



FIFTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

**FIRST SESSION
TUESDAY 22 NOVEMBER 2011**

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BILL (*Public*)

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MAURITIUS

Fifth National Assembly

FIRST SESSION

Debate No. 31 of 2011

Sitting of 22 November 2011

The Assembly met in the Assembly House, Port Louis,

At 11.00 a.m

The National Anthem was played

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

MOTION**SUSPENSION OF S. O. 10 (2)**

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

The Deputy Prime Minister rose and seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

PUBLIC BILL**THE APPROPRIATION (2012) BILL**

(NO. XXVI OF 2011)

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

Consideration of the Appropriation (2012) Bill (No. XXVI of 2011) was resumed.

The Chairperson: Hon. Members, I have to inform the House that I have under Standing Order 73(4) had consultations with the Government Chief Whip and the Opposition Whip, and I have decided to allot 20 minutes per programme code for each Ministry for the consideration of the Programme-Based Budget Estimates 2012 at Committee of Supply, and this will apply as from now. We are all under stress and have been working very hard yesterday until this morning. I am just asking hon. Members to not make any remark or provoke anybody. Let the proceedings of the House be done in order.

Deputy Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Energy and Public utilities – Programme Code 441: Utility Policy, Planning and Management was called.

Mr Uteem: On page 204, under *item 22130 Studies and Surveys*, we note that there is a substantial increase of Rs22 m. as additional fees for 2012. May I know from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister to what these studies and surveys relate?

The Deputy Prime Minister: The studies and surveys for Rs31 m. in 2011 include Rs1 m. fee for preparation of request for proposal, for private sector operator in the water/wastewater sector and Rs30 m. for the new Wastewater Master Plan 2014-2033. We have the Singapore Corporation Enterprise for the water sector reform. We have also a consultancy fee for technical audit, an internal audit to be appointed to carry out a full audit of sewerage consultancy and works contract, and an asset management consultancy to the tune of Rs10 m. to update assets

register for the CWA, which was last carried out in 1998, and for the WMA, which was last carried out in 2000.

Mr Bhagwan: On page 204, *item 441 Utility Policy, Planning and Management*, we are talking about policy, planning and management. As for the wastewater sector, which is a very important sector, we know that the terms of office of the Chairperson has lapsed as he has done two turns and to the Chief Executive has gone to the Central Procurement Board. Can the Deputy Prime Minister inform the House where matters stand concerning the future planning and operation of wastewater?

Secondly, as far as the CWA is concerned, I would like to know whether the new Chairperson is full time, is an Executive Chairman, and where matters stand concerning the Board of the CWA and the CEB as well.

The Deputy Prime Minister: With regard to the CWA Board, the Chairman is not full time. As for the Wastewater, the Chairman will stay on until replaced, as and when required, according to the Singapore report. The GM is being appointed. He will be leaving soon, and an appointment will be made in the days to come. The Board has already met and has decided to advertise the job.

Mr Baloomoody: On the same programme on page 205, *item 28222014 Water Tank Grant Scheme*, can I ask the hon. Deputy Prime Minister whether he can inform the House how many people has benefited from that Scheme, and how is it that for 2012 we have reduced the grant to only Rs20,000?

The Deputy Prime Minister: Mr Speaker, Sir, a sum of Rs120 m. was voted in the last Budget for the *Water Tank Programme* but, unfortunately, the uptake has been unsatisfactory and we are reviewing it. I replied two weeks ago to a Parliamentary Question set by hon. Soodhun and gave all the details, but in brief we have received so far 5,977 applications, 4,505 have been approved, and the disbursement has only been 783. We are reviewing it; maybe, we have to raise the ceiling of Rs10,000 so as to be able to accommodate more people, especially in the unfortunate group.

Mr Jugnauth: On the same issue, Mr Chairperson, may we know when the Scheme will be ready, since it is being reviewed, and as from when people will start benefit from this Scheme?

The Deputy Prime Minister: As I have said, Mr Chairperson, 783 families have already benefited. In the weeks, if not days to come, we will review it and raise the ceiling. We also have to investigate why it is not being taken up. Is it because it does not fit into the housing pattern, because of the drain water not being used? We have to look into it.

The Chairperson: I will request short questions and short answers, being given that time is limited.

Mr Lesjongard: On page 205, with regard to *item 26313098 Current Grant - Utility Regulatory Authority*, can we have an indication from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister about who are the Chairperson and members of that Authority?

The Deputy Prime Minister: The Chairperson was identified and chosen last year. Unfortunately, he has asked for more time. Once he agrees we will fill up the rest.

Mr Bhagwan: Concerning water tanks, can the hon. Deputy Prime Minister inform the House whether these have been given to religious organisations and, if yes, can we have a list?

The Deputy Prime Minister: No, Sir.

Mr Lesjongard: Mr Chairperson, on page 204, *item 22100 Publications and Stationery*, can we get an indication from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister as to why such an increase under this item?

The Deputy Prime Minister: We have introduced a new item for a communication campaign on water. I think that was long overdue. We have been doing it from other budget resources, but now we are putting it as an item in the budget.

Mr François: With regard to Water Tank Grant Scheme, I made requests for provision of concrete tanks for Rodrigues. I would like to ask the hon. Deputy Prime Minister whether this still stands.

The Deputy Prime Minister: We are considering positively the request from Rodrigues not to have water tanks, but to have funding for basins, which are being built.

Mr Uteem: My first question is a follow-up on *item 22130 Studies and Surveys*. May I know from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister the total amount of money paid so far to Singaporean consultants?

Under *item 2822014 Water Tank Grant Scheme*, can I know whether consideration will be given to also subsidise pumps? There are certain households which cannot get water up.

The Deputy Prime Minister: Mr Chairperson, I have not considered the issue of pumps. I will look into it and see what can be done. But for the Singapore team, so far a sum of Rs3 m. has been disbursed and by January they are submitting the report and the works will follow.

Mrs Hanoomanjee: With regard to page 204, item 22130 *Studies and Surveys*, may we know from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister whether any of those results on surveys/studies have been published and, if so, when?

The Deputy Prime Minister: I will look into it.

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, I refer to page 204, under Code 441 *Utility Policy, Planning and Management*. I will take it under the very first *item 21 Compensation of Employees*. Since we are told that 50% of households in Rodrigues are not connected to running water and sanitation facilities, I would like to know why, at page 202, in the indicators there is nothing in relation thereto, or at page 204, in terms of the different votes we have been asked to approve, what allows for a focused, targeted approach for Rodrigues?

The Deputy Prime Minister: Mr Chairperson, the problem with Rodrigues is being addressed with the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. I will look into all these suggestions, but the water situation in Rodrigues needs attention and it will be attended to.

Mr Jhugroo: With regard to the item *Water Tank Grant Scheme*, can we know whether the capacity of tank and the size of the family are being taken into consideration before giving this Scheme?

The Deputy Prime Minister: Mr Chairperson, the grant is there, that is, Rs3,000. We are going to increase it. It does not depend on the size of the family, it is the family who decides about the size of the tank which they would like to have.

Mr Ameer Meea: Mr Chairperson, again, concerning *Water Tank Grant Scheme*, may we know whether same will be extended to the inhabitants of Agalega?

The Deputy Prime Minister: I don't see any reason why not.

Mr Jugnauth: May we know how much money was budgeted for this year and how much has already been spent, if any, for the *Water Tank Grant Scheme*?

The Deputy Prime Minister: Sum spent: Rs2.3 m.; sum budgeted: Rs120 m.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson. I am on page 204, *item 22130 Studies and Surveys*. May I ask the hon. Deputy Prime Minister whether this includes a survey of feeder canals of Mare aux Vacoas?

The Deputy Prime Minister: The survey on Mare aux Vacoas, we will look into it. The internal audit firm would be appointed to look at the audit. The question about what has been published: Wastewater Master Plan has been submitted and is being examined. But we have not made it public yet.

Mr Bhagwan: On this item, Government is subsidising millions of rupees, if not billions, to the water sector. May we ask the hon. Deputy Prime Minister whether one Board member of the CWA, Mr P.R. - I won't mention his name, but the Deputy Prime Minister knows the case - is still a Board member where matters of procurement are discussed and whether he has received representations? There was even a PNQ on that issue.

The Deputy Prime Minister: The Board is being replaced imminently, this week or next week, because after the appointment of the Chairman there are other appointments that are lapsing and we are going to change as well as this gentleman.

Mr Bhagwan: The Deputy Prime Minister should make sure that that person does not sit on Board Meetings dealing with procurement, pending his replacement, as he is still a Board member?

The Deputy Prime Minister: As I said, it is a matter of days.

Mr Lesjongard: Mr Chairperson, on page 204, under *item 22130 Studies and Surveys*, we understand from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister that there is a Master Plan with regard to the wastewater sector. Can we have an indication of the time frame of that Master Plan?

The Deputy Prime Minister: As I have said, the Master Plan will be submitted by March or April next year; the Master Plan will cover 2014 to 2033.

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, on the same issue regarding the Master Plan, may we know what specific amount has been earmarked for the consultancy services from Singapore?

The Deputy Prime Minister: As I have said, Mr Chairperson, it is 1,334,244 Singapore Dollars, almost equivalent to Rs30 m.

Mr Jugnauth: On the same item, may we know how the consultants have been chosen with regard to the surveys and studies that have already been committed?

The Deputy Prime Minister: As far as I know, it's through a tendering procedure. But I will look into it and give the answer.

Programme Code 441: Utility Policy, Planning and Management (Rs119,053,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 442: Energy Services was called.

Mr Lesjongard: Mr Chairperson, under item 25110008 *Feed in Tariff to Small IIPs (MID Fund)*, can we have an indication from the Deputy Prime Minister as to how many SIPPs have been connected to the grid and whether we have to go through the President of the Republic to be able to export power to the grid, and whether the legislation will be amended?

The Deputy Prime Minister: Yes, Mr Chairperson, the legislation will be amended and, at the moment, we have to have the authority from the Presidency. We have received so far 271 applications and permits have been granted. Once the permit is granted, they have one year to connect. We have, at the moment, three connections but, by the end of the year, we are hoping to get about 21.

Mr Bhagwan: About item 25110008 *Electricity Supply for Hardship Cases and Displacement of Electric Lines/Poles for Hardships Cases*, can we know from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister how many cases have been sponsored for the past year by Government and whether there is a number of cases pending? Apart from poles, may I know whether the removal of transformers in people's yards is also concerned? With regard to the *Purchase of Electricity from Landfill Gas (MID Fund)* is it the Mare Chicose Project?

The Deputy Prime Minister: This budget does not include removal of transformers; this is being considered under another item. The scheme is working very well and following interventions in the House, we have asked the CAB Office to help and there is virtually no waiting list at the moment; 120 in Mauritius and 3 in Rodrigues have benefited during this year.

Mr Bodha: Under the same item, Mr Chairperson, may I ask the hon. Deputy Prime Minister whether we have a ceiling as regards the cost of displacement of electric lines? A lot of people come to us and they say that the CEB is charging so much and they are not able to sustain that amount.

The Deputy Prime Minister: Mr Chairperson, these are for hardship cases and not for anyone who wants his electric lines moved. The grant is according to income. For less than Rs8,500 income, the grant is up to Rs65,000; for Rs8,500 to Rs12,500 income, it is Rs50,000. It is graded according to income.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, I am on *Programme 442, item 25110008 Electricity Supply for Hardship Cases*. Last year, we were informed that there was a project regarding the prepaid electricity meters. May I know from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister whether this

project has been on? There was a target of 200 to reach 2000 prepaid electricity meters. May I know where the project is?

The Deputy Prime Minister: The technicalities are being worked out and it is ongoing. The process is there and we are hoping to reach 2000, especially with the new housing estates where there are low income households.

Dr. Sorefan: Mr Chairperson, regarding *item 28222014 Hydro Power Plant at Midlands Dam*, may we know from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister if tender has been launched for the implementation programme?

The Deputy Prime Minister: Sorry! Can the hon. Member repeat the question?

Dr. Sorefan: Regarding *item 28222014 Hydro Power Plant at Midlands Dam*, the last item on page 205. May we know about the implementation programme and if tender has been launched?

The Deputy Prime Minister: The works have started already.

Mr Seeruttun: Mr Chairperson, under *item 22900 Other goods and services*, I can see that the expenditure is going up from Rs2.6 m. in 2010 to Rs17 m. in 2014. May I know what is the expenditure?

The Chairperson: Which item? Can the hon. Member speak in the microphone, please?

Mr Seeruttun: *Item 22900 Other Goods and services.*

The Deputy Prime Minister: It is payment of cash allowance in lieu of uniforms: Rs1 m.; removal of barriers to energy efficiency: Rs1,500,000, and workshops: Rs1,185,000.

Mr Uteem: Mr Chairperson, in relation to *item 22130 Studies and Survey*, there is a budgeted amount of Rs30 m. for *Energy Efficiency and Solar PV Projects*. May I know from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister whether tender has already been launched and whether it has been awarded?

The Deputy Prime Minister: This is a different type of project. This grant is supplementary to the UNDP grant which we discussed before. The Energy Efficiency Regulations and Codes: Rs1.5 m.; Stimulating Energy Efficiency: Rs10 m.; Awareness Campaign: Rs10 m.; Energy Savings in Industries: Rs3 m., and Monitoring and Evaluation: Rs2 m. Project Management. It is a multifaceted approach.

Mr Obeegadoo: If I may take the hon. Deputy Prime Minister back to page 203. Where are we, 442 or 443?

(Interruptions)

On 442, the questions have been asked.

The Chairperson: Hon. Mrs Hanoomanjee!

Mrs Hanoomanjee: On page 205, *item 22120 Fees*, I see an amount of Rs17,600,000 have been earmarked. Can we know to whom these fees will be paid and why the figures have increased and fluctuate and go down to Rs3.9 in 2014?

The Deputy Prime Minister: Mr Chairperson, *item 22120 Fees*, as I have said already, is for the Global Environmental Facility Programme, removal of barriers to energy efficiency and energy conservation in buildings.

The Chairperson: Hon. Bhagwan! Then, hon. Lesjongard!

Mr Bhagwan: On page 205, under *item 25110008 Subsidy to Central Electricity Board (b) Purchase of Electricity from Landfill Gas (MID Fund)*, can we know from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister how many megawatts we are purchasing?

Under item (c) *Feed in Tariff to Small IPPs (MID Fund)*, can we know how many IPPs have been registered as at to date?

Under *item 28222014 Hydro Power Plant at Midlands Dam*, can we know what the capacity is?

Under the same *Programme 442*, we are talking about investment at *Fort Victoria*. Can we know whether surveys have been carried out concerning noise pollution? There is a real problem of noise pollution in the surroundings with the installation of new engines and there are residential areas around Fort Victoria. Has this issue of noise pollution been taken into consideration while purchasing the equipment? Also under *item 32145503 Land Based Oceanic Industry*, I would like to know how much has been spent?

The Chairperson: A follow-up question from hon. Lesjongard and then I will come to hon. Jhugroo.

Mr Lesjongard: Under the same item with regard to *Purchase of Electricity from Landfill Gas*, can we have an indication from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister about the cost of the kilowatt-hour there and the amount earmarked, that is, Rs20 m. represents what percentage of subsidy?

The Deputy Prime Minister: The purchase of electricity from the landfill gas has just started and we are expecting in time to have between 2 and 3 megawatt and up to 20 gigawatt-hour yearly. The sum of Rs20 m. is to top up between the tariff of Rs4.86 per kilowatt-hour and the marginal cost of CEB is Rs3.46.

As to the noise pollution, we have been made aware of this.

(Interruptions)

Concerning small IPPs, at the moment the CEB has one at La Nicolière: 350 kilowatt; it is small. Then there are three which are operational; I call them democratised IPPs, the smaller ones.

The Deputy Prime Minister: Concerning the Land Based Oceanic Industry, as the House was informed, there has been a problem with one of the partners.

The Chairperson: How much has been spent?

The Deputy Prime Minister: I will find out.

Mr Jhugroo: Under *item 22120 Fees*, can we have some clarification as to why it has increased from Rs12.7 m. to Rs17.6 m.?

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Hon. François!

Mr François: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. On page 206, under *item 32145502 Loan to Central Electricity Board (c) Pointe Monier Power Station*, I have three questions. Mr Chairperson. I will ask the three together. Can we know who has been awarded the contract and its actual value? Secondly, when is work scheduled to start for the second phase? And thirdly, whether CEB or the Ministry or the Deputy Prime Minister has received any request for an environmental audit around this site with regard to smoke being emitted from the stack?

The Deputy Prime Minister: In effect, one of the reasons for this Pointe Monier Power Station is the environmental pollution from the old engines and this will take care of it. At the same time, as I mentioned last year, it is to supply the airport and the desalination plant.

The Chairperson: Hon. Lesjongard, do you have a follow-up question on this one?

Mr Lesjongard: Mr Chairperson, the former Chairperson of the Central Electricity Board had requested Government, in the past, not to go ahead with the Pointe Monier Power Station. Can we know from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister what motivated Government to implement the project? Can we know the reasons?

The Deputy Prime Minister: I answered that last year. It was at the request of Rodrigues that we implemented this project.

Mr Baloomoody: Mr Chairperson, under the same *item 32145502 Les Salines Development Project*, may I know from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister where matters stand with regard to the project?

The Deputy Prime Minister: Mr Chairperson, this project was to mount a substation; no amount has been spent.

Mr Jugnauth: Under *item 31122999 (a) Solar Water Heater for Hospitals*, is there a scheme for the public? If yes, can the hon. Deputy Prime Minister circulate the criteria for any applicant to be eligible? And, if yes again, how much money has been earmarked and how much has been spent?

The Deputy Prime Minister: Mr Chairperson, this scheme is not for the public. This scheme here is for the hospitals. We have not got one for the public under the vote.

Mr Bodha: Can I ask the hon. Deputy Prime Minister to enlighten us as regard to the hospitals where the scheme is going to be implemented?

The Deputy Prime Minister: Mr Chairperson, the idea was to have it in Hospital North, Candos, Jawaharlal Nehru Hospital in the South, and Moka, but, problems have arisen because it not just a question of supplying a water heater; it is to change the plumbing and the water network and at the same time having a backup system with gas. So, it is taking time.

Mr Baloomoody: With regard to the Les Salines Development Project, the hon. Deputy Prime Minister just informed the House that nothing has been spent. May I know whether we are going ahead with that project and if not, why are we budgeting sums for 2012, 2013 and 2014?

The Deputy Prime Minister: As and when there is a requirement for the 66 transformers, it will be done, regardless of any other development in the area. But, at the moment, the need is not felt.

Mr Seeruttun: Mr Chairperson, under *item 32145 Loans to Non-Financial Public Corporation*, would it be possible for the hon. Deputy Prime Minister to tell us what are the terms and conditions of those loans?

Mr Jugnauth: I refer to a question which has not been answered with regard to Land-Based Oceanic Industry. The hon. Deputy Prime Minister has said that there is a problem and we

see that budget has been voted for the following years. May we know how much money has already been spent so far?

The Chairperson: The answers will come later. I will have to put the question.

Deputy Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities

Programme Code 442: Energy Services (Rs 1,170,815,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 443: Water resources was called.

Mr Bhagwan: Page 207, *item 32145503 Loan to CWA for the Riche Terre Jin Fei Development Zone*. We are being asked to vote Rs10 m. Can the hon. Deputy Prime Minister inform the House whether any building has been set up and water supply given to any construction industry in the Jin Fei region?

Another question, Mr Chairperson, on page 207, *item 31113410 Upgrading of Feeder Canals*. I raised the issue the other day in a question of a PNQ. Water was being diverted from feeder canals. Can the hon. Deputy Prime Minister inform us whether inquiry has been conducted not only there, but also *dans la region de l'ouest où il n'y a pas mal de feeder canals* which have been tampered? The matter is up to the CWA, Government and the Police.

May I know how many boreholes have been drilled during the past year, the number of boreholes that we have, and whether there is a list of prospective boreholes which can be of help which is under survey?

The Deputy Prime Minister: Mr Chairperson, we are always looking for boreholes. There are five, as far as I remember, which are in the pipeline at the moment. Three have already been explored, there are two or three more that are going to be explored. We are looking for other areas as well, especially in the South.

Mr Ameer Meea: Mr Chairperson, on the Riche Terre Jin Fei Development Zone, can I ask the hon. Deputy Prime Minister up to now what is the total sum that has been spent on this item?

The Chairperson: Let us proceed in an orderly manner, please. We will continue with other questions.

Mr Jugnauth: With regard to Land-Based Oceanic Industry Project, I see an estimate of ...

The Chairperson: Can the hon. Member quote the page and the item?

Mr Jugnauth: It is at page 207, *item 32145503 Loan to CWA for the Riche Terre Jin Fei Development Project*. May we know for what purpose has this loan been granted to CWA and whether it has been spent or how much has been spent?

The Deputy Prime Minister: Concerning the Land-Based Oceanic Industry Project, I will provide the information later, Mr Chairperson. As to the Jin Fei project, it is still ongoing. The completion date for the work is for next year, March 2012, but there is no water being supplied. It will be useful for the areas as well. It is not just for Jin Fei. It will be useful for industry and other purposes.

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Mr Chairperson, with regard to loan to CWA for the rehabilitation of Pailles Water Treatment Plant, could we be informed about the status of the project?

The Chairperson: We can take another question. Hon. Jhugroo!

Mr Jhugroo: At page 207, *item 31113002 Construction of Dams*, can we know what is the capacity of the Bagatelle dam, when it has started construction, when it is supposed to finish and which company has been awarded the contract for the construction?

The Deputy Prime Minister: Mr Chairperson, regarding the Pailles Treatment Plant, it is at the moment that the contract is being evaluated at the Central Procurement Board. Regarding the Bagatelle dam, the storage capacity is 14,000,000 m³, the annual expected yield is 25,000,000 m³. The contractor is the CWA and the contract was awarded on 03 June 2011.

Mrs Radegonde: On page 206, *item 22130 Studies and Surveys*, may I ask the hon. Deputy Prime Minister what are the ongoing studies and surveys which are being carried out, the detailed breakdown of expenses incurred this year, the time period and the name of contractor?

The Deputy Prime Minister: For the information of the question asked, can I come on the LBOI? Funds were for offside works in 2011. No works have been carried out yet, a new tender will be launched. So, nothing has been done.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, I am on page 206, *item 28223010 Capital Grant to CWA for the replacement of old and defective pipelines*. Mr Chairperson, last year in the Budget there was a target of 80 km of defective pipelines to be replaced. May I know whether this target has been reached or otherwise how many kilometres of pipelines we have been able to replace. Also, Mr Chairperson, with your permission, under the same programme, *item 31113410 Upgrading of Feeder Canals*, may we know from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister what feeder canals are we

talking of, to which reservoir and so on? Can we have more details on the feeder canals that we are upgrading?

The Deputy Prime Minister: 60 km of pipelines have been replaced.

Mrs Bholah: Page 207, *item 31113017 Upgrading of Flow Measuring Structures*, can I ask the hon. Deputy Prime Minister why this item is not funded?

The Deputy Prime Minister: It is because the measuring stations are adequate and no provision has been made.

Dr. Sorefan: Mr Chairperson, the hon. Deputy Prime Minister has mentioned that tenders have been launched for Rivière du Poste dam, but I don't see any provision for finance to be incurred in the next financial year.

The Chairperson: Hon. Obeegadoo and then hon. Jugnauth.

Mr Obeegadoo: I refer to page 203, *the outcome of the programme: SS3: Number of kilometres of defective pipelines replaced*. The Minister has just answered a question from hon. Mrs Labelle concerning 2010, I take it. I want some clarification as to the targets. Do we have an idea of the total kilometre length to be replaced? Why 145 in 2012?

The second question on the same issue, at page 206, *item 28223010 Capital Grant to CWA for the replacement of old and defective pipelines*. The hon. Minister did mention prioritisation of asbestos pipes. I want to know how this is being addressed for 2012 and the dangers posed to consumers.

The Deputy Prime Minister: A survey is being carried out and sites identified especially in the Mare aux Vacoas regions about replacement of asbestos pipes. We are going ahead with the project.

Mr Jugnauth: At page 207, in regard to Jin Fei project, the object was to bring FDI to the country. May we know the number of applications that have already been received and how many foreign companies and if ever there are local companies also?

The Deputy Prime Minister: I am not aware of this.

Mr Baloomoody: On page 207 *item 31113010 Construction of Feeder Canals*, we find that for year 2011, we budgeted Rs40 m. May we know how much has been spent and can we have an idea how many kilometres or how many canals have been constructed? We find that for the year 2012 we are budgeting Rs175 m. Has there been a survey and may we have an idea exactly where these canals are found? Which places have been identified for construction?

The Deputy Prime Minister: Mr Chairperson, under this scheme, there is a feeder canal from Rivière du Poste to Mare aux Vacoas which we have already addressed. The bidding document is at the CPB at the moment. We see them in one that we are looking into.

Mr Baloomoody: Therefore, an amount of Rs40 m was budgeted. May we know how much has been spent for the construction of new canals?

The Deputy Prime Minister: The cost will be Rs320 m. I'll look into how much will be spent.

Mrs Hanoomanjee: At page 207, *item 28223010 Capital Grant to CWA for the replacement of old and defective pipelines*, can I ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the localities have been chosen as a result of any survey which has been carried out or how was prioritisation been made?

The Deputy Prime Minister: We have extensively given information on all the areas in Mauritius where old pipes are being replaced. The main criteria is the water losses in the sector and as well as the state of the pipe and this has been decided technically.

Mr Uteem: On the same item of replacement of defective pipes, there is a capital grant and then there is a matching loan for CWA. When we look at page 203, it is intended to increase the number of defective pipelines to be replaced to 245 km - from the 60 km to 245 kilometres. May I know from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister then why are we reducing the budget allocated for replacement of old pipes?

The Deputy Prime Minister: Funds will be available as required, so we have to look into this problem, establish priorities to do the needful and then get funds. This is being looked into.

