WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

BIDDERS - INDEPENDENT REVIEW PANEL

(No. B/290) Mr A. Ganoo (First Member for Savanne and Black River) asked the vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Development: whether, in regard to the challenges and requests for reviews submitted to the Independent Review Panel by unsatisfied bidders, he will consider the advisability of laying before the House, copy of the findings thereof.

(Withdrawn)

ROCHE BOIS, PLAINE VERTE & VALLÉE PITOT - SOCIAL HOUSING UNITS

(No. B/291) Mr C. Fakeemeeah (Third Member for Port Louis Maritime and Port Louis East) asked the Minister of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment whether, in regard to Roche Bois, Plaine Verte and Vallée Pitot, he will, in each case, state the number of social housing units constructed thereat, since August 2011 to date.

Reply: I am informed by NEF that in regard to Roche Bois, Plaine Verte and Vallée Pitot, 26 social housing units have been constructed since August 2011 to date, out of which 13 (CIS) houses have been constructed in Roche Bois, 6 in Plaine Verte and 3 in Vallée Pitot and 4 Concrete-cum-CIS, that is, 2 in Roche Bois and 2 in Vallée Pitot.

ATHLETES - INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS - CASH PRIZE SCHEME

(No. B/292) Mr C. Fakeemeeah (Third Member for Port Louis Maritime and Port Louis East) asked the Minister of Youth and Sports whether,
in regard to the athletes who win medals at international competitions, he will state if consideration will be given for a review of the cash prize scheme in favour thereof and, if so, indicate if retroactive effect will be given to apply to Mr F. B.

**Reply:** I have to inform the House that my Ministry is not envisaging to review the cash prize for the time being as this exercise was conducted in May last year.

Regarding Mr F. B, he has already been rewarded.

**HOTEL NATIONAL, PORT LOUIS - NATIONAL HERITAGE**

(No. B/293) Mrs J. Radegonde (Fourth Member for Savanne & Black River) asked the Minister of Arts and Culture whether, in regard to the Hotel National, at the Pope Hennessy Street, in Port Louis, he will state if consideration will be given for the declaration thereof as part of the national heritage and preserved as such.

*(Withdrawn)*

**SCHOOL BUSES – REGULATIONS**

(No. B/294) Mrs J. Radegonde (Fourth Member for Savanne & Black River) asked the vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping whether, in regard to the school buses, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the National Transport Authority, information as to the –

(a) measures taken to ensure that the regulations in relation thereto are complied with;
(b) number of contractor permits therefor issued, over the past five years, and
(c) number of owners thereof who have been booked for non compliance with the regulations, indicating the measures/sanctions taken against them, in each case.

(Withdrawn)

CSR FUNDS - GOVERNMENT-OWNED COMPANIES – DISBURSEMENT

(No. B/295) Mr A. Ganoo (First Member for Savanne & Black River) asked the vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Development whether, in regard to the Government-owned companies, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain information as to the amount of Corporate Social Responsibility funds disbursed in 2010, 2011 and since January to May 2012, indicating the –

(a) unspent amount thereof remitted to the Mauritius Revenue Authority, and
(b) amount thereof disbursed for –
   (i) social housing;
   (ii) welfare of the vulnerable children, and
   (iii) eradication of absolute poverty, respectively, in each case.

(Withdrawn)

SECONDARY SCHOOLS - BOOKS LOAN SCHEME

(No. B/296) Mrs A. Navarre-Marie (First Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions whether, in regard to the Books Loan Scheme, she will state if she has
been informed that some students eligible thereunder have not yet obtained their school books, and if so, indicate –

(a) the number of students concerned therewith, indicating the secondary institution which they attend, and
(b) if urgent remedial measures will be taken.

Reply: I wish to inform the House that the involvement of my Ministry regarding the provision of books to needy students of the secondary schools is limited to the assessment of eligibility of beneficiaries.

