

No. 19 of 2010



FIFTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

**FIRST SESSION
SATURDAY 27 NOVEMBER 2010**

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Hon John Michaël Tzoun Sao Yeung Sik Yuen	<i>Minister of Business, Enterprise, Cooperatives and Consumer Protection</i>

*Members**Members*

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MAURITIUS

Fifth National Assembly

FIRST SESSION

Debate No. 19 of 2010

Sitting of Saturday 27 November 2010

The Assembly met in the Assembly House, Port Louis,

at 11.30 a.m.

The National Anthem was played

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

ORAL ANSWER TO QUESTION

CLIMATE CHANGE - UNITED NATIONS COPENHAGEN CLIMATE SUMMIT

The Leader of the Opposition (Mr P. Bérenger) (*By Private Notice*) asked the Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development whether, in regard to climate change, he will state if the Republic of Mauritius was represented at the –

- (a) December 2009 United Nations Copenhagen Climate Summit and if so, by whom indicating if Mauritius has –
- (i) joined the Copenhagen Accord/Convention, indicating if it has made any request for financial and other assistance;
 - (ii) taken a commitment at Copenhagen to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, indicating how same would be achieved, and
- (b) Small Island Developing States meetings held in the Republic of Maldives in November 2009 and in the Republic of Kiribati in November 2010.

The Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development (Mr D. Virahsawmy):
Mr Speaker, Sir, Mauritius was represented at the United Nations Climate Change Conference held in Copenhagen from 07 to 18 December 2009.

The delegation was led by Dr. the hon. Navinchandra Ramgoolam, Prime Minister and was constituted among others of -

- Dr. hon. Arvin Boolell, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade;
- Former Minister of Environment and National Development Unit, and
- Senior Government Officials.

Mauritius joined the Copenhagen Accord on 16 June 2010 expecting to obtain assistance under the proposed Copenhagen Green Fund. In our letter to the Climate Change Secretariat -

- (i) a legally binding agreement should be reached at the 16th Meetings of the Conference of Parties in Cancun;
- (ii) a second commitment shall have to be taken by the Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol for a determined period beyond 2012;

- (iii) The financial assistance of 30 billion US dollar for the period 2010-2012 promised in the Copenhagen Accord should be in the form of grants and not loan;
- (iv) The quick-start funding to be made available forthwith and be monitored to ensure that same is not a repackaged fund which should otherwise be granted as traditional overseas development assistance;
- (v) The Copenhagen Green Climate Fund proposed in the accord should be set up and made operational without any further delay, and
- (vi) Priority for funding should be given to the most vulnerable countries such as Small Island Developing States (SIDS), Least Developed Countries (LDC) and Africa.

The developed countries forming part of the Accord pledged to contribute US\$100 billion yearly until the year 2020, with a contribution of US\$30 billion from 2010 to 2012. However, Mr Speaker, Sir, neither the Green Fund has been constituted nor any amount of money has been disbursed under the Copenhagen Accord.

Mauritius has so far obtained funding from bilateral and multilateral sources like the *Agence Française de Développement*, UNDP, JICA of Japan and GTZ of Germany.

The Kyoto Protocol created a number of flexible mechanisms and funds, namely -

- The Clean Development Mechanism (CDM);
- The Adaptation Fund;
- The Climate Change Special Fund;
- The Least Developed Countries Fund;
- The Activities Implemented Jointly (AIJ).

However, access to these funds is very complicated and time-consuming and it deters developing countries to benefit from thereon. Mauritius has applied to the CDM for the following -

Coal bagasse powerplant by *Central Thermique de Savannah* (CTSAV).

The Ministry has also given a letter of approval for the following projects -

- Mare Chicose landfill gas to energy project;
- Waste to Energy project at La Chaumière;

- Windfarm at Plaine des Roches and Britannia.

The CTSAV has not been approved by the United Nations Framework Climate Change Convention (UNFCCC) Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) Executive Board while the Mare Chicose project as well as the waste to energy project are still under process by CDM Board.

We have applied to the Adaptation Fund Board for financing of the Climate Change Adaptation Programme in coastal zone of Mauritius for USD 9.0 m. It is under consideration by the Board.

We have negotiated successfully with JICA for financing the Africa Adaptation Programme, a regional project for Africa. We are one of the nineteen countries in Africa to benefit from the funding to the tune of USD 3 m. The aim of the Programme is to mainstream climate change adaptation in key sectors, namely Agriculture, Water, Tourism, Education, Environment, Public Infrastructure and Health.

My Ministry has successfully negotiated a grant of 1.35 m Euro for the installation of ammonia chillers for air conditioning the Government Centre. This saves on greenhouse gas emission because otherwise the air conditioners would have run on refrigerants which are not only ozone depleting, but also of high global warming potential.

Mr Speaker, Sir, Mauritius as a developing country has no obligation to reduce greenhouse gas emission under the Kyoto Protocol. Making a pledge at Copenhagen would have jeopardized our negotiating leverage to force the developed countries to honour their commitments under the Protocol and take further ones beyond 2012, after Kyoto commitment period. It would not be wise to pledge any commitment when we are not sure of access to funding nor to technology transfer.

We need to avoid unfair burdens on Mauritius as a Small Island State. We should ensure that the agreed commitments to address climate change do not place additional burdens on us that will hinder our economic development.

However, Government has taken quite a number of actions, including projects to reduce greenhouse gas emission. I am circulating a list of these projects. (**Appendix**).

With regard to the meetings in Maldives in November 2009 and Kiribati in November 2010, these meetings were meant for Asia Pacific islands and Mauritius did not participate.

Mr Bérenger: The Copenhagen December 2009 Meeting was a Summit Meeting. Next week, there will be a crucial UN Climate Ministerial Meeting in Cancun, Mexico. Do I take it that the Minister will not be attending this Ministerial Meeting?

Mr Virahsawmy: Mr Speaker, Sir, my Ministry is already represented by a high level delegation of officials. As Minister, I have commitments towards my Ministry and the Government for Budget, and my prerogative will be Budget and not Cancun where, most probably, nothing will be given to Small Island States.

Mr Bérenger: When I heard that the Minister was speaking yesterday, I thought, precisely, that he was speaking to leave if only for a few days to Cancun. He offered a comment which I have a problem taking seriously. Will not the Minister agree with me that we were present at Summit level in December in Copenhagen, it was and it is still vital for us, if we are to be taken seriously, that we be present at all the UN Ministerial Meetings that deal with climate change?

Mr Virahsawmy: I have already replied, Mr Speaker, Sir, that priority for me is the Budget and we are already represented in Cancun by a high level delegation of officials.

Mr Bérenger: I think I heard the Minister saying that we joined the Copenhagen process - by whatever name called, Convention - on 16 June, if I heard the Minister correctly. Copenhagen was held in December and, immediately after, all countries were invited to join as rapidly as possible and most countries throughout the world joined within days of the end of the Copenhagen Summit. Can I know why it took us so long - six months, if I heard the Minister correctly - that it was only on 16 June that we joined?

Mr Virahsawmy: I have already stated, Mr Speaker, Sir, that several agreements had to be prepared and we had to make sure that the interest of Mauritius was well presented in the Copenhagen Accord. This was done on 16 June and it was done properly with all documents which had to be accompanied.

Mr Bérenger: This is the next question I was going to ask. We must have joined in writing. I just heard the Minister saying that – in writing – our joining in the Copenhagen process was accompanied by a number of documents. Is there any objection for those documents and the covering letter to be placed in the Library?

Mr Virahsawmy: There is no problem to lay a copy of the binding agreement. I wish to inform the House also that, up to now, many countries have not joined the Copenhagen Accord.

Mr Bérenger: The Minister says many countries. Can I ask him how many and which countries?

Mr Virahsawmy: I don't have the list, Mr Speaker, Sir, but I can circulate it later.

Mr Bérenger: The Minister said, rightly, that it is to be hoped that when funding begins that those most vulnerable would be attended to in priority. But does not the Minister worry that, probably, the speed at which countries join the Copenhagen Accord will probably weigh in the balance also?

Mr Virahsawmy: No, this has nothing to do with the disbursement.

Mr Bérenger: We will see. The Minister said that, as a developing country, Mauritius chose not to go to Copenhagen with firm commitments to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. Am I right in saying that, in fact, the United Nations, had requested all countries, developed or developing, to come forward with such commitments? In fact, the United Nations has gone further and has requested so-called, I quote –

“Nationally appropriate mitigation actions.”

Do I take it, therefore, that we did not go to Copenhagen with a commitment and that we have not supplied information under the nationally appropriate mitigation actions also?

Mr Virahsawmy: Mr Speaker, Sir, I never said that. I said that Mauritius, as a developing country and a SIDS, has no obligation to reduce greenhouse gas emission under the Kyoto Protocol, but still I mentioned that there are several actions which have been taken by my Ministry and I am circulating the list to show that we have taken action to reduce gas emission.

Mr Bérenger: I thank the hon. Minister for circulating, here, in the House, measures that are being taken, have to mitigate greenhouse gas action. But, if I understood the Minister correctly, this has not been communicated to the United Nations?

Mr Virahsawmy: Mr Speaker, Sir, whenever we have to, we communicate whatever actions that have been taken to the UN and to any other organisation which we have to.

Mr Bérenger: I am sure the Minister is aware that countries like the US, China, South Africa have all come forward, went to Copenhagen with commitments and, since then, have been working on the commitments which we were the first to bring to Copenhagen. Does the hon.

Minister really believe that it is to our advantage that we did not come to Copenhagen with commitments, as requested by the United Nations?

Mr Virahsawmy: The hon. Leader of the Opposition will have to understand that the Prime Minister was there in Copenhagen and a lot of commitments have been taken; he addressed the meeting there. It is worth mentioning, Mr Speaker, Sir, that whatever we said, whatever happened in Copenhagen and whatever will happen in Cancun, all the developing countries are still waiting for not one cent has been disbursed up to now. We are talking about a lot of documents and a lot of agreements when the developing countries are not respecting the agreement.

Mr Bérenger: We know that the major issue next week, discussed by Ministers who will be present, of course, will be the financial situation. This is why I believe it is so crucial that the Minister be present in Cancun. This will be the first item to be discussed, Mr Speaker, Sir. Can I know whether, until now, we have worked out, the Ministry or other bodies concerned, a way to measure or, at least, calculate the greenhouse emissions of Mauritius as a country?

Mr Virahsawmy: We have not calculated the greenhouse emissions, but we are taking actions to reduce nationally the gas emission and we are also taking action to ensure that we reach a sustainable development, as has been aimed in *Maurice Ile Durable* Programme. This is a big programme which we are implementing and which will help to reduce gas emission.

Mr Bérenger: It is obvious that to take the right actions, we must be in presence of the facts. All those countries that have until now come forward towards the United Nations with commitments and with nationally appropriate mitigation measures have done so on the basis of a calculation, or rather, measure. They measure their greenhouse gas emissions. Am I to understand that there has been no work in that direction for us either to measure or, at least, to calculate over the years how the greenhouse gas emissions of Mauritius have developed?

Mr Virahsawmy: A lot of work is being done, Mr Speaker, Sir, to assess what is the level of gas emission. A lot of technicians are working on this to ascertain. What I have said is that, as at today, we don't have an exact level, but the technical work is being done, of course, to ascertain and to see how we can reduce.

Mr Bérenger: To reduce is one thing; to measure, to know where we stand, is another. Being given that we do not know what is the greenhouse gas emission of Mauritius today and yesterday, am I also given to understand that therefore we are in the dark completely as to when

our greenhouse gas emissions will peak because all those countries that have come forward with commitments, they have done their homework, they have done their surveys, their research, their calculations and they know when the greenhouse gas emissions will peak in any given country? Do we know when our greenhouse gas emissions will peak?

Mr Virahsawmy: Mr Speaker, Sir, we are already below the permissible level of gas emission and there are certain sectors where we are working on it. For example, we have introduced a fuel which is 500 ppm as compared to 2,500 ppm. This will reduce the gas emission and will reduce the level. Training is being given by the UNFCCC to ascertain what is the exact level in certain sectors but, in other sectors, we are already calculating what are the levels. And I will circulate a list of the different levels where the levels have been worked out.

Mr Bérenger: What I am talking about is not the levels - levels of what? The Minister said we are below this and that greenhouse and then a few minutes before, he said we are not in presence of figures. We don't know what our greenhouse gas emissions are or were. Which is which?

Mr Virahsawmy: We have carbon gas emissions for Mauritius which amount to 3075 tonnes in 2009. This is what I am telling the hon. Leader of the Opposition. We are working to reduce, because already this level is lower the permissible level by the UN. This is what I am saying. It is not a question of knowing what is the level every day. It is a question of working towards reducing the level.

Mr Bérenger: Again, measures being taken to bring down greenhouse gas is one thing, knowing, measuring, what it is, is another matter, it is the groundwork. The hon. Minister now comes with a figure. Can I know where that figure comes from? Who has worked that out?

Mr Virahsawmy: This figure comes from officials of my Ministry, of course, as I said, 3,075 tonnes in 2009.

(Interruptions)

This is established by the Statistical Office and my Ministry. As I said, we are working. There is a whole programme on this which is working. It's not a question of saying that nothing has been done. A lot is being done, but the Leader of the Opposition has to accept. He can't come forward today and say what was the level yesterday. I told the Leader of the Opposition what was the level in 2009. This is below the permissible level and, in 2010, this is going to

reduce, because already we have brought in diesel which is 500 ppm. The level will go down. The Leader of the Opposition has to accept that.

(Interruptions)

Mr Bérenger: The Minister is mixing two things up. A few minutes ago, he said: we don't know our level of greenhouse. He should read his reply. A few minutes ago, he said: "we do not know our level of greenhouse gas emission." Now, he gives a figure. We are entitled to try and see a bit more clearly. He said that the Central Statistical Office has worked that figure out. They sit in their office, they are provided with figures and they work on those figures. Again my question is: who provided the Central Statistical Office with the figures that allow them to calculate that figure?

Mr Virahsawmy: The different Ministries and Departments supply the figures to the Statistical Office, which then combines and works out. The hon. Leader of the Opposition is saying that I said we do not know. Of course, answers are being given to me by the officials of my Ministry and I am giving whatever the level is. I am sure the Leader of the Opposition should be happy to know at least that there was a level in 2009.

Mr Bérenger: I would expect the Minister to come forward with more explanations: how is that figure worked out, by which Ministries and Departments and how it is communicated to the Central Statistical Office? I am not saying that nothing has been done. Of course, I am happy that there has been a figure that has been worked out because a bit earlier he said there was not such a figure. All right, we have progressed, but I expect him to communicate documents that allow us to see more clearly. Mr Speaker, Sir, can I ask the hon. Minister to liaise with the Central Statistical Office which, in turn, will liaise with the departments concerned to try and work out when our greenhouse gas emission peaked or when it is going to peak because it is vital that we see the trend. Is there a trend? Have we already peaked or are we going to peak, and if yes, when?

Mr Virahsawmy: Mr Speaker, Sir, I shall circulate a reply to give exactly how this is determined by the Department of Statistics and the different Ministries and Departments which give the information. I shall also give the methodology which is being used by the Statistical Office and the different climate secretariat to determine exactly what is the level and I shall also ask the question to know when it peaks and does not peak.

Mr Bérenger: We request the Minister also to see for purposes of positive action to ask the authorities concerned what share of our greenhouse gas emissions is produced by the Central Electricity Board and the IPPs?

Mr Virahsawmy: I shall ask the Statistical Office to work this out together with the CEB and the Ministry of Energy and the reply will be circulated. I am sure that the IPP using coal like CTSAV is one of the largest polluter in Mauritius.

Mr Bérenger: Let's have the figures, precisely. If I can move on to the Small Islands Development States issue. I heard the Minister saying that those two meetings, one was held in the Maldives just before the Copenhagen Summit and the other one has just been held in Kiribati just before the Cancun Summit. Can I ask the Minister to check because it was not restricted to South Asia or South East Asia countries? In fact, countries like Tanzania turned up in the Maldives Meeting. Is the Minister aware that in the case of Kiribati, on the eve of the Cancun Summit, not only were a lot of Island States from all over the world, but big countries joined them, and an agreement was reached on the urgency of the situation for Small Island Developing States and agreement was reached on 18 points and the major achievement was that China joined that agreement. It was an observer. Of course, it is not a Small Island Developing State, but partners were there. Can I ask the Minister whether we were invited to these two SIDS meetings?

Mr Virahsawmy: I am not aware, Mr Speaker, Sir, if we were invited or not, as I said, this represents Asia Pacific countries. I have just received a note to confirm that we were not invited at these meetings and perhaps some countries outside Asia Pacific attended. The hon. Leader of the Opposition mentioned Tanzania. I can't comment on the country, but a lot of countries like to go on mission. As a respectable Government, we send our people on mission only when we are sure that this will benefit the country and not for the fun of going on mission.

Mr Bérenger: The organisation that fights for the rights of Small Island Developing States is AOSIS, Alliance of Small Islands States. Can I know whether we have attended AOSIS meetings in the recent past, in the United Nations or elsewhere and whether we have sought any leadership role after January 2005 UN SIDS Conference in Mauritius?

Mr Virahsawmy: Yes, we have attended AOSIS meeting and we have even chaired one meeting. I have to show the Leader of the Opposition one big report which was prepared on the AOSIS position.

Mr Bérenger: Mr Speaker, Sir, we are interested in all the information we can get. Still on that, being given the hon. Minister has just said that we even chaired a meeting of the Alliance of Small Island States and next week the Alliance of Small Islands States will be very active in Cancun, can I know from him which Small Island State will be chairing the meeting of the Alliance of Small Island States which, therefore, will be the mouthpiece and will be chairing?

Mr Virahsawmy: I am not aware which Small Island State will chair. I am not here to watch which island is chairing, but it could be Grenada or St Lucia which will chair. I can find out and inform the House.

Mr Bérenger: Mr Speaker, Sir, will the Minister and the Prime Minister agree with me that we must be more hands on. We played a crucial role in January 2005 with the United Nations SIDS Conference which was very successful here in Mauritius. Now, clearly, we are not playing the role that we undertook to play, including as far as the AOSIS is concerned, Mr Speaker, Sir. Can I know, precisely, whether the hon. Minister is satisfied that - after we hosted the January 2005 successful UN Conference on SIDS issues, there was a Mauritius declaration, a Mauritius strategy and, in fact, we undertook to be in the forefront to get that strategy going - we have played our role?

Mr Virahsawmy: Yes, Mauritius has played its role on that and it has played its role properly.

Ms Deerpalsing: Mr Speaker, Sir, may I ask the hon. Minister whether there is a Clean Development Mechanism programme being worked out by the World Bank in conjunction with us to find out all these figures on emissions and so on?

Mr Virahsawmy: Yes, Mr Speaker, Sir, there is a programme which is being worked out by the World Bank and we get assistance from UN also and there has been a lot of workshops which has been done to help Mauritius in that sector.

