speech, he will state –

- (a) when same will be implemented;
- (b) the alternatives identified, if any, giving details thereof, and
- (c) the measures that will be taken to preserve the industries involved therein, indicating the expected number of job losses in relation thereto.

**The Minister of Environment, Sustainable Development and Disaster and Beach Management (Mr R. Dayal):** Madam Speaker, the battle against the abusive use of plastic bags is a long standing concern. It is acknowledged that various measures have been undertaken to reduce the use of plastic bags since 2002. These measures include amongst others, promulgation of regulations, introduction of levy and awareness raising. However, these measures to curtail excessive use of plastic bags have been largely unsuccessful.

**D17/TAKE031AF/9(B/285)**

As you know, a zero plastic strategy was also advocated by the previous Government since 2011. However, the absence of a sustained action plan to implement the strategy, coupled with inadequate monitoring and enforcement, coordination and follow-up of the measures failed to achieve expected results.

Consequently, the use of plastic bags has continued to increase over the past decade, amounting to some Rs300 m. annually. The situation has been worsened after the liberalisation of import of plastic bags in 2013.

The decision to ban plastic bags, as announced in the recent Budget, is indeed a very bold measure, which will allow leapfrogging from the throw-away society to an ecologically responsible one.

Madam Speaker, with regard to part (a) of the question, I wish to inform the House that, as announced, plastic bags will be banned as from 01 January 2016.

My Ministry is already working on the modalities and strategies, including awareness raising as well as promulgation of regulations for the ban of the local manufacture, import, trade and use of plastic bags under the Environment Protection Act. I would like to reassure the House that exceptions will be made for plastics used for packing purposes, in view of hygienic and sanitary reasons.

With regard to part (b) of the question, current alternatives produced and sold on the market include, among others, –

- Jute bags;
- Cloth bags made of cotton, linen, polyester and jean;
- Bags made of recycle cloth;
- ‘*Tente vacoas*’;
- Raffia bags; Recycled paper bags, and
- Leather bags.

We have seen from the experience of other countries and Rodrigues that the industry is market-driven. The business of the entrepreneurs of alternative bags has expanded in Rodrigues and so will be in Mauritius. We are confident that the ingenuity of Mauritians and Rodriguans will forge lots of innovation in that sector.

Madam Speaker, with regard to part (c) of the question, as far back as 2009, Government had hired the services of a Technical Consultant to conduct a study on the reengineering of the plastic industry.

The consultant conducted in-plant audits for each enterprise and had made specific recommendations mainly in terms of machinery modification, acquisition of additional accessories and purchase of new equipment for product diversification. The enterprises did not implement the measures recommended due to uncertainty about the viability of the proposals made by the consultant.

I am informed by the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection that there are presently some 12 enterprises producing plastic packaging materials, including plastic bags. Most of the enterprises are SMEs, except for three. I understand that the number of jobs concerned is about 280. The larger enterprises have adequate resources and know-how to further diversify their products range.

I am also informed that the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection is envisaging the following course of action –

- Assessment of the diversification potential of the enterprises by Industrial Engineers of the Ministry.
- Evaluation of the needs of the enterprises, and
- Assistance to the enterprises to address the needs through support institutions.

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Madam Speaker, according to the reply given by the hon. Minister, whereby part (c) of my question I stated that the number of job losses that would occur due to this measure, the hon. Minister did not reply about any number or any sort of this. Can I inform the hon. Minister, according to information that has been published in the press, there are actually 25 plastic companies, and ten companies out of these 25 would close down because all their machines can produce only plastic bags, they can't be reengineered as the hon. Minister just stated. And all these ten companies are SME's, they have taken loans, overdraft and they employ so many employees. So, therefore, can I ask the hon. Minister - this is why this question was firstly addressed to the Finance Minister - what would be done to these specific companies, which only produce plastic bags and those SME's that have so many employment at risk?

**Mr Dayal:** Let me just clarify the points. Part (c) of the question I answered. I said, I understand that the number of jobs concerned is about 280. Let me add now that, yesterday itself, I received three manufacturers in my office and I wanted to get first-hand information concerning how they are going to adapt to what the Government is proposing. I can tell you that all of them said they are going to reengineer their processes, but that will take some time. Only in certain cases, they are going to have problems because they only deal with a certain type of plastic. So, therefore, the issue of reengineering is possible.

**Mr Bérenger:** I think I heard the hon. Minister say that there will be exceptions and he gave a few examples. Can I know from the hon. Minister how widespread would be those exceptions and how will this be administered? These permits - I suppose - which are exceptions are going to be delivered by somebody. How is this going to be administered?

