WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

RODRIGUES – FISHERMEN - BAD WEATHER ALLOWANCE

(No. B/272) Mr A. Nancy (First Member for Rodrigues) asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence & Home Affairs, Minister of Civil Service & Administrative Reforms and Minister of Rodrigues & Outer Islands whether he will state if the Executive Council of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly has submitted any specific matter of policy in relation to the payment of the bad weather allowance to the fishermen of Rodrigues for consideration by the Cabinet and, if so, will he state the new criteria applicable, if any.

Reply: (The Minister of Agro Industry & Fisheries)

I shall reply to PQ B272 and B/273 together.

My attention has been drawn to the ruling of the National Assembly on 08 February 2005 to the fact that in relation to matters pertaining to Rodrigues, Ministers in this House are not responsible for matters set out in the Fourth Schedule of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act 2002. For those matters, it is the Commissioners, who, under Section 35 of the Act, have been assigned responsibility, are answerable to the Regional Assembly. Fisheries is one of such areas.

It, therefore, follows that questions to Ministers on details of policy or expenditure in respect of Fisheries would not be in order.

Having said that, our position remains that the decision as regards the establishment of the new criteria for the payment of bad weather allowance adopted in June 2006 is applicable to both Mauritius and Rodrigues.

The new criteria for payment of bad weather allowance are as follows:

(i) Rodrigues has been divided into 4 zones for assessment of the state of the sea in the lagoon as follows –
North : Baie Pistache to Pointe au Sel
East : Pointe aux Sel to Petit Gravier
South: Petit Gravier to Baie Topaze
West : Baie Topaze to Baie Pistache

(ii) The state of the sea off-lagoon in Rodrigues is the same everywhere.

(iii) The criteria for payment of bad weather allowance to registered fishers are as follows -

(a) a bad weather day is defined as a day when the sea is rough, rough to moderate or moderate to rough;
(b) computation for payment of bad weather allowance is done on a daily basis excluding Sundays and public holidays;
(c) payment is effected every month. The fisher should, however, have his card duly stamped for at least one month immediately preceding the month of payment, and
(d) the newly registered fishers will be eligible to bad weather allowance only up to retirement age.

Nevertheless, I wish to add that, on 07 July 2006, the Department Head, Chief Commissioner Office, made a request to my Ministry to revisit the newly established criteria in view of economic and social difficulties faced by fishers and the difficulties to compute the bad weather allowance.

On 18 August 2006, the Island Chief Executive informed the Financial Secretary, with copy to this office, that the new Executive Council had, on 11 August 2006, decided to grant a supplementary social assistance on an interim basis to top up the bad weather allowance payable to Rodriguan fishers to a maximum of Rs1,000, so as to alleviate their difficulties, pending Government decision on the issue.

In view of the impact that this decision would have on Mauritian fishermen, Government decided, on 25 August 2006, that instead of the additional allowance, the Chief Commissioner should consider payment of social aid. The Island Chief Executive was informed accordingly and was requested to abide by the decisions of Government.
RODRIGUES – FISHERMEN - BAD WEATHER ALLOWANCE

(No. B/273) Mr A. Nancy (First Member for Rodrigues) asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence & Home Affairs, Minister of Civil Service & Administrative Reforms and Minister of Rodrigues & Outer Islands whether, in regard to the payment of the bad weather allowance, he will state if the Cabinet decision taken on 02 June 2006 in relation thereto is applicable to the Island of Rodrigues.

(Vide reply to PQ No. B/272)

TERRE ROUGE & RICHE TERRE LAND SETTLEMENTS – PLANTERS - RELOCATION & ECONOMIC & TRADE CO-OPERATION ZONE

(No. B/313) Mr G. Gunness (Third Member for Montagne Blanche & GRSE) asked the Minister of Agro Industry & Fisheries whether, in regard to the proposed termination of the lease agreement of the planters under the Riche Terre and Terre Rouge Land Settlement Scheme, he will state if he will now reconsider the matter.