Mr Lesjongard: Mr Speaker, Sir, with regard to the Clean Development Mechanism, we understand from the hon. Minister that three projects have been submitted and none of them have been registered until now. We also understand that projects initiated by Government have not benefited from carbon credits until now. May I ask the hon. Minister, if we are embarking on mitigating and adaptation measures, why is it that until now we have not benefited from those carbon credits? Is it so complex for us to understand why we can't benefit from those carbon credits?

Mr Virahsawmy: Yes, it is, in fact, a complex issue. But I would like to correct what the hon. Member said. I have never said that the three projects have not been turned down. It is the CTSAV project which has not been approved. The hon. Member knows very well why it has not been approved because it is highly polluting. It is a project which is operating on coal only and the CDM has rejected that, but definitely CDM is a complex issue and not in favour of Small Island States.

Mr Ganoo: Mr Speaker, Sir, can I ask the hon. Minister - to pick up from where he stopped - to confirm to the House that, according to the Kyoto protocol, to benefit from carbon credits there is a time frame and the possibility is not open-ended?

Mr Virahsawmy: No, there is a time limit, of course, where we are respecting the time limit. But I have to inform the hon. Member that many industrialised countries also have not obtained it.

Mr Speaker: Hon. Leader of Opposition!

Mr Bérenger: My last question, Mr Speaker, Sir, will be that, in January 2005 therefore, we had the privilege of hosting a very successful UN International Conference on SIDS. What has happened since then, I leave aside. But will the hon. Minister agree that it is time to be more proactive? Will he agree with me that we should work very closely with the Maldives? Maldives is today the model, the world overlooks to the Maldives as far as Small Island Development States are concerned. Maldives is the neighbour, it is next door there and, on the other side of the ocean, is South Africa which will be holding the next Ministerial or higher meeting in December of next year. Not much is expected in Cancun, but much will be expected of the South Africa meeting in December 2011. South Africa is next door again; it is close to us, it is a member of SADC and a member of African Union. Will the hon. Minister agree with me that we should shape ourselves up, that we should work much more closely with both Maldives and South Africa, apart from other countries, of course, much more proactively than we have been until now?

Mr Virahsawmy: Mr Speaker, Sir, we are a proactive Government and we take decisions accordingly. I am very surprised with the hon. Leader of the Opposition. He just mentioned that we should have gone to Cancun. Now, he says nothing will happen in Cancun. We have to know which is which. We have sent delegates of officials to Cancun. Now, he is

talking of South Africa in December 2011. We don't know where he is. But we act as a proactive Government and we take decisions accordingly.

Mr Speaker: Time is over!

MOTION

SUSPENSION OF S.O. 10(2)

The Prime Minister: Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that all the business on today's Order Paper be exempted from the provisions of paragraph (2) of Standing Order 10.

The Deputy Prime Minister rose and seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

PUBLIC BILL

Second Reading

THE APPROPRIATION (2011) BILL

(NO. XVII OF 2010)

Order read for resuming adjourned debate on the Appropriation (2011) Bill (No. XVII of 2010).

Question again proposed.

(12.07)

Mr S. Sayed-Hossen (Third Member for Montagne Blanche & GRSE): Mr Speaker, Sir, I wish to start by congratulating the hon. Prime Minister for the inspiration and long-term vision that he has provided to this Budget and to congratulate the hon. vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Development for presenting this Budget to the House.

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is always very easy to criticize a Budget. It is always easy to say "can do better", *budget fade, sans imagination* as would say some *donneurs de leçons*, as if our resources were limitless - as the hon. Prime Minister often says, Mr Speaker, Sir, even if our resources were limitless, time would be a constraint - and as if Mauritius existed in isolation, as

if we had a total and an unbounded freedom to decide on our economic policy orientations, unfettered by international market conditions. But we all know that this is not the case.

Mr Speaker, Sir, before coming to the crux of my intervention, I feel it is important to clear two generally held ideas, very often illusory ideas about Government budgets in Mauritius.

First, as I have stated a few minutes ago, the illusion that, we, in this country, have an absolute freedom, a complete *liberté de manoeuvre* in the policy decisions that we can make in the orientations of our political economy, irrespective of major trends and characteristics of international financial situation and conditions of the international markets.

Mauritius is indeed an island, Mr Speaker, Sir, geographically speaking. But from the point of view of economic interactions, market network, financial and monetary ramifications, no country is an island any more. The whole world operates in a global economic game and, we, in Mauritius, who are not very potent, - we are actually among the countries that are least potent in the detention of economic power - have no choice, but to adapt the best we can to the consequences of economic power games being played thousands of kilometres away. In short, as a nation, we do not have the freedom to lead a life of our own choosing.

Second, the enduring belief, Mr Speaker, Sir, that a Government Budget is a sort of a magical wand, *baguette magique*, that overnight is going to modify given economic orientations and trends. Again, neither a national, what the French would call *l'économie politique* nor a company's economy, *l'économie de la firme* operates in a vacuum, Mr Speaker, Sir.

The determinants of a Government Budget are the direct heirs of factors deriving from the economic policy decided and implemented over a preceding period and these policy decisions themselves determined by preceding situations because, as everybody knows, Mr Speaker, Sir, the making of a national economy is fairly different from fast food. It is neither quick to cook nor quick to eat. Indeed, the hon. Leader of the Opposition is very right to say: "this is a *budget de continuité*". In his speech, the Leader of the Opposition mentioned, and I quote –

“Le malin plaisir qu’aurait pris le Premier ministre de situer le budget dans le cadre des mesures de reformes prises depuis 2005.”

It is indeed the case, Mr Speaker, Sir. But, there is no *malin plaisir*, there is no irony, no sarcasm. The structuring and modernisation of the economy started in 2005 and is still the order of the day as, we, in the *Alliance de l'Avenir*, pledged during the election campaign prior to the polls in May 2010. Whatever the Leader of the Opposition may say, whatever the Opposition may think, this Budget of the *Alliance de l'Avenir* is led and inspired by the hon. Prime Minister, Dr. Navin Ramgoolam. One may ask what is so surprising about that. The task of this Government, Mr Speaker, Sir, started in 2005. It started with a pledge that Dr. Navin Ramgoolam, the then Leader of the Opposition, took with the nation, a pledge which we reaffirmed in 2010 when the hon. Prime Minister assumed his third term of office as Prime Minister. A pledge to reform not only the national economy, but the very foundations of our society, to uproot the legacy of injustice and dominance inherited from our colonial past, to fight inequalities and poverty, to lay the foundations for the development of an inclusive society, to broaden the circle of opportunities for all citizens through a policy of democratisation of the economy, to unlock human potentialities and creative energies, to introduce adequate conditions for economic growth, to facilitate the access of SMEs to the economic mainstream, to protect the more vulnerable amongst us, to extend a brotherly hand to those living in poverty and thereby, uplift them. In short, Mr Speaker, Sir, to restore human dignity and place that most sacred of our values at the centre of this Government's policy and this is what this Budget is about. It is indeed situated in a continuum that started in 2005.

With these words, I would wish to say a few words on a few remarks, rather a few non-remarks from the Opposition. I am sorry my friend, hon. Bhagwan, is not here. I listened to his very entertaining comments yesterday on the NRPT and his very long diatribe on the MBC. Hon. Bhagwan is a great showman, Mr Speaker, Sir, I cannot outperform him. *Je ne peux même pas arriver à ses chevilles*, in this respect, at least. The particular remark which has often been made, in and out of this House, by the Opposition, and again by the Leader of the Opposition in his intervention on Tuesday last, and hon. Bhagwan, about this House having approved the introduction of the NRPT, applauding, which we did, and this side of the House having approved and applauded the removal of the NRPT. This, Mr Speaker, Sir, is pure, unmitigated, unadulterated, undiluted demagoguery. One would be tempted to say that a wise man changes his mind, but a fool never. But, this is not even a matter of changing one's mind. It was not a matter of political expediency in 2005 and it is not a matter of economic indulgence now. We are in

2010, Mr Speaker, Sir, almost in 2011. The introduction of the NRPT and of the taxes on earned interest was five years ago, we had just assumed office and we had inherited an economic situation, characterised mainly by dramatic drop in the rate of growth of GDP, 2.3 percent in 2005 and an alarming level of Government debt, beyond 65 percent of GDP. In simple terms, State coffers were almost empty. There was, therefore, an urgent need to beef up treasury of Government. These measures were unpopular, but needed. They created ill feelings and these ill feelings raised an outcry. But, the hon. Prime Minister stood his ground, choosing the path of political courage rather than that of easy and cheap populist measures. We all know, including the Opposition, Mr Speaker, Sir, that by 2010 the overall economic situation has been largely sanitised and there is no longer any need for such drastic quasi austerity measures. It is a matter of simple matching of problem to solution. There is something in life, Mr Speaker, Sir, there is something in politics and in economics which is called context, and this is exactly what it is.

I have paid a lot of attention to what the Opposition has said, in and out of the House, or written. I have not heard much. We have not heard a lot from the Opposition, Mr Speaker, Sir. It is true that we only have had three interventions up to now, but what we have heard is only criticism: demagogic criticism, opportunistic, very often incoherent and unconstructive. No constructive criticism! No viable, feasible proposal! I wish to recall to the House, Mr Speaker, Sir, that prior to 2005 for five years, we, in the Labour Party, were in the Opposition and we literally flooded the media. We inundated the media and all possible manners of forum, not to say Parliament, I was not here and I would not know, with criticisms, fair enough, but also with our analyses, with constructive *critiques*, with policy orientations which we stated clearly and openly, with policy proposals. In short, so much so that when we had to draft our electoral manifesto in 2005, we only had to synthesise what we had said and written over five years and our manifesto was ready.

What do we see on the other side of this House, Mr Speaker, Sir, is what I would call intellectual bankruptcy, barrenness of thinking. If I were *méchant*, I would say groping in the dark of lack of creativity in political thinking. This political thinking is restricted to picking and announcing a long list of potential Prime Ministers when election time comes, picking and announcing a supposedly dream team to run this country again, when election time comes. Well, Mr Speaker, Sir, election time came and election time went, leaving them *sur la touche*, still

without any hint of political thinking as has been so miserably demonstrated by the last interventions that we have listened to.

I would wish now, Mr Speaker, Sir, to focus my intervention on three main points. First of all, the plight of small sugar cane planters. I will agree with the hon. Leader of the Opposition on one point – the issue of food security and, what I would call, the need for facilitating the emergence of new agricultural entrepreneurs and SMEs. Over decades, Mr Speaker, Sir, we have focussed our agricultural policy on sugar cane. The Ministry of Agriculture has been almost in a continuum until 2010, a Ministry of sugar cane.

This was justified for obvious reasons linked to the industry as a profitable economic activity for most producers: as a highly export oriented economic activity, as a very substantial employment generation sector, as an overall factor of environmental balance and very important as a community life enhancer in the rural areas. From 2006, onwards two separate, but converging trends have dramatically modified the agro-industrial landscape of Mauritius. These are, as we all know, first, the reform of the European Union Common Agricultural Policy, and the resulting 36% drop of the selling price of our sugar, to which the *Alliance sociale* Government reacted with a deep reform of the sugarcane sector as embodied in the MASS.

Second trend: the recurrent threat of either food shortage or of steeply rising food prices, due to a combination of climatic conditions, in major food producing countries and of growing demand for food in fast emerging markets like China, Brazil and India. Right now, Mr Speaker, Sir, the situation of the small sugar cane planter is determined by that drop in the sugar price sold to the European Union. This is made worse by an increase in the cost of fertilizers and other chemical inputs and we know that sugar cane is a heavy consumer of chemical inputs; by the increase in the cost of energy, the cost of transport, increase in the cost of labour as a result of labour shortage and a growing reluctance of workers to work in the sugar cane fields. Arithmetic is very simple, Mr Speaker, Sir, one tonne of sugar fetches these days around Rs12,700 and Rs12,800 and the average cost of production of one tonne of sugar for small planter is Rs15,000. A shortfall is Rs2,000 plus.

My contention is that any effort we can make to reduce costs will only yield marginal results. My contention, again, is that between 3,000 and 5,000 small planters holding land below 10 *arpents* are operating at a loss or breaking even simply because they are discounting their own

input and labour. Many of these planters are inputting fertilizers too late or too little or even not at all. Many of them are not proceeding with *dépaillage* and harvesting because if we add the cost of all that, when we bring the cane to the weighbridge, they have lost about Rs2,000 per *tonne* of sugar. Of course, the situation varies depending on the nature of the operation, full or part time planting, depending on the size of the field, depending on the nature of the terrain; if it is a fairly easy terrain or a difficult area and depending, of course, on the agro-climatic conditions of the soil. We know again, to be very honest, that FORIP (Field Operations Re-Grouping and Irrigation Project) has not yielded the expected results.

On the whole, this situation is not sustainable. It is true that in this Budget – I listened with a lot of attention to the Minister of Finance the other day – paragraphs 46 to 56, 11 paragraphs, contain numerous measures that are meant to give a boost to small sugarcane planters and I will not come back on these as I am sure my friend, the Minister of Agro Industry, will canvass this issue in detail. However, as I said before, I will agree with the hon. Leader of the Opposition to the effect that the tax exemption at paragraph 47, on page 10 of the Budget Speech, on the first 60 *tonnes* of sugar produced by the small planters, should be extended to all small planters, Mr Speaker, Sir, for two reasons -

- First, because under the present conditions, there is probably not one single small sugar cane planter, who can economically, rely solely on sugar. They all need to have a secondary economic activity to be able to survive, and
- Second, because we should as a matter of policy - the hon. Prime Minister has often times mentioned that - proactively encourage and incentivise those sugarcane planters who can produce sugar economically to do so. Not only to generate a critical mass of sugar cane to cause the new and integrated sugar industry to operate, to perform in an optimal way, but, because I think it is fairly safe to assume that the new sugarcane industry, with its derivatives and products (refined sugar, special sugars, alcohol, energy from vinasse and energy through bagasse) will, for a long time, continue to be a major pillar of our economy, both from the point of view of income generation and from the point of view of employment.

However, Mr Speaker, Sir, notwithstanding what I have said right now and probably even more so within the next two years, anything between 2,000 *arpents* and 4,000 *arpents* of sugarcane land will lie idle or just under cultivated or cultivated at a loss. Mr Speaker, Sir, the hon. Prime Minister, this Government, and the philosophy, tradition and spirit that have guided and inspired the management of this country have always been - since I will say over the past 75 years over the lifetime of the Labour Party - on the side of the workers, planters, labourers and of new entrepreneurs. Our support for and solidarity with those categories of our fellow Mauritian have not changed over the past 75 years. Simply put, Mr Speaker, Sir, we cannot default on that question.

For more than a century, in certain cases for a century and a half, in certain cases for nearly two centuries, small sugarcane planters have toiled in extreme conditions of hardship to supply cane to the mills, thereby, contributing heavily to the livelihood of generations of Mauritians, we do not have the right to let them down now. Even more than that, now we need them to produce food for us and we need to facilitate for the small planters that very difficult transition from sugarcane production to food production.

I am addressing this message to the hon. Minister of Finance, to the hon. Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security and to the hon. Prime Minister. This Government must be committed to ensure the economic and social survival of the community of small planters; must be committed to ensure food security for this country, and true to its approach of democratising the economy, has to facilitate the penetration of new entrepreneurs, including women - that is very important - in the agricultural sector. The need for reconversion of many small sugar cane planters, Mr Speaker, Sir, is an imperative need and the main determinant of that reconversion should be simply, profitability and economic sustainability of new activities. Of course, we are all conscious of the need of maintaining a minimum production level of sugarcane production, this is very important. I think that the MASS has mentioned a figure like 450,000 *tonnes* minimum of sugar that we should produce to make the industry viable in the long-term. We know that there have been heavy investments in refineries by sugar estates like FUEL and Omnicane and in distilleries. These heavy investments need to be amortised. But, Mr Speaker, Sir, it cannot be expected that small planters bear the cost of this amortisation.

So, there is a new institutional framework that is required. We need a new approach of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security. We need support through the Food Security Fund and through other available funds. We need technical input from the different institutions of the Ministry of Agro-Industry. We need corporate types of planters and we need training at tertiary level for agricultural managers. I am happy that my colleague, the hon. Minister for Tertiary Education, is considering the setting up of a planters' school and the project is already in inception. We need cooperation between existing private concerns in the sector and small emerging new entrepreneurs. We need market probing for export opportunities. There is a need to comfort existing agricultural producers and to facilitate the emergence of new agricultural entrepreneurs.

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is clear that the trends in the national economy are moving towards a type of structure that will require more and more educated employees, more and more well trained professionals and less and less unskilled workers. But we are far from having reached that job requirement/qualification adequation that will allow us to freely decide on the type of specific development orientations that we wish to have. We may wish for a knowledge-based economy, but we cannot, as long as we have not achieved a quantum of knowledge dissemination, to gain a competitive edge over similar economies and to sustain that competition.

Our development model, Mr Speaker, Sir, has necessarily to take into consideration the huge mass of lesser qualified and lesser technology trained among our fellow countrymen; otherwise, we will end up with an *économie à deux vitesses*, with an economic dualism that will generate higher inequalities and can be a major potential source of social conflict. The democratisation of the economy orientation of this Government is, indeed, not only to prevent generation of higher inequalities, but to reduce inequalities and to reduce the potentialities for social conflict.

This Government should be committed to facilitate the emergence of a new category of agricultural and agro-industrial entrepreneurs - not small planters, but entrepreneurs, not labourers who will produce primary products and leave value-addition for downstream entrepreneurs, but small agro-industrialists.

For example -

- by putting to use 1,000 *arpents* out of the 2,000 *arpents* obtained from the sugar estates in the context of the sugarcane sector reform;
- by supporting, facilitating, monitoring and mentoring corporate type organisations in this activity, with the same institutional backup as for reconverted small sugarcane planters.

The emphasis would be then on food production, on environmental balance, on community-building, on establishing economic activities and creating gainful employment and, of course, this initiative should place a strong focus on women agricultural entrepreneurs.

It is a known fact, Mr Speaker, Sir, that unemployment affects women more than men, far more than men. It is a known fact that poverty is heavily gender-based. It is a known fact that cases of extreme poverty are found particularly among women and, more particularly, among families where the head of the family is a woman. But it is also a known fact that, once taboos and inhibitions generated by education or the lack of education, by gender-biased socialisation, by asymmetries of information are removed, women can become successful entrepreneurs and reliable business partners.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would wish to say few words on one particular case among existing women entrepreneurs. We presently have about 1,200 small cow breeders, most of whom are women. These small cow breeders started this activity at a time when the State was running a livestock feed factory. Now, this factory has closed, and the cost of livestock feed has increased by more than 150%. With increasing difficulties to find fodder, now most of these small cow breeders, most of them women, are also heavily indebted with commercial banks or with the development bank. The present stage is indebtedness and incapacity to break even. The next stage, Mr Speaker, Sir, if we don't do anything about it, is that most of the 1,200 small cow breeders will be dead, and that means the loss to national production of near five million litres of milk.