**Mr Dayal:** Madam Speaker, as I said, we are working on the various aspects governing this very important environmental issue and it is being done by our technicians. We are going to sensitise the whole nation how we are going about certain type of plastics, as I said - I have just quoted one - for hygienic reason, for health concerns. Therefore, we are going to communicate and inform the public how we are going about it in a timely manner.

**Mr Jhugroo:** Can the hon. Minister clarify whether the plastics used by households will continue to be manufactured because these are used for dustbins?

**Mr Dayal:** Madam Speaker, we are going to announce how we are proceeding with what type of plastic and what we are doing. This will be communicated in a timely manner, as I said, and we are working on it.

**Mr Ganoo:** I wanted to ask the hon. Minister more or less the same question. In one specific case of *les grands sac noirs* that all households have in their kitchen and used by all housewives, will this be banned also?

**Mr Dayal:** All these issues will be taken on board.

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Madam Speaker, we are not contesting the fact that plastic bags do a lot of damage to the environment, this is not the point. My point is, some of those companies will close down. The hon. Minister said he met some of these plastic bag companies, but not all of them. I can table a press cutting from '*Le Defi Quotidien*', where already a company, Meeshy Plastic Bag Company Ltd. Said -

*« Il ne sait plus quoi faire. Affirmant qu'il a contracté des dettes pour financer son entreprise, il confie que cette fabrique est le gagne-pain de sa famille ».*

Therefore, if the hon. Minister cannot answer on this issue, maybe I may come back with another substantive question to the hon. Minister of Finance who can reply. Secondly, Madam Speaker, paradoxically the tax on paper bag actually is 30% . If we want people to use paper bag, we should reduce this amount of tax so that it can be accessible at a good price for all people to use it.

**Mr Dayal:** Madam Speaker, as far as the issue of manufacturers is concerned, my office is open to everyone. I received the three persons because they asked for an interview on that specific issue. So, therefore, the hon. Member can ask that person to come to my office and we will meet with our technicians and discuss about these issues. We are here to help, but then, it has to be within the framework of Government policy. The policy is of national interest and on environmental interest. Concerning the tax on paper, I would communicate that to my colleague the Minister of Finance and he will see what can be done.

**Mr Bhagwan:** In order to sensitise the population, will the hon. Minister and the Ministry consider also investing in the manufacture of cloth bag, and then distribute to school children and other poor families as a first step?

**Mr Dayal:** Thank you very much, hon. Member. I would like to say that we are already sponsoring the manufacturer of cloth bag through our community-related projects and one of them is in Quatre Soeurs where they have produced already thousands of those bags, we are distributing free of charge because it is funded by an international concern. So, these issues are there.

**Madam Speaker:** Last question!

**Mr Jhugroo:** Can the hon. Minister inform the House whether the plastic bags used by retail pharmacies to put sugar coated tablets will be banned?

*(Interruptions)*

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Jhugroo, did you declare your interest?

**Mr Dayal:** Can I have the question again, please?

**Mr Jhugroo:** Will the hon. Minister confirm whether the plastic bags used in retail pharmacies to put sugar-coated tablets, which may be damaged, will be banned?

**Mr Dayal:** This is something that I will take on board. It's a very valid suggestion. We will take it on board, Madam Speaker.

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

*(Interruptions)*

#### **NICE COMMITTEE– CHAIRPERSON - APPOINTMENT**

**(No. B/288) Mr R. Bhagwan (First Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière)** asked the Minister of Business, Enterprise and Cooperatives whether, in regard to the appointment of Mr V. M. as Chairperson of the National Institute for the Cooperative Enterprise Committee, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Committee, information as to his -

- (a) qualifications;
- (b) address, and
- (c) terms and conditions of appointment.

**Mr Bholah:** Madam Speaker, Mr Vishal Mauracheea was appointed Chairperson of the National Institute of Cooperative Entrepreneurship (NICE) on 13 February 2015.

With regard to part (a) of the question concerning his qualifications, I am informed that he has a Cambridge School Certificate and has also followed a 'Practical Spreadsheet Processing' examination conducted by the Pitman Examinations Institute. He has wide experience in business activities.

As regards part (b) of the question, his address is Royal Road, Montagne Blanche.