(Vide reply to PNQ)

ICTA – BOARD DIRECTORS

(No. B/314) Mr G. Gunness (Third Member for Montagne Blanche & GRSE) asked the Minister of Information Technology & Telecommunications whether, in regard to the Directors of the Board of the Information, Communications and Telecommunications Authority, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Authority, information as to –

(a) their names and qualifications, together with their respective date of appointment, and
(b) the remuneration and other benefits to which they are entitled.

(Withdrawn)
AIRPORTS OF MAURITIUS (LTD) – EMPLOYEES – TRAINING COURSES

(No. B/315) Mrs A. Navarre-Marie (First Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism, Leisure and External Communications whether, in regard to training facilities offered to employees of Airports of Mauritius (Ltd) since August 2005 to date, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain therefrom, information as to the number of employees who have benefited therefrom in each category, indicating the name of the institution/s which has/have been selected to provide the training.

(Vide reply to PQ No. B/287)

ROAD HUMPS - NUMBER

(No. B/316) Dr. R. Mungur (Second Member for Flacq & Bon Accueil) asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Public Infrastructure, Land Transport & Shipping whether, in regard to road humps, he will state –

(a) the total number island-wise as at to date;
(b) the number of humps between –
   (i) La Louise and Pierrefonds;
   (ii) Gros Cailloux and Richelieu, and
   (iii) along Route du Jardin, Curepipe, and
(c) if all of them are norm driven with respect to vision, width of road, height and inclination.

Reply: I am informed by the Traffic Management and Road Safety Unit that road humps have been constructed along our roads since 1996 with the coming into force of the Road Traffic (Road Humps) Regulations 1996.

There is no reliable information as to the total number and I have requested the TMRSU to carry out a survey accordingly.
With regard to part (b), the numbers are 11, 12, and 11 respectively.

Concerning part (c) of the question, I am informed that all road humps constructed by the TMRSU are in accordance with Road Traffic (Road Humps) Regulations 2002.

MOKA/FLACQ DISTRICT COUNCIL - LIBRARY

(No. B/317) Dr. R. Mungur (Second Member for Flacq and Bon Accueil) asked the Minister of Local Government whether, in regard to the library of the Moka/Flacq District Council, situated at Central Flacq, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Council, information as to –

(a) when it was inaugurated;
(b) its size together with the sitting amenities available thereat, and
(c) if arrangements will be made for a librarian to be posted thereat and, if so, when.

Reply: I am informed by the Moka/Flacq District Council that the library referred to in the question was, in fact, a reading room which was inaugurated in 1972.

I am informed that due to outdated materials and shortage of funds, the reading room was closed in year 2000.

As regards part (b) of the question, I am informed that the building is about 500 sq ft and is presently being used as a sub-office and partly for the running of sewing classes.

As far as the posting of a librarian is concerned, the question therefore does not arise.

I wish to thank the hon. Member for bringing this issue to my attention and I propose to look into the matter and ensure that, at least, the reading room is re-opened as soon as possible.
HOUSEHOLD COMMODITIES - PRICE

(No. B/318) Mr R. Guttee (Third Member for Grand’Baie and Poudre d’Or) asked the Minister of Women’s Rights, Child Development, Family Welfare & Consumer Protection whether she is aware that due to the frequent rise in the price of household commodities, different prices are being claimed for the same commodity in the different parts of the country and, if so, will she state the remedial measures that have been or will be taken.

Reply: Yes, there are some variations in the price of certain household commodities, across the country. As the House is aware, the price of only a few commodities is controlled with the remaining ones under a free market system, where price is determined by demand and supply.

The majority of consumption foods is imported and hence the prices of such goods is subject to fluctuations in exchange rate and in cost price at source. Moreover, the same commodity may be imported by different importers from different sources and under various brand names. All these explain the variations in prices of the same commodity.