Mr Obeegadoo: On page 207, *item no. 31113002 Construction of Dams (b) Rivière des Anguilles Dam*, would the hon. Deputy Prime Minister give us some indication where things stand right now inasmuch as Rs360 m. are budgeted for next year? What can we expect to be achieved next year for the Rivière des Anguilles Dam?

Secondly, further down the line, *item 31113417 Upgrading of Flow Measuring Structures*. This is an important function, I take it.

The Chairperson: The question was asked and the answer had been given.

Mr Gungah: Mr Chairperson, same page, *item 31122999 Acquisition of Other Machinery and Equipment*. May I ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether tenders were

launched for the acquisition and whether he can submit a list of the machinery that has been purchased and the cost?

The Deputy Prime Minister: For Rivière des Anguilles, the dam capacity will be 40,000,000 m³ and annually, it is expected to be 50,000,000 m³. The status at the moment is consultancy services, design, review, construction, supervision and it is at the Central Procurement Board. The works are meant to start on December 2012 and completed in December 2015.

Mr Jugnauth: In regard to Jin Fei project, may we know when will all the infrastructural works in regard to water services be completed?

The Deputy Prime Minister: As I have said, it will not be for Jin Fei only, it will be for the area.

Mr Lesjongard: Mr Chairperson, I will go back to the same item, that is, on page 206, *item 28223010 Capital Grant to CWA for the replacement of old and defective pipelines*. For 2011, the amount earmarked was Rs155 m. and we had replaced 50 km of pipes. We have been told that there are some 2,000 km of pipes to be replaced and for 2012 the amount earmarked is Rs26 m. where we will be able to replace only 20 km of pipes and for the year 2013 it is a sum of Rs4 m. Can I ask the Deputy Prime Minister what is the time frame? Do we have a time frame or a target for the replacement of at least a good percentage of the pipes?

The Deputy Prime Minister: We are talking about grants. If the hon. Member looks at the other page he will find also loans. As I have said before, it will be made available as soon as we have decided on the priorities.

Mr Jhugroo: On the same item, can we have an update of the percentage completed in each case from (a) to (g), that is, from Camp Fouquereaux to Alma Pipeline and ending at Quartier Militaire to Mont Ida?

The Deputy Prime Minister: I have it here, but....

The Chairperson: The Deputy Prime Minister can circulate the answer.

Dr. Beebeejaun: I'll circulate it.

Mr Jugnauth: I come back again to the question I asked in regard to Jin Fei. The hon. Deputy Prime Minister has been saying that it is not only for Jin Fei, but also for the whole area. That is not the case because it is only for Riche Terre Jin Fei Development Zone. May I know when the infrastructural works in regard to water services will be completed?

The Chairperson: Hon. Ameer Meea, follow-up questions on the same item!

Mr Ameer Meea: Thank you Mr Chairperson. Concerning the Riche Terre Jin Fei Development Zone, may I know from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister what is the total loan that has been advanced to CWA for Jin Fei up to now and what are the terms and conditions related to that loan in terms of interest and repayment?

The Deputy Prime Minister: For the Jin Fei, the completion date is 2012, but I insist again it will be for the area as well when the project starts or develops. It will be for the area and beneficial to the area.

Mr Seeruttun: On page 206 under *item 28223010 (e) Beemanic Balisson Pipeline*, Some Rs12 m. have been earmarked in 2012. Will the Deputy Prime Minister inform the House when the work is expected to start and what is the completion date?

The Deputy Prime Minister: I think it is in the information that has been requested. We have asked for the whole list and provide the whole list.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: The information will be circulated.

Programme Code 443: Water Resources (Rs1,924,195,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 444: Sanitation was called.

Mr Bhagwan: Mr Chairperson, I refer to *Programme Code 444: Sanitation* on page 207, under *item 31113008 Construction of Wastewater Infrastructure – (a) Plaines Wilhems Sewerage Project*. The Plaines Wilhems Sewerage project is a good project. The Deputy Prime Minister mentioned - I was not in the House, unfortunately - one region, Mont Roches-Verger.

(Interruptions)

Why is hon. Abdullah Hossen replying for him? I know he wants to become Minister, one day he will become Minister!

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Hon. Patrick Assirvaden! You raised your hand, you were talking to this side of the House. I said at the beginning...

(Interruptions)

If you continue...

(Interruptions)

I saw you. You understand that. This applies to the other Members who provoke the hon. Member. I have said from the beginning that I don't want any remarks. If those people are feeling a bit tired, they can go out of the House. Carry on!

Mr Bhagwan: Plaines Wilhems Sewerage Project, unfortunately...

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: You continue again?

Mr Bhagwan: He is challenging you. Sir, can I know from the Deputy Prime Minister - unfortunately, I was not in the House for health problems - concerning Verger Bissambar for which I asked several Parliamentary Questions. Can at least the Deputy Prime Minister give us the assurance whether it is next year and how many houses? Secondly, concerning the west coast sewerage project, is the region at Albion, which is now *une région du littoral*, also forms part of the west coast sewerage project and also whether Flic en Flac, which is also a littoral region, is in that west coast project?

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Mr Chairperson, under *item 31113008 Construction of Wastewater Infrastructure*, a deep infrastructure rehabilitation in ex-CHA estates and low-cost housing, I would like to know if it is possible to have a list of estates where works have been completed and the targeted *cités* for next year? Then, concerning Baie du Tombeau and Pailles, I want to know where matters stand and finally *(i) Social Housing Projects* what are the regions concerned?

Mr Bodha: As regards the Grand'Baie Sewerage Project which dates back to, I think, six/seven years, we see that we still have Rs462 m. earmarked for 2013 and Rs32 m. for 2012. May I ask the Deputy Prime Minister where we are with this project?

The Deputy Prime Minister: Regarding the Grand'Baie Sewerage Project, at present, a topography survey is being carried out. Once this is decided, as I mentioned in my speech yesterday, we have to survey the topography first before we start works. This is where the topography stands.

(Interruptions)

About the Verger Bissambar, I am pleased to inform the Members that it will be for the next Budget.

(Interruptions)

Albion is part of the west coast.

Mr Baloomoody: Under the same item, I would like to join my friend, hon. Mrs Navarre-Marie. We do not have the real answer with regard to the Pailles-Guibies Sewerage Project in the area. May we know where matters stand and what is the time frame? We are planning to have this project completed with regard to Pailles-Guibies Sewerage Project.

Mr Gungah: On the same item, the Grand'Baie Sewerage Project, can the hon. Deputy Prime Minister inform the House about the percentage of households that have been connected with the Sewerage network in Grand'Baie?

Mr Nagalingum: On the same item, Mr Chairperson, can we know when the sewerage works will start at Hugnin Road?

The Deputy Prime Minister: Concerning the Pailles-Guibies Project, there are the consultancy services for the review of the design and the preparation of the tender document. There are 3,000 house connections and five kilometres trunk in the region of Pailles-Guibies and Camp Chapelon. The design has been submitted and in October 2011 tender documents for the works are under preparation.

Dr. Sorefan: May we know from the hon. Minister regarding the Plaines Wilhems Sewerage Project, as per the Director of Audit, there has been a huge claim of Rs284 m...

The Chairperson: No. the hon. Member cannot make a speech. He should put questions. He is not discussing the PAC Report. Hon. Jhugroo!

Mr Jhugroo: Concerning Plaines Wilhems Sewerage Project, can we know from the Deputy Prime Minister whether La Marie to La Louise and John Kennedy Road, La Croisée Diolle to Savoy form part of the Plaines Wilhems Sewerage Project and, if so, can we know when this will start? My second question is: why is it that there is a drastic decrease in the house service connections from Rs91 m. to Rs2 m?

The Deputy Prime Minister: The house service connection is being reviewed because it is getting more and more expensive and we have to control the expenses which are being reviewed. As to the Hugnin Road, there is some delay because of diversion, but it will be taken care of.

Mr Li Kwong Wing: Mr Chairperson, with regard to the Plaines Wilhems Sewerage project, the region of Mont Roches has been completed and there are only 40 households that need to be connected in Verger Bissambar. I just heard the Deputy Prime Minister saying that it

is going to be for next Budget. Does it mean next Budget 2013 or is it the next Budget 2012, because there are only 40 households that are left to be connected?

Mrs Hanoomanjee: Mr Chairperson, on page 207 under *item 31113008 Construction of Wastewater Infrastructure*, there are several projects here. Can we know whether at the level of the Ministry, there is a team of officers who supervise this work and before payment is effected whether they see that the work has been completed satisfactorily and what is the state of the roads, of the works that they leave?

The Deputy Prime Minister: I answered this yesterday that we are reviewing the way that the roads are reinstated. The Ministry certainly keeps an eye, but we get the report from the Board of the Wastewater Management Authority.

Mr Jugnauth: I heard the hon. Deputy Prime Minister saying that in regard to the house service connections, they are becoming more and more expensive. Then we see a lot of those sewerage projects and definitely there are going to be a lot more households to be connected. How are they going to be connected? What criteria are going to be used and who is going to pay for those connections?

The Deputy Prime Minister: We are looking at sewerage areas at the moment. This is the item – Sewerage Areas. The households should be connected once we decide on the mode of payment or of the new mode of payment.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, on page 207 regarding the wastewater infrastructure *item (i) Social Housing Project*, I do not see any budget allocation for the three coming years and we know that there is the Government policy for social housing. What are we putting here - because we add Rs10 m. for 2011 and nothing for the coming years? How are we going to deal with wastewater infrastructure for social housing projects?

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Hon. Uteem, let the hon. Minister answer?

The Deputy Prime Minister: It is being included in the *Social Housing Project* for the sum of Rs1.5 billion.

Mr Uteem: Mr Chairperson, under the same *item 31113008 (a) Plaines Wilhems Sewerage Project*, may I know from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister what measures are being taken at the level of the Wastewater Management Authority to reduce cost overrun? The cost has increased tremendously on this project.

The Deputy Prime Minister: I addressed this issue yesterday, and I said we are concerned about cost overrun because of lack of planning before we start. I said this is a problem that arose ten years ago, and we are reviewing the procedures.

Mr Ameer Meea: Mr Chairperson, with regard to house service connection, are we to understand that this very important social measure is being discontinued by the CWA?

The Deputy Prime Minister: Is the hon. Member talking about sewerage or water?

Mr Jhugroo: Mr Chairperson, I am still waiting for my answer regarding La Marie Road and John Kennedy Road.

The Deputy Prime Minister: Concerning La Marie Road and John Kennedy Road, this is being considered, Mr Chairperson.

Mr Baloomoody: Mr Chairperson, on page 207, as regards the last *item 31113408 Upgrading of Wastewater Infrastructure*, a sum of Rs125 m. was earmarked for this budget and we have budgeted Rs97 m. May I know from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister what is the percentage that has been used from this amount on this year's budget?

The Deputy Prime Minister: Mr Chairperson, it will be for the upgrading and rehabilitation of existing wastewater infrastructure, including treatment plants and pumping stations. What has been spent recently is on treatment plants in Vuillemin and Dubreuil, upgrading of MNA works. I will circulate it as it is a long reply.

Mr Ameer Meea: Mr Chairperson, please allow me to insist on the house service connection, because I did not get any reply from the Deputy Prime Minister. Can I know whether this important social measure is being discontinued by the Wastewater?

The Deputy Prime Minister: We have not stopped. We are putting it on hold until we review the criteria about costs.

Mr Bhagwan: Mr Chairperson, for Mont Roches, the hon. Deputy Prime Minister stated next budget. Is this for 2012 or 2013? Can the Deputy Prime Minister inform the House as to whether the capacity of the St Martin treatment plant for the Plaines Wilhems sewerage network is being increased just to cope with all the inflows of the new connected areas?

The Deputy Prime Minister: Mr Chairperson, the St Martin treatment plant was built before to make provision for the Plaine Wilhems sewerage area. As regards Verger Bissambar, I did inform the hon. Member that the topography is complex, but I will make sure that the houses are connected when this technical problem is sorted out.

Mr Jugnauth: Coming back to the household connection, since only a small amount is being budgeted and voted for next year, it is clear that Government is not going to pay for the connections. Can the hon. Deputy Prime Minister confirm who is going to pay for that? Is it going to be the household? It looks like!

The Deputy Prime Minister: The centrally managed fund will provide for the service. As I said, we are looking into it because there has been wastage in the way this is being implemented. We are reviewing the way it is being done.

Mr Obeegadoo: At page 207, under *item 311130008 Construction of Wastewater Infrastructure, (a) Plaines Wilhems Sewerage Project*, there is a very hot issue along Gustave Colin Street near the entrance of Cité Atlee. There is a major problem of overflowing of sewerage pipes which almost led to a public riot recently. I would like to know whether this issue is being addressed in the sums proposed to be spent for next year and, if not, whether there are any other regions of the town of Curepipe that are being catered for.

The Deputy Prime Minister: Mr Chairperson, the situation as described needs to be attended to as soon as possible and I will see to it that it is done.

Mr Ameer Meea: On the last line, *item 31113408 Upgrading of Wastewater Infrastructure*, may we know in what region is the wastewater infrastructure being upgraded?

Mr Gungah: The hon. Deputy Prime Minister has not replied to my question concerning the Grand' Baie sewerage project. I wanted to know the percentage of households that have been connected with the sewerage network. I also wanted to know whether this is a new project or an ongoing one.

The Deputy Prime Minister: The Grand' Baie sewerage project has already been done. This is an extension of the new one. I will provide the figures. When it comes to the question of upgrading of wastewater infrastructure, I have already replied and said that I would circulate it as it is a long reply.

Mr Uteem: On the *item 31111008 House Service Connections*, may I know from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister the number of people who applied for the grant and has not yet received it?

The Deputy Prime Minister: Roughly more than 250 to 300 have applied and are waiting for the scheme. As I have said, and I repeat, this is for already sewered areas.

Programme Code 444: Sanitation (Rs1,355,056,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 445: Radiation Protection was called.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, on page 203, regarding *SSI: Number of workers screened for radiation*, the number is 300. Do we have the number of workers who are exposed to radiation and what is the frequency of screening for a worker? How many workers have effectively been screened during 2011?

The Deputy Prime Minister: There are 500 potential workers exposed to radiation. This year 300 have been adequately screened and by next year all will be screened.

Mr Obegadoo: Mr Chairperson, I note that the only achievement of the service last year, according to page 199, is the promulgation of regulations. We are proposing to spend some Rs4 m. on some 14 staff members for this section. I would like to know specifically, apart from the screening of the workers to be completed, what this unit is meant to achieve in year 2012.

The Deputy Prime Minister: This unit visits hospitals and any place where there are sources of radiation to advise on security and to see that security norms are observed.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, in last year's budget, there was another service under this programme. It was inspection and radiation surveys carried out. But in this budget, I don't find this service. Is there any particular reason why we no longer have the service of inspection and radiation surveys, as was the case in previous projects?

The Deputy Prime Minister: This is being carried out all the time, Mr Chairperson. It is part of their work.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, there was a particular target last year. May we know how many such surveys have been carried out during this current year, because we did have a particular target?

Mr Bhagwan: Mr Chairperson, at page 208, *item 31122804 Acquisition of Laboratory Equipment*, we all know about this problem which occurred in Japan: cars coming from Japan with radiation. Can I ask the Deputy Prime Minister where matters stand and whether Government still bans second hand cars coming from Japan? Is radiation check still effected on all cars coming from Japan?

The Deputy Prime Minister: As far as I know, cars are being screened at source and issued with a certificate and screen again here when they come, on a sample basis, by the Radiation Protection Unit. I take this opportunity to say that they have done some very good work, Mr Chairperson.

Mr Bodha: The Nuclear Disaster in Japan highlighted the needs of this section. May I ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether he is satisfied with the resources as regards manpower? For example, for modern equipment I see that not much has been done. May we know whether he is satisfied with what we have and whether we should not do more as regards to human resources and technical equipment?

The Deputy Prime Minister: We have had an additional staff, but I must say that it is difficult to keep the technicians who come there because they have better offers elsewhere. We can review their terms and conditions of service.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, regarding the number of inspections and radiation surveys we had a target of 100 for this current year. Do we know how many there are and whether we have any projection for next year?

The Deputy Prime Minister: Inspections are being carried out and completed on a yearly basis. I will provide the information.

Programme Code 445: Radiation Protection (Rs11,048,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

The Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development – Programme Code 361 was called.

Mr Obeegadoo: One of the objectives as at page 216, *Sub-Programme 36102: Identifying and Developing New Growth Sectors and New Areas for Investment*, is to promote Mauritius as a well-regulated and reputable jurisdiction. I would like the hon. Minister to give us some enlightenment in the light of the proposed renegotiation of the double taxation treaty with India. What specific issues are to be addressed in the coming year?

Mr Duval: Mr Chairperson, generally speaking Mauritius has been improving its standing with regard to all the international agencies concerning these issues: combating money laundering and financing of terrorism. I must say that at the beginning of the year, we had a report, I think, from OECD and the law was passed concerning JBC 2 offshore companies. We are continually improving.

Mr Obeegadoo: There are some specific issues which I understand the Indian Authorities have raised. I am no specialist, contrary to my friend, but I understand that there are specific points which have been brought up. Is there a programme to address those issues this year, prior to beginning of renegotiation?

Mr Duval: Mr Chairperson, the renegotiation is being headed by my colleague the Minister of Foreign Affairs, but it is also a very technical and tricky issue. And I would rather keep it because of things happening at the end of the year. We will keep it not as confidential, but it is a very tricky issue and I think that it is not in the interest of everybody to ventilate it.

Mr Bhagwan: At page 228, under *item 28212019 Decentralised Cooperation Programme*, can the hon. Minister let us know how the programme is prepared, whether there is an organisation which is responsible for the implementation of the programme and the earmarking of projects? Which Authority or Department is responsible for this programme? Are local authorities benefitting from funds in the context of the implementation of this programme?

Mr Duval: Mr Chairperson, decentralisation – this is DCP 2; there was DCP 1 previously which had a bigger mandate. DCP 2 has a smaller and more restricted mandate, basically poverty reduction, etc. I think it deals specifically with the NGOs. It is under the Ministry of Finance because I am the national authorising officer.

Mr François: On the same *item 28212019*, at page 228, may I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister how much money is earmarked under this Decentralised Cooperation Programme (DCP) and what are the priority areas of it?

Mr Duval: It is Rs83 m. and it is there.

Mr François: May we know how much money is earmarked under the item for Rodrigues?

Mr Duval: I do not know, I will find out.

Mr Li Kwong Wing: At page 214, with regard to ‘grant funding from the European Union’, may we know what amount of grant is still available to draw for this Budget year, what is the balance that is left, because I know that it is an annual growth that is being received?

Mr Duval: Does the Member mean the budget support grant? I will get the information. Yes, there is money coming this year. I will get the exact figure for him, but it is a Budget documentation also.

Mr Bhagwan: *Under Sub-Programme 36102: Public Financial Management* at page 229 *item 26313064 National Productivity and Competitiveness Council*, we have heard that there are lots of problems; it is a real mess there. I will not mention names, but things are going to hell there. Has the hon. Minister been informed, and what immediate action he intends to take or he has already taken not only to put some order there - even the Prime Minister is involved in that

regarding the NPCC? Is there a new Board or an organisation set up for the credibility of the organisation?

Mr Duval: Mr Chairperson, as from next year's Budget it is being transferred from the Ministry of Business to the Ministry of Finance. I am not going to make any specific comment on persons because that would not be right. But we, obviously, want the NPCC to be as effective as possible in increasing productivity.

Mrs Labelle: On page 228, under *item 22120 Fees*, of which we have the Capacity Building Programme, may I know from the hon. Minister to whom the Capacity Building Programme is intended and whether this will be outsourced?

Mr Duval: In fact, it concerns technical expertise that is provided to the Ministry of Finance generally. It is particularly to reinforce the Programme Based Budget.

Mr Jhugroo: On page 216, *Sub-Programme 36102: Identifying and Developing New Growth Sectors and New Areas for Investment – promotion of investment through opening space for the private sector*, can we have some more clarification regarding this promotion of the opening of space?

Mr Duval: Mr Chairperson, I think we have given quite a lot of publicity to what we are doing concerning this investment, etc. in the various activities like *Domaine les Pailles, les casinos*, etc. I think that is what it relates to.

Mr Uteem: On page 229, under *item 26313004 Board of Investment*. May I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister when will the Board of Investment publish its audited accounts?

Mr Duval: I will find out whether they are late and what is happening.

Mr Obeegadoo: On page 228, under *item 22120 Fees*. I have a couple of questions. Would the Minister generally tell us what is included under this item? It is going from Rs12.6 in 2011 to Rs27.3 in the next coming year. Specifically, I want to know whether all matters pertaining to consultancies, surveys, research are included under this specific item.

Secondly, on the very same issue, if I may seek the Minister's guidance, the Monetary Policy Committee. Do I take it this is something covered here in the Budget of the Ministry of Finance or is it completely separate under the Central Bank?

Thirdly, I would like to ask the Minister about the research function of his Ministry. We know that when the Ministry of Planning was fused with Finance, there was a core of researchers. I note that further on when we come to the post within the Ministry, there is

reference to *Lead Analysts* at page 235. Is this the same thing? Do we have a dedicated core of researchers; if so, where are they in the Budget?

Mr Duval: Mr Chairperson, the total grant for 2011 is expected to be around Rs2.5 billion. As far as the fees are concerned, it is moving from Rs12 m. to Rs27 m. It says here: Fees to Chairman and Members of Boards and Committees, PPP Committee: Rs535,000; local fees for training, University of Technology, etc., for officers of store and finance cadre: Rs12 m. and B.Sc. level courses. Refund of subscription fees to professional bodies: Rs150,000 and the main increase is the Capacity Building Programme of Rs14.7 m.

Mr Li Kwong Wing: At page 228, under *item Decentralised Cooperation Programme*, there is a sum of Rs83 m., which has just been earmarked for this item. Is this a transfer from the National Empowerment Fund back to the Ministry of Finance because it used to be under Ministry of Finance? Can he give details on that programme and what are the sub-items under that Programme?

Under *item 31132105 e-Projects*, can we know whether it is an ongoing e-project and what is the status of implementation because it seems that the amount earmarked will stop in year 2012? Can we also know what the progress is?

Mr Duval: Mr Chairperson, this is DCP II. DCP I ended, I think, about a year ago or so. That was under the Ministry of Finance under the NEF which was under the Ministry of Finance. For some time, it went under the Ministry of Social Integration and back to the Ministry of Finance because I am the national authorising officer. I will get the information on the e-Projects that the hon. Member is mentioning. There is no list of programmes, there are objectives. As I mentioned to hon. Bhagwan just now, the main objectives have been restricted and it is basically poverty alleviation.

Mr Bhagwan: Mr Chairperson, I have two items. One concerns the Board of Investment. We have seen in the past that the Board of the Board of Investment has not been meeting according to the legislation as prescribed, at least, once monthly. Can the hon. Minister check and later let us know whether during the past month, the Board of the Board of Investment has met according to the legislation passed for the Board of Investment.

Secondly, concerning the National Committee on Corporate Governance, can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister inform us, who are the members sitting on that committee and whether it is performing? Is it the same guys, *donneurs de leçons* - I can say - who are sitting on this National

Committee on Corporate Governance? Is it the guys from the private sector, who would teach us good lessons? Can the hon. Minister inform the House accordingly whether he has a representative of the Ministry of Finance on the Board of the National Committee on Corporate Governance?

Mr Duval: On the Board of Investment, I will provide the information as to its last Board meetings. Concerning the National Committee on Corporate Governance, I think that the Head is Mr Tim Taylor. I can give the Member eventually the names of the members later on if he would like.

As far as the e-Projects are concerned, I will lay a copy on the Table of the Assembly.

(Interruptions)

I will find out and let the Member know. On the e-Projects, I will table the information.

Mr Baloomoody: If I may come back to that Board of Investment. We know that they have not published their account yet, and there have been questions in regard to the activities and missions. Can I ask the hon. Minister - because we are voting quite a substantial sum of money - if he does not have the information, he can circulate at least a list of all the missions of the Board of Investment and who participated in that mission and what has been the outcome, and, of course, the cost of each and every mission?

Mr Duval: I will provide the information. We have just the total figure. I asked them this morning, they have not prepared it yet. The outcome is more difficult, but I'll provide the information on the missions. No problem!

Mr Uteem: Still under the item of Board of Investment, may I know from the hon. Minister of Finance -

- (i) what is the amount budgeted for promotion of financial services, the offshore sector, and
- (ii) whether the expenses of the two roving ambassadors to Africa will be assumed within the Budget of Board of Investment?

Mr Duval: I think the roving ambassadors probably will be where they should be.

As far as the financial services are concerned, there is no specific amount earmarked. We are very active and we will do the maximum. In fact, there is a mission going today to India.

Mr Ameer Meea: Concerning the e-projects, can I ask the hon. Minister of Finance where matters stand in relation to all the three projects mentioned?

Mr Duval: Mr Chairperson, I said I am circulating the information.

The Chairperson: Yes. Hon. Li Kwong Wing!

Mr Li Kwong Wing: Mr Chairperson, firstly with regard to Board of Investment again, will the hon. Minister confirm whether the overseas branches of BOI have been closed down and whether there is any intention to have any further overseas units?

Secondly, when was the last Annual Report published and is it true that there are 4,000 copies of the last Annual Report stuck up in the free zone and not being distributed?

Thirdly, what is the proportion of the expenses that is devoted to marketing and campaign overseas because we have a provision of more than Rs500 m. provided under the Resilience Fund for marketing plus Rs385 m. for promotion of marketing under Mauritius Tourism Destination? So, how much is additionally provided for marketing and overseas travel and allowances? Can we have a breakdown of all the fees and allowances paid to the individual directors and advisers or other external consultants?

Mr Duval: Firstly, Mr Chairperson, I must say that the Board of Investment is doing a crucial job in Mauritius. It is important that we should say so. The next thing that is important, in fact, is that when I took over the Ministry of Tourism, five or six years old, one of the problems that we had with the previous Government is that the Ministry of Tourism had only money to pay for its fixed charges and no money to pay for activities at all. What happened then? Tourism slumped to about 2% growth only. Two years later, I was provided with the money and we reached 14% growth. This is the importance of providing money for promotion. It is not just a question of thinking because you are giving money for promotion and somehow you are wasting it. Often, it is not waste, and it is not right that you should always take that line as if there is some sort of prejudice against that. I think it is money that is being well-spent and needs to be spent for the promotion of Mauritius.