As for part (c) of the question, regarding the terms and conditions of his appointment as the Chairperson of the National Institute of Cooperative Entrepreneurship, this is determined by section 114 of the Cooperatives Act 2005 (as amended). It is stipulated at section 114, subsections (2) and (3) that -

- (i) The Chairperson shall hold office for a period of two (2) years and he shall be eligible for re-appointment, and
- (ii) The Chairperson shall be paid such fees or allowances as the Minister may determine.

Consequently, I am informed that he is paid an all-inclusive allowance of Rs12,350 per month. Moreover, he has no office at the National Institute of Cooperative Entrepreneurship.

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

**Mr Bhagwan:** The population and the country will be pleased to know that this gentleman is actually on bail for possession of stolen property, Cause No. 547/14 and other cases. He was convicted for assault on 01 October 2014, convicted for insult on 22 October 2010, and other cases also. I will be tabling it later...

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Bholah:** I don't have any such information at hand, but I will look forward and inform the House accordingly.

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** Can I enlighten the hon. Minister more. He has been caught again in another case these days and the hon. Minister may inquire. I will give the hon. Minister several information. OB No.1688/2010, Cause No. 1142/12. Secondly, OB 536/07, Cause No. 6164/09; Cause No. 1408/012, allowing licence premises to remain open during prohibited hours. There are several other cases. Can the hon. Minister at least inform the House whether he has asked for a *certificat de moralité* before appointing such persons? And this is the example which he, as a Minister of Government, has recommended to Government.

**Mr Bholah:** I have no such information at hand, but, again, I will look for the information and inform the House.

**Mr Bhagwan:** Will the hon. Minister at least inform the House and give information to the hon. Prime Minister that this person will be sacked immediately, because these are true information?

**Mr Bholah:** If this is the case, yes, it will be so.

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

### **BELLE MARE - FRENCH TOURISTS - DEATH**

**(No. B/289) Mr K. Ramano (Third Member for Belle Rose & Quatre Bornes)** asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism and External Communications whether, in regard to the recent death of two French tourists at sea in the region of Belle Mare, he will state -

- (a) the outcome of the inquiry, if any, carried out thereinto by his Ministry and the actions taken in relation thereto, if any, and
- (b) if his Ministry proposes to introduce new policies in relation to the nautical sports activities within our lagoons.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Madam Speaker, with regard to part (a) of the question, I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that a Police inquiry is being carried out and is still ongoing.

However, pending the completion of the Police inquiry, the following actions have been taken by my Ministry and the Tourism Authority -

- (i) the licence of the skipper involved in the accident has been suspended and the pleasure craft has been impounded at Belle Mare National Coast Guard post;
- (ii) A snorkelling zone has been demarcated by marker buoys at Trou Corn, where snorkelling which was temporarily prohibited has resumed, and
- (iii) procedures have been initiated for the demarcation of speed limit zones in the lagoon of Belle Mare, which are expected to be completed by next week. In the meantime, towing and water ski activities have been prohibited thereat.

In addition, a flying squad has been set up by the National Coast Guard to carry out regular inspections and continuous monitoring, including surprise checks.

Madam Speaker, as regards part (b) of the question, the following new policies have been introduced to reinforce safety and security of sea users -

- (i) suspension of skipper's licence for an approved period upon establishment of a minimum of 3 contraventions within a period of 12 consecutive months;
- (ii) suspension of pleasure craft licence for an approved period upon establishment of a minimum of 3 contraventions within a period of 12 consecutive months, and
- (iii) obligation on owners of commercial pleasure crafts to ensure that their skippers attend every two years refresher courses dispensed by the Tourism Authority to keep them abreast of new safety standards and norms.

Madam Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to reassure the House that there will be no compromise on the issue of safety and security. In fact, it would be pertinent for me to highlight some of the measures which were introduced as far back as 2005 to step up safety and security at sea and which are still being pursued. These include, *inter alia* -

- (i) a new legal framework for the Tourism Authority through the Tourism Authority Act in 2006 complemented by policies, regulations and guidelines for the conduct of nautical activities in a safe and orderly manner;
- (ii) a comprehensive programme for the zoning of lagoon to demarcate snorkelling zones, speed limit zones, ski lanes, swimming zones, mooring zones and installation of navigational aids and passes;
- (iii) setting-up of a Competency Test Panel to assess the competency of skippers;
- (iv) printing of Creole edition of the *Code de la mer*;
- (v) survey of pleasure crafts to assess their seaworthiness before delivery of licence;
- (vi) pleasure crafts operating outside lagoons to be equipped with 2 engines, and
- (vii) setting-up of a Monitoring and Compliance Unit at the Tourism Authority.

