



SIXTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

PARLIAMENTARY

DEBATES

(HANSARD)

FIRST SESSION

THURSDAY 26 FEBRUARY 2015

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Hon. Sir Anerood Jugnauth, GCSK, KCMG, QC	Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Affairs, Minister for Rodrigues and National Development Unit
Hon. Charles Gaëtan Xavier-Luc Duval, GCSK	Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism and External Communications
Hon. Showkutally Soodhun	Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Housing and Lands
Hon. Ivan Leslie Collendavelloo	Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Energy and Public Utilities
Hon. Seetanah Lutchmeenaraidoo	Minister of Finance and Economic Development
Hon. Pravind Kumar Jugnauth	Minister of Technology, Communication and Innovation
Hon. Yogida Sawmynaden	Minister of Youth and Sports
Hon. Nandcoomar Bodha	Minister of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport
Hon. Mrs Leela Devi Dookun-Luchoomun	Minister of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research
Hon. Anil Kumarsingh Gayan	Minister of Health and Quality of Life
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Hon. Prithvirajsing Roopun	Minister of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment
Hon. Marie Joseph Noël Etienne Ghislain Sinatambou	Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade
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Hon. Premdut Koonjoo	Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands
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Hon. Soodesh Satkam Callichurn	Minister of Labour, Industrial Relations, Employment and Training

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MAURITIUS

Sixth National Assembly

FIRST SESSION

Debate No. 05 of 2015

Sitting of 26 February 2015

The Assembly met in the Assembly House, Port Louis at 11.30 a.m.

The National Anthem was played

(Madam Speaker in the Chair)

ORAL ANSWER TO QUESTION**CHAGOS ARCHIPELAGO & TROMELIN ISLAND – MAURITIUS SOVEREIGNTY**

The Leader of the Opposition (Mr P. Bérenger) (*by Private Notice*) asked the Rt. hon. Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Affairs, Minister for Rodrigues and National Development Unit whether, in regard to the sovereignty of Mauritius over the Chagos Archipelago and over the Tromelin Island, he will state –

- (a) where matters stand before the United Nations Arbitration Tribunal on the Chagos Archipelago Marine Protected Area;
- (b) what initiatives Mauritius is taking on the Chagos Archipelago sovereignty issue at this 2016 turning point, and
- (c) if Mauritius has confirmed to France its decision not to go ahead with the 2010 “*Accord-cadre sur la co-gestion de l’île Tromelin*”, and if so, indicate whether discussions over the sovereignty issues have started.

The Prime Minister: Madam Speaker, as the House is aware, it has always been the unequivocal stand of Mauritius that the Chagos Archipelago, including Diego Garcia and Tromelin form an integral part of its territory.

In line with its commitment to ensure that the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Mauritius are fully respected and safeguarded, Government will spare no efforts so that Mauritius can effectively exercise its sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago and Tromelin.

Madam Speaker, let me also remind the House that in the Government Programme 2015/2019, we have expressed our concern at the lack of progress to resolve the long-standing dispute over the Chagos Archipelago and we have pledged to speed up diplomatic talks with the UK and the US Governments and actively seek the support of the international community in this respect.

Madam Speaker, in regard to part (a) of the question, as the House is aware, Mauritius initiated on 20 December 2010 proceedings against the UK under Article 287 of, and Annex VII to, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) to challenge the legality of the ‘marine protected area’ which the UK has purported to establish around the Chagos Archipelago. Mauritius considers, *inter alia*, that the UK, not being a “coastal State” under UNCLOS and international law, had no authority to establish a marine protected area around the Chagos Archipelago.

Since Mauritius and the UK did not agree on the means for the settlement of the dispute, it has been submitted to arbitration in accordance with Annex VII to UNCLOS. In this respect, an Arbitral Tribunal, consisting of five members, including three Judges of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, has been set up.

The team of Counsel who have assisted Mauritius in this case includes prominent lawyers such as Mr Philippe Sands QC, Professor of Law, University College, London and Mr Paul Reichler of Foley Hoag, a law firm in Washington, DC. Professor James Crawford who was Whewell Professor of International Law at the University of Cambridge was also part of the team prior to his assumption of the post of Judge of the International Court of Justice on 06 February 2015.

In accordance with the timetable which was initially set by the Arbitral Tribunal for the filing of pleadings by Mauritius and the UK on the merits of the case, Mauritius filed its Memorial on 01 August 2012.

The UK subsequently raised, on 31 October 2012, preliminary objections to the jurisdiction of the Arbitral Tribunal in respect of the dispute. The UK also requested that its preliminary objections be dealt with as a preliminary matter and that in case that request is not accepted by Mauritius, a separate hearing be held on the procedure to be followed in dealing with its preliminary objections.

After consideration of the written submissions of the Parties and their oral submissions at the hearing held on 11 January 2013 in Dubai, the Arbitral Tribunal adopted on 15 January 2013 a Procedural Order, ordering that -

- (a) the UK's request that its preliminary objections to the jurisdiction of the Tribunal be dealt with in a separate jurisdictional phase as a preliminary matter is rejected, and
- (b) the UK's preliminary objections will be considered with the proceedings on the merits.

At the request of the Arbitral Tribunal, Mauritius and the UK engaged in consultations with a view to reaching agreement on a revised schedule for the filing of the remaining pleadings on the merits of the case. Pursuant to the revised timetable, the UK's Counter-Memorial was filed on 15 July 2013, Mauritius' Reply on 18 November 2013 and the UK's Rejoinder on 17 March 2014.

Thereafter, the Arbitral Tribunal held a hearing from 22 April to 09 May 2014 in Istanbul, Turkey on both the merits and the preliminary objections raised by the UK. The Award of the Tribunal is awaited. The Tribunal has, in a letter to the Parties dated 17 November 2014, indicated that it would not issue its Award before the end of 2014 and that it would later provide the Parties with an update on the anticipated date of issue of the Award.

In reply to part (b) of the question, as I have mentioned earlier, Government is much concerned at the lack of progress made so far to resolve the long-standing sovereignty dispute over the Chagos Archipelago.

In view of the expiry in 2016 of the initial 50-year period of the UK-US agreement in respect of the Chagos Archipelago, Government is currently considering the diplomatic and other strategies to adopt with regard to an eventual agreement, bearing in mind that the US considers that Diego Garcia continues to be of strategic importance.

In keeping with the bi-partisan approach we have always adopted on issues of national importance, the hon. Leader of the Opposition will be consulted at the appropriate time.

In regard to part (c) of the question, pending the settlement of the sovereignty dispute between Mauritius and France over Tromelin, the two countries reached an agreement in 2010 on the co-management of Tromelin, without prejudice to the sovereignty of Mauritius over the island.

I am informed that when the former Prime Minister met the French President on 03 October 2014 in Paris, he said that since there had been considerable delay in the adoption by the French National Assembly of the Bill relating to the ratification by France of the co-management agreement, the whole question of sovereignty should be revisited and that he was no longer in favour of the ratification of the agreement.

He proposed that if France were to acknowledge the sovereignty rights of Mauritius over Tromelin, Mauritius would be ready to conclude a new bilateral agreement with France for the sharing, on a 50/50 basis, of the natural, mineral and other resources of Tromelin, and their joint exploitation on the same basis. The French President indicated that the proposal made by the former Prime Minister would be considered by the French Government. To date, there has been no reaction from the French Government to that proposal.

Government intends to press for the early resolution of the dispute between Mauritius and France over Tromelin, in the spirit of friendship and trust that has always characterised the relationship between the two countries.

Madam Speaker, I would like to reaffirm, most emphatically, the commitment of my Government to ensure that the territorial integrity and sovereignty, and rights as well as security interests, of Mauritius are fully respected and safeguarded.

Mr Bérenger: Madam Speaker, on the first part of my question, that is, the UN Arbitral Tribunal sitting in The Hague, I have not heard any indication of when we can expect the Tribunal to come with the judgement, with the findings. Can I know from the Rt. hon. Prime Minister - since he refers to Professor Philippe Sands, who leads the team of lawyers on behalf of Mauritius; we know that he visited Mauritius recently - who represented Mauritius in discussions with Professor Sands?

The Prime Minister: As I have said already, the Tribunal has not set any specific date when its Award is going to be known. In a similar case, they have said that it will not be in 2014. Insofar as the second part of the question is concerned, I have not met Mr Sands and I do not know with whom he has discussed.

Mr Bérenger: I was a bit surprised, Madam Speaker, since Government says that it is dissatisfied with the lack of initiatives by the former Government on the Chagos Archipelago issue when the Cabinet *communiqué* relating to Cabinet decisions of 09 January 2015, stated that “Cabinet looked forward to the Award of the Arbitral Tribunal” which seems to be positive in tone in contrast to the general comment made. Can I know on what basis, that kind of comment, that we look forward to the arbitration pronouncement, is based?

The Prime Minister: Well, how can we do better than that? We are waiting for the Award. We look forward to get the Award. That is all we can do for the time being.

Mr Bérenger: Do we have any indication that indeed the Tribunal is going to consider –

- (i) Sovereignty, and
- (ii) whether we have any indication that once it considers that it can take a stand on sovereignty it will go our way?

The Prime Minister: I suppose both issues are interlinked. Therefore, that is my opinion; they will have to consider both.

Mr Bérenger: Last question on that part of my question. Can I ask the Rt. hon. Prime Minister whether he has looked into it that it is confirmed that there can be no appeal against the pronouncement of the Arbitral tribunal? That is, if it rules against Mauritius, there is no appeal against that ruling.

The Prime Minister: Well, I cannot answer that. I have not looked into it.

Mr Bérenger: Fortunately that is the case. Madam Speaker, as the Rt. hon. Prime Minister said, 2015 is the turning point because the agreement between London and Washington in 1966 was for 50 years, and it was in the agreement that should either party, UK or United States, want to change anything in the agreement or put an end to it, they would have to make a move in 2015 or 2016, and if there is no move, it is renewed automatically for 20 years. Surely the Rt. hon. Prime Minister will agree with me that if that agreement is renewed for a further 20 years, it will make our case even more difficult. Can I ask the Rt. hon. Prime Minister whether this issue of discussions, supposedly, possibly taking place this year or next year and the role of Mauritius, our stand on sovereignty, has been discussed with either London or Washington or both?

The Prime Minister: I do not know what the previous Government has done, whether they have had certain discussions. I am not aware of it. Our stand is very clear; we have through diplomatic channel made it known that we will not agree to anything that is going to be done between these two parties alone. We want to be concerned and we want to be party to what takes place because we consider that the whole thing from the very beginning had been illegal. United Kingdom had no right to extract from our territory, before giving it its independence, any part of it. Whatever has been done is illegal and whatever is being done in that context, so far we are concerned, is illegal.

Mr Bérenger: From what I am hearing, Madam Speaker, it seems that there has been no contact between the new Prime Minister, Sir Anerood Jugnauth, and the Prime Minister of the UK and the President of the United States since the last elections, in particular, London. Can I know from the Rt. hon. Prime Minister whether we have tried to raise, at the highest level, the issue with London, being given this crucial turning point of 2016? I am asking whether London has refused to discuss the issue pending the Tribunal pronouncing itself on the case in The Haye. Is that the stand taken or have we simply not asked for the matter to be taken at the highest level with London?

The Prime Minister: I have had no chance of meeting either the Prime Minister of UK or the President of the United States of America. Insofar as the second part of the question is concerned, well, as I have said we have made it known what our stand through diplomatic channel is. For the time being, we could not do anything more than that.

Mr Bérenger: Well, for the time being! However, can I know whether the new Government is preparing action at any level, in case London and/or Washington do not wish to discuss the issue again? Are we considering new initiatives at the United Nations including the General Assembly or anywhere else, at the Commonwealth Summit, that are coming this year?

The Prime Minister: Definitely, we are working on it. We are considering the stand that we should take and we want the matter of sovereignty to be thrashed out once and for all. At this juncture, it will not be wise for me to give any details of what we intend to do.

Mr Bérenger: Can I know whether the Rt. hon. Prime Minister has had the opportunity since the last general elections of raising or discussing that issue with India, the friendly country that has been very helpful on that issue and, if not, whether it is the intention of Government to seek once more India's support when the Prime Minister of India visits Mauritius in a few days?

The Prime Minister: India has always been supporting us. I will certainly raise the matter with him. I have, throughout my political career, whenever I have been meeting Heads of Government of other countries, been raising this matter and have been asking for their support at the international level.

Mr Bérenger: If I can move on to Tromelin, Madam Speaker, it is indeed in 2010, on 07 June that the agreement for *co-gestion* was agreed upon by the two sides, Mauritius and France, and when the former Prime Minister was in Paris on 03 October 2014, being given that the agreement for *co-gestion* was for five years initially and more than four years after, it had still not been ratified by the French side, we are informed that the former Prime Minister asked President Hollande, in a way, in English, that enough is enough, and that Mauritius no longer wishes to go forward with the *co-gestion* agreement and we wish to discuss the sovereignty issue over Tromelin. Has there been any reaction on that part of my question, that is, discussions on the sovereignty issue, either in Paris or here with the French *Ambassadeur* in Mauritius on the sovereignty issue?

The Prime Minister: Well, as I have said, the former Prime Minister made his position clear. We were definitely taken for a ride and he has been waiting for the reaction of the President of France, but there has been so far no reaction and, unfortunately, since we are here now in Government, we have had no time to take up the matter with the President of France.

Mr Bérenger: I heard very strong, I would not say undiplomatic, but strong words, from the Rt. hon. Prime Minister that we were being taken for a ride by a friendly country, France.

(Interruptions)

I take note! My point is the following: being given that France, like India, is a friendly country, are we prepared in case we see no reaction from the French side, no move to discuss sovereignty, will we consider asking this friendly country which France is, to agree to arbitration before the International Court of Justice or any other Court for that matter but, obviously, the International Court of Justice is there for that kind of issue. If both sides agree, are we prepared to try and convince France to go for arbitration before the International Court of Justice?

The Prime Minister: We have not yet discussed at Government level what stand we are going to take. As soon as we are ready we will do the needful and we will approach the President.

Mr Bérenger: If I can have a last question before others coming, if they wish, Madam Speaker. For years, Madagascar and other friendly, brotherly countries next door to us, had been claiming sovereignty over all of the so-called *Iles Éparses*, including Tromelin - for years - and then it was in 1978 that I discussed the issue with then President Ratsiraka in Antananarivo and Madagascar agreed to stop claiming sovereignty, that Mauritius only would claim sovereignty over Tromelin and we would support their claim on the other *Iles Éparses*, and since then, the next year, 1979, Madagascar moved a resolution in the United Nations General Assembly, claiming sovereignty yet obtaining the support of the General Assembly for its sovereignty over the *Iles Éparses* and excluded Tromelin as we had agreed, and since then, on every occasion, Madagascar has kept that stand, but there is a new President in Madagascar and, here, now, Sir Aneerood Jugnauth as Prime Minister. Can I know whether we have taken the first opportunity or we will take the first opportunity to, in a friendly way, obtain from our Malagasy brothers and sisters that this stand is reconfirmed?

The Prime Minister: We certainly congratulate the Leader of the Opposition for having achieved that with Madagascar and we are very grateful to Madagascar for the stand that it has taken. We will certainly do what the Leader of the Opposition is suggesting, we will take it seriously.

Mr Ganoo: Madam Speaker, I heard the Rt. hon. Prime Minister mentioning in his answer when answering to part (b) of the question, that the hon. Leader of the Opposition will be consulted in due time. This is very positive and we appreciate that. Can I ask the Rt. hon. Prime Minister since this is an issue of national importance which concerns the whole nation and all the political parties in this House, shouldn't it be the case that, to transcend political considerations, wider consultations, more meaningful consultations – *une concertation plus large* - should take place between all political parties in this House and perhaps structure these consultations in the form of an All-Party Parliamentary Group or Committee which exists in the UK, for example, and this All-Party Committee, which should be across political parties, to be chaired by somebody who has showed long interest on that issue like hon. Minister Bodha or the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: Order! Can the hon. Members please allow the Rt. hon. Prime Minister to reply?

The Prime Minister: This question of Chagos Archipelago, Tromelin, is of national interest and in the interest of what we want to achieve, we want to have as wide consultations as possible but, at the same time, we have to be careful not to let things leak out that may cause prejudice beforehand to what we intend to do. Therefore, we have to take some care and precaution.

Mr Bérenger: One last question, with your permission, Madam Speaker. Being given that time is of the essence, 2016 is a turning point, my information Madam Speaker - and I don't know if the hon. Prime Minister has the same information - is that discussions between Washington and London on this agreement that will be renewed automatically for 20 years if there are no changes suggested by either side, have already started. Can I, therefore, insist that the Rt. hon. Prime Minister should, as soon as possible, take up the issue with both the Prime Minister of the UK, although elections are *derrière la porte*, and the President of the United States because time is of the essence?

The Prime Minister: I have already taken this matter even in the past with the President of the United States of America and the position of the United States has always been that they have nothing to do with Mauritius. They have dealt with UK. There is a lease agreement between United Kingdom and United States and, therefore, they always recommended us to go and deal with UK; and even with UK, I have been raising this matter on all occasions whenever I was Prime Minister, I was meeting the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister of UK made it always very clear that the day it is no longer required for the defence of the West, the Chagos Archipelago would be returned to Mauritius and full sovereignty will come back to Mauritius. And we are made to understand always that the threat to the West was the Soviet Union, the Cold War, but Cold War does not exist today. Today, what we hear now? This information that they are already negotiating, I have it also, I know. But can we stop them? Have we got the means to stop them? And you know, this is a matter with the UK, a question of might, might is right. They feel they are in a very strong position, they don't care to heed what we say, but that won't prevent us, of course, to approach them to do our best and I hope they will come to reason.

Madam Speaker: No more questions? Time is over!

MOTIONS

SUSPENSION OF S.O. 10 (2)

The Prime Minister: Madam Speaker, I 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.

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS - MOTION OF THANKS

Order read for resuming adjourned debate on the following motion of the hon. Second Member for Grand River North West and Port Louis West (Mrs D. Selvon).

"That an Address be presented to the President of the Republic of Mauritius in the following terms -

We, the Members of the Mauritius National Assembly, here assembled, beg leave to offer our thanks to the President of the Republic of Mauritius for the Speech which he has addressed to us on the occasion of the Opening of the First Session of the Sixth National Assembly."

Question again proposed.

(12.07 p.m.)

The Minister of Arts and Culture (Mr S. Baboo): Madam Speaker, I have the honour and pleasure to address this august Assembly for the first time today. First, let me seize this opportunity to congratulate you, Madam Speaker, upon your appointment as the first Lady Speaker of the National Assembly. I also wish to extend my congratulations to the hon. Adrien Duval, Deputy Speaker and youngest Member of the National Assembly. Indeed, this is what we call Meaningful Change, a change which has marked the history of the Republic of Mauritius.

My congratulation also goes to the Rt. hon. Prime Minister, Sir Anerood Jugnauth, "*un vrai sage*" for having inspired us all in this landslide victory of *l'Alliance Lepep* and for constituting a new Government according to the wish of the population – "*un gouvernement du peuple, par le peuple et pour le peuple.*" » I wish to assure the House that I will deliver to the best of my abilities as Minister of Arts and Culture and I shall leave no stone unturned to ensure that we achieve meaningful and sustainable change for the benefit of all citizens of the Republic.

I also express my sincere gratitude to my leader, the Deputy Prime Minister, hon. Xavier-Luc Duval for having put his trust in me. We all know how he has followed in the footsteps of the visionary, Sir Gaëtan Duval to serve the nation with dedication and passion for the last decades. Sir Gaëtan Duval never gave up in the face of adversity and he will continue to be a source of inspiration, a role model for the young generation and us.

Last but not least, I am grateful to the people of this country, for having called a halt to years of moral and socioeconomic decadence. I shall work to live up to their aspirations and expectations. I have been elected to build a castle for myself and I have not been elected to build a castle which will cause problems to the population. I shall endeavour to bring all our citizens under the same castle, "*une île Maurice meilleure*".

Madam Speaker, it is an ill wind that blows no one any good! In addition, the good news is that the people of Mauritius have created these dynamic winds of change to usher in a new era and a new team. It is not about yet another new team trying to play a new game, it is about a new winning team that is slowly but surely changing the rules of the game.

Better still, a game played on a level playing field. *Ce ne sera plus le règne des exceptions pour justifier la règle. Si nous allons faire des exceptions, ce sera pour le peuple dans son intégralité.*

We have closed the road that leads to the *hôtel de petits et grands coquins*, our *copains* are all the citizens of this Republic. What do these winds of change say? « *Coq fine chanter, soleil fine lever, caré caré nous alle de l'avant pou nou libère ça pays-là et pou amène li vers so destin* ». Indeed, we have started achieving a meaningful change as spelt out in the Government Programme.

Madam Speaker, as soon as the people of Mauritius brought in the Tempest of December last, we set ourselves to task. We did not wait till the Twelfth Night to give what we had promised: decent pension for our senior citizens and all the other vulnerable groups in our society! In addition, we are not playing a Comedy of Errors! We really mean business. Now it is no longer business as usual. We are bent upon putting an end to the Midsummer Night's Dream of those who confused their private property with the State's property: *l'État c'est moi*.

Unlike Shylock, we are not out to look for our pound of flesh! Far from that! The voters have already moved the Birnam wood till the Dunsinane Castle to slay tyranny! We are not trampling on those who have fallen heavily to the ground and reduced to a deafening silence. No, Madam Speaker! We only want justice to be done, and, more importantly, to be seen to be done because without the mirror of transparency, there is the danger of democracy being lulled into sleep.

We want our children to live in a society where respect for the rule of law and for institutions reign supreme. This population has already shown the door to those who manifested utter disrespect to an institution as august as our Parliament.

Madame la présidente, j'accuse ces parle-menteurs, ces parle-menteurs qui ont failli à leurs tâches de chiens de garde de la démocratie pour courtiser sans pudeur les aspirants monarques dans le dos de la population, tout en prenant honteusement l'argent du contribuable. J'accuse ceux qui ont traité l'institution qu'est la presse de tous les noms, car

celle-ci ne voulait pas être à leur solde! J'accuse ceux qui ont trahi les aspirations légitimes de leurs partisans en poignardant la sincérité dans le dos, avec leurs interminables épisodes de 'cause causer' à la sauce des telenovelas brésiliennes! *'Pas nek cause causer mam, bizin conner ki pe causer, parce qui ena ene jour ki appelle demain! Ça jour là même, mam fine virer!'*

Unsurprisingly, that day came, ushering a new era of hope and belief in a free, fair and egalitarian society. Madam Speaker, this is precisely what we are out to achieve through the Government Programme that was presented to the population on Tuesday 27 January 2015, aptly entitled 'Achieving Meaningful Change'.

The population has plebiscited this new vision which defines the contours of such a society, a vision full of hope for the future. It is worthy to mention that all those who addressed the House before me supported the Government Programme. I congratulate those Members of the Opposition who have been honest enough to appreciate the quality of the proposals made in the Government Programme.

As a caring Government, we shall bring about sea changes to empower our citizens and work towards improving the quality of life.

Madam Speaker, the vote of 10 December 2014 is unequivocal! The people sent winds of change to attack the era of corruption, nepotism and favouritism. This Government, under the able leadership of Sir Anerood Jugnauth, took the bull by the horns by creating a Ministry dedicated to ensuring good governance and fair dealing!

The Minister of Finance has, amongst others, announced a package of incentives to empower those who have driven an initiative in order to foster a nation of entrepreneurs.

The hon. Minister for Tourism has announced plans to diversify our markets and make Mauritius an up-market destination. The law and order situation is being revisited to afford better security to all.

We are taking measures to reduce the gap between the haves and the have-nots. To that end, Government has decided to remove VAT on a number of food items; we also propose to introduce a Minimum Wage Bill for those at the lower rung of the ladder. Our ultimate goal is to ensure social inclusion of the population and to protect those at the bottom of the ladder.

Madam Speaker, people and businesses need the proper environment and facilities in order to enjoy a meaningful life. We will adopt a sustainable environment policy with a view to ensuring a cleaner, greener and safer Mauritius. *Il n'y a pas que la misère économique, mais aussi la misère sociale!* How many libraries do we have in these orphan regions? Madame Speaker, I have been elected in the Constituency No. 16. There, we have many sports and recreational amenities that have been closed, such as Residence l'Oiseau.

How far do people have to walk, like in Residence Mangalkhan, to get access to primary health care? I can go on and on.

I am of a different metal, a different brand! I think positive and I see positive! Let bygones be bygones!

I have fathomed the depths of these problems and I shall make it a priority to address these shortcomings as far as possible, in close collaboration with all stakeholders. The citizens of this nation deserve better!

In the same vein, many novel initiatives will be brought up by other departments of this Government to make Mauritius a true post-card nation. So, Madam Speaker, riding on these winds of change, we are bringing in a new wave of investor and consumer confidence, a far cry from the morosity and deficit in leadership of last year.

We shall leverage on these feel-good factors to pave the way for the second miracle on the economic, social and cultural fronts; an inclusive miracle where we really put all the people first and no one is left behind.

We want to achieve an inclusive society where no child of this country feels he or she is a second-class citizen.

It is inadmissible, that in 2015, when we are talking of broadband, Wi-Fi, iPad and all, many people in this Republic still do not have the basic necessities of life; things as basic as water and housing.

This brings to my mind the harsh realities prevailing in my own Constituency, that is, Constituency No.16. During the electoral campaign, I was an eyewitness to the “*laisser-aller*” and sheer neglect in the infrastructure in some no-man’s lands.

La circonscription No. 16 est un réel choc des contrastes. D’un côté, vous avez des quartiers huppés comme River Walk avec ses millionnaires, « compter fini millions rester » et de l’autre côté, ceux comme les pauvres de Résidence l’Oiseau et Résidence Mangalkhan qui

n'ont pas de millions. « Millions pas enan, enan juste nerfs, pour affronte la misère et la précarité! »

Madam Speaker, now I move on to the subject matter of Arts and Culture and our vision for a refined Society. A society that upholds shared values, tolerance and our intention to promote the creative genius of Mauritians and make a high value addition to our GDP through our Creative Industries.

The four cardinal points of my vision are -

- less Government, more governance;
- empowerment of all stakeholders;
- innovation and facilitation, and
- nation building.

Implementation of this vision will require a departure from established norms. It is not about cosmetic changes, *changements pour la galerie*. It is not about changing the Emperor's clothes; it is about doing away with the Emperor himself!

Madam Speaker, we shall promote the creativity of Mauritians through the creative industries, which comprises of -

- the Music Industry;
- film and Broadcasting Industry;
- performing Arts and Fine Arts;
- design Industry;
- authors and composers;
- architecture;
- advertising;
- software and Games Industry, and
- publishing.

I must emphasise that the importance of arts and culture and its contribution to our economic and social well-being has not been properly recognised. Culture has been the vector of development of humankind since time immemorial and the importance of the human factor, beliefs, values, culture, and intercultural dialogue has to be acknowledged. We have to be able to use creativity and cultural expressions as a powerful instrument for human and social development.

To achieve human and social development, we have to create conducive conditions for the furtherance of the spiritual development of the nation. Pilgrimages to holy lands are an integral part of Mauritian life. Government will facilitate that such pilgrimages take place in the best possible conditions.

The integration of culture into development will definitely enhance the quality of life of the population with the Creative Industries as its main driver. It will bring supportive livelihood to creators, artists and performers as well as economic growth, thus allowing them to earn a decent living.

The Creative Industries should not be seen with blinkers. It has a wide manoeuvring spectrum. Culture is, therefore, a fundamental component of sustainable development.

Madam Speaker, the vulnerability of our creators, artists and performers to-day is a matter of great concern to this Government. Rapid changes in technology, the elimination of geographical barriers and the effects of globalisation are major challenges that have to be addressed immediately by this Government.

This is why my Ministry is proposing measures which will promote the Creative Industries as another pillar of the economy.

The Creative Industries encounter threats that need to be tackled to enable the process of creativity to continue.

Madam Speaker, allow me to elaborate on these threats and on the means to combat them -

One of the major threats faced by our artists is piracy, which hampers creativity. We have the problem of enforcement of the Copyright Law. While acknowledging the contribution of IT in all fields, we have yet to fight piracy faced by artists through the misuse of such developments.

Our policy on Copyright, will henceforth, be based on four important aspects, namely

- (1) legal norms;
- (2) licensing and contract;
- (3) enforcement, and
- (4) overall functioning of the Copyright system.

As regards the rights of artists, creators and performers, my Ministry will ensure that the Rights Management Society will work on these four aspects. We want transparency, accuracy, efficiency and good governance in the Management of the individual rights of artists, creators and performers.

Another threat to the Creative Industries is the Restrictions on the movement of artists. We have a very small market for our cultural goods. In fact, we do not have the critical mass required to enable the artists to draw a decent living from their art. Our creators have to explore other markets in the region. Our artists are constantly confronted with major hurdles such as visa, tax and work permit.

These problems will be addressed in consultation with artists, appropriate stakeholders and our friendly countries through our Cultural Exchange Programs.

We will see to it that our artists and creators benefit from the exposure, be it region-wise or at international level. Furthermore, the domestic market is saturated with imported cultural goods and products. This has damaging consequences on the process of creation, leading to erosion of local identities. We thus have to nurture the creative economy and transform the creative potential into economic reality by facilitating the sales of our cultural products.

Now, is the time to make the most of the economic opportunities offered by the Creative Industries and place it on the mainstream of the economy? It is an innovative sector that can no longer be ignored.

Madam Speaker, in the past decade, '*Lepep*' has witnessed a massive erosion of values. This Government will bring a new dynamism in the field of Arts and Culture for the benefit of the population. It will be geared towards the cultural, spiritual and moral upliftment of the citizens. Creators, artists and performers are the positive forces that can help us to solve many societal ills and problems.

Madam Speaker, we have to leapfrog from the preservation and promotion concept to economic realities. We have to make the future economically viable for our artists, creators and performers. Cultural entrepreneurs will be encouraged to set up Micro Enterprises. This will be a positive step towards empowering our artists and creators. It will contribute to capacity building, market mechanism, funding for innovation and growth, economic support providers and networking. We shall ensure that the fruits of economic development are shared equitably among all sections of the population.

I wish to thank the hon. Minister of Finance who announced that Rs10 billion will be placed at the disposal of SMEs for the development of Micro Enterprises. This incentive is most commendable since it will provide a new impetus to the creative sector and boost artistic creativity.

Cultural Entrepreneurship is the motor for developing Creative Industries. Cultural entrepreneurs, including artists and creators will have their share in the Rs10 billion announced in the form of Start-Ups and other schemes. In this respect, my Ministry will work in close collaboration with the Ministry of Business, Enterprise and Cooperatives and other relevant institutions and organizations. The Cultural value chain, that is, Creation – Production – Distribution and dissemination of creative goods and services will have to be worked out along professional lines.