(Interruptions)

I am giving the information because it is not the first time that the hon. Member is raising it. It is as if there is something to hide; there is nothing to hide.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Let the Minister answer!

Mr Duval: The provision here is Rs158 m. and there is a breakdown. I can provide the breakdown as to what are the expenses and how much is going to be promotion expenses. I say

again, money is needed; there was a mission that went to China about a week ago; there is a mission which is going to India today and it is important, Mr Chairperson, that the voice of Mauritius be heard overseas and we are going to continue along that line. I just gave the information, Mr Chairperson, that there is a sum of Rs58 m. in the vote of the BOI for promotion, but if more is needed, it will be obtained from the National Resilience Fund.

Mr Bodha: Let me come again to the Board of Investment. We have a capital grant of Rs7 m., may I know what is the purpose of that capital grant?

Mr Duval: It is to do with IT equipment, Mr Chairperson. All of it is IT, in fact.

Mr Li Kwong Wing: Will the hon. Minister, therefore, table all the information that we asked for because we are not questioning that he is providing the sum. This is performance budgeting; we want to know the performance evaluation. So, if we can have all the information that will be useful.

The Chairperson: No speech! The hon. Member is happy, he got the information.

Mr Duval: Mr Chairperson, I will table the information. But the only thing I am waiting for are the accounts. I am waiting like you as to what happened to the account. I am hopefully waiting for my colleague to provide me with the information, as we go along and I will give it to you.

Programme Code 361: Policy and Strategy for Economic Growth and Social Progress (Rs592,425,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 362: Public Financial Management was called.

Mr Bhagwan: May I know who is heading the GRA these days?

Mr Duval: There is an officer who is heading the GRA. They were trying to recruit someone, but they did not find anybody suitable. So, there is a temporary officer in charge. I will get the name for the hon. Member.

Mrs Navarre-Marie: On page 229, *item 22040 Office Equipment and Furniture*, we are asked to vote a sum of Rs600,000 compared to Rs40,000. I would like to know how does the hon. Minister account for such a tremendous increase and whether there are to be new officers?

Mr Duval: Mr Chairperson, there are sundries, pieces of furniture.

Mr Baloomoody: I refer to *Assessment Review Committee* on page 236 under *Code 21 Compensation to Employees*. Can I know from the hon. Minister what are the vacancies that

exist? I think there is the Deputy Chairperson now and there are two vacancies. This is creating a lot of backlog.

Mr Duval: There are vacancies and we are about to fill them.

Mr Li Kwong Wing: Mr Chairperson, under *Item 22120 Fees*, there is a provision of Rs6 m. for resource mobilisation. Can we know what kind of resource mobilisation is involved and whether ...

The Chairperson: On which page?

Mr Li Kwong Wing: Under *item 22120 Fees* under *Sub-Programme 36205 Resource Mobilisation and Financial Re-engineering* at page 230, there is a provision of Rs6m. Can we know for what purpose these fees are going to be paid and whether there is any tender exercise or any public invitation before we allocate these fees?

Mr Obeegadoo: At page 230, *item 26323043 Mauritius Revenue Authority*, of course, very important function, but these days the MRA keeps making the headlines because of the state of bad industrial relations there. I would like to know, being given the increase we are asked to vote, whether this matter is being addressed so that there are no longer such issues in the MRA and it can do its job properly.

Mr Duval: Mr Chairperson, I understand there is a salary review going on which will sort out these issues. Concerning *item 322120 Fees*, provision made for payment of fees for training and fees to resident Adviser under the Technical Assistance Grant from ADB for debt management capacity building project.

Mr Uteem: On page 229, *item 21110, Personal Emoluments*, I note that there is a substantial decrease by Rs4 m. in emoluments whereas there is actually two additional staff that are being recruited. May I know the reason for that?

Mrs Hanoomanjee: Mr Chairperson, on page 230, *item 26323043 Mauritius Revenue Authority*, I see there is a capital grant to Mauritius Revenue Authority for a provision of Rs45 m. which has been made. Can we know for which projects specifically?

Mr Duval: Basically, it is for IT - Rs56 m. for Integrated Tax Administration System; SIT: Rs12 m.; 5 vehicles: Rs3 m.; equipment: Rs5 m., maintenance of ICT equipment: Rs8 m., Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery: Rs11 m., acquisition of drugs and chemical detection devices: Rs2.5 m. and hence a set of security infrastructure of Rs1 m. at new Customs House, upgrade of IT Infrastructure again Rs1 m., acquisition of some 5000 server IT: Rs9.5 m.,

CMS2 application, enhancement and upgrade: Rs2 m., revamping of website - IT again: Rs1 m. I can circulate it if the hon. Member wants.

Mr Bhagwan: I'll come under the Mauritius Revenue Authority. We have no problem with the organisation, the Chairperson and the Managing Director. The problem is that we have people at the MRA who act as Gestapo. I think paying tax is ...

The Chairperson: No! Now we are discussing policy ...

Mr Bhagwan: I am coming to facts.

The Chairperson: No, the hon. Member should come to the item.

Mr Bhagwan: Can the hon. Minister inform the House whether sufficient funds are being given for financial facilities to this organisation to catch the big sharks - those people who are accumulating wealth ...

(Interruption)

The hon. Minister should look at himself. He should have his own problem, not my problem! He has a lot of problems these days! Big sharks which have accumulated wealth and we see big Maserati and what whatever type of cars – Jaguar - and buildings and so on. Can the hon. Minister inform the House what action his Ministry is taking with the Board of the MRA to have all these big sharks be caught in the *filet*?

Mr Duval: Mr Chairperson, I must say that year in year out, MRA is improving its collection. Not only are we getting more money because of growth in the economy, but the collection also is improving and this year we have a Voluntary Disclosure Scheme. I am sure that we would all like to see the MRA improve its catching of big sharks and it has not fallen in deaf ears.

Mr Jhugroo: I refer to *item 22900922 conferences/Seminars/Workshops: Global Forum on Circular Migration*. In 2011 there was no sum earmarked and we see that there is a sum of Rs6 m. earmarked for 2012. Can we have some more clarification regarding this item?

Mr Duval: Mr Chairperson, we are hoping to host the *Global Forum on Circular Migration* next year and this is a provision for that. It should be a good thing, it encourages Mauritians to work overseas and eventually obtain training and the expertise and return to Mauritius.

Mr Li Kwong Wing: With regard to Mauritius Revenue Authority, we are voting almost Rs1 billion for this department. When we have had a look at the last annual report there is less

and less data being given in this annual report. If we are going to evaluate the performance of the Authority with a budget of \$1 billion, the least we would expect is that in the annual report, there is a whole list of statistics and data of the performance and collections, the categories of people who are contributing to the types of tax so that we can have an analysis to see whether the tax collection, administration is efficient and performing. I can't find it in the annual report.

Mr Duval: I can pass it to the MRA and see whether they can improve it. But it is quite a thick report, I had a look at it.

Mr Jugnauth: In regard to the Global Forum on Circular Migration, may I know how much money we are going to receive as foreign contribution? I had a feeling that most of it was being paid for from overseas, but I will check.

Mr Uteem: In relation to the grant to the Mauritius Revenue Authority, may I know from the hon. Minister of Finance, the number of penal cases prosecuted by the MRA - if he has this information - and secondly, the amount of bonus given for customs and other undervalue recovered by the officers of the MRA?

Mr Duval: Mr Chairperson, I will ask the MRA to provide the information. I don't have it here.

Mr Seeruttun: At page 230, the last line, *item 22900922 Conference/Seminars/Workshops*, could we have an idea of how many Mauritians have taken advantage of the circular migration project in terms of how many have gone abroad and been under that scheme?

Mr Duval: May I suggest to the hon. Member - this falls under the NEF and they will provide the information as it goes along. The Forum is here because it's Global Circular Migration but actually, sending people overseas is under the NEF. But there has been quite a few people who have left; quite a few hundred people have gone.

The Chairperson: Hon. Quirin!

Mr Quirin: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. At page 230, *item 21110 Personal Emoluments: Sub-Programme 36202*, there is a decrease compared to 2011 and, on the other side, *item 21111 Other Staff Costs*, there is an increase. Can the hon. Minister of Finance and Economic Development explain why it is so?

Mr Duval: I am waiting for the information. Mr Chairperson, if I may provide the information on the BOI; Annual Reports are published every year in accordance with the

Investment Promotion Act and the last report was for the year 2010. So, it is year 2011, I don't think we are late if it's 2010 that was published. I am also informed that the Board Meetings are held according to the provisions of the Investment Promotion Act and since January 2011, four Board Meetings have been held.

Programme Code 362: Public Financial Management (Rs1,157,939,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 364: Procurement Advisory and Contract Award Services was called.

Mr Obeegadoo: Again, I seek the guidance of the hon. Minister, I see at the bottom of page 231, a reference to *Computerisation of Central Procurement Board*. Is this where I may raise issues pertaining to the Central Procurement Board?

Mr Duval: There is a separate programme for the Central Procurement Board. Yes, the hon. Member can do it here.

Mr Obeegadoo: We have been made aware of the number of decisions of the Board which are overturned on appeal and I would like to know, in terms of financial provisions for next year, what measures the hon. Minister is proposing to take to shore up capacity within the Procurement Board to avoid applicants having to go on to appeal to obtain fairness and justice?

Mr Duval: All I can say on this issue, Mr Chairperson, is that we have a new Chairman there now, previously from the Public Procurement Policy Unit, Mr Beeharry. He is an ex-civil servant and he has a lot of experience and I think also that some members have been appointed. Hopefully, if it was a people problem, that would be sorted out and if there is anything to do, obviously, we are keen ourselves to ensure that the Procurement Policy is as fluid as possible; as you know, there is a White Paper that has been published and that has to be acted upon.

Mr Bhagwan: The hon. Minister just informed us that there is a new Board. From what we have heard in Parliament there has been a lot of issues which have not been given consideration, a lot of projects which are there and waiting for approval. Can the hon. Minister give directives to the new Board?

Mr Duval: I think there is a new person there. He should be allowed to look at it and I am not sure even if I can give directives there, but I have taken note of what the hon. Member has said.

Mr Bodha: Mr Chairperson, at page 231, regarding *Fees*, we have a decrease from Rs18.3 m. to Rs14.2 m., does that mean that we are going to have less meetings of this contract award services?

Mr Li Kwong Wing: At page 231, Mr Chairperson, *item 31132103 e-Business Plan-Procurement*, can we have more details about this e-business plan, whether the contract has been awarded? Then, if we look at the items under *Sub-Programme 36402: Contract Award Services*, *the item 22030 Rent*, the rent is Rs4.5 m., but *item 22060 Maintenance* of the building, I suppose, is Rs2.6 m. So, the maintenance is more than 50% of the rent. Can we have an explanation why it is so? Then, under *Fees* there are Rs14 m. fees under *item 22120* Rs14.2m. fees that are being paid. What type of fees are they and is there any sort of competitive bidding for the services for which fees are paid? Lastly, we have a social benefits in cash. Why should there be any social benefits in cash paid in this department for contract award?

Mr Duval: It's not in cash. These are gratuities that are given to advisors, to people on contract, I understand; I am providing the other information. I need some time; there are five questions.

Provision for payment of fees to evaluators and consultancy services, local and foreign: Rs14 m.; fees for training of staff and appropriate fees: Rs350 m.; inspection and audit fees Rs100 m. These are not ongoing contracts. These are what they are expecting to pay next year. The maintenance is Rs2.6 m., for building: Rs100,000, plant and equipment: Rs200,000, vehicles: Rs412,000, IT equipment: Rs1.9 m., and furniture: Rs50,000.

Programme Code 364: Procurement Advisory and Contract Award Services (Rs103,138,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

The Chairperson: I will suspend for one hour and fifteen minutes.

At 12.57 p.m., the sitting was suspended.

On resuming at 2.21 p.m with Mr Speaker in the Chair.

Mr Duval: Can I table some of the information requested, please?

The Chairperson: Yes, please!

Mr Duval: Concerning the list of missions of BOI, the amounts earmarked for Rodrigues on DCP II, the composition of the Board of the National Community on Corporate

Governance, the circular migration seminar, the Ag. Chief Executive of the Gambling Regulatory Authority and the Intangible Fixed Asset projects, I am tabling the information.

Mr Obeegadoo: Since, the hon. Minister is kind enough to table that information, will he also provide us with the composition of the Central Procurement Board and the qualification of members in good time?

Mr Duval: If I am not mistaken, there was a Parliamentary Question last week or the week before. But anyway I will table the information.

Programme Code 365: Government Accounting and Payment System was called.

Mr Li Kwong Wing: Mr Chairperson, concerning Programme Code 365, can the hon. Minister give us some information about the rent which has increased from Rs 7m. to Rs 7.4m., the reason for the increase and where the building is located? Then, in respect to Programme 365, *item 22060 : Maintenance*, there has been an increase of almost Rs 4m. from Rs16.6 m. to Rs 20.5m. Can we have some explanation on what is the reason of the increase, please?

Mr Duval: Mr Chairperson, for rent, provisions are made for the renting of Rabadia Building, Voucher Room, Farquhar Street, Flacq Cash Office, Pamplémousses Cash Office and Voucher Room. I think the increase is a normal increase which is due to inflation. Nothing else! As far as maintenance is concerned, again it is a bit of IT, Mr Chairperson. Plant and equipment: Rs100,000, motor vehicles: Rs 100,000, IT hardware: Rs 20m. I think they put the payment for **Oracle** and technical support. That is worth Rs 15m.

Mr Nagalingum: Under *item 26210: Contribution to International Organisation*, can we have some information about the budget.

Mr Duval: It is to the *Association Internationale des Services du Tresor*, Mr Chairperson.

Mr Ameer Meea: Mr Chairperson, the amount of Rs 5m. for *e-Payment Project*, can we have some more details on this project?

Mr Duval: It is all through the various programmes. The hon. Member will see that the Ministry of Finance is putting through the e-Project, e-Payment, e-Receipt. That includes all the programmes.

Mr Nagalingum: Can we know who is implementing these projects?

Mr Duval: They pay by internet, that's what it is.

Programme Code 365: Government Accounting and Payment System (Rs97,556,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 366: Provision of Statistics was called.

Mr Obeegadoo: On page 232, *item Studies and Surveys*, I note that we had a very important sum of Rs 176m. budgeted for 2011. I would like to know how much of that amount was effectively utilised and to what end, and why it is being slashed to Rs 43m. for next year? Under the same item, I would put the question under the vote of Director of Statistics, will the hon. Minister tell us whether provision is being made next year for alignment of the indicators used in different areas with what pertains internationally, in education, for instance, that remains a major problem reconciling our approach to internationally accepted classifications?

Mr Baloomoody: Under *item 22120: Fees*, for next year we have an increase of at least Rs11m. May we know for what specific services this fee is?

Mr Duval: Mr Chairperson, concerning studies and survey, the large amount last year was for housing and population census. A sum of Rs161m. was provided. I do not have the actual figure of how much was spent, but if the hon. Member needs that, I can provide that figure. We are actually standardising with the SDDS. If I get more information I will give that to him. On the fees, they are fees to Chairman and members of the Board and Committees of the Statistic Board: Rs 1.5m. against Rs500,000 last year. Fees for training: Rs 2.1m. against Rs1.5m. last year. Fees to consultants for training of staff for Statistical Capacity Building - that's a grant from ADB - Rs 8m. The other one is capacity building programme: Rs 2m. All that take us to the sum of Rs13.6m.

Programme Code 366: Provision of Statistics (Rs146,240,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 367: Valuation of Immovable Properties was called.

Mr Bhagwan: Yes, Mr Chairperson, I will take more specifically page 240, *Programme 367: Valuation of Immovable Properties, item 260088 Director Valuation and Real Estate Consultancy Services*. I mean the Chief Examiner Evaluator. Mr Chairperson, we all know what has happened to that gentleman and to that post which has been discredited. I would like to move as per Standing Order Section 73(7) on page 46. I read –

“Any Member may move for an amendment to reduce by Rupees – I am moving for Rs 1 - the sum to be allotted for a programme, in respect to the sub programme of item of expenditure as the case may be in relation to the programme. “

Mr Chairperson, being given that the holder of that post who has been suspended and who has been involved in all sorts of private practices which Government has given a lot of replies here, I think it will be a shame for us to have a vote on this item. I am making a motion, personally, Mr Chairperson, that the salary of the Director be reduced by Rs1 as per the Standing Order Section 73(7) *parce qu'il a été inculpé et fait discrédit au service civil*. Can the motion be seconded by hon. Obeegadoo? I move for the motion that the salary be reduced.

Mr Obeegadoo: Can I second the motion, Mr Chairperson, on the ground that the Re1 can be used for medical treatment for loss of memory as well?

(Interruptions)

Mr Duval: Mr Chairperson, on the actual spending on the census, which was asked in the previous vote, I just provide that information. The actual spending is Rs149.2 m.

As far as the Director of Valuation is concerned, Mr Chairperson, our view on this side of the House is that the person has not been convicted; he is presently interdicted on full pay and we should wait for the court, for the justice system to decide. Someone cannot be sanctioned without being heard – say, by the House or whatever - and he cannot be also sanctioned without having gone through the justice system, Sir.

Mr Baloomoody: Can I ask the hon. Minister for what issue he has been interdicted? Especially he has been interdicted with pay, can we know for how long we are going to pay?

The Chairperson: No, the question is a hypothetical one. How can the hon. Minister tell for how long he will be suspended?

Mr Baloomoody: Why is it that disciplinary action has not been initiated against him?

Mr Duval: Mr Chairperson, he is interdicted and it is for the PSC to take disciplinary action. I think it is following some sort of inquiry concerning complaints from independent valuers outside.

Mr Bhagwan: Nous avons tous été témoins à travers des réponses aux questions parlementaires comment il n'avait pas le droit d'effectuer des travaux à titre privé. *Just to substantiate my motion, this is one of the aspects*. Je dis cela pour la crédibilité du service civil. On ne peut pas accepter que notre service civil ait des gens corrompus de ce genre.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: The word that has been used is for somebody who is not a Member of the House. I have said in my ruling that the hon. Member takes his responsibility in making such a statement. I am sorry, I cannot prevent him.

Mr Bodha: Of course, we will support the motion. May I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether the case has been referred to the PSC and the interdiction has been decided by the PSC?

The Chairperson: Yes, he said so.

Mr Bodha: Can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister tell us what is going to happen from thereon?

The Chairperson: No, he cannot answer for the PSC.

Question put on motion.

The Chairperson: The Noes have it.

Motion defeated.

Mrs Labelle: On this Programme 367...

The Chairperson: The motion was defeated. I thought that Members had no questions. I just looked around and there was no Member standing up.

Mrs Labelle: I have additional questions with your permission, Mr Chairperson, on this.

The Chairperson: Carry on!

Mrs Labelle: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Regarding the emoluments of high officers in the Department, I take it is a full-time job. Following PQs, we know the number of valuations that a person who is on a full-time basis has done; a list of valuations being paid. Is this the common practice? Are we going with the same practice or are we going to limit the number of surveys that a full-time person can do?

Mr Duval: The House may note that it was before, of course, my joining the Ministry. But even before I came, the system was changed and these valuers were requested to ask for a specific permission to undertake private work. I understand that nobody has been given permission to do so.

Mr Li Kwong Wing: With regard to *item 22030 Rent*, if we look at the year 2012, there is an increase of Rs1 m. in the rent for a complement of 250 people, whilst the provision for Statistical department is half that amount, that is, Rs9m. for more than 250 people. There is

almost twice the value of the rent which has increased by another Rs1 m. for a department which has fewer staff than a big department like the Statistical department. I find this to be very, very exaggerated. Can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister give us some clarification as to why so much rent is being paid? Because there is excess vacancy from what it is.

Mr Duval: Mr Chairperson, it is factual. It is a national amount. It is being provided for 3,000 square metres at Ebène at the rate Rs1,450,000 per month. There is an increase of 10% provided as from April 1992. It is at Ebène; I think it is a new building.

Mr Seeruttun: Mr Chairperson, under *Item 22010 Cost of Utilities*, I can see that the amount earmarked has more than doubled in 2012. Would the hon. Vice-Prime Minister inform the House what are the items within that budget vote?

Mr Duval: Mr Chairperson, in fact, it is for electricity. I think there is more electricity now with the new building at Ebène. That has gone up from Rs1.6 m. provision to Rs2.2m. this year, but a lot of it also has to do with the rental of the fibre optic line which, I think, is costing nearly Rs100,000 a month. So, there are two sides to it.

Mr Baloomoody: Let me come back to the Supervision Officer. We know that now he had been interdicted. Is he allowed to do private practice while being interdicted?

Mr Duval: I have no idea.

Mr Ameer Meea: Mr Chairperson, on the *item Rent* to the tune of Rs17 m., may we know who is the owner of the space that is being rented?

Mr Duval: I will ask for this information.

Programme Code 367: Valuation of Immovable Properties (Rs85,983,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 368: Regulatory framework of Companies was called.

Mr Baloomoody: With regard to compensation for employees, can I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether the post of Deputy Registrar of Companies will be filled? Year in year out we say that we are still looking for *l'oiseau rare*. We know the workload at that Registry now.

Mr Uteem: In relation to compensation to employees, may I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether provision is being made for the setting up of the Registrar of Partnership, in accordance with the Limited Partnership Act that has just been voted?

Mr Duval: Yes, there is provision. At least, additional amounts have been voted for this, putting into practice this new law. The owner of the building for the Valuation Division is Mr Chan Sui Ko.

Mr Nagalingum: Regarding *item 31132401 Upgrading of ICT Infrastructure*, can we know what firm has got this contract?

Mr Uteem: On the same item, may I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister when will the online registration of companies and partnership come into effect?

Mr Duval: Mr Speaker, Sir, in fact, that is to do with the upgrading of the ICT infrastructure for which we are getting, I believe, 50% grant from the Investment Climate Facility for Africa. This is ongoing. Hopefully, it will be this year. We have just agreed on the terms, I don't have an exact date.

For the Deputy Registrar of Companies, I am told that no provision is being made for the time being. I think, at least, for the e-filing, it is State Informatics Limited that had got that particular contract.

Mr Ameer Meea: Mr Chairperson, on the item rent where Rs70 m. is earmarked, would the hon. Minister of Finance consider moving all the offices of the Valuation Office to other Government premises like all the money has been invested in the Infinity Tower. Instead of paying rent, would the hon. Prime Minister consider moving this office to the Infinity Tower so as to save up taxpayers' money?

Mr Duval: I mean there is no reason to target this particular Valuation Department.

(Interruptions)

Let me just finish giving the explanation. There are tens of departments which are in rented places everywhere in Port Louis and Ebène. It was before I came that they went to Ebène; so I am not responsible for that. As far as the Infinity Tower is concerned, I understand it's already being taken up.

Mr Seeruttun: On page 233, under *item 31132401 Upgrading of ICT Infrastructure*, since it is an intangible asset, does that mean that it relates to software and licences?

Mr Duval: Yes, it is software.

Mr Li Kwong Wing: Mr Chairperson, there is so much that has been provided for rent for all the offices of the Ministry of Finance and since, under the Stimulus Package, the Ministry of Finance has bought Infinity Tower which is still lying vacant today, because the refurbishing

has not been completed, it is totally vacant, can't we at least move out of the Ministry of Finance Department into Infinity Tower, make it the Ministry of Finance House under the Stimulus Package?

Mr Duval: Mr Chairperson, at short notice, I cannot reply as to whether Infinity Tower is empty or full or what is being done. If the Member would like to ask me a question, I will do, but they will agree that we need to rationalise all the offices that are being rented here, there and everywhere. That is agreed. I cannot answer offhand for Infinity Tower.

Programme Code 368: Regulatory Framework of Companies (Rs100,425,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 369: Registration of Deeds and Conservation of Mortgages was called.

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, on page 234, under *item Nos. 31132 Intangible Fixed Assets and 31132401- Upgrading of ICT* respectively, we are proposing to invest huge sums next year, that is, Rs75 m., for the upgrading of ICT. Can we safely expect that, at the end of 2012, we will have a fully computerised registry?

Mr Duval: Hopefully, Mr Chairperson, this is all to do with speeding up the registration, transfer of property, etc. and I think also connected with the LAVIMS project. Now, this is being financed 50% by the Investment Climate Facility for Africa. Hopefully, we are planning to have it all completed in 2012.

Mr Obeegadoo: So, the register of mortgages will be fully computerised online?

Mr Duval: I understand so.

Mr Uteem: On page 234, under *item 21 Compensation of Employees*, being given that the Conservator of Mortgages has to interpret the law, is provision being made for any legal adviser to be attached to the office of the Conservator of Mortgages?

Mr Duval: I'll look into that, Mr Chairperson.

Dr. Sorefan: Under *item 22060 Maintenance*, may I know from the hon. Minister whether this will take into consideration the bad state of the Registrar General's Office?

Mr Duval: In fact, the registration of deeds online is for 2014, I am told, not 2012. I don't know for legal advisers, if I knew I would have replied.

With regard to maintenance side, the breakdown is for buildings, plant and equipment. It is only Rs103,000 for buildings, so no major repairs are going to be done.

Mr Uteem: Being given that the Conservator of Mortgages relates to collection of registration duties, is provision also being made to extend the opening hours for payment of registration duties?

Mr Duval: We are looking at the whole question of Saturday working, Mr Chairperson.

Programme Code 369: Registration of Deeds and Conservation of Mortgages (Rs 140,068,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping - Programme 321: policy and strategy development for public infrastructure, land transport and maritime services was called.

Dr. Sorefan: On page 255, under item No. 26313010 Current Grant - Construction Industry Development Board. The sum has drastically been reduced from Rs6 m. to Rs4.4 m. May we know the reason thereof? Can we know who is the Chief Executive Officer, the Chairman of the Board and if the financial report has been tabled in this Assembly?

