Mr. G. Lesjongard (Second Member for Port Louis North and Montagne Longue) 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 he has had a meeting with the parents of the students attending the Chitrakoot Government School and, if not, why not.

Reply: I am replying to Parliamentary Questions B/1105, B/1143 and B/1173 together as they relate to the same issue.

The reply is in the affirmative.

I indeed received a group of parents of the pupils of the Chitrakoot Government School in my office on 15 November 2007.

During the meeting, I explained to them that the safety and security of the pupils and teachers of the school have been the main concern of the Government ever since the structural safety of the school was put into question by the Ministry of Public Infrastructure and the engineers of the National Development Unit.

I also emphasized on the fact that the Government is very much conscious of the distress and anxiety that is associated with the shifting of school. Government therefore wanted to spare the pupils and parents the trauma of moving to the new school.

Following the discussions with the parents, the engineers of the Ministry of Public Infrastructure, the National Development Unit and GIBBS (Mauritius) Ltd and a reassessment of the situation, it has now been decided that:

(a) the pupils of Chitrakoot Government School would not be transferred to another school;
(b) as a temporary measure, the existing building would be repaired to enable classes to resume in January 2008; and
(c) a plot of land outside the risk zone would be identified for the construction of a new school which would be operational in 2009.
Moreover, a special committee, under the chairmanship of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Environment and National Development Unit, has been set up to prepare the implementation plan for the rehabilitation of the existing school complex.

The repair works will be executed by a team of technicians and workers drawn from several Ministries.

The scope of work would comprise -
(a) restoration of building including structural repairs, finishing and flooring, openings, plumbing and electrical works; and
(b) external works including tarmac, drains, boundary wall, landscaping and other minor works.

I can inform the House that rehabilitation works have already started yesterday and is expected to be completed by end of December 2007, weather permitting.

The NDU will continue to operate the monitoring system in place for the identification and measurement of any landslide and will liaise with the Cyclone and Natural Disaster Committee in my Office.

The special committee will meet once weekly to monitor work progress until completion.

DETAINEE M. F. – BROWN SEQUARD HOSPITAL - ADMISSION

(No. B/1106) Mr J. C. Barbier (Third Member for GRNW and Port Louis West) 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 one Mr M. F., he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Prisons, information as to if he is presently serving his imprisonment sentences in the Brown Sequard Hospital and, if so, the reasons therefor.

Reply: I am informed by the Commissioner of Prisons that, on the advice of the treating Psychiatrist, Mr Swastee Rao Fakhoo also known as Manan Fakoo was admitted to the Brown Sequard Mental Health Care Centre on 12 January 2007.

On 17 April 2007, on the recommendation of the treating Psychiatrist, the Mental Health Commission granted two weeks leave to the detainee and he was discharged and sent back to prison.

On 20 April 2007, Mr Fakhoo was re-admitted to Brown Sequard Mental Health Care Centre. Ever since, he is detained in a High Security Ward at the Brown Sequard Mental Health Care Centre and is under 24-hour surveillance by Prisons Officers.

I am also informed that since 12 January 2007, the Mental Health Commission has reviewed the case of Mr Fakhoo on seven occasions, the last review being on 9 October 2007. On the recommendation of the treating psychiatrist, the Mental Health Commission has on each occasion confirmed that the mental state of the detainee warrants further stay at the Brown Sequard Mental Health Care Centre for care and treatment.
Mr Speaker Sir, I am further informed that currently there are two other convicted detainees who have been admitted to the Brown Sequard Mental Health Care Centre on the advice of their treating Psychiatrist.

MAURITIAN VESSEL – HIGH SEAS – FISH TRANSFER

(No. B/1107) Mr J. C. Barbier (Third Member for GRNW and Port Louis West) 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 recent case of transfer of fish in the high seas from a Mauritian vessel involving a Malagasy captain, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Police, information as to if an inquiry has been carried out thereinto and the outcome thereof.

Reply: I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that no such case has been reported recently to the Police.

FEDERATION CREOLES MAURICIENS – REPRESENTATIONS

(No. B/1108) Mr M. Allet (Second Member for Beau Bassin and Petite Rivière) 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 he has received representations from the Fédération Créoles Mauriciens (F.C.M) to replace the appellation of Population Générale by that of Créoles et Autres Chrétiens in the Constitution and wherever they appear in the law and public documents and, if so, the actions he proposes to take.

