

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS
POST OFFICES – LARCENY CASES

(No. B/742) Mrs F. Jeewa-Daureeawoo (Third Member for Stanley & Rose Hill) asked Prime Minister, Minister of Defence & Home Affairs, Minister of Civil Service & Administrative Reforms and Minister of Rodrigues & Outer Islands whether, in regard to alleged cases of larceny committed at post offices, since 2006 to date, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Police, information as to the number thereof, indicating –

- (a) if inquiries have been carried out thereinto and the outcome thereof, and
- (b) the remedial measures he proposes to take.

Reply: I am informed by the Acting Commissioner of Police that since 2006 to date, 11 cases of larceny committed at Post Offices have been reported to Police.

Out of these 11 cases, eight have been classified, one is awaiting advice from the Director of Public Prosecutions and enquiry is being pursued in two cases.

As regards part (b) of the question, I am further informed that Police and the Mauritius Post are working together on the following remedial measures -

- (i) regular night patrols by the local Police, members of the Emergency Response Services and ADSU;
- (ii) establishment of a direct communication network between Post Offices, the Police Operations and Information Room and Divisional Operations Rooms to ensure quick response and assistance;
- (ii) arranging for the presence of police officers during payment of pension;
- (iv) posting of armed police officers for all cash money transfers;
- (v) organising training programmes for the benefit of the personnel of the post offices by the Crime Prevention Unit;
- (vi) equipping all post offices with alarm systems; and
- (vii) installation of CCTV cameras at the Central Post Office and the Parcels Post Office.

The Mauritius Post Office is also proposing to install CCTV Scan in ten post offices on a priority basis and to hire the services of private security guards for offering more effective protection to members of the public, its employees as well as its premises.

CCVTV CAMERA SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM & RADIO SYSTEMS

(No. B/743) Mr G. Gunness (Third Member for Montagne Blanche & GRSE) 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 project for the installation of CCTV cameras and radio systems across the island, he will state if any contract has been awarded and, if so –

- (a) the places where same will be installed, and
- (b) the cost thereof.

Reply: I am informed by the Acting Commissioner of Police that no contract for the installation of CCTV cameras and radio systems across the island has been awarded yet. The Police Department is in fact currently working on these two projects.

The CCTV Surveillance System project will cover arteries, business, entertainment and commercial areas as well as crime prone areas. It will be implemented in the first instance, in the regions of Port Louis, Grand' Baie and Flic en Flac. It will afterwards be extended to other regions of the country.

The project for the regions of Grand' Baie and Port Louis, is being implemented with the assistance of the Government of the People's Republic of China through an interest free loan of about Rs135 m. The support of the Chinese Government was in fact secured following discussion I had with the Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao during my official visit to the People's Republic of China in November 2006. In this respect, a Chinese expert team visited Mauritius in April 2008 to carry out a feasibility study of the project. Following this visit, a report was submitted by the expert team wherein it has been proposed that 271 surveillance cameras be installed in the city of Port Louis and 69 others in Grand

Bay. The project is presently at design stage, and the design is expected to be completed by end July 2008.

Furthermore, in view of major tourist development in the region of Flic en Flac, there is a need to reinforce security in the region. The installation of a CCTV surveillance system in that area is also under consideration. The Police Department is currently working on the details of the project.

With regard to the radio systems of the Police Department, I am informed by the Acting Commissioner of Police that the present Police radio communication system is more than 15 years old, and is subject to various technical problems. Since 2002, a project for the replacement of that system has been in the pipeline. During my visit to China in November 2006, this issue was also discussed with the Chinese authorities. It was subsequently agreed that a project of Installation of a modern digital radio communication system which would link up all Police Units and Divisions, would also be implemented with the assistance of the Chinese Government. I understand that this project is being executed together with the project of installation of CCTV camera surveillance system at Port Louis and Grand' Baie by the same Chinese expert team. The project is also at design stage.

POLICE HEADQUARTERS - DEPARTMENTAL ORDERLY ROOM

(No. B/744) Mr G. Gunness (Third Member for Montagne Blanche & GRSE) 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 Commissioner of Police, information as to if the Departmental Orderly Room has been closed and, if so, the reasons therefor.