Safety and security is a topmost priority of my Ministry. An Action Plan to reinforce safety and security at sea has been elaborated for implementation and an amount of Rs13 m. has been earmarked in the budget of my Ministry.

But, as always, Madam Speaker, enforcement remains a major issue. Since taking office, I have had regular meetings with the Coast Guard in this respect.

Also, the Tourism Authority will build up its enforcement capability as a matter of urgency.

**Mr Ramano:** Est-ce que je peux savoir du ministre si des actions ont été prises contre l'hôtel en question pour opération sans permis, notamment en ce qui concerne la plongée sous-marine?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Madam Speaker, there are two things: one is the hotel and the other one is the boathouse. In fact, the boathouse also did not have a licence and it did not have a licence because it had no security boat.

Now, it has a security boat and a licence has been delivered, but we are waiting for the whole inquiry to finish before taking any further action. But we have not taken any action against the boathouse itself.

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

**Mr Ganoo:** With regard to the insurance cover for the skippers or for passengers of the pleasure craft, can the hon. Minister indicate to the House if the law makes it imperative for the owner of the pleasure craft or the skipper to take any insurance cover to protect the passengers?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Madam Speaker, I am sure that the requirements cover the existence of an insurance policy by all concerned, but I will check what the situation is. I am quite sure that it is the case.

**Mr Bérenger:** In very sad occasions like that, can I ask the hon. Minister whether the Ministry - the hotel probably does its part, but the Ministry and the Tourism Authority whether we do something special, we do something human in the direction of the relatives, the family of those tourists that come here to spend good time and meet with death?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Yes, Madam Speaker. This was a very, very tragic incident, in fact, where the parents died and their daughter stayed in Mauritius. We visited the girl obviously and we provided all the assistance necessary for relatives to come to pick up the girl and return back to France.

**Mr Ganoo:** It would seem that on the day of that fatal accident, the weather was not very good. Can the hon. Deputy Prime Minister indicate the House whether new policies should be taken on days of bad weather to ensure that pleasure crafts owners and skippers

should be warned or should be sensitised about the weather conditions and should be discouraged from taking tourists or other local passengers outside the lagoon.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Madam Speaker, I am not sure whether the hon. Member is not confusing between this accident and the one at Flat Island. This accident was inside the lagoon and I have not been told that the weather was particularly bad at that time. We have taken additional measures concerning out of lagoon excursions involving pleasure crafts, involving tourists.

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

### PAVILLON - RECEPTION HALL - CONSTRUCTION

(No. B/290) **Mr K. Ramano (Third Member for Belle Rose & Quatre Bornes)** asked the Minister of Local Government whether, in regard to the construction of the new reception hall at Pavillon, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Municipal Council of Quatre Bornes, information as to the –

- (a) contract value thereof;
- (b) names of the bidders thereof;
- (c) provisions, if any, made in regard to pollution hazards to the surroundings thereof, and
- (d) nature of the complaints received from the inhabitants thereof, if any, and if so, indicate the actions taken in relation thereto.

**Dr. Husnoo:** Madam Speaker with regard to parts (a) and (b) of the question, I am informed by the Municipal Council of Quatre Bornes that –

- the contract value for the extension and sound proofing of the Pavillon Reception Hall is Rs5,417,615.50, inclusive of VAT and contingencies, and
- only one offer was received from Messrs New Horizon Builders Ltd, following a procurement exercise conducted by the Council.

As regards part (c) of the question, I am informed that the new concrete building is being constructed with sound proofing measures. These specifications include that all the openings be doubly gazed, air conditioners be installed and air curtains be fixed at exit location. The reconstruction is being done in order to address the noise emanating from

activities held at the Hall which was due to the fact that the roof of the building was made up of iron sheets.

As far as part (d) of the question is concerned, I am informed that the inhabitants of the region have complained that –

- they were not aware of the project;
- they are concerned with the green space which is already very scarce in the town, and
- if there was any tender process.

I am further informed that the following actions have been taken by the Council to address these complaints –

- a notification plate with all relevant information on the project, the contractor's name and the implementing agency has been placed on the site;
- a meeting was held on 01 April 2015 in the office of the Mayor with representatives of the *Regroupement Citoyen de Quatre Bornes* whereat all details were made available to them, and
- as regards the green space, the turfing and the shrubs will be reinstated after completion the project.