Mr Bachoo: The grant has been limited to Rs4.4 m. because the CIDB is supposed to generate income for itself according to the Act. All those who will be registered as contractors will have to contribute and, as far as the Chief Executive is concerned, the post is still vacant. There were advertisements, nobody responded. We are still looking for that rare bird.

The Chairperson: The report?

Mr Bachoo: I have to check the report.

Mr Obeegadoo: On page 254, under Programme Code 321: Policy and Strategy Development for Public Infrastructure, Land Transport and Maritime Services, if I may seek the Minister's guidance, is it where the Road Development Authority would arise?

Mr Bachoo: No, Mr Chairperson. The hon. Member has to be patient. The final report is not yet submitted. It is being prepared and will be submitted in 2012.

Mr Uteem: On page 255, item 28223990 Obligations following Winding up of the Development Works Corporation, may I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether the Corporation has been fully wound up and all outstanding amounts have been paid?

Mr Bachoo: The answer is in the positive, yes.

Mr Baloomoody: On the same page, under item 22120 Fees, can we know what other services are included in the fees other than the capacity building programme?

Mr Bachoo: That concerns the fees to assessors, fees for training and refund of subscription fees to professional bodies.

Mr Baloomoody: May we know who are the professional bodies mentioned?

Mr Bachoo: I'll give that information.

Programme Code 321: Policy and strategy development for public infrastructure, land transport and maritime services (Rs 152,769,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 322: Construction and Maintenance of Government Buildings and Other Assets was called.

Dr. Sorefan: At page 256 under *item 22060 Maintenance*, Mr Chairperson, may I know from the hon. Minister which building was maintained and which will be maintained during this year and also next year?

Mr Bachoo: These are maintenance of all the MPI buildings and Government quarters. That comprises Emmanuel Anquetil Building.

Dr. Sorefan: Mr Chairperson, regarding *item 22120008 Fees to Consultants*, can I ask the hon. Minister what is the scope of work of this consultant?

Mr Bachoo: That consultant is being appointed. He is going to look after the landslide problem in Mauritius, especially at Quatre Soeurs Deux Frères and also consultant for Emmanuel Anquetil for the retrofitting projects.

Dr. Sorefan: The next item, Mr Chairperson, regarding the upgrading...

The Chairperson: Give me the page!

Dr. Sorefan: At page 256 and it follows to page 257, under *item 31112401 Upgrading of Office Buildings (b) New Drawing, Registry and QS Section*. I see there is an estimate of Rs34 m. and *sub-office at Argy*: Rs29 m. But according to Audit Report, this has already been completed. I would like to know why there is such a huge amount of estimate for 2012?

Mr Bachoo: Regarding the new drawing, Registry and Quantity Surveying Section, it concerns the construction of the Quantity Surveying Office and it is going to start in February 2010 and be completed within a year. The project value is Rs39.8 m.

Regarding the second one, the sub office, there are two offices; one belonging to RDA and another one belonging to MPI and the work has not been completed; only the building has

been completed. Particularly, in my Ministry, we need to have stores to do all types of maintenance works, that is the reason we need that money.

Dr. Sorefan: May we know for the same two buildings who was the contractor and whether tender was launched?

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, that was the district contractor. There were two buildings and, in fact, the Director of Audit also mentioned in the draft, but later on, they were agreeable to the explanations provided by my Ministry; two buildings, one belonging to RDA and another one belonging to the Ministry of Public Infrastructure, but construction was undertaken by the district contractor who was appointed by the Central Procurement Board.

Dr. Sorefan: Mr Chairperson, I have a question on these district contractors. They are allowed to go to the tune of Rs5 m.; how come we are going to the tune of Rs34 m. and Rs29 m.

Mr Bachoo: No, the hon. Member is mistaken. Rs5 m. works are over. It has been slightly beyond Rs5 m., but that has been explained by the technicians of my Ministry. For the sum that is being voted, we have not yet given the tender and, if I am not mistaken, part of it will be undertaken by the RDA and that too under the district contractor. There is no limit, because for tarring of road, upgrading of roads, upgrading of platforms, the limit is not there, we can go beyond that.

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Mr Chairperson, at page 256 under *item 22120008 Fees to Consultants*, may we know the number of consultants and who are they?

Mr Bachoo: I am going to table the information.

Mr Uteem: On page 257 under *item 31112433 Refurbishment of Emmanuel Anquetil Building*, can I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether there are any traces of asbestos that have been found in that building and, if so, whether provision is being made to remedy the situation?

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, if I am not mistaken, consultants have already been appointed and that falls under the responsibility of the Prime Minister's Office. As far as I am concerned, that is the retention money which we are going to pay for air-conditioning and some minor works are being undertaken.

Mr Seeruttun: On page 256, under *item 22090 Security*, I can see that there is no amount earmarked for 2012. Does that mean that there won't be any security services provided for the buildings?

Mr Bachoo: This means we are trying to economise and the work will be done in-house by our own officers.

Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport & Shipping - Programme Code 322: Construction and Maintenance of Government Buildings and Other Assets (Rs406,385,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 323: Construction and Maintenance of Roads and Bridges was called.

Mr Bhagwan: I have a few questions for the Minister, Sir, on Road Decongestion Programme, at page 257 - Rs1 billion, Rs 700 m. - under *item 2633079 Capital Grant*. I want to know from the Minister whether – we have discussed so many times - the Ministry will get information from the RDA about the road decongestion of Rose Hill Centre near CEB.

Where exactly are we? Is there some hope that at least studies be commissioned and so on. This is one question, Sir.

Secondly, I have raised the question many times concerning St. Jean to Pont Fer. The Minister has replied to PQs and he can go and verify. I have asked so many times that lighting be provided from St. Jean to Pont Fer. The Minister replied and when we go there, there is no lighting. The Minister can come and let us know whether this is so.

On page 258 under *item 31113004 Rehabilitation of Steel Bridges* concerning this *patrimoine*, Pont de Grand River North West Bridge – *l'ancien pont* – people are cutting steel. I think this is a *patrimoine*. Can I ask the hon. Minister whether he has taken cognizance of what is happening and what is planned, at least, to maintain that bridge of Grand River North West. Lastly, footbridges – I will come later on that item.

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, regarding the Road Decongestion Programme, on many occasions in Parliament, I have been speaking on it. The hon. Member wanted to know what will be done for Rose Hill and most of the time I have also been inviting Members of Parliament of that region to come forward with certain suggestions and advice. Unfortunately, nobody tendered an advice and Government has ultimately decided that in order to decongestion that region, there must be a bridge that can link A1 to M1, that is, Soreze to Coromandel and that is already included in the PPP. Be a bit patient, next year they will see the result!

Secondly, as far as Grande Rivière Nord Ouest is concerned, there was a series of investigations conducted in-house by officers of my Ministry/Engineers of my Ministry. Unfortunately, thieves have stolen part of the steel structure there and that bridge appears to be in

a dangerous condition. We are trying to appoint a consultant and to see whether it can be reinstated. We can fortify the bridge.

Thirdly, the lighting issue which the Member has raised hardly one or two months ago, this has already been included in the contract of the contractor. So, be patient, the work is going on! In a few months' time he will see the results. Regarding the landslide, the consultant is Dr. Saldivar.

Mr Bodha: As regards to the motorway from St. Jean to the City of Port Louis, in view of the complex nature and the major works that have been carried out, when this whole project is going to be completed?

Mr Bachoo: In fact, work has started in all parts, except that we had a problem, there was a challenge in one part. That concerns the widening of the Pont Colville Deverell Bridge. We hope that within a few weeks, probably, the issue will be cleared and that is the only part which missing. Once the work starts there, within a year, everything will be cleared, including the great separated junction.

Mr Uteem: Under the Road Decongestion Programme under *item 26323 Ring Road Phase I*, may I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister when the Phase I of the Ring Road is expected to be completed? Secondly, whether the outline for the Phase II has been finalised? And thirdly, whether any amount is being budgeted in the Budget for the Phase II?

Mr Bachoo: Phase I, Mr Chairperson, the completion period is mid next year, we cannot say early next year, but rather we can push it a bit more, because there are all types of problems we are facing; so, mid- 2012.

As far as the Ring Road part II is concerned, that forms part of the PPP programme and, in fact, the alignment has already been finalised and we are moving for acquisition of land. Actually, we are more concerned with the Harbour Bridge, because we are finalising the acquisition of land and we will move towards Ring Road Phase II.

Mr Bodha: May I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister what is the time frame for the Terre Rouge/Verdun Link Road?

Mr Bachoo: The first part of the Terre Rouge/Verdun Link Road will be ready by April or May next year; the second part will be ready probably by September or October.

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, under the *Construction, Maintenance of Roads and Bridges* generally, can I ask the hon. Minister whether he has provided in the budget for next

year for communication to the Public Office plans so that at the end people are not just placed before *un fait accompli* as it has been in 2011 concerning roads and so on?

My second question: under the road decongestion programme, it is now being confirmed with the Budget that the *métro léger* project will go ahead, I understand, on the *piloti*. I would like to know what provision is being made in next year's budget for that very important and costly project, whether that is going to be PPP or otherwise. Should I go on or should I let the Minister answer first?

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairman, all that is being done, has been properly calculated and organised. It is not a haphazard growth and we know where we are. We will see the light at the end of the tunnel, try to see the light or else we will feel the heat later on. Mr Chairperson, regarding the Light Rail Transit Project, following a field mission by representatives of Singapore Corporation Enterprise, a term of reference was already sent. I just want to say that we are also moving towards it. Probably, a Local Technical Committee which is under the Prime Minister's Office is liaising with the Singaporean Authorities and I do hope that sooner or later we are going to take an action on that.

Mrs Hanoomanjee: Mr Chairperson, at page 257, *item 26313079 Current Grant – Road Development Authority*, can we know why the provision has been increased substantially from Rs15 m. to Rs40 m. Secondly, can I know whether the RDA is moving its head office from Vacoas to Moka and why?

Mr Bachoo: I am not in a position to say whether RDA is moving its office. That concerns the Board. It has got a Board and it is independent. As far as the increase is concerned, last year the amount voted appeared to be less; this year a request was made and we have increased it. In addition to this, we have got additional expenditure, for example, additional technicians have been recruited on contract basis.

Mr Jugnauth: In regard to the construction of roads, the access road to Jin Fei, may I know how much money we have already spent up to now with regard to the road infrastructure? Secondly, concerning the upgrading of Higginson Road, from Providence to St Julien, I know there was a problem at the level of the procurement. Has this problem been solved so that we can go ahead with this project? My third question concerns the St Pierre bypass. May I know how much money has been earmarked in the budget if ever there is going to be compulsory

acquisition of land or, if not, under what kind of scheme are we going to get the land from the sugar estates?

Mr Bachoo: As far as Jinfei is concerned, the estimated project was Rs99 m. The work has already been completed, that's why we are left for the payment of Rs2 m. Concerning the St Pierre bypass, evaluation has already started by the Central Procurement Board and I would request the hon. Member to have a site visit at Higginson Road where work has already started.

Regarding the land, in fact, we are in negotiation with that sugar estate. I don't know the quantum but, in fact, negotiation is going on and we are going to move for compulsory acquisition. This has been agreed by both sides.

Mr Bhagwan: At page 259, under *item 31113403 Upgrading of Roads*, can we know from the Minister how this sum is apportioned in the different constituencies and whether there is a survey island wide? I am not upset for Constituency No. 9, I like people there. We are under the impression that there are roads in urban areas, even in certain villages, in other constituencies that they are *des laissés-pour-compte*. Everybody - even the Deputy Prime Minister - can *témoigner* what is the state of the roads under the responsibility of the Minister in Rose Hill, Beau Bassin, Quatre Bornes and Baie du Tombeau.

What are the criteria used by the RDA to have the roads repaired? Is there a mapping, a survey? Is the money apportioned equally? Each constituency must have its share.

Secondly, at page 258, *item 32145302 Loan to Special Purpose Vehicle – Road Decongestion Programme*, can we know what does this mean?

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Order!

Mr Bhagwan: Mr Chairperson, I don't want to be disturbed by Members making comments.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Yes, carry on! Hurry up! Time is running out!

Mr Bhagwan: Can the hon. Minister inform the House whether there are studies – I'll say the ancient road from Beau Bassin to Port Louis – under the Decongestion Programme from Gamma Civic which is the lower part of Beau Bassin to Port Louis.

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, following questions in the House, I had already submitted a list of the works that have been undertaken by my Ministry, NDU and RDA in the whole country - roads, drains, bridges and everything. I am tabling one copy again.

Secondly, one thing we have to understand, Mr Chairperson, is that on many occasions, I have already explained in the House that there are three constituencies where it is difficult to work. They are Constituency Nos 18, 19, 20. I am giving the reasons. It's because of the sewerage work which is going on. I wanted to start ...

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: Let the hon. Minister answer! The hon. Member cannot dispute the answer given by the Minister.

Mr Bachoo: I wanted to start the upgrading of Hugnin Road for the past one year where Government has decided to spend about Rs40 m. but, unfortunately, I am stuck. Let me say that if this is the case, Mr Chairperson, how do we explain the Rs20 m. which Government spent in *chemin de la mort*. In the past, we could not do it, we have done that. I would request the hon. Member...

(Interruptions)

Let me finish!

The Chairperson: Let the hon. Minister answer!

Mr Bachoo: We have not been able to spend money even in Constituency No. 18, Belle Rose and Quatre Bornes. At Royal Road, Rose Hill, Mr Chairman, I have already given work order to the tune of about Rs13 m. The contractor is not doing the work because he told me that he has to wait for the New Year to be over. The contractor is General Construction. There is no question that we are not willing to do any work. We are here, we want to support and help. I am just waiting for the sewerage connection to be over and the hon. Member will see the amount of work that will be done.

The second issue which was raised concerns the special purpose vehicle. The Government will provide long term rupee based loan to the private party amounting to around Rs20 billion over four years starting in 2012 at market rate of interest. It should be used to finance Harbour Bridge, Ring Road, and Ring Road second phase A1, M1 and upgrading the roundabouts on motor ways. Private party will start reimbursing the loan after operation starts.

Mr Bhagwan: He has given a list. What I am saying is roads in the centre of Rose Hill, Beau Bassin and Quatre Bornes where there are no sewerage works.

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, as I have just mentioned, it is already one month that I have issued part of the work order. I have called the contractor in my office and I have asked the engineers to have a look.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: The work is going on or is going to start. Hon. Soodhun!

Mr Soodhun: At page 258, *item 31113004 (d) Bridge on Pailles Branch Road*, Mr Chairperson, we already know that the work is on at Pailles Branch Road, but there is a problem of street lighting. This can cause a lot of accidents. I would make an appeal to the Minister to see to it.

Secondly, at page 259, *item upgrading of roads* Rs300 m. has been voted. It is not the same case as in 1980 in Constituency No.1 at Camp Chapelon, Pailles; it is a complete disaster. Since the death of the late Minister, the road is today completely damaged. I am talking under the correction of the hon. Members of Constituency No. 1. People of Muslim faith cannot even go to the Mosque on rainy days. It is not my constituency, but I make a humble request to the Minister so that the needful could be done as soon as possible.

Mr Bachoo: I thank the hon. Member, Mr Chairperson, and I will look into the issue. Nobody has told me so until now.

Mr Uteem: At page 258 relating to the *loan to the Special Purpose Vehicle*, being given that we are providing a substantial sum of money to the special purpose vehicle, may I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether this special purpose vehicle will be subject to the Public Procurement Act?

Mr Bachoo: I will have to consult on this issue because up to now it has been the responsibility of RDA. I will try to find out from them what is the situation and how the Procurement Office will come in.

Dr. Sorefan: Regarding the *upgrading of Quartier Militaire Phase I* and for *upgrading of Quartier Militaire Phase II*, may I know from the hon. Minister what is the tender price and the final cost because I can see that a huge amount has been earmarked up to Rs1.2 billion? Concerning the *upgrading of Avenue Tulipes* to the tune of Rs48 m., I would like to have some clarification.

Mr Bachoo: For Avenue Tulipes, we have put Rs48 m. because that is an estimated cost and, of course, we are going for tender. Regarding B6 which starts from Wootun and ends at Belle Rive, the work is already completed. The second part is from Quartier Militaire to Wootun and the work has already started. It is costing us above Rs900 m. and it is being financed by the World Bank. The procurement regarding the special vehicle will be subject to Public Procurement Act.

Mrs Hanoomanjee: I am coming again on page 257, *item 26313079 Current Grant to Road Development Authority (RDA)*. The Minister has just said that the RDA is totally independent, but it is receiving more than Rs70 m. Can I know how independent it is and whether there is no representative of his Ministry on the Board and whether the employees are not paid according to the PRB rates or are they totally outside the PRB?

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, when I spoke about the independence, I meant to say that I do not poke my nose in the day-to-day affairs of the Board because I am not going to dictate to them whom to give and whom not to give. I never do that.

Mr Li Kwong Wing: With regard to page 258, *item 31 (n) Transaction Advisory Services for Ring Road and Harbour Bridge* for the value of Rs15 m., has the contract been awarded for the transaction advisory services and, if so, was a tender issued and who is the contractor who has been awarded this tender?

Under *item 32 Loan to Special Purpose Vehicle – Road Decongestion Programme*, has the special purpose vehicle been set up and is Government represented in this special purpose vehicle?

Mr Bachoo: The special purpose vehicle has not yet been set up because we are still at the initial stage. Regarding the *Transaction Advisory Services for PPP Road Decongestion programmes*, that has already been set up and they have gone a long way. In fact, towards the end of January, we are going to open up the bids. There are three companies which were interested. We are going to open the bids probably towards the end of January. The Transaction Advisory Services is already there and through procurement exercise that firm was selected.

Mr Chairperson: Time allocated is over!

Programme Code 323: Construction and Maintenance on Roads and Bridges (Rs4,347,700,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 324: Land Transport Management was called.

Mrs Labelle: At page 259, *item 22120004 Fees to Mauritius Posts Ltd*, may we have some information regarding for what purpose this fee is being paid to the Mauritius Posts Ltd?

Mr Bachoo: In fact, this fee is paid to the Mauritius Posts Ltd for the issue of motor vehicles licences and parking fines and most of the transactions of the NTA is being conducted by the Post Office. All the registration fees are no longer being paid at the NTA because it takes too much of time and people have to queue up day and night. We have decentralised it completely and that is the fees that we have to pay to them.

Mr Bodha: On the same page, the last *item 22900013 Supply of Bus Passes (Free Travel)* where a sum of Rs5 m. is being asked, may I ask the Vice-Prime Minister how many bus passes have been granted last year and whether they are still free when they are granted for the first time?

Mr Bachoo: There are 150,000 students in secondary and tertiary and disabled persons passes granted last year were 160,000.

Mr Uteem: On the same item, following up on what hon. Bodha has said, the question is whether these bus passes are free or are students being made to pay for these passes?

Mr Bachoo: They are Rs30 per bus pass.

Dr. Sorefan: Regarding the bus passes, as I can see from the table, every year, we seem to be giving one to the student. Can the hon. Minister consider of having one bus pass for 3 or 4 years for the same student? It will cost less.

Mr Bachoo: I think that it is not possible; if it is, then we will look into it.

Mr Obeegadoo: On page 260 *Sub-Programme 32402: Traffic Management and Road Safety, office equipment*, is the hon. Minister aware that there is a major problem with the telephone exchange at the NTA? It is extremely difficult for the public to get through and will he tell us whether, in the next budget, he will ensure that this problem is addressed for proper service to consumers?

Secondly, on the Maintenance, is this where the issue of maintenance of traffic lights arises? If it is not, then I will go on to another point.

Further down, *item 22900903 Awareness Campaign*, up until now, it would seem that awareness campaigns have targeted schools. May we know whether for next year there will be a more proactive campaign on road safety using billboards, television and radio?

Thirdly, at the bottom of the page, *item 31113018 Construction of Road Safety Devices*, an amount of Rs25 m. is being budgeted, may we know to what end?

One final question, Sir, I refer to page 269 regarding the staffing at the NTA. The NTA has been complaining over and over that they are unable to act against illegal taxi operators, for instance, because they lack the staff for inspection around the island. Can the Minister tell us whether he considers the number of positions that we are budgeting for next year will, in any way, help address this problem?

Mr Bachoo: Regarding the office and equipment, the request which the Member has made regarding the telephone issue does not fall here. But, definitely, I am going to draw the attention of the officers.

Regarding maintenance, traffic lights fall under this particular item and maintenance of existing traffic signal equipment will be ensured through a maintenance contract and purchase of spare parts. That item provides the purchase of spare parts and ten additional controllers will be repaired in order to avoid delays. Upgrading of traffic signage and road marking programme will also be made to make the traffic signs more conspicuous to road users. The awareness campaign is not only among the students, but is also among the senior citizens. We have conducted 100 of such campaigns and, in addition to this, among bus drivers and conductors in the private company, in CNT and other bus companies; although road safety tasks were held everywhere, we have been able to address over 30,000 students and 63 secondary schools.

The last one, the construction of road safety devices, here when we speak about devices, we have signalised pedestrian crossings, signalised road junction, speed reduction measures undertaken island wide and the fitting of the handrails and guardrails. Then, in addition to this, we have the foot bridges, pelican crossing, pedestrian crossing, speed reducing devices are being set up everywhere.

As far the officers are concerned, I have taken good note of that. In fact, this year in our budget, provision has been made to recruit a few additional officers.

Mr Seeruttun: Mr Chairperson, allow me to go back to page 259 on *Fees to Mauritius Posts Ltd.* Can the Vice-Prime Minister enlighten the House what are the mechanisms put in place to compute fees payable to Mauritius Post?

Mr Bachoo: Where is that?

Mr Seeruttun: On page 259 on Fees to Mauritius Posts Ltd.

Mr Bachoo: Well, I have just mentioned that about 50% of NTA's transactions are conducted by the Post Office. That is the dealing which the NTA had with the Mauritius Posts and they have come to this conclusion that so much money had to be paid to them.

Mr Seeruttun: Can we know what mechanism has been put in place to compute that?

Mr Bachoo: I'll try to give it.

Mr Bhagwan: On page 260, under *item 22060*, I drew the attention of the hon. Minister some time back concerning the poor quality of paint for road markings, we have road markings where the colours are fading. I have one case in front of my office, after two days the crossing has completely vanished. Can we know whether the hon. Minister has conducted an inquiry as this concerns the road safety. There are different colours; yellow or white, after two or three days the paint goes out.

Secondly, about this scheme for old people, there are many bus companies, even private or individual, which upset the disabled and old persons and they even left them at the bus stop. Can the Minister say whether there have been bus companies which have been taken to task?

Mr Bachoo: Regarding the quality of paint, Mr Chairperson, the hon. Member drew my attention and, in fact, I have given strict instructions to my officers to have a careful look at all places where the colours are fading. Secondly, we are looking and assuring the quality.

As far as old people are concerned, this was the hon. Prime Minister's order always that we have to act against all those conductors and bus drivers. I must say that hundreds of contraventions have already been established. Not only that, we have bus companies which were heavily fined for neglecting the senior citizens. I can give the assurance to the House that things have improved a lot.

Dr. Sorefan: On page 260 regarding free travel for old age pensioner and disabled person, the hon. Minister may be aware that old age pensioner can't climb the steps of buses. Will he consider improving the specification of the steps so that old age pensioner can enjoy this free travel.

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, we have tried a lot but, unfortunately, the buses are extremely expensive and we wanted to bring the low floor, not the completely low floor buses, but, at least, mid way between the two. It is not an exaggeration, I will say, even the hon. Prime Minister told us that we could have a few specimen in our country. We are trying hard and I hope that we will succeed. We are also concerned about the old age.

Mr Bodha: The total sum for the free transport is almost a billion, when we started it was about Rs760 m. May I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether any study has been made as to the best manner to spend that amount of money as regards the system?

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, in fact, a study has been conducted - I don't have it in my mind now - but this system had been considered to be the best; the most economical and best. We have to improve on that. We have tried so many other systems – even before me, the hon. Deputy Prime Minister also tried it – ultimately we have come to the conclusion that it is the best method, but we have to improve definitely. There are certain loopholes and we will have to improve on that.

Mr Uteem: On the same item of subsidy, may I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether there has been an agreement reached now with all the buses for next year about the amount of subsidy?

Mr Bachoo: I don't think so; I have not been informed about it. But as at now there hasn't been any problem. In the beginning, there were private companies who were at war with us, but I get the feeling that they were bound to accept whatever we are offering. I don't see how we can be more gracious on that.

Mrs Labelle: With your permission, I am on page 260, *item 31113018 Construction of Road Safety Devices*. When I link that to page 252, the number of pedestrian crossing/road junctions signalised, there were 12 in 2010 and we are forecasting 10 for next year. We have to bear that in mind, Mr Chairperson, the number of fatal accidents which occurred on pedestrian crossing. May I ask the hon. Minister whether this sum includes additional signalisation of pedestrian crossing to avoid these fatal accidents? Do we have additional signals that we are putting near pedestrian crossing?

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, as far as the 'balisa' lights are concerned, the light which we are going to put in 900 places, that is not included here. In fact, we are working on the tender document. Once it is over, I know we have got a Contingency Fund, we are going to appeal to the hon. Minister of Finance to provide us with the fund.

Mr Jugnauth: In regard to free travel scheme, the hon. Vice-Prime Minister has said that we have to improve on it. The report dates back quite a few years, since then up to now, may we know what steps the hon. Vice-Prime Minister has taken, in order to try to improve on this scheme?

Mr Bachoo: As far as CNT is concerned, we don't have much problem because they are on time. As far as the bus company and CNT are concerned, I almost had 95% to 100% satisfaction. Earlier, we have problems with CNT and now I am happy to announce that CNT has got new buses, which we were able to provide. Regarding the private bus operators, we still have some problems in certain regions. Once we provided them with regular buses and secondly, we take action against the conductors and drivers, this acts as a deterrent for them to commit mischief. I have to admit that there are certain places where we have problems. But, I do hope that we will take additional steps.