These beneficiaries are –

(i) recipients of Social Aid and Unemployment Hardship Relief (UHR) and,
(ii) needy recipients of basic pensions who would have qualified for Social Aid in the absence of the basic pension, namely Basic Widow’s Pension, Basic Invalidity Pension, Guardian’s Allowance, Basic Orphan’s Pension and Basic Retirement Pension.

Applications from parents whose children attend secondary schools are received at the Social Security Offices of my Ministry as early as September each year, in order not to penalise students when they resume classes at the beginning of the year. These applications are made on a specific form provided by the Heads of schools.

Once the eligibility of applicants is established, the application is approved and issued by my Ministry normally on the same day depending on the production of the relevant documents for example, salary/pension slip, pension cards, civil status documents, etc.

Those who are not eligible are informed accordingly.
For the period September 2011 to date, 5916 applications were received by my Ministry, out of which 5566 were found eligible and 350 applications were turned down. There are no outstanding applications at the level of my Ministry. It is to be noted that the exercise is ongoing throughout the year as there are always late applications from beneficiaries.

As regards parts (a) and (b) of the question, and also the matter relating to availability of school books, these issues do not really fall within the mandate of my Ministry. They relate to the Ministry of Education and Human Resources.

**CEB - EMPLOYEES - TRANSFER**

(No. B/297) Mrs P. Bholah (First Member for Piton & Rivière du Rempart) asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Energy and Public Utilities whether, in regard to the Central Electricity Board, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Board, information as to the number of employees thereof who have been transferred, since January 2012 to-date, indicating the reasons therefor, in each case.

**Reply:** I am informed by the Central Electricity Board that as per the Collective Agreement signed on 1 July 2009 between the Unions and the CEB Board of Directors, for an effective period of 4 years ending on 30 June 2013, transfer, i.e movement from one post to another of the same hierarchical level, may be effected for the following reasons -

(a) for an optimum utilisation of resources, staff rotation may be effected -

(i) for planning and organising the main functions of the Board in departments, services, work groups or otherwise;
(ii) for assigning employees to any department, service, work groups as per their profile and skills in relation to the nature of work of the relevant department, service, work groups, and

(iii) as and when the need arises.

(b) On administrative grounds (to ensure the smooth running of operations), and on disciplinary grounds.

I am further informed by the Central Electricity Board that thirty nine employees have been transferred from their respective postings since January 2012 to date and, apart from a few which are in response to requests from the employees themselves, the rest of the transfers are on the above grounds.

M1 MOTORWAY - BUS STAND - SHELTERS

(No. A/141) Dr. R. Sorefan (Fourth Member for La Caverne & Phoenix) asked the vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping whether, in regard to the bus stand on the M1 motorway, near the Victoria Bus Square, where buses of route number 197 ply to the Rivière des Galets/Chamouny stand, he will state if he has been informed of the absence of bus shelters, of presence of overgrown trees impairing visibility, especially at night and of lack of street lighting thereat and if so, indicate if remedial measures will be taken.

Reply: There is no space for providing shelters for buses of route No. 197 Rivière des Galets/Chamouny bus stands at Victoria Square.

With regard to “overgrown trees” the following can be pointed out -
(i) there are a number of trees (Bois Noir) with relatively dense foliage at the Rivière des Galets/Chamouny Bus Stand at Victoria Square;

(ii) the trees are of medium height, with branches of 3-4 m from ground level. Being located alongside the slip road adjacent to the Motorway, they are outside the range of vision of drivers of vehicles along the Motorway. As such they do not obstruct their visibility;

(iii) the slip road is used mainly by buses to link with the Motorway and conditions where visibility of bus drivers are obstructed by any part of the trees have not been observed, and

(iv) there are street lamp posts only at the position of the first bus on the stand. As the bus stand accommodates 3-4 buses, the other buses fall outside the lit zone.

Moreover, it cannot be said that the trees are “overgrown” as their branches do not extend to abnormal length. Should the trees become a source of hazard, the Road Development Authority which is the highway authority responsible for the Motorways, will take necessary action to remedy the situation.