(Withdrawn)

CITE BARKLY – INCIDENT – 10-11 SEPTEMBER 2007

(No. B/1109) Mr M. Allet (Second Member for Beau Bassin and Petite Rivière) 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 gun shots that were fired at Cité Barkly during the night of 10-11 September 2007, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Police, information as to if an inquiry has been carried out thereinto, indicating the number of arrests effected, if any.

Reply: I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that following the incident which took place at Cité Barkly during the night of 10-11 September 2007, four persons have been arrested. A provisional charge of “attempt at murder” has been lodged against the two first accused before the Rose Hill Court.

The first accused was released on bail on 26 September 2007 upon furnishing a surety of Rs75,000 and entering into a recognizance for the sum of Rs200,000. The second accused was released on 27 September 2007 upon furnishing a surety of Rs10,000 and entering into a recognizance for the sum of Rs25,000.

The third and fourth accused have been arrested on a provisional charge of “illegal possession of firearms”. The third accused was bailed on 27 September 2007 upon furnishing a surety of Rs7,500 and entering into a recognizance for the sum of Rs50,000. The fourth accused
was bailed out on 25 September 2007 upon furnishing a surety of Rs3,000 and entering into a recognizance of Rs25,000.

All the accused will appear in Court again on 18 February 2008.

SAVANNE AND BLACK RIVER – LARCENY & LARCENY WITH VIOLENCE, RAPE & AGGRESSION - CASES

(No. B/1110) Mrs D. Perrier (Fourth Member for Savanne and Black River) 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 reported cases of larceny, larceny with violence, rape and aggression in the region of Savanne and Black River since July 2006 to date, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Police, information as to the number thereof in each case.

Reply: I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that from July 2006 to date, 916 cases of larceny, 41 cases of larceny with violence, 4 cases of rape and 1,912 cases of assault have been reported in the district of Savanne and 1,307 cases of larceny, 53 cases of larceny with violence, 5 cases of rape and 731 cases of assault have been reported in the district of Black River.

I wish to refer the House to my reply to PQ B/1033 on 06 November, 2007 wherein I mentioned the series of measures taken by the Police to ensure permanent police presence on the ground throughout the island, including the districts of Savanne and Black River. These measures will be reinforced in view of the forthcoming end-of-year festivities. I am informed that the Police regularly reviews the level of criminality island wide, identifies high risk areas and take corrective measures accordingly thereafter.

QUATRE BORNES MARKET FAIR – STALLS – ALLOCATION

(No. B/1111) Mr R. Bhagwan (First Member for Beau Bassin and Petite Rivière) 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 recent exercise carried out for the allocation of stalls at the Quatre Bornes Market Fair by the Municipal Council of Quatre Bornes, he will consider recommending the setting up of a commission of inquiry to be chaired by a retired judge to inquire into the matter.

Reply: As the House may be aware, the Independent Commission Against Corruption is already investigating into alleged cases of malpractices in the allocation of stalls at the Municipality of Quatre Bornes.

At this stage, therefore, the question of recommending the setting up of a Commission of Inquiry to enquire into the matter does not arise – the more so, as I am advised that the facts so far disclose prima facie evidence of the commission of criminal offences which may lead to prosecution. The setting up of a Commission of Inquiry would only unduly protract matters since evidence given before a Commission of Inquiry cannot give rise to civil or criminal proceedings, nor is it admissible against any person in civil or criminal proceedings, other than a prosecution for perjury.
RODRIGUES – POLICE BAND – SETTING UP

(No. B/1112) Mr J. Von-Mally (Fourth 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 proposed setting up of a Police Band in Rodrigues, he will state where matters stand.

Reply: I would like to refer the hon. Member to the reply made on 10 July 2007 on this issue.

I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that the eight Rodriguan Bandsmen appointed in November 2005, are still undergoing training to attain the required level of proficiency and competency to form part of the Police Band sub-unit in Rodrigues.

When the Rodriguan Bandsmen would have acquired the required training and exposure to act as professional Bandsmen, arrangements would be made to provide the necessary infrastructure and logistics to implement the project.

POLICE DE L’ENVIRONNEMENT – VEHICLES, POLICE OFFICERS, ETC.