Mr Jugnauth: I think that the hon. Vice-Prime Minister has misunderstood my question. It is about the scheme. There has been a report - the hon. Minister, himself, stated that there has been a report - but in order to try to improve, Government considered that this was the best scheme that would be applied. But the hon. Vice-Prime Minister said that we have to improve on that. The question that I am asking is: since that report up to now, have there been any steps that have been taken in order to improve on the scheme and not under the service of the bus industry?

Mr Bachoo: At the NTA, there is a committee which is working on that, they are working minutely on that issue.

Mr Baloomoody: May I take the hon. Minister to Student Travel Scheme. The hon. Minister informed the House last time that old buses which are not fit to carry passengers, were used to carry students. This was what was informed in the House. The hon. Minister said that he will try to review that process. Can I ask the hon. Minister whether we are still using all these unworthy buses to carry students around?

Mr Bachoo: They were not unworthy, they were in running condition, but I have given my words to the House and, in fact, I am abiding by the words which I have given. I told that towards the end of this year, the work has been replanned and these buses will be replaced.

Mr Jhugroo: On page 263, regarding road safety device, can I ask the hon. Minister whether the handrails fixed by Traffic Management are according to safety norms? Can I know the size and the thickness of the galvanised pipes used because following accident of my ...

The Chairperson: No, we are not there yet. Does the hon. Member have a question under this vote? Carry on!

Mr Soodhun: Mr Chairperson, several times the issue concerning traffic signs which are placed very close to crossroads has been raised. Nearly everywhere in the country it is like that.

Mr Bachoo: No, but the signs are international. If visibility is missing anywhere, then I will request my officers to have a look. I am also after them day and night. We have a limited number of technicians, but they are doing a good job.

Programme Code 324: Land Transport and Management (Rs1,282,896,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 325: Maritime Safety and Development was called.

Mrs Ribot: Mr Chairperson, I have got three questions for the hon. Minister. First of all, under *item 22120008 Fees to Consultants*, I would like to get the names and qualifications of the consultants and the specific tasks assigned to them.

Second, a list of the ferry boat operators benefiting from the subsidies under *item 25 Subsidies* and their place of residence.

Third, the list of the international organisations benefiting from grants under *item 26*.

Mr Bachoo: Fees to the tune of Rs2.9 m have been paid for port baseline survey and this with regard to the management of ballast water.

The second issue about the ferry boat operators is at *Grande Rivière Sud Est*, and the contract has been awarded to Mrs L. Maunick for a period of two years with effect from 17 September 2010.

With regard to *grant to international organisations*, that is the IMO, International Maritime Organisation.

Mr Uteem: On page 252, *Programme 325*, can I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister the number of vessels that are registered under the Mauritian flag and the number of foreign vessels that are being inspected?

Mr Bachoo: It is about 163 for small ones and hardly a few for bigger ones. I'll let you know about the foreign vessels.

Mrs Hanoomanjee: On page 261, *item 22120008 Fees to Consultants*. I did not quite get the name of the consultants. Can we know the terms of reference of those consultants?

Mr Bachoo: I don't have the conditions with me. I'll let the hon. Member get it.

Programme Code 325: Maritime Safety and Development (Rs68,197,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 404: Community-Based Infrastructure and Public Empowerment was called.

Mr Bhagwan: Can I ask the hon. Minister whether this is the NDU budget?

Mr Bachoo: Yes.

Mr Bhagwan: At page 263, *item 31113003 Construction of Roads*, can I ask the hon. vice-Prime Minister whether there is a plan of work constituency wise? My constituency has a new PPS - there have been so many during the past years - and I pray he stays there. Can we know whether all facilities are given to the PPS for Constituency No. 20, because he is so frustrated that he is not having all the facilities needed to implement his job? I am not blaming him. Such an efficient PPS, hon. Issack, must be given the tools, the means and also money to spend in my constituency with regard to roads, landscaping, construction of not only the cremation ground, but also the incinerator in the region of Rose Hill and Beau Bassin. Can I appeal to the Minister if he could consider giving all the facilities to our good friend? I make an appeal also in regard to the CAB offices of Petite Rivière and the Centre de Beau Bassin which need upgrading.

Mr Bachoo: Regarding the point raised by hon. Mrs Hanoomanjee, the bids for consultancy services for the baseline survey are being examined. They have not yet been appointed, but the money has been voted for that.

Regarding the PPS the hon. Member referred to, contracts have already been issued; he is aware of it and is full of praise for the work that we are going to do in the constituency. So, I don't find any difficulty with him. He is a responsible person and a dozen of site visits has been conducted by him despite his poor health. He has been to the constituency, and we don't have any problem in supplying any type of support that he requires.

As far as the CAB offices are concerned, trust me, we are going to have a look at them.

Mr Quirin: I would like to put a question concerning *item 3113006 Construction of Sports Facilities* on page 263. With regard to the construction of sports facilities, a sum of Rs20 m. was earmarked for 2011. I would like to know from the hon. vice-Prime Minister whether the total sum has been spent, and I would really appreciate if he could submit a list of all the sports facilities which have been constructed this year.

Concerning *item 31113406 Upgrading of Sports Facilities*, Rs32 m. have been earmarked for this year. I would like to know whether the total sum has been spent and if he could also submit a list of all the sports facilities which have been upgraded.

Mr Bachoo: I have it with me, and I am just submitting the list.

Mr Jugnauth: With respect to the construction of cremation grounds, may I know if the project of the cremation ground of Circonstance l'Avenir is included in this budget and, if so, what is the amount that has been earmarked?

Mr Bachoo: That falls under the Minister of Local Government. That is not with me; I have got that of Hollywood.

Mrs Radegonde: At page 263, *tem No. 3113019, Construction of Bus Shelters and Stands*, I know that there is no budgetary provision made for the year 2012. May I understand that the NDU will be no more responsible for the construction of bus shelters and stands?

Mr Bachoo: No, this one has been transferred to the Traffic Management and Road Safety Unit. They are going to construct 100 bus shelters. That falls under a different item.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, under *item 31113014 Landscaping Works*, may I ask the hon. Minister whether he will be kind enough to table a list of landscaping works that have been carried out in Constituency No. 16 for 2011, and also projects for the coming year?

Mr Bachoo: I am going to submit for the whole constituency.

Mr Jhugroo: I am coming for the second time on the construction of roads at Mahebourg, namely 16 lanes. I asked a question last time, and the Minister told us in this House that it has already been started. But, up to now, I have seen nothing done regarding the construction of the 16 lanes at Mahebourg. My second question is with regard to structures. Can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister tell us whether for handrails, the size and the thickness of the galvanised pipes used are according to safety norms? Because after the accident in which my colleague was involved, hon. Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun, I am in doubt regarding the thickness of the galvanised pipes used for the construction of these handrails.

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, I am not an expert nor am I an engineer, but I can assure the House that the structures are of good international standards. The hon. Member knows very well, I had been personally in his constituency and he was almost overjoyed to see the amount of work that was undertaken. It goes beyond Rs70 m. as far as drain works are concerned. Once works are over, resurfacing work will start; he knows that.

Mrs Navarre-Marie: At page 263, *item 31113021 Construction of Children's Playgrounds*, I would like to know the different localities where these playgrounds have been constructed and whether these playgrounds were handed over to the relevant local authorities?

Mr Bachoo: I am submitting a list thereof.

Mr Baloomoody: We are on the NDU. The hon. Vice-Prime Minister clearly informed us that it is for the NDU; we know that there is one PPS attached to each constituency. Can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister lay on the Table the budget allocated to each constituency through the PPS and the amount spent in each constituency for the last financial year?

Mr Bachoo: In fact, we don't allocate budget specifically to constituencies. We go according to the projects which are prepared and submitted by the PPS.

Mr Baloomoody: Can we check, at least?

Mr Bachoo: I don't have it with me.

Mr Baloomoody: Not today, maybe tomorrow morning or tonight.

Mr Seeruttun: At page 263, under *item 31113006 Construction of Sports Facilities*, some Rs20 m. have been earmarked. Will the hon. vice-Prime Minister inform the House whether sports facilities are constructed in Constituency No. 11 within that amount earmarked?

Mr Bachoo: Yes, as from next year when work will start, they will see the amount spent there. In fact, we have done a lot even in the past when hon. Moutia was the PPS.

Mr Nagalingum: With regard to *Construction of Children's Playgrounds*, may I know if there is anything earmarked for Constituency Nos. 8 and 19?

Mr Bachoo: The PPS who is responsible for the constituency will look after those projects. I don't have any problem.

Mrs Ribot: Can we know from the hon. Minister, the location of the cremation grounds and cemeteries and the stage the works have reached?

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, throughout the country wherever the need has been felt, the PPS has come forward with the project and the projects are being implemented and wherever the need will be felt, even in the forthcoming year, we don't have any problem. We can go ahead, but I don't have the list with me.

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, would the hon. Minister inform us whether the NDU is at all represented in the Constituency of Curepipe/Midlands? Is there a PPS for the constituency of Curepipe/Midlands? Going back to the question of hon. Baloomoody, if we can presume that for 2011 and 2012, there is some proportionality in terms of spending for the different constituencies, will the hon. Minister agree to table details of spending per constituency for 2011?

Mr Bachoo: I will request NDU to prepare the programme together with the PPS. Actually, it is hon. Henry who is looking after Constituency No. 17. So, through him you are going to submit. I have got a list of the cremation grounds which the hon. Member was asking.

Mr Obeegadoo: Will a breakdown of the spending per constituency be circulated?

Mr Bachoo: It has to be worked out. We have not yet worked it out; it is Budget time.

Mrs Hanoomanjee: At page 263, with regard to the *Construction of Children's Playgrounds, Construction of Cremation Grounds/Cemeteries, Construction of Sports Facilities*, can the hon. Minister say whether all the amounts earmarked for 2011 had been used?

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, the payment is being effected now. So, it becomes a bit difficult for me to say because, at times, we overspend. I am not aware exactly, but I am confident that all the money must have been spent.

Mr Nagalingum: Concerning the *Upgrading of Cremation Grounds/Cemeteries*, Mr Chairperson, can we know if the cremation grounds at La Chaumière is included?

Mr Bachoo: I have got a list again, of cremation grounds and cemeteries - an additional list - but if it is not included, of course, I am going to include it.

Mrs Radegonde: Mr Chairperson, at page 263, *item 31113403 Upgrading of Roads*, I note that there is an increase from Rs60 m. to Rs85 m. May I have a list of the roads proposed to be upgraded, the exact location and time frame?

Mr Bachoo: We have not yet worked on that. Once the Budget is over we are going to work for next year and I will submit a list to the hon. Member

Mr Jhugroo: Can I ask the hon. Minister whether he will consider the construction of an absorption pit or drain near Highlands Mosque due to accumulation of stagnant water and which is very inconvenient to school children and those going to the Mosque?

Mr Bachoo: Of course, I will look into it. I just got the list of the proposed projects of 2012; I am just submitting it.

Programme Code 404: Community-Based Infrastructure and Public Empowerment (Rs363,123,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 405: Land Drainage was called.

Mr Bhagwan: At page 264, under *item 31113015 Land Draining and Watershed Management Programme*, a sum of Rs250 m. is being voted and we are asked to vote Rs250 m. Can the hon. Minister inform the House whether there was a new survey following the last heavy

rains to see whether there was need to amend the original plan as far as the flooded areas are concerned? Can the hon. Minister circulate a list of the emergency projects which were effected under emergency procedures and also projects which are in the pipeline constituency-wise under this programme for the coming years?

Mr Bachoo: All the works have already been undertaken. The list has already been circulated. I have already laid two copies for the previous year as from January 2012. In fact, we have upgraded the original list. We have exhausted most of them. I don't have any problem in submitting it, but please bear with me, we are finalising the list.

Mr Baloomoody: Can the hon. Minister inform the House whether during this end-of-year period, specific attention will be paid in regard to land drainage - because according to the Meteorological Service, we are supposed to have heavy rain and flood - to avoid the calamity we had last time when there was a flood?

Mr Bachoo: Yes, Mr Chairperson, that is the reason why we are laying less emphasis on construction of roads. We are concentrating more on the clearing of drains and bridges.

Mr Bodha: Mr Chairperson, as regards *Fees to Consultants - Watershed Management Study*, can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister enlighten us as to the nature of the study in terms of reference and who is going to carry that study?

Mr Bachoo: Yes, provision is made for payment of a consultancy fee to carry out a comprehensive survey. As pointed out by hon. Bhagwan, we have to upgrade. This is what, in fact, we are doing in the watershed management study throughout the country. We have not yet appointed one, but procedures have started.

Mr Baloomoody: Coming to that land drainage issue, the hon. Minister is telling us that he is giving much importance to that, but we don't have provision for even a Project Manager.

Mr Bachoo: Normally, it is the responsibility of the NDU and the engineers. We have got a Project Manager there and he undertakes the work.

Mr Uteem: On the same item, may I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister, out of the Rs217 m. that was budgeted last year, how much has been spent? I note on page 253 that only 23 projects have been completed, and now, it is proposed that 50 projects be completed. So, we are doubling the number of projects, but the amount budgeted is not being doubled.

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, we have gone beyond the amount. We have spent more than what was budgeted. In fact, in that case, the Ministry of Finance is liberal enough to grant

us funds. Last year, the work that had to be completed, has already been completed. There have been delays but, at the same time, we have done a lot of work as far as drains are concerned.

Mr Nagalingum: As regards the Land Drainage Programme, has proper consultation with local authorities been made?

Mr Bachoo: Normally, we work in collaboration with local authorities. There are many places like Vacoas/Phoenix, the NDU, we give them the responsibility to do the work and we pay them. But, unfortunately, there are certain places where we cannot do that because of lack of engineers on the part of the local authorities.

Programme Code 405: Land Drainage (Rs266,330,000) was, on question put, agreed to. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade.

Programme Code 381: Policy and Management for Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade was called.

Mr François: Upon your guidance, Mr Chairperson, I relate to page 275, in the context of food security initiative. I just want to know from the hon. Minister with regard to sub-lease of Mozambique State land, how many acres of land have been earmarked or will be sub-leased to Mauritian operators?

Dr. A. Boolell: Thank you very much for putting that question. 23,000 hectares have been earmarked. Negotiations are ongoing. There has been an agreement entered with the Mozambican company to make the sub-lease easier because it is quite a sensitive issue and there are three companies earmarked to whom the land is going to be sub-leased -

- (i) allocation of land to BAI could amount to 6000 hectares;
- (ii) an Indian company which will invest in seed production of rice: 2000 hectares, and
- (iii) a Mauritian company belonging to Mr Aubeeluck. I have been told that he has submitted an application to have 1000 hectares.

Mr Obeegadoo: I have two questions, Mr Chairperson. I note at page 277 that the very first priority objective of this programme is the effective exercise of sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago, on the one hand and Tromelin on the other. I also note at page 280: *S3 Safeguard the sovereignty of Mauritius over the Chagos Archipelago and Tromelin*, that the targets chosen are completely, should I say, will all due respect, useless, in the sense that it is 100% by definition. If you look at the targets at *SSI: To actively defend the rights of Mauriitus to*

exercise its sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago and Tromelin in consultation with PMO and SLO, it means nothing in practice. Can I ask the hon. Minister, being given the latest developments, that is, our failure in the case of the challenge we mounted before the International Tribunal as reported, for the funds we are going to approve for the next year, what specifically does the Ministry propose to be doing in relation, on the one hand, to sovereignty over the Chagos and on the other hand sovereignty over Tromelin which we no longer hear about since the cogestion Agreement?

Dr. A. Boolell: Mr Chairperson, let me make it quite clear to my hon. friend that this is a battle that can be a long battle, waging the battle on three fronts: one, diplomatic; Second, political and thirdly, juridical. Having said so, I grant him that we put up a challenge in respect of the arbitrator appointed by UK on the basis there was a nexus of proximity with UK. I agree that this has been aside, but let me remind him that we have been very forceful on the diplomatic front so much so that we have the full support of non-aligned member countries and AU. This is an ongoing process. I don't have to remind our friend that in respect of UK, we have put up a challenge. We can say loud and clear that UK is not a coastal State. And I am not going into the history of the consultation paper. But let me come to Tromelin. As you know, this is a historical landmark. In the world, when it comes to *cogestion*, co-management of an island, where, of course, we agree to disagree with France on the issue of sovereignty. Having said so, Mr Chairperson, let me remind my friend that during the duration of the framework on co-management of Tromelin, Mauritius will continue to have discussion with France on the issue of sovereignty over Tromelin. But you know very well that this is entrenched in the French legislation. We are continuing to wage the battle on the international front, seeking support from like-minded countries which we have. I have stated AU and non-aligned movement, but there are ongoing discussions with France. But let me come to the current status! First, with respect to ratification of the Accord on the management of Tromelin, the Accord was under consideration by the *Secretariat Général du gouvernement* whose function is to advise the French Government on legal matters. This Accord will be submitted to the French National Assembly. It is expected that the process would be completed by next year. On the Mauritian side, the authorities have started the process for amending our domestic legislation so as to enable both parties to ratify the agreement at the same time.

Let me also say that we are for negotiations, for dialogue. I believe the matter could be resolved through dialogue and consultation. This is the way forward. But in respect to Diego Garcia we did take up the matter also with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of UK. We are pro dialogue and consultations. We have asked for a bilateral negotiation at the highest political level between the two heads and, of course, we are looking forward to have a trilateral discussion. But this is a long haul and I have made my point very clear.

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, my question was very specific and practical. We have been asked to vote Rs55 m., Mr Chairperson, for this programme and the first priority is sovereignty. So, my question is: practically, what steps are we taking? The hon. Minister is being given Rs55 m. What are we doing? And maybe I can add a supplementary there, for the first time, he is going to have both the Secretary for Foreign Affairs and a Permanent Secretary. Last time we tried that, it was a disaster with constant wrangling. It seems that we are going to try that again in 2012. Now, what, in practice, will we achieve?

Dr. A. Boolell: I have been practical and I have given a very practical reply. Now, if my friend is hard to understand, I am not to be blamed.

(Interruptions)

I have said this is an issue where we are moving on three fronts: diplomatic, political and juridical. We are working very closely with the State Law Office, with the Office of the Prime Minister and, as my friend knows perfectly well, for the first time, there is honesty of purpose and we are waging battle on three fronts.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Order!

Dr. A. Boolell: As far as rallying support from non-aligned Member countries is concerned, I think we are doing what is called upon us to.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Order!

Mr Baloomoody: I will ask the hon. Minister a simple question and if he will kindly give me a cool answer.

The Chairperson: Order!

Mr Baloomoody: I find on programme 381: Compensation of employees, we are budgeting, for next year, Rs38,766,000. When we look at the list of employees, Human

Resources, on page 289, we find that there has been provision on list of employees to have two roving Ambassadors. These roving ambassadors are now employees. Do we take it that they will be career diplomats who will be appointed roving ambassadors and if so, what exactly the total cost of these two roving ambassadors will be to the nation?

Dr. A. Boolell: That will be decided, but these are going to be home-based ambassadors who have acquired experience over the years ...

The Chairperson: The question was: whether these two roving ambassadors will be career diplomats or non-career diplomats.

Dr. A. Boolell: That would be decided accordingly.

The Chairperson: The cost.

Dr. A. Boolell: As I have said, that will be decided.

Mr François: Again, Mr Chairperson, upon your guidance at page 277, on regional integration and international trade, with regard to food security, climate change and marine resources development, I have a proposal or a question. I will ask the hon. Minister whether he is prepared, certainly upon the green light of the Prime Minister, to propose Rodrigues as a member of the various institutions of the IOC.

The Chairperson: To see that Rodrigues is a member of the regional integration!

Dr. A. Boolell: Rodrigues is part of our territory, so the interest of Rodrigues will be taken care of.

The Chairperson: Hon. Bodha!

Mr Bodha: Thank you, Chairperson. From the answer of the hon. Minister, we are going to have roving ambassadors based in Mauritius. We are going to have a desk and the administrative backup of the Ministry - that is how they are going to operate?

Dr. A. Boolell: That is what I have said.

Mr Bodha: So, how do they interact with the other ambassadors who are already placed, let's say, for example, in Africa and other places?

Dr. A. Boolell: No, there is no problem in interacting. In fact, we will reinforce the work being carried out by other ambassadors based on the African continent.

Mr Uteem: May I know from the hon. Minister in relation to the arbitration over the sovereignty of Chagos, how much money has been spent so far in the challenge?

Dr. A. Boolell: I don't have the exact quantum but, as soon as I have it, I will supply it to the hon. Member.

Mr Bhagwan: A last question on this Chagos issue. Can the Minister inform the House whether in the Budget funds are provided for the *Groupe Réfugiés Chagos* in their plea, at least, for our sovereignty? Are they being provided with air tickets, financial or otherwise?

Dr. A. Boolell: This issue will be replied by my colleague, the hon. Attorney General.

Mr Ameer Meea: Mr Chairperson, on *item 22030 Rent*, an amount of Rs12 m. is provided. May I know to whom this amount is paid?

Dr. A. Boolell: For parking of rent for the floor that we occupy - 1114 parking slot.

Mr Chairperson: To whom - the company, the owner?

Dr. A. Boolell: The owner of the building where the Ministry is housed.

(Interruptions)

But this is what I have said. I don't have his name. I will give the name to the hon. Member, there is no problem.

Mr Chairperson: The Minister has no name.

Dr. A. Boolell: Société Belem.

Programme Code 381: Policy and management for Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade (R 54,906,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 382: Foreign Relations was called.

Mr Obeegadoo: On a point of order, Mr Chairperson, since there are a number of different sub-programmes, can we consider one by one. If not, it will be very confusing, going from one to the other?

The Chairperson: No, I don't get the point of the hon. Member. Can he repeat his point?

Mr Obeegadoo: I am saying that under this vote, we have all the rest of the vote of the Ministry under a number of different and very distinct sub-programmes. Can we go through one by one?

Mr Chairperson: If that will facilitate the House, yes.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, under *Programme 382 Foreign Relations*, I would like to link that to the constraint and challenges of foreign relations. At page 276 it is said that the constraint is the political instability in the neighbouring States; and to face this challenge we are being told that the Ministry will continue to collaborate closely with AU, SADC and so on.

Mr Chairperson, to promote political stability AU has a charter on democracy election and governance, which has been adopted some years ago by an AU Summit. Mauritius did sign this charter but, up to now, we have not yet ratified this charter. May I know from the hon. Minister why we have not ratified and whether we are going to do so soon?

Dr. A. Boolell: We will look into it.

Mr Bhagwan: I am under *Programme 382*. I refer to *item 26210 Current Grant to International*. I see here that we have current grant to International, for example, contribution to United Nations and so on. As far as I know, Mauritius has some link with the alliance of the SIDS, the small States. Can the hon. Minister inform the House what type of collaboration we have with the AOSIS? Do we pay anything? Where do we meet? Is there any formal meeting between AOSIS and Mauritius or is Mauritius still formed part of AOSIS?

Mr Ameer Meea: Mr Chairperson, on the *item 22030 Rent* on page 285, there is another sum of Rs15 m. Is it the same building, the same company, the same owner or is it something different?

Dr. A. Boolell: Let me come to the AOSIS issue. As you know, when we had the conference which was held in Mauritius, a strategy called ‘Mauritius Strategy’ was prepared and highlighted the prime importance of Small Island Developing States. Having said so, at times, we appeared to be at loggerheads with AOSIS countries but, thanks to common understanding, they fight for climate change mainly.

But the criteria for definition of Small Island Development States, this is slowly, but truly making an inroad at the United Nations. However, there are other countries which prefer to be called Small Vulnerable Economies and this is an issue which has been taken up at the World Trade Organisation. In respect to the question put to me by hon. Ameer Meea, it is the same building by Société Belem.

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, under *Sub-Programme 38201* at page 285, I would like to know whether the contribution to the UN includes grants to UN specialised agencies. My question relates specifically to UNESCO which, following the suspension of US funding...

Mr Chairperson: Whether UNESCO is included in the vote.

Mr Obeegadoo: Yes, and if so, does the provision for next year include additional funding for UNESCO as requested recently by the UNESCO Director-General. Furthermore, may we have some information concerning a number of items here, the contribution to UN

Peacekeeping Operations. What exactly we are contributing? Also the UN Capital Master Plan and the South Centre as well as the International Exhibition Bureau.

Dr. A. Boolell: In respect of the South Centre, there is no contribution made. As for the United Nations Organisation, I have here the amount earmarked but I have been told that there is no provision to the UNESCO. I have here the amount earmarked, but I have been told that there is no provision to the UNESCO. The contribution is met by the Ministry of Education. In respect of the UN Capital Master Plan there is a contribution of US\$188,835 for a period of five years for mega projects to renovate the UN headquarters complex in New York. This has already been settled. Hence there will be a decrease in annual contribution. This is foreseen.

Mr Uteem: If I can move to *Sub-Programme 38202: Support by Mauritius Overseas Missions* on page 286. May I know from the hon. Minister the number of vacancies that we have?

The Chairperson: Let us finish page by page, Sub-Programme by Sub-Programme. Now have we finished with the Sub-Programmes?

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, I would like to go back to UNESCO. We are a Member State of UNESCO. As far as I understand, every year, we have a yearly contribution. My question is for next year since, after the withdrawal of the US, there has been a special appeal sent to the Government of Mauritius last week or so, requesting additional funding in these exceptional circumstances. Since Mauritius supported recognition of Palestine within the UNESCO, is Mauritius now providing for additional support to UNESCO for next year?

Dr. Boolell: I am glad. The hon. Member has pointed out very clearly, we are very supportive of the cause of Palestine to UNESCO, but I cannot give a reply offhand. However, this is the information that I have. The UNESCO contribution is made by the Ministry of Education. That will be looked into by Government since this is a legitimate frequency; so, I see no problem.

Mr Baloomoody: I just want some guidance from the Chair. We are going page by page, so we have twenty minutes.

The Chairperson: No, we are now under programme 38201, page 285.

Mr Baloomoody: Thank you, My Chairperson.

The Chairperson: Now that programme is over! Hon. Obeegadoo is still on programme 38201.