**SORÈZE BYPASS - CONSTRUCTION**

**(No. A/142) Dr. R. Sorefan (Fourth Member for La Caverne & Phoenix)** asked the vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping whether, in regard to the design and construction of the Sorèze bypass on the M1 motorway, he will lay copy of the design and the contract therefor, indicating the -

(a) contract cost thereof, and
(b) if any variations works have been carried out and if so, the cost thereof, indicating the cost of re-instatement thereof following the fatal accident that occurred thereat on 31 March 2012, indicating the name of the contractor therefor.

Reply: There is no Soreze bypass. There is only a temporary diversion the cost is Rs540,000.00. It forms part of the main contract.

Copy of relevant contract specifications, drawing and approval from TMRSU is being placed in the Library.

No variation works have been carried out, only adjustment to the diversion scheme has been made at no additional cost. The contract is a joint venture between Rehm Grinaker Construction Co. Ltd and COLAS (Mtius) Ltee.

**EBÉNE CYBERCITY - BUS SERVICE**

(No. A/143) Mr K. Li Kwong Wing (Second Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière) asked the vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping whether, in regard to the Ebéne Cybercity, he will state if he will cause a survey to be carried out of the state of the pavements, roads and drains near the bus shelters thereat and of the inadequacy of bus services thereat and, if so, when and, if not, why not.

Reply: Surveys have been carried out. It has been observed that within the compound of Ebene Cybercity, there exists three bus stops when proceeding from the direction of Trianon towards Réduit. Two of the bus stops are provided with shelters and there exists no pavement near these bus stops.

When proceeding in the opposite direction, there are two bus stops and only one is provided with shelter, but no pavement is available near the bus stop
whereas at the other shelter found near Ebene Heights, a pavement of about 3 metres wide is available.

Moreover, checks carried out by the National Transport Authority recently have revealed that the buses along Route 198 in the direction of Mahebourg in the late afternoon had their full capacity when they arrived at Ebene Cybercity and as such commuters in that direction had to travel in excess. The National Transport Authority is looking into the possibility of introducing a short service along the route to alleviate the problem encountered by the passengers. No other complaints have been received so far.

It is noteworthy that when the Ebene Cybercity was being developed, the BPML made it clear that no bus services will be required within the Cybercity, hence, no provision for layby, pavements and bus stops were made. However, when the different operators settled in the Cybercity and started their operations requests were made for bus services to operate therein. Bus services were accordingly diverted inside and bus stops sited along the roads inside the city.

**NEF – UNEMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME**

 *(No. A/144) Mr K. Li Kwong Wing (Second Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière)* asked the Minister of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment whether, in regard to the Training and Placement for the Unemployed Programme, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the National Empowerment Foundation, since 2009 to date, a list of the enterprises which have benefitted therefrom, indicating in each case -

(a) the criteria used for the selection thereof;

(b) the sector involved;
(c) the number of trainees who;

(i) completed training and

(ii) were retained after training

(d) the contribution made by the Foundation, and

(e) if any fraud and abuse have been detected in the implementation thereof.

**Reply:** The information is being compiled and will be placed in the Library of the National Assembly.

**PETIT VERGER BISSEMBAR, MONT ROCHES & EX-PRISONS ROAD – WATER SUPPLY**

(No. A/146) Mr R. Bhagwan (First Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière) asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Energy and Public Utilities whether, in regard to the water problem at Petit Verger Bissembar, Mont Roches and the ex-Prisons Road, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Central Water Authority, information as to if any project for the replacement of the water pipes has been initiated and if so, indicate the implementation schedule therefor.

**Reply:** I am informed by the Central Water Authority (CWA) that the regions of Petit Verger Bissembar and the ex-prisons Road in Mont Roches are supplied from Stanley service reservoir of a capacity of 7,000 m³.

The normal hours of supply are as follows -

4.00 a.m. to 8.00 a.m.

4.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.
However, owing to the corroded state of the cast iron pipes and the small diameter galvanized pipes, water losses result in low pressure.