(No. B/1113) Mrs M. Martin (Second Member for Curepipe and Midlands) 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 Police de l’Environnement Department -

(a) he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Police, information as to the number of vehicles attached and officers presently posted thereat;

(b) the number of contraventions they have booked, since January 2007 to date, in respect of -

   (i) smoke emission by vehicles, and
   (ii) noise pollution.

I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that fourteen vehicles are attached to the Police de l’Environnement, out of which four are allotted to Rodrigues. Thirty four Police Officers are posted thereat, out of which five are in Rodrigues.

I am advised that from January 2007 to date -

   (i) 3,478 notices have been served to drivers for smoke opacity, and
   (ii) 9 contraventions have been established for playing music in a loud tone.
MEDIA TRUST – TRAINING - BENEFICIARIES

(No. B/1114) Mrs M. Martin (Second Member for Curepipe and Midlands) asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence & Home Affairs, Minister of Civil Service & Administrative Reforms and Minister of Rodrigues & Outer Islands whether he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Media Trust, information as to if journalists have, since January 2007 to date, benefited from training locally or abroad and, if so –

(a) the number thereof, and
(b) table a list of the names of the beneficiaries, indicating –

(i) the publications for which they work, and
(ii) the organisations which offered the training.

Reply: I am informed that in the context of an existing cooperation between the Media Trust and the French Embassy, ten journalists of the written press and seven radio journalists benefited from courses organised in the premises of the Media Trust this year. The training sessions were conducted by resource persons from “L’École Supérieure de Journalisme de Lille, France” and Radio France Internationale.

I am also informed that three journalists who followed the course for the written press in 2006, were awarded scholarships this year following a selection exercise conducted by the French Embassy.

I am tabling the list of beneficiaries indicating the publications for which they work.

RODRIGUES - PRIVATE SECTOR WORKERS ASSOCIATION – REPRESENTATIONS

(No. B/1115) Mr J. C. Barbier (Third Member for GRNW and Port Louis West) 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 he has received representations from the Private Sector Workers Association of Rodrigues by a letter dated 06 November 2007 and, if so, the actions he proposes to take.

Reply: I have received representations from the Private Sector Workers Association of Rodrigues and the letter has been referred to the Island Chief Executive, Rodrigues Regional Assembly for appropriate action.
PUBLIC OFFICERS - INTERDICTION

(No. B/1116) Mr N. Bodha (First Member for Vacoas and Floreal) 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 public officers who are presently under interdiction, he will state –

(a) the number thereof, and
(b) in each case -

(i) since when, and
(ii) where matters stand as regard to the inquiry.

Reply: I am informed that there are currently 245 Public Officers who are under interdiction.

As regards part (b) of the question, the information is being tabled.

CHITRAKOOT – SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION – CONSULTANT REPORT

(No. B/1143) Mr G. Lesjongard (Second Member for Port Louis North and Montagne Longue) asked the Minister of Education and Human Resources whether he will state if Government has taken the decision not to proceed with the construction of a school at Chitrakoot, Vallée des Prêtres, on the basis of the final report submitted by the consultant appointed to look into the landslide problem.

(Vide reply to PQ No. B/1105)

STATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS – TEACHERS (PREVOCATIONAL STREAM) – RECRUITMENT

(No. B/1165) 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 teachers of the prevocational stream, he will state the number thereof recruited in the State Secondary Schools as at to date.

(Withdrawn)
CEB - ALLEGED THEFT

(No. B/1166) Mrs L. D. Dookun-Luchoomun (Third Member for La Caverne and Phoenix) asked the Minister of Public Utilities whether he is aware of a recent alleged case of theft committed by an employee of the Central Electricity Board thereat, and if so, will he, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Board, information as to if the case has been referred to the Police or to the Independent Commission Against Corruption.

(Withdrawn)

SHRI RAMACHANDRA MEDICAL COLLEGE - OPERATION

(No. B/1167) Mrs L. D. Dookun-Luchoomun (Third Member for La Caverne and Phoenix) asked the Minister of Education and Human Resources whether he will for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Tertiary Education Commission, information as to whether the Shri Ramachandra Medical College has been given approval to operate in Mauritius and, if so, since when and, if not, why not.

(Withdrawn)

RICHFIELD TEXTILES, LE HOCHET, TERRE ROUGE – ENVIRONMENT POLLUTION

(No. B/1168) Mr P. Jhugroo (Third Member for Port Louis North & Montagne Longue) asked the Minister of Environment and National Development Unit whether he is aware of the existing environment pollution problem at Richfield Textiles, Le Hochet, Terre Rouge and, if so, will he state –

- (a) if he has received any representation in connection therewith;
- (b) he has effected a site visit thereto and, if so, when and, if not, why not, and
- (c) the remedial measures that are being envisaged.