Mr Obeegadoo: I have one last question. On the major achievements, reference is made to mediation in Madagascar. We know that President Ratsiraka has announced his return to Madagascar in terms of provisions for next year. Will instructions be given to our staff under the financial provision for next year that we should do nothing to go against the SADC summit decision, that is, that the roadmap is premised on the return to a Madagascar of former President?

The Chairperson: No, no. The hon Member should put his question.

Dr. Boolell: Mr Chairperson, I think the whole region has recognised the effort being waged by Mauritius to ensure that this roadmap be implemented.

The Chairperson: Yes, Sub-Programme 38202 now.

Mr Bhagwan: Under *item 31112408 Upgrading of Chanceries* at page 286, there is a sum Rs91.2 m. I come specifically to London. The Director of Audit had been very critical as far as the choice of the consultant. The Minister can let us know what is the final amount paid to the consultant and what would be the cost of the upgrading of our London based building - it's Kensington?

Dr. Boolell: Yes.

Mr Bhagwan: Can the Minister inform the House when we can, at least, pay a visit to our friend there in Kensington?

Dr. Boolell: I would wish the hon. Member could pay the visit as soon as the renovation work is carried out. I have a whole list of the works which I would circulate. The renovation work is estimated to be to the tune of Rs130 m.

Mr Ameer Meea: For *item 22030 Rent* under *Sub-Programme 38202: Support by Mauritius Overseas Missions*, there is an amount of Rs103 m. that has been provided. May I ask the hon. Minister if an amount has been provided for the opening of the Mauritian Embassy in Saudi Arabia in this amount?

Dr. Boolell: I am glad my hon. friend has put the question. As I said, there is a standing indication, the Prime Minister will take it up and from there we will take it as we go along.

Mr Uteem: Under *item 21 Compensation of Employees*, may I know from the hon. Minister the number of vacancies in terms of ambassador and permanent representative in our overseas missions at the moment?

Dr. Boolell: We have three designated ambassadors; we'll take up their posting in Maputo, New Delhi and Kuala Lumpur. We are waiting for agreement. In Pakistan also, but in view of the difficult circumstances in Pakistan, therefore we have a *chargé d'affaires*.

Mr Obeegadoo: On the same point, Sir, I don't know whether the Minister answered that. The number is going up from 15 to 16 under *item 02 00 93 Ambassador and Permanent Representative*, at page 290. I wanted to know why it is that the figure is increasing from 15 to 16 and out of the 16, how many career diplomats and political nominees?

Dr. Boolell: I can give the hon. Member the breakdown in respect of the number of political nominees, but we tried to even it out to ensure that we give satisfaction to all. I'll give the breakdown.

The Chairperson: Hon. Labelle!

Mrs Labelle: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under *overseas missions*, presently, I think, we have only three representatives for the whole African continent – Egypt, South Africa and Mozambique - and I don't think we have any representative in Central Africa and Western Africa. May I ask the hon. Minister whether there is any provision for representatives in those two regions particularly with the statement of the Minister for further relation with this part of the continent?

Dr. Boolell: No, we are putting a lot of emphasis because we look at Africa as the continent of the present and the future, hence the relevance of having two ambassadors. If the hon. Member refers to the paragraph specifically on the appointment of two ambassadors, she will see that the main purpose is to focus on Africa.

Mr Bodha: Thank you Mr Chairperson, may I ask the hon. Minister to enlighten us on the overseas travel of the ambassadors?

Dr. Boolell: Does the hon. Member mean the two roving ambassadors?

The Chairperson: It is *item 22110 Overseas Travel*. Carry on!

Mr Obeegadoo: On the very same issue, at page 286, *item 31112408 Upgrading of Chanceries*, the amount of Rs10 m. budgeted for 2011 jumps to Rs91.2 m. for 2012. Is that linked to an increase in the number of ambassadors from 15 to 16, if not, why is it?

Dr. Boolell: In respect of the Overseas Travel, while waiting for the reply to the question which the hon. Member has put, from the sum of Rs15 m. earmarked that has been increased to Rs16 m. Provision represents payment of subsistence allowance to ambassadors and officers

attending official functions; refund of medical expenses to home-based staff; warm clothing allowance and contribution for SADC Day, Africa Day. The upgrading of the Chanceries – I think that I replied partly to the question put to me by hon. Bhagwan - it is for rehabilitation work to Chancery building in London; consultancy services for transfer and staff quarters in New Delhi at Rs5 m. and upgrading of government old buildings abroad at Rs6.2 m.

Mr Baloomoody: Can I just ask hon. Minister one question? He said that in regard to certain embassies where there are vacancies, we are awaiting accreditation from the foreign country to confirm the appointment. Can I ask him whether, in regard to the one who is supposed to represent them in Malaysia, he has been offered a job in his Ministry pending his appointment to Malaysia?

Dr. Boolell: Yes, he is adviser of the Ministry.

Mr Baloomoody: Now that he has been appointed as adviser to the Ministry, may we know the package? What is his remuneration and on which items in the Budget he is being remunerated?

Dr. Boolell: The same remuneration which an adviser will get, but not as hefty as Mr Desvaux.

The Chairperson: No, no.

Mr Bodha: Mr Chairperson, the hon. Minister mentioned the upgrading of the Embassy in London. At one point in time, the option was to sell that building and to buy another one. Have we decided finally, in fact, to upgrade that building and to stay there in Elvaston place?

Dr. A. Boolell: I am sure. My hon. friend will recall that there was a committee set up and they looked into the matter and that was the decision taken.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade - Programme Code 382: Foreign Relations (Rs793,357,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade - Programme Code 383: International Trade was called.

Mr Obeegadoo: I thought I was going to raise it under Sub-Programme 382 or 383, but I'll raise it here instead. I refer to regional integration which is also Sub-Programme 383 and I am sure the hon. Minister would not mind. At page 281, I notice that...

The Chairperson: Which code?

Mr Obeegadoo: On page 281 – *Multilateral Directorates/RID*.

The Chairperson: No, at the Member's request, I granted that we go by Sub-Code. We are now on Sub-Code 38301. If he wants to go back, he must connect this Sub-Code with what he is referring to.

Mr Obeegadoo: That is precisely what I am doing, Mr Chairperson, because with all due respect, you skipped 38203. So, under Programme 383: *International Trade* that also concerns regional. I note that at 281, there is stroke of a regional strategy to be implemented in collaboration with the PMO and we know that we are paying membership fees next year to the IOR/ARC, to the Indian Ocean Commission, SADC, COMESA. I would like to ask the hon. Minister how he is making provision for next year for a consolidated regional strategy. Are we providing funding for the publication of a document which will spell out a coherent integrated regional strategy policy?

The Chairperson: Sorry! I will have to stop the hon. Member here. There was a specific Code 38203 *Regional Integration* and this question should have been put then.

Mr Obeegadoo: Sir, it was skipped by you.

The Chairperson: No, it was not skipped by me. I was just looking around...

(Interruptions)

No, I am sorry! I am under Code 38303 – *International Trade*.

Mr Obeegadoo: So, I'll put it under 38303 – *International Trade*, whether for purposes of international trade, next year the Minister is providing for the publication of a document outlining a coherent integrated strategy.

Dr. A. Boolell: I cannot understand why we have to wait for next year. The document is already ready. I am sure my hon. colleague had the opportunity to look at our strategy in respect of regional integration.

Mr Li Kwong Wing: Mr Chairperson, with regard to international trade, can I know who is the Director of the International Trade desk and whether this desk falls under the Secretary of Foreign Affairs who is an officer under contract and whether that officer is the Executive Head of the whole Ministry being the contractual officer.

Dr. A. Boolell: Yes, he is the Chief Officer of the whole Ministry, Supervising Officer, as we say, and the International Trade falls under the purview of the supervisory.

(Interruptions)

Yes, he is a policy Member. The policy is defined by all of us.

Mr Bodha: Do we still have a WTO desk at Geneva and what is the composition of the desk, who are the specialists working on the WTO talks?

Dr. A. Boolell: As you know in Geneva, our Ambassador is the spokesperson for the African group. You know he is fully supported by the staff of the Ministry and we have also enlisted the services of one adviser in the name of Mr Narsingham. So, we have a team and they are doing an excellent work and there is no complaint, Mauritius has earned a reputation in respect of the work which is being carried out.

Mr Obeegadoo: Under *item 38302 Protection and Registration of Industrial Property Rights*, may I seek some clarification from the Minister – and I'll invite him to keep cool, there is no offence meant – if he can just explain, being given we are providing some Rs10 m., I believe on the Sub-Programme at page 288, almost Rs11 m., and we have a staff of 19 persons for the next coming year. But there is no clear target, no mention of any achievement in this section, maybe just for clarification purposes, if the Minister can tell us what we are going for here?

The Chairperson: Carry on!

Mr Baloomoody: My friend just said 19. We see that there are 19 members of staff in that Protection of Registration, the Property Rights. May we know, because this is a very technical department, whether we have somebody qualified in international law with regard to International Property Rights amongst the staff?

The Chairperson: Hon. Uteem, do you have a question? We take this question and then the hon. Minister will reply.

Mr Uteem: Since it is on the same programme, may I know from the hon. Minister when does the International Property Department intend to go online, so that we can make searches online.

Dr. A. Boolell: In fact, the Director of the World Intellectual Property Organisation will be in Mauritius and we are going to set up an intellectual property development plan and an office. Once the agreement is signed, we are going to disseminate all the relevant information and we hope to set up a portal line which will give all the relevant information to interested parties.

Having said so, we are also looking at trademark and brand names. Let me also remind our friend, hon. Baloomoody, that, no, we do not have somebody who is specialised in intellectual property law, but we organise seminars very regularly and we enlist the services of

those who have the competency. Hence, the interaction with the World Intellectual Property Organisation. They collect fees in respect of trademark patent, industrial design, etc. But I agree if you want to become a superpower in the soft power industry, this is the way to go.

Mr Bodha: May I ask the hon. Minister whether he can consider two things: first, as regards capacity building in intellectual property and consider the possibility of signing the Convention of Madrid for the safeguard of trademarks and plans which would be....

The Chairperson: Policy! That is policy.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade - Programme Code 383: International Trade (Rs34,370,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

The Chairperson: I suspend for half an hour.

At 4.28 p.m. the sitting was suspended.

On resuming at 5.04 p.m with Mr Speaker in the Chair.

Ministry of Housing and Lands - Programme Code 641: Policy and Management for Housing and Lands was called.

Mr Obeegadoo: At page 300, right at the top, under *item 22120 Fees*, there is a rather stunning increase in the estimates from 2011 to 2012. Would the hon. Minister please tell us how much of what was projected for 2011 has indeed been utilised and why such a significant sum for 2012?

Dr. Kasenally: Mr Chairperson, the fees are paid to resource persons for training. In 2012, a sum of Rs500,000 is meant for capacity building; there are some for consultancy fees and provision has also been made for consultants who may be recruited for the social housing programme.

Mr Obeegadoo: The Minister might not have understood the question. My point was: how much of the amount budgeted, for 2011 has indeed been utilised and why there is such a significant jump from 2011 to 2012. What is the difference?

Dr. Kasenally: The difference is that we are embarking on a full-fledged social housing programme, which has never been accomplished before. That's why we have taken some time. Initially, it did take some time to get all our projects together, but the projects are ongoing. We have got social housing, and about 800 houses will be built in the next year or so. Then, there is the project for Route Militaire. All these are going to take a fair amount of money for specialised engineers and architects.

Mr Bhagwan: At page 299, under *item 22030 Rent*, can I know from the Minister of Housing of Lands whether all the services are centralised in one building and whether there are still offices at Edith Cavell Street?

Dr. Kasenally: Mr Chairperson, we have removed almost everybody from Edith Cavell Street and Moorgate House. There is only a small part of a floor which is being occupied by an office of mine at Moorgate House, which we are vacating at the end of next month. All these offices, which were at Edith Cavell Street, Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund, Moorgate House, Metal Cast Building, Victoria House, Rainbow House, Ken Lee Building have moved to Ebène Tower.

Mr Gungah: Concerning *item 22060 Maintenance*, can I ask the Minister whether the maintenance is carried out in-house or whether it is contracted out and, if so, to whom?

Dr. Kasenally: We do not perform any in-house maintenance because these are mostly old buildings, NHDCs and a lot of other housing projects, rehabilitation. These are contracted out following, of course, tender procedures.

Mr François: At page 294, right at the top, *Hydrographic surveys effected for the East of Rodrigues*. May I know from the hon. Minister by whom, when, and its cost?

Dr. Kasenally: This is a programme which is ongoing following a Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Government of Mauritius and India. They have been coming around and performing a fair amount of hydrographic survey. In fact, they have extensively surveyed Rodrigues, especially all the channels. Later, there is a programme, and I can come a bit more in detail about it because there are also proceedings about surveying our Exclusive Economic Zone.

Mr Obeegadoo: May I have a clarification as to where we are, Sir? I am at a lost.

The Chairperson: We are still on Programme Code 641.

Ministry of Housing and Lands – Programme Code 641: Policy and Management for Housing and Lands (Rs61,162,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 642: Social Housing Development was called.

Mrs Labelle: In the Budget, last year, we had the target regarding social housing, particularly to be constructed under the MSPA deal. We had a first batch of 100 units and the target was 60% of the project by December. We also had batch 2 with 100 units and 20% of the

project by December. May I know from the hon. Minister whether these targets have been achieved and, if not, what is the percentage that we have achieved during this financial year?

Dr. Kasenally: Mr Chairperson, of course, there has been a delay and the reason for it was to identify the land that was going to be provided for housing on the deal between the MSPA and Government. There are some inherent problems in the land because sometimes the lands which the MSPA provides to us in the deal is not particularly suitable because they are far away from habitable regions, which means that we have to incur a lot of expenses as far as infrastructure is concerned.

So far, 90 *arpents* have been secured and tenders have been launched. We have got quite a number of projects going on. We have just finished about 508 housing units and the project cost is Rs325 m. and this includes about 60 housing units at Glen Park – the constituency of the hon. Member. Plaine Magnien: 60; La Tour Koenig: 37; Grand Bel Air: 50; Britannia: 45; Roche Bois: 16, which we have already delivered. D’Epinay: 60; Camp Diable: 60, Cottage: 60, Calebasses: 60. The cost is about Rs325 m.; building cost is about Rs170 m. and the infrastructure cost is Rs156.m.

The project has been completed. As for the allocation of these units, out of the 508 units, 300 have already been allocated and the rest will be done in the weeks to come. The average selling price is Rs480,000.

Mrs Labelle: I thank the hon. Minister for the information that he has just given. But, I was referring to the houses to be constructed under the MSPA deal and we had a target. Must I take it that we have not done anything on this particular project?

Dr. Kasenally: No, far from it. In fact, this is for a mixed housing development. The infrastructure for 56 service slots have been completed at Solitude and the project cost was Rs14.3 m. There are sites for construction of 481 housing units and for the provision of 270 service slots at Pointe aux Piments, Quatre Cocos, Camp Ithier, Sebastopol, Beau Bois and Chebel. Some of the works have been completed. But, as far as the 481 housing units are concerned, tender has already been launched and will be closed at the end of this month and subsequently will be allocated.

Mr Bodha: As regards the implementation of the syndic project, may I ask the hon. Minister when the project is going to be implemented, whether it is going to be on a pilot basis or whether it will start in all the housing estates at the same time?

Dr. Kasenally: I am glad that the hon. Member has mentioned the syndic because we have been trying to get them going for quite some time and, as I have said in my speech, we got somebody from the UNPD who came up and advised us and put up a report. We are glad that we are going to start it gently all over because my Ministry is already working on it. We have a Housing Development Unit. We will target 6,150 families residing on 41 NHDCs. There are three households which are not being considered as they are for the middle income families: Fleury sur Mer at Trou aux Biches, Harewood Park at Beau Bassin and Villeneuve.

An Estate Management Unit is being set up at the NHDC to manage all the activities related to the proper functioning of the syndic. There has already been a campaign undertaken to sensitise the residents and we will go on full-fledge speed in January.

Mr Ameer Meea: Can I move on to page 301, *Programme Code 642 on Infrastructure at Military Road?* An amount of Rs19 m. is provided. I have a few questions on this item as it is in my constituency. May I know who is the contractor of this project, how many units are to be constructed, what extent of the land will be covered by this construction? If I could also get an indication of the total cost of the project and what is included in terms of infrastructure in the Rs19 m. budgeted?

Dr. Kasenally: As far as this project is concerned, a tender was launched and it was awarded to a contractor who was supposed to start work in August. It was a Chinese contractor because nobody locally did tender for it. Unfortunately, we negotiated with him but, finally, about a couple of months ago, he bolted out. So, the NHDC itself is taking over the construction. Together, we are getting help from my colleague, the hon. Minister of Public Infrastructure. Government will contribute on the on-site and off-site infrastructure estimated to be at Rs18.2 m. The off-site will be about Rs1 m.

As far as the project itself is concerned, there will be 36 housing units of the EXIM type, ground plus one configuration with 3 bedrooms. The site is to the extent of 2.58 *arpents*. As I said, the implementation will be undertaken in-house at the NHDC. As I said, the Chinese contractor has bolted out.

Mr Gungah: Sir, at page 301, under item 28222012 *Casting of Roof Slab Grant Scheme*, can I ask the hon. Minister why there is a yearly reduction of Rs10 m.?

Dr. Kasenally: I am sorry, I didn't hear the Member's question.

Mr Gungah: Why is there a yearly reduction of Rs10 m. in the Estimates?

Dr. Kasenally: This is perhaps one of the most successful projects of my Ministry. Of course, it is on demand and supply. So far, since 1999, this project which was started by the first Labour Government, a fair amount of money has been disbursed. Now, the principle is that people should be earning less than Rs8,500 and, of course, we have to target these people. It is a question of demand and supply. As far as we are concerned, there has been a fair amount of problems in that because there has been a lot of cheating. We have had a problem with people, trying to forge their income or something like that but, so far, we allocated Rs65,000 for the slabs. It is also done *pro rata* because it must be about 100m² and if it is less they will get in *pro rata*, and if it is more, we will just give them 100m² and they will pay the difference. I have been informed by my colleagues, if funds are required, additional funds will be provided and no one will be left high and dry.

The Chairperson: I have to remind hon. Members and hon. Ministers that we have 20 minutes per programme. So, questions must be short as well as answers. Hon. Mrs Navarre-Marie.

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Mr Chairperson, on page 300, under *item 25, subsidies*, could the hon. Minister enlighten us on how does he reconcile the fact that on the one hand, subsidies are going down, whilst on page 295, under Priority Objectives, the objective is to provide 8,700 housing units for the low income groups.

The Chairperson: We take another question. Hon. Uteem! I must give a chance to everybody.

Mr Uteem: In relation to casting of roof slabs grant, is the hon. Minister considering revising the criteria for eligibility, taking into account the cost of living and the inflation rate for households which are eligible to that scheme.

The Chairperson: Let us take another question, a third one. Hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: I heard the hon. Minister mentioning Chebel in one of his replies. Is there scope for further extension? We are there, we know that there is sufficient land?

Secondly, concerning rehabilitation of infrastructure of the NHDC estates, can we have a list to be circulated of all the NHDC estates where works have been carried out and another list where work is to be done during the coming years?

Dr. Kasenally: In fact, there is going to be a mixed development under the amount of Rs1 billion, which is being earmarked at Chebel, where there will be people of various incomes, so that we have a mixed development and with certain facilities socially.

(Interruptions)

Well, I don't have the exact number, but I think at Chebel it must be about 240 odd like that. There will be people with smaller houses and there will be a small park and social activities. There is also scope for extension at Chebel as well because we have got some lands there.

As far as waterproofing work is concerned, there would be on seven sites: La Caverne, Beau Vallon ...

(Interruptions)

I will circulate it because somebody asked for it. There is La Tour Koeing, Alpha and Camp Levieux.

Mr Bodha: Can the hon. Minister state why the actual grant of Rs65,000 has not been increased? May I request the hon. Minister to see to it that the processing of the application is done as soon as possible because we have a lot of hassle and a lot of people waiting for months and months to have this casting of the slabs. They wait for the money to, in fact, cast the slabs.

Dr. Kasenally: Let me respond to that because it is very interesting. I think initially the slab grant was Rs45,000, it has been increased to Rs50,000 and only recently, it has been increased to Rs65,000. So, we are going up taking into consideration the increasing cost of living.

As far as processing is concerned we have reduced it and I have seen to it personally. Coincidentally, this morning I approved the allocation of 300 cases of casting of slabs and we are putting pressure on the NHDC to do it promptly.

Mr Baloomoody: Can I ask the hon. Minister on *item 2822201, Upfront Grant Scheme for First Time Buyers*, how many have been used in this amount of Rs8 m. which was allocated for last year and what is the percentage?

Under the last *item 28222015 Transfer of title deeds of ex-CHA houses*, we know, Mr Chairperson, that most of these houses are in a very bad state, especially the slabs. May I know whether provisions have been made in the budget to assist those who want to redo – not casting the slabs – at least to redo their slabs.

Dr. Kasenally: As far as the ex-CHA is concerned, Mr Chairperson, we have made a special effort to see to it that those people who really need it, get it. We have got a problem because some of them who have already applied for it and have even gone to the Notary, their title deeds are ready, but they cannot pay it for the simple reason that they are going to pay Rs10 and some of them are 80 years old. They say Rs10 per year, they don't want to pay. Apart from the Rs2,000, they have to pay also some notary fees.

Mr Jhugroo: Mr Chairperson, regarding casting of roof slabs, can I know how many cases of cheating have been reported and whether this has been referred to the Police?

Dr. Kasenally: I have not made an enquiry on that, but we do come across it. In fact, the Police are investigating and even ICAC is investigating. I must say that they do that in connivance with some of the Inspectors, in fact, two Inspectors were involved: one has been retired promptly and another one has been sacked.

Mr François: Under the same item Casting of Roof Slab Grant Scheme, may I ask the hon. Minister whether he can circulate a list of beneficiaries from Rodrigues and the amount granted to them.

Dr. Kasenally: Yes, I shall.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, I think I heard the hon. Minister stating that when the area is less, it is being paid *pro rata*, but when it is more, the maximum is being given. May I ask the hon. Minister whether - when the roof is above 100m² - these applications are being entertained? According to my information, when it is more, it is being disregarded. So, has there been a change in policy in the sense that when it is above 100m², this request too, is being entertained.

Dr. Kasenally: No, Mr Chairperson. We do try to help these people, but sometimes what happens is that when it is only plus or minus 5, we just do it. They say the beam area is 100m²; the allowable prime area is 150 m² with a flexibility of plus or minus 5. He should not already be the owner of a house and should not have benefitted from grants before.

Mr Ameer Meea: Coming back to Military road, now when it has come to our knowledge that the contractor has been changed and that the MPI would carry the projects, may I know from the hon. Minister what would be the proposed selling price of the housing units? Secondly, I would like to know whether the buyers of those houses have already been selected.

Dr. Kasenally: The price should be just the same. It is a presold project for people of the middle class and it is going to go on. As far we are concerned we are also making provision for a green area.

Mr Obeegadoo: Sir, I take it we are still on *Programme Code 642*?

The Chairperson: It is Code 642.

Mr Obeegadoo: I have two issues on page 301, *item 28222013 Rehabilitation of Infrastructure of NHDC Estates*. I have drawn the Minister's attention to the problems at NHDC Atlee. I would like to know whether it is planned to address those problems at Atlee in the next financial year. Secondly, at bottom of page 300, the point raised by hon. Bodha, *item 28212023 Setting Up of Syndic for Maintenance of Housing Estates*, since there is no dedicated unit identified on the page referring relating to staff, may I know from the hon. Minister whether there is a plan already worked out as to how the syndic will be set up? Will the services be contracted out the more so as some housing units already have a syndic?

The Chairperson: We take two more questions.

Mr Seeruttun: Going back to *item 28222012 Casting of Roof Slab Grant Scheme*, I know that one of the criteria for eligibility is the earnings of the family which should not exceed Rs8,500 and that includes overtime as well. One of the problems that are faced by those families is that they do have to work hard to be able to complete the construction work, they do work extra time to get that extra money. I would ask the hon. Minister if we can consider, when taking into account the earnings of the family, exclude that overtime element so that these people could be eligible for that grant.

Dr. Kasenally: I could not agree more with the hon. Member. In fact, I have directed the NHDC to take only the basic pay. I think this is fair as the hon. Member has said. As far as hon. Obeegadoo has said, we have projected to rehabilitate the roof waterproofing of two units, especially at Camp le Vieux where it is very acute and there is one at Rose Belle. Only a certain amount has been earmarked for that. Unfortunately, Atlee has not come as far as the roofing is concerned, but rehabilitation works, as far as water infrastructure and electricity are concerned, these will be carried out in all these housing estates including Atlee. I know the hon. Minister has made repeated pleas to me and I think it can be possible, because I know in Curepipe, it is a bit cold and we will see what we can do.

Mr Bodha: I understand that a number of social housing units have already been completed in Glen Park and Henrietta and I also understood that there is a short list. May I ask the hon. Minister when these housing units would be allocated and if I may also ask out of the 242 service sites whether there are any in Henrietta?

Dr. Kasenally: Mr Speaker, Sir, there is none in Henrietta. As far as the remaining units at Glen Park, they will be allocated within the weeks to come.

Programme Code 642: Social Housing Development (Rs299,981,000), on question put, was agreed to.

Programme Code 643: Land Management and Physical Planning was called.

The Chairperson: Let us start at page 301, the Programme Code starts at 643: *Land Management and Physical Planning*..

Mr Francois: On item 22130003 (b) *Review of District Outline Planning Scheme*, may I know from the hon. Minister how many urban outline schemes have been proclaimed under the Planning and Development Act 2004?

The Chairperson: Hon. Minister, it is on the same issue.

Mr Bodha: In regard to the studies I would like to know who carried out the studies and whether there are any reports which have completed and whether we can have access to those reports.

Dr. Kasenally: Most of the urban schemes were prepared in the 1980's and there was a need for comprehensive review. Tenders were floated on 19 February 2010 and contract awarded on 11 May 2011. The contract has been awarded to Halpro group and this project which amounts to about Rs32 m. inclusive have already started and their contractual period would be for duration of 25 months. The project is, therefore, expected to be completed by 30 June of 2013. As we could naturally see there has been a delay because initially no bids were found to be non-responsive and therefore tenders had to be refloated.