Madam Speaker, the concept of Cultural Tourism will be given a new dimension with the support of the Hon. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Tourism and External Communications.

We will promote Cultural and Heritage Tourism through our Segga typique, Bhojpuri folk songs and dance amongst others, Mauritian Cuisines, Arts and Crafts, our World and National Heritage sites, museums, and cultural festivals. We will also work in collaboration with the other islands of the Indian Ocean to promote cultural tourism, taking into consideration our desire to make Mauritius a High-Income country.

After 47 years of Independence, it is high time for the setting-up of a Mauritian History and Culture Museum. It will retrace our history from the discovery of the Island up to contemporary Mauritius. Other museums, such as Natural History Museum and the National History Museums will be rehabilitated to be more lively and attractive.

The National Archives, which is the memory of the Mauritian history, is in a deplorable state and is located in a high-risk area at Coromandel. Pending the construction of an appropriate building to house our National Archives, my Ministry is looking into the possibility of relocating the Archives, not only for security reasons but also for better accessibility and improved service to the general public.

Madam Speaker, currently, the services of my Ministry are being offered from scattered locations, with the result that the Ministry has to meet the costs for rentals. I would prefer to have all the major services to be provided from one centralized building. My

solemn wish is to provide improved service to the population at large and also to lower operational costs.

Madam Speaker, the quality and content of programmes presented to Tourists in hotels need to be revisited. Government will come up with appropriate Regulations to protect our artists working in the hotel Industry. Artists should not be considered as seasonal workers. Their status has to be recognized and respected. The Ministry of Tourism and External Communications, the Ministry of Labour and Industrial Relations, Employment and Training and my Ministry will work together in the drafting of Legislation, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, to safeguard Creativity and the interests of artists. Their social and economic status will be fully acknowledged. Assistance will be sought from WIPO and UNESCO to draft a modern legislation in line with the UNESCO Declaration of Belgrade in 1980 on the Status of the Artists in the Society.

Madam Speaker, for the benefit of artists and the population, Government is very keen to accelerate the renovation of Serge Constantin Theatre. It is high time that we keep our cultural infrastructure up-to-date with modern sound and light technology of international standards, through renovation and maintenance so that a new impetus is given to the performing arts. Uplifting the cultural standards of our infrastructures will not only benefit local artists but also the theatre-loving public. The Serge Constantin Theatre is being provided with the state of the art technology. The reopening of the modern Serge Constantin Theatre will be effected this year. It will be the only modern theatre in the Indian Ocean region.

Madam Speaker, Artists and Performers have been urging for a “Stade Musical” for years to enable the organization of open-air concerts at affordable cost. Therefore, my Ministry is looking for an appropriate plot of land in consultation with the Ministry of Housing and Lands, for the construction of a permanent “Stade Musical”. It will enable our artists to promote their talents and give the population the opportunity to attend high quality local and international concerts.

Madam Speaker, to sustain our Creative Industries, capacity building is a must to meet the needs of the market. Hence, Government will set up a National Centre for Performing Arts, which will act as the nursery to nurture the required manpower. In the first instance, this Centre will initiate training in –

- sound and light techniques;

- events management;
- make-up;
- scenography;
- acting, and
- marketing of cultural goods and products.

Capacity Building will be catered for at all levels through the respective curricula. Our children are gifted with inborn talents which cannot be left to oblivion.

In the spirit of inclusive development, my Ministry will collaborate with the Ministry of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research for the setting up of a School of Arts.

Madam Speaker, let me briefly refer to Rodrigues. Besides new measures already mentioned regarding the promotion of artists, performers, creators, cultural entrepreneurs and cultural tourism, my Ministry will ensure that Rodrigues is not left out and will work in close collaboration with the Commission of Arts and Culture in Rodrigues for the setting up of a Museum and a Unit of the National Archives.

In fact, only this Monday I met Mrs Rose Delima Edouard, Commissioner for Arts and Culture at the Rodrigues Regional Assembly to discuss these issues. I intend to proceed to Rodrigues after the National Day celebrations to finalise the Memorandum of Understanding on Arts and Culture between Mauritius and Rodrigues.

I shall conclude by referring, once again, to the salubrious winds of change that have not only changed our political landscape but have also shaken deep-seated beliefs and prejudices. These have demonstrated that we have to reckon with the maturity of a nation that has given the lie of those who wanted to perpetuate the myth of the so-called '*dépot fixe*'.

The events of 10 December 2014 have abundantly shown that this nation can unite and become one in the face of threats to its culture and ethos. As Minister of Arts and Culture, all my actions will be inspired by the sacrosanct necessity of preserving and promoting this culture and ethos within the larger framework of nation building, where promotion of arts and culture would become an instrument of national policy for achievement of greater growth.

In order to achieve that, Madam Speaker, I will focus on three levers –

- (i) Action;

- (ii) Action, and
- (iii) Action.

because, as Nelson Mandela said:

“Action without Vision is only passing time,
 Vision without Action is merely daydreaming,
 but Vision with Action can change the world.”

This is the roadmap for achieving meaningful change!

This is the commitment of our Government, a government for its people by its people!

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

(12.39 p.m.)

Mr F. Quirin (Fourth Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière): Madam Speaker, first of all, I would like to congratulate you for your election as Speaker of this august Assembly. As you may know, to elect a woman as Speaker of the National Assembly was also the wish of the MMM during the last general elections, so I wish you good luck. I also seized this opportunity to congratulate the Deputy Speaker as well as all the new elected Members of this House.

For my part, it is an honour to serve the Constituency No. 20, Beau Bassin/Petite Rivière, for the second mandate running, though my election was more difficult than expected. The reason is the reluctance of the MMM base to accept the alliance with the Labour Party and we could really feel it during the electoral campaign.

Nous avons effectivement payé très cher le fait d’avoir ignoré ...

(Interruptions)

Je dis les choses telles qu’elles sont - d’avoir ignoré les réticences de notre électorat et de la population en général par rapport à cette alliance. Mais c’est déjà chose du passé. Nous sommes résolument tournés vers l’avenir, que nous abordons avec sérénité.

Lors des précédentes interventions, Madame la présidente, j’ai entendu beaucoup de critiques à l’égard du gouvernement sortant, venant pour la plupart de l’autre côté de la Chambre. Certaines de ces critiques sont justifiées.

Je dois tout de même rappeler qu'une des composantes du gouvernement actuel était partenaire de l'alliance au pouvoir de 2005 à 2014, soit pendant neuf années! Si cela ne relève pas de l'hypocrisie, je me demande ce que c'est!

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker, there are some good intents in the Government Programme and I do sincerely hope that they will be implemented in the best possible way; but only time will tell if this Government really means business. I must, however, stress the fact that there are some points which are of some concerns to me.

A commencer, Madame la présidente, par les mesures sociales. Mendès France disait, et je cite –

« La République doit se construire sans cesse, car nous la concevons éternellement révolutionnaire ... à l'encontre de l'inégalité, de l'oppression, de la misère, de la routine, des préjugés.... éternellement inachevés tant qu'il reste des progrès à accomplir.»

Nous devons donc nous inspirer de ces paroles pour bâtir une île Maurice meilleure.

Madame la présidente, le logement est un secteur qui mérite une attention très spéciale. C'est fort louable de vouloir construire 10,000 unités sur une durée de cinq ans pour les personnes à faibles revenus, mais je m'inquiète que la classe moyenne n'ait pas été mentionnée. J'espère simplement que ce n'est qu'un oubli. Il faut, en effet, Madame la présidente, tenir en ligne de compte qu'il n'existe qu'une fine ligne entre la classe moyenne et ceux se trouvant au bas de l'échelle. Les deux catégories ont besoin d'un '*helping hand*' de l'État. Du moins de la même attention.

Les grosses pluies de ces derniers jours ont occasionné des cas d'inondations dans plusieurs parties de l'île. Cette situation dure depuis plusieurs années déjà et, à chaque fois, de nombreuses familles sont dans la détresse et leurs biens personnels sont abîmés. Ce serait souhaitable que les gens se trouvant dans ces situations bénéficient d'un '*special scheme*' leur permettant d'effectuer les travaux et réparations nécessaires chez eux pour que l'évacuation d'eau se fasse comme il se doit en périodes de déluge. Et que le gouvernement accorde une attention particulière, en urgence, à ces régions, pour que ces images d'inondations et de drame humain soient vite du passé.

Par ailleurs, Madame la présidente, j'aimerais aussi attirer l'attention de la Chambre que très souvent les catégories de personnes ciblées pour obtenir les facilités pour l'acquisition de '*low-cost houses*' ne sont pas en mesure de satisfaire le critère de la somme requise comme dépôt. L'État devrait, à mon avis, faire un effort dans ce sens pour revoir cette somme à la baisse.

De même, mes mandants ont régulièrement attiré mon attention sur le critère de salaire total de R 10,000 par famille afin de pouvoir bénéficier de cette facilité. Souvent, les demandes des ménages touchant un salaire légèrement au-dessus de cette somme requise ne sont pas prises en considération. C'est injuste, vous en conviendrez, Madame la présidente. Il faudrait donc ne pas avoir une somme fixe, mais plutôt une fourchette, avec une considération malgré tout aux ménages dont les revenus se trouvent légèrement au-dessus de ce plafond.

Dans la même foulée, la mention pour une politique de salaire minimal est salubre. Il faut évidemment s'assurer que nos citoyens touchent un salaire qui leur permet de faire face au coût élevé de la vie. Il ne faudrait pas non plus, Madame la présidente, que les petites entreprises se retrouvent dans une situation où elles se voient obliger de réduire leur personnel afin de pouvoir déboursier le salaire minimal. Ce serait catastrophique sur le plan humain!

Toujours dans le secteur du travail, Madame la présidente, je note que le discours-programme fait mention d'une mesure pour étendre le *Youth Empowerment Programme (YEP)* à deux ans au lieu d'une année, et je cite –

« *To increase the chances of young jobseekers and fresh graduates secure permanent employment at their training stations.* »

En même temps, il est question, dans une autre mesure énoncée, de « *new fiscal incentives*

« (...) *granted to the private sector to encourage them recruit unemployed people on a full-time basis.* »

Comment peut-on, Madame la présidente, encourager les employeurs à étendre la formation à deux ans au lieu d'une année et en même temps recruter les sans-emploi sur une base permanente? N'encourage-t-on pas les employeurs à retarder le recrutement permanent en étendant la durée du *YEP*? En même temps, cela n'augmenterait-il pas le nombre de jeunes sans emploi qui attendent d'être embauchés sous le *YEP*? Je demande donc au présent gouvernement de faire très attention et d'avancer sagement avec cette mesure, car il y aura

toujours des entrepreneurs sans scrupules qui vont profiter outre mesure de l'extension de cette facilité.

Madam Speaker, our elders are our treasures! I am happy that the Government has granted a sizeable increase in pension payment to the elderly.

However, I make a plea so that the payment be done in a way that takes into account the age and physical condition of our old people.

Dans certains endroits - et je ne généralise pas - nos vieux sont contraints de faire des queues interminables pendant des heures. Nous sommes en 2015 et je crois que c'est primordial de mettre en place un système d'attente digne de ce nom, avec des sièges et un système de numérotation.

Pour que nos aînés n'aient plus à attendre debout pendant une demi-heure, trois quarts d'heure, une heure ou plus, avant de pouvoir toucher leur dû. Je crois bien qu'ils méritent toute cette attention pour avoir tant contribué pour ce pays.

Je vais maintenant, Madame la présidente, aborder le '*Law and Order*'. Nos policiers sont souvent pointés du doigt. Il faut dire, toutefois, qu'ils ont perdu confiance en eux-mêmes ces dernières années. Par manque d'égard, par manque d'encouragement et aussi de la part du sommet de la hiérarchie et de l'État. Et, bien sûr, par manque de discipline à tous les niveaux dans le pays.

Il faut donc redonner confiance à la force policière dans son ensemble. Car sans une police disciplinée et efficace, la population vivra dans une frayeur constante. Une société tétanisée ne pourra jamais prendre le train du développement. La détérioration du '*law and order*' est une des raisons qui poussent nos compatriotes à aller voir si l'herbe est plus verte ailleurs. Nous avons assez de ces vols avec violence et viols qui font les unes de nos journaux toutes les semaines. Nous voulons tous que la situation s'améliore et pour cela il nous faut restructurer la force policière, et, comme je l'ai dit plus tôt, la redonner confiance en elle-même.

Du moment que la police, Madame la présidente, pourra fonctionner à plein régime en toute indépendance et sera en mesure de *deliver the goods*, la population sera rassurée, cela dissuadera les bandits et la confiance et le *feel good factor* seront de retour.

Donner le droit aux policiers de se syndiquer est une initiative qui mérite d'être saluée. Mais je suis d'avis qu'il y a aussi d'autres mesures qui doivent être prises, afin que les

membres de la force policière puissent avoir le ‘*self esteem*’ et donner le meilleur d’eux-mêmes.

Madame la présidente, le discours programme fait référence à, et je cite –

“Degree holders will be encouraged to join the Force and new incentives will be introduced to reward performance.”

Encore une fois, l’intention est fort louable. Dans un passé récent, j’ai reçu la visite de deux mandants qui n’ont pas été embauchés dans la force policière simplement parce qu’ils n’avaient pas de *credit* en mathématiques. Ils sont pourtant bien bâtis et tous deux ont réussi dans les autres sujets en HSC. C’est à se demander, Madame la présidente, si la force policière recrute exclusivement pour compter l’argent dans les coffres-forts surtout après le cafouillage sur les chiffres fournis par la police au début de l’enquête sur l’ex-Premier ministre.

Le recrutement des policiers, Madame la présidente, doit se faire dans la transparence, selon la méritocratie et en donnant la chance égale à tout citoyen qui veut s’engager comme un soldat de l’ordre et de la paix.

Pas plus tard que la semaine dernière, nous avons appris avec stupéfaction l’agression d’un policier par trois jeunes en plein jour dans la capitale. Je sympathise avec l’agent en question et je l’encourage à se reprendre psychologiquement pour continuer à servir le pays. Mais cette agression, Madame la présidente, démontre que l’uniforme ne force plus le respect au sein de la population. En d’autres temps, on respectait la police. On la craignait presque! De nos jours, la population s’interroge sur les critères de recrutement. Les calibres de certaines nouvelles recrues sont parfois source de dérision. À une époque, les policiers recevaient des entraînements physiques spécifiques. Est-ce toujours le cas de nos jours?

Madam Speaker, Police officers should receive continuous physical training, self defence and martial arts training. We need a Police in good health and always ready to fight criminality. Donnons tous les moyens nécessaires à notre police pour rétablir le *law and order* dans le pays.

Madame la présidente, la distribution de méthadone est un autre souci majeur pour la population. La décision de décentraliser ce service a été accueilli favorablement dans son ensemble. Mais il existe, toutefois, des problèmes dans certaines régions à propos du système de distribution. Je citerai deux exemples pour étayer ce que j’avance.

A Chebel, par exemple, dans ma circonscription, les habitants se plaignent que les patients de méthadone se regroupent sous le kiosque, dans le jardin toute la journée, une fois leurs doses obtenues. On m'informe qu'il en est de même dans d'autres régions de Port Louis, à Ste Croix en particulier, et je pense que les élus de la région peuvent en témoigner. Ces rassemblements, Madame la présidente, une fois la distribution terminée ne rassurent pas les habitants de ces localités. Ils dénoncent même des cas d'intimidations, de vols et d'insécurité. Il est du devoir des autorités, Madame la présidente, de la police et les travailleurs sociaux de s'assurer que les patients de méthadone ne se regroupent pas à ne rien faire et quittent les lieux une fois la distribution terminée.

Dans ce même ordre d'idée, j'ai de la peine à parler des enfants des rues, Madame la présidente. Il est malheureux que des enfants de plusieurs quartiers du pays se retrouvent à traîner les rues, à vagabonder au lieu d'être à l'école ou dans une institution pré-vocationnelle.

En 2012, l'ONG Safire et le planning familial avaient recensé 6,780 enfants de rue à Maurice. Si l'État ne s'attaque pas à ce problème, ces enfants seront comme des bombes à retardement qui s'exploreront un peu partout à travers le pays. Si rien n'est fait, ces jeunes citoyens, sans éducation et sans repères, deviendront des adultes à problèmes dans quelques années.

Dans certains cas, ces enfants sont déjà des sources d'ennuis: de vols et d'agressions. Le gouvernement doit agir bien et vite sur ce dossier.

Madame la présidente, le terme '*national unity*' n'est que vaguement mentionné en deux occasions seulement dans le programme gouvernemental. Le combat sans cesse contre le communalisme est un programme en lui-même. L'unité nationale est la clé pour l'harmonie sociale et le développement durable du pays. Notre diversité culturelle est une de nos plus grandes richesses. Nous devons nous assurer, Madame la présidente, que personne - je dis bien personne - ne vienne mettre en péril notre unité nationale. Il est souhaitable donc de renforcer la loi au sujet de l'incitation à la haine raciale. Nous devons débarrasser notre société de ce réflexe répugnant. Ces têtes brûlées qui s'amusent à mettre l'unité nationale en danger, en prônant le communalisme - surtout en période de campagnes électorales - doivent être mis hors d'état de nuire.

Et je remarque, à ce propos, qu'un certain individu, connu pour être un danger à l'unité nationale, s'affiche très souvent ces derniers temps aux côtés du gouvernement. Et il

se fait gaiement prendre en photos dans des fonctions officielles. Comme si que ses qualités de ‘*caméléon*’ et sa capacité à ‘*virer mam*’ lui ont conféré une virginité.

Le Premier ministre a exhorté les membres de son gouvernement à dissocier la politique de la religion, mais il semble que les personnes qui lui sont proches ne respectent même pas cette consigne. ‘*Plorer mam!*’

(*Interruptions*)

Madame la présidente, en ce qui concerne l’art et la culture, je note que le programme gouvernemental parle de réhabilitation du théâtre de Port Louis et du Plaza. *It’s long overdue!* Je plaide que le budget total soit déboursé pour compléter ces projets.

(*Interruptions*)

Car plus on tarde, plus ces patrimoines nationaux vont tomber en ruine et plus le coût augmentera.

Par ailleurs, s’il est clair que le gouvernement ne veuille pas du projet de métro léger, par contre, mention est faite dans le discours programme et je cite –

« A new state-of-the-art transport system will provide rapid access and connectivity throughout the country for the population and tourists, fuel economic activities and promote social integration within the country.”

De quel moyen de transport est-on en train de parler ici? Ce serait bien que le gouvernement vienne avec plus de détails pour mieux éclairer la population.

Madame la présidente,...

(*Interruptions*)

Madame la présidente, le financement des partis politiques est un projet que le MMM tient à cœur. Avec les événements de ces dernières semaines, le débat est revenu sur le tapis. Il est grand temps - à mon avis - de procéder avec une bonne législation pour que les partis politiques évoluent dans la transparence. De même, l’obligation pour ministres et députés à déclarer leurs avoirs devrait vite entrer en vigueur. Notre souhait, de ce côté de la chambre, c’est que ces déclarations soient rendues publiques.

En parlant de la politique, Madame la présidente, je souhaite que le gouvernement légifère au plus vite contre le transfugisme. « *Carapate sanz lisien* » diront certains, il faudra donner toute sa valeur au poste de député, qui ne se marchande pas, ni ne se vend. D’ailleurs,

nous avons été témoins lors du précédent mandat de ces élus qui ont changé de bord du jour au lendemain.

Je ne peux également passer sous silence, Madame la présidente, l'attitude de ces gens qui changent de casaque à la veille des élections comme ce monsieur, ex-député de ma circonscription, grand donneur de leçons - qui distribuait des '*Foong Pow*' et sollicitait les votes en faveur de l'Alliance Lepep, et cela sans aucun scrupule.

Par ailleurs, Madame la présidente, je note que le gouvernement fait part de son intention de régler le problème de marchands ambulants. Encore une fois, je dis les choses telles qu'elles sont. Je pense qu'il est grand temps de prendre les taureaux par les cornes en ce qui concerne les marchands ambulants.

Le gouvernement MSM/MMM de 2000 à 2005, avec l'honorable Paul Bérenger comme Premier ministre à partir de 2003 avait trouvé une solution

(Interruptions)

pour la capitale en construisant le *Hawkers' Palace* ...

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: Please order!

Mr Quirin: Pourrais-je intervenir?

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: Order please!

Mr Quirin: ...tout comme l'avait aussi souligné avant moi mon collègue, l'honorable Ameer Meea. C'était un bijou pour les marchands ambulants. Mais l'histoire retiendra que le gouvernement Parti Travailleiste/PMSD qui nous a succédé a dilapidé le projet pour des raisons bassement politiques. Que du temps perdu, Madame la présidente. Aujourd'hui, il faut tout recommencer à zéro.

Les marchands ambulants contribuent, à leur manière, à l'économie du pays. En même temps, un pays moderne doit s'assurer de sa sécurité routière, de la sécurité de ses piétons et s'assurer qu'il n'y ait pas de concurrence déloyale surtout envers ceux qui payent leurs patentes de magasins. Je souhaite qu'une solution soit trouvée dans l'intérêt de toutes les parties concernées. Qu'on prenne aussi en considération l'environnement et le paysage de nos villes.

En parlant de ville, Madame la présidente, une nouvelle *Local Government Act* est vivement souhaitée. Au MMM, nous sommes en faveur d'une municipalisation du pays, en particulier tout en incluant les grandes agglomérations rurales. Villes et villages doivent être sur le même pied d'égalité.

Chaque citoyen a les mêmes droits et doit, en même temps, avoir droit aux mêmes services.

La nouvelle loi devra conférer plus de pouvoirs décisionnels au conseil. Ceux du ministre de tutelle et des administrateurs devraient être limités. De même, les budgets des municipalités et des conseils de districts devraient connaître une hausse significative si on veut qu'ils aient une participation active. Ma circonscription, Madame la présidente, est mi-urbaine/mi-rurale. Je suis donc bien placé pour constater la disparité qui existe entre les budgets des villes et des conseils de district. Le plus vite on donne les mêmes moyens aux administrations le mieux le pays en profitera pour un développement meilleur.

L'Internet, Madame la présidente est un outil primordial dans la vie de tous les jours. Maurice veut se positionner comme une plaque tournante en Afrique dans le domaine de la technologie informatique. Le '*upgrading*' du réseau à travers l'île et une baisse significative dans le prix d'accès à l'Internet doivent être les priorités du gouvernement. Selon net index, une source de mesures de la connectivité, Maurice a un '*Household Download Index*' de 16.9 Mbps, contre une moyenne mondiale de 22.0 Mbps.

La technologie informatique se développe à vitesse grand V sur le plan mondial et Maurice ne peut se permettre de rester à la traîne.

Je vais maintenant, Madame la présidente, aborder un sujet qui me tient particulièrement à cœur, comme vous le savez, le sport et la jeunesse.

À la première lecture du programme gouvernemental, je m'étonne que très peu de mesures figurent à ce chapitre, alors que le ministre de tutelle occupe une bonne place dans la hiérarchie actuelle. Comme la communauté sportive dans son ensemble, je suis resté sur ma faim.

La promotion du football professionnel, telle que mentionnée dans le programme gouvernemental, n'est rien de nouveau. Le processus de professionnalisation de cette discipline a commencé depuis l'année dernière, sous l'ancien régime. Le gouvernement devrait plutôt se demander si ce processus est fait de la meilleure façon avant toute chose.

Quel est le premier impact de la professionnalisation, telle que lancée l'année dernière, sur le niveau de jeu et au niveau de l'assistance?

Dans le sport, Madame la présidente, le plus important c'est la base. La *Mauritius Professional Football League* investit déjà gros dans cette ligue professionnelle.

L'État devrait plutôt se concentrer sur la formation des formateurs, et ainsi mettre en place un système de formation des très jeunes, «*at grassroot level*». C'est de cette façon que nous aurons de bons footballeurs dans 4-5 ans, voire 10 ans. Alors, ceux-là pourront intégrer une académie, avant de faire le saut dans le football professionnel. C'est ce que le MMM avait proposé dans son programme gouvernemental lors des dernières législatives. Madame la présidente, le gouvernement actuel fera une bêtise s'il fonce tête baissée et persiste dans la voie tracée depuis 2014. Ignorer la base, c'est s'assurer de l'effondrement de la pyramide dans quelques années. De même, la création d'une académie de football n'est pas un projet clair et si je me base sur ce qui est mentionné dans le programme du gouvernement. Ou alors on s'y prend mal. Je m'explique -

Que lit-on à ce sujet? Je cite –

« In collaboration with an English Premier league soccer club, a high-level football academy will be set up in Mauritius to offer talented youngsters the opportunity to pursue a career locally and abroad”.

Comment voulez-vous qu'on ait des «*talented youngsters* » pour faire partie d'une académie si on ne donne pas à nos jeunes footballeurs en herbe une formation digne de ce nom?

Combien d'écoles de football ne fonctionnent plus à travers le pays par manque de formateurs ou parce que ces derniers sont démotivés n'ayant pas obtenu leurs salaires? C'est à ce niveau qu'il faut mettre de l'ordre avant tout.

Le gouvernement court le risque de mettre la charrue devant les bœufs dans le seul but de vouloir honorer sa promesse électorale. L'on se souvient que l'Alliance Lepep avait mêlé l'entraîneur anglais de West Ham, Sam Allardyce, à la politique mauricienne lors de la dernière campagne électorale. Et cela, je dois le dire de façon grotesque! Pour prouver que ce n'était qu'une mise en scène, où on a voulu marquer des points, je me réfère à l'embauche du technicien français Didier Six comme Entraîneur National et Directeur Technique National tout récemment. Je suis très intéressé à savoir comment on compte s'y prendre pour concilier un système de formation et d'académie anglais avec un DTN français?

Je vous cite, Madame la présidente,

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: Allow the hon. Member to continue!

Mr Quirin: Une récente étude de l'observatoire du football CIES, basé en Suisse, en date du 21 janvier 2014. Cette étude concerne la formation de footballeur professionnel en Europe. Sans surprise, c'est la France qui arrive en tête avec 179 joueurs formés qui évoluent dans les plus grands championnats européens.

L'Espagne suit juste derrière avec 177. L'Allemagne est troisième avec 66 joueurs et l'Angleterre quatrième avec 52 joueurs, devant l'Italie, 44 joueurs.

Le système français, reconnu mondialement, a fait ses preuves à Maurice dans le passé avec le passage de François Blaquart. À l'époque, l'île Maurice de Désiré Periatambee se permettait de battre le Cameroun de Samuel Eto'o au stade Anjalay. C'était les années de gloire du football mauricien.

Madame la présidente, le gouvernement a intérêt à définir la meilleure façon pour relancer le football à Maurice. Il n'existe pas mille solution, il nous faut investir gros au niveau de la racine et attendre les fruits du travail dans 10 années ou plus.

Lancer une académie en grande pompe, juste pour épater la galerie ne nous amènera rien de bon, si ce n'est qu'une perte de temps et beaucoup d'argent.

En ce qui concerne le sport d'élite, Madame la présidente, on n'a presque rien à se mettre sous la dent. A croire que le gouvernement n'a pas encore défini sa politique sportive. Pire, il n'a même pas un programme digne de ce nom pour le sport.

Le projet de construction de 'Residential Sports Training Centres' à Bel Ombre et Anse la Raie est néanmoins fort louable. Ce serait bien de moderniser aussi celui de Pointe Jérôme, tout en projetant de construire un centre similaire pour la région de l'Est.

Madame la présidente, pas une seule ligne dans le programme du gouvernement sur les Jeux des îles qui auront lieu bientôt, et l'on ne sait encore quelle politique le ministère de la jeunesse et des sports compte adopter par rapport à cet événement.

Je suis révolté! - et le mot n'est pas fort - de la réponse...

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: Don't interrupt the hon. Member, please! Allow him to proceed with his speech.

Mr Quirin: Je suis révolté, Madame la présidente, - et le mot n'est pas fort - de la réponse fournie par le ministre de la jeunesse et des sports mardi dernier à propos de ses attentes pour les Jeux des îles. Il n'a rien trouvé mieux à me dire qu'il n'a pas de boule de cristal. Madame la présidente, en sport on se fixe des objectifs, après avoir évalué nos forces et nos faiblesses, aussi bien que celles de nos adversaires.

Setting a target is something natural in sport. The hon. Minister should already have met with representatives of all sports disciplines and should ask them about their targets, about the difficulties they are facing during their preparation and how they can be helped to reach their goals by giving them all the necessary facilities.

If this was already done, the hon. Minister should have known what is the legitimate ambition of the Club Maurice for the Indian Ocean Games. Je vous assure - malheureusement il n'est pas là - qu'il n'a nullement besoin, l'honorable ministre des sports, de boule de cristal pour le savoir. Mais simplement de bon sens et de vision!

La politique sportive, telle que préconisée à Maurice, Madame la présidente, est dépassée. C'est bien d'accorder de l'attention au football, qui a besoin d'un renouveau, mais il faut aussi voir les besoins des autres disciplines. Le sport collectif dans son ensemble se porte mal. Le manque de résultats dans les différentes sélections nationales sur la scène internationale ces dernières années en est la preuve.

Ce qu'il nous faut...

Madam Speaker: Hon. Quirin, for how long do you have?

Mr Quirin: Five minutes, I can say.

Madam Speaker: Five minutes.

Mr Quirin: Ce qu'il nous faut préconiser, Madame la présidente, c'est une professionnalisation du sport dans son ensemble. Pas uniquement le football mais là encore, il faut s'assurer de revoir le fonctionnement à partir de la base. Le volleyball, le basket et le handball sont des disciplines collectives qui ont autant besoin d'un coup de fouet que le football. Il ne faut pas qu'il y ait des parents pauvres dans le sport. Pas de discrimination. Il en est de même pour les autres disciplines. Là où nous faisons bien déjà, il faut viser plus

haut, alors qu'il faut sensiblement hausser le niveau dans les disciplines où nous faisons moins bien.

Par ailleurs, si j'accueille favorablement l'annonce de *fitness facilities* dans les complexes sportifs, je note l'absence de création de parcours de santé à travers le pays, avec des équipements pour les exercices. On peut se baser sur le modèle du parcours de la Montagne des Signaux. Une nation sportive, Madame la présidente, est une nation en bonne santé.

Le volet Jeunesse dans le programme gouvernemental est squelettique. J'aimerais attirer l'attention du gouvernement sur les horaires d'opération des centres de jeunesse. Ces centres ferment normalement à une heure où les jeunes sont libres.