Mr Speaker, Sir, ensuring the food security of this country to the farthest possible extent is not only a necessity; it is not only an imperative; it is a duty that we have towards our fellow countrymen. We have just been awarded nearly Rs6 billion by the European Union, as a second *tranche* of accompanying measures, in the context of the sugarcane sector reform. These funds, Mr Speaker, Sir, were never meant to be invested solely in the sugarcane sector, but to assist in

the restructuring of the national economy, following the negative impact of the sugarcane sector reform, especially following the 36% drop in prices.

So, it is only fair that an important chunk of these funds be utilised to gear up our agriculture, in the wake of the shock which it has undergone. Beyond measures to be taken to ensure that we produce a critical mass of sugarcane, to allow the industry to run in an optimal way, it is imperative that funds and efforts be mustered -

- to assist small sugar cane planters who will reconvert to food production;
- to assist and facilitate the emergence of new agricultural entrepreneurs, including young people and women;
- to incentivize livestock breeders, with special attention to small milk producers, and
- bearing in mind one very important thing, Mr Speaker, Sir, that the non-existence, the absence of a reliable insurance scheme to cover risks of cyclones, floods and droughts and other national calamities can be a major and deadly disincentive for many small agricultural producers. I would wish that we consider the establishment of an insurance scheme for this very important category of stakeholders in the national economy.

The second point I would wish to canvass - and I won't be long, Mr Speaker, Sir - is about SME's. We know where we come from, Mr Speaker, Sir. We, unfortunately, come from conditions, where the supply chain in production was largely locked, was largely *vérouillé*, and we know that for small and medium enterprises the two major problems are access to finance and access to markets. Access to finance is very difficult, because our banks have a very conservative approach to banking. We just have to look at what happened when the *l'Alliance sociale* Government introduced the additional stimulus package. Contrary to what was done in most countries, Government had to make funds advances to companies, because banks would not play the game. The ERCP of hon. Pravind Jugnauth is again addressed to companies and not to banks, because banks would not play the game. I am very concerned, and I do hope that I have not understood it properly.

Je ne tiens pas à faire le procès des banques, M. le président. But suffice it to say that, up to now, the Development Bank of Mauritius has been behind the success of many small

producers, many small and medium businesses, and many small planters over the past 40 years. We know that commercial banks are not interested to finance small projects, because they consider them too risky, because of the administrative costs of managing numerous small accounts are too high. We know that, in periods of natural disasters and calamities, only the DBM has been in a position to intervene promptly, very often very effectively, to rehabilitate affected sectors by disbursement in its Permanent Disaster Scheme. We know that the DBM has been the only bank that provides financial support to vulnerable sectors; we know that the DBM provides support to sectors which do not obtain loans from commercial banks; for example, the fishing sector. We know that commercial banks are not willing to provide loan support to entrepreneurs applying for loans of up to Rs2 m., because these loans fall under the Borrowers' Protection Act, and recovery under this Act can be fairly difficult.

I wish to invite the hon. Minister of Finance to revisit his intent to convert the Development Bank of Mauritius into the Development Financial Agency because I am convinced, personally, that the new role of the DBM is potentially wrong. Acting as an articulation between SMEs and commercial banks will certainly not yield the desired results. In a way, we have all contributed to bring the Development Bank of Mauritius into disrepute. We know, and we have to be honest about it, that the Development Bank of Mauritius has been utilised by politicians as a political and electoral tool. We know that there has been debt write-off. Some of them official, decided by Government and some of them unofficial but one cannot simply give a dog a bad name and drown it, Mr Speaker, Sir. DBM is not like any commercial bank. It does not have the right to have current accounts. It cannot run savings accounts. So, it cannot be assessed and evaluated along the same lines, along the same criteria as a commercial bank and, as I have just had the opportunity to mention, there are very serious justifications for the continued existence of the DBM as a Development Bank. Alright, we need to structure the Development Bank of Mauritius. We, maybe, need to streamline it. We need to revisit it but, please, and I am addressing the hon. Minister of Finance, we cannot simply decide because of its poor performance up to now that the DBM is going to be converted into an intermediary agency.

Mr Speaker, Sir, a few words on access to markets. We know the situation in Mauritius, Mr Speaker, Sir: Closed Supply Chains, asymmetries of market networking, lack of agency of small and medium entrepreneurs, coupled with lack of finance to do proper marketing, to do proper sales canvassing and there is an urgent need - and I would request the hon. Minister of

Industry to look into that and the Minister for Business - for support by setting up support trading houses for SMEs and support export houses again for SMEs. Maybe, we should consider at this moment in time that the Competition Commission, probably, also has a role to play in that because there has been of late, over the past three to five years, a proliferation of setting up of supermarkets and hypermarkets very often under the same *enseigne* - as the French call it - which tend to create monopolistic situations in the market. There could be - in certain cases there have been - cross share holdings between different *enseignes*; so much so, that the retail distribution network again becomes completely *verrouillé*. Twenty years ago, 80% of retail distribution was held by small shops all over the country, about 8,000 small shops. I have been in the business, myself, I know. Today, 65% of retail distribution is held by chains of supermarkets and hypermarkets.

Before ending, Mr Speaker, Sir, I wish to canvass one little point on the assistance which the hon. Minister of Finance has announced in his Speech for examination fees. Of course, we all appreciate the extension of the eligibility criteria but I wish to bring to the attention of the hon. Minister of Finance that income is not the only criterion in the regulations that govern this assistance. We know that the possession of a car, for example, prevents or renders somebody ineligible; the possession of a trade license renders somebody ineligible. Now, you can have a trade license and run a shop which earns you Rs15 m. to Rs20 m. profit per year. But, those who sell vegetables in front of their houses, those who have a small '*tabagie*', generating a profit of maybe Rs4,000 to Rs6,000 a month, they also hold a trade license. We cannot consider that both trade licenses are the same. So, I would plead with the hon. Minister of Finance to revisit that and to make the eligibility criteria about the same for everybody.

(Interruptions)

Mr Speaker, Sir, I am being harassed by the Government Chief Whip so I would stop here.

Mr Speaker: I would make a request to the hon. Member; I am going to stop at 12.50 p.m.; so as not to break the speech of the hon. lady, you can continue for another five minutes.

Mr Sayed-Hossen: Thank you, Mr Speaker, Sir. I am done, Mr Speaker, Sir, *parce que le Government Chief Whip a coupé mon élan.*

(Interruptions)

Je reprends mon souffle et je reprends mon élan, M. le président. So, I will conclude, Mr Speaker, Sir. My conclusion is that, notwithstanding what the Opposition has said in this House and out of this House, and actually, as I have stated, not much has been said, apart from criticisms like somebody was very much angry, *en colère* about this Budget but one of the Members of the Opposition was here during the last mandate, had a favourite phrase, “out there”.

(Interruptions)

Copyright my friend, hon. Dr. Arvin Boolell! “Out there”, Mr Speaker, Sir, I know of only of two categories of people who are not happy with this Budget, those who are unhappy about the increase in the price of cigarettes and those who are unhappy about the increase in the price of alcohol. These are the only two people who are not happy and we have the same “out there”. I mean, we won the last elections massively, my friends on the other side of this House cannot say that we are not in contact with “out there”. We have the same “out there”. And our “out there” is much broader than their own “out there”, Mr Speaker, Sir, and out there people are happy about this Budget because from there they said that we have a *peuple intelligent et admirable* and this *peuple intelligent et admirable* knows exactly what is possible and what is not possible; knows that two years ago, the *Alliance sociale* allowed a 40% plus PRB increase payable at one go. Not in two *tranches*, one go. The leader of this Government is the same as the leader of the preceding Government, Dr. the hon. Navin Ramgoolam, and the hon. Leader of the Opposition himself said that this is a *budget de continuité*. So, please, it is the same, it is a continuum. Since 2005, it’s been a continuum and I will conclude on that one thing. This Prime Minister, the hon. Dr. Navin Ramgoolam, has pledged to reform this society but we all know, Mr Speaker, Sir, that we are the inheritors of a society which has been built over three centuries of dominance during which we have had to struggle. Our forebears have had to struggle. How can you expect anybody to change that in two years or ten years, but we will be here again, Mr Speaker, Sir, and the hon. Prime Minister will continue that work to make Mauritius that place of dignity, of human freedom and of respect for everybody.

Thank you, Mr Speaker, Sir.

Mr Speaker: I suspend for one and a half hours!

At 12.48 p.m. the sitting was suspended.

On resuming at 2.23 p.m with the Deputy Speaker in the Chair.

ANNOUNCEMENT

UNPARLIAMENTARY WORD - RULING

The Deputy Speaker: I have a small announcement to make before hon. Mrs Navarre-Marie starts. In the course of the debate yesterday, hon. Ms Deerpalsing raised a point of order asking for my ruling as to whether the word ‘*voyou*’ was parliamentary. I ruled that the word was not used in a way to attack the character of the hon. Member. On reflection, I realise regretfully that my ruling was not appropriate and I now rule that the word ‘*voyou*’ is unparliamentary. Thank you.

(2.25 p.m)

PUBLIC BILL

THE APPROPRIATION (2011) BILL

(NO. XVII OF 2010)

Mrs A. Navarre-Marie (First Member for GRNW & Port Louis West): Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, previously, the Budget was a long awaited exercise by the population at large. Everyone, from all social strata waited for the Budget Speech to know what was lying ahead of the future. People knew exactly about changes in prices of commodities and other important items and got themselves prepared and adjusted or re-adjusted their household budget in relation to the National Budget.

This year, the Budget which has been presented by the Minister of Finance has been a non-event. Les gens, au lieu d’être scotchés à leurs téléviseurs pour suivre le discours sur le budget, ont continué à vaquer à leurs occupations se disant que leur situation ne s’en trouvera nullement améliorée.

Tous ces chiffres ronflants sur le GDP, la croissance, des millions par ci des millions par là ne lui disent rien. Avec ce budget qu’est-ce qui va changer pour la petite ménagère ? Pour la ménagère en général ? Pour le petit fonctionnaire ? Pour le petit travailleur ?

Ce qui lui importe est la question suivante. Comment est-ce que ce budget changera ma vie ? Est-ce-que je survivrai mieux à ce budget? Est-ce-que la vie de ma famille s'en trouvera améliorée?

Quelques exemples véridiques M. le président, des exemples que je vais donner et qui peuvent être vérifiés par n'importe qui. Premier exemple : Pamela, une femme qui habite à Cité Débarcadère à Pointe aux Sables. Elle est mère de famille. Son mari ne peut plus travailler. Il a des problèmes de santé et son cas, selon des médecins, ne mérite pas une allocation sociale car il ne souffre pas d'incapacité à soixante pour cent au moins. La femme doit subvenir aux besoins de la famille. Elle fait une demande auprès de la municipalité pour pouvoir vendre des boulettes et des mines dans un petit tricycle installé devant chez elle. En attendant d'obtenir son permis, et ne voyant rien venir du côté de la municipalité, elle commence à vendre ses produits car elle doit faire vivre sa famille. Elle se souvient que le permis est considéré avoir été obtenu automatiquement après deux ou trois jours de soumission de demande, si aucune réponse n'a été obtenue.

Ne voilà-t-il pas que des policiers viennent la sommer de plier bagage. Et à partir de là, s'ensuit une série de harcèlements pour l'empêcher de vendre ses produits. Même ses concurrents qui se trouvent juste à côté d'elle trouvent que c'est injuste. Et le ministre des finances, dans son discours, dit ceci au paragraphe 213, je cite –

« We cannot talk about raising the nation's productivity without giving some deep thoughts to the low participation rate of women in the economy, which is 43 percent compared to 76 percent for men. Moreover, the female unemployment rate is 12 percent compared to only frictional unemployment among males. To rebalance growth we will need to rebalance these statistics with emphasis on training, re-skilling and also encouraging more women to become entrepreneurs. »

Que reproche-t-on à cette femme? Qu'elle ne détient pas de permis pour lequel elle avait fait une demande en bonne et due forme auprès des autorités dites compétentes ? Si cette dernière raison s'avère, je pense qu'elle fait les frais d'une politique de deux poids deux mesures. A une question de mon collègue, l'honorable Reza Uteem, du côté de cette Chambre, en date du 16 novembre, question 1B/610, adressée au ministre des administrations régionales sur les

marchands ambulants qui opèrent illégalement dans les rues de Port Louis, en faisant la différence entre *hawkers who work all around the year, and those who come in just at the end of the year*, le ministre répond ceci, *I quote*:

'I am of opinion that, on humanitarian grounds, it would not be proper at all to prevent them from earning a decent means of livelihood. I am having a dialogue with the Municipality of Port Louis to look into the ways and means to accommodate the hawkers without causing any prejudice to the traffic flow and without jeopardising the normal activities in Port Louis.'

Mais Pamela est en train de *earn a decent means of livelihood*, M. le président, pour reprendre les mots même du ministre. Et elle n'est nullement en train de *jeopardise the normal activities in Port Louis*. Et le ministre de réitérer sa réponse en ces termes on ne peut plus clair, *I quote*:

'I am of opinion that, on humanitarian grounds, it would not be proper at all to prevent them from earning a decent means of livelihood.'

Avec tous ces beaux discours du gouvernement, réaffirmé dans le discours du budget présenté par le ministre des finances, qu'est-ce qui va changer dans la vie de Pamela? M. le président, on a plusieurs fois parlé de l'*empowerment* des femmes. Ce matin encore, l'orateur qui m'a précédée, l'honorable Sayed-Hossen, avait, dans son discours, démontré ses préoccupations à ce sujet-là. Je reconnais l'engagement personnel de la titulaire du ministère des genres dans le passé, lorsqu'elle était au MMM avec d'autres femmes. Récemment encore, le Premier ministre en a fait une profession de foi en la question, à l'occasion de l'intronisation d'une femme à la vice-présidence du pays. Mais, cette fois, aujourd'hui, je suis bien triste pour Madame Bappoo ; je suis bien triste pour les femmes de ce pays. Dans son discours, le ministre des finances annonce fièrement ceci au paragraphe 215, après n'avoir rien dit au paragraphe 214 pour '*encouraging more women to become entrepreneurs*' -

'We are providing Rs98 million for women's empowerment and gender mainstreaming.'

Tout le monde de l'autre côté de la Chambre a applaudi bruyamment. Je suis allée donc consulter les documents du budget, mais grande fut ma déception, M. le président, en consultant

les dotations budgétaires de 2011 sous cet item, de constater, qu'en fait, ce budget a été réduit. A la page 213 du *Recurrent*, en 2010, les dotations budgétaires étaient de R 102 millions sous cet item; pour l'année prochaine, on est en train de proposer R 98 millions, et le ministre le dit fièrement, le dit sans honte. En 2010, donc, les dotations budgétaires étaient de R 102 millions sous cet item.

Voilà, M. le président, comment on traite les femmes de ce pays. On leur fait croire qu'elles deviendront toutes des femmes entrepreneurs, avec petite voiture et *laptop* à la main, et voilà qu'on leur coupe le budget sur un item tellement important ; et le ministre de venir faire croire le contraire. C'est pourquoi je dis : je sympathise avec la ministre ; je sympathise avec toutes les femmes de ce pays, parce que je sais que ce ministère-là, le ministère de Madame Bappoo, requiert beaucoup d'effectifs, beaucoup de moyens, comme en témoignent les récents événements, pour pouvoir mener à bien sa tâche, M. le président.

Deuxième cas, deuxième exemple, M. le président, les mesures sur l'alcool et la cigarette. De telles augmentations - les augmentations sur les prix de ces produits, notamment l'alcool et la cigarette - renfloueront bien sûr les caisses de l'Etat, sans aucun doute. Mais a-t-on auparavant fait une étude sur les conséquences sociales de telles mesures sur les familles, dont le principal *bread earner* est alcoolique ou bien un gros consommateur de cigarettes ? Quel sera l'impact de ces mesures sur ces familles, surtout des familles à faible revenu ? L'alcoolique - c'est une maladie dit-on - va certainement puiser du budget familial pour sa consommation, et c'est la famille qui souffrira. L'alcoolique va couper dans la nourriture des enfants. Moins d'argent à la maison engendre des conflits qui mènent aux disputes, qui mènent à la violence, qui mènent à la cassure dans la famille, qui mènent à la séparation du couple, qui mènent aux enfants déchirés, qui n'ont plus de repère, et qui deviennent des délinquants, qui peuplent nos prisons, qui perpétuent la violence à leur tour. Est-ce le type de société que nous voulons avoir, M. le président ? Je ne dis pas que je suis contre le fait que les prix sur ces articles-là ont été augmentés, mais il faut que cela soit accompagné de mesures sociales, d'autres mesures en parallèle, pour guérir les alcooliques. Et là, je pense que, dans ce budget, on aurait dû énoncer des projets pour donner un signal fort et clair pour la réintégration, l'intégration des alcooliques et des gros fumeurs, parce que ce budget ne va pas améliorer la qualité de vie de ces familles-là. Au contraire, elle s'en trouvera appauvrie davantage.

Autre exemple, M. le président, comment est-ce que ce budget va améliorer le quotidien de ce *surfer* qui gagnait bien sa vie sur le plage du Morne quand on lui interdit de *surfer* en prétextant qu'il n'a pas les compétences, alors que c'est lui qui en avait formé d'autres qui vont maintenant prendre sa place ? Dans ce budget, on parle d'injecter des millions dans le secteur touristique. Huit paragraphes ont été consacrés au secteur touristique dans ce budget - paragraphes 31 à 38. Au paragraphe 33, R 350 millions pour inviter les touristes indiens à venir à Maurice, soit R 100 millions du gouvernement et R 250 millions du secteur privé. Au paragraphe 37, le gouvernement spécifie que -

« *our tourism industry will require around Rs1 billion over the next five years (...)* ».

Que bénéficie le petit *surfer* dans ce budget, M. le président ? Comment est-ce que ce milliard qui est injecté dans ce secteur va améliorer sa vie ? Alors qu'un milliard est injecté dans le secteur, lui, il sera carrément éjecté hors du circuit. Maintenant, que fait le ministère de l'Intégration Sociale ? Au lieu de s'occuper de ces problèmes comme il faut, le ministre se fait le Père fouettard et reproche aux *ti-dimounes* de faire trop d'enfants. Il usurpe le rôle des autorités compétentes en la matière et se lance dans une campagne de contrôle de naissance. Est-ce qu'il y a une étude, M. le président, démontrant qu'il existe un lien entre la pauvreté et le nombre d'enfants ? Personne ne le sait ! En attendant, les enfants sont là, il faut s'en occuper. Le ministre ferait mieux d'enquêter sur toute la machinerie sur la distribution de feuilles de tôles par certaines personnes – des personnes dites *social facilitators* au *Trust Fund*.

M. le président, un citoyen avait, il y a quelques temps de cela, dénoncé un travailleur social – j'en étais témoin – opérant dans un faubourg de la capitale et qui serait en connivence avec un fournisseur de matériaux de construction. Voilà que le travailleur social est au courant de l'identité de la personne qui l'a dénoncé. Le gouvernement se targue de l'argent déboursé pour l'allocation des *CIS houses*, mais en réalité, c'est un véritable scandale. Je conseillerais au ministre de faire une enquête sur ce sujet. Beaucoup d'argent déboursé, certes, mais peu parvient en fait à ceux qui le méritent.