However, to ensure that consumers are not unduly exploited, the Consumer Protection Unit of my Ministry constantly monitors the prices of some 200 items of basic household commodities and submit reports to the Ministry of Industry, Small & Medium Enterprises, Commerce & Cooperatives for appropriate action. In the event that wide fluctuations are found in the selling prices, an in-depth analysis of the costing of these commodities is carried by the Market Analysis and Monitoring Unit under the Ministry of Industry, Small & Medium Enterprises, Commerce & Cooperatives. It is through these regular monitoring of prices that remedial measures are taken to ensure that basic commodities are sold at affordable prices.

In this context, in August and October 2005 Government took the decision to include basic household commodities, such as milk powder, corned mutton, corned beef and canned pilchards, under the mark up system to prevent abusive price practices at the expense of consumers.
With a view to protecting consumers from both abusive trade practices and excessive prices, the Consumer Protection Unit of my Ministry delivers regular talks across the island to educate consumers on not only their rights, but also on how they should buy intelligently, laying stress on prioritising family needs.

My Ministry has also published 5000 booklets, flyers and posters giving information on various provisions of consumer legislation, the rights of consumers and how to make proper choice when purchasing. These Information Education Communication materials have been distributed in Social Welfare Centres, Women Centres and schools.

Moreover, officers of the Consumer Protection Unit regularly intervene on radio and television to sensitise consumers.

On a meeting held on 02 May 2007 at my Ministry, I expressed concern on the variation of prices over the island and it was decided to hold four regional seminars on households budgeting so as to educate heads of families on prioritising their expenditure

I am tabling a list of commodities under the price control system.

**EX-CLUB ROAD – GRAND BAIE – REPAIRS**

(No. B/319) Mr R. Guttee (Third Member for Grand’Baie and Poudre d’Or) asked the Minister of Environment and National Development Unit whether he is aware that the Ex-Club Road in Grand Baie is in a bad state and, if so, will he state the remedial measures that will be taken.

**Reply:** I have been aware of the bad state of Ex-Club Road at Grand Bay.
I am informed that following representations from different quarters, works order for an amount of Rs9,031,116 has been issued on 03 May 2007 for the resurfacing of Ex-Club Road extending over a length of 3 kms from Grand Bay to Pointe aux Cannoniers.

The works is expected to be completed by end of May 2007.

**CEB - LAYMEYER INTERNATIONAL GMBH – CONSULTANCY SERVICES**

(No. B/320) Mr G. Lesjongard (Second Member for Port Louis North and Montagne Longue) asked the Minister of Public Utilities whether he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Central Electricity Board, information as to whether it has refused to allocate the award of a contract to Laymeyer International GmbH for consultancy services.

*(Withdrawn)*

**PRIVATE SECTOR - SALARY COMPENSATION**

(No. B/321) Mr G. Lesjongard (Second Member for Port Louis North and Montagne Longue) asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Development whether, in regard to the payment of a salary compensation for loss of purchasing power in the year 2005-2006, he will state the number of workers in the private sector who are being paid a salary compensation higher than Rs135.

**Reply:** The inflation for Financial Year 2005/06 as estimated by the Central Statistics Office was 5%. In view of the difficult economic situation, Government proposed a full salary compensation of 5% for those drawing a monthly salary of Rs2,700 or less. For those earning more than Rs2,700, the salary compensation was Rs135. A special effort was thus made to support those at the lower rung of the income ladder. All the workers have been duly compensated.
In addition to the minimum proposed, Government made an appeal to companies, which had the capacity to pay a compensation higher than Rs135, to do so. Many private companies responded positively. I am informed that around 40% of employees of the large establishments in the private sector representing some 80,000 workers have received higher compensation.

So far as the State owned enterprises are concerned, they employ around 21,700 workers. Out of these, some 9,000 workers were granted a compensation higher than Rs135 by those enterprises having the capacity to pay. These include Mauritius Telecom, Airports of Mauritius Ltd, State Investment Corporation, SICOM, Air Mauritius, State Bank of Mauritius Ltd, Financial Services Commission, Mauritius Duty Free Paradise, Mauritius Housing Company and Mauritius Ports Authority.