Je suis d'avis qu'il est temps de revoir les heures d'ouverture et les rendre plus flexibles, afin que les jeunes puissent avoir un lieu de détente dans l'après-midi jusqu'à tôt dans la soirée. Les centres de jeunesse doivent offrir toute une série d'activités et de loisirs qui attireront les jeunes et les éloigner des fléaux que sont l'alcool et la drogue. Un effort considérable doit être fait à ce niveau.

Je m'étonne aussi, Madame la présidente, que le gouvernement n'ait pas fait provision d'un audit des infrastructures sportives du pays, dont la plupart sont dépassés. À cet égard, je m'interroge aussi sur le rôle du Mauritius Sports Council et je me demande si cette institution a toujours sa raison d'être.

De même, je lance un appel pour qu'on recouvre les terrains de basket, de volley et de handball, à travers le pays, car ce sont des sports qui se pratiquent essentiellement en salle. Cela ne pénalisera pas les sportifs non plus en situation de mauvais temps.

Madame la présidente, nous sommes une Opposition responsable. Je n'ai pas fait que critiquer, mais j'ai aussi proposé. Pour finir sur le volet jeunesse et sport, j'aimerais énoncer quelques points rapidement qui faisaient partie du programme du MMM lors de dernières élections.

Si le gouvernement peut s'en inspirer pour redonner un nouveau souffle à ce secteur, je serais comblé et je cite -

1. redonner ses lettres de noblesse aux sports collectifs, avec un accent particulier sur la formation;

2. mettre le sportif au centre du développement de ce secteur en lui offrant les facilités nécessaires et les *incentives* pour atteindre l'excellence;
3. faire un audit des infrastructures sportives du pays, réaménager et *upgrade* les sites nécessaires; identifier les sites pour la construction de nouvelles infrastructures dont un gymnase pour le kick-boxing et un vélodrome;
4. revoir le fonctionnement, le rôle du Mauritius Sports Council;
5. encourager les collectivités locales à être un acteur majeur du développement du sport à Maurice;
6. encourager l'introduction de nouveaux sports;
7. accorder une attention particulière aux bourses sportives, sports-études et plancher sur la création à long terme d'une académie des sports;
8. revoir le système d'aide aux fédérations;
9. utiliser le sport comme un moyen efficace pour combattre la pauvreté, en collaboration avec le ministère de l'intégration sociale;
10. encourager l'introduction du sport comme un sujet à part entière dès le primaire et la pratique du sport dans les écoles, en collaboration avec le ministère de l'éducation;
11. plancher sur un plan de retraite pour les sportifs de haut niveau;
12. accorder une attention particulière à Rodrigues;
13. accorder plus d'autonomie aux fédérations sportives;
14. trouver des sources de financement pour les différents projets qui mèneront à la professionnalisation du sport et la quête de l'excellence;
15. offrir les facilités et les encadrements nécessaires aux fédérations et sportifs en vue des Jeux des îles, et
16. accorder une attention particulière au handisport et voir quelles sont ses besoins, à moyen et long termes;
17. revoir aussi certaines clauses du Sports Act pour qu'elle soit en harmonie parfaite avec les lois et instances internationales et ainsi permettre aux fédérations et clubs de fonctionner en toute autonomie;

18. restructurer le centre médico-sportif de Vacoas;
19. doter la jeunesse de ce pays de ‘*Youth Centres*’ modernes et dynamiques;
20. s’assurer que chaque région du pays ait un ‘*Youth Council*’ actif et dynamique;
21. remettre à jour les ‘*Youth Recreational Centres*’ existants et construire deux à trois nouvelles structures à travers le pays;

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: Please, allow him to complete his speech!

Mr Quirin:

22. organiser un Festival de la Jeunesse sur une base annuelle, et qui culminera sur la tenue d’un Youth Carnaval et d’un Youth Concert;
23. repérer et récompenser les talents parmi les jeunes à travers des concours régionaux et nationaux;
24. création d’un National Youth Aid pour venir en aide aux jeunes, les orienter, les conseiller et finalement,
25. encourager les projets montés par les jeunes pour les jeunes.

Pour clore, Madame la présidente, j’aimerais faire part de quelques difficultés dont fait face ma circonscription, Beau-Bassin/Petite Rivière.

Le MMM, dans son programme, a tout un plan pour la circonscription. Je salue, par ailleurs, le bon travail abattu par la mairie de Beau-Bassin/Rose-Hill, qui tombe sous l’administration du MMM.

Le centre-ville et les régions de Chebel et de Barkly ont besoin d’un marché moderne.

Les routes et les drains méritent une attention particulière à Maingard, Petite Rivière, Belvédère, Coromandel, Hermitage, entre autres. Les travaux d’aménagement de drains par la NDU à Chebel Branch Road ont stoppé court après les élections de décembre dernier et cela au grand dam des habitants de la région.

Les autorités devraient également s’atteler à la construction d’un medi-clinic à Petite Rivière, d’une gare routière à Mont Roches et d’abribus à Albion, entre autres.

À Canot, Madame la présidente, la propriété de Médine a déjà mis à la disposition de l'État un espace nécessaire pour la construction d'un terrain de foot. J'espère que la NDU et les autorités concernées feront le nécessaire dans un proche avenir.

Madame la présidente, je soulèverai d'autres problèmes relatifs à ma circonscription au cours de mon mandat, afin d'aider à améliorer le quotidien des habitants de ma circonscription. De même, je soulèverai des questions d'intérêt national pour l'avancement et le bien-être des citoyens du pays en général.

Je vous remercie.

Madam Speaker: I suspend the sitting for one and a half hour for lunch.

At 1.12 p.m. the sitting was suspended.

On resuming at 2.43 p.m with Madam Speaker in Chair.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY – COMMITTEES – COMPOSITION

- (1) COMMITTEE OF SELECTION
- (2) PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE
- (3) STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE
- (4) HOUSE COMMITTEE

Madam Speaker: Hon. Members, I have a few announcements to make with regard to the composition of Committees in accordance with Standing Orders 69.

Composition of Sessional Select Committees

I wish to inform the House that, in accordance with Standing Orders 69(1), and following consultations I had with both sides of the House, I have nominated the following hon. Members to serve on the Committee of Selection -

1. Honourable Adrien C. Duval, Deputy Speaker
2. Honourable Purmanund Jhugroo, Chief Government Whip
3. Honourable M. S. Abbas-Mamode, Parliamentary Private Secretary
4. Honourable Toolsyraj Benydin, Parliamentary Private Secretary

5. Honourable Mrs Deveena Boygah, Parliamentary Private Secretary
6. Honourable Rajesh Anand Bhagwan, Opposition Whip
7. Honourable Jean-Nel Alain Aliphon
8. Honourable M. Osman C. Mahomed
9. Honourable J. P. France Quirin
10. Honourable Dhananjay Ramful
11. Honourable Sudesh Rughoobur

In accordance with the same Standing Order, I shall be the Chairperson of the Committee.

Furthermore, I wish to inform the House that the Committee of Selection met under my chairmanship earlier today and has approved the composition of the following Sessional Select Committees as hereunder –

A. Public Accounts Committee

1. Honourable Purmanund Jhugroo, Chief Government Whip
2. Honourable J. H. Thierry Henry, Parliamentary Private Secretary
3. Honourable Sangeet Fowdar
4. Honourable Mrs M. C. Jeanne Monty
5. Honourable Gowkaran Oree
6. Honourable Kalyan Tarolah
7. Honourable S. M. Aadil Ameer Meea
8. Dr. the Honourable M. Raffick Sorefan
9. Honourable Ezra S. Jhuboo

In addition, I have, in accordance with Standing Order 69(2) of the Standing Orders and Rules of the National Assembly, appointed Honourable Alan Ganoo, to serve as Chairperson of the Public Accounts Committee.

B. Standing Orders Committee

1. Honourable Mrs Roubina Jadoo-Jaunboccus, Parliamentary Private Secretary
2. Honourable Satyaprakashsing Rutnah, Deputy Chief Government Whip
3. Honourable Rajesh Anand Bhagwan, Opposition Whip
4. Honourable Vedasingam V. Baloomoody

In accordance with Standing Order 69(3) of the Standing Orders and Rules of the National Assembly, the Honourable Deputy Speaker is an *ex officio* Member of the said Committee and I will be chairing the Committee.

C. House Committee

1. Honourable Rajesh Anand Bhagwan, Opposition Whip
2. Honourable M. C. Eddy Boissézon, Parliamentary Private Secretary
3. Honourable J. H. Thierry Henry, Parliamentary Private Secretary
4. Honourable A. Bashir Jahangeer
5. Honourable M. Osman Cassam Mahomed

In accordance with Standing Order 69(4) of the Standing Orders and Rules of the National Assembly, the hon. Deputy Speaker is the Chairperson of the Committee.

Hon. Members, as you are aware, section 59 of the Prevention of Corruption Act provides for the setting up of the Parliamentary Committee to monitor the Independent Commission against Corruption and it also provides for the mode of designation of the hon. Members and of the Chairperson thereof to serve the said Committee.

I have thus to inform you that the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister and the hon. Leader of the Opposition have designated the following hon. Members to serve on this Committee –

1. Honourable M. S. Abbas-Mamode, Parliamentary Private Secretary
2. Honourable Maneesh Gobin
3. Honourable Satyaprakashsing Rutnah, Deputy Chief Government Whip
4. Honourable Dharmendar Sesungkur

5. Honourable Rajesh Anand Bhagwan, Opposition Whip
6. Honourable Vedasingam V. Baloomoody
7. Honourable Zouberr H. Joomaye
8. Honourable Shakeel A. Y. A. R. Mohamed
9. Honourable Kalidas Teeluckdharry

In accordance with Section 59(3) of the Prevention of Corruption Act, the Rt. honourable Prime Minister has appointed hon. Maneesh Gobin to be the Chairperson of the Parliamentary Committee.

I thank you.

(2.53 p.m.)

The Minister of Technology, Communication and Innovation (Mr P. Jugnauth):

Madame la présidente, permettez-moi aussi de me joindre aux autres pour vous féliciter pour votre nomination en tant que présidente de notre auguste Assemblée et, encore une fois, nous marquons l'histoire parce que c'est la première fois que notre auguste Assemblée est présidée par une femme. Mes félicitations vont aussi à l'honorable Adrien Duval pour sa nomination en tant que *Deputy Speaker*. C'est la première fois qu'il est candidat ; premier essai, premier succès. Donc, je lui souhaite un long chemin. *I look forward that* nos chemins se font ensemble.

Let me also say that in the past election, we have presented Mrs Ameenah Gurib-Fakim as our candidate for the post of President and that it was overwhelmingly vote. I am looking forward that she will assume Office, I would say sooner than later, et nous allons marquer, encore une fois, l'histoire à l'avenir car ce sera pour la première fois qu'une femme sera nommée Présidente de la République.

Madame la présidente, je voudrais aussi remercier le peuple mauricien pour la confiance placée dans l'équipe de l'Alliance Lepep, à son programme et aussi, et surtout, pour avoir sauvé notre pays de la tyrannie d'un Premier ministre devenu dictateur, prêt à tout pour non seulement dévaliser mais dévaluer la nation mauricienne.

Le peuple a encore une fois prouvé que le vrai pouvoir est entre ses mains et qu'il sait sanctionner sans pitié. Mais, si le changement tant espéré est arrivé lors des élections du 10

décembre dernier, c'est qu'il y a eu aussi une main divine qui a béni notre pays et a tracé le cours des événements. Je me souviens encore de ses déclarations teintées d'une arrogance démesurée, qui nous faisait croire que l'Alliance de l'Unité et de la Modernité se dirigeait vers une victoire de 60-0 car un certain professeur, et expert en mathématique électorale, avait déjà comptabilisé que 40% plus 40% donnerait un cinglant 80%, et même en tenant compte des *discounts* de 10 à 20% peut-être...

(Interruptions)

Cela allait donner aux environs de 50% au moins. Donc, cela ferait un score sans appel de 60-0. Mais le peuple a fait voler en éclats ce fameux laptop utilisé par cet expert. Lui-même et ses compères qui avaient concocté une alliance contre nature dans le dos du peuple ont été, pour la plupart, balayés par l'électorat. Et nous n'avons pas encore oublié, Madame la présidente, que cette auguste Assemblée avait été fermée pendant presque toute l'année 2014, afin de servir les desseins d'alliance obscurantisme visant à un partage de pouvoir entre le Premier ministre et le Président de la République désigné.

L'Alliance de l'Unité et de la Modernité vous avez proposé un Président, élu pour sept ans, qui aurait eu des pouvoirs exécutifs, qui aurait pris des décisions majeures, mais qui n'aurait pas de compte à rendre à qui que ce soit, tout en bénéficiant d'une immunité contre toute action légale. L'ancien Premier ministre voulait instituer un régime absolutisme pour verrouiller le pays et le mettre à sa merci. Mais, heureusement que le peuple nous a épargné ce malheur. Car, avec tout ce qu'on découvre, surtout maintenant, sur l'ex-Premier ministre, ces millions amassés dans des coffres et valises, les scandales qui ont marqué son gouvernement, les abus de pouvoir, le copinage, le favoritisme, le népotisme, on réalise bien que notre pays a échappé à un catastrophe. En tout cas, le peuple a bien senti le danger.

Je suis sûr que le partenaire du Parti Travailleiste savait, comme a dit auparavant l'honorable Quirin, il a senti lui aussi les dangers. Mais malgré toutes ces critiques, malgré tout ce qui a été dit – et je me souviens encore, à un certain moment le Chef de l'opposition disait: « Mais dans la tête de l'ancien Premier ministre qu'est-ce qu'il y avait? » Mais ce n'est pas pour autant qu'ils se sont alliés. Mais le peuple, lui, n'a pas changé d'opinion et de cours, car le peuple a fini par démasquer cet homme à double visage qui pensait que ses excès, ses menaces, son langage outrancé, ses frasques et ses caprices, ses combines malsaines, sa culture d'immoralité et son affairisme au sommet de l'État allaient être cautionnés.

Aujourd'hui, le peuple et la classe politique réalisent à quel point j'avais raison dans mes dénonciations contre l'ancien Premier ministre et le régime Travailleiste. J'ai malheureusement côtoyé la personne entre 2010 et 2011, de très près, Madame la présidente. J'ai été témoin et victime de ses machinations et de l'utilisation des institutions à des fins de persécution politique et personnelle. Donc, c'est en homme averti que j'ai sillonné le pays pour conscientiser la population face au danger que représente le Dr. Navin Ramgoolam. J'ai vu la colère et le dégoût du peuple vis-à-vis de l'ex-Premier ministre et de la pourriture qu'il caractérise. C'est pourquoi je n'ai jamais cru dans cette chansonnette de mauvais goût qui nous faisait croire que l'alliance que dirigeait l'ex-Premier ministre allait vers un *walk over*.

Madame la présidente, si le peuple a vu juste et prouvé sa maturité, je peux dire que j'ai été étonné de constater comment le Chef de l'opposition, avec tout ce qu'il a dit lui-même au sujet du Dr. Navin Ramgoolam, du Parti Travailleiste, avec toute son expérience, ait pu se faire prendre par l'hameçon du pêcheur de requin! Je n'ai jamais pu comprendre - malgré le sang qu'il y avait avec cet appât - comment le Chef de l'opposition ait pu se mettre aux côtés de Navin Ramgoolam pour concocter une alliance contre nature! Que les militants ont tant contesté comme l'a si bien dit l'honorable Quirin. Comment le Chef de l'opposition ait pu croire à un seul moment qu'il allait nettoyer le pays en s'alliant à un Dr. Navin Ramgoolam qui voulait à tout prix étouffer la vérité sur les scandales qu'il avait engendrés! Comment le *Leader* de L'opposition ait pu se liguer à Navin Ramgoolam pour prendre la démocratie parlementaire en otage pendant presque toute une année et allait contre la volonté de l'électorat! J'avoue que je ne comprend pas! Comme ont dit certains, même si l'appât appétissant de cinq ans de Prime Ministership ait pu perdre la raison! D'autant plus que maintenant - l'autre jour d'ailleurs j'ai entendu le Chef de l'opposition critiquer l'ex-Premier ministre, mardi dernier, lors des échanges sur la PNQ concernant l'ICAC. Je présume donc que le *Leader* de l'opposition prend la mesure aujourd'hui du désastre qu'aurait connu le pays si l'ex-Premier ministre était revenu aux affaires. Imaginons un seul instant, Madame la présidente, que l'ex-Premier ministre avait réussi son coup dans le dos du peuple avec le concours du Chef de l'opposition, cela aurait été un grand recul pour la démocratie, cela aurait été aussi de restreindre encore plus la liberté sous toutes les formes. La recette pour plus de pauvreté, plus de corruption, encore plus d'excès, plus de népotisme et de copinage et les frasques de Navin Ramgoolam seraient restés, au fait des secrets de l'État. D'ailleurs, qu'il a franchement emporté avec lui!

Le pays a été sauvé. Le peuple s'est rassemblé derrière Sir Anerood Jugnauth, derrière les autres dirigeants et l'équipe de l'Alliance Lepep pour nous donner un mandat net et clair. Je tiens, ici, à saluer le courage de Sir Anerood Jugnauth, son rôle inestimable dans la victoire de l'Alliance Lepep, sa vision d'une île Maurice meilleure traduite dans le discours-programme du gouvernement et surtout sa détermination à mettre en pratique ce programme dans l'intérêt du peuple.

Mes salutations vont également à mon ami, Xavier-Luc Duval, *Leader* du PMSD et à Ivan Collendavelloo, le *Leader* du ML, qui se sont donnés à fond pour assurer la victoire de l'Alliance Lepep, et qui travaillent eux aussi d'arrache-pied pour matérialiser le vrai changement qu'attend la nation mauricienne. Et, bien sûr, je ne peux oublier mes camarades du MSM qui ont été à mes côtés dans ce combat contre les présumés Goliath et qui m'ont soutenu en tant que *leader* du MSM contre vents et marées.

Madame la présidente, l'équipe au pouvoir aujourd'hui a la bénédiction du peuple pour nettoyer, réformer et reconstruire. Le discours-programme reflète notre ambition de bâtir une société juste, prospère, moderne où chacun aura sa part du gâteau national et le discours-programme est, au fait, loin d'être un chapelet de bonnes intentions comme le disent certains membres de l'opposition. Il englobe des engagements fermes que le gouvernement a déjà commencé à honorer avec passion et dévouement. Le peuple réalise que nous traduisons nos paroles et nos promesses en actes, 'Parole donnée, parole sacrée'. C'est cela notre devise!

Nous avons démarré avec la bénédiction de nos aînés quand à peine quelques jours après l'entrée en fonction du nouveau gouvernement, nous avons augmenté, comme promis, la pension de vieillesse à R 5000. Le nettoyage au Karcher a été bien enclenché et les chantiers de reconstruction sont immenses.

Madam Speaker, during the past nine years, fraud, corruption, lies and bluffs have, in fact, ruined our country. We all realise that we are now in the midst of a crisis. The society's health has deteriorated since 2006 and is in a very poor state littered with unemployment, poverty, institutional malfunctioning, drugs and insecurity. In fact, the poor has become poorer while those close to power and, certainly, the inner circle of the former Prime Minister, *les copinages*, have prospered. They have prospered in, I must say, a gigantic way.

The income gaps have widened. Income inequality has risen. This is confirmed by the Gini coefficient. The taxpayers have seen their contributions to the State being lavishly spent

on financing unproductive, inefficient and wasteful projects. We can see today how billions have been spent in supposedly projects that would have put Mauritius into a forward and modern age and which are now really crumbling down.

The enquiries are underway and we hope eventually that the guilty parties will be exposed publicly. Today, when we see those millions of notes cascading from the coffers of the former Prime Minister, probably now we can have a clearer picture why there have been large cost overruns on infrastructural projects. Our economy has critically been weakened due to the irresponsibility, the incompetence and, more specifically, the greed of the outgoing Government.

Our mission now is to bring meaningful change at all levels and steer our economy anew on the path of sustainable growth. We are fully committed and we mean business when we say that our ultimate objective in Government is to pave the way towards achieving a second economic miracle.

As stipulated in the Government Programme 2015-2019, we have taken the commitment to transform Mauritius into a forward-looking, environmentally sustainable, economically vibrant and innovative country with the provision of modern infrastructure, global connectivity, high skills and technology. In fact, the second economic miracle will be driven by technology and innovation. My Ministry will have a key role in shaping the new economy and lifting our society to a higher paradigm of economic development and high standard of living that is worthy of the status of a developed economy.

Madam Speaker, Internet connectivity, broadband, information and communication technologies and, indeed, innovation will be at the heart of all our economic and social strategies cutting across not only through our existing pillars but as importantly, through all the new economic sectors that this Government will be kick-starting during the course of its mandate. The ICT sector has an inherent dynamism for boosting economic growth through wealth and employment creation. It is expected that with the new innovations in computing which will change the way IT services are delivered to business and end-users, new employment opportunities can be created in the sector through the mastering of the latest trend in IT architecture comprising of social, mobile, analytics and cloud technologies collectively known as, SMAC. Businesses in Mauritius will need to move up the value change and success will most likely be realised by those organisations that not only migrate

quickly to the new SMAC paradigm, but who figure out how to deal with hybrid environments as they effect transition from one evolution of ICT to the next.

The Government Programme highlights the development of the ICT/KPO industry and through the provision of the necessary incentives to attract foreign direct investments; global players will be willing to establish their operations in Mauritius in the following sectors –

- the BPO non-voice, that is, back office;
- payroll;
- finance and accounting outsourcing;
- legal process outsourcing;
- information technology outsourcing, that is, software development, mobile apps development, web development, e-commerce and multimedia, and
- IT services, that is, data centres, disaster recovery, training and consultancy.

In view of spurring growth in the ICT/KPO industry, Government will, in fact, concentrate its efforts on developing new value added and high-end activities, thus spearheading innovation.

Research and development will, of course, inevitably emerge as a major component of the economy in order to sustain innovation. Through a compelling alternative for higher value works, Mauritius will also increasingly leverage as the ideal platform for the delivery of business services to Africa with regard to ICT. Mauritius has the potential for becoming the new business platform for Africa and position itself as a gateway between Asia and Africa. This Government is committed to maximise fully on the potential of the African dividend. In addition, we will strive our best to make of Mauritius the back office of Europe and the USA through the provision of high-end knowledge process outsourcing.

However, Madam Speaker, no meaningful progress can be made in the ICT sector if we do not ensure the delivery of high-speed connectivity at competitive costs across the island. Broadband technology, digital technology should be available to everyone, to every household, from the young student with artistic *talents cachés* to the small entrepreneur, from the child to the older, from the hotel operator to the taxi driver, from the textile company to the medical doctor at the hospital, from the household in the city area to the remotest place in both Mauritius and Rodrigues. My Ministry will soon make proposals on the strategies we shall execute to make this happen.

I wish to inform the House that my Ministry is already working with service providers here in Mauritius to connect, at least, 50,000 new households scattered across the country; many will be from economically deprived areas to the digital economy before the end of this year. We are delighted that we will, in the same breath, be able to install Wi-Fi3 structures in as many as 300 spots comprising schools and colleges, community centres, shopping malls, places of high student concentrations such as campuses and libraries and at the airport. This project is sitting high among my priorities and I hope to conclude happily part of it in the very near future. After all, this is what broadband and the Internet should be all about, not only as an instrument of growth and progress, but also as an instrument to reduce the social divide and its impact on society.

Internet should be all about, not only as an instrument of growth and progress, but also as an instrument to reduce the social divide and its impact on society.

Madam Speaker, we have in our hands a whole host of issues that need to be addressed in order to make our country a fully digitalised smart city called upon to drive the country in its quest to become a newly developed economy. Let me, Madam Speaker, deal on a couple of points that will inevitably come up as we address the digital agenda.

First, about the broadband plans that have been prepared by my predecessors, but that were never implemented. Consequently, little actions have taken place to look after broadband speed compared to other countries even in our near vicinity. Hence, the first major challenge is about what we understand by the concept of broadband and what will be the definition that we will give to it today and in the years to come. One or two decades ago, a speed of 256 kbs was the norm, then it was upgraded to 512 Kbs, recently, we wanted 4 Mbs up to 10 mega to be the standard. But, let me tell you, Madam Speaker, that in some countries of our own region, 30 Mbs or more has become the norm and that, in some countries, or what was known as Eastern Europe broadband speed definition is now 100 Mbs and over. What does this mean? We will have to focus on providing fast and robust broadband to all, including those in the deprived areas and the economically weak. We will have to face of fact that it may not be commercially viable to internet service providers to bring broadband whatever definition we give to it eventually to 20% or 30% of the homes of our country. But we shall need to implement some form of public support scheme, so that nobody is left behind. Government is clear about this necessity and my Ministry is already working on it.

The second point is about the different models and the different technologies that are available today for deployment of broadband, to the homes and businesses and to the various public places. We will eventually have to make choices, but one issue is clear cut, Government will have to intervene if high reliable speed internet is to be deployed to all citizens of the country and to all sectors of the economy. In that respect, Madam Speaker, the staff of my Ministry is actually busy talking with the major service providers, the regulator and other stakeholders of the industry to come up with an integrated action plan. We want to bring basic broadband to all by 2016. I know this is a high target, but still we need to aim high in order to achieve what we want in terms of our objectives. We will have to determine how and when we can upgrade the norm to a higher level of speed, let's say about 30 Mbs and to eventually start deploying 100 Mbs by 2020, in line with targets set in some countries of Europe and South-East Asia. Again my staff has started to work on these long-term targets, even if they appear, as I have said, to be very ambitious and very challenging.

If we are indeed committing ourselves to become a smart island city then we will have to think how small and medium enterprises can reinvent their business, so that they will not discover too late that their customers have, in fact, gone to another supplier or that the textile factory and the hotel catering for foreign clients have lost their clients to savvy Internet users in competing countries. It, therefore, follows, Madam Speaker, that this Government will act on several fronts to transform Mauritius into a fully digitalised country and we will endeavour to –

- (i) provide a digital platform to all the enterprises and institutions including SMEs, which are not presently online or adequately online;
- (ii) reach out to the young and the education system and to unlock their potential for transformation, creativity and innovation, and
- (iii) reduce the digital divide between the haves and have not.

Madam Speaker, the overall strategy of my Ministry will not be comprehensive enough, if I do not dwell on the issue of data protection and security. Over and above trust in all respect, security and data protection are also key pillars of our digital strategy. We need to revisit all our information security systems to be in line with the best in the field of cyber security strategies and any breach, cybercrime, and cyberfraud should be readily identifiable and dealt within the framework of the law.

Last, but not least, I would like to mention that another priority of my Ministry consists in working with the private sector, tertiary and research institutions of the country on an Action Plan to spur innovation that will include competition and prizes to creators and inventors. We expect that this initiative will motivate our young people to create and innovate and in that respect my Ministry is also looking at the opportunity of organising a national seminar later this year. Let me say, Madam Speaker, that our young people will be a key theme in all our endeavours and that on one day as a matter of example and to illustrate the vision we have through our youth, we hope - it is not limited only to our youth - that a youngster will come forward to tell us that he has done a perfect computer aided three-dimensional figure of an object over a famous personality or an application that will help patients to better connect with their doctors both in the public and private sector. And why not, a software application that will enable the whole hotel sector to more effectively sell their rooms across the world.

Madam Speaker, we will have to do everything possible to encourage the entrepreneurial spirit of the nation in the four corners of our country. We will have to provide an effective broadband platform at the lowest possible cost so that our firms can more effectively compete both internally and for export. We will have to provide to our young creators a free platform for them to unlock their potential to create and to turn ideas into commercially viable ventures and to create in turn new jobs and accelerate economic development while knocking off all obstacles that might come their way. That's how the technology, communication and innovation will spur the second economic miracle that I hope will bring along it inclusiveness and social justice, progress and prosperity to one and all. That's how we will achieve the meaningful change that the country is waiting for.

Thank you Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Jhugroo!

(3.25 p.m.)

Mr P. Jhugroo (Second Member for Mahebourg & Plaine Magnien): Madam Speaker, first of all, I wish to congratulate you for being the very first Lady of the Republic of Mauritius to accede to the chair of this august Assembly, and I am sure, all of us present today and the whole of Mauritians are very proud of it.

My sincere congratulations also go to the Deputy Speaker, my very good friend, hon. Adrien Duval, who is only 24 and I think he had got long way to go, more than ten mandates and if he wants to become like our hon. Prime Minister, it may become to 12.

I also extend my warmest congratulations to all elected Members of the last General Election. I feel greatly honoured to be on the right side of Sir Anerood Jugnauth who marks history by becoming the Prime Minister of Mauritius for the sixth time in his political career.

I deeply thank the hon. Minister Pravind Jugnauth, my leader, who entrusted his confidence in me to stand as candidate for the third consecutive time. Thank you, leader!

Je tiens finalement à féliciter et à remercier chaleureusement tous ceux qui ont voté pour moi, et aussi pour mon ami l'honorable Henry et mon ami l'honorable Hurreeram dans la circonscription no. 12.

Madam Speaker, let me draw your attention that this Assembly has been hijacked last year by the former Prime Minister, avec la bénédiction du *Leader* de l'Opposition. Ceci ayant pour résultat l'entrave à la bonne marche de notre auguste Assemblée, créant ainsi un obstacle à la démocratie parlementaire à Maurice. Le peuple a gardé un très mauvais souvenir de l'épisode de la réforme électorale, '*koz Kozé*', la deuxième République, le *on/off*, '*frotte frotté*' et les *cooling off periods*.

Aujourd'hui, cette Assemblée est '*on*' et, eux, ils sont '*off*' pour un bon bout de temps, cela peut durer 10 ans, 15 ans. Where is our famous *pêcheur requins*? *Li fine tasse dans filets*! Mais savez-vous quels filets? Dans les filets du *CCID*, *dans casier*! C'est cela qu'on appelle '*Grandeur et Décadence*'!

Madam Speaker, I wish to mention today that, during the last electoral campaign, Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam had got the guts to treat l'Alliance Lepep as '*camion saleté*'! Let me remind him that this '*camion saleté*', with our driver Sir Anerood Jugnauth has been able to elect 51 MP's, when the party of '*Mr Ali Baba*' has elected only 4 MP's while he, himself, landed at Mare Chicose! Ce '*Roi lion*, qui croyait être le propriétaire de l'île Maurice, a oublié que c'est le peuple qui détient le pouvoir. Croyant qu'il avait de la classe et beaucoup de *cash*, il se comportait comme ses homologues dictateurs africains.

Madam Speaker, for the past nine years, it has been repeatedly said by some *grandes gueules* of the previous Government - vous savez de qui je parle - that the development of Mauritius has been only the doings of the Labour Party, which is absolute false.

Pendant ces 10 dernières années, ils ne disaient que c'est seulement le Parti Travailleiste qui a tout fait à Maurice – le développement. Ils n'ont jamais pensé qu'il y avait le MSM qui, de 1982 à 1995, a vraiment fait bouger l'île Maurice, et ils ont faussé l'histoire.