M. le président, la politique consistant à construire des *CIS* sur le terrain d'une tierce personne est à revoir. Lorsque ce concept avait été introduit au départ, l'intention était bonne. Maintenant, le concept s'avère dépassé, car au fil des années, cela engendre des conflits entre le propriétaire du terrain et l'occupant qui a eu des feuilles de tôles du *Trust Fund*, car la solution

qui était censée être temporaire se mettait à durer et, est maintenant devenue permanente. Les occupants restent là, ils ont des enfants qui se marient et deviennent des parents ensuite et les vrais propriétaires des terrains deviennent maintenant des locataires. Donc, il y a pas mal de problèmes. Je pense que le gouvernement doit revoir ce concept et essayer d'allouer une portion de terrain appartenant à l'Etat à ces personnes qui vont bénéficier des feuilles de tôles du *Trust Fund*.

Toujours sous le chapitre du logement, M. le président, nous savons que la plupart des résidents des cités *CHA* sont maintenant propriétaires de leurs maisons. Mais savez-vous dans quelles conditions délabrées sont la plupart de ces maisonnettes datant du cyclone Carol il y a 50 ans de cela ? Ces maisons sont dans un tel état, M. le président ! Les dalles craquent et peuvent céder à n'importe quel moment ; c'est un véritable danger. Aux plafonds on ne voit que les fers de construction – ferrailles. Ces plafonds suintent et c'est dangereux car les ampoules se retrouvent rattachées à ces vieilles ferrailles. Mes collègues, l'honorable Jean Claude Barbier et l'honorable Veda Baloomoody et moi, nous avons visité plusieurs de ces maisonnettes dans notre circonscription. Mon collègue a même pris des photos. Mais je me pose la question : comment est-ce que ce budget va améliorer la vie de ces personnes ? La plupart de ces personnes ont fait des demandes auprès du *Trust Fund* pour changer la dalle. En vain ! On cherche toutes sortes de tracasseries administratives. La plupart de ces maisons sont habitées par des veuves avec des enfants en bas âges ou alors des personnes âgées et elles ne savent pas vers qui se tourner. Je pense que des *social facilitators* doivent revoir leur approche vis-à-vis de ces personnes.

M. le président, je vais dire deux mots seulement sur la santé. C'est une expérience personnelle, parce que je sais que mon collègue, l'honorable Dr. S. Boolell, va venir après. Je ne vais que très rarement consulter un médecin. Dieu merci ! Il se trouve qu'un ami m'a conseillé d'y aller pour un petit bobo cette année après les élections générales. Un jour, j'ai pris rendez-vous, me disant qu'avec un nouveau ministre la situation a dû être améliorée. Le médecin, après consultation, pense qu'il est nécessaire que je me fasse radiographiée. Il téléphone à la section concernée - je parle de l'hôpital Jeetoo. L'appareil de radiographie est en panne et on ne sait pas quand ce sera réparé. Le bon docteur téléphone à l'hôpital Candos. Même réponse ! Je lui suggère de voir du côté de l'hôpital du Nord car c'est plus pratique pour moi. Même réponse ! Finalement, une réponse assez positive du côté de l'hôpital de Flacq. Pourquoi assez positive ? Parce que, là-bas, la machine ne fonctionnait que partiellement. J'ai pu avoir un rendez-vous

après. Et là, M. le président, c'est un traitement de faveur qu'on me fait, parce que vous savez comment sont les gens à Maurice - la mentalité - un député, donc, traitement de faveur. Ça c'est une faveur que l'on me fait. Donc, imaginez un moment le traitement infligé aux petites gens ! C'est pourquoi, je posais la question au début de mon intervention. Est-ce que le quotidien des petites gens va améliorer avec ce budget ? Et on parle des *studies* par-ci et on parle des *studies* par-là, des millions par-ci et des milliards par-là, mais les petites gens s'en trouveront encore plus démunies. Ils deviendront encore plus pauvres en considérant en même temps que la pauvreté n'est pas uniquement une question d'argent mais de qualité de vie. La pauvreté, donc, c'est aussi la qualité de la vie, la qualité de l'eau.

A Port Louis récemment, cette semaine, je crois, les habitants ont dénoncé le fait que des matières fécales sont présentes dans l'eau dite potable. La même chose pour les habitants de Baie du Tombeau, M. le président, circonscription du Premier ministre, là où j'habite, plus précisément, Morcellement Ilois, à Pont Bruniquel et Morcellement Madhou. Tous les matins nous consommons de l'eau infecte, de l'eau boueuse, de l'eau suspecte, M. le président. Les habitants de la région, moi-même et l'honorable Barbier, nous avons, à plusieurs reprises, fait des plaintes sur la qualité de l'eau, mais rien n'est fait, l'eau qui coule de nos robinets est toujours de la mauvaise qualité.

Quelques mots sur ma circonscription, M. le président, pour terminer. M. le président, lors de mon discours sur le discours-programme, j'avais mis en garde le gouvernement de vouloir punir, victimiser ou pénaliser des habitants de ma circonscription. Nous recevons des cas, mes deux colistiers et moi, presque tous les jours. Des associations sociales pénalisées par la municipalité de Port Louis ou alors le *District Council* de Rivière Noire. On leur reproche leur proximité avec l'opposition. J'ai eu l'occasion d'en parler au ministre concerné, je lui ai parlé personnellement et j'ai posé une question parlementaire. Le ministre m'avait assuré que tel ne sera pas le cas. Il m'avait affirmé que les demandes de facilités seront considérées *on a 'first come, first serve' basis*. Mais dans la pratique, on sait comment cela se passe et les habitants de notre circonscription continuent d'être pénalisés surtout quand on sait que certaines municipalités prennent leurs directives des élus de la majorité. Ce n'est pas l'honorable Ms Deerpalsing qui me dira le contraire.

J'avais donc fait un pressant appel pour que les gens de ma circonscription ne soient pas pénalisés. Or, M. le président, il se trouve que dans ce budget, aucun projet dans ma circonscription, sauf *un drop-in centre* dont la pose de la première pierre avait été faite par l'ex-ministre, Madame Seebun, mais pas un seul projet dans ma circonscription, pas un seul projet d'infrastructure à Port Louis en général. C'est injuste! Les élections générales sont maintenant derrière nous, M. le président.

(Interruptions)

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please!

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Laissez au placard ces petites gens et œuvrons pour toute la population!

Pour terminer, M. le président, le *Leader* de l'opposition, réagissant à chaud à ce discours du budget, avait trouvé qu'avec ce budget, la population s'en trouvera appauvrie davantage - et ne croyait pas si bien dire. J'ai pris l'exemple de petites gens et leurs vécus. Je sais que les parlementaires qui vont encore dans leur circonscription, qui marchent dans la rue, qui voient et qui entendent et qui ont encore du cœur, qui sont encore capables de s'émouvoir, vont comprendre cela. Pour les autres, je n'aurai que ceci à dire: il n'y a pas de pire aveugle que celui qui ne veut pas voir, ni de pire sourd que celui qui refuse d'entendre.

Je vous remercie, M. le président.

(Interruptions)

The Deputy Speaker: Order, order, please!

(2.54 p.m.)

Mr P. Jhugroo (First Member for Mahebourg & Plaine Magnien) Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, let me from the very outset, thank the vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Development, hon. Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, for the presentation of the Budget on Friday 19 November. I am proud of my leader. My thanks go also to our hon. Prime Minister, Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam, who has all the way supported our *grand argentier cote zot ti alle rode zot boule*.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, we all know that the world is facing serious economic crisis, especially the countries in the euro zone. And their impacts are more likely to affect smaller countries like ours. No need for me to present statistics to support my views. One just has to surf on internet and will discover what is happening over there.

Despite this worldwide difficult economic situation, the Minister of Finance has come with a budget containing series of measures to resist the external shocks. *Seuls les inconscients ne voudront pas voir et comprendre cette dure réalité.*

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, the expectation of all people in Mauritius was suspended to the lips of our Minister of Finance during the presentation of the national Budget. After two hours and fifteen minutes, the nation at large was satisfied. *Kot ou passé, dimounn dire ou ene mari budget, sauf l'opposition.*

(Interruptions)

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, you will surely agree with me that the vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Development, hon. Pravind Jugnauth, has been not only successful in his presentation of the national budget but, has also proved to be excellent in his marketing.

This budget puts into practice many of the proposals of *l'Alliance de l'Avenir* during the last electoral campaign - *kot zot faudré pas blier ki kalité baté boeuf zot finn gagné* And in this connection, the vice-Prime Minister has confirmed the abolition of taxes on interests, income as well as the National Residential Property Tax with effect from 01 January 2010.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, you have surely noted that this national budget is largely approved by each and everyone, despite of what the Opposition is saying.

Je voudrais, ici, ouvrir une parenthèse sur la déclaration du *Leader* de l'opposition après la présentation du budget. Nous savons tous qu'avec l'âge on devient sage, mais je note qu'avec l'âge le *Leader* de l'opposition perd le sens du goût.

The Deputy Speaker: Please, don't attack the character of a Member.

(Interruptions)

Mr Jhugroo: J'ai dit sage. Car il est la seule personne à dire que le budget est fade. Il est un éternel insatisfait.

Je comprends la position du *Leader* de l'opposition, qui se sent obligé de critiquer régulièrement tous les bienfaits de ce gouvernement. Le *Leader* de l'opposition est aux antipodes des réalités. Comme j'avais dit dans mon discours sur le programme du gouvernement 2010-2015, 'le MMM est un parti foncièrement de l'opposition, qui a grandi dans l'opposition et qui sera toujours durable dans l'opposition.'

M. le président, au niveau de l'éducation, ce budget prévoit aussi la réforme. Tous les différents gouvernements ont toujours donné priorité à l'éducation. Il va sans dire que ce ministère est un des principaux pôles de dépenses qui se chiffrent à R 9.8 milliards.

En passant, I seize this opportunity today, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, to praise the late Prime Minister, Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, a man of vision, to have taken one of the historic decisions to provide all the children of this country a free education. In the same breath, the Rt. hon. Prime Minister, Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam, a great *visionnaire*, decided to facilitate access to free education by offering *le transport gratuit* to all students of this country.

M. le président, ce gouvernement, à travers son ministre des finances, l'honorable Pravind Jugnauth, continue dans la même foulée et va encore plus loin avec des mesures audacieuses telles que 38 nouvelles bourses d'Etat, dont 24 seront destinées aux lauréats issus de parents pauvres, malgré le fait que nous passons par des moments très difficiles. Le rétablissement des subsides pour les élèves prenant part aux examens de *SC* et du *HSC* est encore une preuve car les candidats bénéficieront de 100% de subsides si leurs parents touchent moins de R 14,500 par mois et 50% aux candidats dont les parents touchent entre R 14,501 à R 20,000.

En passant, je tiens à saluer mon colistier, l'honorable Dr. Vasant Bunwaree, ministre de l'éducation et des ressources humaines – malheureusement, il n'est pas là - qui, depuis sa nomination, est venu de l'avant avec plusieurs réformes dont l'introduction d'un système SMS pour aider à combattre la pratique de l'école buissonnière.

M. le président, la santé publique demeure à la pointe de la philosophie de l'Etat providence avec une enveloppe de R 8 milliards. Il s'agit d'un système qui requiert toute une infrastructure et une organisation bien rôdée afin de permettre un fonctionnement sans faille.

Déjà, nous notons des changements prometteurs qui sont en cours dans ce secteur, menés de main de maître par la nouvelle ministre, l'honorable Madame Hanoomanjee. Je viens d'entendre l'oratrice qui a parlé avant moi. Ce n'est pas possible que dans tous les hôpitaux, en un seul jour, tous les appareils tombent en panne. Ce n'est pas la première fois que cela arrive. Je connais la santé publique à Maurice. On avait le même problème sous l'ancien régime MSM/MMM. Ce n'est pas la première fois et je ne pense pas que ce sera la dernière fois. La construction de l'hôpital Jeetoo, dont les travaux prendront fin probablement en décembre 2010, la construction d'une nouvelle medi-clinique à Plaine Verte, la construction d'une nouvelle unité d'urgence à l'hôpital SSR et la construction d'un nouveau bloc à l'hôpital de Flacq sont des exemples. Il y a aussi une campagne pour la promotion de la santé et de la qualité de la vie et un recrutement constant des effectifs dans les hôpitaux et autres centres de santé.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, law and order has always been the priority of this Government and, in this context, the installation of CCTV cameras in Port Louis and Grand' Baie and this security system is also having an impact on the beach resort in Flic en Flac. I would appeal to the hon. Prime Minister that this system be applied to different fragile regions, including my Constituency, No. 12, mainly, Mahebourg, which is called to register continuous major developments in the coming years.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to appeal to the hon. Prime Minister to further consolidate the existing laws and to review the Bail Act as well as the Criminal Evidence Act without further delay. It is obvious that the rate of criminality is constantly diminishing, not increasing as mentioned by someone yesterday! But, unfortunately, we are still experiencing crimes and aggressions of bestial nature. The last one at Le Bouchon in our constituency is a vivid example of this degradation of our society. To counter this upsurge of crimes, this Government must consider the reintroduction of capital punishment. Regarding the latest insecurity prevailing, our Government is proposing to recruit 770 more Police officers by March 2011. A sum of Rs21 billion is earmarked for the coming three years, out of which a sum of Rs7 billion is for next year.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, there is a public outcry against the proliferation of gambling in this country. The Minister of Finance, hon. Pravind Jugnauth, has come with a series of measures to stem this tide of social imbalance. It is known to everybody that gambling is

forming part of the daily life of every Mauritian and its impact on our family life is devastating. Crimes, drugs, prostitutions and rapes are mostly the outcome of the effect of gambling on our society. If left unchecked, we are going down to the precipice. The Minister of Finance, conscious of this deep problem, has decided to stamp it down. The removal permit of Ti-Vegas at Quatre Bornes is a clear example and the big increase in the licence fees for casinos, MTC and other gaming houses proves the good faith of this Government *afin de décourager à ce que notre pays devienne une nation de 'zougadere'*.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Budget Speech provides Rs4.5 billion for a project loan to Airports of Mauritius. Work is being undertaken at the cost in excess of Rs10 billion at the airport to accommodate bigger aircrafts like A380, and extend terminal capacity to 4 billion passengers annually. The Budget also proposes to invest Rs120 m...

(Interruptions)

The Deputy Speaker: No cross talking, please!

Mr Jhugroo: ... for the construction of an airstrip at Agalega. When it comes to the constituency from where I am elected, I welcome, like many others, the announcement to the effect of the setting of a feasibility study of a new port at Mahebourg.

Let me now come to my Constituency, No. 12, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to tell the House that both hon. Thierry Henry and myself, PPS of the Constituency, are very grateful to hon. Anil Bachoo, the Minister responsible for NDU who is always attentive and responsive to all our requests. Since our assumption of duty as PPS, we have completed a lot of projects which are as follows –

- construction of Janaza Platform at Plaine Magnien;
- construction of three *pétanque* courts at Ville Noire, Remy Ollier and Camp Carol, and
- resurfacing roads at Mare Tabac, Mare d'Albert, Plaine Magnien and Mahebourg.

Ongoing projects are –

- the upgrading of crematorium ground at Tombeau, Mahebourg;
- upgrading of a green space at Remy Ollier;
- construction of a cloakroom, and

- fencing of football ground, and lighting at Plaine Magnien.

The proposed projects already earmarked for the next financial year are as follows –

- construction of drains in different parts of Mahebourg, Trois Boutiques and Mare Tabac;

(Interruptions)

The Deputy Speaker: Order!

Mr Jhugroo:

- Lighting of football ground at Mare Tabac and Trois Boutiques.

As a Parliamentary Private Secretary, I have also the responsibility to undertake NDU projects in Constituency No. 14.

(Interruptions)

The Deputy Speaker: Order, order!

Mr Jhugroo: Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I must point out that I have the full support of hon. Minister Aimée and hon. Minister Hanoomanjee. The following projects are undergoing at

–

(Interruptions)

The Deputy Speaker: Order, order, please!

Mr Jhugroo:

- construction of Dumar Bridge at Chamouny;
- construction of Janaza Platform at Surinam;

(Interruptions)

Chupchap!

(Interruptions)

- construction of drains at Capitaine Road in Tamarin;
- resurfacing of roads at Keats College, Tamil Temple and Beegoo roads in Chemin Grenier;

- funding of Rs15 m. by the NDU to the Black River District Council, and
- construction of drains at Mère Theresa in Belle Source.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I have to inform you that we have many projects in the pipeline for this Constituency, which will start very soon –

- construction of roads and drains at Cotteau Raffin;
- construction of a new bridge a Rivère Patate;
- construction of drains at Ramlagun Road, Baie du Cap;
- construction of cloakroom and lighting of football ground at Chamouny, and
- renovation works at cremation ground at Surinam.

M. le président, nous savons tous que dans ce budget, un des thèmes est ‘*Consolidating Social Justice*’, c’est-à-dire la prise en charge de tous ceux se trouvant au bas de l’échelle. Le ministre des finances, l’honorable Pravind Jugnauth, a fait la part belle au social et je le félicite pour cette initiative. Cette importante somme de R 2.3 milliards mise à la disposition de notre vice-Premier ministre et ministre de l’Intégration Sociale, l’honorable Xavier-Luc Duval, servira au développement de Maurice, en assurant aussi à ce que les personnes défavorisées bénéficient de l’aide du gouvernement, en leur accordant tout le soutien nécessaire pour leur permettre de faire face à la dure réalité économique.

L’honorable Pravind Jugnauth, le ministre des finances, a bien fait comprendre, M. le président, que le social fait partie intégrante du budget, avec pour but d’aider ceux se trouvant au bas de l’échelle et promet l’intégration sociale, culturelle, la justice sociale, l’inclusion, l’égalité et la diversité. Il est bon de souligner que le ministre des finances veillera à un partage équitable du gâteau de la croissance, en indiquant clairement son intention de soutenir les pauvres. Il est à noter que plus de 19,000 étudiants et enfants défavorisés pourront poursuivre leurs études universitaires.

Deux villages intégrés à La Valette et à Cité Lumière seront construits visant à la protection des enfants dans des poches de pauvreté. La construction de 500 maisonnettes pour des groupes vulnérables fait aussi partie de l’action de ce gouvernement, pour venir en aide à ceux qui n’ont pas de moyens financiers.

M. le président, même si nous sommes dans une période d'austérité, le gouvernement tient à cœur l'éradication de la pauvreté et l'utilisation des fonds recueillis dans le cadre du programme de CRS est revue dans le but de se concentrer sur les problèmes urgents.

Le logement, M. le président, c'est la dignité humaine. Ce gouvernement va construire environ 700 logements en 2011 et 40,000 logements d'ici dix ans. Ce sont des projets intégrés sur les 2,000 arpents obtenus dans le cadre des négociations par notre Premier ministre, le Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam, avec l'industrie sucrière.

(Interruptions)

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Mohamed and hon. Ameer Meea, if you have something to say, you can do it outside, please!