Reply: I am informed by the Acting Commissioner of Police that the Departmental Orderly Room, based at the Police Headquarters, was set up since 09 April 2001 to conduct disciplinary proceedings throughout the Force, except for the Special Mobile Force.

However, this mechanism had several drawbacks as the disciplinary proceedings were centralised, overloaded, time consuming and deprived officers at the Branch and Divisional Level of the power of disciplinary control.

The Departmental Orderly Room at the level of the Police Headquarters, therefore, ceased to operate as from 29 March 2008 and the former practice of conducting disciplinary proceedings at Branch and Divisional Level has been

introduced anew. With the resumption of this practice, Branch Officers and Divisional Commanders are now dealing with disciplinary proceedings against personnel under their orders in accordance with Standing Order 21.

This decentralised system reduces delays and serves the cause of discipline in a more effective manner.

LARCENY & HOLD-UP CASES – 01.06.08-28.06.08 - INQUIRY

(No. B/745) Mr N. Bodha (First Member for Vacoas & 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 the three cases of hold-up, which took place on or about 09 June 2008, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Police, information as to if inquiries have been carried out thereinto and the outcome thereof.

Reply: I am informed by the Acting Commissioner of Police that during the period 01 to 26 June 2008, four cases of larceny with violence have been reported as follows -

- (i) at Poste de Flacq Total Filling Station on 07 June 2008;
- (ii) at Brisée Verdière Indian Oil Filling Station on 12 June 2008;
- (iii) at Sebastopol Post Office on 13 June 2008, and
- (iv) at Adamas Duty Free Diamond Shop at Grand Bay on 13 June 2008.

The Police are inquiring into the four cases. Two arrests were effected by the Northern division CID in the case of the hold-up at Adamas Duty Free Diamond Shop at Grand' Bay, on 13 and 20 June 2008 respectively. A provisional charge of "conspiracy" was charged against both accused at Mapou Court. One of them was bailed out upon furnishing a surety of Rs10,000, whilst the charge against the other one was struck out by Court.

The inquiries are ongoing and upon completion thereof, they will be referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions for advice.

GANGS – SERIOUS OFFENCES – JANUARY 2008-JUNE 2008

(No. B/746) Mr N. Bodha (First Member for Vacoas & 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 alleged cases of serious offences committed by gangs, since January 2008 to date, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Police, information as to the number thereof, indicating if inquiries have been carried out thereinto and the outcome thereof.

Reply: I am informed by the Acting Commissioner of Police that since January 2008 to date, 12 cases of serious offences committed by gangs have been reported to the Police.

A total of fifteen persons were arrested in six of these cases, out of whom eight have been bailed out, whereas the seven others are still in Police custody.

Inquiries are ongoing and upon completion thereof, they will be referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions for advice.

CARS – LARCENY CASES – JULY 2005-JUNE 2008

(No. B/747) Mrs L. D. Dookun-Luchoomun (Third Member for La Caverne & Phoenix) 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 alleged cases of larceny of car, in which minors are involved for alleged joyriding purposes, since July 2005 to date, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Police, information as to the number thereof.

Reply: I am informed by the Acting Commissioner of Police that since July 2005 to date, six cases of larceny of cars involving eight minors have been reported to the Police. However, none of these cases were committed for joyriding purposes.

VICTORIA HOSPITAL – DETOX UNIT - INCIDENT ON 08 JUNE 2008

(No. B/748) Mrs F. Jeewa-Daureeawoo (Third Member for Stanley & Rose Hill) 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 Commissioner of Police, information as to if, on 08 June 2008, an incident was reported to have allegedly taken place at the Queen Victoria Hospital, involving patients attending thereat to obtain methadone and armed individuals, and, if so, if an inquiry has been carried out thereinto, indicating –

- (a) the outcome thereof, and
- (b) the measures that will be taken to prevent the recurrence of any such incident.

Reply: I am informed by the Acting Commissioner of Police that on Sunday 08 June 2008 at 08 30 hours, following a request from PMOC Police Post, Police personnel comprising the members from the regular Police, the Emergency Response Service and the Divisional Support Unit, proceeded to Queen Victoria Hospital Candos, where a group of about 75 persons was gathered at the entrance of the hospital and were expressing their dissatisfaction over the dispensing of methadone to drug addicts. They were insisting on the closure of the Detox Unit at Queen Victoria Hospital.