Madam Speaker, the Labour Party est renommé pour faire '*maja caro*', '*kalépilé*' et sans oublier '*touss salis*'. Madam Speaker, the Mauritian people made the right choice in 1982 by electing Sir Anerood Jugnauth as the Prime Minister of Mauritius.

Laissez-moi vous rafraîchir la mémoire, ce pays était au bord de la banqueroute après la défaite de SSR en 1982. C'était la misère noire avec plus de 80,000 chômeurs à Maurice, le pays était au bord du précipice. Grâce aux efforts constants de l'équipe de Sir Anerood Jugnauth, le pays a connu un développement sans précédent dans tous les secteurs, créant ainsi le plein-emploi.

Je tiens à remercier le *Leader* de l'Opposition qui, malheureusement, est absent aujourd'hui....

(Interruptions)

Pour avoir convaincu...

Madam Speaker: Who use unparliamentary words? Hon. Rutnah, please do not use unparliamentary words!

Mr Hurreeram: On a point of order Madam Speaker, hon. Baloomoody used the word '*batchiara*' against my colleague Rutnah!

Madam Speaker: Did you use that word hon. Baloomoody?

Mr Baloomoody: I withdraw.

Mr Jhugroo: Je tiens à remercier le *Leader* de l'Opposition pour avoir convaincu Sir Anerood Jugnauth de quitter son poste de Président de la République et descendre à nouveau dans l'arène politique pour sauver le pays, nettoyer les pourritures et remettre le pays sur les rails. Au lieu de donner un coup de main pour sauver et nettoyer le pays, il s'est laissé embêter par l'appât du pêcheur de requins pour un poste de Premier ministre pour cinq ans. Sir Anerood Jugnauth et son équipe ont continué leur route dans tous les coins et recoins du pays avec la bénédiction du peuple et les rescapés du MMM sont toujours durables dans l'opposition, comme j'avais prédit dans mon premier discours gouvernemental de 2010.

Madame la présidente, avez-vous une idée du bilan de l'ancien Premier ministre Navinchandra Ramgoolam durant ses deux mandats de 1995-2000 et 2005-2014? First, do you still remember the famous 'Macarena' party held at Albion? This party was organised to please the former Prime Minister to be in the company of several young girls seeking a foreign job. What a shame! What a shame for the Labour Party! This was in the first mandate of the Labour Government.

(Interruptions)

This first episode of '*touss sali*' was also largely displayed in the press, thus curtailing the image of the Prime Ministership of Navin Ramgoolam and that of our island.

Second, la mort de Kaya en cellule policière en février 1999 qui causa une émeute à Maurice; there was no law and order.

Let me refresh the mind of everybody in this Assembly about the *émeutes* of 1999. The then Prime Minister Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam took a very long time to put down the rebellion which started in Roche Bois and propagated in other areas in Mauritius. During this very sad period of unrest, Madam Speaker, it is most unbelievable that our former Prime Minister disappeared completely from the screen and become *l'homme invisible*...

(Interruptions)

...ou introuvable comme le dit notre Premier ministre. He remains silent for more than 72 hours, while the country was à feu et à sang. Le public pensait que le Premier ministre *ti ale kassiet emba lili* for 72 hours!

(Interruptions)

No, now *li ti dan lili*?

How can we forget the episode of *the escadron de la mort qui a semé la terreur parmi la population*? There was a sense of insecurity prevailing among the public at large. Law and order was beyond the control of Navinchandra Ramgoolam. No proper decisions were taken by the then Prime Minister to check them and to restore peace in the country.

Let me talk about the Tianli, Sin Jin project. *L'ancien gouvernement avait déraciné les planteurs et éleveurs de Riche Terre pour le fameux projet qui a coûté la bagatelle de R 630 millions* out of public fund which were invested in this project by the then Minister of Finance, Mr Sithanen, without creating a single job which they promised. Sithanen promised 40,000 jobs to be created. This was another bluff of the then Minister of Finance.

How can we forget the State Trading Corporation scandals? Do you still remember *les gros pois d'Ah Fat qui n'ont jamais poussé à Madagascar?*

(Interruptions)

Non, non, jamais poussé. Millions of rupees disappeared! How can we forget *le détournement de parfums et de whisky au Mauritius Duty-free Paradise* by the then Chairman, Mr Joy Beeharry and the Human Resource Manager, Mr Veeren Coomaren? How can we forget?

(Interruptions)

Mr Mohamed: On a point of order. This is not right that you accuse Mr Joy Beeharry by name when there is no case that has been proved against him. This is very unfair.

Madam Speaker: Hon. Jhugroo, could you please refrain from mentioning names.

Mr Jhugroo: Yes, okay. I rephrase. So, Joy Beeharry is J. B. and Veeren Coomaren is V. C.; J. B. and V. C.

Souvenez-vous, Madame la présidente, de la fameuse conseillère du Parti Travailleiste qui se promenait sur la plage de Flic-en-Flac avec son '*cabas rouge*' rempli de billets et vendant des étaux de la foire de la mairie de Quatre Bornes?

Si la police avait fait son travail correctement, elle n'aurait pas récidivé en faisant d'autres victimes avec le *Ponzi Scheme*.

How can we forget the hedging at Air Mauritius? More than Rs6 billion lost! Rs6 billion! How can we forget the hedging at STC where the Mauritian people had to pay Rs8 billion, Madam Speaker? On peut oublier le fracas du ministre Jeetah, le *dumping* du lait Amul à Mare Chicose? Combien de questions, PNQ, on a eu dans cette auguste assemblée, par millions et des millions qu'on a jeté à Mare Chicose à cause de l'incompétence de l'ancien ministre Jeetah. Toujours favori, on ne sait pas pourquoi.

La dilapidation des terres de l'État à des petits copains et copines. Le fameux contrat de Betamax taillé sur mesure pour les familles Jeetah et Bhunjun! Taillé sur mesure! Heureusement, que nous avons notre ministère de la bonne gouvernance qui est en train d'ouvrir une enquête et on a terminé son contrat.

Le fameux Ring Road '*ki ine fini crazé avant fourmi marcher*. How can we forget this? La route Terre Rouge-Verdun inaugurée en grande pompe mais fermée à toute vitesse pour cause de danger public - fissures partout, pareil comme il y a dans l'opposition.

How can we forget les universités '*marrons*' de Jeetah '*kot certificat pena valère*'? How can we forget the D. Y. Patil Medical College de la famille Bappoo? How can we forget des terrains qu'on a donnés à un pandit. Je croyais pour faire un *pooja shop* mais pour faire un restaurant, Madame la présidente! C'est ça notre Premier ministre, le *leader* du Parti Travailleiste, qu'on a toujours gardé comme *leader* modèle, donner du terrain à un pandit pour faire un restaurant et si demain les hindous ne vont plus aller dans les *Shivalas*, ils vont aller dans les restaurants, qui va être responsable?

(Interruptions)

'Li gagne contrat.'

Can we forget l'allocation du contrat de l'aéroport à Airway Coffee, cette dame: 'ou conné are kisanla ou pe gagne zafaire!' *Can we forget* le jour qu'il y avait le *counting* pour les élections municipales, je me souviens j'étais dans l'école Aryan Vedic avec mon amie, Françoise Labelle pendant le *counting*? J'ai reçu un coup de téléphone de mon ami, Yogida Sawmynaden quand je suis entré dans la station, vous savez combien officiers de police il y avait? Il y avait le DCP, ACP, les surintendants et les inspecteurs, comme si on avait un criminel dans la station de Vacoas. Il y avait le Commissaire de police. Heureusement que j'étais là.

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: No cross-talking, please!

Mr Jhugroo: Non, c'est passé, c'est vrai!

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: Hon. Jhugroo, address the Chair, please!

(Interruptions)

Mr Jhugroo: Après qu'est-ce qu'on a fait? Le dictateur Navin Ramgoolam a fait fouiller la maison de mon ami, de mon voisin Yogida Sawmynaden, comme s'il est un criminel. Aujourd'hui, il est en train de payer tous les péchés qu'il a faits avec les gens. Laissez-moi dire à cette auguste Assemblée what he did with me for the past ten years and

the hon. Members of the Opposition are well aware, même le *Leader* de l'opposition. Tellement que je pose des questions au PNQ, quatre fois pendant 10 ans il a envoyé des officiers d'ADSU pour faire fouiller ma pharmacie où moi je pratique comme pharmacien, Madame la présidente.

(Interruptions)

Et savez-vous qui travaillait dans ma pharmacie? La sœur de Mme Soornack travaillait dans les deux pharmacies qu'on a et le Premier ministre était au courant, mais malgré cela il avait envoyé l'ADSU. *'Dominère'*! Navin Ramgoolam est en train de payer les péchés aujourd'hui.

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: Order, please! Order!

Mr Jhugroo: Maintenant, laissez-moi venir sur le scandale d'*Airway Coffee*.

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: Hon. Jhugroo, please!

Mr Jhugroo: Revenons au scandale d'*Airway Coffee*. Heureusement, qu'on a posé la question mardi dernier. On a fait deux *tenders*, Madame la présidente. Il y a une dame qui est aussi membre d'AML; c'est elle qui a présidé l'évaluation du deuxième *tender* et ça aussi dans le bureau du Premier ministre. Il faut faire une enquête approfondie. Les conditions n'étaient pas respectées pour les *tenders*. Il faut faire une enquête; on aura beaucoup, beaucoup à voir, ce qui s'était passé avec AML. Maintenant, quel était le rôle de Monsieur – je peux dire les noms?

Madam Speaker: Refrain from mentioning names, hon. Jhugroo!

Mr Jhugroo: Est-ce qu'on doit faire une enquête sur le rôle de Monsieur S. P, *the Chief Executive of Airports of Mauritius Co. Ltd* sur tous les fracas qu'il a faits depuis 2005? Quel était son rôle pour l'octroi du contrat à Madame Sournack concernant *Airway Coffee*? On doit faire une enquête sur tous les recrutements qu'on a faits à *Airports of Mauritius Co. Limited* depuis 2005. On aura beaucoup des surprises, Madame la président, croyez-moi! Pour quelle raison une compagnie qui n'a pas payé une dette de R 25 millions à *Airports of Mauritius Co. Ltd*, a eu le *red carpet* pour aller à ATOL? Pour quelle raison l'ancien régime a formé une compagnie privée nommé ATOL quand il y a bel et bien *Airports of Mauritius Co. Ltd* où il y a des auditeurs? Là-bas, il n'y a pas des auditeurs. *It is a private company which*

is not governed by PoCA, which is not governed by the Procurement Act. Pour quelle raison notre ancien Premier ministre a fait cette compagnie privée? Je laisse le soin à la nation de poser la question pour quelle raison Navinchandra Ramgoolam, le lion, avait fait cette compagnie privée.

Concernant les autres scandales, le fameux saga-night de Roches-Noires, heureusement il y a une enquête. On va savoir si le Premier ministre était bel et bien présent. Et s'il était présent, comme un Premier ministre responsable, pourquoi il a menti à l'Assemblée Nationale? J'ai été choqué d'apprendre cela. Il a quitté River Walk pour aller à Roches Noires parce qu'il avait loué son campement à une heure ou deux heures du matin, j'ai oublié l'heure.

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: Hon. Jhugroo, there is an enquiry going on, so refrain from making comments on this issue, please!

Mr Jhugroo: Concernant le vol de la montre Rolex. Il avait montré sa montre Rolex. Il a fait une conférence de presse pour montrer la montre. On a une seule comme ça à Maurice. *Ene sel le roi lion.*

Concernant la pendaison suspecte de monsieur Ramdhony dans une cellule policière, comme l'a dit l'honorable Premier ministre à plusieurs reprises, est-ce qu'on peut pendre quelqu'un sur une porte de cellule de cinq pieds? La question que je me pose: quelle était le rôle des DCP? Je ne vais pas nommer leurs noms.

Madam Speaker: Here also, hon. Jhugroo, could you, please, refrain from making comments on this issue!

Mr Jhugroo: Okay. Ma question maintenant est celle-ci: est-ce qu'on avait retiré Monsieur Ramdhony ce soir-là de la cellule de la station pour l'emmener dehors?

Madam Speaker: Hon. Jhugroo, I am sorry, I have to interrupt you! I just asked you not to elaborate on this issue.

(Interruptions)

Mr Jhugroo: Okay. *Madame Speaker, last but not least, how come anyone conceived that the former Prime Minister has in his possession at his residence such a huge amount of money 110 million Mauritian rupees and 110 million in foreign currencies? If my memory serves me well, je pense avoir écouté à la radio, ce soir-là, l'intervention de l'honorable Shakeel Mohamed quand il avait déclaré: qu'est-ce qu'on va voir chez le Premier ministre à River Walk quand on va ouvrir l'armoire? C'est Madame Soornack qui va sortir! Après il a eu la réponse.*

(Interruptions)

Il a eu la réponse!

(Interruptions)

Lui-même, il était choqué!

(Interruptions)

Son papa ne savait pas quoi faire. Enfin, je retire le mot 'papa'.

(Interruptions)

Tone choqué! Tu as raison, j'apprécie! What a shame for the Labour Party!

(Interruptions)

We were made aware that the former Prime Minister had in his custody sex toys and more than 540 sexual erection tablets...

(Interruptions)

... which are prohibited in Mauritius thus contravening our existing law!

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker, have you, in your political career, ever heard of any Head of Government in the world, having in his custody a stock of sex toys and sex tablets?

Madam Speaker: Don't ask me the question!

Mr Jhugroo: What message is he sending to our children, to our youngsters to join politics?

(Interruptions)

What a shame! My question to all the Labour agents in Mauritius: is this the model leader who was heading our country for a second Republic?

(Interruptions)

So programme ine trop chargé! Madam Speaker, let me refresh the memory of hon. Members that in the year 2011, when the MSM was in the Government, I still remember, my very good friend, hon. Shakeel Mohamed, who had treated the MSM party as a little party, very little party- *un parti où il avait lui-même pris son biberon politique.*

(Interruptions)

I still remember that. The then Prime Minister did nothing to recall his hon. Member à l'ordre. *Il était stoïque et sans réaction avec son sourire narquois*, which I consider was – we can say it today – his instruction to hon. Shakeel Mohamed to do so, et il n'avait rien dit.

(Interruptions)

I cannot forget that night. My friends, on the other side, know my temper.

(Interruptions)

I was expelled from this august Assembly because of the 3% they were saying about the MSM. 3%!

(Interruptions)

Tiny party! Now, I ask hon. Mohamed to give me the answer.

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: Hon. Jhugroo, address the Chair, please!

(Interruptions)

Mr Jhugroo: Not now! When the hon. Member will come with his speech.

(Interruptions)

I know I can't ask you this question, so I am asking my very good friend, hon. Shakeel Mohamed, to give me the answer.

Madam Speaker: No, hon. Jhugroo, you don't have the right to question another hon. Member; you have to address the Chair.

(Interruptions)

Mr Jhugroo: Okay! So how come, Madam Speaker, 3% plus 0.5% of the PMSD and the newly joined Party ML, we have got 51 elected members?

(Interruptions)

And I cannot catch how come 40% and 40% which makes 80%. You can count over there...

(Interruptions)

How can you explain?

Leur expert en réforme électorale, le Maître et fameux Guru Sithanen, qui avec ses calculs savants, prédisait un '60-0' dans toutes les circonstances. Toutes les circonstances, '60-0'! Yet, the very small parties, selon les dires de Shakeel Mohamed a fait élire 51 députés.

I am sure hon. Mohamed that you cannot find the explanation of this simple mathema...tricks. In this case, I shall advise you to consult our well experienced professor, Sir Anerood Jugnauth, who would be pleased to teach you the ABCs of electoral equations.

(Interruptions)

Madame la présidente, dans le passé, certaines grandes-gueules...

Madam Speaker: Do not use this language, hon. Jhugroo. It is unparliamentary to use these words.

Mr Jhugroo: Certaines grandes bouches disaient haut et fort que le MSM montait à 'kadadak'. Now I want to know *qui a monté kadadak? MMM sur Travailliste ou Travailliste sur MMM?* I want to know it today. *Le MSM n'est pas monté kadadak. Madame la présidente, je tiens à faire ressortir que peut-être l'homme de Roches Noires qui a monté 'kadadak'*

(Interruptions)

Madame la présidente, je tiens à faire ressortir qu'à chaque fois que Sir Anerood Jugnauth était au pouvoir, il y a eu de belles réalisations, car il tient toujours ses promesses.

Il avait maté les escadrons de la mort et les barons de la drogue, avait rétabli le *Law and Order* dans notre chère Ile Maurice. Il avait redonné l'espoir à tout un peuple.

Encore une fois, ce peuple admirable a conduit Sir Anerood Jugnauth au pouvoir. Et nous sommes tous certains que Sir Anerood Jugnauth, avec son équipe, saura tenir les

promesses énoncées pendant la dernière campagne électorale, rejoignant ainsi, les 300 points énumérés dans le discours-programme.

A cet effet, je me réjouis de la mise sur pied d'une commission d'enquête sur le trafic de la drogue à Maurice. I wish to put on record that the last Commission of Enquiry was held in 1985, when Sir Snerood Jugnauth was Prime Minister and after nearly 30 years, Sir Anerood Jugnauth will set up another Commission of Enquiry. The former Prime Minister, Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam, had, on several occasions, been asked for such Commission, but to no avail.

Madam Speaker, the previous Government implemented the free transport scheme to students and the senior citizens without any planning. We all know the burden the beneficiaries are encountering, such as non-availability of school buses, drivers of buses refusing to stop on bus stops at which the senior citizens are waiting. We have heard and witnessed several cases reported through the private radios every day.

Madam Speaker, I humbly propose that the Ministers concerned sit together and come up with solutions, so that we come to a win win situation.

I shall now say a few words about my constituency. My constituency of Mahebourg and Plaine Magnien, Madam Speaker, has been left out by the previous regime. We have had MPs who, *soi ti pe la guerre entre zot même*, or were welcoming subutex traffickers at the VVIP lounge.

I firmly believe, that though the NDU, which now falls under the purview of the Rt. hon. Prime Minister, and with the close cooperation of my colleagues, hon. Hurreeram and hon. Henry, we shall be able to improve the quality of living of our constituents. I beg to make the following proposals in that regard -

Mahebourg is well-known for its waterfront, which unfortunately, *est dans un état lamemtable*. I have myself set PQs on that issue when I was in the Opposition. The south east part of the island will surely attract more tourists if the Mahebourg Waterfront is fully upgraded, to include tuck shops, food courts and other commercial units. *Bref, faisons de Mahebourg un village touristique digne de ce nom et ce qui fait honneur au rôle important qui a joué dans l'histoire de ce pays.* I propose that the Minister of Finance gives due consideration in the forthcoming budget.

Les régates, Madame la présidente, sont des évènements bien accueillis parmi les habitants du Sud. I, therefore, propose that Government *valorise cette activité, qui*

augmentera l'activité touristique à Mahebourg. Je suis sûr qu'avec le soutien de l'honorable ministre des Sports, on va aller de l'avant avec cela.

I would also appeal to the hon. Prime Minister for us because we promised to the inhabitants of Plaine Magnien, me and my friend Henry regarding the Plaine Magnien market to be covered. *Il faut couvrir le marché de Plaine Magnien.*

Water supply remains a serious issue for the inhabitants of the south, Trois Boutiques, Plaine Magnien, Ville Noire, Mare Tabac and Mahebourg. This is due to the fact that water pipes, which date back to more than 50 years, have not been replaced nor have they been upgraded for so many years while the number of houses/commercial units have considerably increased. So, I appeal to the hon. Vice-Prime Minister to see to it.

As far as the lease of Camp Carol/Kenya is concerned, we had a PQ last time and with the answer of the Vice-Prime Minister, who is absent today, I am sure that he will do the needful.

To end, Madam Speaker, on 10 December 2014, a lion went to sleep dreaming of a Second Republic. On 10 December 2014, *le jour des élections*, a lion went to sleep dreaming of a second Republic. On 11 December, the sun was shining so bright that his dream melted like thin ice. Since then mother nature has been showering her blessings on our dear country. I am confident that this Government *sera à la hauteur de l'honneur qui nous a été fait.*

With these words, Madam Speaker, I thank you.

(4.05 p.m.)

Mr R. Rampertab (Second Member for Flacq & Bon Accueil): Madam Speaker, may I wish to seize this opportunity, on behalf of my constituents, especially all the ladies of Constituency No. 9, to congratulate you for being the first lady Speaker to preside over this august National Assembly in this history of Mauritius. May I also congratulate hon. Adrien Duval for being the youngest ever Deputy Speaker of this House.

Let me also take the opportunity of thanking the Leader of this House, Sir Anerood Jugnauth together with hon. Pravind Jugnauth, Leader of the MSM, for choosing me to stand as a candidate in the last general elections.

My thanks also goes to hon. Xavier-Luc Duval and hon. Ivan Collendavelloo, as leader of the respective parties for their support, and my two *colistiers*, without forgetting hon. Ministers Roopun and Dayal for their support and help.

Madam Speaker, I must say that I have had the opportunity to have been elected democratically as a Borough Councillor in the county of Surrey in the United Kingdom where I served the British community with great pride between 2007 and 2011. But, Madam Speaker, to stand as a candidate in the general election in Mauritius and to serve the population of the island is a privilege and, indeed, I think it is a dream of every single Mauritian who has spent several years abroad to come back and serve their home country with dignity. In this context, Madam Speaker, as a professional having spent many years of my career in the United Kingdom, I resolutely decided to come back home and serve the same.

Madam Speaker, I must say that the trigger which made me decide to come back and throw myself in the political arena was no doubt the Rt. hon. Sir Anerood Jugnauth, our Prime Minister, whom I have known to be a man of his word and integrity.

Madam Speaker, I have got no doubt that like me other experienced Mauritian professionals, *les fils et les filles du sol* will come back and share the experiences and knowledge they have acquired abroad.

Madam Speaker, since this Government has taken office there is indeed a good feeling factor that is felt across the country and even among all the Mauritians living abroad. One thing that really baffles me is, Madam Speaker, when we embarked on our electoral campaign people said we are no hoppers, we are only a small party. But, what we and the people have witnessed in Mauritius and especially in the east of Mauritius, is the destitution of a self-proclaimed king and his lieutenants and, an old lion who is now without a den today. In Constituency No. 9, I must say, on one hand, there was arrogance of a self-proclaimed king and his servants and, on the other hand, we faced the electorate with great humility, Madam, and the result said it all.

Madam Speaker, I can see today that it is with the same humility that this Government will serve the people of the country and will implement our Government Programme. This Government is a government of action. We have already shown within a few days of coming into power how we have honoured our commitments. For instance, the increase in the old age pension, the increase in pension of disabled and those in need and the additional

remuneration for the workers of this country. It shows how a considerate and how caring Government we are. Madam Speaker, likewise, this Government will honour the commitments taken in the Government Programme 2015-2019.

Madam Speaker, one thing in particular of which I was really shocked during our campaign is the level of poverty I witnessed during the course of election campaign, while my colleagues and I were going around in the constituency doing *du porte-à-porte*. I could not believe my eyes when I saw people in 2014 having no electricity and no water in the so-called “modern country” by the last Government.

Madam Speaker, I am sorry to say that the previous Government was known to be a Labour Government for the labourers, but has totally failed to look after the working class of this country. Unfortunately, Madam Speaker, we had a Government led by someone who was in quest in digging gold from the population like those days in Eldorado. This has been witnessed by the entire nation and around the world when the famous safes with no codes or forgotten codes were opened a few days ago in the CCID office. Needless to say that this nation has undoubtedly witnessed that the last Government was motivated by protecting *les petits copains et copines* in the name of *démocratisation de l'économie*.

Madam Speaker, today, I am glad that the high horse on which the previous Prime Minister was riding has been brought down by the population on 10 December when the armada of *l'Alliance Lelep* - ‘*Viré Mam*’ - decided to take the bull by its horn and set the record right by placing the trust in the leadership of the Rt. hon. Sir Anerood Jugnauth who is now commonly known as *le grand père de la nation and le grand père du deuxième miracle économique* which we are anticipating in the very near future by virtue of the Programme that has been presented on 27 January of this year.

Madam Speaker, changes are bound to occur and we know as well as those who are on the other side of the House that our educated population is now ever ready to face the challenges and help us to bring about a new culture of politics where meaningful change will really take place by firstly treating all the citizens of this country equal as per our Constitution. The real *démocratisation et diversification* of the economy will take place.

May I also seize the opportunity to thank the Minister of Finance and Economic Development, hon. Lutchmeenaraidoo for setting up the SME banks, thereby giving the opportunity for children and individuals coming from all strata of life to develop this country economically, socially and positioning it as one of the leading State of the African Continent

so that we can play an active part in the SADC community and extend our bilateral, social and economic cooperation with Asia and, in particular, with the emerging countries like the Great China, the Mother India as well as Europe and USA.

As our Government Programme is entitled “Achieving Meaningful Change”, Madam Speaker, we will set the example, unlike the previous Government. We will show the population of Mauritius the right way and the right direction that they should proceed. Here, I will end by quoting Mahatma Gandhi who said, and I quote –

“BE THE CHANGE YOU WANT TO SEE IN THE WORLD.”

I rest my case, Madam Speaker.

Thank you.

(4.16 p.m.)

Mr S. Toussaint (Second Member for Curepipe & Midlands): Madam Speaker, allow me, to congratulate you for your appointment as Speaker of this august House. Indeed, as the first lady ever being appointed to this post, you are the pride of the Republic. I am sure that you will be *à la hauteur et que vous dirigerez notre auguste Assemblée d’une main de fer.*

I would like also to congratulate the Deputy Speaker, the hon. Adrien Duval, for being the youngest Member ever being appointed to this post. He is, Madam Speaker, the hope of all the young people of this country. He is also the pride of Constituency No. 17, Curepipe and Midlands.

My congratulations also go to hon. Mrs Malini Sewocksingh for her election. I am sure that you will be *une digne représentante des femmes de notre circonscription et de toute l’île Maurice.* I would like also to congratulate all the Members of this August Assembly.

Madam Speaker, my thanks and gratitude go to the Rt. hon. Prime Minister, Sir Anerood Jugnauth. Thank you, Sir, for giving me the opportunity to stand as candidate in the last elections. Thank you also for my nomination as PPS for Constituencies Nos. 16 and 17. *Je puis vous rassurer que je serai à la hauteur de vos espérances.*

My thanks also go to the leaders of l’Alliance Lepep –

(i) the Deputy Prime Minister, hon. Xavier Duval;

- (ii) the Vice-Prime Minister, hon. Ivan Collendavelloo, and
- (iii) my leader, hon. Pravind Jugnauth.

Thank you dear leader for believing in me and for giving me the opportunity to serve my country.

My thanks also go to my hon. friends of the MSM for their support and their friendship. Special thanks also to the YOs.

Madame la présidente, la victoire de l'Alliance Lepep aux dernières élections est effectivement la victoire du peuple. Nous pouvons être le meilleur des mathématiciens, à la fin, Madame la présidente, c'est le peuple qui décide et, en effet, *lepep finn décidé*. Le peuple n'en pouvait plus de toute cette arrogance qui provenait de l'alliance de la honte. Le peuple, Madame la présidente, a sanctionné, comme disait l'honorable Mahen Jhugroo, le 40 + 40.

Madame la présidente, la circonscription numéro 17, Curepipe/Midlands n'a pas été épargnée de la bassesse dont l'honorable Roubina Jadoo Jaunboccus faisait allusion dans son discours. Les candidats de l'alliance soi-disant de la Modernité et de l'Unité parlaient de '*pena adversaires dans Curepipe*' et traitaient l'honorable Madame Sewocksingh de novice, '*pas conne narien, novice, ti zenfant*' et traitaient l'honorable Adrien Duval de '*Ti coq*'. Et, Madame la présidente, '*ti coq fine tire zot manzé*'.

(Interruptions)

Quant à moi, Madame la présidente, on me traitait de '*piti cité*'. Oui, Madame la Présidente, *mo ene piti cité, mo habite Cité Malherbes et mo fier ki azordi ena ene piti cité dans ça parlement-là*, Madame la présidente.

(Interruptions)

Merci, l'honorable Sir Anerood Jugnauth et, bien sûr, notre *Leader*.

Madame la présidente, je veux aujourd'hui ouvrir la voie aux plus démunis de notre société. Si moi j'ai pu arriver là où j'en suis, d'autres pourront le faire. *Yes, they can*. En effet, ...

(Interruptions)

En effet, demain dans nos cités ouvrières, dans nos faubourgs ou dans nos villages, nous aurons, Madame la présidente, des *CEOs* de grandes compagnies, nous aurons de grands

chirurgiens, nous aurons de grands avocats, pour ne citer que quelques-uns. C'est cela le 'meaningful change' dont parle notre programme gouvernemental.

Madame la présidente, la réforme dans notre système éducatif sera un élément catalyseur. Elle entraînera dans son sillage la transformation de notre pays vers une vraie modernité, *pas bann-là zot modernité*. Je suis sûr, Madame la présidente, que l'honorable ministre de l'éducation fera un bon travail, vu les compétences qu'elle possède. Madame la présidente, le 'meaningful change' c'est aussi le deuxième miracle économique. *Ena ti pe rode deuxième république*. Avec l'expérience et les connaissances de l'honorable ministre des finances, je suis sûr et certain que le pays connaîtra son deuxième miracle économique. Des nouveaux piliers de l'économie verront le jour, tel que l'économie océanique, le *duty-free shopping* et les *TICs* entre autres.

Les petites et moyennes entreprises auront un très grand rôle à jouer dans la réalisation de ce deuxième miracle économique. Le gouvernement proposera diverses mesures qui aideront ces entreprises à s'épanouir. Tous les entrepreneurs pourront avoir accès à ces facilités. Je dis bien, Madame la présidente, tous les entrepreneurs, *pas zis maîtresse ek ti-copains*. Tous ceux intéressés par le monde du business bénéficieront de l'aide du gouvernement afin de faire croître la richesse de notre pays.

Madame la présidente, nous vivons dans un monde de technologie. Les plus petits - trois ans ou quatre ans - demandent maintenant au Père Noël des tablettes tactiles, des laptops et non des *zouzous ménaz*. Les jeunes parlent de *Facebook*, de réseaux sociaux. *Enfin ena ti pe dire facebook poison zot*.

L'informatique, Madame la présidente, fait partie intégrante de notre vie de tous les jours. C'est pour cela que le plan gouvernemental parle à la page 31 de *National TIC Strategic Plan 2015-2020*. Ce plan transformera notre pays en un *Smart Mauritius* avec des *smart people*. La connectivité de l'Internet à travers le système wifi sera installée dans les places publiques et les différentes institutions éducatives. Je suis sûr, Madame la présidente, que mon *Leader*, l'honorable Pravind Jugnauth, mettra toutes ses compétences au service de son ministère afin de très vite transformer le pays in an *intelligent and smart Mauritius*.