LA CHAUMIERE - WASTE TO ENERGY PROJECT

(No. B/322) Mr S. Naidu (Third Member for Beau Bassin and Petite Rivière) asked the Minister of Environment and National Development Unit whether, in regard to the Waste to Energy Project at La Chaumière, he will state if he has received any representations in connection therewith and, if so, will he give details thereof.

(Withdrawn)

MOTOR FUEL - LPG

(No. B/323) Mrs S. Hanoomanjee (Second Member for Savanne and Black River) asked the Minister of Industry, Small & Medium Enterprises, Commerce and Co-operatives whether he is aware that LPG from cooking gas cylinders are being used in cars as motor fuel and, if so, will he state if Government proposes to stop this practice, indicating the measures that will be taken.

Reply: A list of people who are allegedly indulging in such activity was referred to my Ministry. I am informed that the Police is investigating into these allegations.
IVTB – FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES

(No. B/324) Mrs L. D. Dookun-Luchoomun (Third Member for La Caverne and Phoenix) asked the Minister of Education and Human Resources whether, in regard to the Industrial and Vocational Training Board, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain therefrom, information as to if it is experiencing financial difficulties and, if so, the reasons therefor.

(Withdrawn)

UNIVERSITY OF MAURITIUS – ACADEMIC STAFF

(No. B/325) Mrs L. D. Dookun-Luchoomun (Third Member for La Caverne and Phoenix) asked the Minister of Education and Human Resources whether, in regard to the University of Mauritius, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain therefrom, information as to –
(a) the number of academic staff employed thereat;
(b) the actual expenditure for their salaries;
(c) the annual expenditure for allowances for lectures delivered outside normal working hours.

(Withdrawn)

MEDCO CLAIRFONDS - INCIDENT

(No. B/326) Mrs L. D. Dookun-Luchoomun (Third Member for La Caverne and Phoenix) asked the Minister of Education and Human Resources whether he will state if there was any incident recently at the MEDCO Clairfonds and, if so, will he state the reasons therefor.

(Withdrawn)
COOKING GAS - PRICE

(No. B/327) Mrs L. D. Dookun-Luchoomun (Third Member for La Caverne and Phoenix) asked the Minister of Industry, Small & Medium Enterprises, Commerce and Co-operatives whether he will state if an agreement has been reached between his Ministry and the suppliers of cooking gas with regard to an increase in the profit margin.

(Withdrawn)

IRS PROJECTS – VILLAS - SALE

(No. B/328) Miss K. R. Deerpalsing (Third Member for Belle Rose and Quatre Bornes) asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Development whether, in regard to IRS projects, he will state –

(a) the number of villas sold to date;
(b) the revenue generated by the sale of the villas, and
(c) the amount of foreign currency deposited in Mauritian banks in respect of the sale of these villas.

(Withdrawn)

CLEAN AIR BILL AND CLEAN WATER BILL - INTRODUCTION

(No. B/329) Miss K. R. Deerpalsing (Third Member for Belle Rose and Quatre Bornes) asked the Minister of Environment and National Development Unit whether he will state if Government proposes to introduce into the House a Clean Air Bill and a Clean Water Bill.

Reply: The Environment Protection Act 2002 already makes provision for the issue of standards to protect the quality of air.

The Environment Protection (Standards for Air) Regulations were promulgated in 1998 and provide for ambient air standards based on World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines and set limits for major air pollutants emanating from industrial activities.

I would also like to inform the House that the Environment Protection (Standards for Air) Regulations 1998 are being reviewed taking into
consideration new activities such as municipal waste incinerators, which may have an impact on air quality. The new proposed standards will be based upon the latest development in this field and aligned with WHO standards, World Bank Guidelines and European Directives, among others. New parameters of particular concerns such as dioxins and furans are also covered. The new proposed Environment Protection (Standards for Air) Regulations have already been submitted to the Attorney-General’s Office for vetting purposes.