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

#### **PRIMARY SCHOOLS – NON-TEACHING STAFF - RECRUITMENT**

**(No. B/291) Mr V. Baloomoody (Third Member for G.R.N.W & Port Louis West)** asked the Minister of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Science Research whether, in regard to the recruitment of the non-teaching staff of the primary schools, she will state the tests, if any, the prospective recruits are made to undergo before they are assessed to be fit and proper persons to work in an environment involving children.

**The Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security (Mr M. Seeruttun):** Madam Speaker, I am informed that the non-teaching staff posted to the primary schools comprise the following grades:

- (i) Assistant School Superintendent and School Clerks recruited by the Public Service Commission, and

- (ii) Head/Senior School Caretaker, School Caretaker and General Worker recruited by the Ministry under delegated powers from the Public Service Commission.

Appointment to the above grades are made either by selection from serving employees/officers of the Ministry/Civil Service or by selection from outside candidates or by promotion depending on the qualification requirements of the post. All candidates joining the Civil Service for the first time, prior to their appointment on the permanent and pensionable establishment or confirmation in their post, are required to undergo a medical examination carried out by the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life as soon as convenient after their assumption of duty in order to assess whether they are medically and constitutionally fit for employment in the Civil Service. If found medically unfit, their appointment is terminated immediately as stipulated in the offer of appointment made to them when joining the service on probation or in a temporary capacity or on a casual basis.

Prior to joining the Ministry, police clearance is sought as well in respect of outside candidates to check whether there is any adverse report or police case against them.

It is also to be pointed out that School Caretakers recruited, following a selection exercise from among officers in service, are offered appointment in a temporary capacity in the first instance, and they are required to undergo a fresh medical examination carried out by the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life to certify whether they are fit to work in schools. In case they are found medically unfit, the appointment is terminated and they are reverted to their previous substantive post.

**Mr Baloomoody:** Can I ask the hon. Minister - of course he is not the substantive Minister - whether that medical test includes psychological test especially when we know that these people are going to work with young children, young girls and boys?

**Mr Seeruttun:** Well, Madam Speaker, I don't think I am in a position to confirm whether it includes a psychological test. Probably I will have look into that.

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

#### **STATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS – SUPPLY TEACHERS – RECRUITMENT**

**(No. B/292) 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 supply teachers in the State Secondary Schools, she will state the number thereof employed over the past two years, indicating –

- (a) on average the
  - (i) shortest and
  - (ii) longest engagement contract allocated thereto and
- (b) if her Ministry will consider adopting and implementing the policy of recruiting the supply teachers on the permanent establishment.

**The Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security (Mr M. Seeruttun):** Madam Speaker, I am informed that Supply Teachers are enlisted in respect of State Secondary Schools for both mainstream and pre-vocational stream in order to palliate the shortage of staff and to replace Educators proceeding on sick/maternity/vacation leave and leave without pay.

For the past two years, the number of Supply Teachers enlisted for mainstream and the pre-vocational stream are as follows:

Mainstream	Pre-Vocational stream
Year 2013 : 332 (short and long periods)	31 (long periods)
Year 2014 : 397 (short and long periods)	31 (long periods)

Madam Speaker, I am also informed that, generally:

- (i) the shortest period of enlistment of Supply Teachers is 19 days to replace Educators who have proceeded on vacation leave, and
- (ii) the longest period is one full academic year, that is, as from the resumption of studies in January up to the end of the third term, normally in the first week of November.

As regards part (b) of the question, the enlistment of Supply Teachers is made every year under delegated powers from the Public Service Commission on the terms and conditions specified by the Commission. In the offer of appointment made to the Supply Teachers, it is clearly stated that their enlistment would be on a purely temporary basis as and when required.

It is also specified that in the offer of appointment that the enlistment will not give them any claim for permanent appointment as Educator and may be terminated without notice or compensation in lieu of notice in the event of incompetence, misconduct or insubordination or in case their services are no longer required.

Should they wish to be considered for appointment to the grade of Educator, they will have to submit their application anew as and when the post is advertised by the Public Service Commission. Hence it is not envisaged to implement a policy for employment of supply teachers on a permanent basis in as much as there already exist a mode of recruitment for Educators on a permanent basis.

However, it is also to be pointed out that, with the approval of the Public Service Commission, around 125 Supply Teachers were enlisted in the years 2004/2005 for the pre-vocational stream. Their enlistment was on a month to month basis as and when required. As at date, 30 supply teachers prevocational are still in employment. They are enlisted at the start of the academic year in January and their enlistment is terminated at the end of the third term in October/November and they are re-employed at the beginning of the following year on the same terms and conditions. Given that the 30 supply teachers are serving since 2004/2005, the approval of Cabinet was obtained in May 2014 to absorb them on the establishment of the Ministry.