Madame la présidente, étant moi-même un peu animateur et comédien amateur, chanteur un peu de tout, je peux vous dire que l'artiste a bien souffert pendant ces neuf dernières années.

(Interruptions)

Rien n'a été fait pour la dignité de l'artiste. Nos deux plus belles salles hélas, de théâtre et je salue l'initiative de l'honorable ministre des arts et de la culture pour la transformation de la salle Serge Constantin. Mais il y a deux autres qu'il ne faut pas oublier et je suis sûr que c'est le cas. Nous parlons du Plaza, Madame la présidente, et nous parlons aussi de notre théâtre de Port Louis. Malheureusement, ce ne sont plus que des ruines et je dis cela avec beaucoup de tristesse puisque j'ai eu l'occasion de fouler ces planches moi-même, en tant que comédien amateur. Le théâtre de Port Louis, Madame la présidente, qui est un théâtre à l'italienne, est unique dans l'hémisphère sud, unique, Madame la présidente. Je fais, donc, appel à l'honorable ministre des arts et de la culture afin qu'il puisse mettre tout en œuvre pour sauver ces deux belles salles de théâtre et je suis sûre que tout un chacun nous mettrons la main à la pâte pour régler ce problème.

Madame la présidente, l'industrie du film et du cinéma peut devenir un autre pilier important de notre pays. Avec les changements que le gouvernement apportera dans le rôle et le fonctionnement de la MFDC, cette industrie connaîtra un nouvel essor. Je vois déjà de nouvelles productions de films mauriciens qui inonderont bientôt nos téléviseurs et nos salles de cinéma. Je peux même proposer des titres à nos producteurs locaux: *Chemistry*, *Koz koker*. Certains pourraient même s'inspirer du célèbre titre de Hemingway, le vieil homme et la mer pour nous donner le pêcheur et le requin.

(Interruptions)

Madame la présidente, la circonscription numéro 17, a été très longtemps laissée à l'abandon. Notre ville lumière est hélas devenue une ville morte. Nos villages ne sont plus que désolation. Quel développement l'ancien régime a-t-il apporté dans la circonscription numéro 17? Rien, si ce n'est ...

(Interruptions)

...que la distribution de macaroni à la veille des élections municipales 2012 Madame la présidente. *Et en plis gagne touper pou bat madame dans élection.*

Je fais, donc, Madame la présidente, un appel pressant à notre honorable Premier ministre afin que nous, les députés de la circonscription, puissions avoir les moyens nécessaires afin de transformer la circonscription no. 17 *into a shining Constituency.*

Laissez-moi rappeler à l'honorable Premier ministre que c'était lui, qui dans les années 80, avait transformé la cité Malherbes en quelques jours. Madame la présidente, à la cité Malherbes dans les années 80 *pas ti ena cimé, ti ena corail, ti manque zis la mer.* Juste

après un site visite, en l'espace de quelques jours, rapide comme l'éclair comme il a toujours été notre honorable Premier ministre, a transformé la cité Malherbes et les coraux de la rue principale ont été remplacés par de l'asphalte faisant ainsi la joie et le bonheur des habitants. En quelques jours aussi après la visite de notre honorable Premier ministre la fontaine publique a été remplacée par des compteurs de la CWA – un dans chaque maison, Madame la présidente. C'était dans les années 80!

Madame la présidente, comment oublier aussi les développements apportés jadis toujours sous le *Prime Ministership* de notre honorable Sir Anerood Jugnauth. Les développements dans les villages qui forment partie de la circonscription No. 17. Les développements dans le village de Midlands, je suis sûre que l'honorable Premier ministre s'en souvient encore, la construction de notre bureau de CAB, *the Police Station* et tous les développements autour de ce village. Aujourd'hui encore, honorable Sir Anerood Jugnauth, la circonscription no. 17 a besoin de vous. Je vous remercie d'avance au nom de ces habitants.

Madame la présidente, je voudrai avant de conclure rendre hommage à mon épouse et mes enfants pour leur soutien pendant la dernière campagne électorale.

(Interruptions)

Malgré les critiques, ils ont toujours été à mes côtés et m'emmenant, moi ainsi que mes deux collègues, vers une victoire nette et sans bavure. Je remercie aussi les membres de la régional MSM de la circonscription no. 17 pour leur fidélité et leur encouragement.

Madame la présidente, je fais appel aux honorables membres de l'opposition afin qu'ils apportent des critiques constructives qui pourraient faire avancer le pays. Ce ne sont certainement pas vos piques et vos '*mo pas peur toi*' qui feront de vous des dignes membres de cette auguste Assemblée.

Madame la présidente, *nou pas bizin 100 jours pou sanz la vie dimoune nou, dan 2/3 jours mem la vie fini sanzer*. Comment ne pas parler de l'augmentation de la pension vieillesse, de la compensation salariale, de l'arrêt des radars, du *freezing* du permis à point parmi tant d'autres et *ziska lapli tomber réservoir rempli, déborder!*

L'Alliance Lepep, Madame la présidente, apporte un vrai changement et cela la population peut le constater tous les jours et ce sera ainsi durant notre mandat de cinq ans. Je dirais aux honorables membres de l'opposition, *pas gagne nous tracas*.

Nous réussirons dans notre tâche, *pas pressé*. Madame la présidente, nous allons réussir notre projet pour cette île Maurice car il ne faut pas oublier nous avons un sage comme Premier ministre. God bless you, honourable Sir Anerood Jugnauth and God bless l'Alliance Lepep, God bless Mauritius.

Merci, Madame la présidente!

Madam Speaker: Hon. Mrs Sewocksingh!

(4.35 p.m.)

Mrs M. Sewocksingh (Third Member for Curepipe & Midlands): Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, allow me, first of all, to congratulate you for being the first lady presiding this House. You are our pride Madam and thank you for making us proud. I would also like to congratulate the Deputy Speaker, hon. Adrien Duval, who is none other than the grandson of late Sir Gaëtan Duval. Hon. Adrien Duval who was also my running mate in the past election has become an icon not only for the youths but for the whole population. I have had and still have the privilege to work with such dynamic and enthusiastic people like himself and my brother, hon. Stephan Toussaint, whom we have all just heard and I would like to congratulate him for his great speech.

Our success, Madam Speaker, in the last election is nothing but our solidarity that was prevailing and that is prevailing in our constituency.

Madam Speaker, it is an honour for me today to address the House, an honour for me, because, like every Member of this House, the people chose us to represent them. I have gone through two elections within two years, Madam Speaker, one was for the Municipal Elections and the second one was lately, the General one.

I have had the chance to climb the ladder in a short period of time, Madam Speaker, because I am blessed to be in a Party as the PMSD where democracy, ideology, meritocracy and equal opportunity prevail.

And, these ideals are there mainly because we have a Leader as hon. Xavier-Luc Duval who is a person full of integrity, humility and with wisdom, with both a conscience and charisma of course.

Unlike others, Madam Speaker, who haven't seen further than their nose, I shall always be grateful to my party and to my Leader for what he made me today.

I have experienced more important values with my party namely- loyalty, sincerity, trust and faith and I am sure that those *ingrats* must be repenting today. I even know a case where someone who went so low in not only changing his party, but even changed his *appartenance ethnique* just to stay in power.

On 10 December 2014, Madam Speaker, the population clearly and unequivocally disapproved a way of doing politics which was characterised by repression, opacity, nepotism, and waste of public funds. A way of doing politics where the select few of certain inner circles, Madam Speaker, amassed untold amounts of wealth, under the guise of economic democratisation.

L'Alliance Lepep under the leadership of the Rt. hon. Prime Minister, Sir Anerood Jugnauth who has become a living legend and is an example of strength, courage, determination and wisdom. *L'Alliance Lepep* won the elections because the population in its wide majority was fed up with all the scandals. And we sought to respond to the needs of the population by listening to them, and crafting an electoral program which later became the Government Programme.

Madam Speaker, I have been elected in Constituency No. 17 together with my two good friends, hon. Adrien Duval and hon. Stephan Toussaint. Constituency No. 17 is special in its own way not only because it is one of the largest Constituencies by geographical area, but it is also a Constituency where almost all political parties are being represented during elections. We always have almost all of them. Unfortunately, we did not have *Parti Malin* this time, but we always have some, most of them. And, Madam Speaker, it becomes quite challenging to stand as candidate and to be elected, to have a 3-0 in Curepipe/Midlands, was a big deal and we proudly did it, and I would like to thank all the people, all our mandates, who believed in the three of us and made us here.

This Constituency is a landmark. Curepipe/Midlands, No. 17, is a place, it is almost the centre of the country where almost all tourists have to cross to go down for their sightseeing, but unfortunately, as hon. Toussaint just mentioned nothing much, nothing has been done, I should say, for the past years. For some 20 years, if I am not mistaken, Constituency No. 17 was in the hands of the Opposition.

When I was a Councillor of the town of Curepipe, I have had the time and the opportunity to be close to the people. I have seen the town and its people in good times, and I have seen how people in remote locations live in bad times too.

Constituency No. 17 is just not about Rue Lees at Curepipe, or Rue Chasteauneuf, it is also about places like Cité Anoushka, Madam Speaker, and Dubreuil where there are big problems of waste water management. I have seen how the families suffer in times of heavy rain, or how the children go to sleep hungry. Yes, Madam Speaker, we still have a big problem of poverty in our Constituency. The problem of poverty is not because these people are lazy, far from that, but it is that they have been deprived from many things. And, for this, we cannot resolve poverty just by inaugurating a village hall, or a children's playground. We all have to resolve it in a well-structured manner. It is all about empowerment, Madam Speaker.

Sustainable poverty alleviation can only happen when we make the people believe they are worth something. We need to invest in bringing back the self-esteem. We need to have committed stakeholders who will invest their willpower in uplifting the whole community and this is where we, *l'Alliance Lepep* stand, Madam Speaker.

Providing a decent roof under which families can thrive is what the actual Deputy Prime Minister achieved to an extent when he was the Minister of Social Integration and I am sure, Madam Speaker, that together with our actual Minister of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment, hon. Roopun, we will find ways and plans to alleviate poverty.

Many people have skills, but unfortunately, do not have access to markets, or do not have the equipment or workplace to make a living out of their skills. We have many mechanics, carpenters, painters, plumbers, who find their clients confined to a small area. This is the intent behind the creation of a kind of 'Business Park', geared towards *la revalorisation des métiers*.

Madam Speaker, coupled with the intention of this Government to put a credit line for the SME sector, this will provide the necessary seed capital for those craftsmen to get the right equipment and deliver quality products and services.

And, not later than yesterday, the hon. Minister of Finance and Economic Development announced that there will be a one-stop shop for SMEs. This shows again the commitment and dedication of this very Government.

We need to focus on the future, Madam Speaker, but it is also important to draw lessons from the past, especially when we look at the scandals that have tainted contract allocations, be it at the airport, or the distribution of crown lands to *petits copains* which is a

total disregard of good governance and ethics. The pictures of unexplained wealth as yet that appeared in the press are still fresh in our minds.

Madam Speaker, our natural aspiration is to become a high income and to achieve this, we need to look at other places in the world where other countries have achieved. Our main resource, Madam Speaker, is our human capital. We need to invest more in quality education and training.

Education is not only about the teaching of facts, but rather training of the mind to think.

Public Education today is not what it could have been, but I am very much confident that the Minister of education, hon. Mrs Leela Devi Dookun-Luchoomun, who is the right person at the right place, will have the right strategies in place to revamp our education system totally.

I take this opportunity, Madam Speaker, to mention in my speech about companies who just pay up their CSR contributions to the MRA, as opposed to engaging in their neighbourhoods to support worthy causes. Together with the Deputy Speaker, hon. Adrien Duval and hon. Toussaint, we shall spearhead CSR approved projects in Curepipe/Midlands, with a particular focus on the well-being of children and education. This will enable a more direct impact to be created regionally and also raise awareness of needs within communities and, of course, the Government will keep channelling the CSR funds to worthy and noble causes, Madam Speaker.

Madame la présidente, the Tourism Sector in which I personally work *a pris un sale coup ces dernières années*. It is high time to bring back our brand, our destination by enforcing the law and promoting the destination in a more diversifying way and for sure there is no doubt that, the actual Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism and External Communications, hon. X. L. Duval, will find ways to change things. And this leads me to my last point, which is about integrity and honour in politics, as mentioned by hon. Bhagwan - who is unfortunately moving. I wish the hon. Member could stay for two minutes.

(Interruptions)

I don't think it will be so boring. You will be happy, hon. Bhagwan.

(Interruptions)

While giving his speech, and I should say here, that I have had the opportunity to have a chat with hon. Bhagwan – I don't know why the hon. Member is moving just now when I was about to tell this. Hon. Bhagwan told me of his 32 years in politics; indeed, it is a long way, yes. The hon. Member mentioned in his speech that, all of us who are sitting here, Madam Speaker, have 'Honourable' in front of our names, which means a lot.

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker, being a newcomer, being a woman in politics, I wish to see an Assembly where there are elegant debates, discussions and arguments. So, my appeal to all hon. Members of the House is, let us do politics differently. Let us show that, yes, we can do politics *autrement*. Let us debate issues and not people. Let us put our country first like we always say and let us truly work for the whole population and, especially, Madam Speaker, when we refer to women particularly, especially in this august Assembly - you know why and what I am referring to. We are going to encourage more women to join this place. And when there are good suggestions, we have to work together and make those become reality for our country. After all, we all have a common purpose, that is, the welfare of the Republic of Mauritius and its people.

A special word goes to all hon. Ministers, and hon. Members of the Parliament on both sides of the House, members of the staff of this Assembly, my family, my father, my daughter, my late mother, my agents, my good friends who have helped me in being what I am today and all my good friends who are sitting here, who are helping me in adjusting, in getting me through this teething period. I thank you all for that and I thank God for that. I would not like to mention each and every one so that I don't miss anybody.

Madame la présidente, je ne pourrais pas passer à côté d'un commentaire qu'on entend de temps en temps du côté de l'Opposition, disant qu'il y a quelques mois de cela, le PMSD faisait partie de l'ancien régime et nous traite d'hypocrites. Permettez-moi, Madame la présidente, de dire qu'il n'y a rien de plus hypocrite lorsqu'on est assis dans le siège de l'Opposition et en même temps on fait les yeux doux avec l'autre parti.

(Interruptions)

L'hypocrisie, Madame la présidente, ...

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: Order! Order, please!

Mrs Sewocksingh: L'hypocrisie, Madame la présidente c'est lorsque...

(Interruptions)

le cœur est ailleurs, et la clé est peut-être dans le coffre - je ne sais pas.

(Interruptions)

Qui ne se souvient pas de l'épisode 'on and off'?

(Interruptions)

Madam Speaker: Please, order!

Mrs Sewocksingh: Le peuple en a jugé. Le PMSD est un parti sincère; lorsqu'il fallait mettre les points sur les 'i', on l'a fait.

Madam Speaker, when we are attached to our principles, and better still, when you join forces with other people of goodwill, this creates a compelling case to get elected. The population today is far more information savvy than they used to be. This is why *l'Alliance Lepep* got elected. On an ending note, I would like to reinstate my gratitude to the Leader of the House, the Rt. hon. Prime Minister, Sir Anerood Jugnauth, and other Leaders of concerned party for having ably led this Alliance to the resounding victory that few thought possible. In the end, we all learnt that elections are more about people, about how we can impact their lives positively, and not about statistical models built on history and often out-dated data.

The outcome of the recent elections shows that Mauritians want a return to principles in politics. This is why I just mentioned, let us do politics *autrement*. This is what people want to see. People have sanctioned those who sold their principles and causes for pecuniary reasons. Our intent is common, Madam Speaker. We are all here sitting to serve the country and I look forward to serving my country with honesty and dignity.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: I suspend the sitting for half an hour for tea.

At 4.50 p.m. the sitting was suspended.

On resuming at 5.28 p.m. with the Deputy Speaker in the Chair.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Koonjoo!

The Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands (Mr P. Koonjoo): Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, allow me, first of all, to congratulate you on your election as the Deputy Speaker, and if I don't make mistake, I believe that you are the youngest Deputy Speaker that this House has known. I know this House since 1976. Until now, it makes about 39 years in politics. So, first, it is a huge congratulation for you as a young lawyer, young MP. The coincidence is that both the father and the son are working together in the Parliament.

Also, I would like to congratulate, Madam Speaker, Mrs Hanoomanjee, as the Speaker of the House, because that's true, as the others outside would have said, historic because a lady for the first time has become a Speaker in the House, in Mauritius. Congratulations to Mrs Hanoomanjee as well!

I must also congratulate all the hon. Members who have been elected in the Parliament, and especially the Leaders of *l'Alliance Lepep*. We have got above all, Sir Anerood Jugnauth, whom I happen to know, as I said, for more than 38 years, a dynamic, a man of word, a man of action, what we say in Hindi he is a Karmic Yogi, a man who believes in action. He is here in front of me.

He was the person in 1976 to ask me to join MMM, because there was lacking one candidate in 1976 to stand against the ex-Prime Minister, SSR, in Triolet. For me, it was quite difficult at that time, because I came from a very modest family. My father was a labourer and I just married, I just became father of a child, my father had a stroke, he was bed-ridden. Sir Anerood Jugnauth at that time came to my place. He said: "Give us a helping hand." Without any hesitation, I told him: 'Okay'. And from that time, I have never refused anything that Sir Anerood Jugnauth has asked me to do in politics. He is a Leader who has changed the destiny of Mauritius, of every Mauritian. The world knows that.

Today, he has led the *l'Alliance Lepep* together with my good friend, the Vice-Prime Minister, hon. Collendavelloo, whom I happened to know in the MMM and the DPM, hon. Duval, with whom I had the opportunity to work as a Minister in the Cabinet of Sir Anerood Jugnauth. These were the persons who led the country from darkness to light. I must congratulate them as well. Above all, the Rt. hon. Prime Minister had faith in me, not only to offer me a ticket, but also to give me a portfolio, a huge one, I must tell you, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir.

(Interruptions)

At the same time, I would like to thank the electorate of Constituency No.11. For me it was a bit tough, difficult to start from Plaine des Papayes to go to Vieux Grand Port and *la cote comme on disait dans numero 11*. It was a bit tough. But, I had given my word and I hold my word. I also thank the Rt. hon. Prime Minister for that and I congratulate and thank the people of Constituency No. 11 for having elected, not only myself, but the three of us. I said on the day the election results were proclaimed that it was a matter of pride for me because at that time there were many kings in Mauritius. *Le roi du sud, le roi du nord, le roi de l'est*, so many kings!

(Interruptions)

Le roi lion!

And for the son of a labourer to defeat a king in his constituency, who had reigned there for more than 26 years!

(Interruptions)

A lion king also! Yes! For me, it was a matter of pride, Mr Deputy Speaker Sir. I thank and congratulate my two friends from Constituency No.11 and, through this Parliament I want to thank all the members of public who worked for us and voted for us.

Today, in this House, in *l'Alliance Lelep* I think we have seven ladies as Members of Parliament and Ministers. I do not find anyone there on that side of the House! No lady!

(Interruptions)

Yes, it is an irony because the ex-Prime Minister used to say: "*qui ou lé frère ban femmes content mwa!*"

(Interruptions)

That was the weapon of defeat for him and it was a matter of pride for *l'Alliance Lelep*. I can tell you one thing, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, that in this election people said this: *la masse, le peuple a voté*. Yes, I agree. There was an invisible hand, the hand of God. Yes, I agree. But, I will add that it is mostly because of the women who voted for this *l'Alliance Lelep*!

(Interruptions)

The women, ladies, girls, daughters and sisters of this country were fed up with the manner in which the ex-Prime Minister was behaving himself! *Il était une honte pour le monde entier et pour la famille mauricienne, surtout pour les femmes!*

(Interruptions)

It is said in the Hindu culture that where women are respected, where women are honoured, there God lives. Unfortunately, I do not know which culture our ex-Prime Minister here...

(Interruptions)

I better not name it!

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Ministry I was bestowed is a five-pronged sectors: the Ministry of Ocean Economy, which I believe is the future of this country - *l'économie bleue*; we have marine resources, living and non-living; we also have the sector of fisheries which I also believe has a bright future and the sector of shipping which later on we will know how it has been blundered by the last Government. Lastly, we also have the responsibility of outer islands, that is, about Agalega and other small islands.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, allow me now to embark on the mandate of my Ministry which, as I said, is huge. The setting up of a new Ministry of Ocean Economy should come as no surprise to anyone. The development of the ocean has always been the vision of our Prime Minister as far back as 1980s. For the first time in the history of Mauritius, the Prime Minister initiated bathymetric surveys of our coastal waters including Rodrigues in the 1980's! He also promoted major infrastructural development for the harbour and container handling facilities. During his mandate in 2000-2005 where I was present, he set up the Mauritius Oceanography Institute (MOI) which is still here.

Since the exploitation of productive land resources globally, as well as in Mauritius, are necessarily reaching their limits economically and ecologically, the importance of the ocean as a resource for economic development has become increasingly prominent. This Government is committed to making ocean economy an important sector to sustain economic diversification, job creation and wealth generation. Indeed, the creation of a Ministry dedicated to the ocean economy is a major breakthrough by this Government. The potential of economic advancement and prosperity that this resource can generate, if developed in a sustainable manner, can help to take Mauritius in the long run to the next level, that is, of a high income country. The landslide victory of *l'Alliance Lepep* in itself is a catalytic indicator to motivate us to move in this direction.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, the ongoing police enquiry concerning the coffers and massive sums of money found at the residence of the former Prime Minister can have important financial and economic ramifications for the country. This observation transpires

when we read an extract from the Economist's article of 21 December 2013 and 03 January 2014 at page 86, entitled Dirty Money: Rich Smell, and I quote –

“The leakage of wealth from poor countries through tax evasion, money laundering and other misdeeds is indeed an ever bigger worry for those who want poor countries to get rich. Global Financial Integrity calculates that such ‘illicit financial flows’ have increased sharply over the past decade and may now be \$1 trillion a year or even more. Even experts who question the campaigning group’s methodology accept that outflows probably exceed income and investment combined.”

Mr Deputy, Speaker, Sir, such behaviour can offset the country’s efforts to raise funds and attract investments thus tarnish the country’s image internationally. This Government is already using the flag of transparency and efficiency to combat mismanagement of public funds, maladministration of the public service, and overall laxism in law and order, security and safety to the society, particularly children, women and elderlies. Thus, the looming economic debacle stemming from the way the former Government conducted business is getting avoided by this Government.

Mr Deputy, Speaker, Sir, taking cognizance that the ocean provides jobs, food, energy resources, ecological services, recreational and tourism opportunities, and play a critical role in shipping and sea transportation, in the national economy and trade; it is clear that it cuts across and encompasses various sectors and disciplines.

Mr Deputy, Speaker, Sir, before moving to the strategy fit of this Ministry, let me remind the House that the former Government has lamentably failed in setting the right vision for the development of the ocean economy. My Ministry will be working towards a set of clear-cut national policies and strategies to encompass all ocean and ocean related matters for both the medium and long term. We will thus be shifting from a fragmented and ad hoc approach to a permanent, coherent and integrated strategy that would fully optimise the ocean related resources of Mauritius and Rodrigues with the support of technological know-how, innovation and research.

Taking into account the cross-cutting nature of the ocean economic sectors, and in the process of realisation of our mission, we will require the support of relevant institutions in attracting investors, and international funding. For example, we will need the Board of Investment to support us in the promotion of our major projects and attract both foreign and

local investors. Similarly, the Mauritius Research Council together with the University of Mauritius will complement the Mauritius Oceanographic Institute in leading research and development for all ocean activities. Notwithstanding the advent of this Ministry, the supporting Ministries and institutions will be crucial in developing core competencies to promote the ocean economy.

It is with great pleasure, Mr Deputy, Speaker, Sir, that I have the honour and humility, and I am dedicating myself to the vision, mission, policies and strategies of this Government. My Ministry will provide the necessary leadership for tapping the full potential of the vast Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), and help to bring about meaningful change in the life of people. Every effort will be made to consolidate existing economic sectors such as fisheries, seafood hub and shipping and promote aggressively the development of new growth poles such as the shipping industry, the maritime services including flagship registration, which is in a mess today, deep ocean water applications and the sound utilisation of marine resources present in our continental shelf and the EEZ. There is no doubt that growth of these sectors, will in the long run, bring employment opportunities for thousands of people, be it at unskilled, skilled or professional level.

My Ministry considers research and development, and training as key support to economic growth, not only in the living and non-living marine resources, but also, in strengthening the capacity of our institutions through technology transfer and innovative skills. For example, the policies and objectives of the Mauritius Oceanographic Institute will be revisited to assess how it can be restructured to take care of new challenges of my Ministry through research including scientific, technological and economic studies for development. So will be the case of the Mauritius Training Academy, which will be called upon to prepare a new Strategy Plan for the long term. Empirical research is still lacking in the elaboration of an inventory of resources of our continental shelf and the EEZ. In this regard, every effort will be pursued to develop joint programs with our Indian Ocean neighbours and traditional friendly countries. My Ministry will carry out a performance audit of the fisheries, aquaculture and shipping economic sectors to identify constraints and new challenges, following new national sustainable policies will be formulated and implemented.

Mr Deputy, Speaker, Sir, let me now turn towards Industrial Fisheries. Particular attention will be given to this sector. Though annual growth in the seafood industry is constantly increasing, my Ministry feels strongly that there is still room for expansion, and increase export through the provision of a new incentives and infrastructural facilities to new

investors. Research for development will be carried out within the EEZ for an inventory of primary productivity and stock of demersal fisheries. Port Louis, as a transshipment and bunkering hub, will be a novel development in the region and the private sector would further capitalise on this asset to attract fishing vessels in the region; to make use of updated facilities for bunkering, landing and transshipment of their products in Mauritius. The Government would encourage the foreign fish operators to move to engage in the fish processing in Mauritius.

As regards the Artisanal Fisheries, Mr Deputy, Speaker, Sir, I understand that the fishing communities are very vulnerable to sea level rise and their livelihoods are threatened by storms and extreme weather conditions, coupled with other anthropogenic activities. The poorest will be least able to adapt to these impacts. In an open competitive world with obvious priorities on sustainability and innovation, we need to develop well-equipped and competent fishermen, ready to provide high-level quality services to meet the new challenges.

Mr Deputy, Speaker, Sir, my Ministry is very sensitive to the outcry of fishermen to damaged and loss gears. We will attempt to alleviate their difficulties through the provision of materials to construct wired basket traps for their daily subsistence.

My Ministry would be fully involved in upgrading the artisanal fisheries sector by imparting advanced training to fishermen, to enable them to fish further offshore, use long lines to fish, and target other species such as tuna fish. Since fishermen will be required to travel further offshore and stay longer at sea, safety equipment (such as hand-flares, radar reflectors, life jackets, life rafts, first aid box and fire extinguishers and fluorescent tarpaulins) will be provided to improve security and safety at sea. The training will also include placement of Fish Aggregating Devices called (FADs) offshore. We will also empower the fishermen community to install and manage FADs.

More importantly, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, this Government would not turn its back when confronted with obstacles, whatever they are and never shirk from extending a helping hand to the most disadvantaged. Our approach would be multi-pronged, comprehensive and integrated. To meet the fisheries economic challenges, I assure the House that my Ministry will pursue with programme of improving artisanal fisheries as follows -

1. Introduction of a new Fisheries and Marine Resources Bill in line with international instruments and ensure best management practices.

2. Carrying out research for the protection, conservation and management of the marine ecosystem and its sustainable development and to improve the growth, productivity, competitiveness and environmental sustainability of aquaculture (including offshore aquaculture).
3. Potential cage culture sites around Mauritius will be publicised, and same would ultimately be leased to small scale enterprises for cage culture, with due regard not to hamper tourism and coastal development.
4. Comprehensive support to fishermen communities by speeding up sea concessions and providing technical, infrastructural and other support to engage in subsistence fish cage farming.
5. Create opportunities for diversification of the artisanal fisheries sector through joint partnership for culture of octopus, Groupers (*vieille*); sea-cucumbers, oysters, seaweeds and pearl.
6. Empower the fishermen community in alternative jobs such as fish farming; secondly, through the promotion of fish cage culture and also provision of training to join the industrial fishing sector.
7. Assist small and medium entrepreneurs in developing projects pertaining to *barachois* and cage culture.
8. Focus on export market development in the fish processing industry, and pursue new markets to promote strong and sustainable fisheries and aquaculture.
9. Encourage the development of a national fleet for harvesting resources in our EEZ, which would have direct bearing on the seafood hub, with multiplier effects on the economy.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I'll turn now to the non-living marine resources in Mauritius EEZ. Mauritius is a small island developing State with no known mineral resources endowment, but against a landmass of some 2,000 square kilometres, Mauritius has jurisdiction over a large Exclusive Economic Zone of approximately 2.3 million square kilometres with significant potential for the development of a modern and prosperous marine base sustainable industry. Moreover, the strategic location of Mauritius in this part of the Indian Ocean makes it an attractive place to develop such industries.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, Government will create the right conditions and options for business to take up the innovation challenge in a sustainable way.

To give the necessary push to this most promising sector, my Ministry will support tailored policies for extracting renewable energy from offshore such as wind energy, wave energy, exploitation of oil and natural gas and harnessing Deep Water Ocean Application (DOWA).

Now let me turn to shipping development Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, with your permission. Mauritius, as a small island economy, relies on sea transportation as a means of importing and exporting goods. In addition, the structure and geo economic status of the country highlights that maritime transportation is an important intermediate service in the production process of Mauritius industrial and manufacturing sectors. As liberalisation continues to reduce artificial barriers, the effective rate of protection provided by transport costs is now in many cases higher than the one provided by tariffs.

The importance of good logistics performance for economic growth, diversification and poverty reduction is now firmly established. Improving logistics is at the core of the economic growth and competitiveness agenda. Higher maritime connectivity is important for our global competitiveness in the wake of liberalisation and globalisation of the international trade. With the erosion of our trade preferences, the transitional sectors are facing a lot of difficulties to remain viable.

Today, high maritime connectivity has enable the ailing sugar sector in Mauritius to move to higher value addition activities such as refinery. As transshipment activity is volatile, we need to develop appropriate strategies to enhance our competitiveness in view of international trade becoming transport intensive and time sensitive.

In a similar vein, the impact of poor logistic performance was also highlighted in the report entitled - competitive position of the Mauritius seafood hub, present and future challenges, development options and scenarios - World Bank Report December 2009 (BOI). It was recommended that we should investigate and prevent misinterpretation of the World Bank logistic performance index which ranked Mauritius 132 in 2007.