The Chief Pharmacist intervened with a view to avoiding any incident and ordered Officers of the Detox Unit not to dispense methadone to any patient. The clients were referred to the pharmacy of the hospital for their respective doses. As the group of demonstrators who was still hostile, proceeded to the pharmacy, the Chief Pharmacist took the decision to stop the dispensing of methadone on that day.

On the same day that is 08 June 2008, a meeting was held between the Chief Pharmacist and four representatives of the '*Forces Vives*' and another meeting was scheduled for 09 June 2008 for further discussions. Thereafter, the demonstrators left the yard of Queen Victoria Hospital peacefully.

I am also informed that subsequent to the meeting held on 09 June 2008, and following consultations, it was agreed, as a short term solution, to take measures to respond to complaints made by the '*Forces Vives*' of the locality as hereunder –

- (a) the Ministry of Health & Quality of Life will acquire 5 vehicles to operate mobile units in different areas of the country and at different times to reduce the number of drug patients calling at a centre;
- (b) the time frame for the issue of methadone, actually from 0600 to 0900 hours, will be extended to 1100 hours so that there is no rush since the number of patients has increased;
- (c) patients from Eau Coulée, Floréal and Curepipe will be transferred to J. Nehru Hospital and those from Stanley will be sent to Brown Sequard Hospital, and
- (d) the reinforcement of security guards and Police vigilance on days when methadone will be dispensed.

However, on 22 June 2008 at 0800 hours the '*Forces Vives*' of Candos again held a pacific walk from Solferino to Victoria Hospital, insisting that the Detox Unit stops operation at Victoria hospital in the dispensing of methadone.

In this connection on 27 June 2008, the Minister of Health & Quality of Life met the '*Forces Vives*' together with the Attorney General and reassured them that, in accordance with its programme, his Ministry was working on a plan of decentralization, which would be effective shortly. It was agreed that the '*Forces Vives*' would be kept informed of developments during the course of the following week.

However, on the same day, a group of 40 persons who claimed to be members of the "Voice of Hindu" created some disorder at the Dispensing Unit at Victoria Hospital. I am also informed by the Acting Commissioner of Police that following the incident on 27 June 2008, ACP Beekun, ASP Monvoisin, ASP Dawonarain and CI Mohun in charge of Quatre Bornes Police Station and members of the Emergency Response Service and Divisional Support Unit immediately attended the site. Following a meeting with the Regional Health Director, all members of the '*Forces Vives*' left the Hospital compound.

As from 28 June 2008, the Ministry of Health & Quality of Life has decided that no Methadone will be issued at the Candos Hospital but will instead be dispensed near the Rose Hill Area Health Centre from 06.00 a.m to 07.30 a.m and in the yard of Special Mobile Force Museum from 08.00 a.m to 09.30 a.m through a mobile unit in the presence of the Government Pharmacists and Police officers. The exercise took place without any incident.

The Methadone Substitution Therapy which has been implemented by Government since January 2006 represents one of the means to combat the drug addiction and associated problems such as HIV/AIDS. To date, more than 800 drug users have benefited under this therapy. With due regard to methadone clients, the '*Forces Vives*' is called upon to collaborate with the Health Authorities until the implementation of the abovementioned remedial measures.

MEDWAY COLLEGE - IRELAND - MAURITIAN STUDENTS

(No. B/749) Mrs A. Navarre-Marie (First Member for GRNW & 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 is aware that Mauritian nationals studying in Ireland are facing difficulties, and if so, will he state if measures have or will be taken to come to their assistance.

Reply: I am advised that there has been no official representation from students in Ireland about any difficulty they are confronted with.

However, on the basis of reports appearing in the press to the effect that there are some Mauritian students who are facing difficulties in Ireland following the deregistration of Medway College in February 2008, our High Commissioner in London was requested to look into the matter and to report.

He visited Ireland in that regard and met with some senior officials of the Irish Department of Education and Science and raised the issue of Mauritian students in Ireland in general, and also the case of Medway College in particular.