In this respect, the scheme of service is actually being amended to take on board the Supply Teachers in conformity with the Cabinet decision. It is expected that their situation will be regularised shortly as a special case.

**Mr Rutnah:** That is the answer that the hon. Minister gave in relation to making some of the teachers permanent once the Cabinet will meet. Is the hon. Minister aware that for the last 10 years, there is a shortage of teachers in, at least, three State Secondary Schools in my constituency, for example, at the Piton State Secondary School, at Mapou State Secondary School and at Ramsoondar Prayag State Secondary School and in the last 10 years, only supply teachers have been teaching on and off?

**Mr Seeruttun:** Madam Speaker, if this is the case, then probably I will ask the officers of the Ministry to look into it and see what are the measures they intend to take to correct that situation.

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

**BOI, SIC & STATUTORY BODIES – STATE LAW OFFICERS - APPOINTMENT**

**(No. B/293) Mr S. Rutnah (Third Member for Piton & Rivière du Rempart)** asked the Minister of Finance and Economic Development whether, in regard to the Board of Investment, the State Insurance Company Ltd. and the other statutory bodies falling under the aegis of his Ministry, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from each of them the –

- (a) names of the State Law Officers whose services are presently retained thereat, indicating in each case,
- (b) the date of appointment thereof, and
- (c) remuneration drawn.

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** Madam Speaker, with regard to parts (a), (b) and (c) of the question, I am tabling the information requested in relation to State Law Officers who are called upon to provide their services by Statutory Bodies and Government-owned companies falling under the aegis of my Ministry.

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

#### **STATE-OWNED SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE – FEES**

**(No. B/294) Mr A. Aliphon ( Third Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière)** asked the Minister of Youth and Sports whether, in regard to the State-owned sports infrastructure and facilities, he will state if the Mauritius Sports Council had consulted his Ministry before increasing the fees payable by the general public to have access thereto and, if so, indicate the stand of his Ministry in relation thereto, especially in the light of the policy of his Ministry to encourage the practice of sports by the mass.

*(Withdrawn)*

#### **MAURITIUS PORTS AUTHORITY – SCAVENGING & CLEANING SERVICES – CONTRACT**

**(No. B/295) Mr A. Jahangeer (Third Member for Rivière des Anguilles & Souillac)** asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism and External Communications whether, in regard to the Mauritius Ports Authority, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain therefrom and table a list of the contractors who have been awarded contracts for scavenging and cleaning services thereat, as regards the ships and ports area, since 2005 to 2015, indicating in each case, the amount of money paid thereto.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Madam Speaker, I am tabling, as requested by the hon. Member, the information regarding scavenging and cleaning services contracts awarded by the Mauritius Ports Authority for the period 2005 to 2015.

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

### **POINTE AUX SABLES - AREA HEALTH CENTRE**

**(No. B/296) Mr P. Armance (First Member for GRNW & Port Louis West)** asked the Minister of Health and Quality of Life whether, in regard to the existing area health centre in the region of Pointe aux Sables, he will state if he has been informed of the derelict state thereof and that it is too small to accommodate the number of patients attending thereto on a daily basis and, if so, indicate –

- (a) if urgent remedial measures will be taken in relation thereto, and
- (b) where matters stand as to the proposed construction of a new mediclinic thereat, indicating the time frame set for the implementation thereof, if any.

**Mr Gayan:** Madam Speaker, the Pointe aux Sables Community Health Centre is a single storey building of 45 metre square located on a plot of State land of 46.8 metre square. This Community Health Centre has been operational since more than 25 years. I am informed that the building does not suffer any structural distress and as such can be considered safe.

The average yearly attendance for the last three years at Pointe aux Sables Community Health Centre is 8,643 patients and the average daily attendance is 43 patients.

In view of the space constraints thereat, in 2010 and 2011, my Ministry decided to carry out an extension project which did not materialise as no responsive bids were received on four occasions to temporarily house the Committee Health Centre in a rented building pending completion of the extension project.

In October 2013, the inhabitants of Pointe aux Sables made a request for the construction of a new Community Health Centre in order to provide more facilities for the patients and the staff.

On 03 April 2014, the Ministry of Housing and Lands was requested for the vesting of a plot of land of 580 metre square, situated behind the Community Health Centre, in my Ministry for an extension project. They informed the Ministry that the land was vested in the Ministry of Local Government for use by the Municipal Council of Port Louis for the construction of a sports complex.