This ranking reflected the relative logistics weakness at Port Louis, and the core of the Mauritius seafood hub. The same story repeats for the provision of modern logistics. Unfortunately, the absence of essential strategies impacted negatively on our World Bank logistics performance index, which has been downgraded from 72th position in 2012 to 115th in 2014. Today's world economy Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, is characterised by unprecedented globalisation. If one keeps pace, this offers great potential for improvement in shipping development; but, if not properly handled, this may in fact have negative economic consequences.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, Government will implement the necessary policy initiatives to improve our logistics performance. In so doing and given the strategic location that is located halfway between Africa, Latin America and Asia, Mauritius will be positioned to take advantages of the potential offered by the accelerated growth of BRICS countries. In this regard, there is a growing need for the local maritime industry to operate in a professional manner. To meet this challenge, Mauritius would establish equality flagship registry, as well as try to become a major base for the international shipping operations and other activities related to shipping.

Mauritius also needs to offer business opportunities beyond mere flagship registration, ranging from marine insurance, financial facilities, port services, bunkering, ship chandlers and marine communication. The development of our shipping sector can create thousands of jobs for our unemployed youth, provided these vertical integration supported by training and skills development.

It is to be deplored, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, that due to the absence of a national policy on shipping, the development aspect has been neglected. This Ministry has been allocated the task to develop the maritime cluster as an engine of economic development. Accordingly, the existing shipping division will be revisited to orient it to meet the aspiration of Mauritius becoming a pivotal shipping and maritime hub along the south maritime corridor. As a result, this entity would focus on the elaboration of policies for the development of the shipping sector.

In addition, there is a huge and long term potential for Mauritius to develop infrastructure facilities for ship recycling, ship repair, maintenance and refurbishment for countries of the Indian Ocean region. In this regard, my Ministry will be coming up with a feasibility study, and will seek collaboration with overseas partners for joint venture.

And now, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I will come to the Ocean Governance.

This maritime realm defined as encompassing oceans, seas, coastlines and harbours, is vulnerable to a wide array of threats, including illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing; environmental degradation; smuggling in persons, narcotics trafficking, piracy, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and aggressive actions including terrorism. The western Indian Ocean region is one of the last regions in the world where fishing activities are largely unregulated. Vessels from Europe and Eastern Asia heavily exploit tuna, cape, hake, blackhand sole and other species within the exclusive economic zones of Mauritius and our island neighbours regrettably they land the catch outside the region, without reporting the

catch to the national authorities. Improvements in fishing methods have led to great numbers, larger sizes and increased variety of fish being caught. As a consequence, fish stocks are shrinking and several species face potential extinction. Thus, we need to reinforce our maritime security domain.

In the same vein, piracy off the coast of Somalia impacted on our economy which is highly dependent on international trade. Maritime piracy affects imports and exports of goods by sea, insurance costs, cruise ship calls, fishing and fish processing industry as well as the tourism industry. Similarly, maritime supply chains are susceptible to terrorism and this may involve loss of lives, damage and destruction to property, and a reduction in economic activity. Hence, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is the priority of my Ministry to ensure that necessary legislations are enacted for enhancing maritime security.

Turning to Navigation Authority and Maritime Security, I will say the first step we are taking -

1. Regarding the Shipping sector, twenty-one regulations have been drafted to incorporate the provisions of Conventions acceded to by Mauritius in our national law.
2. The Shipping Division of my Ministry is responsible for safety of navigation and Aids to Navigation around Mauritius and the Outer Islands. A needs assessment mission was conducted by an expert from the International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authority, that is, IALA, and he proposed to establish an 'Aids to Navigation Authority' with a view to enhance safety of navigation in our waters. The Authority would be responsible to upgrade Aids to Navigation through better provision of aids to navigation around Mauritius and the Outer Islands as well as maintenance of the same.
3. In order to ensure continuity and improvement of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS), and HF maritime communication services for the safety of the ships and fishing vessels in our territorial waters, the GMDSS equipment has been replaced with modern and hi-tech equipment.
4. With an increase in piracy attacks, especially in the northern sector of our Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), the use of security technology is essential for tracking, identification and exchange of navigation information for our ships by the Maritime Administration and related agencies. Mauritius as a

responsible State, is very much concerned with maritime security, and since the merit of utilising technologies for maritime security is undeniable, it has been decided that all vessels, including fishing vessels and pleasure crafts, operating in the Maritime Zones of Mauritius would be fitted with Automatic Identification System (AIS) by 2015, as it provides the following benefits -

- (i) all inward and outward movements around the Mauritian coasts would be actively and positively monitored by the National Coast Guard through their Coastal Surveillance Radar System and by their planes, ships/boats on patrol.
- (ii) It will also provide better identification and distress response during a search and rescue operation for –
 - early detection of ‘unidentified’ craft, and
 - better monitoring of pleasure craft and tourist boats operating inshore.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC), 2006 is an important Labour Convention for the Maritime Transport industry as it emphasises on the need for decent working and living conditions on board ships regardless of nationality or flag. Mauritius has ratified the MLC 2006 on 30 June 2014, and drafting of regulations is almost finalised for effective implementation of the MLC 2006.

I will now turn to the Blue-Green economy. The concept of green economy applies also to the blue economy. My Ministry will take the laudable steps forward to monitor that the irrational growth of the blue economy does not take place. Natural capital from the ocean has to be sufficiently preserved for future generations, as it cannot be replaced with economic capital.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, an oil spill, accidents at sea, marine pollution due to leakages (as we had recently witnessed at St. Brandon), and dumping of ballast water and ship wastes result in irreversible negative impacts. In this context, a Marine Pollution Bill has been drafted to incorporate provisions of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) to regulate ships registered under the Mauritius flag as well as ships plying in our maritime zones. The success of a sustainable ocean economy directly depends on the health of the marine environment.

All these measures together with regional and international cooperation will help protect our sea ecosystem, and ensure that shipping in the region be classified as sustainable; more so that it is the policy of my Ministry to expand the local shipping industry.

Last but not the least, we come to the Outer Islands, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir.

Government is committed to the enhancement of the quality of life of the inhabitants of the Outer Islands, specifically Agalega.

My Ministry will ensure the implementation of the two major projects, namely, the upgrading of airstrip to ease landing and taking off of aircrafts at Agaléga, and secondly, the construction of a new jetty of 150 metres long to allow vessels to berth easily. Installation of essential communication and navigation equipment would also be undertaken.

Now, concerning international cooperation, Government will synergise all the efforts towards building stronger partnership worldwide to improve global management of fish stocks and marine ecosystems in line with international instruments and regional organisations. My Ministry will continue to collaborate and consolidate linkages with agencies such as the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission, South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission, SADC, COMESA, IORA, World Bank, IMO, AFDB, EU and the UN system. It goes also without saying that my Ministry will, through bilateral agreements, seek technical and financial assistance from our friendly countries for the development of the ocean economy in the following areas –

1. Exploration of marine resources
2. Scientific and technical training for resource mapping and its management
3. Fisheries aquaculture
4. Seaport development and shipping
5. Green tourism
6. R & D Ocean technologies
7. Creation of centres on excellence in marine biotechnology

This Ministry, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, is adopting a strategic approach to translate our vision into reality by setting up a steering committee for the purpose of elaborating a national strategy plan. This plan would be implemented following the promulgation of an Ocean Act and the setting up of a National Ocean Authority which will lead and facilitate the

development of Ocean related activities in a sustainable manner. In this regard, my Ministry will set up the appropriate legal framework and regulatory body to licence, monitor and regulate the activities of operators in the Ocean economy.

In this context, the assistance of the Commonwealth Secretariat is being sought for the services of a consultant.

In recent years, all kinds of new marine industries have emerged. In this respect, my Ministry would ensure that all ocean-related activities are carried out within the ambit of a well-defined plan with clear cut objectives.

While promoting the Ocean economy, building a skilled workforce, inclusiveness and sustainability will be the key areas of my Ministry.

Before ending, given that the Ocean economy will be the next frontier of global economy, I would like to assure this House that every effort will be undertaken to meet the needs of all ocean related stakeholders and leave no stone unturned in the endeavour to make the Ocean economy the next wave of prosperity.

I thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir.

(6.20 p.m.)

Mr S. Rughoobur (Second Member for Grand’Baie & Poudre d’Or): Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, let me first of all congratulate you on your election and request you to convey my warmest congratulation as well to the Speaker, Mrs Hanoomanjee, on her election. I would also congratulate all hon. Members of this august Assembly on their election. Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, my election as a Member of Parliament would not have been possible without the support of my parents, *mes deux collistiers*, hon. Ashit Gungah and hon. Sangeet Fowdar and the electorate of Constituency No.6 and I will remain eternally grateful and thankful to them.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, my election as a Member of Parliament is a long cherished dream and let it be an inspiration to the youth today as the journey has been extremely difficult. There have been moments of happiness, joy but moments of despair as well. However, let me share with the House what the great Nelson Mandela had to say in one of his famous speeches, and I quote –

“There is no passion to be found playing small, settling for a life that is less

than the one you are capable of living ".

It is both a privilege and a honour to be inspired by Mr Mandela and use him as a marked reference in my maiden speech in this august Assembly, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir.

I am fully decided to live a life I am capable of living, that is precisely the reason why, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I have a vision for my country. My vision for my country rests on three important pillars that are -

- liberty;
- solidarity, and
- durability.

Je veux d'une l'île Maurice libre, Madame, la présidente. Je milite pour une l'île Maurice solidaire, et finalement aussi je milite pour une l'île Maurice Durable.

This Government, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, under the able leadership of the Rt. hon. Prime Minister, Sir Anerood Jugnauth, is committed to the concept of liberty. We have freed the citizens of this country from the shackles of nepotism, sheer corruption and a failing leadership, utterly autocratic without a vision and without the interest of the nation at heart. Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, we have the interest of the nation at heart.

We are going to ensure, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, that institutions in this country have the means and resources to deliver. We will ensure that they operate in absolute transparency and that they contribute in the promotion of equality and fairness in our society.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, confidence is back among our youth and the population at large appreciates the series of measures currently being taken by the Government.

In our endeavour to consolidate democracy and decentralise power, we want to put in place a system of Local Government that meets the aspiration of our youth and the population at large. This is not the case today, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir.

Successive Governments have failed to put in place an appropriate system of Local Government because the priorities were wrongly addressed. They have been wrong in concentrating all efforts in amending the Local Government Act but Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, the best laws in the world does not bring in efficiency and effectiveness in a system if you do not have the means to implement that law, that is, whatever law you want to implement. In the weeks to come, this Government will bring in reforms that will be meant at looking at the structure, the resources and only after being satisfied that these two important issues are

addressed, will look into law and regulations for a better system of Local Government.

Under liberty, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, we will walk the talk in upholding the doctrine of the separation of powers, bring reform in our system of Local Government, review the role of our institutions including the police force, uphold Parliamentary Democracy where the Parliament will no longer remain closed for months and months against the wish of the nation only because of the whims and caprices of a dooming and failing Leader of the House. This Government will be an inspiration to the youth of this country and to the nation at large.

Solidarity, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, is a concept stronger than unity. During the recent electoral campaigns, much has been said on national unity, but what a paradox, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir? Those same people who have been self-proclaiming the great defenders of national unity, *le grand rassembleur*, have also been the main allies of socio-cultural organisations that stunk nothing, but sheer communalism and division.

This Government believes that National Unity is too important for our stability, but is convinced that we, politicians have no lesson to give to the nation after the last general election. On the contrary, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, it will be an insult to those same citizens if we, politicians constantly fail to understand that they are miles ahead from us. They fully understand how unity in diversity is a *sine qua non* condition for the security, safety and wellbeing of their children, family and the country at large. When I refer to unity these days, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I refer to the importance of unity among our neighbours in the region. We need to work closely with our partners in the Indian Ocean Commission and the African continent and this is where we, politicians have our part to play to meet the challenges of our nation ahead. This is what the population is expecting from us as we are a tiny little dot in the map of the world and we can make a difference if we understand the importance of regional integration and address it with the priority and importance it deserves.

Still under solidarity, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, apart from the concept of unity, social justice is another issue that this Government has among its priorities. The recent decisions in regards to pensions and salary increments are meant to reduce the poverty gap. A Government led by the Right hon. Prime Minister, Sir Anerood Jugnauth, has always understood the importance of discipline, hard work and the equitable distribution of wealth much in the interest of the less fortunate of our society. Naturally, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, better social justice for us under the able leadership of our Prime Minister does not mean free distribution of crown lands to "*petits copains et copines*", better social justice for us, Mr

Deputy Speaker, Sir, does not mean protecting the rights of a selected few "*au detriment des plus méritants*". We will bring "*une vraie démocratisation de l'économie*" with the dream we cherish to make of Mauritius "*une nation d'entrepreneurs*". Everybody will recall, Mr Deputy Speaker, that it was during the late 90's under the Prime Ministership of Sir Anerood Jugnauth that the country witnessed the emergence of a new breed of entrepreneurs in the textile, tourism, immovable property and many other sectors. The concept of unity, social justice and democratisation of our economy are, Mr Deputy Speaker, aspects of the second pillar of my vision that I call "Solidarity".

Finally, Mr Deputy Speaker, the third pillar of the vision I have for my country is 'Durability'.

We can no longer develop a nation without taking into consideration, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, the economic, social and environmental aspects of development concurrently, that caters for and protects the rights, interest, security and comfort for our generations ahead.

This Government, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, will ensure that every investment does necessarily consider, in a holistic manner, not only the economical, but also the social and ecological/environmental impact of the development we wish to undertake.

A good mix of the three elements along with the will to innovate and the responsibility always associated with such decisions will no doubt make the future generations proud of the achievement of this Government.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, the expectation of the population is extremely high outside and we have three options –

1. To meet those expectations;
2. To meet those expectations, and
3. To meet those expectations.

I make an appeal to members on both sides of the House. Let us work together in the reconstruction of our country, setting aside petty politics, but share genuinely ideas we have for a better Mauritius. History bears testimony to the fact that great achievements have resulted from a sum total of differences shared by people who understood that "humility is the best policy". We are living in a world where fierce competition is the norm. We often have been referring to Mauritius having nothing in terms of resources apart from its human resource.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, such a statement is today more than outdated. The countries around the world are struggling hard to prevent brain drain and providing all sorts of facilities/benefits to their expatriates to come back to their homeland.

The request and proposal that I will be having for the Minister of Finance in the context of the forthcoming budget is to provide special attention to "Empowerment and Training", especially on those fields where we have a shortage of expertise to consolidate some important sectors of our economy like financial services, ICT, ocean economy. We should also provide incentives to local experts who are settled abroad to return back to Mauritius.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, let the youth of today not lose hope in our country, let we, Members on both sides of the House, endeavour in bringing back the confidence lost in our youth because of the way this country was managed in the recent years.

As a concluding note, Mr Speaker, Sir, let me quote from the words of the great Mahatma Gandhi. I quote –

“Man often becomes what he believes himself to be. If I keep on saying to myself that I cannot do a certain thing, it is possible that I may end up by really becoming incapable of doing it. On the contrary, if I have the belief that I can do it, I shall surely acquire the capacity to do it even if I may not have it at the beginning”. Unquote.

Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Mahomed!

(6.33 p.m.)

Mr O. Mahomed (Third Member for Port Louis South & Port Louis Central): Mr Deputy Speaker Sir, rising today for my maiden speech in this august Assembly, I am conscious of the immense responsibility I owe to the people of my Port Louis No. 2 Constituency, both to those who have voted for me and those who did not, but whom all I represent here, today.

Building on the words of those who have preceded me in this debate, I congratulate the Government on much of the programme they have set before us. Not least because it complies with the socialist principles I espouse. I also congratulate you, Sir, on your election

as Deputy Speaker of the House and also to Mrs Hanoomanjee as Speaker of the House.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is probably well-known that I bring with me some experience, dare I say, some expertise, on the concept of sustainability. I must, therefore, commend the Rt. hon. Prime Minister for being the very personification of that concept. Indeed, he has lasted well. He made his maiden speech here, some years before even I was a twinkle in my father's eye. As for his policies and those of the Government they have sustainability too, especially in their enunciation; let us hope that their promise, as he emphasised, will be amply fulfilled.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, in roundly endorsing much of the Government Programme, whilst, to be fair I support much of it, my principal regret is that there are so few beside me in this part of the House, our absent friends, who did not achieve the resilience to join us here, on these benches of Opposition. I know, however, that their spirits are here in strength, to ensure we underscore the flaws "*les manquements*" in the programme before us. In our defeat we may be humble, but nonetheless resolute and trust that magnanimity, not recrimination, will be the touchstone of the style of this Government.

Now, if I may, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, let me turn to the substance of my critique, much of which will be based on the triple bottom line of Economic Growth, Social Progress and Environmental Stewardship and not environmental sustainability *per se*.

I commend hon. Bhagwan for the part of his speech on sustainable development. He did mention that I was quite active on that front. I am happy to learn from Minister Dayal's speech that the new Programme will build on and revise as needed the *Maurice Ile Durable* policy, strategy and action plan, which I hope will be widely supported on all sides of the House and will continue to attract the technical and financial support of our long standing development partners, such as Agence Française de Développement, the European Union, the United Nations system, to name but a few. Many projects and schemes for greener development are ripe to be taken further forward. External finance has been well established and technical support through the Partnership in Action for a Green Economy is at hand, as well as finance through the EU under the Global Climate Change Facility Plus.

The time is ripe for this Government to take the lead and I have every hope that they will stride forward with the objectives of their Programme. This can include financial incentives to encourage renewable energy production plus greater energy efficiency in the public and the private sectors which could tremendously cut the costs of energy we use, based

on international experience from countries like Germany, Italy, France, China and Singapore. For here lies a huge opportunity for the Government right now to bag on one of the biggest win-win prizes out there today. Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I strongly urge the Government to do the sums and hit on this jackpot early on.

USA studies show that improving refrigerator efficiency alone, for example, saves more energy than all they are generating from renewables, excluding hydroelectric power. An Energy Efficiency Management Office was set up here in Mauritius in 2011. But to hit this jackpot it needs strong backing leadership and vigorous technical staff working closely with the public and private sectors. Then we can go the extra mile in the quest of the buried treasure trove of energy efficiency. The starting point for this treasure hunt might well be the 2013 Report on the National Energy Commission and its 21 recommendations for action to avoid power cuts and to move towards greener energy production. And let's knock the really bad idea of a coal fired power station on the head for good and all. Another low hanging fruit could well be the extension of the solar water heaters scheme, under which nearly one in five families in Mauritius has benefited, half of which comes from the lower rung of the ladder.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am not against renewables, far from it, and I trust the Government will continue developing this important field of what in the trade is known as intermittent energy production. It is just not true that when the sun goes in and the wind declines all the lights go out when you have solar panels and wind farms. The key is achieving balanced production and storage. Storage for renewable energy is a domain I urged the Government to master. The Central Electricity Board has signed contracts for 65 MW of renewable energy under the MID initiative for projects on two major wind farms and six solar photovoltaic farms. Several countries are working on the fiscal and technical challenges such sources present. We are not alone. France and our neighbour Reunion Island are ahead and can offer useful technical support to keep up with the best in the field.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to express my own assessment of the future of public transport. Car drivers like roads but providing first-class public transport is the way for the future. Our dilemma is more and more people are attracted to the beautiful high-powered cars now available, heavily subsidised in the public and the private sector with duty-free access and home to office pay. Moreover, the public transport is way behind the times. Anyone who travels abroad can see that, whether in Singapore, Sydney, London, Paris or Rome. And as I speak now, even Ethiopia is taking the first steps to open a new railway service. Evidence shows that building more roads brings with it more demand for cars and

lorries and more congestion already costing the country millions in daily traffic congestion and environmental pollution.

In 1985, some thought Lee Kwan Yew was mad to back a railway system when Singapore was heading for recession. Without its urban railway system where would Singapore be now? Probably where we are today without first-class public transport, a country desperately trying to escape the middle-income trap. To make that breakthrough we not only need first-class systems for internal public transport but first-class inter-regional shipping, airlines and ICT.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I do urge the Government to reappraise its policy on public transport and look again at the Singapore model. I know about its economic, social and environmental benefits, not just from books and reports but from leaving there for 10 years, studying and practising Civil and Structural Engineering. Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, a key element in this model is a cleaner, greener, healthier environment.

But let me now turn to another health issue. When recently a Mauritian was admitted to a Singapore hospital he was recognised as coming from here, Mauritius, not from his ID card but from the pesticide levels in his blood! Some have complained about the impact of excessive pesticides in the lagoon and rivers. Now we must take action on the rivers of pesticide in our own blood stream. This is a serious public health issue. I trust in our new Government, the two relevant Ministries will be talking to each other on how we can do more to protect health from such environmental threats. Moreover, Green Agricultural Certification will also go a long way to enhance demand, creating a bigger market for green agricultural products and make our farmers pause before they add more pollutants to our bloodstream.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, a further opportunity for greater efficiency arises in a better waste management on our islands. There is a growing awareness in this country that waste is a resource, and that reduction, reuse and recycling offer large social, environmental and economic benefits. Much has been done, but we are just in our infancy in this field by comparison with the best international practice.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I also welcome the commitment of the Government to make the Ocean economy an important industry to sustain economic diversification, job creation and wealth generation. This is a long-term task and the process must be established so that it can be sustained well into the future, which I am sure will receive all-party support.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I greatly welcome the Government's commitment to civil services reform. Internationally, by the World Economic Forum, we are labelled as being over bureaucratic and lacking a work ethic. The next stages of development, the economic miracle Mark II, depend greatly on innovation and productivity in the private sector. So, we cannot afford to have a civil service that is over staffed and holding the private sector back. For too long civil servants have become used to the habit that they are sitting in jobs that are secure for life, no matter how they perform. Reform we need is not just a new game of musical chairs. We need a performance-based culture, no more security for life. We need work measurement and real incentives to efficiency and innovation.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I hope the new Government will also look urgently at the growing undisclosed underfunding of the public sector pensions. Let us see the figures published, as in the EU, of the future commitments on the existing pensions' scheme and the provision being made to fund it. If we are like all the EU countries, we are in for a shock. I will also forward to that debate and to see how far the new Government will come up with a new pensions' policy that seeks to avoid the nightmare sweeping Europe and the USA of underfunded pension scheme bankrupting public sector funding.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, to close, let me say that I have spoken much about the welcome, national policies of this Government, how they have evolved from our long history of independent Government and how they can be further developed to provide Mauritius with the real prospects for a better tomorrow for our children and our children's children, through consultation on integrated long-term development.

Now, let me finally mention the special needs of the people of my Constituency No. 2. I am glad to see that better housing, the relief of poverty and support for those sadly addicted to drugs are high on the Government agenda. These are all pressing needs of my Constituency and much voiced abroad by people when I meet them.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would be glad to provide, at another time, advice on how these issues can be most effectively and efficiently addressed to meet the local needs, building on local evidence and views through local consultation.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am thankful to the hon. Prime Minister for enlightening the House that the inquiry being conducted by the National Human Rights Commission in relation to the case of arson at the gaming house, known as L'Amicale de Port Louis, is expected to be completed by mid-2015, albeit a delay of five months. I would like to make a

plea here this afternoon. I trust that if there are any new findings and fresh evidence uncovered, the Government will swiftly refer the case to the Supreme Court under section 19A(4) of the Criminal Appeal Act, so as to avoid any taint of miscarriage of justice. I feel bound to stress that I fully expect that this case, and others concerning Mauritians, in general, if ever there is a case like that one, will be followed on the basis of the undertaking that was publicly articulated by leading Members of the *l'Alliance Lepep* during the last electoral campaign.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, if the voice of the people is but the voice of God, may I say before resuming my place, praise to the people for their electoral choices, for us all, and indeed praise to the Lord for giving me this opportunity to review the many sound elements in the Government Programme and to offer my suggestions for some modest but essential further improvements.

This, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, is my approach to fashion a new culture in political debate, in which as a loyal opposition, we eschew fractious conflicts, we avoid personal attacks on Ministers trying their best to do a good day's work, we sidestep venomous party politics and focus together on the priority needs of the country and how these can be best met in the interests of all people.

I thank you for your attention.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Rutnah!

(6.51 p.m.)

Mr S. Rutnah (Third Member for Piton and Rivière du Rempart): Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am inwardly pleased today to address this Assembly and you as being the first youngest Deputy Speaker of this House. I also wish to convey my congratulation to the first Madam Speaker of this House and perhaps you could use your best endeavours to convey my congratulation.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, today what I am about to say in this house will come from my heart and my mind and that's why I do not have a script to read.

Some time ago, a bus conductor from Rivière du Rempart, who in the late years of 70s became an active member of the General Workers Federation at Rivière du Rempart Bus Service, came with my pregnant wife to Port Louis on a trip. And then, at a certain moment

in time, both of them found themselves in the public gallery of the National Assembly. They were watching quality debates going on and then the couple spoke to themselves and said: “we wish that if this child is born one day, he will sit in this Parliament. And then, at some point in time, I was born and I grew up. When I was growing up, my father used to take me on bicycle to every public meeting, public gathering of the Movement Militant Mauricien. Just like my hon. friend, Mrs Selvon, said in her address that since her childhood she grew up watching and witnessing political history. I witness political history unfolding since my childhood. When I used to go to public meetings, I used to watch Sir Anerood Jugnauth, hon. Ivan Collendavelloo, Mr Jayen Cuttaree at the time, there was hon. Prem Koonjoo and a number of lawyers, Mr Subash Lallah, hon. Veda Baloomoody, hon. Alan Ganoo and my father used to tell me: “this is how I want you to speak on a political platform one day.”

Eventually, came a time when I was in my teenage, I joined *Régional* No. 7, Piton/Rivière du Rempart. Those days were hard times for the MMM. They were only about five or six militants coming to *Régional*, and, unfortunately, it is still hard time. In those days, I can clearly remember like yesterday, my friend Rama Poonoosamy, Steve Obeegadoo, Zayed Ameer, Sheila Babajee, Eshan Abdool Raman and many others leading the *jeunesse militante* and I was in there. Those days, I could not see my hon. friend Uteem, but this is how I grew up in politics. Eventually, while I grew, I became a very active member in *Régional* No. 7. And there came a time when I was told that I will be a candidate for the next general election in Constituency No. 7 by the Leader of the Opposition. I wish he could have been here today to hear the truth. Unfortunately, he is not here for reasons I know that have been conveyed to me by my hon. friend, Mr Mahen Jhugroo.

Then, at a moment in time, a transfuge became more militant than I am, an *arriviste* became more militant than I am and yet I remain loyal to my party and my leader, the MMM. Like this, during the historical period that I have been with the MMM, I have witnessed only *transfuges*, *arrivistes* and others who have taken advantage of the party. It was in my blood, MMM! Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I was shell shocked when I heard the hon. Leader of the MMM and a few of his “yes” men, crony on one hand in remake and on that other hand negotiating alliance with *Le Parti Travailleiste* de Navinchandra Ramgoolam; not *le Parti Travailleiste* de my very good friend Shakeel Mohamed but *Le Parti Travailleiste* de Navinchandra Ramgoolam.

(Interruptions)

And the *bilan* of Navin Chandra Ramgoolam can only be witnessed if you look at the clip that *l'Alliance Lepep* produced during the course of the electoral campaign which is called 'Vire Mam'. Against that background, against the background of a corrupt regime, against the background of a Prime Minister with no seriousness at all, against the background of a Prime Minister who was taking this country to the brink of collapse, taking it really to the rotten dogs.

(Interruptions)

My ex-leader then decided to bury the remake and make an alliance with the *Parti Travailleiste*. We should never forget history, the manner in which they were trying to fool the nation while they were saying "on and off", "on and off".

(Interruptions)

Exactly! I am grateful to the Rt. hon. Prime Minister for the comments he has made. It became worse than *Parti Malin*. At least, *Parti Malin* has got principle and consistency, but today I am ashamed.

(Interruptions)

The word "ashamed" is frequently used by the hon. Leader of the Opposition in this House. Today I am ashamed to say that the hon. Leader of the Opposition, against all these backgrounds, sold the *militants*, sold the workers and sold virtually everybody who had trust in him. All the glory he acquired since the 70's, he sold that glory for nothing in days and today he has been reduced to a man with no credibility in his own party, right now.

(Interruptions)

Right now, we know the position of hon. Barbier, we know the position of hon. Sorefan, we know the debilitating position in which hon. Lesjongard is. We know also the *accrochage*, as it has been termed in the newspaper, between the hon. Leader of the Opposition and my very good friend, Steeve Obeegadoo.

(Interruptions)

When I was growing, my peers was listening to '*I am a disco I dancer*' while I was listening to '*soldat lalit militant*'. But then, eventually I left MMM on a point of principle like my Leader, hon. Ivan Collendavelloo, did. I left on a point of principle!

(Interruptions)

When we left, we were joined by my very good friend who is like a big brother, hon. Boissezon and later on by a number of other militants all across the country. When we left, we left against all odds of a 60/0 because someone called Rama Sithanen, who is the mathematical and economical guru and who claims to be one of the most intelligent economist in Mauritius ...

(Interruptions)

... produced this equation that it is going to be 60/0 and he managed to dupe the entire *bureau politique* of MMM into it. Except one man, my leader Ivan Collendavelloo. We, in *Movement Libérateur* when it was formed, decided to call the unity of opposition. And those who really believe in the future of this country, those who really believe that they should put the country first, decided to unite and thank you, hon. Sir Aneerood Jugnauth, thank you hon. Xavier Duval. Thank you so much! Today, if there would have been no hon. Sir Aneerood Jugnauth, no hon. Xavier Duval, we would not have been sitting here. There is a likelihood that there would have been a dictatorship placed in Mauritius.

(Interruptions)

Because we have witnessed it, we witnessed it during the course of the electoral campaign. It was very clear, with the written contract and the agreement they reached, one was going to be Prime Minister for five years, another one going to be President for the seven years with all sorts of powers in hand, including immunity for seven years.

(Interruptions)

Believe me, even if they would have won the election, in less than two weeks the hon. Leader of the Opposition would have got the first kick out of the Government and would have found himself in prison. That's what would have happened. But God saved the king.

(Interruptions)

Exactly! And we saved him today. During the electoral campaign what did our opponents have to criticise us. The other day, I heard the outcry of my very good friend, sister at the Bar, hon. Jadoo-Jaunbocus. The kind of campaign against her.

(Interruptions)

Wait a minute, I am coming to you!

(Interruptions)

The Deputy Speaker: Silence!

(Interruptions)

Order!

Mr Rutnah: against ...

(Interruptions)

The campaign against a sister who came from Rivière du Rempart and who was candidate, hon. Boygah and against other women. And the campaign against women is still going on.