Mr Jhugroo : Ce ne seront pas que des "*Low Social Housing*", M. le président, je concède que ce projet est nouveau et intelligent. Dans le même sens, la "*National Foundation Empowerment*" va offrir des programmes de formation pour améliorer l'employabilité des personnes défavorisées, afin qu'elles soient assurées d'un avenir.

M. le président, tout le budget comporte une nouvelle philosophie et pour ne pas déroger à la règle, le ministre des finances, l'honorable Pravind Jugnauth vient d'implanter quatre idées novatrices qui feront progresser le pays. Ces quatre nouveaux concepts sont –

- 1) *A Sovereign Wealth Fund (SWF)*;
- 2) Le Bureau des Statistiques va se reformer en profondeur en une nouvelle appellation, *Statistics Mauritius*;
- 3) Développement Foncier – A travers un nouveau *Land Productivity Enhancement Scheme*, le ministre des finances vient assainir une situation complexe de procédures administratives qui entravent la conversion des terres, et
- 4) Productivité – le ministre des finances, l'honorable Pravind Jugnauth, veut que le revenu par tête d'habitant soit triplé à partir de l'an 2020, pour atteindre les R 50,000 par mois.

(Interruptions)

Comme d'habitude, je constate que le MMM n'a pas changé dans sa stratégie '*passé du beurre au gouvernement*'. Se sentant acculé, il se sert comme stratégie la réforme électorale,

Chagos et, tout récemment, la deuxième République pour ‘*alle koze kozer*’ avec le Premier ministre et ‘*rode ene ti boute pour rentre dans le gouvernement*’.

(*Interruptions*)

Joué là ine ferm !.

(*Interruptions*)

The Deputy Speaker: Order! Order!

Mr Jhugroo: Je dois rappeler aux militants ‘coltar’ que le MMM avait fait la même chose en janvier dernier, ‘*ramper pour ène l’alliance*’ – mais sans succès. Voilà, ce qu’est devenu le MMM de l’an 2010 !

A chaque fois le MMM traite le MSM de petit parti, mais c’est bon de le faire mémoriser, que c’est bien ce petit parti qui avait fait de Paul Bérenger, le Premier ministre en 2003. Aujourd’hui le MSM est au gouvernement, ‘le *soi-disant grand parti*’ est toujours dans l’Opposition comme d’habitude...

(*Interruptions*)

The Deputy Speaker: Order!

Mr Jhugroo ...est durable dans l’opposition comme d’habitude. Je leur demande de suivre la ligne de conduite de Pravind Jugnauth et du MSM et de ne pas continuer à ‘*zigzager*’ et de faire des ‘*coustiques politiques*’ qui ont été toujours sans succès! On peut berner les militants ‘coltar’ pendant un bon moment, mais on ne pourra pas les berner tout le temps. *You can fool someone for a while and several people for sometimes, but you cannot fool everybody all the time.*

M. le président, nous sommes au courant des problèmes aigus que rencontrent tous les usagers de la voie publique pour atteindre et quitter la capitale tous les jours. Conscient de cela, le ministre des finances est venu avec le ‘*Rapid Transit System*’. Ce mode de transport de masse tracera l’avenir de Maurice. Il a mis l’emphase dans son budget de préparer Maurice au-delà de 2020-2030. Ce système de transport est la solution aux problèmes de la congestion routière à Maurice. Une fois ce projet mis en chantier, le pays connaîtra une transformation aux alentours de différentes stations.

M. le président, le public en général rencontre depuis quelques années des problèmes pour l'approvisionnement en eau à Maurice. Comme nous savons tous, ce gouvernement a pris la décision d'améliorer le système de distribution, en revoyant le système de conduit d'eau qui date des dizaines d'années. La décision de subventionner à hauteur de R 3,000 les familles avec un revenu de mois de R10,000 pour l'achat d'un réservoir est plus que salutaire.

The Deputy Speaker: Three more minutes, hon. Jhugroo!

Mr Jhugroo : Comme nous savons tous, la demande pour l'approvisionnement augmente d'année en année avec le développement en cours, tels que la construction des hôtels, l'implantation des usines ainsi que le fameux projet Jin Fei, la création d'une ville satellite à Highlands et aussi les différents projets IRS.

M. le président, je considère *its high time* que le gouvernement investisse davantage dans la construction de nouveaux réservoirs. M. le président, l'hôpital Victoria de Candos a fait son temps. Il est bon de souligner que cet hôpital a rendu beaucoup de services aux malades dans le passé et soulage toujours les patients qui visitent cet hôpital en ce moment-ci. Avec le nombre grandissant de patients, cet endroit est devenu exigü et deviendra bientôt inconvenant et il y a urgence de revoir toute la conception de cet hôpital. Je suggère qu'un projet similaire à l'hôpital Jeetoo prenne forme à Candos avec, bien sûr, une provision pour un grand aire de stationnement. Ce budget a porté un coup fatal à l'Opposition.

Our vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Finance has proved himself, together with the hon. Prime Minister, the Leader of the PMSD and the DPM, to be a very good striker like Messi in Barcelona and Argentina.

Cette proposition a changé de trajectoire, une semaine après la déclaration du *Leader* de l'Opposition concernant le budget. *Now we are hearing* un autre son de cloche from hon. Steven Obeegadoo, *Secretary General of the MMM, regarding* les mesures positives que contient ce budget. C'est ça le MMM, M. le président, '*zot la langue change couleur couma coulèvre*'. If the Leader of the Opposition was in the place of the hon. Minister of Finance, do you know what he would have said, Mr Speaker, Sir, *poêlon là mari chaud, serre ceinture le peuple*.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I must confess that I feel very proud and privileged to serve under the leadership of the hon. Prime Minister, Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam, and to bring my

close collaboration to my leader, the vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, hon. Pravind Jugnauth, to make Mauritius a better place to live.

Thank you.

(3.20 p.m.)

Mr P. Assirvaden (First Member for La Caverne & Phoenix): Tout d'abord, mes félicitations à mon ami, l'honorable Jhugroo.

M. le président, permettez-moi de saluer le fait que, dans le pays, les observateurs politiques, en général, ...

(Interruptions)

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please!

Mr Assirvaden :...ont tous accueilli le budget avec satisfaction. L'opposition a certes, cette fois-ci - je dis bien, cette fois-ci - joué son rôle, et une appréciation différente du *Leader* de l'opposition l'autre jour nous aurait bien évidemment étonné. Je ne peux toutefois me retenir de me poser une question : que serait un budget présenté par l'opposition dans une conjoncture internationale si délicate, où personne n'a une visibilité adéquate des fondamentaux économiques, même dans le court terme ?

Je me réjouis d'abord, M. le président, de la composante sociale de ce budget, et la volonté affichée clairement du gouvernement de s'occuper des plus pauvres de notre société. Les acquis sociaux sont maintenant consolidés par l'engagement, entre autres, pour la construction de nouveaux logements. Un effort soutenu au secteur de l'éducation, et la formation des jeunes issus des familles les plus modestes, devraient, à terme, nous aider à combler, M. le président, un fossé déjà existant dans l'égalité entre les enfants riches et pauvres de notre pays. Une telle initiative, que constitue l'augmentation des bourses, comme le disait mon ami, l'honorable Jhugroo, pour les lauréats, à l'instar de l'éducation gratuite ou du transport gratuit aux étudiants, me paraît irréversible à l'avenir, et c'est tant mieux pour une société plus juste et humaine.

M. le président, notre démocratie, je dirais, est une démocratie apaisée ; ce n'est pas une démocratie où tout le monde est d'accord, mais où tout le monde s'écoute et se respecte. Le budget est un moment important, que j'aborde avec gravité et humilité, tant la situation que nous

vivons est sans précédent. Nul dans ces circonstances, - je dis bien, nul dans ces circonstances - n'est assuré de détenir la vérité.

M. le président, la crise n'est pas finie. Nous ne savons même pas quand elle se terminera ; nous ne pouvons que souhaiter que ce soit le plus rapidement possible. En attendant, nous devons continuer à soutenir l'activité. Nous devons continuer à garantir la stabilité de notre système économique et social, comme le fait le gouvernement actuel. Nous devons protéger nos concitoyens, les plus fragiles, ceux qui souffrent le plus.

Le budget, M. le président, traduit dans la réalité ce que je vous dis actuellement. Nous devons tout faire pour éviter que les victimes de cette crise ne deviennent des exclus, que nous ne pourrions plus ensuite réinsérer dans l'économie et la société. L'exclusion, M. le président, en 2010, c'est ce que cette crise vicieuse peut engendrer de plus grave. Relâcher notre vigilance, nos efforts, pour conjurer ce danger au prétexte, comme certains de nos amis de l'opposition essayent de dire, que la crise serait finie, serait irresponsable. Ce ne serait pas seulement compromettre la reprise, mais ce serait hypothéquer lourdement notre avenir.

M. le président, considérer cette crise - c'est pour cette raison que je dis bravo à l'honorable Pravind Jugnauth, pour ce budget présenté, alors que le monde est en crise - comme une parenthèse qui sera bientôt refermée, faire comme si tout devait recommencer comme avant, comme si on allait pouvoir penser comme avant, se comporter comme avant, avec les mêmes critères, les mêmes méthodes, serait une erreur fatale. Loin de moi, M. le président. Je vous dis franchement, M. le président, que j'ai apprécié sincèrement quand l'honorable Pravind Jugnauth a précisé, lors de ce bras de fer syndicats-Etat, que ceux gagnant plus de R 30,000 n'auront pas de compensation salariale. Loin de moi l'idée d'un débat sur la discrimination positive. Mais je voudrais, ici, dire que, pour atteindre l'égalité, il faut savoir donner plus à ceux qui ont moins. Il faut savoir compenser les handicaps de ceux auxquels la vie a donné d'emblée moins de chance de réussir qu'aux autres. Nous le faisons, M. le président ; nous le faisons avec ce budget.

Permettez-moi, M. le président, de dire quelques mots sur les chiffres prononcés dans le budget. 11.6 milliards - on parle de milliards - pour l'éducation et la formation ; cinq milliards sur dix ans pour combattre la pauvreté ; le *social housing* pour combattre la pauvreté absolue ; *the training programme*, les crèches, l'environnement, les familles. Pour vous dire, M. le

président, que le vice-Premier ministre et ministre des finances traduit dans la réalité ce que nous disons depuis quelque temps.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, as I have said earlier, we should agree that the Minister of Finance has done a marvellous job, considering the different crises we are facing.

M. le président, qui ne connaît pas l'histoire de la Grèce ? La Grèce est à genou ; la Grèce, c'est un pays qui est *collapsed*. L'Irlande, M. le président, est en train de mendier, aujourd'hui, aux pays européens, pour pouvoir vivre ; l'Angleterre ! ; des banquiers, aux Etats-Unis, qui avaient maisons, bungalows, voitures ont tout perdu, pour se retrouver dans des caravanes.

On est en 2010, M. le président. Hier, on a vu à la télévision qu'il y a une grève générale au Portugal ; les gens sont dans la rue. Ici, à Maurice, un budget de R 250 milliards sur dix ans ! Ici, à Maurice, M. le président, le pays se développe. *To maintain the recovery, we have embarked on a massive development across the country.* Tout le monde le voit ; de Port Louis vers le nord, on refait cette route complètement. *To help industries in difficulties, we have embarked on a massive modernisation development, starting on a road development project never seen in the country, in the island, which is going to cost nearly Rs15 billion.* Et on dit que rien n'est fait pour le trafic.

Another project is the modernisation and expansion of the airport. On est en crise ; l'île Maurice est supposément en crise ; notre aéroport est en développement, notre port est en développement ; le développement se fait partout. M. le président, le temps fait défaut. Je n'ai pas à vous lister les R 250 milliards. On se pince un peu, pour vraiment croire aux R 250 milliards dans un budget, alors qu'on est en crise.

M. le président, j'ai écouté avec attention l'autre jour ce que le *Leader* de l'opposition disait sur l'eau. 'Pas un mot sur l'eau' dans le budget présenté par ce gouvernement ! A la page 46 du *Budget Speech*, il est dit –

'The water sector is one area where Government is putting in all efforts required, but our institutions are under performing with respect to the expectations of the population. The Government of Singapore is extending its assistance to this process which will be an integral part of the new 2010-2025 Master Plan'.

Et rien sur l'eau! Cela continue à la page 47 –

'And that single authority will pursue a multi-pronged strategy.

- (i) improve water catchment;*
- (ii) reduce water losses;*
- (iii) protect underground water from pollution;*
- (iv) promote water demand management'.*

M. le président, rien sur l'eau - je me demande si vraiment ils ont lu les pages 46 et 47 du *Budget Speech*. Voilà ce que le *Leader* de l'opposition trouve à dire, je cite –

'En ce qui concerne l'eau, pas un mot sur la situation actuelle. Pas un mot sur les problèmes que nous connaissons aux quatre coins de l'île, pas un mot sur la demande.'

M. le président, il est dit à la page 47 du *Budget Speech* –

'Meanwhile Government will continue to support the CWA Programme for the replacement of old and defective pipes around the island to ensure an improvement of water supply. Rs454 m. (...)'

Pas un mot? Il y en a deux pages ! Au paragraphe 270, il est prévu *Rs245 m. for Pailles Treatment Plant*. Au paragraphe 271, *Rs53 m. to upgrade boreholes and existing dams*.

Et on dit qu'il n'y a pas un mot sur l'eau. Si ce n'est pas de la mauvaise foi, c'est quoi? Je recommande mes amis de l'Opposition de lire sérieusement la page 47, paragraphe 272 –

"At the same time we will support low income families who need a water tank. Government will give a cash grant of Rs3,000 to families with a monthly income below Rs10 000".

Une somme de R 120 millions a été *earmarked*, M. le président.

M. le président, je viens sur la question de MID. MID, R 27 milliards ! On ne parle que de milliard alors que le monde est en crise. Le MID, M. le président, c'est le concept de l'île Maurice de demain, c'est l'environnement, c'est l'énergie, c'est la manière de vivre de demain, de changer notre habitude et penser à autre chose.

(Interruptions)

Exactement, je veux dire l'île Maurice de 2010 à 2015. Mon ami, l'honorable Aimée connaît ça bien.

J'en viens à l'environnement, M. le président. Permettez-moi de partager avec nos amis de la Chambre ce que 2,500 experts intergouvernementaux ont écrit sur l'évolution du climat. Je vais citer une partie du rapport –

« Les endroits humides le seront de plus en plus, avec des précipitations plus élevées et plus intenses, tandis que les endroits secs le seront encore davantage, avec de graves problèmes d'approvisionnement en eau. Ce qui semblait encore irréaliste il y a deux ans est désormais probable. Si aucune action n'est entreprise, nous prenons la route d'une hausse de 6⁰ C des températures. Les ouragans pourraient devenir plus violents et les inondations surviendront plus fréquemment. Les eaux plus chaudes et plus acides déclencheront une mortalité accrue des coraux et le déplacement d'espèces animales. En Inde, la mousson risque d'être chaotique. »

C'est ce qui se passe actuellement au Pakistan.

Je continue -

« Si les humains n'ont plus à manger ni à boire, si leurs terres sont inondées, ils devront se déplacer. Ces migrations poseront des problèmes politiques.'

Et, ce n'est pas par hasard que ce groupe de 2,500 experts ont reçu le Prix Nobel de la Paix en 2007.

Chaque pays, M. le président, s'engage à réduire ses émissions de gaz à effet de serre de 25% à 40% en 2020. C'est du moins ce que recommandaient, en 2007, les 2,500 experts, pour limiter le réchauffement de 2^o C par rapport au niveau préindustriel.

Il est aussi dit que :

«Il faut ainsi diviser par trois nos émissions de gaz carbonique en 2050 ».

Pour l'instant, nous sommes loin du compte. Pour ne pas dépasser les 2^o C, il faut que le bilan carbone d'un mauricien soit divisé par dix, tout comme notre consommation personnelle.

M. le président, l'autre jour, mon bon ami, l'honorable Aimée, disait que les déchets de chaque mauricien tournent autour de 0.9 kilo par jour - ce qui est beaucoup.

C'est vrai, M. le président, que les pays industrialisés sont responsables des trois quarts des émissions de gaz à effet de serre, alors qu'ils ne regroupent qu'environ 20% de la population mondiale. Combien allons-nous investir pour que nous puissions nous adapter ? La réponse est dans le budget : Rs27 milliards. Ce budget, M. le président, montre la voie ; les taxes sur les sacs en plastique, les taxes sur les bouteilles en plastique et les taxes carbone montrent clairement que le gouvernement '*means business*' dans la préservation de l'environnement.

Depuis Kyoto, les équilibres du monde ont changé. La Chine, M. le président, est désormais le pays le plus pollueur du monde. 15% de ses émissions de CO₂ sont dus aux produits consommés par les nations riches. En même temps, c'est une leçon. La Chine a commencé une révolution: c'est le premier producteur mondial de chauffe-eau solaires et de photovoltaïque. Les gens prennent conscience que, à cause de l'épuisement des ressources, le passage aux énergies renouvelables, M. le président, n'est pas un choix, on peut même dire que ce n'est plus un choix, c'est une obligation.

Et ici, j'accueille favorablement l'augmentation sur la taxe carbone et le charbon. Il est dit aussi dans le *Budget Speech* -

"The two-fold increase in the levy of Coal and Fuel Oils generating considerable increased revenues for the MID Fund, I think, should be followed by well defined priorities in the classifications of projects from the concerned administration of the MID Fund."

Permettez-moi, M. le président, de dire quelques mots sur cette taxe carbone. M. le président, le gouvernement est là pour légiférer, pour imposer une taxe sur les restaurants, les touristes, les maisons de jeux, l'alcool et la cigarette. Le gouvernement est là for the *right balance*. La taxe carbone imposée par le ministre des finances, qui était de 15 sous sur le charbon, est désormais de 30 sous par tonne de charbon consommé - imposé sur les *Independent Power Producers (IPPs)*. Et c'est malheureux, c'est injuste. La taxe carbone de 30 sous imposée sur ces messieurs, qui est l'équivalent de R 240 millions par an, imposée sur les IPPs, a été passée directement aux consommateurs, au CEB et à la population. Mercredi dernier, avec leur contrat, les responsables des *IPPs* ont brandi la clause 27 de leur *Power Purchase Agreement (PPA)* pour dire que *the change in law*, c'est l'Etat, la population, qui doit payer. C'est ça que le

Premier ministre voulait changer. C'est ça la bataille du Dr. Navin Ramgoolam. Mes amis de l'Opposition sont bien timides là-dessus.

(Interruptions)

Vous qui êtes si proches de ces gens-là, essayez d'être l'avocat de la population et de l'île Maurice.

(Interruptions)

M. le président, je peux comprendre leur embarras.

(Interruptions)

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please!

Mr Assirvaden: M. le président, le MID est tout, sauf une coquille vide. Certaines personnes, ayant peut-être l'idée ailleurs, ont trouvé que cette coque est vide, M. le président.