Out of a total of 2.5 kilometers of old and defective galvanized iron/ cast iron pipes, CWA has already renewed some 400 metres of the most affected parts and is in the process of awarding a contract to replace the remaining 2.1 kilometers of the network.

The works are expected to start in July 2012, subject to obtaining wayleave from the Municipality of Beau Bassin/Rose Hill, and will last for a period of 4 months.

PETITE RIVIERE – HOUSING PROJECT

(No. A/147) Mr R. Bhagwan (First Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière) asked the Minister of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment whether, in regard to the new Housing Project at Petite Rivière, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the National Empowerment Foundation, information as to the -

(a) number of housing units under construction, indicating the size of each unit and the extent of land on which same stands;

(b) contractual completion date thereof;

(c) contractual cost thereof, and

(d) names of the beneficiaries thereof.
**Reply:** The National Empowerment Foundation has informed that -

As regards part (a), 59 houses are under construction at Petite Rivière in the context of an integrated housing project to accommodate vulnerable families. The area of each housing unit is 30.3 m². The extent of each plot of land on which the house stands varies from 140 to 290 m² depending on the location of the plot.

As regards part (b) the contractual completion date of the housing units is August 2012.

With regard to part (c) the contractual cost of the project is Rs20,650,000 (VAT inclusive) for the houses and Rs325,000 (excluding VAT) for site and services.

As far as part (d) is concerned 73 households from the regions of Petite Rivière, Richelieu, Grande Rivière, Albion, Bambous, Camp La Paille and Cité La Ferme have been found eligible for the housing units at Gros Cailloux according to the criteria laid down by NEF. The selection of the 59 beneficiaries will be made through drawing of lots.

**BEL OMBRE – ROADS RESURFACING**

**(No. A/148) Mrs J. Radegonde (Fourth Member for Savanne and Black River)** asked the vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping whether, in regard to Bel Ombre, he will state if he has been informed of the bad conditions of the roads thereat and, if so, indicate if remedial measures will be taken.

**Reply:** The Black River-Savanne Road Coast Road (B9) was resurfaced by the Road Development Authority from Macondé to Bel Ombre, over a length of
approximately 4.1 km, in 2010. The road surface is reported to be in good running condition.

Another segment of the road, extending from Sainte Marie to Movenpick Hotel, will be resurfaced in the course of this financial year.

**BAIE DU CAP - BUS SHELTERS**

(No. A/149) Mrs J. Radegonde (Fourth Member for Savanne and Black River) asked the vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping whether, in regard to Baie du Cap, he will state if he has been informed of the absence of bus shelters in the vicinity of the Primary RCA School and of the church located thereat and, if so, indicate if urgent remedial measures will be taken.

**Reply:** There is one bus stop on each side of the Black River Savanne Coast Road within the vicinity of the Primary RCA School and the Church located thereat.

The Northbound bus stop opposite the RCA School in the direction of Macondé is already provided with a bus shelter. My Ministry will look into the possibility of constructing a bus shelter in the Southbound direction near the Social Welfare Centre.

**OLD MOKA ROAD - STREET LIGHTING**

(No. A/150) Mr P. Jhugroo (First Member for Mahebourg and Plaine Magnien) asked the Minister of Local Government and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the street lighting system found on the Old Moka Road, in Bell Village, Port Louis, at the level of its junction between the Brabant Street running up to the
motorway, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain form the Municipal Council of Port Louis, information as to if consideration will be given for -

(a) a review thereof and the installation of additional street lanterns, in view of the fact that the lighting points thereat are either of low capacity or are far apart, thus constituting serious risks of accidents, and

(b) trimming of the overgrown trees depriving visibility at night.

Reply: I am informed by the City Council of Port Louis that –

(i) there are 27 lighting poles equipped with 150 watts sodium vapour lamps along old Moka Road from its junction with Brabant Street up to the motorway and which are not of low capacity;

(ii) since, these poles are at regular intervals providing adequate lighting along the whole stretch of the road, it is not proposed to review the situation, and

(iii) although there are several trees along the road, there is no overgrown branch depriving visibility and a regular trimming/lopping of branches is carried out by it.