Furthermore the Road Traffic (Control of Vehicle Emissions) Regulations promulgated in 2002 and enforced by the National Transport Authority provide for emission limits for smoke, carbon monoxide and hydrocarbons levels amongst others.

A Clean Air Bill is, therefore, not envisaged at this stage.

A Clean Water Bill basically pertains to the protection of surface water quality, including protection from pollutant discharges and surface run-off. These are presently covered under different primary legislation, namely the Rivers and Canals Act, the Ground Water Act, the Central Water Authority Act, the Public Health Act and the Environment Protection Act. Furthermore, a set of standards, guidelines and regulations to protect the quality of our water resources from industrial and other sources of pollution have been promulgated under the Environment Protection Act over the past years. These include –

- The Environment Protection (Effluent limitations for the sugar industry) Regulations 1997
- The Environment Protection (Standards for effluent discharge) Regulations 2003
- The Environment Protection (Standards of effluent for use in irrigation) Regulations 2003
- The Environment Protection (Standards for effluent discharge into the ocean) Regulations 2003, and
- The Environment Protection (Effluent Discharge Permit) Regulations 2003

The Ministry of Public Utilities is the enforcing agency responsible for monitoring and enforcement of the effluent discharge standards.
I have been informed that the Ministry of Public Utilities intends to encompass all water related issues under a single legislation, the new Water Bill. This will be required to operationalise water services under the provisions of the Utility Regulatory Authority Act, which has yet to be proclaimed.

**QURAN HOUSE - PETITION**

*(No. B/330)* Miss K. R. Deerpalising (Third Member for Belle Rose and Quatre Bornes) asked the Minister of Local Government whether he has been made aware of a petition signed by the President of Quran House, also known as Masjid Boundary, and the neighbouring residents concerning a complaint about the cleaning of the pavement and the drain on Boundary Street and, if so, will he state the remedial measures that will be taken.

**Reply:** I am informed by the Municipality of Beau Bassin/Rose Hill that it had received on 18 April 2007 a petition from the President of Quran House also known as Masjid Boundary and the neighbouring residents relating to the cleaning of pavement and covering of drain at Boundary Road.

Given that the road in question is a classified road and falls under the jurisdiction of the Road Development Authority, the petition was forwarded by the Municipal Council to the latter for appropriate action, at its end.

I am informed by the Road Development Authority that the existing drains along this road are being cleared and maintained regularly.

I am further informed that it is proposed to upgrade the existing drains in order to prevent accumulation of water and to construct footpaths. In this connexion, a survey will be carried out by the Road Development Authority and the works will be included in its programme of works for next financial year.
MAURITIUS SUGAR AUTHORITY – OPERATING EXPENSES

(No. B/331) Miss K. R. Deerpalsing (Third Member for Belle Rose and Quatre Borne) asked the Minister of Agro Industry and Fisheries whether he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Mauritius Sugar Authority, details of the operating expenses for each of the financial years 2003, 2004, 2005 and 2006.

(Withdrawn)

RODRIGUES - CARAVANE DE L’ENTREPRENARIAT

(No. B/332) Mr J. R. Spéville (Second Member for Rodrigues) asked the Minister of Industry, Small & Medium Enterprises, Commerce and Co-operatives whether he will state if he has recently visited the Island of Rodrigues to organise a caravane de l’entreprenariat and, if so, state the objectives and the outcome thereof.

Reply: I participated in the official ceremony of the caravane de l’entreprenariat which was held on 28 April 2007 at Camp du Roi Stadium, Port Mathurin, Rodrigues.

The objectives of the caravane de l’entreprenariat was to provide potential entrepreneurs with the following –

(a) counseling on key issues for setting up of small business;
(b) apprising entrepreneurs of the services, facilities and incentives offered by various support institutions, and
(c) facilitating registration of entrepreneurs with SEHDA and application for DBM loans.

Some 1600 people attended the official ceremony of the caravane on Saturday 28 April. 816 certificates of registration were awarded by SEHDA and 33 cheques representing loans for a sum of Rs736,800 were granted by DBM Ltd.