Permettez-moi, en quelques minutes de démontrer que ce concept de MID, lancé par le Premier ministre il y a déjà trois ans, commence à se remplir aujourd'hui. Nous avons, le *solar water-heater*, lancé il y a quelques années, M. le président, dans le cadre du MID. Les éoliennes placées à Rodrigues, M. le président - on vient de les placer. Le *Deputy Prime Minister et* ministre de l'énergie est au courant - forme partie du MID. Les ampoules économiques lancées en 2009 - pas celles qu'on va recevoir - étaient dans le MID. Les *Small Independent Power Producers (SIPPs)* avec le *grid code* et, le *feed-in tariff*, qui est prêt dans le MID. Je vois les *electric cars*. Il aura une étude pour voir le bien-fondé d'un *electric car* dans notre système, dans le cas du MID à Plaine des Roches, douze megawatts d'éolienne en négociation au CEB, dans le MID, le hydro à la Nicolière en opérationnel, M. le président. Et venant dire...

The Deputy Speaker : Five more minutes!

Mr Assirvaden : J'irai vite. Venant dire que le MID est vide, M. le président, c'est de mauvaise foi encore une fois. M. le président, au-delà de tout du MID, je pense sincèrement qu'il nous faut dans ce pays un plan solaire mauricien - toujours dans le contexte de MID - pour une traduction concrète de cette nouvelle histoire du MID marquée par une coopération entre le privé et l'État. Ce sera un plan de transition. Le plan solaire mauricien sera un plan de transition

énergétique pour un bouquet mauricien, que moi, je considère, M. le président, à 50% sur base d'énergie fossile et 50% sur l'énergie renouvelable.

Le solaire, M. le président, est sans doute l'énergie renouvelable la plus mature, la plus rentable aujourd'hui. Le bouquet mauricien est un bouquet d'une centaine de mégawatts par an, grâce à un ensoleillement, et à une surface disponible considérable pour la production d'énergie. M. le président, je crois sincèrement dans ce plan solaire mauricien qui fixera nos objectifs très ambitieux pour 2010 à 2020 avec une attention particulière sur la photovoltaïque, sur le solaire thermique et sur la géothermie. Concrètement, M. le président, le plan solaire mauricien devrait être à deux niveaux. La phase pilote on l'a fait. On a commencé, M. le président, on a fini de voir tout ce qui peut se faire en ce qui concerne le SIPP, en ce qui concerne le bâtiment de la MCB à St Jean. C'est l'incarnation même de ce que va être l'île Maurice, les bâtiments de l'île Maurice de 2020. Elle doit être suivie aujourd'hui d'une phase de déploiement plus rapide, M. le président.

(Interruptions)

M. le président, je terminerais en vous disant que j'ai été étonné que le *Leader* de l'opposition ait trouvé, chaque mois, depuis cinq ans, que nous allons manquer d'électricité. L'honorable Dr. Beebejaun en est témoin. L'honorable Dr. Abu Kasenally, qui était ministre de l'énergie, en est témoin. Depuis 2005, M. le président, chaque semaine le *Leader* de l'opposition, à chaque conférence de presse, trouve que l'année prochaine il nous manquera de l'énergie ; danger en 2009, danger en 2008 et on est déjà en 2010. On est à l'abri. Aujourd'hui, la pointe est de 400 mégawatts. En décembre, on attend 414 mégawatts en pointe pour la demande, M. le président, alors que nous avons installé aujourd'hui 536 mégawatts. On est à couvert. Je n'irai pas plus loin, M. le président, je garderais les autres choses que j'avais à dire pour la prochaine fois, mais je dirais que ce budget démontre clairement l'intention de ce gouvernement.

(Interruptions)

Je dirai simplement que ce qu'on a pu faire avec ce budget, M. le président, c'est aussi grâce à ce que pendant cinq ans l'honorable Dr. Ramgoolam a pu reformer, a pu amener les amendements nécessaires, a pu amener ce pays dans la modernisation et aujourd'hui avec le

budget du vice-Premier ministre et de ce gouvernement, on va aller plus loin. On va bouger à un palier pour la modernisation de ce pays.

Merci, M. le président.

At 3.43 p.m. the sitting was suspended.

On resuming at 4.19 p.m. with Mr Speaker in the Chair

Dr. S. Boolell (Second Member for Curepipe and Midlands): Mr Speaker, Sir, after the verbal onslaught in the House on the part of the two previous orators, I think the Budget speech course should be a little bit on restraint. I have always said that the elections are over and we have to look forward. And I really do in a way appreciate the final quote from the Minister of Finance when he quoted from Martin Luther King and talking about the challenge of the one who has the crown. I would like to answer this quote by one from Mahatma Gandhi who said:

‘Take a look at the poorest man that you have ever seen and ask yourself whether the step that you are going to take will change his destiny’.

The poor man, the one from the road, the one out there, like somebody said - I think, it was hon. Cader Sayed-Hossen, borrowed from hon. Dr. Arvin Boolell - does not care about your hi-tech medicine. He wants to know, when he goes to hospital: will he come out with a cure; will he get better in any way? This Budget is impressive in the sense that it caters for hi-tech medicine. A lot of the propositions in this Budget are concerned with hi-tech and I will be developing it a little bit shortly, but also in *Maurice Ile Durable*, I think Professor de Rosnay yesterday mentioned the four ‘E’s of *Maurice Ile Durable*. I will mention the three ‘A’s of *Maurice Maladies Durables*: alcoholism, addiction, associated collateral damage, which means poverty, which means larceny, which means violence. These are the three ‘A’s of Mauritius *maladies durables*. This Budget does not promote enough, does not send the message across enough on what are known as non-communicable diseases. In a country where 70% of the deaths are attributed to cancer and diabetes alike, we do not have a strong message. This comes from the figures given in the Programme-Based Budget estimates. The message is not sent strong enough.

In Mauritius, we have this art, Mr Speaker, Sir, of going through the symptoms; of going through the diseases rather than going through the causes. It is much easier to be dialysed than to

know why your kidneys failed. But, again, in this Budget, when we have to start looking, the Budget does not, but we see the propositions of the Budget. I do not mind in vitro fertilization. It's a good example of maybe what hi-tech medicine is all about, but we are going to promote a medical hub in a country where people, where women aren't even safe to undergo liposuction. How can we get this message if this were to go internationally on the net that the people died from liposuction and then we are going to talk about hi-tech medicine? After all, the medical hub basically has to do with plastic surgery. 10,500 people came over to Mauritius supposedly according to this Budget - some 10,500 foreign patients - had been treated this year in Mauritius, but it will be wise to break down this figure and find out how many are from next door - Madagascar, Comoros, Seychelles who come to Mauritius and are subsidized by the Mauritian taxpayers and enjoying the benefits of our medical system at the expense of the Mauritian taxpayers. It's good to have figures because otherwise people who come over, Mr Speaker, Sir, for the medical hub are people who come to have their face and their nose jobs and maybe their hair transplanted. This is basically what they do in all discretion, but we get a bit further more and then we go to stem cells research – the Board of Investment trying to promote stem cells research. All is very good, I am impressed, but one has to remember the ethical problems linked with stem cells research across the world. Quality is desirable; one has to be very, very careful. Stem cells research has been booted out of many countries.

I note: 'We are removing customs duty on cosmetic products and pharmaceuticals imported as samples for testing purposes in Mauritius'. I understand there was a little bit of a problem at the Shopping Paradise where samples were given as presents during the month of August or December, but I do not think that this warrants actually a removal of the duty! The words which are involved in this sentence: 'removing customs duty on cosmetic products and pharmaceuticals imported as samples for testing purposes'. Who are going to be tested? Who are those who will be volunteered? Will it be prisoners from Beau Bassin who will be given a guarantee of remission? Will they be volunteers who will be paid? Are we going to be a nation of guinea pigs? Aren't we pigs enough right now being taken for a ride over so often? These are ethical measures. It's good in a Budget for you to go and tell the poor man, the man out there whether he is impressed, that we are going to take off the duty on cosmetic products and samples.

Then we do have the draft Bill on Human Tissue (Removal, Preservation and Transplant) - a Bill which has been present for, at least, the previous five Ministers of Health; a Bill which is not seeing the light of day because somewhere in Mauritius we are trying to invent the wheel. I mean, God knows, we ought to have started promoting the concept of transplantation. I think for the concept of transplantation, it is well-known that you are not expected to take your organs to heaven. Heaven expects you to use these organs down below. So, we should try to get people to understand, we should start promoting before the Bill gets through, but it is something that we have to look at. When we come to item 106, this is where it becomes a little bit shocking for the medical profession and I quote -

‘106. Our second set of actions relate to creating professional capacity in the industry.’

I never, in my whole life, as a doctor, believe that the medical profession was an industry unless this sentence is out of paste, has been cut and pasted from somewhere else and creating professional capacity means that we do not have *l'expertise nécessaire. Nous ne sommes pas professionnels assez et qu'il faut le créer dans l'industrie qu'est la profession médicale*. I hope this is only an oversight that the word ‘industry’ may be gladly changed in a world where you are changing police department to police service; you cannot change medical profession to medical industry.

‘107. The Medical Council Act will be amended to provide, amongst others, for the recertification of medical practitioners.’

I do not know how to recertificate a medical practitioner. He has got a certificate, either he is a doctor or he is not, and the Dental Council Act will be amended again. At the same time, we have to take on board the plight of those students or rather of those parents who send their children to the Mauras School of Dentistry and who do not know whether they will be at all recognised; whether they will be registered. A dental school which has lost the authority to take in students at the lower end because they do not have lecturers for the first or second year, but they have lecturers for the final year and the parents of those who were taken on board somewhere when that school was given the right to function.

(Interruptions)

Well, if I am going to put it, maybe I'll rephrase my question as to whether it should be the Dr. Jeetah Dental School, but I don't know whether it's him! I'm only joking!

(Interruptions)

I'm quite glad that this expression of '*tir manze*' has come up because it reminds about the time I practiced autopsies.

'108. The Dental Council Act will also be reviewed.'

I do not blame the current Minister of Health because, after all, she did inherit a fairly slow system from the previous incumbent of the position. She is really crumbling under that. Actually she even came up, Mr Speaker, Sir, the other day, to defend the Rs1,500 per pint of blood which is being charged, not only on rich people, but also on poor people who go to the clinics to the tune that this Budget is getting Rs4,500,000 just from the blood sale and that blood money, God knows, what it going to happen to.

A Board of Postgraduate Medical Education will be set up to address all issues relating to registration of specialist qualifications. This is something I welcome, Mr Speaker, Sir, from the hon. vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Finance. It is time that some order came up in the profession. There was a good technique in the past which used to be applied and it is my wish that, maybe, that recommendation of mine should be taken on board. A specialist who should be registrable in Mauritius should be recognised by as such by the donor country which issued the certificate. You cannot have 'made in Mauritius specialist' or 'made in China specialist'. The specialist coming from any country should be recognized as such, barring visa requirements and its length of stay requirements, by that donor country. This is when you will reassure your population on the quality of care that you are giving.

I note again the creation of another Council. There is already a Dental Council which is politely put, a medical council which needs a prosthesis to be able to walk about and which has not got too many powers and which when they do have powers sometimes they make an abuse of it. Then, they are going to have a third council, a Health Professional Council, for all health and allied professions other than medical and nursing will be set up. I fail to see why we need the councils, except if it has to do with the postgraduate education which we intend providing to members of the medical profession in relation to the countries where they will be exported to. It

would seem due to wrong planning, there is now an excess of doctors in Mauritius and an excess of doctors coming in and that we will have to start importing to SADC or other countries. I think it comes out very clear that to introduce a flexible training period adapted to the requirements of the countries where they will practice. The clinical training framework will be updated. I fail to see how you can update a clinical training framework when there is practically no clinical training. The growth of health care into a centre of excellence with substantial private investment, both foreign and domestic, will not crowd our Government's responsibilities. Government is paid for that, Government is in office to provide a certain minimum of basic care. This is not something to come and be proud of. Then also, we do have, in this process of excessive postgraduate medical education, a tendency for foreign medical schools to come in. We are going to have a hub of creation of medical schools and it is my wish that if more medical schools, more dental schools were to come up in this country, they should be functioning under the aegis of the University of Mauritius. Somewhere along the line, the University of Mauritius will have to be called upon to maintain discipline and order in the profession as regards clinical training. But then, what is the point of having so many Councils, of having so many services, of investing so much? I am not here to say whether the Budget is one of continuity or whether it contains more additives. What I am trying to impress upon you is that the quality of care is lacking. We need some form of control, a service to control the quality of care, we need standards, we need an independent board of health professionals retired from active service who shall be there as *les chiens de garde de la profession* and ensure that the quality of control of the service stays at par if we want to reassure foreign investors, if we want to reassure people who come over, we do not want them to take a newspaper on the plane or go on the internet and read Mauritian newspapers and hear about all cases of alleged medical negligence due to the poor quality of the service. We do not have quality control in our hospitals. The Medical Council, itself, is not even empowered to take action against a doctor from the Ministry of Health who has faltered. The Medical Council is only allowed to take action against a doctor from the private sector. This is where I always said the Medical Council wears no teeth, it has dentures. So, it wears the dentures to bite outsiders, not insiders. This is, maybe, why you need a change in the Dental Council to manage dentures.

Much of the money being provided for health care are due to Dr. Jeetoo Hospital. Obviously, you have started a hospital, you have got to finish. I am not quite impressed.

Upgrading of hospitals - the way the blood is being sold at Rs1,500! Maybe, the *punaises* of Dr. Jeetoo Hospital might start charging money for biting patients. But this is not the case; we have to maintain the standards in our hospitals.

The Minister is right when she says she will take action against the officers who do not function rightly. I have no quarrel with that but, please, Mr Speaker, Sir, I would humbly request the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Energy and Public Utilities to invest in new furniture for a new hospital. Let us not see the block at Dr. Jeetoo Hospital with all the antiques inherited from the Second World War which are still there. You need to approach new hospitals with new staff. The money can always be found. This is why CSR is all about. You do not need to take CSR, half of it and take off to build houses when this can come from the Budget. The corporate social responsibility, after one year of existence, should have been evaluated and the money from CSR verified as to whether it attained the people that it was meant to and if it did not, this is the kind of investment where one actually could consider from CSR.

Then, you obviously have a geriatrics hospital. I have gone through the Budget; I find no vote for the geriatric hospital. But somewhere in the PBB and PSIP, I find there is a vote for Rs50 m. for geriatric equipment. I sincerely hope, Mr Speaker, Sir, that the equipment is not here already and rotting in some shed. Let us put it this way, Mr Speaker, Sir, it is desirable to have a geriatric hospital, it is wiser to take geriatrics to the people, to open two wards, male and female per hospital, per major or even sub-major hospital in this country. Somebody who is old, who needs to be near his own relatives, needs to be visited. It is in our culture to receive visits. Imagine if you are staying in Port Louis and you need to be admitted in a geriatric hospital which for political expediency may have been erected in Cap Malheureux or in Flacq, how do you go about visiting? It is against our culture. So, you need to be able to get two geriatric wards. There is an excess of doctors. We do not need to always think in terms of exporting doctors. Geriatric medicine is the medicine in a way of the future, because our lifespan is extending. We are all dying at about 75/76 and a geriatric hospital is all about tendering care, rehabilitation, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, speech therapy, mobilisation, almost sports medicine to get you mobile and you do not need to be able to build one centre. Already, I would like to pay homage at this moment to the Sun Group of Hotels which, with the Minister of Health, has created a new cancer ward for kids in Victoria Hospital. I would be more than grateful as a citizen of this country, beyond political divides, beyond ethnic divides, to change what I call the

Gulag Archipelago which is the cancer ward of Victoria Hospital where everybody who suffers from cancer is centralised, when you find people waiting for a bed on benches under absolutely disastrous conditions. I would invite anyone of us, if we love this country, if we are loyal, if we want medicines of equality to imagine that someday, one of us will need to be there, I imagine choosing your bench while waiting for your bed. We need - maybe the private sector - to bring in people on board. I go for medicine of the present. I am impressed by hi-tech medicine, we do need nuclear medicine; we need investigations. Hon. Mrs Navarre-Marie talked about the X-ray machine which did not work. It is not a secret, Mr Speaker, Sir, that machines in hospitals keep breaking down due to lack of maintenance. It is almost that for one machine, you have to employ one maintenance officer, far too often. If you see the rent that has been paid to private clinics for CT-scans which, I think, came up to the tune of Rs21 m. over a 3-year period for one private clinic. It is money which could have been used for investment. And I am told there will be scans being bought for the hospitals. But will there be a maintenance officer? And the day the scan breaks down who will be blamed? Is it the porter at the door because he forgot to switch the light off? We do not have a quality control. And I do not see it in the budget. We need a quality control for the pharmaceutical products of this country. Nobody here can give me the guarantee that the pharmaceutical products purchased or given in the Government hospitals have been subjected to a random sampling off the shelf concerning the quality of the product and the quality of the drug. We all read about third world markets being inflicted with fake drugs. There are fake cigarettes and fake drugs. It is a world of fakes. But when we are talking about pharmaceutical tablets, about the health of anyone, your children or your parents, there should be off the shelf screening, sampling with a certified lab locally. I do not believe in a kind of once in a while, only when there is a complaint to act on it and then say that it is the drug or the pharmaceutical product.

Anyone here, who is associated with the medical profession, we have pharmacists, ophthalmic opticians, we have anyone who is using tablets or using pharmaceutical products, can they give me the guarantee of the effectiveness? I think this budget talks about effectiveness and efficiency. And somewhere along the line, we are fighting between the fine print efficiency versus effectiveness. What is effective and what is not?

Obviously, while I am talking about the elderly, I am almost begging with the hon. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance not to uproot the elderly across the country, but

to make sure he gets his treatment locally. I am also making a humble request to him. A gentleman who is about 75 plus came to me and said that he had some savings on which he had been charged tax on interests and that he feels by the time he is refunded, in two years time, he might not be alive. I would be grateful if the elderly, maybe not those over 60 but, at least, those over 70 ensure that they are refunded that sum which was taken at source. That will make them happy. No political mileage out of that remark.

Then, we get obviously to the *maladies durables*. I talked about alcoholism. It has never been proved that the rise in price of alcohol has deterred the consumption. I should know, my basic degree came from a country which had a very, very high consumption of alcohol. At Budget time, everybody was worried about the rise in the price of the pint, and the consumption did rise. Everybody who was worried about the pint went to the pub and drank talking about it. The prices of alcohol will always - if they rise beyond a certain reason, maybe, this can cause *les alcool frelatés à faire leur apparition sur le marché. Vous vous rappelez de l'époque du 'tilambique' de certains endroits. Si cela devient trop cher, elle va chercher d'autres moyens de consommation. Du vin banane ! On va essayer de faire monter sa propre bière. Mais tout sera fait au détriment du lait qu'il faut acheter pour le bébé. Il y a quelqu'un quelque part qui va sourire. Je suis contre l'alcoolisme. Je ne peux pas être médecin et être pour l'alcoolisme, mais il y a d'autres moyens.*

The revenues which will be generated, which are expected according to the budget, are to the order of Rs600 m., I think, which will be brought in by the alcohol. The amount of money which is programmed to be given to NGOs taking care of alcohol is only Rs500,000. That's in the budget. We have to decide. Either we are raising the price of alcohol towards a fund raising exercise for the budget and then we say so, but we do not hide behind this possibility of taking on board the interest of the poor man's liver because this is not the case.