Reply: With regard to part (a), the answer is in the affirmative.

As regards part (b), I effected a site visit in January 2007 and organised a tripartite meeting on 22 February.

As for part (c), the following remedial measures were proposed as a result of an independent audit:-

(i) use of diesel as fuel in the spare boiler;
(ii) use of heavy fuel oil 600 CST as fuel in the main boiler and the number of shut-offs of the boiler should be reduced so as to abate the black smoke and soot deposition problems;
(iii) regular maintenance of the boiler;
(iv) the height of the chimney connected to the dryer should be raised and a proper equipment be retrofitted to abate the odour nuisance;
(v) the flash tank of the boiler should be lagged to abate the noise nuisance, and
(vi) the retention capacity of wastewater should be increased so as to prevent wastewater overflow.

All the measures have already been implemented and my Ministry is monitoring the situation regularly.

As there is still some odour problem from the dryer chimney and soot deposit nuisance, the Ministry of Health & Quality of Life has been requested to investigate further and take appropriate action.

RODRIGUES – PLAILNE CORAIL - SIR GAETAN DUVAL AIRPORT

(No. B/1169) Mr J. Von-Mally (Fourth Member for Rodrigues) asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism, Leisure and External Communications whether, in regard to the Sir Gaëtan Duval Airport of Plaine Corail, Rodrigues, he will state if a decision has been taken by his Ministry in collaboration with the Rodrigues Regional Assembly to extend the airstrip with a view to boosting the tourism industry in Rodrigues and, if so –

(a) if a firm has been contacted in connection therewith, and
(b) where matters stand.

Reply: The House may wish to know that the possibility of providing the Sir Gaëtan Duval Airport at Plaine Corail Rodrigues with an extended runway is being examined. The present runway, which extends over some 1,287 metres, restricts its use to small aircraft of the size of ATR 72 and thereby limits the number of passengers who can travel to Rodrigues. It is envisaged that for the development of the Rodriguan economy and in particular the tourism industry in Rodrigues there would be a requirement for an aircraft of the size of A 319 to service the route, thereby necessitating a runway of some 2,000 metres. I understand that the deployment of such an aircraft on the route will be more cost effective for the airline and will hence trigger a reduction in the cost of airfares.

At a meeting held on 18 October under my chairmanship and comprising the Chief Commissioner of Rodrigues Regional Assembly and representatives of inter alia, Airports of Rodrigues Ltd, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, Ministry of Rodrigues & Outer Islands and my Ministry to discuss the outlook for the tourism industry in Rodrigues and the desirability of pursuing this project, it was decided to undertake a feasibility study in the first instance. It was also decided to approach Aéroports de Paris International (ADPI) which had prepared a Master Plan for Rodrigues in 2000 to carry out an update of its plan together with a review of the –

(i) options for an extension of the runway;
(ii) forecast for incoming and outgoing passengers, and
(iii) proposals for the mode of financing the project.
I am advised that ADPI is agreeable to undertake the update of the Master Plan before the end of the year. However, the details of its proposal are still awaited. Meanwhile, a local firm which is experienced in airport development works in Rodrigues has been approached to provide a cost estimate for a new runway. Also, I shall, in the very near future, be leading a technical delegation to Rodrigues to hold further discussions with RRA and ARL and to effect a site visit of the airport.

A decision on the project will be taken when all the relevant factors and implications for the short, medium and long terms will have been assessed.

**MAURITIUS – MICE DESTINATION**

(No. B/1170) Mrs M. Martin (Second Member for Curepipe & Midlands) asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism, Leisure and External Communications whether he will state if a decision has been taken to develop Mauritius into a Meetings, Incentives, Conference and Events (MICE) destination and, if so, the measures taken, if any.

**Reply:** As part of the overall strategy of my Ministry to diversify the tourism product portfolio, the MICE segment is being increasingly targeted. The promotion of the MICE market is especially appealing in view of the fact that it has the potential to tackle the seasonal variation in tourist arrivals by addressing the problem of low occupancy in low and shoulder seasons.