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, REGIONAL INTEGRATION AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE - SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS - OVERSEAS MISSIONS

(No. A/151) Mr D. Nagalingum (Second Member for Stanley and Rose Hill) asked the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade whether, in regard to the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, he will state the total
number of overseas missions he has undertaken, since July 2005 to-date, indicating in each case the –

(a) countries visited;
(b) duration thereof;
(c) composition of the delegation, and
(d) total amount of money spent in terms of air tickets, per diem and/or other allowances.

(*Withdrawn*)

EMMANUEL ANQUETIL BUILDING - POST OFFICE

(No. A/152) Mr. D. Nagalingum (Second Member for Stanley & Rose Hill) asked the Minister of Information and Communication Technology whether, in regard to the Post Office located at the Emmanuel Anquetil Building, Port Louis, he will state if he has been informed of the long queues thereat during daytime and, if so, will he, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Mauritius Postal Services, information as to if remedial measures will be taken, including the introduction of a Queue Management System thereat.

**Reply:** Port Louis Centre Post Office, located in the busy city centre, provides postal and non-postal services for all Government Ministries and Departments and the major companies and businesses as well as the public in general within that area.

The flux of customers during peak business hours, especially during lunch time is quite considerable. In order to meet customer expectation and address the “queue problem”, the Mauritius Post has taken the following remedial measures -

(i) introduction of a non-stop service from 08.15 has to 16.00 hours;
(ii) conversion of part of the back office into an additional counter to serve customers bringing the total number of counters to 8, and

(iii) appointment of a ‘Queuing Attendant’ to guide customers.

In view of the exiguity of the office space, no further improvement could be envisaged. However, Mauritius Post Limited is in search of office space to provide a retail facility and thereby enabling decongestion of the existing post office. Moreover, consideration is being given to the installation of kiosks for automatic payment of utility bills and dispensing of stamp labels.

POUDRIÈRE STREET, PORT LOUIS - TREES - TRIMMING

(No. A/153) Mr A. Ameer Meea (First Member for Port Louis Maritime & Port Louis East) asked the Minister of Local Government and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the Poudrière Street, Port Louis, he will state if he has been informed that the overgrown trees deprives visibility from the street lanterns at night and vehicles parked thereat during the day have been damaged by falling branches and, if so, will he, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Municipal Council of Port Louis, information as to if consideration will be given for the trimming thereof.

Reply: I am informed by the City Council of Port Louis that -

(i) regular lopping of the trees along Poudrière Street is undertaken by it with a view to ensuring that the street lighting thereat is not obstructed, and

(ii) there has been no report of any damage caused to parked vehicles by falling branches along this road.
I am, however, informed that in January this year, a “baba calebasse” did fall on a car damaging its windscreen. Subsequently, the Council has enlisted the services of a contractor for picking of “baba calebasse” in order to prevent such incidents in the future.

MAGON STREET, PORT LOUIS - CHILDREN’S PLAYGROUND

(No. A/154) Mr A. Ameer Meea (First Member for Port Louis Maritime & Port Louis East) asked the Minister of Local Government and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the children’s playground situated at the Magon Street, next to the Mauritius Telecom Customer Service Centre, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Municipal Council of Port Louis, information as to if it is in a bad state and, if so, indicate the remedial measures that will be taken, including if consideration will be given for the installation of -

(a) additional games, and

(b) lighting points thereat.

Reply: I am informed by the City Council of Port Louis that the children’s playground situated at Magon Street next to the Mauritius Telecom Customer Service Centre is in bad state due to renovation works underway and necessary reinstatement will be done after completion of the civil works and installation of all equipment.

With regard to part (a) of the question, I am informed that the following equipment have already been fixed -

- 1 play centre
- 2 swings
- 1 climbing frame
As far as part (b) of the question is concerned, I am informed that the following will be fixed shortly -

- 4 swing riders
- Lighting points