A Steering Committee has been set up under my chairmanship to monitor implementation of SME projects in Rodrigues.
MASTS INSTALLATION - NUMBER

(No. B/333) Mr J. R. Spéville (Second Member for Rodrigues) asked the Minister of Information Technology and Telecommunications whether, in regard to masts installed in mainland Mauritius and the Island of Rodrigues, he will state the number thereof, including mobile phone masts and television and radio transmitters.

Reply: I am advised that the total number of masts installed in Mauritius is 374 and in Rodrigues the number is 29.

The breakdown is as follows –

Mauritius –

- TV and Radio transmitters 22
- Fixed line telephone transmitters (for MT) 29
- Mobile Phone masts 323

Rodrigues -

- Multi-Carrier (Mauritius) Ltd
  (TV and Radio) 7
- Fixed Line telephone transmitters (MT) 7
- Mobile phone masts 15

NON-IONISING RADIATION PROTECTION – GOVERNMENT POLICY

(No. B/334) Mr J. R. Spéville (Second Member for Rodrigues) asked the Minister of Information Technology and Telecommunications whether he will state Government Policy in regard to Non-Ionising Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) for mainland Mauritius and the Island of Rodrigues.

Reply: I am informed that the International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) has published guidelines which sources emitting radio frequencies should adhere to.
I am further informed that the ITU-T (Telecommunication Standardisation Sector of the International Telecommunication Union) has elaborated Recommendation K.52: “Guidance on complying with limits for human exposure to electromagnetic fields” which translates the requirements of the forementioned guidelines from a regulatory perspective. The provisions of the K.52 recommendation are given full application by the ICT Authority in the exercise of its radio frequency management functions for Mauritius and Rodrigues.

The Government policy, therefore, on this matter, is to comply with the recommendation of the ITU, which is the worldwide recognized authoritative source for radio frequencies standards, amongst others.

HOSPITALS AND HEALTH CENTRES – DRUGS SUPPLY

(No. B/335) Mr R. Bhagwan (First Member for Beau Bassin and Petite Rivière) asked the Minister of Health and Quality of Life whether, in regard to the supply of drugs in hospitals and health centres, he will state if he is aware of the prevailing situation in connection therewith and, if so, will he indicate the actions he proposes to take to ensure a regular supply of drugs to patients.

Reply: My Ministry holds some 700 different pharmaceutical preparations in stock at all time. These items cover the whole spectrum of diseases and ailments encountered in Mauritius ranging from simple and cheaper paracetamol tablets to the most sophisticated and expensive products derived from biotechnology, such as human insulin or interferon.

My Ministry obtains all its drugs from overseas as it cannot buy its bulk requirements off the shelf and local manufacturers are not able to compete with overseas suppliers because of economy of scale. Overseas purchase can be risky because of price or currency variations or freight problems. In some cases, no quotes are received against tenders.

It may happen that from time to time, we run short of a few drugs for a limited period. I understand that this is a common feature in all health systems. I wish to point out that most of the time at least 95% of drugs are available in our health institutions.
The main reasons for the shortages are due to suppliers defaulting. In fact, some suppliers decline to supply because of increasing production costs or unavailability of raw materials. There are even cases of suppliers who are late with their deliveries. In addition, there has been an unforeseen increase in the consumption of some newly introduced drugs which has resulted in early depletion of stocks.

My Ministry is committed to a regular supply of drugs to patients. Currently non-available items include drugs used for different indications. However, there is no concentration of such items in any particular therapeutic group. Most of the drugs which are not currently available can be suitably replaced by other existing drugs. Whenever suitable substitutes are not available, hospitals are allowed to buy small quantities on the local market as and when required. Arrangements are also made to airfreight some items that are not available on the local market whenever the need is felt.