The campaign against Dr. Gurib-Fakim, the campaign that is currently going on against the lady who is now in charge of the Cardiac Unit, because there is a tendency of the Parties in the opposite side to criticise women and that's why today - because they have so low esteem about women coming into politics - they sit there alone a whole day.

But, they use it as a defence punch line time and time again that they are going to empower women in this country, but no, they prefer to empower Soornack and others. There is a list, I can go on and on, but against that particular campaign when personal attack came on me by the hon. Leader of the Opposition when he says he has got a *révélation*, '*ène révélation pou faire*' against a candidate of Constituency No. 7 who has come from Great Britain. So, I thought that I must have done something massively wrong in my life and that's what he was going to come about, but what transpired is extraordinary. He managed to obtain a few photographs of me with my very good friends of a Christmas party in December 2007 and with the complicity of Advance newspaper and multimedia, they created a clip to discredit me, to ruin my reputation, but the electorate who is now intelligent did not buy into that and they got their lesson that they had to get. But, what was more extraordinary coming from the hon. Leader of the Opposition is when he had nothing to criticise, he criticised my hairstyle and...

(Interruptions)

he said now that I wear ties, I talk too much. But when I wear ties, I wear it because I have worked hard in my life.

(Interruptions)

And I earned it with respect. I have never sold my country, I have never sold my people, I have never sold any militant. I have not sold my dignity or my soul and that's why I am able

to wear a tie with dignity and with respect, and other than a tie, the noble profession in which I am, enables me to dress in gown, in band and in collar worn by a barrister. And, call me '*avocat malpropre*' in a *comité central*, because I, together with my learned friend, who sits today in this Parliament, hon. Kalidass Teeluckdharry defended a young man who was really innocent, who has had nothing to do with a crime. Later on, we were persecuted, victimised, but yet we did our job and because of that, I was even called '*ène avocat malang*'.

(Interruptions)

Exactly! What the hon. Leader of the Opposition forgot is that no matter who you are in this country, there is by virtue of our Constitution, the rule of law. The rule of law simply means that everybody is equal. But, in the days when Navinchandra Ramgoolam was the Prime Minister of this country, some were more equal than others and there was a campaign of persecution against everybody who spoke the truth about him, about his Party, about his politics and about his wrongdoing in the country and my friend, hon. Kalidass Teeluckdharry and I have been that victim, and others as well. Even hon. Soodhun was not spared; someone whom I know for ages when I was a kid I used to

(Interruptions)

The persecution was not only against lawyers and politicians! The persecution was also against journalists, journalists who were doing their jobs, journalists who were reporting.

(Interruptions)

Dharmanand Dhoocharika who was doing his job, simply his job of informing public interest was sent to jail, Deven Anacootee and others, but in this Government never and never again any journalist will be arbitrarily arrested

(Interruptions)

Because we are a Government that believe in the rule of law and we are going to treat everybody equal before the law. Even though the population knows the track record of the Prime Minister, an enquiry has started against him in relation to the money found at his place and in relation to the Roches Noires affair. He has been given all the latitude and all his rights have been respected. I have said it outside and I am not hesitating to say it here, in this House, that should anybody in this country be arrested and his rights not respected, me as a human rights lawyer, I will intervene and I will be prepared to sacrifice whatever sacrifice I have to do ...

(Interruptions)

We have, on 27 January of this year, presented a programme to achieve change and change will surely come because that is what the population is expecting from us. I am proud, today, that I will be forming part of that change and that I was a candidate alongside with one of the greatest Prime Minister that this country has known...

(Interruptions)

...and one of the greatest Minister of Finance this country has known and together with the team, we are going to bring the second phase of *miracle économique* in this country and that's for sure.

(Interruptions)

I can assure my very good friend, friend at the bar, hon. D. Ramful that he should not worry. You are in safe hands in the hands of Sir Anerood Jugnauth, in the hands of Xavier-Luc Duval, in the hands of hon. Pravind Jugnauth and in the hands of hon. Ivan Collendavelloo. We are safe, we have already taken this country out of danger.

(Interruptions)

But, you can be assured...

(Interruptions)

I agree, I have had the opportunity of working with my learned friend at the bar and he is, indeed, a very good man, he's a gentleman.

(Interruptions)

Whilst we strive to achieve what we want to achieve and to bring change, we have to look at our institutions and I was pleased...

(Interruptions)

The Deputy Speaker: Silence! Silence, please! Hon. Rutnah!

Mr Rutnah: I was pleased to hear my very able and learned friend and hon. Member of this House, Ravi Yerrigadoo, the Attorney General, when he was addressing his speech in which he dealt with very serious issues regarding law and order and the judiciary.

In relation to law and order and in relation to Police, I have said it outside on numerous occasions - and I do not hesitate to say it in this House, that on the very apex of our

Police force, there were certain high level Police officers behaving like real gangsters and criminals, and that culture will have to stop as a result of the reform that the hon. Attorney General is proposing, and I anticipate. This is going to be remedied once and for all, in particular with the implementation of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act. There is also a need for change in our judiciary. We have to reform and look at the ways Magistrates and Judges are recruited in our country. We have to look again at Section 72 of our Constitution to see the way in which the Director of Public Prosecutions executes his duties and the way he is recruiting. We have to review the way in which prosecutors are recruited at the State Law office, at the Attorneys General's office, and at the Solicitor General's office. We can't have in this country, Judges or Magistrates not following guidelines of Judicial conduct on a daily basis, but yet, there is no mechanism to enforce any guideline for judicial conduct, because we do not have a Judicial Complaint Commission in this country.

It is high time to bring change, and in order to bring changes, we have to reform our institutions, so that the public at large will have confidence in all our institutions, and that should start from investigating authorities and from the Judiciary.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, there is a long list of programmes in the Government Programme that was presented on 27 January. One thing I should say is that the Government of Navinchandra Ramgoolam was prepared to spend billions of rupees on a Light Railway Project, all about Rs500 m. on an election should they have won to bring reform for the election of the President, whereas many parts of the country do not have water supply. I am proud today that, that sector is being looked after by my Leader, hon. Ivan Collendavelloo, who has already set a framework to modernise the entire pipeline system within the country for the efficient, proper and continuous supply of water. Water is more of a necessity than a presidential election or a light railway. How can we call a country a modern country, when there is no basic like water available to our people and our nation? How modern is this, in an era when things should be met with speed and intelligence at broadband speed, we have a meagre broadband speed. And, I am proud today of the statement made by hon. Minister Pravind Jugnauth about the changes that he is going to make in the Telecommunication Industry and the Communication Industry and to revamp our Internet system.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, it reminds me of Shakespeare's Macbeth. Earlier today, we heard quite a lot about Shakespeare from my hon. friend, Minister Baboo - there were three witches. And there were three witches also during the electoral campaign: Nandinee, Nita, and Pratibha.

(Interruptions)

They asked:

“When shall we three meet again? In thunder, lightning, or in rainfall?

When the hurly-burly’s done, when the battle is lost and won.”

And sure, they met, again, when the battle was lost and won. We won, they lost!

And yes, it was sunshine during the day, but when the result came, it was thunder, lightning, and rainfall; it was hurly-burly’s in Mauritius. The population at large was enjoying, the mood of the country had changed; the mountains are green, the country is green as a whole! This is how we are going to lead this country, always flourishing, green, and we all have trust in our Leaders. We have trust in Sir Anerood Jugnauth as the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister, in hon. Xavier-Luc Duval, in hon. Pravind Jugnauth, in hon. Ivan Collendavelloo, and I know, and they have said that they are here in a transitional period. They are not going to be here attached to these chairs like many others on the other side of the House have attempted to do, and are doing. I am glad to hear that they are in a transitional period and they are going hand over at some point to the use of the country because we represent the future of this country.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, on this note I propose to terminate. This is only Act 1, scene 1. Act 1, Scene 2 will be during the Budget debate. On this point I rest my case.

Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir.

(7.24 p.m.)

Mr G. Lepoigneur (Fifth Member of Beau Bassin and Petite Rivière): M. le président, je voudrais tout d’abord vous féliciter pour votre nomination comme *Deputy Speaker* et aussi je voudrais profiter de l’occasion pour féliciter Madame la présidente d’être la première femme à être élue à ce poste. Je profite aussi de cette occasion pour exprimer mes remerciements à mon *leader*, hon. Xavier-Luc Duval pour la confiance qu’il a placé en moi pour représenter le PMSD au sein de l’Alliance Lepep dans la circonscription No. 20 qui, au départ est reconnue pour une circonscription difficile. Dans la plupart des cas, cette circonscription a été dominée par le MMM.

Je voudrais également féliciter notre gouvernement actuel pour la mise en place rapide de certaines promesses, telles que l’augmentation de la pension de vieillesse,

l'augmentation salariale et l'éclaircissement sur certains scandales. Nous avons aussi noté que l'indice de confiance est passé de 68 % à 97% grâce aux promesses du nouveau gouvernement. Ayant intégré le nouveau gouvernement comme député correctif, je suis satisfait de cette première performance, qui me permet d'apporter ma contribution au bien-être du peuple mauricien. Je l'ai souvent dit dans mes meetings, une campagne électorale débute le lendemain des résultats des élections. Je me considère donc actuellement en campagne électorale pour réaliser des actions en faveur du peuple mauricien. Cette campagne durera cinq ans et permettra au peuple de juger si elle a été convaincante.

M. le président, je souhaiterais soulever certains aléas que j'ai pu constater lors de la campagne électorale. Certains outils utilisés me semblent d'être inadéquat pour séduire l'électorat mauricien.

Selon mon constat, j'ai trouvé inapproprié l'utilisation des bases pour promouvoir chaque partie car cela représente un investissement financier trop important qui n'est pas nécessaire. De plus, ces bases incitent à encourager des conflits agressifs entre agents, encouragent la consommation d'alcool ou des produits illégaux. Je pense donc que notre gouvernement devrait introduire une loi, soit pour l'abolition ces bases ou la mise en place d'un règlement sur le nombre de bases et sur la manière dont elles seront utilisées.

Je voudrais aussi mettre l'accent sur les banderoles et les oriflammes qui représentent aussi un important investissement financier. Je pense que nous devons ensemble introduire, encore une fois, un règlement sur l'utilisation de ces matériaux visuels. Je pense qu'il faut limiter l'utilisation de ces oriflammes et banderoles qui devraient être utilisées dans des endroits spécifiques, c'est-à-dire, lors des meetings ou des réunions uniquement. Par la suite, nous devons encourager la réutilisation de ces matériaux visuels pour les futures réunions et meetings et de ce fait mettre en avant l'importance de l'*eco-friendly*.

De cette manière, les fonds utilisés pour ces matériaux seront réduits et peuvent être utilisés pour des actions telles que le combat contre la pauvreté, l'amélioration de l'environnement et bien d'autres.

Une preuve que l'utilisation des bases, d'oriflammes et de banderoles n'a servi à grand-chose est la victoire de l'Alliance Lepep. En effet, le pays a été submergé par les oriflammes rouge et mauve sans compter le grand nombre de bases et de banderoles avec l'annonce préméditée des résultats annonçant un 3/0, que je qualifie d'une arrogance de la part de l'Alliance de l'Avenir et de l'Unité. Cela a prouvé que ce peuple admirable n'est pas

aussi imbécile et bourrique qu'un certain a voulu faire croire. Notre peuple ne s'est pas laissé berné et influencé par ces visuels qui voulaient faire croire d'un 60-0 en faveur de l'Alliance de l'Avenir et de l'Unité. Je pense que si l'Alliance Lepep avait eu encore deux semaines pour terminer notre campagne où nos meilleurs agents étaient les acteurs de notre clip '*Viré Mam*', cela aurait été un 60-0 en faveur de l'Alliance Lepep.

M. le président, je voudrais maintenant mettre l'emphase sur ma circonscription No. 20, circonscription dont j'ai l'honneur de servir et pour laquelle je suis fier de relever le défi, de la reconstruire et d'offrir une vie meilleure à ces habitants, en collaboration avec mes colistiers, l'honorable Alain Aliphon et l'honorable Anil Gayan.

Aujourd'hui, j'ai mis à la disposition des habitants de cette circonscription un bureau où nous récoltons leurs doléances afin de les écouter, les orienter dans la bonne direction et de mettre en place des actions et leur permettre de vivre dans un environnement agréable.

Suivants ces premières actions, j'ai constaté un manque de développement dans la circonscription No. 20 durant ces 30 dernières années.

Les problèmes majeurs ressortis sont les suivants –

- l'extrémité de la pauvreté dans certains endroits ;
- l'état délabré des maisons ;
- la consommation excessive des produits illicites ;
- la distribution d'eau ;
- le manque d'infrastructure, et
- le nombre important de chômeurs.

M. le président, je pense que notre gouvernement devra rattraper ces 30 ans de disette et je me permets de développer ces différents points.

La pauvreté dans les différents quartiers est à déplorer. Nous sommes en 2015, vous n'allez pas me croire, M. le président, si je vous dis qu'il y a des personnes qui n'ont pas des toilettes ou des salles de bain chez eux. Il existe des personnes qui arrivent vers le 20 de chaque mois, qui n'ont pas de nourriture alors qu'il y en a d'autres qui ont plus de R 220 millions dans leurs coffres.

M. le président, la circonscription No. 20 a été majoritairement gérée par l'opposition. Ayant pour cette fois trois députés du gouvernement dans cette circonscription, je pense qu'ensemble nous arriverons à combattre cette pauvreté.

Une des solutions que je trouve adéquate est la sensibilisation des mauriciens, des entreprises gouvernementales et non gouvernementales afin qu'ils prennent conscience de l'exercice de cette pauvreté. De ce fait, je fais un appel aux différents acteurs afin de faire participer à l'éradication de la pauvreté soit en contributions financières, donations ou *sponsorship*.

En ce qu'il s'agit des maisons délabrées, beaucoup de personnes vivent dans des maisons qui, selon moi, sont inhabitables. C'est-à-dire que certains toits sont sur le point de s'écrouler, le manque de sanitaire qui relève d'un manque d'hygiène, l'absence d'électricité et d'eau, ou encore des maisons qui en temps pluvieux ou cycloniques sont immergées d'eau. Ce sont pour moi des situations urgentes où nous devons venir en aide à ces personnes.

Cette situation que je qualifie d'invivable entraîne ces habitants à la consommation de drogues, ou encore au vol ou de pouvoir s'approprier de quoi vivre.

Pour remédier à ces trois premiers points, je pense qu'une collaboration avec le ministère du Logement, de l'Intégration sociale et des Finances est primordiale. En effet, comme nous prévoyons de bâtir 10,000 logements pendant ces 5 ans, ce serait bien de prévoir une bonne partie de ces logements pour cette circonscription.

Il serait aussi intéressant de prévoir un budget pour aider à la rénovation de ces maisons délabrées. Ainsi, il y aura une diminution du nombre de réfugiés dans nos centres sociaux lors des pluies torrentielles et des temps cycloniques. Par la même occasion, les coûts encourus par les centres de refuge seront réduits.

Pour venir sur la santé, je sollicite aussi notre ministre de la Santé, qui est mon colistier, afin de ne pas oublier, dans son projet, une medi-clinique à Coromandel car cela a été une demande lors de la campagne.

Actuellement, une de nos promesses, en l'occurrence la décentralisation de la Méthadone, a été réalisée. Pour continuer sur cette bonne lancée, il faudra travailler sur la réouverture de la clinique présente dans la cour du centre de réhabilitation à Beau Bassin afin de permettre aux patients de bénéficier un traitement adéquat. Ayant personnellement visité ces locaux, j'estime que cet endroit est idéal pour offrir un traitement complet aux patients. A

ce jour, il existe des patients qui suivent des traitements de plus de 8 ans. Je considère cela anormal car ce traitement aurait dû être temporaire.

M. le président, un fléau qui ronge cette circonscription est le problème d'eau. En effet, les habitants n'ont pas de connexion d'eau et c'est un des problèmes qui fait souvent sonner notre portable. Fort heureusement, il y a notre cher Mamade Bundoo que je suis fier de citer aujourd'hui car il m'a bien aidé à résoudre des problèmes temporairement et avec beaucoup de réactivité. Les quartiers de la Police de Montréal sont aussi très concernés par ce gros problème d'eau. Il y a aussi d'autres problèmes tels que: la cour des *quarters* qui est dans le noir total, un problème d'environnement et un manque de terrain de jeux pour les enfants des policiers. Ces *quarters* sont occupés par environ 280 familles et ces problèmes datent depuis plusieurs années.

M. le président, nous avons également fait un constat sur les infrastructures sportives qui sont actuellement dans un état lamentable et qui sont même quasi inexistantes dans certaines régions. Je pense qu'une rénovation et la construction de ces infrastructures s'imposent. A titre d'exemple, il y a plus de 6,000 habitants à Coromandel, nous avons constaté qu'il n'y a pas de terrain de football. A Beau Bassin, le volleyball féminin représente 50% de la ligue nationale, mais il n'y a pas de gymnase où ces joueuses puissent s'entraîner correctement. Le manque d'infrastructure sportive en salle dans la région de Beau Bassin, Coromandel, Petite Rivière, Canot, Gros Cailloux et Albion se fait sentir auprès de ces habitants. J'espère qu'avec notre nouveau gouvernement, nous arriverons à redonner cette circonscription ses lettres de noblesse car malgré ce manque d'infrastructures, il y a un bon nombre d'athlètes de niveau national qui viennent de cette circonscription.

Je souhaiterais donc travailler en collaboration avec le ministre de la Jeunesse et des sports afin qu'ensemble, nous travaillions pour promouvoir l'importance du sport au sein de cette circonscription.

M. le président, au sein de cette circonscription, nous avons l'honneur d'avoir des diplômés dans les régions défavorisées. Malheureusement, il y a des cas où les candidatures de ces diplômés sont rejetées en se basant simplement sur leurs adresses. Comme mentionné dans notre programme électoral, nous allons faire primer la méritocratie afin de mettre fin à cette discrimination et ainsi de permettre à ces diplômés de pénétrer dans le monde du travail dans le secteur gouvernemental ou privé.

Je pense qu'il serait aussi intéressant d'équiper les centres de jeunesse d'un réseau internet et des ordinateurs pour permettre aux étudiants et aux entrepreneurs qui n'ont pas les moyens, d'en tirer profit, et que ces centres soient ouverts jusqu'à 19h ou 20h.

Je souhaite rencontrer les différents ministres de notre gouvernement pour discuter de la manière dont ils peuvent nous aider dans ma circonscription.

Pour terminer, je voudrais féliciter le Premier ministre, Sir Anerood Jugnauth pour son courage d'avoir abandonné le château de Réduit pour venir prêter main forte afin de mettre fin à la dictature.

Merci, M. le président.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Husnoo!

(7.34 p.m.)

The Minister of Local Government (Dr. A. Husnoo): Mr Deputy Speaker Sir, hon. Members, I would, first of all, take this opportunity to thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, for giving me the chance to address this august Assembly.

It is a matter of pride for me to address this Assembly as the new Minister of Local Government.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, may I congratulate you as the youngest Deputy Speaker, first, and please convey my congratulations to Madam Speaker for being the first lady Speaker as well.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, allow me now to speak about a few subjects which are of major concern to this newly elected Government and, some its objectives before I pass on over to some important and key points relating to my Ministry.

I am confident that the Government Programme, Achieving Meaningful Change, will be an inspiration for our fellow citizens and will really bring a change to the lives of our fellow countrymen.

I firmly believe that this programme will turn Mauritius into a global reference. And we, as Ministers, parliamentarians and guardians of the reputation, safety and image of the country, are determined to strive for a better Mauritius which will enable our people to lead a better and more prosperous life.

The objective of this Government, may I recall, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, is to transform the island of Mauritius into a forward looking, environmentally sustainable, economically vibrant and innovative country with modern infrastructure, global connectivity, high skills and technology.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, fighting corruption is one of the major priorities of this Government. *C'est notre cheval de bataille*. On Sunday 08 February 2015, the population of Mauritius was stunned and shocked by what they actually saw on the evening news. When the safe and the suitcases were opened, bundles of notes of Rs2000, Rs1000 and Rs500 just came out tumbling out of the safe. The suitcases were packed with millions of dollars. This will mark this generation for a long time to come and even the future generation. As the scene went viral on the net, people overseas, in Europe and the USA could not believe what they just saw after what they knew of Mauritius. On that particular night, the reputation of Mauritius took a severe battering. How come that Mauritius which has such a good reputation of good governance and is a reference for not just in Africa but in the world, how come we have reached this level? The police and the CID are doing their investigation. I am not going to dwell on this.

What we should do is to ask ourselves: what are we going to do to prevent these kinds of things from happening again. All right-minded Mauritians are asking themselves this question: what can be done? What should be done to redress this situation and prevent the ruling elite from giving such a blow again to the reputation of Mauritius?

To start, I think, we need to have a look at the Government Programme which was read by the President of the Republic on 27 January 2015. This Programme demonstrates the determination of this present Government to fight the scourge of corruption well before we came in office. In the very introduction of the Government Programme, it reads that the Government is committed to conducting business on the principle of discipline, transparency, accountability and exemplary governance.

Furthermore, it says the Government is going to work hard to free our society from the shackles of widespread corruption, favouritism, nepotism, mafia and political interference. This is in the very introduction of the Government Programme. To show that it means business, to show that it has zero tolerance against fraud and corruption, the Government has set up a Ministry of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms. I think this is the first time that we have such a Ministry in Mauritius. A Ministry

which has been given the full power to combat all sorts of corruption, be it economic or otherwise, which has plagued our country recently.

If we want our citizens to have faith and trust in what the Government is doing, tourists to respect Mauritius and foreign investors to come and invest in our country, we cannot do otherwise. We have to show them we mean business and this Government is going to do what it takes to combat corruption in all its forms.

On page 34 of the Government Programme, paragraph 246 reads the Government has a mandate for change and will relentlessly fight fraud, corruption and financial crime.

Furthermore, paragraph 248 states that

“Government will eradicate fraud, corruption, malpractices and irregularities in all aspects of public life and restore our national values. To this end, a new Declaration of Assets Act for Members of Parliament and high ranking public officers and a Financing of Political Parties Act will be enacted. A new Code of Conduct will be introduced for all Members of Parliament and public officers.”

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, this Government has set the standard very high and, I am sure of that, with the determination of the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister, Sir Anerood Jugnauth, this Government will be able to control this scourge of bribery and corruption and that Mauritius will regain the status and reputation it once held on the world stage.

Before going on to the Local Government, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to mention a few words about another key aspect of the Government Programme. It is the overarching policy of this Government to fight against poverty. For me there are two major aspects: fighting corruption and fighting poverty. I wish to highlight that social justice as well as the improvement in the purchasing power of our citizens are on the forefront of our programme.

The Government has the means to lead and to win this battle and it will be done with the participation of the population at large. Before coming into Government, *l'Alliance Lepep* came with a number of measures to help the poor in its electoral manifesto. And these include

–

- to increase the monthly old-aged pension, basic widows pension and basic invalidity pension to Rs5000;

- to provide '*un repas chaud*' to all the students of primary schools;
- the abolition of fees for SC and HSC examinations, and
- the construction of over 2000 social housing units every year during the next five years.

As soon as we came in office, this Government honoured its promise. All these measures were put in action. The Government also came with a uniform salary compensation of Rs600 to all workers and now as you know, the Ministry of Housing and Lands is working very hard to realise the construction of the 2000 social housing units across the island for people who are living in extreme poverty. This Government does not just talk, but it walks the talk as well. A Marshall plan will be elaborated to combat poverty and social exclusion.

I wish to bring to the House that in the two months we have been in Government, many measures have been taken and many more are in the pipeline. They are namely –

- the new legislation to protect the elderly, women, children and physically handicapped;
- a special supporting care will be given to elderly persons with disabilities and those leaving alone, and
- new legislation will be enacted in respect of charitable organisations.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, as you would notice this Government does not intend to worsen the life of the poor nor does it intend to make the rich wealthier, but rather, to work together with the population to give a helping hand to our fellow citizens who are in extreme difficulty, and help them out of the trap of poverty. As I said, we promised it, we have already put some of these policies in action and we will consolidate them in the months and years ahead.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, now, if you would allow me to say a few words on my Ministry. As mentioned on page 39 of the Government Programme, we will amend the Local Government Act to consolidate democracy at the local level and to promote better participation of local councillors in the management of community affairs.

A Ministerial Committee has been set up under the chairmanship of the Deputy Prime Minister and we are working on the Local Government Act. Pretty soon, we will be coming with major changes in this Act, as you know the Local Government Act 2011 is very

undemocratic. Any councillor who disagrees with his group or party can be expelled and he or she will automatically lose his or her seat.

At present, we have so many of these cases in Court. Is it fair that because you disagree with your party you lose your seat? Is it democratic, Sir? Is it constitutional? I wonder! We have so many of these cases, especially at the village level and I am sure you will agree with me, to say the least, this is very unfair.

Let me state, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, that we have an opportunity to remove some of these roadblocks that have been holding us back, and this is an occasion for us to set this sector on a new path for the years to come. I am confident that this will certainly mark the beginning of a new relationship between the State and the Local Government.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I wish to bring to the House that the changing nature of Government over time is characterised by change in service delivery and responding to the community needs. There have been and there are still raging and passionate debates on local democracy in Mauritius and all over the world. Nearly every citizen of this country has his own views of local democracy and nearly every citizen seems to have a model of democracy in mind.

We shall definitely not reinvent the wheel when we will debate the model of local democracy in Mauritius, but we will definitely attempt at finding a model of democracy, which, we hope in the present time, would best suit the aspirations of our population and the local communities.

We will also promote better participation of the councillors in the management of the affairs of the Village, District and Municipal Councils.

We have started a discussion on how to increase local democracy, but we all agree with more rights and freedom, there are also more responsibilities that go with it as well. We have to be careful. Rights and responsibilities go hand-in-hand. I was a municipal councillor in Port Louis from 2001 to 2005 and I know what I am talking about.

In response to the quest of local communities for more decision-making power and more authority to local councillors, the central Government will definitely allow more authority and autonomy to local bodies.

However, I repeat accrued authority and decision-making power to local communities with invariably called forth enhanced responsibility and improved accountability process.

Enhancing local democracy is not only a quantitative process, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is much more a qualitative process.

Allow me to explain. What matters in an advanced democracy is not the number of layers of decision-making wherein local councillors are called upon to participate. But what is important is the level of decision-making process they participate into.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, another concept I shall introduce is of concern to a sustainable local democracy. Sustainable in terms of the resources the local authorities are able to command and sustainable also, in term of the level of service which the local communities are willing and able to provide.

Another key aspect which encompasses sustainability is in relation to financial sustainability. This is an important and determinant factor, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir.

Local authorities have definitely got to progress to higher levels of independence. Independence means also financial independence. My views are that local authorities should be given the means and the tools to improve their finances and become less and less reliant on central Government funding.

I also acknowledge that prudence will have to be exercised so that financial independence is in keeping with the duty of accountability. Moreover, financial independence will also need to be in keeping with the notion of the sovereignty of the State.

Local authorities will be encouraged to implement self-supporting development projects in order to improve their financial situation.

My Ministry will work together with all the District and Municipal Councils in their tasks of raising more revenue at their level.

On a different note, Mr Deputy Speaker Sir, with a view to improving proximity to the citizens, the portal of Local Authorities will be enhanced and electronic and mobile payment facilities will become a reality in the new future.

Furthermore, as the Government is moving towards a major transformation for bringing in more efficiency and ensuring optimum use of the resources available, it is imperative for the local authorities to follow the example.

In this context, efforts will have to be made by local authorities in collaboration with my Ministry for the implementation of projects which capitalise on the use of innovative technologies - which was mentioned by hon. Minister Pravind Jugnauth, earlier – which

would undoubtedly aimed at bringing in more efficiency in the day-to-day running of the local authorities. For example, this will definitely improve the service provided by the local council and prevent the citizen from queuing for hours on end just to pay their bills.

This year we are going to look - as my colleague asked earlier - at the two national monuments which are the theatre of Port Louis and Plaza. In Port Louis, we will start the renovation work whilst at Rose Hill, the second phase of the restoration of plaza will be started. The restoration of the *Hôtel de Ville de Curepipe* and the construction of Forum are also on our agenda.

Mr Deputy Speaker Sir, on a different note, another subject, I would like to mention the problem of hawkers. As you are aware, this problem has been discussed for years. I appreciate it is a major problem in all the cities, but it is much more acute in the City of Port Louis. I have had meetings with the different stakeholders, namely, the Market Traders Association, the New Wing Market Traders, Municipal Councils, the police and the hawkers as well. Obviously, everybody will have to earn a living, but we have to be fair to each and every one.

This is why, at the level of my Ministry, we are very adamant to implement a sustainable solution to this problem in the most humane possible manner. Just in the City of Port Louis, we have about 1,200 hawkers. As I mentioned, in a PQ a couple of weeks ago, we are looking into the ways and means of how we can accommodate these hawkers in the best interest of everybody. We have identified a couple of sites in Port Louis, at *la gare du nord* and *gare du sud*. Pretty soon, we hope to start the work on these two sites.

Last but not least, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am going to say a few words on the Fire and Rescue Services. As you are aware, the men and women at the Fire Services are doing a marvellous job. Every time we are in trouble, they are there to help us. Be it a fire outbreak, flooding or road traffic accident, they are usually there promptly to give us the first aid. That's why I feel we have to improve the service more, in terms, of manpower, emergency vehicles and improving training to cope with the different calamities.

Moreover, with a change in global weather pattern in the future, the Fire Services will be called to deliver a wide range of non-fire functions crucial to the community safety. To that effect, provision has been made in the Mauritius Fire and Rescue Services Act, for the establishment of the Fire Service Training Academy, which is intended to design the Academy for its future development into an International Training Centre for countries in the

Indian Ocean and the SADC region. I shall recall that a plot of land has been vested in the Ministry of Local Government for this project.

Another aspect relates to the Fire Safety Exhibition and Safety Awareness Campaigns which will be organised as frequently as possible with an aim of preparing our citizens to deal with unforeseen circumstances.

Finally, many projects including the construction of a Fire Academy and Fire Station in the different regions of the island namely, Rose Belle, Goodlands, Montagne Blanche are on the agenda of my Ministry. As Minister, I am keen to ensure that all sections of the Fire Services are well placed and adept in dealing with this change. One thing that will not change, however, is that volunteers are an essential part of our Fire Services.

And with this, allow me, Mr Deputy Speaker Sir, to state that, as we reflect on our achievements to date, we equally recognise the need for change, and a willingness to roll up our sleeves and work together to build a better future for our country.

I am sure, with this Government, under the leadership of Sir Anerood Jugnauth, we will live up to it to the expectations of the citizen of Mauritius where we shall create a fairer Mauritius which will give hope to everybody be it to the unemployed youth, the single mother or the sick and the old. They can rest assured that they have a Government who cares.