It is the same for cigarettes. Somebody told me: *cigarette monté*, I will go to a lower make. I will move from Matinée to Embassy, to Matelot or to whatever. Somebody else said drugs did not go up. It is cheaper maybe to grow gandia than to smoke cigarettes. But this is a bit uncalled for. But when I say we are *Maurice Maladies Durables*, there is a disease which needs to be cured. And I mean cured. This is gambling. Whether the vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Finance increases the license for the casinos, reducing the number of casinos, this is a

financial exercise. But I am trying to speak up on the medical side of things. We do need, in this country, a medical treatment for the gamblers. We need an NGO to come up and I use this opportunity, during my speech to ask all those social workers who claim that they love the society so much, that they will be willing to go without a State decoration on 12 March, to join together and come up with a gamblers' anonymous programme to get people off the hook of gambling because gambling is a disease and, maybe, get CSR funds to assess such an NGO.

But then, I also note the absence of referral to drugs in this budget. When I am talking about referral to drugs, I mean hardcore drugs. We have had recently quite a bit of action at the level of *paradis en dey*, at the level of all those social workers who come from those areas where drugs are recognised as being a recognised *fleau*.

The methadone treatment has shown its limitations. Even today in one of the reports from PILS, I note that 47% of intravenous drug addicts are HIV positive. This budget does not send a message concerning intravenous drug addicts and the possibility of treatment and what we have to give them. I join the *Movement Anti-drogues* into saying that the drug addict is not a criminal totally. He is also a sick patient. He has got to be treated. We have these prejudices against somebody who is a drug addict, but I have seen in families, most of us, Mr Speaker, Sir, are MPs who have had to face the problem of drugs at the level of their constituency. They even know the areas, they even know who is selling, they even know who is actually making the money on the backs of those people who are dying, but we need to be able to address this problem. It is not fair for Mauritius, the tiger of the Indian Ocean, to be the first in Africa concerning opiate consumption, to be the fifth in the world per hundred population concerning opiates. One would almost think we have poppy fields replacing the sugar cane fields.

When we talk about alcohol, I mentioned the Rs600 m. that the Minister of Finance will be earning through this levy. They all say that the Opposition criticises, the Opposition is not positive. May I humbly suggest, Mr Speaker, Sir, that you even use your good offices should we not send a message to people who drink too much to have, at least, one dry day per month in this country? Hon. Dr. Jeetah seems to be a bit thirsty because he is making a few comments.

(Interruptions)

One dry day!

(Interruptions)

Mr Speaker: Order, now!

Dr. S. Boolell: Thank you, Mr Speaker, Sir. I make an appeal for one dry day. I mean, you have the majority, you can decide to turn it down. I have no problem with that. At least, my conscience, Mr Speaker, Sir, is clear and also the sale of alcohol should be made only on presentation of the ID card. I remember on one mission in Washington, a lady who appeared to be on the wrong side of 50 was actually asked to produce identity to be able to buy a glass of beer, why can't we do it?

We have something which has been mentioned in the budget - I was trying to understand what it meant - somewhere to prevent a kind of a drink which was mentioned for the young ones. They have a certain fondness for the drink which is already mixed. To stop this drink, the only way is to produce your ID at 18; no alcohol to be sold. On the eve of elections, we manage not to sell. Obviously, you will have those cowboys, who will manage to glide and buy in anticipation; even if they are making the effort to plan, we reduce the kind of compulsion to go and buy. If you vote at 18, Mr Speaker, Sir, you may be allowed to drink at 18; there is nothing on 21.

You have to empower the NGOs. I think the hon. Minister Bappoo, a couple of days ago, said that, for the street children, she was willing to empower 'Saphire', because the work of the Ministry alone cannot get to the street children. I think that, as far as the drugs are concerned, you have men and women of good intention outside. Maybe, these are the people towards whom the drug addicts will show more trust. These will be the people who actually can implement the Drug Exchange Programme. Just like the people from PILS, there are some organisations above reproach which should be delegated the power by Government. The treatment of drug addiction in Mauritius should not be by repression. You need to support the family.

At the end of the day, as we look forward to the new Budget year, I would like to conclude, Mr Speaker, Sir, with the aspiration - again using the expression of the man out there - of any Mauritian, man or woman, to lead a life of safety, to be in security. The security in the hospital service is lacking; *ça laisse à désirer*. The only way you can actually improve on the security of the staff in the service is to recruit and recruit. This Budget shows only a possible recruitment of 13 Nursing Officers for next year, and for all allied professions in the health

sector, it comes to about 500. With about 500 new entrances in the health sector, with about 770 policemen who will be recruited for the Police, we will not be in a position to maintain either law and order, or to guarantee the security of medical staff. So far, the management of the hospital service has been by crisis. We need a new vision. We are in the year 2010, and we need a vision 2020 for the health sector. We need to know where we are going. We need to know what our expectations are, so that anyone here who, maybe, has a child who wants to turn to nursing, to pharmacy or medicine, at least, knows where he stands.

I think that I have finished, and so I thank you very much for your attention.

(4.53 p.m.)

The Minister of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms (Mr A. K. Gungah): Mr Speaker, Sir, let me, from the very outset, congratulate the vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Development, hon. Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, for having unveiled a “Feel Good Budget” in this august Assembly, on Friday 19 November. I should also thank the Leader of *L’Alliance de L’Avenir* and Prime Minister of this country, Dr. the hon Navinchandra Ramgoolam, for his support to our vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Finance.

Mr Speaker, Sir, before the presentation of the Budget, many *oiseaux de mauvais augure* were flying all over the country, praying for failure. *Sans la peur au ventre, les tripes bien solides, le grand argentier a démontré qu’il peut faire mieux.* He had consultations with all stakeholders before putting himself to task. *Et le résultat de son travail, on l’a vu le vendredi 19 novembre. La population, dans sa grande majorité, a été agréablement surprise par la présentation de ce “Feel Good Budget”.* We all recognise that he has done an excellent job. The Prime Minister, immediately after the Budget Speech, gave a press conference, *où il a salué les mesures énoncées. L’opposition MMM a été abattue par les multiples tirs foudroyants qu’a effectués le grand argentier, et ces tirs l’ont atteint en plein cœur.*

(Interruptions)

I am surprised, Mr Speaker, Sir, that they are still opposing this pro-people Budget. This reminds me of a very nice story, with great moral, in *Panchatantra*. It goes about a scorpion and a tortoise. They were both on one side of a river, and they had to go on the other side. The river was very deep. At the time the tortoise was going to jump, the scorpion told him: “Hey *bhai*,

bring me along with you.” The tortoise replied: “Are you mad? You have got poisonous stings, and you will bite me.” Then, the scorpion said: “My brother, how can I do that? Both of us will then die, and, as I don’t know swimming, I will get drowned.” Then, the tortoise, believing in the words of the scorpion, asked him to climb on his back near the head. When the tortoise reached the middle of the river, the scorpion bit him, and the tortoise said: “I told you that you were going to bite me.” Do you know what the scorpion answered? “This is my character, and I can’t change.” This is how this present Opposition behaves in this country.

(Interruptions)

Mr Speaker, Sir, our aim is to make of this country a prosperous one. We want this country to grow together with our people. *N’en déplaise à l’opposition!* This Government took office in the midst of an unprecedented economic crisis in the euro zone. All statistics show that our main markets are in great trouble. The people of this country have elected their Government with a clear mandate: to strive for a rapid economic development, and to eliminate poverty and social inequality. This is what this Budget aims at. Mr Speaker, Sir, Mauritius will definitely rise. We want stability, and we want to preserve the social harmony. We are at a time when the world is still struggling with an unprecedented financial crisis and an economic slowdown that has also affected our country.

Mr Speaker, Sir, we are right now on the eve of the second decade of the 21st Century. This Government has had a clear mandate to construct a strong country and a prosperous nation. This Budget aims at putting Mauritius on the path of rebalancing growth and consolidation of social justice. This Budget, Mr Speaker, Sir, sets out the plan to rebuild the economy and the society on no less than such cherished values as unity, equity, modernity, economic efficiency, social justice, transparency and accountability, keeping in line with what has been enunciated in the Government Programme.

In view of the difficult economic situation worldwide, it would have been easier for this Government to move for expenditure reduction, and raising of taxes. Any reasonable person would agree that a Government can give only what it can afford. In this tight and difficult economic situation, we have not only maintained free education, free health services, free transport to students and the elderly, but we have also kept the promise made to the population during the electoral campaign.

This Government has an undisputed mandate from the electorate for the next five years. We are just at the beginning of this mandate and we have already started implementing what we pledged to the population. In this respect, Government has removed the National Residential Property Tax and tax on interest and, the more so, with retrospective effect as from January 2020. The removal of these two taxes is already an important milestone.

I must also hasten to point out that this Government has shown itself a responsible and caring one because we have not increased the Value Added Tax, as some countries are doing to increase revenue.

No responsible Government can afford to take this country to the brink of bankruptcy. Any honest, rational mind would acknowledge that this first Budget of *l'Alliance de l'Avenir* Government is a far-sighted Budget that will act as a brake towards the precipice. The once acknowledged European Union model, Ireland, is now in dire economic crisis and would only be able to survive thanks to a massive 90 billion Euro bail-out loan from the IMF and Europe. Greece, once a prosperous economy, has just recently undergone the worst economic crisis of its history. Spain and to a lesser extent, other European countries have had to take drastic measures, to put their ailing economies back on track. All this happened due to lack of political will and far-sightedness. The price to be paid by the people of these countries will be very high indeed. The Euro zone crisis has hit us hard and we must be well armed to face the worst that is yet to come.

Mr Speaker, Sir, no reasonable person would wish to see this happen to our country. This Budget reflects the strong determination of Government, to show to our people and to the world, that even, if we are a small nation, we are wise enough to draw lessons from the experience of other big countries. Not later than this week, the Director General of the World Bank acknowledged that Mauritius has a competent Government, ready to take up challenges and we can serve as a model to the rest of Africa.

We must be proud, Mr Speaker, Sir, that thanks to our vision and hard work, we have been quite resilient and have been able to contain the effects of the global economic and financial crisis. Besides, the Euro zone crisis has compelled us, to rethink our strategy and diversify our market. A Budget *'juste pour faire la bouche doux'*, would have aggravated our problems linked to external factors.

Yet, it is comforting to note that, in spite of all these difficulties, the Budget presented last week does not ignore the human side of our society. The social measure announced in this Budget would alleviate the sufferings of the poorest sections of our population.

Mr Speaker, Sir, a country cannot progress and its economy cannot grow, if it does not have an effective and efficient public sector, adequately manned by the right employees in the right job at the right time. This Budget has announced a series of measures geared towards the modernisation of our public sector. Among them, I can mention the e-service initiatives to improve the service quality, transformation of our bureaucracy into a more result and output oriented system that would encourage entrepreneurial and innovative practices as laudable measures. Success cannot be achieved on this front, if we do not invest in our people.

This Budget formulates clear, credible, and ambitious and growth friendly fiscal consolidation plans. It does not create hopes artificially, but tackles the root causes of economic and social problems. This has been clearly demonstrated in the host of measures, taken to boost the hopes and aspirations of small planters in the sugar sector, which was at one time the main pillar of our economy. This Budget has given new lifeline to the sugar sector, through the ten new measures introduced to assist the beneficiaries.

The vast array of measures contained in this Budget will no doubt facilitate economic growth and sustainable development. The existing measures have been enhanced further and a number of new measures have been introduced to keep pace with the development trends and to enlarge the economic base of the country.

This Budget strives to promote Mauritius as a Knowledge Centre of Excellence and Health Centre of Excellence, with a view to making the country an important hub in the region, in the health and education sectors. Hence, measures have been taken to allow a larger number of students to benefit from the subsidy on the SC and HSC fees. The number of State scholarships has been increased from 12 to 50 laureates and students from families with modest income will be targeted.

We have gone a long way in addressing the social needs of our people by providing water, electricity, health care facilities, schools, social security, houses, road infrastructure, the list is long. Furthermore, this Government is supporting families with lower income to purchase a water tank, with a cash grant of Rs3,000 and the Solar Water Heater Scheme has been

reinstated. Addressing health issues, necessary measures have been taken to tackle the problem of proliferation of gambling outlets and the consumption of alcohol and tobacco in the country. In addition to that, our elders will benefit from Recreational Centres, which will be constructed in the North, at Pointe aux Piments and in the South, at Riambel.

Mr Speaker, Sir, we acknowledge the critical and sterling role public officers have played and continue to play in the transformation, reconstruction and development of this country. We are conscious of the significant role of an effective and efficient public service in building our society and the economy. We must remember that democracy and successful governance are built on the foundation of a competent Civil Service.

Mr Speaker, Sir, we should recognise that all the achievements and development we have witnessed since independence would not have been possible without the active contributions of both the public and private sectors. Here, I must point out that most public officers, from the lowest to the highest rungs of the ladder, work from behind the scene quietly, diligently and unnoticed. Thousands of them serve the country every day and I want to take this opportunity to congratulate all those dedicated and commitment officers for their contributions.

In my intervention during the debate on the Presidential Address, I did mention the vision of this Government to transform the Civil Service into a Smarter Civil Service. In order to achieve this vision, I have highlighted the urgent need for three main thrusts that will have profound effects for the development and progress of the Civil Service in coming years.

I am more than happy that this Budget has made provisions for those three key issues, for modernising the Civil Service through enhanced reforms programmes. These three issues relate to the following -

- 1) the establishment of a national policy and strategy to guide Human Resource Planning;
- 2) the programme for enhancement of work environment in the Civil Service, and
- 3) the project for setting up of a Public Service Training College.

For the Government to achieve the national development goals, it is vital for the public service to identify and implement viable strategies, to ensure that the public sector has the right mix of people, knowledge, skills and behaviours for now and the future. However, there is need

to have a framework to assist the public service to determine the human resource development plans. Successful organisations continuously identify and adopt innovative human resource management policies and practices to sustain the competitive advantage. This Budget will pave the way for the public sector organisations in this direction.

My Ministry is conscious that the procedures for prescribing a Scheme of Service are considered to be time consuming and it acts as an impediment in some cases for filling of posts in the Civil Service. My Ministry has already started working on a series of measures to streamline the processes and procedures. In this context, discussions have been initiated with the stakeholders with a view to revisiting the procedures so as to curtail the processing time. I must inform the House that I am giving a personal attention to this matter and my Ministry is expediting actions to finalise the outstanding Schemes.

Moreover, as the vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Finance stated in the Budget Speech, Government will, whenever necessary, seek delegation of powers from the Public Service Commission for recruitment under such conditions as may be prescribed by the Commission. There is no need to create a storm in a tea cup. The provisions for delegation of powers already exist in the Constitution of Mauritius at section 89. Mr Speaker, Sir, my Ministry is also spearheading the introduction of the Performance Management System in the Civil Service. The PMS is a major strategic reform initiative which aims to improve the overall management of public organisations and ensure productivity gains at various levels within the organisation. This project, which was initiated in 2006, is expected to be rolled out by December 2010 across the Civil Service. More than 40,000 public officers have already signed their Performance Agreement Forms. Necessary steps are being taken to evaluate and consolidate the system.

My Ministry will also ensure that work environments are safe, secure and healthy. Wide experience from countries has shown that a healthy economy, high quality of products or services and long-term productivity gains are difficult to achieve in poor working conditions with employees who are exposed to health and safety hazards. On the other hand, the most successful economies have demonstrated that workplaces designed according to good principles of occupational health and safety ergonomics are the most sustainable and productive. We cannot afford not to pay attention to the work environment of public officers at a time when we are

striving to create a smarter civil service, a civil service for the 21st Century. Mr Speaker, Sir, we are at the time of change, a time when safety and health and environmental issues are being given the attention they deserve. My Ministry has the vision not only to provide a quality and rapid service to the population, but it is also duty-bound to ensure that public officers operate in a safe and healthy working environment. We will ensure that a safety culture within the civil service is being fostered and upheld. Visits carried out by my Ministry in various public sector organisations have revealed major non-conformities with respect to safety and health at work. These can have direct incidence or bearing on the well-being of public officers.

However, in some cases, necessary remedial actions could not be taken due to lack of funds. While we have achieved much in the recent years, we can do more to support Ministries and Departments to ensure workplaces are safer and healthier particularly given the changing work patterns and our goal to promote the well-being of public officers. Action and achievement are now the watch words. We need nothing less than a step change improvement in the safety and health over the years to come. My Ministry, as a caring employer, is taking a step ahead to not only improve but also to enhance the working environment in which public officers are working. Public officers, our human capital, deserve, in some cases, better work environment as a necessity the more so when we are working towards a modern civil service.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I am thankful to the vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Development for having provided in this Budget a dedicated item for the enhancement of work environment which will pave the way towards a smarter civil service.

Mr Speaker, Sir, my Ministry has already started working towards the establishment of a Medical Insurance Scheme as recommended in the PRB. In this context, the PRB and the SICOM have been consulted and the latter has made a first proposal which has been examined by my Ministry. As it was considered to be incomplete, SICOM has been requested to review the proposal and to come up with a comprehensive scheme. Once the revised proposal is obtained, all stakeholders will be consulted before a proposal is made to the Government.

Mr Speaker, Sir, our endeavour to transform the Mauritian public sector into a world class one has already started bearing its fruits, but we are conscious that our people have to continually update their knowledge, aptitude and skills through lifelong learning, training and development. As the business environment keeps on changing, we have to adapt ourselves to

these changes. My Ministry strongly believes in training and development and capacity-building. We have invested quite a lot to upgrade the competencies of our public officers from all grades, from the lowest rung of the ladder to the higher echelon. However, we are aware that we could not have done more and we should if we really want our public sector to keep pace with the developmental trends in a dynamic world. During my mission to Malta last month, I have had consultations with the Commonwealth Secretariat for assistance to set up the Public Service Training Sector. This centre, Mr Speaker, Sir, will focus on a specific and practical training programme for public officers as well as induction courses for new recruits. In the longer term, we will develop the appropriate linkages with regional centres with a view to extending our training services to public officers in the region. This will, no doubt, provide an opportunity for our public officers to rub shoulders with their counterparts and benefit from an international exposure.

I am pleased to inform the House that the Commonwealth Secretariat has responded promptly and positively by arranging for the Director of the Civil Service College of Singapore to visit Mauritius in January 2011 to discuss the modalities of the feasibility study to set up our training centre. We sincerely hope that when the project materializes, it will be another important milestone in this present Government's mandate. Mr Speaker, Sir, as I said earlier, we cannot build a smarter civil service unilaterally. This requires the collaboration and cooperation of one and all. In this context, I want to reassure the House that I would continue to foster and promote a harmonious dialogue with all stakeholders, including the unions and the federations.