I wish to reassure the House that there is at all times a regular supply of drugs to patients except for a few drugs for which palliative measures are taken.
MAURITIUS FILM DEVELOPMENT COMPANY – DIRECTOR GENERAL – APPOINTMENT

(No. B/336) Mr R. Bhagwan (First Member for Beau Bassin and Petite Rivière) asked the Minister of Industry, Small & Medium Enterprises, Commerce and Co-operatives whether, in regard to the Mauritius Film Development Company, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain information as to –

(a) the names, date of appointment and terms and conditions of employment of its Director-General, and
(b) whether he is aware if there is any conflict between the Chairperson and the Director-General and, if so, indicating –

(i) since when, and
(ii) the remedial measures taken, if any.

Reply: I have been informed that the Board of the Mauritius Film Development Corporation appointed Mrs Nurvuda Ramyead as General Manager of the Corporation on a contractual basis for a period of two years on 13 February 2007. She assumed duty on 01 March 2007.

A copy of the terms and conditions governing her employment will be placed in the Library of the National Assembly.

As regards part (b) of the question, I am not aware of any conflict between the General Manager and the Chairperson of the Mauritius Film Development Corporation.
FOURTH INDIAN OCEAN GAMES – DISCIPLINE, TEAMS, ETC.

(No. B/337) Mr R. Bhagwan (First Member for Beau Bassin and Petite Rivière) asked the Minister of Youth and Sports whether in regard to the Fourth Indian Ocean Games, he will state the actions taken to ensure the participation of Mauritius in terms of –

(a) performance in the different disciplines;

(b) preparation of the teams;

(c) training per games;

(d) participation of Mauritian supporters and the media, including live coverage by the MBC/TV;

(e) financial support to federations and athletes, and

(f) medical check-up and follow-up of athletes.

Reply: I would like to thank the Hon. First Member for Beau Bassin and Petite Rivière for this question which gives me an opportunity to inform the House of the actions taken for participation of Mauritius in the next Indian Ocean Islands Games.

In fact, the Fourth Indian Ocean Islands Games were held in Seychelles in 1993. I presume that the hon. Member is referring to the next edition of the Games which is the Seventh (7th) Indian Ocean Islands Games will be held in Madagascar from 09 to 19 August 2007.

Mauritius will participate in all the 15 sports disciplines retained for the next Games, namely -

Athletics, Basket-Ball, Boxing, Cycling, Football, Judo, Karaté, Pétanque, Swimming, Table Tennis, Tae Kwon Do, Tennis, Volleyball, Weightlifting and Wrestling.
Last month, I had a meeting with Air Mauritius regarding arrangements for special flights for travelling of the Mauritian Team to Madagascar and back.

Regarding parts (a), (b) and (c) of the question relating to performance, preparation and training for the Games, Mr. Speaker Sir, I would like to inform that, in October last year, I personally met the representatives of the 15 Sports Federations concerned to impress upon them the urgency to start specific preparation of the National Squad. Subsequently, a Monitoring Unit headed by the Director of Sports was set up at my Ministry to follow closely the preparation of pre-selected athletes under the guidance of the respective national coaches and the sports federations.

The national coaches have established relevant training plans, which are being implemented. The training plans include three to five times weekly intensive technical, tactical and physical including mental preparation.

Moreover, national competitions and local training camps are being held to give opportunity to the pre-selected athletes measure their performance among themselves in order to excel further. A number of Sports Federations have also arranged for training camps abroad as well as participation in international competitions.

For example, in the case of Athletics –

- a number of athletes are already training abroad in High Performance Training Centres in Senegal and Malaysia and a few more will soon proceed to France for high level training camps;

- further, the Mauritius Amateur Athletic Association has made arrangements for the participation of its athletes in competitions in countries of the region such as Reunion Island and other African countries.

For football, participation in regional tournaments, namely COSAFA cup and African Cup of Nations as well as in friendly international matches constitute the plan of preparation. The National Football team recently
played football matches against Seychelles, Reunion Island, Côte d’Ivoire, Tunisia and Sudan. A training camp abroad is also being envisaged prior to the Games.

For disciplines like Karaté, Tae Kwon Do and Pétanque, apart from the weekly training plans, the national coaches have also planned local intensive training camps whereby the expertise of high calibre foreign coaches will be enlisted.