On 09 May 2014, my Ministry requested the Ministry of Local Government to consider releasing the said plot of land for vesting in my Ministry for the extension of the Pointe aux Sables Community Health Centre.

The Ministry of Housing and Lands has informed that the said portion of State land has been retrieved from the Ministry of Local Government and vested in my Ministry on 02 April 2015 for the extension of the Pointe aux Sables Community Health Centre.

Regarding part (a) of the question, I am informed that there was some leakage after heavy rainfalls, and waterproofing as well as painting works have already been carried out. Now that additional land has been vested in my Ministry, the Committee Health Centre will be extended to accommodate the following facilities –

- (i) a record room;
- (ii) one pharmacy store;
- (iii) one family planning/antenatal care clinic;
- (iv) one mess room;
- (v) additional toilets for both patients and staff;
- (vi) extension of the pharmacy, and
- (vii) a waiting area

As regards part (b) of the question, Madam Speaker, there is no project at present for the construction of a mediclinic at Pointe aux Sables.

**Mr Armance:** May I ask the hon. Minister if he will intend to provide dental services at the new health centre?

**Mr Gayan:** On the list that I have just mentioned, dental services do not appear, Madam Speaker, but it can always be considered.

**Mr Barbier:** Is the hon. Minister aware that in the recent past, the NDU circulated a list of projects for Constituency No. 1 and amongst the extension of the health centre at Pointe aux Sables with a proviso of Rs18 m. for the project?

**Mr Gayan:** Well, I listened to the Rt. hon. Prime Minister early this morning on the NDU. It would appear that there does not seem to be much scope for that, but at the level of the Ministry, steps are being taken to revamp this particular project.

**GRNW & PORT LOUIS WEST - SOCIAL HOUSING UNITS**

(No. B/297) **Mr P. Armance (First Member for GRNW & Port Louis West)** asked the Minister of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment whether, in regard to the numerous applications and demands for social housing units in the Constituency No. 1, Grand River North West and Port Louis West, he will state –

- (a) the number of social housing units constructed, since 2005 to date, indicating the expected date of delivery thereof;
- (b) the names of the beneficiaries of the social housing units
  - (i) constructed at Sugar Planter, and
  - (ii) under construction at La Pointe, and
- (c) if any project for the construction of new social housing units in the said constituency is in the pipeline.

**The Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Housing and Lands (Mr S. Soodhun):** Madam Speaker, with your permission, I shall reply to this Parliamentary Question.

With regard to part (a) of the question, I am informed by the NHDC Ltd. that during the 9-year period running from 2005 to date, 235 housing units have been constructed and delivered in Constituency No. 1 as follows –

- (i) 198 housing units constructed at Pointe aux Sables in February 2006, and
- (ii) 37 housing units at La Tour Koenig in December 2011.

Madam Speaker, as regards part (b) (i) of the question which refers to the beneficiaries of housing units constructed at Sugar Planter, I wish to inform the House that there is no project implemented by the NHDC Ltd. there.

Regarding parts (b) (ii) and (c) of the question which refers to the housing project at La Pointe, I am informed that some 24 housing units are being constructed by the NHDC Ltd. The project is expected to be completed in July 2015. The allocation of these housing units will be made once the project will be completed.

**Mr Barbier:** Maybe hon. Armance is referring to those housing units already completed now at Sugar Planter which, I suppose, is under the aegis of the Ministry of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment. Is the hon. Minister aware of that project and will he inform the House as to who are going to be the beneficiaries of all these housing units?

**Mr Soodhun:** Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. Member for his question. Concerning the NEF project, I am not in a position to answer because I have no information as such. Surely, I am going to liaise with the hon. Minister concerned and communicate same to him.

**Mr Baloomoody:** Can I ask the hon. Minister, with regard to the construction at La Pointe, when will the inhabitants be made aware that these houses are available for occupation so that they can apply and by what means will this be done?

**Mr Soodhun:** 24 housing units are being constructed. Madam Speaker, I am coming with a new plan. Really, we have a big problem concerning the registration and now I am going to work in close collaboration with the Prime Minister's Office, that is, NDU and the CAB office where people can go and apply for a housing unit, for land, roof slabs or materials. In this case, they have to go to the NHDC of Rose Hill.

*(Interruptions)*

They are informed.

**Mr Barbier:** Regarding the housing units at Pointe aux Sables, may I know from the hon. Minister whether they are for the *classe moyenne* or low-cost housing units because we don't have any precise information on the types of housing units being constructed there?