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is said that a 'good budget' is one that is loaded with goodies and a 'good Government' is one that presents good budgets. The test of a Government is how it looks after those who are most vulnerable, not just in good times but also in difficult times. I would like to relate this budget to a saying which goes as follows, I quote –

“We can't change the British winter, but learning how to cope with the stress can put a spring in your step”.

To conclude, Mr Speaker, Sir, in a nutshell, this budget has been crafted by the vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Development and with the full support and able guidance of Dr. the hon. Navinchandra Ramgoolam, Prime Minister and Leader of

L'Alliance de L'Avenir, to face the challenges of the winter and to bring economic growth and sustainable development to the doorstep of every Mauritian.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I thank you.

(5.19 p.m.)

Mr T. Henry (Third Member for Mahebourg & Plaine Magnien): M. le président, tout d'abord, je voudrais féliciter le Premier ministre, le Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam et son gouvernement pour le présent budget. Je tiens également à saluer le travail abattu par le vice-Premier ministre et ministre des finances, l'honorable Pravind Jugnauth, ainsi que toute l'équipe.

Ce gouvernement, M. le président, a réussi - malgré la conjoncture économique actuelle dont tout le monde s'accorde à dire - à présenter un budget résolument social, qui répond non seulement à des problèmes ponctuels mais c'est aussi un budget social tourné vers l'avenir.

Mr Speaker, Sir, we all know that the world is facing serious economic crisis, especially the countries in the Euro Zone. Its impact is more likely to adversely affect small countries like ours. No need for me to go into statistics or economic analysis to support the obvious. My intervention, Mr Speaker, Sir, will focus on three major parts of the Budget which, in my opinion, will no doubt play a major role in building up of the Mauritius of tomorrow. First, the social integration; second, the education and third, the Small and Medium Enterprise. These measures are related.

Après un parcours, que je qualifierais d'excellent et productif au ministère du tourisme et des loisirs, lors du précédent mandat, mon *Leader*, le vice-Premier ministre, l'honorable Xavier-Luc Duval, s'attelle pour ce nouveau mandat à l'intégration sociale, soit de combattre la pauvreté sous toutes ces formes. Avec un tel bilan au tourisme, je n'ai aucun doute qu'il aura un bilan tout aussi positif, voire meilleur, en ce qui concerne l'intégration sociale.

(Interruptions)

M. le président, le combat contre la pauvreté nécessite des interventions à plusieurs niveaux dans divers domaines. Nous connaissons tous, dans cette auguste Assemblée, l'importance d'un toit pour toute une famille. M. le président, le ministère de l'intégration sociale mettra en œuvre un *comprehensive housing with good living*, étalé sur dix ans. Il est prévu de construire pas moins de 700 maisons par année pour les familles touchant moins de R

5,000 et cela rien que pour l'année 2011. Une enveloppe budgétaire de R 400 millions est prévue à cet effet et cela, M. le président, ne constitue qu'une partie de ce programme.

Une des priorités du ministère concerne les enfants qui représentent l'avenir. Des crèches seront mises en place à travers l'île, dans des régions ciblées, de même que les écoles pré-primaires ouvriront leurs portes. M. le président, un budget de R 100 millions sera injecté pour le bien-être de quelque 10,000 enfants venant de familles vulnérables. L'intégration sociale, M. le président, s'applique également aux autrement capables, qui doivent faire totalement partie de la société mauricienne. Dans cette optique, le ministère de l'intégration sociale, privilégie la formation et l'accès au travail des autrement capables.

L'intégration sociale, M. le président, doit également profiter aux ex-prisonniers. Les programmes de réinsertion, encore une fois, accès sur l'emploi sera développé. Les ex-prisonniers seront associés au projet Maurice Ile Durable en étant la base du projet gouvernementale de fabrication de sacs en papier pour le remplacement de sacs en plastique. Tous ces projets visent à *empower* les personnes en situation difficile et non pas les assister. La *National Empowerment Foundation*, le fer de lance de *l'empowerment*, mettra l'accès sur la formation en mettant en place un *training programme* ainsi que la construction d'un centre de métiers est prévu. Il ne s'agira pas seulement de former, mais également de faciliter l'emploi à la sortie de ce programme. Il sera demandé aux entreprises employant des *unskilled expatriates*, d'employer des participants au programme de la NEF. Et cela ne constitue qu'une infime partie de l'action du ministère de l'intégration sociale.

S'agissant de l'éducation, M. le président, ce gouvernement veut s'assurer d'une éducation qui soit accessible à tous, quel que soit le niveau. Je voudrais, M. le président, féliciter ce gouvernement pour les modifications au *Government Scholarship Scheme*. Non seulement le nombre de lauréats va passer de 12 à 50, mais 24 de ces lauréats seront des étudiants issus de familles à faible revenu. C'est aussi, M. le président, l'exemple que le combat social est l'affaire de tous au sein de ce gouvernement.

Dans le même sens ce gouvernement a prévu de réduire le taux d'intérêt sur les *education loans*, octroyé par *l'Employee Welfare Fund*. Le taux d'intérêt sur les *loans* d'un montant maximum de R 500,000 passe de 7.5% à 5%. Pour les *loans* dépassant R 500,000, le taux passera de 10% à 5%.

Ce gouvernement, M. le président, se propose également d'augmenter le seuil de revenu familiale, au-dessous duquel les frais d'examens seront exemptés. Les seuils passeront de R 8,500 à R 14,500. Ce n'est qu'une partie des améliorations aux *School Certificate* et *HSC Examination Fee Scheme*. Ce *scheme* profitera à plus de 19,000 étudiants. Le projet de ce gouvernement, M. le président, est de faire de l'île Maurice de demain une Ile Maurice qualifiée.

Troisième et dernière partie de mon intervention, M. le président, concerne les petites et moyennes entreprises. Les petites et moyennes entreprises devront se développer et grandir pour galvaniser l'emploi et assurer la continuité pour le développement économique. Ce gouvernement, M. le président, a prévu des changements structurels. Une approche institutionnelle intégrée sera également mise en place. Ainsi, la SMEDA, la NPCC, la NICE, la NWECC, *l'Enterprise Mauritius*, agissant de concert avec la DFA. Ce regroupement sera coordonné par l'UBEB tombant sous la tutelle du ministre. La DBM sera transformée en *Development Finance Agency* afin d'apporter un soutien élargi aux petites et moyennes entreprises. *This agency will focus on support services and technical assistance to Small and Medium Enterprises*. Ces changements, M. le président, donnera, sans aucun doute, un nouveau dynamisme dans le secteur de petites et moyennes entreprises, contrairement à ce que pense le *leader* de l'Opposition. *The SMEs will have, as regards finance, the support of ERCP which will provide guarantees not only towards working capital, but also guarantees on import loans. The ERCP will also finance SMEs by providing support from factory.*

Je voudrais, maintenant, M. le président, parler des projets du ministère de la *National Development Unit* en ce qui concerne les circonscriptions Nos. 12, 19 et 20. Dans la circonscription No. 19, un terrain de volley-ball, de basket-ball au village de la Montagne à Rose Hill au coût de R 8 millions sera construit.

(Interruptions)

A Camp Levieux, M. le président, un terrain de basket-ball, volley-ball et d'un boulodrome sera construit au coût de R 8 millions. A Stanley, M. le président, R 1 billion sera injecté pour réhabiliter le boulodrome.

M. le président, en ce qui concerne la circonscription No. 20, une somme de R 4.6 millions a été déboursée pour le cimetière de St. Martin. Pour l'année prochaine, divers projets dans cette même circonscription seront enclenchés avec un budget total de R 18 millions.

These projects are: Upgrading of Cremation Ground at Chebel for the sum of Rs1 m.; Lighting of football ground at Camp Creole amounting to Rs3,500,000; seats of football ground for the sum of Rs2 m., lighting of volleyball pitch at Petite Rivière for the sum of Rs1,500,000 and finally, construction of drains à Epingle Street, Mont Roches at the sum of Rs3 m.; and Gomany and Pavé D'Amour Streets in Coromandel at the cost of Rs5 m.

J'espère, M. le président, que mon ami, l'honorable Rajesh Bhagwan, saura apprécier les développements prévus dans la circonscription.

En ce qui concerne ma circonscription, le No. 12, M. le président, mon colistier, qui est également *PPS*, l'honorable Mahen Jhugroo, a déjà élaboré sur les développements à venir dans toute la circonscription. Donc, je n'ai pas grand-chose à ajouter parce qu'on travaille ensemble avec l'honorable Dr. Bunwaree. On est trois députés, on travaille main dans la main pour l'avancement de notre circonscription.

En tant que député de la circonscription No. 12, M. le président, je tiens à remercier le gouvernement pour le projet d'envergure que constitue l'extension de l'Aéroport Sir Seewoosagar Ramgoolam. Je tiens également à apporter tout mon soutien au projet futur du port de Mahebourg.

Avant de finir, M. le président, je ne peux pas m'empêcher d'informer l'Opposition, qui a tant critiqué et dénigré le *branding* en général, que cette même campagne autour du *brand* a remporté le premier prix sur *BBC World* devant de grands pays comme l'Australie, la Nouvelle Zélande et le Canada. C'est un plaisir messieurs.

(Interruptions)

Finalement, M. le président, j'invite l'Opposition à venir de l'avant avec des propositions concrètes au lieu de critiquer pour critiquer, car nous le savons bien « l'art est difficile et la critique est aisée. »

Je vous remercie, M. le président.

Mr Soodhun: Sir, I move that the debate be now adjourned.

Mr Virahsawmy rose and seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

Debate adjourned accordingly.

ADJOURNMENT

The Deputy Prime Minister: Sir, I beg to move that this Assembly do now adjourn to Monday 29 November 2010, at 11.30 a.m.

The vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment (Mr X. L. Duval) rose and seconded.

Mr Speaker: The House stands adjourned.

MATTERS RAISED

(5.32 p.m.)

CAMP DE MASQUE CEMETERY – UPGRADING WORKS

Mr J. Seetaram (Second Member for Montagne Blanche & GRSE): Mr Speaker, Sir, I will be very brief for I have only one issue to raise. It concerns strictly the cemetery situated at the junction road from L'Unité towards Fuel at Camp de Masque. The cemetery needs upgrading and cleaning.

This matter concerns the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Public Infrastructure as well as the Ministry of Local Government.

I shall put those requests as follows. The state of the cemetery needs quite a bit of work to be attended to. Further, it needs the erection of a fence. There is also no water supply connection to that cemetery; the road needs to be tarred and the pathway leading to that cemetery needs to be upgraded. The travellers going to that cemetery, that is, road users would obviously attend cremation and if a bus stop could be erected accordingly. I would be very grateful if the relevant Ministries could be communicated same. Thank you.

VALLEE PITOT CANAL – UPGRADING WORKS

Mr R. Uteem (Second Member for Port Louis South & Port Louis Central): Mr Speaker, Sir, this is for the hon. Minister of Public Infrastructure and National Development Unit - who is not here - but it may also concern the Ministry of Local Government.

It is in respect of a canal in the area of Vallée Pitot. I know that residents of my constituency have made petitions and sent a letter to the hon. Deputy Prime Minister and, to my hon. friend, Mr Hossen. There is a canal which links Gal de Mar Street to Sauzier Street in Vallée Pitot and whenever there is heavy rainfall it is always over flooded and, in times of dryness, it is used as a dumping ground by local inhabitants. This situation is creating a lot of odour problems. Could the Minister please look into it and ensure that the canal is cleaned and repaired? Thank you.

The Minister of Local Government and Outer Island (Mr H. Aimée): Mr Speaker, Sir, I take note. I can assure both Members that the needful will be done.

FARQUHAR & LA REINE STREETS – MARCHANDS AMBULANTS

Mr A. Ameer Meea (First Member for Port Louis Maritime & Port Louis East): Mr Speaker, Sir, I have a concern in my Constituency which is Port Louis Maritime. Des marchands ambulants et des marchands de légumes sont venus me voir ce matin par rapport à la rue Farquhar et la rue La Reine respectivement. Ces marchands sont venus me dire qu'ils sont harcelés par les inspecteurs municipaux et qu'ils n'arrivent pas à travailler. Ces inspecteurs municipaux saisissent leurs articles. Ils ne portent pas de badges, pas d'uniformes et ne sont pas accompagnés par des policiers. Laissez-moi rappeler au ministre des administrations locales ce qu'il a dit à la session parlementaire du 16 novembre. Il a dit que, « *on humanitarian ground* »

Mr Speaker: There is no need for the hon. Member to quote. He just has to make his point.

(Interruptions)

Mr Ameer Meea : C'est par rapport à l'engagement que le ministre a pris. Il a dit qu'il allait laisser ces marchands-là travailler sur une base humanitaire. Donc, mon point est qu'il laisse ces gens travailler sur une base humanitaire et que ces inspecteurs municipaux agissent dans le respect des lois et des règles. Je voudrais attirer l'attention du ministre que ces gens-là sont accompagnés par des gros bras qui ne sont même pas des travailleurs municipaux. Donc, il

faut que tout ça cesse et qu'on laisse ces gens de la rue Farquhar et de la rue La Reine travailler tranquillement.

Merci, M. le président.

The Minister of Local Government and Outer Island (Mr H. Aimée): Mr Speaker, Sir, everybody can accuse everybody in this country without substantiating what they are saying. This is democracy.

M. le président, je pense que l'honorable membre n'a pas bien écouté ce que j'ai dit sur ce sujet précis. J'ai dit que je suis d'accord for *them to earn a living*, mais dans le respect comme vous dites, pas aux pieds des portes des magasins. Comme vous parlez justement de la rue Farquhar, il y a un jugement de la cour suprême que nous devons respecter à la municipalité, aux *local authorities*. Je dois dire, ici, que les marchands ambulants ne peuvent pas travailler à la rue Farquhar. Ce n'est pas normal. Merci.

MORALITY CERTIFICATES

Mr V. Baloomoody (Third Member for GRNW & Port Louis West): Mr Speaker, Sir, I have an issue which is quite urgent concerning the Police. As you are aware, Mr Speaker, Sir, some people do get individual sentence. They are required, after being guilty for an offence, to pay fines and to provide a surety for good conduct for two years. After those two years, if there has been good conduct, they must have a certificate from an appropriate authority to get their money refunded. Normally, we are talking about Rs10,000 to Rs20,000. In the past, the office which looked after certificates of morality used to give a certificate that this person, the accused, has been of good conduct for two years. Unfortunately, the decision has been taken by the DPP that the office issuing morality certificates will no longer issue that certificate. They only issue a certificate of morality 10 years after the conviction.

I have personally spoken to the DPP and, according to him, it is the Police who should give a certificate, certifying that accused has not committed any offence or even been arrested during the two years but, unfortunately, the Police is not issuing those certificates. This is creating tremendous difficulties for people who have borrowed money and who have behaved themselves for two years and they can't get refunded.

I will humbly ask the hon. Deputy Prime Minister to look into the matter urgently. This concerns especially poor people and if they have been of good conduct they should get their money back and it is urgent. Thank you.

Mr S. Obeegadoo (Third Member for Curepipe & Midlands): I have a short matter for the Minister of Public Utilities. Some time ago, I intervened at Adjournment time concerning necessary sewerage works at Camp Le Juge and that has been done. Well, thanks for that. However, as it often happens, the works have been entrusted to an individual contractor who has dug up the road, laid the pipes and then gone away without reinstating the road. Now, this accounts for an uneven surface, a very muddy area. People have even fallen down and injured themselves. So, my appeal would be to the hon. Minister, if he could kindly intervene to ensure that proper reinstatement is effected as soon as possible. Thank you.

The Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Energy and Public Utilities (Dr. R. Beebeejaun): Mr Speaker, Sir, I take note certainly, but I would like to inform the House that for many, many months now, we have a Unit that liaises between the Ministry and the works. I'll send to each Member of the House the address and phone number of the person who looks after it so they can attend to it immediately.

At 5.41 p.m., the Assembly was, on its rising, adjourned to Monday 29 November 2010, at 11.30 a.m.

PNQ

Appendix

CLIMATE CHANGE –

UNITED NATIONS COPENHAGEN SUMMIT CLIMATE

List of Current and Forthcoming Projects

- (i) The “*Maurice Ile Durable*” programme which also aims towards promoting sustainable development. Emphasis has been laid on increasing reliance on renewable energy, while aiming at decreasing importation and therefore reduction in the use of non renewable fossil fuel. The scope of the programme is being reviewed to cater for other initiatives to mitigate and to adapt to climate change.

- (ii) Replacement of all street lighting with energy saving lamps over the next five years.
- (iii) Replacement of incandescent bulbs with energy saving lamps. The target has been doubled from 1 million to 2 million lamps.
- (iv) Incentives under the Solar Water-heater Scheme which has already enabled 23,628 households to acquire solar water heaters in Mauritius and Rodrigues. This scheme will continue and target another 50,000 households in the coming years.
- (v) A Hydro Unit has already been set up at La Nicolière and one is being envisaged at Midlands. Also, two wind parks of a total of about 30 mega watts, one at Curepipe Point and one at Plaine des Roches are envisaged by 2012.
- (vi) Installation work on four wind turbines in Rodrigues is in progress.
- (vii) Development of a National Grid Code to enable CEB to purchase electricity from Small Independent Power Producers (SIPPs) that adhere to the democratisation programme of the Government and to the policy of promoting clean, renewable and local energy sources.
- (viii) Government will be working out a green performance framework for new and existing public buildings. This includes energy auditing of 5 major public buildings, 27 manufacturing establishments as well as 18 small and medium hotels and 14 restaurants, amongst others.
- (ix) To sustain our energy saving initiatives, an Energy Efficiency Bill which is being finalised will introduce a regulatory framework for labelling household electric appliances on the basis of their energy efficiency and give the Ministry of Renewable Energy the authority to impose carbon taxes on energy inefficient appliances. It also provides for the setting up of the Energy Management Office.
- (x) We are seeking assistance from the French Government for the setting up of an observatory of climate change which will enable all stakeholders to take informed decision.
- (xi) The Land Based Oceanic Industry will be a key contributor to generating energy savings as cold deep sea water will be used for air conditioning.
- (xii) Implementation of major Road Decongestion Programme.
- (xiii) Planting of one million trees which act as sink to carbon dioxide, as well as maintenance of habitat.
- (xiv) Plaine des Roches wind farm project.

List of forthcoming projects addressing climate change mitigation and adaptation for which international support is being sought -

- a) Climate Proofing of Key Economic Sectors of the Republic of Mauritius.
- b) Development of a Roadmap for climate change mitigation.
- c) Preparation of A National Mitigation Strategy and Action Plan.

- d) Setting up of an “*Observatoire national du changement climatique*”.
- e) Climate change adaptation programme in the coastal zone of Mauritius.

Project related to coastal zone -

- f) **Cap Malheureux:** Repair of gabions over 100 m., signboard, plantation of creepers, wooden staircase on piles over 5 m. in height.
- g) **Bain Boeuf:** Rehabilitation of the existing rock walls in terrace over 250 m beach frontage and 3 rows of terrace.
- h) **Poudre d’Or:** Rock revetment of over 300 m from the jetty to the Mandir.
- i) **Rivière Noire:** Feasibility study on the extent of rock revetment will be undertaken.