As far as outline scheme for District Councils, it has already been approved for the four districts. They were initially approved in 2006, were modified partially, taking into consideration the mineral zoning. Policies were redrafted to make them clearer and this has given way for projects which were held previously due to mineral zoning to be undertaken. The new outline schemes are already operational.

The Chairperson: Hon. Obeegadoo!

Mr Obeegadoo: My question relates to the hydrographic surveys, *item 22130002 Hydrographic Surveys by Indian Navy*. As far as I am aware, Mr Chairperson, these surveys have been going on for a very long time when I was Minister of Fisheries 15 years ago. I would like to know from the hon. Minister what is the outcome of these surveys? Do we have reports that are made public? Is this a project that is ongoing indefinitely? Is there a point in time when we stop and take stock of the situation? Could we have some clarification?

Dr. Kasenally: Mr Chairperson, these projects have not been ongoing for quite a long time - I do not know in his own time - but these surveys have started following a signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Mauritius and the Government of the Republic of India by the Prime Minister on his visit to India. Since then 18 hydrographic surveys were completed in collaboration with the Indian Authorities since 2006. Five nautical charts for Port Louis, Port Mathurin, Agaléga, St Brandon and the continental shelf of Rodrigues. Currently, all around the island, the surveys have been done for the harbour entrance and for the region, the whole of Rivière Noire and also on the Eastern Coast. Now, we are left to do the survey for our Exclusive Economic Zone which is quite vast.

Mr Lesjongard: *On page 302, item 26313091 Current Grant-Town and Country Planning Board*, may we know from the hon. Minister who heads the Board now and who are the members and why there has been a decrease of almost Rs2 m. with regard to year 2012?

Mr Ameer Meea: On the LAVIMS project may I ask the hon. Minister, it is

Mr Chairperson: No, let's us finish with the page 302 first.

Mr Baloomoody: On page 302, *item 22120 Fees*, we found that there has been an increase of 50% for the year 2012. May we know who the beneficiaries for these fees are?

Dr. Kasenally: The Board operates with a limited staff to prepare appeal cases for all over the island. In the case of appeal, each case is visited and a report made to members. There is one administrative staff, four staffs which are technical; the Board is composed of a Chairman who is the Permanent Secretary of my Ministry, 10 other members representing various Ministries and two representatives of the Association of Rural and Urban Authorities. The Chairperson fee, is Rs15,600 per month whereas the members are remunerated at Rs625 per sitting. A subcommittee of the Board which is composed of three Board Members, one of whom is the Chairman, hears appeals where parties are not represented by counsels. We are doing one almost every week to clear the backlog. The allocation for the Chairperson of the sub-committee

is Rs790 per sitting. Very often, parties appeal against the decision of the Board to the Supreme Court and the Board has to support its decision.

Mrs Hanoomanjee: Mr Chairperson, on page 302, *item 22160 Overseas Training*, I see there is only an amount of Rs500,000 where provision has been made. Can we know how many officers will be trained with this amount of money?

Dr. Kasenally: As far as we are concerned, training is just meant for their stipend and their fares because a lot of the training is met by donor countries. I don't have the number but, I understand, over the past year about 10 of our technical staffs especially surveyors and technicians from the Survey Division and Planning Division have been.

Somebody mentioned about the decrease in provision of the TCPB; this is because it is now housed in Ebène and shares facilities with the Ministry of Housing. So, we have made some savings by moving to Ebène.

Mr Uteem: As a follow-up to the grant to Town and Country Planning Board, may I know from the hon. Minister, in 2011 how many cases were heard by the Town and Country Planning Board and what is the time limit within which they deliver their judgement on average?

Dr. Kasenally: I have got that somewhere but, you know, I want to put just something about *Overseas Training* there are bilateral agreements and provision is made just for *per diem* and stipends. Now, as far as the TCPB is concerned, the number of appeals lodged in 2011 is 210 until October 2011 and the same number, incidentally, was lodged in 2010. The number of appeals disposed of was 12 by the subcommittee - this is where Counsels were represented - there were only 12 because when Counsels are represented they take a long time because it's a question of fixing dates, people may not be free. If one Counsel is free the other one is not free and also there is postponement due to unforeseen circumstances. The subcommittee where Counsel is not represented, 166 have been dealt with this year and there are only 10 cases pending.

Mr Ameer Meea: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Still, on *Sub-Programme 302*, may we move to LAVIMS project?

The Chairperson: No. Let me put the question!

Mr Ameer Meea: It is on page 302, it continues; it is the same programme...

The Chairperson: I will come on that.

Mr Lesjongard: At page 302, *item 22030 Rent*, the value now is more than Rs7 m. Can we know from the hon. Minister whether we are talking of the same building in Ebène and I understand that there have been complaints with regard to access to that building. Can we know from the hon. Minister whether solutions have been found?

Dr. Kasenally: I go everyday there; I have no difficulty in access. So many people come and see me, we do not have access problems. I don't know particularly what sort of access it is because we have put pointers everywhere and the sum earmarked is the rent being payable for Ebène. We pay only one rent now; as the hon. Member would see, there is not rent in all other programmes.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Ameer Meea, at page 303!

Mr Ameer Meea: On the LAVIMS project, can I ask the hon. Minister what is the total cost of the project up to now and when will the LAVIMS project be fully operational?

Dr. Kasenally: The LAVIMS project will be probably completed early next year. There have been some delays in it because there was a bit more than 100 additional properties which had come since the project was initiated and which had to be taken on board. There was also the upgrading of security system at the Registrar General Department and the expected date of handing over is December this year or early January.

The initial project value was 18 million dollars. The variations had already been approved by the CPB and there were additional proposals, as I said; this added about 1.5 million dollars and there was upgrading at security which was 22,000 dollars. The revised project value is about 19,860,264 dollars and to date we have effected 18,695,000 dollars. There is a balance of 1,164,962 dollars. This will also be kept as retention money pending no impediment in the project being fully operational.

Mr Bhagwan: Concerning the implementation of the LAVIMS project, can the hon. Minister inform the House whether, at this particular time, the Ministry has in hand a complete list of all State lands which has not been developed and where we have specific, I would say, information category-wise, region-wise, the *superficie*, and whether it is residential or otherwise? Is this information readily available at any point in time with the implementation of the LAVIMS project?

Dr. Kasenally: Once, the project is fully operational in the months to come, we will have all the details.

Mr Bodha: Mr Chairperson, as regards the LAVIMS project, we have for the maintenance support: Rs36 m. Can the hon. Minister enlighten us as to this budget and what is the nature of the support and whether there is some sort of capacity building to be able to operate the system once the project has been implemented?

Mr Baloomoody: On this page, the last item, *Acquisition of Land*, can I ask the hon. Minister whether there is now any proper control database with regard to acquisition of land? We know that the Director of Audit has said that many lands have been acquired by the Ministry, but has not been developed. Now, may I ask whether there is a proper control database to ensure that acquired lands are being developed?

The Chairperson: Can we have an answer, hon. Minister?

Dr. Kasenally: Yes, Mr Chairperson. As far as LAVIMS is concerned, there must be some maintenance of the hardware where required and it includes training so that there is an element of capacity building because we have invested so much; we also have to have the human resources to be able to control it. Of course, there would be also consultants needed from time to time.

As far as acquisition is concerned, I agree with the hon. Member. In fact, the policy of my Ministry is not to acquire any land for anybody unless they have a well written-up project and they have the money to implement it.

Mr Lesjongard: Mr Chairperson, on page 303, the *LAVIMS Project*, that is, *item 31132101*, can I ask the hon. Minister how many officers at the level of his Ministry will be attached to that section and how many of those officers have been fully trained to operate the system until now?

Dr. Kasenally: In fact, we have got officers fully trained into it and we have set up also in the context of LAVIMS, a Cadastral Implementation Unit. It's a dedicated Cadastral Unit which has been set up to ensure the maintenance of the cadastre. The present staffing consists of 21 persons which comprises of a Principal Surveyor, two Surveyors, Trainee Surveyors, Senior Survey Technicians, Cartographer and Trainee Cartographer.

Mr Seeruttun: Thank you, Mr Chairperson, still on LAVIMS project. Will the hon. Minister inform the House, in terms of percentage, how many households have been involved in that project?

Dr. Kasenally: In fact, we are upgrading it almost daily and it is a significant number. It is a question of having the pin number. We are having some teething problems, but basically by the end of the project, at the end of December, almost all of them will be enlisted in that project.

Mr Bhagwan: Can I take this opportunity, on this item, to request the Minister to make an appeal? We have State lands, be it in rural, even centre of urban areas, where projects have been identified by Ministries which have not been developed and all these lands have become nuisance. I think Government should set the example. Can the hon. Minister, at least, as Minister of Housing and Lands, see to it with the Minister of Environment and Local Authorities that these State lands are being maintained and do not become a *repère* not only for drug addicts, but also for rats.

Dr. Kasenally: Yes, there are small rats and big rats, but we are taking care of them. It has been found, after we have set up the LAVIMS, that there are 447 residential properties and 31,378 commercial properties.

Mr Ameer Meea: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Just a point of clarification; there is an amount of Rs30m. for retention money. If I am not wrong, I heard the hon. Minister stating that there is an amount of 164,000 dollars for retention money. Can the hon. Minister clarify whether this sum of Rs30 m. is right?

Secondly, in the *Major Achievements*, it is mentioned that LAVIMS project has been completed and the hon. Minister just stated that the project will, in fact, be completed in December or January next year. Can the hon. Minister clarify it?

Dr Kasenally: Of course, we know there have been teething problems. It is almost completed actually, but we do have teething problems because it is so complex and highly technical. There is an element of *rodage*-running in. As far as the retention money is concerned, it is Rs30,000. Part of it is still there, we are not giving it to them yet.

Mr Bodha: Mr Chairperson, when we were addressing the issue at the Ministry of Infrastructure, one of the constraints raised in this budget was lengthy cumbersome procedures for land acquisition and lack of trained labour and that cause delay in implementation of project. May I ask the hon. Minister whether he will do something to address this issue?

Dr. Kasenally: The delay is not really coming to us because once we take the decision that we are going to acquire it compulsorily, we issue a notice in the Gazette and it becomes Government property. The delay is in compensating these people, but we are also trying to find

a new system. We are proposing to bring amendment to the legislation to allow payment of compensation as recommended by the Valuation Department once Government becomes land owner. Should there be any representations regarding the quantum of compensation payable, the matter will be referred directly to the Board of Assessment which, as proposed by the Ministry of Finance, will be replaced by the Revenue and Valuation Appeal Tribunal. On determination of the case, the balance will be paid together with any interest accrued.

The Chairperson: Hon. François, last question now!

Mr François: With regard to this LAVIMS system there is a fair bit acquisition of land and basically it is agricultural land also. Will there be a full workout cadastral to be linked with the LAVIMS system for good monitoring in the future?

Dr Kasenally: Mr Chairperson, the cadastre is invariably linked and forms part of the LAVIMS system. That is why we have put up a cadastral unit.

Programme Code 643: Land Management and Physical Planning (Rs448,245,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions.

Programme Code 501: Policy and Management for Social Affairs was called.

The Chairperson: Hon. Mrs Ribot!

Mrs Ribot: Mr Chairperson, I would like to know from the hon. Minister...

Mr Chairperson: The hon. Member should quote the page.

Mrs Ribot: On page 311 *item 50204*, the justification of the substantive increase in the *residential and recreational activities*.

Mr Chairperson: Any other question!

Mrs Ribot: I would like to know from the hon. Minister concerning *item 50402 Rehabilitation of juvenile Offenders*, the number of Rehabilitation Youth Centres. The number of juvenile...

The Chairperson: Programme 501!

Mr Bhagwan: On page 315, *item 22120007 Fees for Training*, can we have an idea of its training? Is it for what?

Mr Chairperson: Any other question on programme 501?

Mrs Ribot: On page 314, *item 21110 Personal Emoluments*, being given that there are only eight additional offices as can be seen on page 32, can I know from the hon. Minister the increase in compensation of employees and personal emoluments?

Mr Chairperson: Any other question on programme 501?

Mr Seeruttun: Under *item 22900 Other goods and services*, there are some Rs2m. earmarked. Could we have some details about what is included in that goods and services?

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Minister!

Mrs Bappoo: Concerning the construction of the Recreational Centre for senior citizens, this is one project which is being scheduled on my budget as from 2014. It is at Riambel. It is on 6 *arpents 50 perches*, estimated at Rs197m., but scheduled for 2014. Concerning fees for training, the provisions are made for payment of fees; one is to the University of Mauritius in respect of five offices of Social Security cadres following Diploma course in social work sponsored by the Ministry and also resource persons conducting induction course and in-house training expenses at times, a stipend which is being paid to foreign resource persons. Goods and services, this is for payment of uniform allowance to office care attendants and minor grades, also catering expenses and syndic fees for cleaning of lifts, lighting, etc at the NPF building in Port Louis.

Mrs Ribot: Mr Chairperson, I don't think I got the answer to the increase in compensation and personal emoluments? It is *item 21110 Personal Emoluments*.

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, at page 308, the major constraint faced by the Ministry is described as lack of capacity to formulate innovative policies, that is, research and policy formulation, and reference is made to a Planning and Implementation Unit. At page 314, I cannot find any reference to this unit or to any initiative to address this major constraint identified. Could we have some explanation?

Mrs Bappoo: Mr Chairperson, with regard to challenges to the lack of capacity to formulate innovative policies, we have been allocated in the budget one Lead Analyst, one Senior Analyst and one Analyst who will be posted to the Ministry. They are going to assist the Ministry in the formulation of new policies. In addition, with the development partners such as the UNDP, they will be working in collaboration with the Ministry to set up the social register of Mauritius.

Mr Baloomoody: Mr Chairperson, page 314, with regard to *compensation of employees*, I take the hon. Minister back to page 308, *Strategic Note 1. Major Achievements*. We find that 3,000 employers were sensitised on employability of persons with disabilities. Can the hon. Minister inform the House how many people who were listed as people with disabilities have been employed following that sensitised programme?

Mrs Bappoo: In view of the emphasis on the integration of persons with disabilities, 3,000 employers have been sensitised. But the Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Board and the MEF have allowed us to tap from another 1,000 of registered employers at the MEF.

For the year 2011, we trained some 75 people with disabilities and we managed to get mostly 60 among them in employment. The Training and Employment Board at Calebasses has its own training programme in various disciplines for people with disabilities.

I do understand that there is a lot of campaign to be done on that. That's why we are envisaging maybe to amend the law, to see what will be the way forward to impose upon the employers as the Act stipulates that they have to recruit 3% of their 35 batch employees. But even that, the process is quite slow. We are in consultation with the Attorney General's Office to see how we can make the law harsher.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, we are being told that 3,000 employers have been sensitised. May we know from the hon. Minister how these sensitisation campaigns were carried out and by whom, and whether she can give us some details?

Mrs Ribot: Mr Chairperson, I heard the hon. Minister mention the employment of five advisers. Could we get the names, qualifications and the remuneration of those advisers?

Mrs Bappoo: Concerning the employers, it is a long process for sensitisation campaigns etc, but we are trying, Mr Chairperson, to do our best in order to be able to have more people with disabilities in employment.

As far as the advisers are concerned, we have the Senior Adviser of the Ministry, Mr Deerpalsing, on pension and social insurance matters, Mr Mooneswur Nattoo, Adviser in public relation matters, Mr Sankur Gowrea, Adviser on information matters, Mr Soopaya Pillay Mauree, Adviser on residential care homes and the elderly, Mr Kaviraj Sanchurn, Engineer and Senior Adviser to my Ministry on issues pertaining to infrastructure, buildings, and also Dr. Ameena Sorefan, posted to my Ministry and consultant on social development matters.

Mr Uteem: To have a follow-up on this, may I know from the hon. Minister what efforts are being made also with regard to the Civil Service to increase the number of handicapped in employment?

Mrs Bappoo: It will demand indeed, Mr Chairperson, a lot of efforts because the next group of employers we are going to target for 2012 will be those from the parastatal. We are going to target all the parastatal bodies. From there, we will have consultations with the Ministry of Civil Service Affairs to see what can be done, so that in the Civil Service also people with disabilities can have their chance.

Mr Quirin: Mr Chairperson, page 314, *item 21210 Social Contributions*. I would like to know from the hon. Minister why nothing was earmarked for 2011, and who are those in 2012 who are going to benefit from these contributions.

Mrs Bappoo: This is a new item, Mr Chairperson, where there is provision for payment of contribution to the National Savings Fund to 1,170 staff of the Ministry, formerly shown under the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development Budget programme. Now, it has been decentralised to respective Ministries.

Mrs Hanoomanjee: At page 315, *item 22100 Publications and Stationery*, there are so many forms of social assistance benefits which are given. Can I ask the hon. Minister whether there is any publication which has been issued and which gives an indication, at least, to the public of the different forms of social assistance which they can benefit?

Mrs Bappoo: Yes, Mr Chairperson, we do work on a new publication each time after the Budget. So, it is a yearly feature and now, after this Budget also, the new pamphlet will come up and will be issued to the public at large.

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, I want to go back to my earlier question - major constraints and lack of capacity for a review of the social protection sector. Since this is the first priority, the major constraint identified, where in the Budget for next year is it foreseen that there will be a thorough going review of social protection in Mauritius?

Mrs Bappoo: This issue has been discussed with the Ministry of Finance, Mr Chairperson. That is why there are additional posts of cadres and professionals like Lead Analyst and Senior Analyst, who will be helping the Ministry to set up whatever we need as new policies from the Social Register of Mauritius.

Mrs Ribot: Mr Chairperson, with regard to Senior Advisers, we have got the names of the Advisers, but I also asked their salary.

Mrs Bappoo: I don't have this with me, but I will circulate it.

Programme Code 501: Policy and Management for Social Affairs (Rs100,443,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 502: Social Protection was called.

Mrs Labelle: Under *item 22130002 Social Register of Mauritius Surveys*, Mr Chairperson, last year, this was the first achievement and we were told that the first phase of the Social Register was completed. We were also told that there was a consultant and we were awaiting the final report. May I ask the hon. Minister whether this report has been received and where matters stand regarding that?

Mrs Bappoo: Yes, Mr Chairperson, we have completed most of the surveys from the consultant that we had since 2008 from the UNDP. Now, the present status is that the software for the register will be developed; all works by the UNDP external consultant in terms of reports have been submitted and discussion is actually going on with the Ministry of Social Integration and NEF on how we may use the SRM system to gather information, depending on our policies where we want to help the most vulnerable. As mentioned by the Minister of Finance, the two priority areas will be the housing sector and the 2,000 children for the crèches.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, with your permission, last year, we were told that the development of the software was completed and testing was going on. May I know which is which? Because last year it was completed and testing was going on but, I think, I heard the hon. Minister stating that we are going to develop the software.

Mrs Bappoo: The development of software has nearly been completed because we are now going to start. Yes, it has been completed; the testing also has been completed and now we are going to focus on the two new policies which are housing and *crèches*.

Dr. S. Boolell: On page 315, *Programme Coded 27, Social Benefits*, under *item 27210 Social Assistance Benefits in Cash*, all the social assistance benefits seem to have been consolidated under one item. I would be more grateful if the Minister could, at least, circulate the various details concerning Funeral Grants and at the same time circulate the current transfers to charitable institutions and religious bodies to again have the details of the amount of money which was given to both institutions.

Mrs Bappoo: Yes, I have all the details of these questions and I will circulate all of them.

Mr Bhagwan: On page 315, one but last, *item 28211004 Other Current Transfers Charitable Institutions*. Can the Minister, at least, later on, circulate the list of all these charitable institutions? Also under *item 28211024 Other Current Transfers Subsidy to Religious Bodies*, may we know which religious bodies receive these subsidies and what are the criteria?

There is also *item 27220001 Social Aid*. Has there been any change in the policy and are there new policies under the different types of social aid which are being given?

Mrs Bappoo: Yes, Mr Chairperson, the list of charitable institutions - some 20 of them - will be circulated with all the different criteria to the benefit of the inmates. Subsidy to Religious Bodies: in fact, this is the transfer made from the Minister of Finance just to pay the water rates of the religious bodies and each year it is budgeted to my Ministry.

Mr Bodha: May I ask the hon. Minister, as regards the register, the number of households which were surveyed...

The Chairperson: Which page?

Mr Bodha: It is still the same page 315, the number of households which were surveyed to have an idea of the register and second, as regards to social aid and benefits we have the 60% criteria to be able to have access to social aid. May I ask the hon. Minister whether she considers the possibility of *quelque part de réactualiser les critères en fonction de la vie d'aujourd'hui* ?

Mrs Bappoo: I think this is a matter of policy, Mr Chairperson but, as far as the survey is concerned, we have grossly some 6,000.

Mrs Radegonde: Mr Chairperson, at page 315, under *item 27210003 Unemployment Hardship Relief*, I would like to ask the hon. Minister the number of children who have benefited from this scheme under *item 27210013 Assistance for S.C and H.S.C. Examination Fees*.

Mrs Bappoo: Yes, Mr Chairperson, there has been for the hundred percent refund in all for SC : 10,245; HSC: 4477, which makes 14,722.

For the second scheme, which is the 50% refund, for the SC it is 2,239; for HSC it is 1,135 and the total for both schemes is 18,087 students.

Mr Seeruttun: Mr Chairperson, again on the social benefits for the year 2011 some Rs732 m. were earmarked, would the hon. Minister inform the House so far how much has been spent in terms of percentage for this year?

Mrs Bappoo: Which page and which items?

Mr Seeruttun: At page 315, *item 27 Social Benefits* where Rs732.6 m. had been earmarked for 2011, how much has been spent so far for this year in terms of percentage?

Mrs Bappoo: A sum of Rs572,670,000 has been spent this year on various items according to the criteria for social aid and this figure is up to 22 November.

Mr Bhagwan: At page 315, under *item 31121801 Acquisition of Vehicles*, we are being asked to vote Rs7.1 m. for the coming year. The same item continues to page 316. Could the Minister give us the justification for asking us to go for Rs7 m. and how many vehicles are for the Ministry?

Mrs Bappoo: I tend to smile

Mr Bhagwan: Why?

Mrs Bappoo: Why? I will just explain. It is because they are not ordinary vehicles for the use of the Ministry every day. It's two Luxury Type Omnibus for senior citizens which will be attached to the two Recreation Centres at Pointe aux Sables and Belle Mare and which will be named Senior Citizen Tours.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Hon. Obeegadoo, if you are not happy, I can't do otherwise. You can't have your way all the time.

Mr Gungah: At page 315, *item 27220001 Social Aid*, may I ask the Minister the number of persons who have benefited from this social aid and on which criteria?

Mrs Bappoo: Mr Chairperson, I think it is better for me to circulate the list as it is a long one. There are those benefiting from hearing aids, wheelchairs, dentures, spectacles. There are the criteria for beneficiaries.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, regarding the acquisition of vehicles, last year a sum of R1 m. was voted. It was voted according to the last budget. May I know from the hon. Minister whether – because I don't see anything from here – this sum has been used; whether vehicles have been purchased and what has happened to the sum of R1 m. which the House voted last year?

Mrs Bappoo: I will just collect the information.

Mr Uteem: Mr Chairperson, on page 315 under *item 27 Social Benefits*, we now find it that there are social benefits given by the Ministry and also the Ministry of Social Integration plus National Empowerment Foundation. May we know from the hon. Minister how does she

coordinate between the three institutions when it comes to providing social benefits for the vulnerable?

Mrs Bappoo: These benefits, Mr Chairperson, have already been stipulated in the Social Aid Act. So, it has nothing to do with the Ministry of Social Integration. They are all stipulated in the Social Aid Act, because there are issues like UHR, assistance to fishermen, income support, funeral grants, burial expenses, etc.

Mr Baloomoody: In fact, this is an appeal to the hon. Minister, if she can look for another building for the Appeal Tribunal with regard to incapacity? Now, it is at Astor Court and it creates many difficulties for those who are handicapped, because there is no parking, they have to stop the taxi on the road. It is on the first or second floor, they have to climb upstairs. Can I ask the hon. Minister whether we can have another proper building or at least they can have proper parking and have it on the ground floor, because it is creating much inconvenience?

Mrs Bappoo: I do take note, Mr Chairperson.

Mr Obeegadoo: I have a few questions since I have been waiting for long. On page 308...

The Chairperson: I am sorry! The hon. Member must understand that there are so many other hon. Members who want to intervene and he won't be able to get his will according to his wish, it is according to the wish of the Chair.

Mr Obeegadoo: Two bites at the cherry while I am still waiting. Page 308 the first major achievement of the Ministry is referred to as...

The Chairperson: If the hon. Member continues to make such remarks, I will have to call him to order. Does he understand that? The hon. Member has no right to impute motives on the Chair or make comments on what I have said. I run this place.

Mr Obeegadoo: Yes, Sir, but if you do not want me to put questions, then I will sit down and not put any questions.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. François!

Mr François: Mr Chairperson, on page 315 under *item 272100113 Assistance for SC and HSC Examination Fees*, may I ask the hon. Minister whether she considers revisiting the eligibility criteria with regard to this assistance? I have read in local newspapers and I have been made aware of cases where parents own big mansions, they own businesses and they are still receiving this assistance. May we avoid abuse in the future?

Mrs Bappoo: To review, it is quite impossible, Mr Chairperson, because it is a policy matter, but I can reassure the Member, to see the social enquiry which is on, so that it is really genuine students or families who can benefit from the scheme.

The Chairperson: Any further question on Sub-Code 50201? We go to Sub-Code 50203.

Mr Seeruttun: On page 315 under *item 272100113 Assistance for SC and HSC Examination Fees*, I can see that there were some Rs150 m. earmarked for 2011. Are there still parents awaiting a refund of their subsidy? I believe that there are parents that have paid the fees and have made a claim for a refund as they are eligible. Will the hon. Minister confirm that there are still some parents who are awaiting that refund from the Ministry?

Mrs Bappoo: I need to confirm. We have made all the payments to the MES. We do not do the payments from the Ministry of Social Security; all the documents, etc. are sent to the MES. I do not know from this, if there is any question of refund; I will try to investigate.