**Mr Soodhun:** As it is considered like *boîte allumettes*, they are still like *boîte allumettes*.

*(Interruptions)*

We are going to change, because still the same types of houses are being constructed.

### **BOI – COMPOSITION & INVESTMENTS**

**(No. B/298) Mr D. Sesungkur (First Member for Montagne Blanche & GRSE)** asked the Minister of Finance and Economic Development whether, in regard to the Board of Investment, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain therefrom, for the period 2009 to date, information as to the –

- (a) composition thereof;
- (b) remuneration paid and fringe benefits to which the Chairperson thereof was entitled, and
- (c) number of trade/other missions conducted by the Board, indicating the –

(i) outcome thereof, and/or

(ii) total amount of investments attracted to Mauritius.

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** Madam Speaker, with regard to part (a) of the question, I am tabling the information requested.

Regarding part (b) of the question, I am informed that the previous Chairman of the Board of Investment did not take any fees and was not paid any fringe benefits. However, the costs of promotion missions in which he participated were incurred by the Board of Investment.

The current Chairman draws an all-inclusive monthly fee of Rs70,000 and is not paid any fringe benefits.

As far as part (c) of the question is concerned, I am further informed that from 2009 to date, the Board of Investment has undertaken 60 investment promotion missions. These include State Visits with a business component, Minister-led investment promotion missions, as well as BOI-led ones.

I am informed that as a direct outcome of the missions conducted by the Board of Investment from 2009 to 2014, there have been 82 projects with a total project value of Rs43.5 billion, of which Rs23.6 billion of FDI and that some 9,700 jobs have been created.

Furthermore, the BOI-led export of services promotional initiatives have contributed in increasing the number of foreign students, the number of global business companies as well as the number of foreign patients following medical treatment in Mauritius.

**Mr Sesungkur:** Given that BOI is an important arm of the Ministry of Finance and that the Government is targeting a lot of FDI, is the Minister satisfied with the current structure and the team that he has within the BOI to deliver in the forthcoming days and months?

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** The structure of the organisation is being reviewed to make it more compatible with our own vision. So, this is being carried out presently. On the question of team, we are presently understaffed and following the results of the reorganisation, we will take the measures. But, still, we have advertised recently some five or six jobs at management level and we have received more than 600 applications which are being processed.

**Mr Bhagwan:** The hon. Minister has just informed us that the former chairperson was not taking any salary. But, will the Minister be surprised to learn - and he can enquire - that that person was giving contracts to his close relatives! Even his son! Can I make a request to the Minister to go and check whether photographs were taken by the son of the previous chairperson and paid out of public funds for the annual report of the Board of Investment?

**Mr Lutchmeenaraidoo:** Well, we have so much information on the former chairman! For the moment, what the hon. Member said on the question of whether he was involved in the allocation of contract for the identity card which, I remind the House, was to cost Rs400 m. and finally cost Government Rs1.5 billion. So, the question is whether I should investigate into the matter, yes, we will.

**Madam Speaker:** Time is over, hon. Bhagwan! The Chair has been informed that Parliamentary Questions No. B/301 and No. B/302 have been withdrawn!

**MINISTRY OF HEALTH & QUALITY OF LIFE - PARACETAMOL  
INTRAVENOUS INFUSION - COUNTERFEIT MEDICINES**

**(No. B/301) Mr P. Jhugroo (Second Member for Mahebourg & Plaine Magnien)** asked the Minister of Health and Quality of Life whether he will state if a stock of 70,000 units of paracetamol intravenous infusion, 10mg/ml x 50ml, and 90,000 units of paracetamol intravenous infusion, 10mg/ml x 100ml, of counterfeit medicines were delivered to his Ministry on 27 March 2014 and, if so, indicate the –

- (a) name of the supplier thereof;
- (b) cost incurred in relation thereto, and
- (c) actions, if any, taken in relation thereto.

*(Withdrawn)*

**AIR MAURITIUS LIMITED – AIRPLANES & PILOTS**

**(No. B/302) Mr P. Jhugroo (Second Member for Mahebourg & Plaine Magnien)** asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism and External Communications whether, in regard to Air Mauritius Limited, he will state the number of –

- (a) airplanes it has, and
- (b) Mauritian national pilots and foreign national pilots employed thereat, indicating –

- (i) in each case, the terms and conditions of employment thereof, and
- (ii) during the last recruitment exercise, the number of Mauritian national pilots and foreign national pilots recruited.

*(Withdrawn)*