I am informed that the Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority has since quite some time been more aggressively promoting Mauritius as a destination for MICE i.e Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions. The campaigns are carried out in close collaboration with the tourism industry partners, namely: Incentive Travel & Meetings Association (ITMA) which regroups hoteliers offering MICE facilities, Swami Vivekananda Convention Centre, and the local Destination Management Companies (DMC) and other stakeholders. In addition, the MTPA sponsors some of the activities of the ITMA.

I am further informed that the Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority has taken a series of other measures to promote MICE as follows:-

(i) participation in specialized MICE fairs such as the -
   (a) EIBTM (European Incentive, Business and Travel Mart) - targeting mainly the European clientele
   (b) AIME (Asia - Pacific Incentive & Meeting Expo) in Melbourne, Australia
   (c) IMEX (Incentive Meeting & Exhibition) - the worldwide exhibition for Incentive Travel Meeting and Events in Frankfurt, Germany

(ii) showcasing of the MICE potential of the destination in workshops conducted in major markets targeting the International Travel Trade & Media e.g in South Africa

(iii) production and distribution of promotional materials such as MICE brochures, info guides in several languages, DVDs etc.
(iv) display of MICE information on the website of the MTPA. MICE organisers and suppliers have the possibility to link up with the MTPA site.

(v) production of supplements in magazines specialized in MICE such as the MICE-net in Australia and in the Conference and Incentive magazine in the U.K.

(b) familiarisation trips for the overseas Travel Trade and Media organized in collaboration with local tourism stakeholders.

(vii) collaboration with international Tour Operators having in-house specialized incentive departments, e.g. in South Africa.

MEDICAL INTERVENTIONS ABROAD – BENEFICIARIES – JANUARY TO NOVEMBER 2007

(No. B/1171) Mrs M. Martin (Second Member for Curepipe and Midlands) asked the Minister of Health and Quality of Life whether, in regard to the beneficiaries of Government assistance for medical interventions abroad since January 2007 to date, he will state their names and respective addresses.

Reply: It would be most unethical to disclose the names and addresses of patients who have been provided with financial assistance for medical treatment abroad.

The medical conditions and the personal details of patients are considered as confidential and can only be revealed if authorised by a patient or if there is a legal compulsion. However, in case the hon. Member wishes to obtain any specific information on the issue I will be glad to provide same.

I also wish to inform the House that during Financial Year 2006/2007, 508 patients benefited from financial assistance for treatment abroad and my Ministry disbursed a total amount of Rs41 m. under this item. From January 2007 to 15 November 2007, 374 patients have already been granted financial assistance to proceed abroad for treatment as follows –

| Region 1 | Dr. A.G. Jeetool Hospital | 81 |
| Region 2 | SSRN Hospital | 75 |
| Region 3 | Flacq Hospital | 42 |
| Region 4 | J. Nehru Hospital | 62 |
| Region 5 | Victoria Hospital | 114 |
DR. JEETO HOSPITAL – NEONATAL DEATH –
27 OCTOBER 2007

(No. B/1172) Mrs A. Navarre-Marie (First Member for GRNW and Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Health and Quality of Life whether he is aware of an allegation of a case of medical negligence which resulted in the death of a new born baby at the Labour Ward of the Dr. Jeetoo Hospital, made by one Mrs M. M. L. of Cassis, on Saturday 27 October 2007, and, if so, will he state if an inquiry has been carried out thereinto and the outcome thereof.

Reply: I am informed that a preliminary inquiry was carried out at the level of my Ministry to look into the alleged case of medical negligence concerning the neonatal death which occurred on 27 October 2007 at the Dr. A.G. Jeetoo Hospital.

The preliminary inquiry has concluded that there was no evidence of medical negligence. It also noted that in spite of all the necessary and appropriate care given to the mother, the new born died as a result of complications probably due to concealed aspiration of meconium, a type of complication that may occur during delivery.

The findings of the preliminary report have been fully studied at my Ministry and I am advised that the case requires a further in-depth investigation. Accordingly, the matter has been referred to the Medical Council.

CHITRAKOOT – SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION – REPRESENTATIONS

(No. B/1173) Mrs B. Juggoo (First Member for Port Louis North and Montagne Longue) asked the Minister of Education and Human Resources whether he will state if he has received any representation for the construction of a new school at Chitrakoot, Vallée des Prêtres.

(Vide Reply to PQ No. B/1105)