The Department of Education and Science in Ireland which registers complaints from international students, informed the High Commissioner that no complaint or grievance has been registered from any Mauritian student following the deregistration of the Medway College.

Our High Commissioner also met with some Mauritian students in Dublin. The students whom he met did not voice any grievance and, indeed, seemed comfortable in Dublin.

Our High Commission in London is monitoring the situation and is ready to extend consular assistance to the Mauritian student community.

However, I am advised that, in the wake of the recent press articles reporting on the difficulties faced by Mauritian students in Ireland after the Medway College was deregistered by the Irish authorities, the Ministry of Education and Human Resources has requested the police to carry out an inquiry to determine whether the students have proceeded to Medway College on their own or through unlicensed recruiting agents.

MBC – DIRECTOR GENERAL – OFFICIAL CAR

(No. B/750) Mr P. Jhugroo (Third Member for Port Louis North & Montagne Longue) 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 official car of the Director General of the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Corporation, information as to if same was involved in a road accident, on or about 24 May 2008 and, if so –

- (a) the circumstances thereof;
- (b) the value of the damages caused, and
- (c) if an inquiry has been carried out thereinto and the outcome thereof.

(Withdrawn)

LAND (UNOCCUPIED) – ROUTE DES PAMPLEMOUSSES (OPPOSITE COEUR SACRE DE JESUS SCHOOL) – DUMPING

(No. A/5) Mr S. Lauthan (Third Member for Port Louis Maritime and Port Louis East) asked the Minister of Environment and National Development Unit whether he will state if he is aware that an unoccupied plot of land situated at Route des Pamplemousses (opposite the Coeur Sacré de Jésus RCA School) is being used as a dumping site and, if so, indicate the measures he proposes to take to have it cleaned.

Reply: The Municipal Council of Port Louis has already cleared the plot of land and will monitor the situation.

DR. IDRICE GOUMANY CENTRE – AIR CONDITIONING SYSTEM

(No. A/6) Mr S. Lauthan (Third Member for Port Louis Maritime and Port Louis East) asked the Minister of Local Government whether, in regard to the air conditioning system of the Dr. Idrice Goumany Centre, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Municipal Council of Port Louis, information as to if it is now operational and, if so, since when and, if not, why not.

Reply: I wish to refer the hon. Member to the reply I made to PQ No. A/1 on this issue.

I am informed by the Municipality of Port Louis that a fresh tender exercise had been launched for procurement of two air conditioners in replacement of the defective ones as the sole offer received following the previous tender exercise did not meet the specifications.

DR. IDRICE GOUMANY CENTRE - BADMINTON COURT

(No. A/7) Mr S. Lauthan (Third Member for Port Louis Maritime and Port Louis East) asked the Minister of Local Government whether he will state if he is aware of the deplorable state of the badminton centre of the Dr. Idrice Goumany Centre and, if so, will he, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Municipal Council of Port Louis, information as to the measures he proposes to take to improve its infrastructural conditions.

Reply: I am informed by the Municipality of Port Louis that the badminton court of the Dr. Idrice Goomany Centre is in good condition.

PAUL ET VIRGINIE & PAGODA STREETS, PORT LOUIS – PAVEMENTS

(No. A/8) Mr S. Lauthan (Third Member for Port Louis Maritime and Port Louis East) asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Public Infrastructure, Land Transport and Shipping whether, in regard to the road works recently carried out at the Paul et Virginie and Pagoda Street, Port Louis, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Municipal Council of Port Louis, information as to if provision was made for the construction of pavements thereat and, if not, why not.

Reply: Paul et Virginie and Pagoda (also known as Hassen Sakir) streets in Port Louis are under the jurisdiction of the Municipal Council of Port Louis.

The National Development Unit (NDU) is implementing a project for the value of Rs8 m. at these two streets. The works, which consist of the enlargement of part of Paul et Virginie Street (250m) and Pagoda Street (100m) started in the last financial year, and are being carried out by the NDU's contractor, Transinvest. The only involvement of the Road Development Authority is supervision of works.

The existing pavements and drains have been upgraded along the stretch of 350m. The works are 95% completed. As regards the placing of handrails and humps, works are also in progress.