I would like to assure the House that my Ministry is providing all the necessary support in terms of logistic, technical and transport facilities, medical assistance during training sessions and competitions and provision of food supplements and vitamins to each sport federations for proper preparation of their respective athletes. A Sports Cadre has been designated for each sports discipline to ensure proper coordination.

The responsibility for the selection of athletes rests with the national coaches and the Sport Federation concerned respecting specific criteria based on results, performance and regularity. Some Federations such as Athletics and Swimming have also fixed minima.

With regard to part (d) of the question, I am informed that at the last meeting held in Madagascar last month, the “Conseil Permanent de Jeux des Iles” requested the Organising Committee to take appropriate steps to facilitate participation of supporters in the Games from the neighboring islands. The Organising Committee has undertaken to put sale of tickets online in this respect.

The Sports Federations are being encouraged to take advantage of this facility including possibility of additional seats being provided by Air Mauritius.

With regards to participation of the media, arrangements will be made in due course for accreditation facilities to enable them cover the Games.

In addition, I am informed by the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation that it has taken major steps to ensure live coverages of the Indian Ocean Games in Madagascar from 09 to 19 August 2007.
The MBC has successfully acquired a satellite teleport which is in operation since October 2006. Through this system, it is sending/receiving TV pictures from Rodrigues, the Outer Islands and also Madagascar and Reunion. Transmission of TV pictures to Madagascar was tested during the visit of the President of the Malagasy Republic, Mr. Marc Ravalomanana in Mauritius in March 2007.

Reception of TV pictures from Madagascar was tested during the swearing-in ceremony of the President Marc Ravalomanana. The MBC is working in collaboration with (Reseau France Outre-Mer) RFO Reunion and (Canal France International) CFI to effectively produce good quality TV live coverage during the Games.

I am further informed that an MBC mission will soon be going to Madagascar under the aegis of “Association des Radios Télévision de l’Océan Indien” for a site survey and finalise the logistics and all other resources required for this event.

As regards financial support to Sports Federations, my Ministry has provided some Rs27 m. in the current financial year to the 15 sports federations concerned for development of their respective disciplines including preparation for the Indian Ocean Islands Games.

Besides, the Mauritius National Olympic Committee has already granted some Rs1.2 m. to Sports Federations to assist them in their preparation and will also provide sports equipment worth Rs1 m..

Moreover, the Sports Medical Unit of my Ministry has since February 2007 started operating till 19.00 hours and effected specific medical tests on all pre-selected athletes. The services of two Remedial Massage Therapists have been retained by my Ministry to assist preparation of athletes.
CITÉ MARTIAL AND CAMP YOLOFF COMMUNITY CENTRES-EXPENSES

(No. A/8) Mr S. Lauthan (Third Member for Port Louis Maritime and Port Louis East) asked the Minister of Social Security, National Solidarity and Senior Citizens Welfare & Reform Institutions whether in regard to the community centres at Cité Martial and Camp Yoloff, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund, a detailed breakdown of expenses incurred since July 2005 to date, indicating the names of the beneficiaries.

Reply: With regard to PQ A/8, I am tabling a detailed breakdown of the expenses in respect of Cité Martial and Camp Yoloff Community Centres since July 2005 to date.

CONSTITUENCIES NOS. 2 AND 3 – PROJECTS

(A/9) Mr S. Lauthan (Third Member for Port Louis Maritime and Port Louis East) asked the Minister of Environment and National Development Unit whether, in regard to each of the projects undertaken by the National Development Unit in Constituencies No. 2 and No. 3 for the period 2001 to 2005, he will table a detailed list thereof, indicating –

(a) the amount of money spent, and
(b) the date of termination.

Reply: The information sought in relation to projects undertaken by the National Development Unit in Constituencies Nos. 2 and 3 for the period 2001-2005 is tedious and time-consuming.

Arrangements are being made to compile the information which will be placed on the Table of the National Assembly as it will be ready.