As the famous motto of Liverpool Football Club states, I quote –

“You’ll never walk alone.”

I would like to say to the poor people in Mauritius, with Sir Anerood Jugnauth at the helm, and with such a programme, ‘*zotte népli pou mars tousel*’.

I thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, and hon. Members for your kind attention.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Aliphon!

(7.56 p.m.)

Mr A. Aliphon (Third Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière): Monsieur le président, permettez-moi de copier mes collègues députés et d’abord de féliciter, Madame la *Speaker*, pour sa nomination comme la première femme *Speaker*, de notre île Maurice moderne.

Je voudrais aussi réitérer mes félicitations à vous M. Duval, junior, et dire que l'île Maurice pousse vers la vraie modernité. Il faudrait aussi étendre ces félicitations à l'ensemble des dirigeants de l'Alliance Lepep pour leur confiance et d'avoir su choisir cette nouvelle équipe, et surtout admirer le courage de Sir Anerood Jugnauth de venir relever ce défi monstre de diriger cette île Maurice en perdition, quand tout le camp adverse nous donnait pour battu avant le 10 décembre. Grâce à leur clairvoyance, les élections du 10 décembre ont permis à tous les mauriciens de tout bord, de connaître les dessous insoupçonnables des ex-dirigeants du pays. Comme nous, comme vous, nous l'entendons, les mauriciens commentent le résultat, non pas comme une correction donnée au gouvernement sortant mais comme une condamnation pour mauvaise conduite aux ex-dirigeants de la modernité. Pourtant, l'Opposition disait, criait à qui voulait l'entendre, que problèmes il n'y en avait pas, ou il n'y en avait plus, avec la fameuse parole ou le slogan '*blier*'.

Et là, je demanderai à mes amis de l'Opposition de ne pas venir jouer la carte de la victime, car comme dit le dicton –

'Quand vous approuvez et soutenez des menteurs et des tricheurs, vous n'êtes pas des victimes, mais vous devenez surtout des complices'.

Mais je suis toutefois heureux de voir que les quelques membres restant, de l'Opposition actuelle, semblent tourner le dos à l'ex-Premier ministre et, ou du moins, sont gênés par les événements. Ils sont surpris, c'est vrai, ou emmerdés.

Donc, je vais leur lancer une invitation comme mes collègues l'ont fait tout à l'heure: '*Quitt parti là, ale ailleurs ; virer mam pas peur!*'

Comme moi, comme nous, le peuple mauricien n'a pas voulu être complice des menteurs et des tricheurs. Ils ont voté pour le changement, ce qui rend encore plus belle la victoire du 10 décembre.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, il ne faudrait pas passer sous silence le dynamisme que cette nouvelle majorité a fait preuve et qui continuera à aller dans ce sens et c'est cela que les mauriciens appelleront la vraie modernité. La population mauricienne intelligente qu'elle est, que nous sommes, avons choisi un gouvernement propre qui *means business*. Depuis son installation à la tête du pays nous avons su, sous les directives de Sir Anerood Jugnauth que les promesses et engagements seront honorés. En trois mois - pas encore 100 jours - au moment où je vous parle, ce gouvernement a su donner la reconnaissance qui se doit à ses aînés, augmentation, ou encore permettre aux mauriciens de continuer d'envoyer leurs

enfants à l'école avec le paiement des *fees* du *SC* and du *HSC*. J'ose espérer que chaque mauricien prenne connaissance de ce projet de loi.

Dans le chapitre de la santé, dès notre arrivée au pouvoir nous avons, dans le respect le plus total, solutionné de gros problèmes dans la délivrance de méthadone. Mon collègue en a parlé avant moi. En régionalisant le service, maintenant malades et habitants sortent gagnants et cohabitent sereinement et sérieusement. Depuis quelque temps, les *Health Care Centres* sont disponibles 24hrs sur 24 grâce à notre ministre de la Santé et cela va certainement aller en s'améliorant.

En ce qui concerne le sport - malheureusement, mon ami l'honorable Quirin n'est pas là - je voudrais, sans vouloir défendre le ministre du Sport, simplement parler des problèmes des centres de jeunesse. Il était dans le gouvernement passé, qu'a-t-il fait, lui? Concernant le JOI, il était dans le gouvernement, qu'a-t-il fait lui?

(Interruptions)

The Deputy Speaker: Silence!

(Interruptions)

Order!

Mr Aliphon: Rappelez-vous et souvenez-vous que nous sommes au pouvoir depuis seulement 83 jours et à moins de cinq mois des Jeux des îles de l'Océan Indien. On ne pourra rien changer maintenant, arrive qui arrive mais je souhaite que les sportifs courageux qu'ils sont, défendront les couleurs de l'île Maurice comme ils le peuvent et je les félicite pour ça. Si pendant ces quelques jours seulement au pouvoir *nous ti capav finn guet devant et avancer* sans scandale, nous serions bien loin aujourd'hui.

En 83 jours exactement autant de dossiers ont été levés et qui font mal aux mauriciens. Pour cela, rappelez-vous, lorsque vous quitterez cette terre vous n'emporterez rien de ce que vous avez reçu, mais uniquement ce que vous aurez donné. Donc, à qui de droit *mett* chapeau là! Ce ne sera certainement pas à ce gouvernement-là qu'il faudra le mettre. En 100 jours, nous aurions retrouvé la vitesse de croisière que l'île Maurice mérite et que nous aurons perdue depuis une décennie.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, les scandales, parlons-en! Mon ami l'honorable Bhagwan a parlé l'autre jour du *City Power*. Je suis heureux de dire que j'étais parmi les premières personnes à avoir organisé la première réunion contre le *City Power* à Albion en invitant les

gens de la région de Pointe Aux Sables, de Roches Brunes, de Mont Roches et de Petite Rivière. J'ai ensuite passé la main à des plus costauds que moi pour continuer la lutte et, à ce jour, toutes les régions restent contre ce projet et aujourd'hui plus que jamais. Cependant, je remercie l'honorable Bhagwan de nous avoir soutenus sur le projet, mais voilà il ne faut pas oublier que l'honorable Bhagwan était colistier, il était partie prenante dans le gouvernement sortant avant le 10 décembre. Il aurait dû dans sa coalition avec ce gouvernement faire rejeter le dossier *City Power*. Pourquoi ne l'a-t-il pas fait? J'ose ici citer –

'Nothing works unless you do the job'.

Il aurait dû le savoir. *Too easy now to have the good job to ask us to stop City Power project. Let me thank him for the advice, but I am dead sure that in the new Government - which I form part – we should know how and what to do to stop the project* et faire que Maurice reste une île verte et durable.

M. le président, parlons du développement. Comme mon ami le *PPS*, l'honorable Boissezon, et comme mon ami l'honorable Lepoigneur l'ont dit, je demanderai que, lors du prochain budget le Premier ministre, de même que le ministre des Finances aient un regard spécial à une ville oubliée depuis 30 ans, Bassin/Petite Rivière. Il faut le signaler, c'est sous la bannière de notre Premier ministre Sir Anerood Jugnauth que le District Council de Rivière Noire a vu le jour en 1992 et depuis nous sommes les oubliés. Ces régions n'ont connu aucun développement sérieux, et je souhaiterais énumérer en gros les développements urgents à faire – avec mon ami l'honorable Dayal - à Hermitage, stopper le glissement de terrain et faire des drains.

L'honorable Quirin a parlé de Chebel. Oui, c'est vrai, à Chebel on a fait des travaux avec empressement avant les élections et, aujourd'hui où vous passez il y a des trous qui se forment à Chebel, et c'est malheureux. C'était pour gagner les élections, mais malheureusement ils ont perdu.

Notre joli patrimoine, le bazar de Beau Bassin avec à côté la station de police, la place des taxis, la poste et le Jardin Bijoux. Pourquoi pas une modernisation qui changerait le *look* de ce centre-ville oublié? À Coromandel, mon ami l'a dit, un terrain de foot. À Belle Etoile, pourquoi pas un *Health Care Centre* qui n'existe pas dans cette région.

Et maintenant pour Barkly - je regrette que mon ami l'honorable Quirin ne soit pas là. Il a parlé du bon fonctionnement de la municipalité de Beau Bassin/Rose Hill. Laissez-moi vous dire les amis, Beau Bassin/Rose Hill a fait construire une foire qui, à ce jour, reste

inexploitée, inutilisée, du gâchis, *enn vrai la foire* qu'il faut réveiller et cela a été un projet de la municipalité de Beau Bassin/Rose Hill.

La blonde Albion, mon ami Mahen l'a dit tout à l'heure-là, le *Macarena party*. Et c'est vrai, cette région est devenue un village en 1992 sous le *leadership* de Sir Anerood Jugnauth. Depuis 30 ans, lors de chaque grande pluie le pont disparaît sous les eaux et pourtant depuis 30 ans nous avons des députés et des grandes personnalités de l'île Maurice qui empruntent ce pont chaque jour et, à ce jour, rien n'a été fait. Il est temps que nous entreprenions assez rapidement le rehaussement de ce pont.

Et quid d'avoir une poste digne de ce nom où habitants et touristes pourraient trouver leur compte sans avoir à aller - tenez-vous bien - chez le petit copain de l'ex-Premier ministre, dont la boutique sert de poste, modernité oblige, essayons d'avoir une poste digne de ce nom.

Finalement, M. le président, quid de Petite Rivière, l'évêque de Port-Louis - là je le rejoindrai - qui a proposé au Premier ministre la volonté de l'église pour aider dans des projets visant au bien-être de la famille, logement social, je ne pourrai terminer sans être la voix des pauvres de la région qui chaque jour vont au bureau de la sécurité sociale pour être aidé dans leur misère et qui subissent l'humiliation du système et de l'environnement dégradant du bureau, il est temps de revoir la chose.

M. le président, pour terminer je voudrais rejoindre un des députés qui tout à l'heure avait remercié sa femme et sa famille. Je tiens à le suivre, à le citer, c'est vrai, il faudrait remercier notre famille, à tout un chacun qui subisse nos humeurs de politiciens. Merci à vous et à eux.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, to conclude, my wish is to express my sincere devotion to the Leader of the House, Sir Anerood Jugnauth, to all my colleagues and I want to express to all Mauritians these words full of hope -

« Si petit soit ton boulot, sois-en fier, fais le avec courage, et espère ta famille en dépend.»

We, as a caring Government, should help you to feel better in a near future.

Merci, M. le président.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Teeluckdharry!

(8.08 p.m.)

Mr K. Teeluckdharry (Second Member for Pamplémousses & Triolet): Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, allow me to join my friends to congratulate you for your appointment as well as Madam Speaker to her post. Allow me the opportunity to thank the Rt. hon. Prime Minister, Sir Anerood Jugnauth, Q. C. who has bestowed on me the honour and privilege to form part of this House and to address this House this evening.

We have before us the itinerary, which we have to follow for the forthcoming five years ahead of us. We are not *des passéistes*, but we have lessons to learn from the past. What happened during the past decade, how the affairs of this country were being conducted during the past nine years?

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, 10 December 2014 will be remembered in history. It will be a date to be remembered on the same scale as the abolition of slavery, the end of indentured labour in Mauritius, the accession of this country to independence, the accession of this country to the status of Republic. I say so, because 10 December 2014 represents the date when the people of Mauritius made this pacific revolution of the people. *L'Alliance Lepep* represents a pacific revolution.

(Interruptions)

Politicians have been governing the affairs of this country. They have been learning lessons, strategies, and tricks from manuals. I understand there is such a manual called "The Prince" written by Niccolò Machiavelli. Machiavelli has said that for a Prince to achieve power or for a Prince to rule longer and longer, what he has to do; he has to betray his ally and he has to befriend his enemies so that he can rule longer or so that he can achieve power. This is exactly what the two former political leaders who intended to set up the alliance of l'Unité et la Modernité so as to govern this country, what they have done. They betrayed their friend and they contracted an alliance with their enemies, but the verdict was in the hands of the tribunal of the people.

The people were fed up of lies, strategies, demagoguery, stratagems, devious means to fool the people. The people had two choices; they preferred the choice showed to us by the Rt. hon. Sir Anerood Jugnauth. History of this country has witnessed, each time that this country, this nation was in difficulty, *au bord de la crise, au bord du marasme économique*, a man came forward in the person of the Rt. hon. Prime Minister, Sir Anerood Jugnauth, to

save his fellow countrymen and to save this nation. Be it in 1982 or 1983, be it in 2000 or be it in 2014.

Sir Anerood Jugnauth, QC, has taught this country and the whole world that politics is a discipline. Myself, my friend hon. Callichurn, and my friend hon. Ramkaun, we had a task that was not easy in Constituency No. 5.

(Interruptions)

That is, the second largest constituency.

(Interruptions)

It was the second largest constituency, but the constituency with the highest number of voters. It was the constituency of the former Prime Minister who had been in power for 14 years: 1995 to 2000, 2005 up to 2014, almost fifteen years. I regretfully say that this constituency is one of the most neglected constituency with large *poches de pauvreté*. Persons do not have the basic needs; we are talking of water supply, electricity supply, where several members of one family have to sleep on a single bed. This is the constituency of the former Prime Minister. What has he been doing over the years? He said he will change the life of people in hundred days. He said he will make us rich. Many promises, salary increase for workers, so many promises and all the promises were only sounds and furies.

We have a difficult task, myself and my two friends when we look back three to four months ago, but, fortunately, we were not single soldiers because we had along our side a man, a one-man army, Sir Anerood Jugnauth, who came in our constituency one week before elections on three consecutive occasions. We won indeed an overwhelming victory.

Today, I must say that – *magnanimes, nous sommes dans le combat modeste, nous sommes dans la victoire* because the work has started as from 11 December 2014. Serious work has started and the change is *plus que palpable* in all fields of activities. There is change. Change is coming forward. We have seen how the police force was operating in the past and we have seen how the police force has been doing their job as from the start of this year. Even the counsel of the former Prime Minister had to concede and to apologise to the police because the police were doing their job in full independence. The Rt. hon. Prime Minister made it clear to the hon. Leader of the Opposition, at the very first PNQ, that the police is an independent institution. It is doing its job. And we are happy today that the police are arresting suspects on the basis of overwhelming *prima facie* evidence. Gone are the days when the police were arresting innocent political leaders. I have in mind my leader, hon.

Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, arrested just on flimsy allegations. Police were being used as puppets and mercenaries by the parties in power and political leaders. Let alone honest political leaders, even honest citizens, human rights activists and even human rights lawyers were not spared.

I can still remember the day when my friend, hon. Rutnah, was arrested *manu militari* by the police force. What was his crime! His crime was he accepted to be my junior to defend an innocent man before the Assizes Court. We had a system where the police was given blank cheque, was given full discretion to go and arrest even innocents and to torture and extort confessions and to make a mockery of justice. We had institutions, prosecuting authorities turning a blind eye to human rights. We can say today that for the past nine years under the Labour Government, the flag of democracy, the flag of human rights, democratic values, Republican principles were made to fly at half-mast. I say so because we have seen how freedom of expression were being tampered with. Journalists were arrested and jailed, why? Because he wrote an article on Roches Noires Gate? He was arrested. They used another pretext that he committed a Contempt of Court. Two highest institutions of the land colluding to persecute an innocent journalist. These words are not from me, these words are from the Privy Council where it has been stated in clear words that there was no Contempt of Court at all, but what is worst; Counsel who represented the innocent journalists were told to shut their mouths. They could not even represent their clients. They were bullied by institutions, Human rights liberty, liberty of the citizen.

We have another instance where the citizen's liberty was attacked by the introduction of a smart card, the Identity Card Gate. We all know today about the Identity Card Gate. This card represents a danger. We have seen how my hon. friend said "broadband speed", but we could see how at lightning speed the former Prime Minister legislated, on the single day, with Certificate of Urgency, First Reading, Second Reading, Third Reading and the Bill was voted. The hon. Leader of Opposition then, Mr Alan Ganoo said: I did not have time to read the Bill. Why? Why was there a hurry to bypass the Legislation, the provisions of the Public Procurement Act? Why was there a need to bypass three tenders which were much less, at least one fourth of the tender to which company the project was allocated? And we know that this card was the first step, a surveillance state. The second step was the institution, the proposed institution of a second Republic and how to enslave the people of this country. The movement of each individual would have been tracked down by a card with a smart integrated chip together with a RF ID, that is, at whatever point he would

approach a camera, it could be read where this person has been, his movement could have been monitored.

The Deputy Speaker: I am sorry, hon. Teeluckdharry, are you mentioning a case which is, right now, before a Court of justice!

(Interruptions)

Mr Teeluckdharry: Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I take note of the observation of my hon. friend and I would propose to move on. We have seen from the Roches Noires Gate to River Walk Gate, what was happening in this country.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to say that, today, I am happy the way the police is conducting its affairs and how other institutions are functioning. I am also happy to learn that there is the possibility of instituting a Miscarriage of Justice Tribunal because we all know that no human system, no human justice is infallible. We have the case of Amicale Four. Though I am personally involved at some stage, my friend hon Rutnah as well, we all wish that like other civilised institutions and in other civilised countries, we do have a Miscarriage of Justice Tribunal. I am happy to learn the other day from the Attorney General that there will be reforms in the Judiciary. We have this problem occurring again and again; delays in writing judgments. A great man, Martin Luther King, had said that Justice delayed is worse than injustice. Myself and my colleagues of the bar, besides our clients, have been waiting for judgements of the Court for nine years, ten years, and sometimes twelve years. This is indeed scandalous. We have today before us a programme, a Government Programme of almost 300 measures. I would say that this Government, *l'Alliance Lepep*, represent the voice of the people. Hon. Members of this Government have not come here to acquire coffers or to fill those coffers with millions of rupees. We have come here to serve the nation.

At the end of my speech, I remember my late mentor, Professor Frank Richard. I remember this quotation from Hamlet of William Shakespeare and I propose to end my speech with it.

This Government “will suit the action to the word, the word to the action.”

I thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir.

(8.27 p.m.)

Mr D. Sesungkur (First Member for Montagne Blanche & GRSE): Mr Deputy Speaker Sir, let me join my other hon. friends to congratulate you on your appointment and I would wish that you convey my best wishes to Madam Speaker for her appointment as well and we are confident that you will do your job up to the level expected from you.

I am grateful to be given the opportunity to make my maiden speech in the House in such an important debate. I am deeply humbled to stand here in this august Assembly. It is a great honour to represent the Constituency No. 10 Montagne Blanche & Grand River South East. From the bottom of my heart, I thank the good people of my constituency for electing me and my two colleagues, hon. Bholah and hon. Tarolah.

I have been here throughout the debate and there have been some excellent maiden speeches. I congratulate all those who have spoken so far, especially hon. Rutnah for his radical speech. There is, indeed, a fresh spark of hope for the future of this House.

At this point in time, I should like to pay genuine and sincere tribute to the skill and extraordinary ability and wisdom of the Leader of the House, the Rt. hon. Sir Anerood Jugnauth who was instrumental to the overwhelming victory of *l'Alliance Lepep* during the last election. He saved this country from being a totalitarian State which the Labour-MMM Alliance wanted to install. I feel confident in saying that without the leadership he showed, we would not have been here, today. The Rt. hon. Sir Anerood Jugnauth is admired by Members from both sides of the House for his courage and determination. His sense of patriotism is just magnificent. The Rt. hon. Sir Anerood Jugnauth is not just a man of action, but a man of sound judgment. I do not think age is a barrier for him as he has always gone about his work with a certain youthful vigour. The Rt. hon. Sir Anerood Jugnauth is a larger than life person. His record of dedicated service to the nation now well into the sixth decade is both remarkable and a genuine inspiration to the nation. It is a great privilege and also an enormous pleasure to be part of a House with such a legendary personality.

I take this opportunity to thank the Rt. hon. Sir Anerood Jugnauth and my Leader, hon. Pravind Jugnauth, for having believed in me and allowed me to serve my country, my motherland. Hon. Pravind Jugnauth has laboured to make the MSM the party it is today, a party with a largest number of seats in this House and it cannot be over emphasised that *l'Alliance Lepep* won a crushing victory over the *l'Alliance de l'Unité et de la Modernité* and that much to their surprise.

This unprecedented verdict was a serious warning shot from the electorate. That is why those of us engaged in politics have to do more to connect with people and make meaningful offers in terms of policies. There is no justification from the benches opposite to be overconfident, as some have a deficit of credibility which they will never ever surmount. The Labour Party has failed to listen and to take action to address concern. They have often over-promised and under delivered.

Given my background as a qualified accountant and practising for over 20 years, it is, but natural that my comments will focus mainly on the economic chapter and the economic proposals contained in the governmental programme. His Excellency's speech has outlined many measures in Government Programme 2015-2019 for which proper scrutiny will keep us fully occupied. These measures all reflect long-term thinking.

This House needs to be constantly refreshed with new thinking, approaches and experience if it is to continue to be effective. There is varied expertise in this House and that, of course, is one of the strengths of this House, the way in which a range of expertise and knowledge is used, not just to hold Government to account through debate and legislative scrutiny, but to take evidence, deliberate and then contribute to public policy.

Precisely, with regard to the economy, the situation we inherited from the last Government was that Mauritius has been at the bottom of the league. Indeed, there are some huge decisions facing our nation which will determine our place in the world, most notably the rebuilding of the economy. For no Government has a greater responsibility than its stewardship over the public finances. I was very pleased to see the emphasis in His Excellency's speech on stability and security of the economy. The long-term economic plan is all about raising living standards for everyone in our country. But to do that, we have to tackle the country's economic problems head on. We cannot duck the difficult decisions even when they come at a political price.

The previous Government has left a heavy legacy and it is an undeniable fact that our economy today is in a dramatic situation. For years now, Mauritius has been going off the rail. We have been struggling to maintain a growth of around 3%. There is something wrong with a growth of 3%. If we grow at the rate of 3% a year, in real terms the per capita income will double in 20 years. Essentially, we are thus sacrificing a whole generation.

Let us look at the emerging economies around the world, for example, China. For 30 years, China has grown by 10% and India for five or six years at a rate of 9% and for 20 years, has grown at an average of 6%.

Mauritius should not be satisfied by a 12 billion dollar economy, that should even not place it in the top of a 300-list of fortune 500 corporations in terms of its output. It should be an 18 billion economy. It is underperforming by, at least, 50%. 50% makes a big difference. Everybody has to be a bit more ambitious. If we look at island economies like Singapore, it has now a per capita income level of nearly 60,000 USD compared to approximately only 10,000 USD for Mauritius.

In 1960, Singapore per capita income was only twice that of Mauritius. Today, it is more than six times bigger. Our performance leaves a lot to be desired. As a nation, we buy more goods and services than we sell. The high deficit in our balance of trade account nearly Rs80 billion is a major source of vulnerability for the country. Mauritius has to export almost the size of its GDP. Hong Kong and Singapore do even better because their export exceeds the respective GDP. To balance the books, the previous Government has been increasing the national debt and selling off our best land to foreigners. This is clearly unsustainable.

Public sector debt including debt of Central Government and public enterprises stood at nearly 60% of GDP in 2013. The gross external debt of the country increased by Rs10.5 billion in a single year to reach Rs60.6 billion at the end of 2013.

Our ability to deliver on job creation depends on investment. Unfortunately, national savings level continues to decline year after year. This increases our dependence on foreign capital flows that tend to be volatile in a current shaky global economic landscape. The low savings ratio deserves consideration since it creates a resource gap, thus obstructing the materialisation of planned investment. Such a picture largely corroborates our apprehension of the macroeconomic outlook of the country. We better think where we go from here.

The positive intention contained in the governmental programme to stimulate investment and rekindle economic growth is laudable. Low levels of private investment in the country are a reflection of capital market failures. Overreliance on bank finance along with problems of banks concentration and short termism are constraining firm growth, especially of dynamic and innovative SMEs. Only yesterday, the Minister of Finance drew the attention regarding the role which banks have to play to propel the growth rate in the country and support the SMEs.

My speech today will focus precisely on the role of banks. Banks have a crucial role in the economy. Banks provide, amongst other things, a safe store for deposits, credit for individuals and businesses and the infrastructure for payments transactions within the economy. It is essential to enable the industry better to serve the needs of the real economy.

However, banks have failed in many respects. The Bank of Mauritius has recently published a survey on the banking sector and banking services entitled 'Banking Your Future'. This document is very revealing about the profound resentment of customers and public at large. The fees and charges of banks are considered as exorbitant and, in some cases, extortionate. The main line of my argument is that we are in the midst of an unprecedented global experiment in monetary policy.

It is unfortunate that it is so little understood by the public that money is created by the banks every time they make a loan. In effect, the banks have a virtual monopoly over domestic credit creation so they determine how money is allocated across the economy. That has led to the vast majority of money being channelled into property markets and the financial services sector. It is only a comparatively small amount which is lent to businesses and to consumer credit.

This has a real impact on GDP and economic growth. The conclusion is unavoidable, we cannot continue with a system in which so little of the money created by banks is used for the purposes of economic growth and value creation in which, instead, the overwhelming majority of the money created inflates property prices, pushing up the cost of living.

In a nutshell, the banks have too much power. They have greatly abused it. First, they have been granted enormous privileges since they can create wealth simply by writing an accounting entry on a register. They decide who uses that wealth and for what purpose. They have used their power of credit creation hugely to favour property and consumption lending over business investment because the returns are higher and more secure. Thus, the banks maximise their own interests but not the national interest.

Would Parliament ever have voted to delegate power to create money to those banks? I think the answer is unambiguously 'no'! The question that needs to be put is how we should achieve the switch from unbridled consumerism to a framework of productive investment capable of generating a successful and sustainable manufacturing and industrial base that can securely underpin Mauritius living standards.

The purpose of accountability to the treasury committee would be to enable Parliament to fully explore the manner in which the Monetary Policy Committee is working. The money will be lent to banks with the requirement that the funds are used for productive purposes, whereas lending for speculative purposes, for example, to purchase pre-existing assets, either financial or propriety, would not be allowed.

Profound cultural change in banks should be achieved. Poor standard in banking is the consequence of the flagrant disregard of numerous sensible codes that exist already. Banks should know that they are given a licence to provide banking facilities to the public. Using banking facilities is a right not a privilege. Banks should be accessible to all customers, irrespective of the financial circumstances.

The functioning of the MCIB should also be reviewed to avoid more hardship on deprived customers. The banking and financial services sector landscape should not create a climate of box ticking of the kind that we saw so far. We need in our regulation to exercise judgement rather than just process.

My last point, which I think is very important, is that sovereign money redresses a major democratic deficit. Under the current system a few board members across the largest banks make decision that shape the entire Mauritian economy even though these individuals have no obligation or mandate to consider the needs of the society or the economy as a whole or are not accountable in any way to the public. It is for the maximisation of their own interest, not the national interest.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to make a short but quick comment about the role of the State in shaping our economy. The first economic miracle may be attributed to the active role of the State in shaping the Mauritian economy. The role of the State is extremely important in as much as we do not have a very dynamic and pioneering private sector. Looking back at the historical development of our country, most of the economic pillars have been initiated by the State, from tourism, EPZ, offshore sector to that of the Freeport and the Cyber city. In achieving these objectives, the State pursued highly interventionist financial and industrial policies in order to ensure that capital flowed to strategically important industries and firms.

The recent laissez-faire approach has resulted in our private sector investing in only those sectors where there are quick and easy wins and neglecting other productive sectors which can add to the growth in the longer run, for example the SME sector. Our country

needs a balanced economy with a strong base in service sectors as well as industry and manufacturing. The strategy for jobless growth is too costly for our economy and our country.

In all countries, the State plays some role in shaping the structure and output of the economy. In States that were late in industrialisation, the State itself led the industrialisation process, that is, it took on developmental functions. The role of the State in the industrialisation process had been extremely decisive in the economic miracle of some countries such as Japan and South Korea, just to mention these two.

Precisely, the role of the developmental State is to play an active role in guiding economic development and using resources of the country to meet the needs of the people. The State needs strategic organisational and technical capacity to play its developmental role. Institutions and policies are needed to sustain economic growth in the dynamic world economy. After years of inadequate investment in skills, infrastructure innovation, there are long-standing structural weaknesses in the economy all rooted in a failure to achieve stable planning, strategic visions and a consensus on the right policy framework to support growth.

If we are to bring prosperity, this will require providing the right condition for investment in skills, infrastructure and innovation. This will not happen without creating institutions that are built to last and that diminish rather than exacerbate policy uncertainty. We need institutions that can help to develop and deliver a better industrial strategy. I propose the creation of an Independent National Growth Council which brings together expertise across all disciplines to review relevant evidence and to recommend growth enhancing policy reforms that could be subject to rigorous evaluation. Investment in equipment and new ideas are crucial engines of growth. Fostering a supportive environment for investment and innovation is central to having a dynamic and productive economy.

I also propose the Government to consider setting up of an Infrastructure Planning Commission together with the infrastructure bank which can unblock project and share the gains from development. This will dramatically reduce the policy instability that has led the country's infrastructure to be poor in comparison to other countries.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, before I conclude, I would like to make two comments on two important public services sector which have big influence on the livelihood of common people. Talking about education, it is important that we ask ourselves the question: "What

kind of education do our children need?” Should we continue to cram their heads with facts and figures that are just a click away on a smart phone?

If we aspire to have a knowledge-based economy, then we must create knowledge and not just learn it. We must nourish our children’s national curiosity and coach them to think creatively, think critically and, most of all, think for themselves. They will need to collaborate together to be competitive in a connected world. Are our schools, teachers and curricula up to the task? Good academic result alone is not a guarantee of success in life. Our children also need to learn life skills and moral values. Successive Governments have wavered over reform. Now, we need a revolution. Our future depends on it.

Regarding, the healthcare; when we are working on the improvement of health care, what matters is not just what occurs in an acute hospital; it is not just about what can be measured and put on the website as an indicator. It is about things such as quality and perhaps, more importantly, a word that I never hear often enough in political discourse: dignity. We cannot measure the patient’s dignity, but we know when they have lost it. Once again, I urge Government to put dignity at the heart of all they do in healthcare.

To conclude, debate in this House will no doubt be lively and, at times, fractious, but while our beliefs may differ and despite what the cynics would have you to believe, what unites us here in this House is a desire to do the very best for our country.

Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir.

Mr Gobin: Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, after hearing such inspiring speeches tonight and looking at the late hour, I can only move that the debate be now adjourned.

Mr Jahangeer rose and seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

Debate adjourned accordingly.

ADJOURNMENT

The Prime Minister: Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this Assembly do now adjourn to Tuesday 03 March 2015 at 11.30 a.m.

The Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Housing and Lands (Mr S. Soodhun) rose and seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker: The House stands adjourned.

At 8.47 p.m. the Assembly was, on its rising, adjourned to Tuesday 03 March 2015 at 11.30 a.m.