Mr Obeegadoo: Can I?

The Chairperson: Yes.

Mr Obeegadoo: On page 308, first major achievement quoted 23% additional beneficiaries of social aid. Does this indicate a major impoverishment of the Mauritian population? Would the Minister kindly provide us figures for the number of beneficiaries of social aid for financial years 2010/2011 respectively?

My second point is at page 311 under *item 50201 Social Safety Net*. Could we possibly have the number of beneficiaries of food aid for the year 2011? I have one third question, Sir, it concerns the constraint mentioned at page 308, *Lack of infrastructural facilities at local office level*. I have made many representations concerning the inappropriateness of the Social Security Office at Curepipe to the Minister's predecessor and possibly to herself. I would like to know whether next year it is envisaged to re-house in more appropriate premises the Social Security Office in Curepipe. And one very last point, at page 316, *Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons*. I note that the sums projected to be spent are exactly the same as 2011. Therefore, no account is being taken of inflation. Would the Minister care to comment?

Mrs Bappoo: There has been somewhat 23% increase in the number of social aid cases. I am informed that the number of applications received for social aid on issues of assistive devices, income support, allowance for purchase of nappies, etc, for elderly people from 75 years

plus and where cases have been rejected also, there has been an increase of up to 23%, for example, 10,000 additional students assisted for refund in exams fees, around 4,000 new applications for income support, around 1,000 new applications for cash assistance social aid, 300 new recipients for incontinence allowance and 100 more applications for UHR. There has been quite a reasonable increase as far as social aid is concerned and that's the trend which is going on.

Concerning local office, exactly I do not know where is the issue for Curepipe, but I will certainly check it. But I am informed that land has already been vested in the Ministry for Curepipe; the local office will be then constructed, maybe phase-wise. I do not know exactly where is the land, but the land has been vested in the Ministry and we are going to work on it so that we can have a new Social Security Office maybe constructed phase-wise.

The Chairperson: I can accommodate a last question from hon. Mrs Hanoomanjee because of time constraint.

Mrs Hanoomanjee: On page 315 under *item 28211004 Other Current Transfers – Charitable Institutions*, a sum of Rs60 m. has been earmarked and we know a number of charitable institutions benefit. Can I ask the hon. Minister what mechanism has been put in place at the level of her Ministry to see to it that, in fact, the funds made available trickle down to the poor, the needy and the downtrodden?

Mrs Bappoo: I have already answered that question, Mr Chairperson. I will be circulating the list of charitable institutions, but the inmates in the charitable institutions all go under the criteria which are stipulated in the law under the Residential Care Homes and they are all officially registered charitable institutions.

Mr Baloomoody: A remark on the appellation in the Budget, at page 316. The current grant to Chagossian (Ilois) Welfare Fund. I remember we passed a law in Parliament where we changed from Ilois Welfare Fund to Chagossian Welfare Fund. So, there is no point to put 'Ilois'. We should go straight to Chagossian Welfare Fund.

Mrs Bappoo: The hon. Member is right.

The Chairperson: Point conceded.

Programme Code 502: Social Protection (Rs1,403,040,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions - Programme Code 503: National Pension Management was called.

Mrs Ribot: Mr Chairperson, I have two questions for the hon. Minister. First of all, I would like to have a breakdown, a list of the Non-State Actors under *item 22130001 Studies (Support to Non-State Actors)* and at the same time understand why the funds have been reduced so drastically from Rs4 m. to Rs2 m.

My second question is under *item 26313093 Current Grant – Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Board*. Can we have the ...

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: We are on Programme 503 at page 319. We have allocated 20 minutes for each Programme Code, the 20 minutes are over. In fact, I was generous by giving two minutes more.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, we are on *Programme 50203: Protection and Well Being of the Elderly*. Mr Chairperson, last year, we were informed of cases of bad treatment against elderly. May I know from the hon. Minister what has been provided regarding cases of ill-treatment to elderly? This is my first question. Mr Chairperson, there was training of carers for elderly. We did have a first batch, I think, last year. May I know from the hon. Minister whether this programme is ongoing and how many carers for elderly have been trained during this year?

Mrs Bappoo: The programme for the protection of elderly people as well as the sensitisation programme is ongoing. There have been some 350 talks from January to October 2011 and we have received some 675 cases; 606 have been cleared and the others are having some follow-up. I want to reassure the Member that everything is on. Concerning the elderly watch, they are doing an excellent job both in Mauritius and Rodrigues. The training programme for carers is ongoing. Last year, we have completed the first batch and I think next week we are starting with a second batch. We will be going for 100 carers to be trained each year because it is a programme up to 2015.

Mr Baloomoody: At page 318, under *item 22120001 Fees for Medical Boards ...*

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: No. We have already voted Programme 502. I am sorry. We agreed 20 minutes per Programme Code. Programme 502 has consumed the 20 minutes and now we are on Programme 503.

(Interruptions)

No, but it is voted! Hon. Member, this is not the last exercise that we are doing on this issue. You can come with a Parliamentary Question and you will get the necessary reply.

Mrs Labelle: With due respect, I think that my hon. colleague is referring to *Sub-Programme 50203: Protection and Well Being of the Elderly* which continues on the next page and it refers to fees for Medical Boards and domiciliary visits.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: We agreed for 20 minutes. If Members take all the 20 minutes on one particular issue, how can we proceed? We have to proceed with the work. Now, we are on *Programme Code 503: National Pension Management*. It starts at page 319.

Mr Uteem: Mr Chairperson ...

The Chairperson: Questions must be short, answers must be short. I don't want long answers.

Mr Uteem: At page 319, under *item 27210103 Basic Invalid Pension*, I see that there is a reduction of Rs100 m. May I know why there is this reduction? There is the *item 22120001 Fees for Medical Boards* which, I think, determines who is eligible for invalid pension. What are the criteria for selection of the Medical Board?

Mr Baloomoody: Regarding the same issue, one answer will fit us both. At page 318, under *item 22120001 Fees for Medical Boards and Domiciliary Visits*, may I know from the hon. Minister whether this Medical Board also visits people in old age pensioners home, because we know that there have been many cases of *maltraitance* which have been reported.

Mr Obeegadoo: On the same issue, Sir, we know that considerable difficulties are caused to persons who have to wait for meetings of these Medical Boards and go down to Rose Hill. With the funds projected for next year, is it possible for this Medical Board to sit in different parts of the island?

Mrs Bappoo: I know that the Medical Tribunal sits in Rose Hill. The others do sit, if I am not mistaken, in other areas. But I am going to see to it. The criteria that are requested, I have it and I will table it so that Members can have access to it. Here it is, Mr Chairperson, the Medical Board sits in 17 centres across the island. The criteria for the Medical Board, for BIP and so on, I am going to table it.

The Chairperson: There is one question which has not been answered.

Mr Uteem: It concerns reduction of Rs100 m. for basic invalid pension.

Mrs Bappoo: In 2011 the number of beneficiaries for BIP were 26,999. Based on this, the amount has been calculated for this year.

(Interruptions)

If we have more, we will request the Ministry of Finance to see to it.

Dr. S. Boolell: The *item 26210 Current Grant to International Organisations* is to the tune of half a million rupees. I would like to know, Mr Chairperson, what do we get in exchange for that kind of generous contribution?

The Chairperson: Any further question! Yes, hon. François!

Mr François: Mr Chairperson, on page 319, under *item 27210103 Basic Invalid Pension*, I raised the issue of unjust and unfair disallowance of claims in Rodrigues at Adjournment time. May I ask the hon. Minister to inform us what remedial action has been taken so far?

Mrs Bappoo: Mr Chairperson, it is different for Rodrigues and Mauritius because in Rodrigues, the assessment is being done by the doctors from the Ministry of Health in Rodrigues, not the Medical Board as here. But when I was there, I think, one month back, on mission, we encountered complaints from people under the issue of award for BIP. What we have done is that we have had discussions with the Medical Director in Rodrigues.

(Interruptions)

I just want to inform the hon. Member that we have had discussions with the Medical Director in Rodrigues who is responsible for the Medical Board Assessment which is being done there. We are working on a protocol from Mauritius to Rodrigues and I believe that this will be helpful for them for their assessment. Guidelines will also be provided.

The contribution to ISA is mostly for the technical expertise and exchange programmes and workshops and seminars and I should say, Mr Chairperson, that the Mauritian model on social protection is always being requested at ISA because we are one of the best models for social protection.

Mr Bodha: May I ask the hon. Minister as regards to *fees for Medical Board* how many applicants appeared before the Board and how many were rejected when they came to request for social aid?

Mrs Bappoo: I have the figures for 2010, but I do not have those of 2011. For 2010, the number of claimants scheduled was 36,100, allowed 16,956 which is mostly 47% and not allowed 11,595, mostly 32%.

Dr. Sorefan: May I know from the hon. Minister whether the domiciliary visits of doctors could be extended, not only for doctors, but also to dental surgeons, as old people do not only have medical problems, they also have dental problems?

Mrs Bappoo: We do not have any dental surgeon at the level of the Medical Board, Mr Chairperson.

Mr Lesjongard: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. At page 319 *item 28212022 Contribution to NPF on behalf of Domestic Workers*, can we get an indication on the number of domestic workers and whether a survey has been carried out?

Mrs Bappoo: There is a Remuneration Order, Mr Chairperson, for domestic workers under different categories of employees which are mentioned in that R.O. and the figures that we have got here are: private household employees may be some 4500, but we have to start the campaign so that we can embark on this new issue of Government contributing to the NPF of these employees.

Mrs Ribot: Could I get some clarification from the hon. Minister concerning the meaning of 'Other Basic Pensions'?

Mrs Bappoo: Yes, but it is a long list. I have to circulate, but the most important ones we have are the severe handicapped, the additional BIP, the Brown Sequard Hospital, people of 60 years, the contributory pension and so forth. It is a long list, so I will circulate.

The Chairperson: Yes, the Minister will have to circulate.

Mr Seeruttun: On page 319 *item 22120001 Fees for Medical Boards and Domiciliary Visits*, will the hon. Minister consider it proper to circulate a list of all the members of that Board and the fees paid to them in 2010?

Mrs Bappoo: I will certainly do it.

Mr Uteem: Again on *item 27210103 Basic Invalid Pension*, may I know from the hon. Minister the number of beneficiaries of invalid pension for 2010-2011 who are no longer benefitting from that pension in 2012?

Mrs Bappoo: I need notice to get the figures.

Programme Code 503: National Pension Management (Rs10,349,587,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 504: Probation and Social Rehabilitation was called.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, on page 320, I am referring to *item 22120031 – Fees for Community Service Work*, may I ask the hon. Minister if she can give us some information regarding this particular item. It seems to be a new one.

Mr Chairperson, I would also like to ask the hon. Minister if she has the number of young persons who have been rehabilitated under this programme. Is she contemplating an evaluation of the rehabilitation programme that has been carried out during the past five years?

Mrs Bappoo: Yes, Mr Chairperson, this is quite a new item from the last Budget since we amended the law in 2009. The beneficiaries of the CSO offenders as from the age of 16 convicted on a term of imprisonment not exceeding 2 years and whose fines or unpaid balance do not exceed Rs25,000. So, the duration has been minimum 60 hours and the maximum 300 hours. Number of workers who have been working on this programme: 1,806 male, 145 female and there have been 13 boys also involved. The annual average number of CSO workers is 225. I think that these are the most important points. We amended the law concerning those children as from 16, so there also have been 13 minors rehabilitated in this programme.

Mrs Labelle: May I ask the hon. Minister whether this fee is being paid to the offenders who are doing the community work? I failed to get this right.

Mrs Bappoo: I would just check for the answer.

Mr Obeegadoo: I refer to the two last items under *Probation and Care Services – Probation Home for Girls, Probation Home for Boys*. The Budget Speech announced the creation of 6 new shelters for children, if I am not mistaken.

Mrs Bappoo: It is not for my Ministry.

Mr Obeegadoo: In that case, can I ask the hon. Minister how, with the present budgetary provision, she will be able to meet the increasing demand, as all the Members of Parliament know, it is extremely difficult to get admission for a young person into one of these Homes because they are full and there is no space. So, how are we going to cope next year?

Mrs Bappoo: These are orders from Court and from there the probation service is responsible for the rehabilitation programme. There was even one question put as to whether there is a fee paid to the workers and supervisors and I am told yes, it is Rs500 per session.

Mrs Ribot: Mr Chairperson, according to the position titles, it seems that there are 3 posts that are vacant which I consider important. On page 324, the *Head of the Institutional Care Division* which is a new post, I would like to know whether it is going to be filled. *Code 175060 – Female Assistant Superintendent for the Rehabilitation Youth Centre and Code 232147 – the post of matron*, are those posts going to be filled?

Mr Baloomoody: We still have not had an answer for the question regarding community service. We are allocating Rs1 m. for fees. We want to know who benefit from the fees. Is it the accused? He is no more an accused, he has been convicted and his sentence is suspended – if he wants he can say that he will undergo 100 or 60 hours of community service. When we are allocating Rs1 m. for fees, who are the beneficiaries?

Mrs Bappoo: They are the supervisors and others also will be recruited and the fees are for the supervisors.

Mr Obeegadoo: I go back to the issue of Probation Homes for Girls and Boys. Can I ask the hon. Minister what is the capacity of these Probation hostels and how many inmates - if that is the term - worked there respectively in 2011 and 2010?

Mrs Bappoo: Exactly for the figures for the Boys and Girls, I think that I need it from the officers. But I have just been informed the other day that actually, I think, four to five girls in the Probation Home for Girls and mostly the same capacity, it is 15 girls and 15 boys. As at date, we have five girls and five boys. It is a very low intake and that makes the difference with the shelter.

Mrs Hanoomanjee: On page 320, *item 28211049 ...*

Mrs Bappoo: Which page?

Mrs Hanoomanjee: Page 320, on Probation Home for Girls and Boys. Can I know from the hon. Minister - even after the girls and boys have left the Probation Home - whether they still have psychological support, and if so, for how long?

Mrs Bappoo: There is follow-up which is being done by our staff of the Probation Unit itself.

Mr Baloomoody: Again, under the item Probation, may I take the hon. Minister to page 310, with regard to the objective. It mentions Probation and Social Rehabilitation – After-Care Service, does the Ministry work in collaboration with the Prisons Service? Before prisoners are

released, they are given an after-care so that they can integrate the society easily and they do not reoffend.

Mrs Bappoo: We don't work with the Prisons Service because this is different from the Probation service, but we work with NGOs which carried on with projects like halfway homes in order to take care of these youngsters.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, still under the same programme, we also see the question of reduction of suicide and promotion of family and social harmony – the objective is on page 310 and under the programme 504. May we know from the hon. Minister what is being done to strengthen this service and whether there is a better collaboration with the NGOs which work on suicide prevention?

Mrs Bappoo: Yes, we have a lot of collaboration from the main NGOs which are involved in these programmes for the halfway home, the probation and the Life Plus, which formerly we called the Suicide Unit of the Ministry.

Mr Obeegadoo: On page 320, *Sub-Programme 50402: Rehabilitation of Juvenile Offenders*, once again we are being asked to vote a hefty sum, Rs20.2 m. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether there has been an independent audit of the effectiveness of juvenile rehabilitation so far.

Mrs Bappoo: I know that the Ministry is actually working under revisiting the legislation itself, and we are in consultation with the Attorney General's Office and maybe at a later stage, we can give better details.

Mr Obeegadoo: Maybe I did not express myself clearly enough; we are talking about relapse by offenders. In this case before we vote a new sum of Rs20 m., I would like to know whether there has ever been an in-depth study to evaluate the effectiveness, whether these young people when they leave these centres or whatever can integrate society normally. Is there a follow-up? Has there been a measure of the effectiveness of this programme?

Mrs Bappoo: Relapse maybe known from records at the RYC and the CYC and at the Prison Department. But the fact that we deal with the children, whatever happens to them, after 18 years, we are not in a position to follow. But if there is any relapse as from the date or the time that they leave the Probation Home up to 18 years, we do have a follow-up. There hasn't been a proper study as such on the issue. The only follow-up is done by the Probation Officers.

Mr Baloomoody: I take the hon. Minister to page 310, it says that the Priority Objective on this item is to, I quote -

“Create synergy among stakeholders (Ministries, private sector, NGO’s, civil society) for an integrated approach to juvenile delinquency.”

My friend, hon. Obeegadoo was asking whether there has been a sort of study among all the stakeholders, so that we work up a programme for young offenders to reintegrate society and don’t offend again.

Mrs Bappoo: I believe that there is a sort of integrated policy on how to join hands together and work together. But we haven’t done it through a proper study and survey, which I consider worthwhile considering for the future.

Mr Obeegadoo: May I ask the hon. Minister whether she will be ready - out of these Rs20 m. that we are to approve - to reallocate funds, so as to be able to finance an in-depth study as has been suggested?

Mrs Bappoo: I take note and I will try to give it a positive consideration, Mr Chairperson.

Programme code 504: Probation and Social Rehabilitation (Rs69,644,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Education and Human Resources

Programme Code 421: Policy and Management for Education and Human Resources was called.

Mr Obeegadoo: I shall start with page 336, there is a significant increase, in terms of personal emoluments from one year to the other. May I have some clarification from the hon. Minister as to the purport of such an increase?

My second question - on page 337, at the top of the page, under *item 22090 Security*, there was a PQ about an incident in schools and here it would appear that there is a drastic – I suppose that this is the Ministry and this is on schools – reduction in spending on security, which is half from Rs4 m. to Rs2m.

I will put a third question and then stop there. At the top of page 337, *item 22120 Fees*. Here, there is an explosion. We are going from Rs1.6 m. to Rs11.4 m. from one year to the next, could we have some explanation?

Dr. Bunwaree: Let me give the answers for the security services, Mr Chairperson. In fact, under this programme security services are provided to three Zones; 1, 2 and 3 and the Central Supplies Division. The security service for Zone 4 is undertaken by the owner of the building under the lease agreement. Following an open advertised bidding, the contract for security services have been awarded to RSL security services, with effect to 01 July 2010, for a period of 12 months, renewable and subject to my Ministry being satisfied with the performance. I must say that the contract has been renewed for a period of 12 months as from 01 July 2011 because they were satisfied. In fact, this firm seems to be giving satisfaction.

Second, concerning fees, I must say that it is for capacity building programme and fees to cater for services of experts under this programme.

The Chairperson: The question of compensation of employees, why there is a drastic increase?

Dr. Bunwaree: There must be a good reason. I am waiting for the reply.

Mr Obeegadoo: My question was why the estimates have been halved; in 2011, it was Rs4 m., and this year it is in the region of Rs2m.

Dr. Bunwaree: The decrease in the provision is due to the fact that the contract value is about to 1.7 for one year and a contingency sum for torrential rain and cyclone, the closing down of the NCCRD division and actual spending.

Mr Bhagwan: On page 337, *item 26313099 Current Grant – World Hindi Secretariat*. Can we have some information as to whether this World Hindi Secretariat is well established now, where it is situated and their assignment?

There is another *item 22120024 Capacity Building Programme*, for which a sum of Rs9.5 m. is being earmarked. It is the first time that we are asked to vote Rs9.5 m. What are the actions that have been initiated?

Dr. Bunwaree: With regard to the World Hindi Secretariat, in fact, it was not too good some time back, but now it has been revitalised. According to a Memorandum of Understanding signed between the Republic of India and Mauritius, now it is running full-fledged. A team from the Ministry of External Affairs of India was in Mauritius in October a few weeks ago to review the plans and drawings of the building which is going to be set up and discuss the implementation of the project. I am also informed that the preparation of the drawings and plans

of the building have reached an advanced stage, and tenders for construction works are expected to be floated around end of November near the Indira Gandhi centre.

Concerning the capacity building programme, Mr Chairperson, in the context of its reform programme, my Ministry availed of the services of experts under the capacity programmes to drive specific projects. I can circulate the service providers, to gain time.

I must say that three new sectors have been identified for reinforcement under this capacity building programme, namely the Special Education Needs, ICT and Prevocational Education.

Mr Baloomoody: On page 337, *item 22130001 Study on Education IT Projects*, a sum of Rs3 m. was allocated last year in the context of its reform programme, but we find that there is no allocation for the coming years. Are we abolishing the idea of giving a laptop to each and every child at the higher education?

Dr. Bunwaree: Not at all.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, since there was a study - we take it that a study has been carried out regarding this subject - may we know from the hon. Minister the findings of same and whether it has given an indication of the cost of providing laptops to students, as announced by the hon. Minister?

Dr. Bunwaree: Announced by me? Check the information, please! It was announced, but not by me. Mr Chairperson, the study on education IT projects such as Sankoré, SIMS, laptops included, and e-educational portal was provided for in the 2011 Budget to be carried out on IT projects by the Ministry. The Ministry has now opted to carry out the study in-house with the assistance of the Ministry of ICT. Both the study and the e-educational plan are expected to be finalised by the end of December. So, we will have to wait for that.

Mr Uteem: In respect to *item 22900922 Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers* on page 337, I see that there is an amount of Rs8 m. budgeted for next year. Will that conference be held in Mauritius?

Dr. Bunwaree: Yes, of course, it will be held in Mauritius in August next year.

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, if I may refer the hon. Minister to the objectives of this programme at page 328, which are to formulate policies that are fully costed. I would like to know whether, precisely, the Ministry can give us the costs of some of the new policies that have been announced in the Budget, for instance child minding services made available in schools

after school hours or the summer school programme or even the extension of Pre-Vocational education for one additional year. Have these policies been well formulated and fully costed under these programmes?

Dr. Bunwaree: The fact that they appear in the budget means that the costs have been taken into consideration. As we are going to start the summer school programme very soon, we have submitted it to the Minister of Finance and it will cost around Rs2.5 to Rs3 m., according to the figures we have worked out at the Ministry. This has been submitted to the Ministry of Finance, and we hope to get the clearance so as to start by next week.

We have an envelope. We have been informed by the Ministry of Finance during pre-budget consultations and budget preparation that this programme will be taken care of by the Ministry. Now that it has been announced in the Budget, we are already starting. We have finalised the cost and sent it to the Ministry of Finance for it to start by next week, as I said.

Concerning Prevoc and the other programmes that have been mentioned in the Budget, I will probably need some time to inform the hon. Member of the exact cost.

Mr Obeegadoo: Concerning the summer school programme, may we know, therefore, if it is going ahead and to whom the financial provision will go to? The Minister knows that this is very controversial right now; whether it is going to eradication of poverty, which is complaining of lack of communication from the Ministry, or to other organisations. Will he provide us with some enlightenment, if the programme is to start next week?

Dr. Bunwaree: We have agreed to start the programme. The programme will be the responsibility of the Ministry of Education. An important NGO has come forward to say that they have got *une pédagogie différenciée*. We also have one for the Ministry, which is, in fact, our enhancement programme; *c'est une pédagogie différenciée*, which is already on for two years. They have proposed their help, and we want to see what they can do also. If they are good, as they say, and after the assessment we find that it is as good or better, we are going to take all this on board. As to where the funds are going to come from, it will be from the Ministry of Finance through the Ministry of education.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, may I stay on the summer school programme? I think that at first this programme was scheduled to be run for one month; now, we hear the Minister saying that it will start next week. May we know for how many weeks this programme will be run, and whether a particular programme has been designed for one week, two weeks or so?

Dr. Bunwaree: So far as the Ministry is concerned, there is no problem because we already have all that is needed. Now that an NGO is going to be roped in, this has to be taken on board. The NGO has asked for the MIE, which is under the purview of the Minister of Education, to help them to train those whom they want to rope in. This has to be taken on board. It takes some time. We are in discussion with them.

Mr Obeegadoo: Two further questions, Mr Chairperson. At page 337, *item 26210069 Contribution to United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)*, will the hon. Minister confirm that there has now been a request from UNESCO - I don't know whether it has been addressed to the Ministry of Education or to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs - for an increase in Mauritian contribution further to the US suspension of funding and where things stand?

The second question, at page 345, staffing positions; I note that for the positions of Director, HR Development, Principal HR Analyst, Senior HR Analyst, there is no provision. Now, it would seem that one whole chunk of the Ministry of Skills Development, which was merged with Education, is now disappearing. Would the hon. Minister care to give some explanation?

Dr. Bunwaree: Well, the vacancies in the HR cadre are not being filled as the agency of the Ministry for HR development is the Human Resource Development Council. However, in view of the importance of the HR sector, a fresh look is being given to the role of the HR Unit of the Ministry within the context of the next PRB Report 2013. So, this is taken care of. I quite agree with the hon. Member in a certain sense.

Concerning UNESCO, I must say that, in fact, we have got a request as the US and even Israel, I think, has pulled out. We are giving a sympathetic consideration to this and it will be taken on board.

Mr Obeegadoo: Can I ask the hon. Minister, again, about policy formulation? This is the object of the programme. This issue of child minding services to be made available after school hours, is this being provided for in the budget because there is no specific mention of it, and how is it going to work out?

Dr. Bunwaree: It is being provided in a certain sense, but I must say that it will not be free, because it would be for the PTAs with the help of the Ministry to make it happen and the

parents - those who want to take advantage of this system - will have to contribute. For the Pre-primary, yes. But for the Primary, the PTAs will arrange for that.

Programme Code 421: Policy and Management for Education and Human Resources (Rs537,561,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 422: Pre-Primary Education was called.

Mr Bhagwan: At page 338, Mr Chairperson, we are being asked to vote Rs179 m. for *Current Grant - Early Childhood Care and Education Authority*. Has the attention of the hon. Minister been drawn to mismanagement in that Authority?

Dr. Bunwaree: At the ECCEA?

Mr Bhagwan: Has the hon. Minister's attention been drawn to the fact that we have received correspondence? May I ask whether he is considering a reassessment of the performance of that Authority and whether that is taken into consideration following the criticisms which have been levelled through a correspondence? I can send the hon. Minister one of the copies that I have received here.

Mrs Radegonde: Mr Chairperson, at page 337, I would like to ask the hon. Minister in regard to the construction of the Pre-primary school in Chamarel, whether budgetary provision has been made and under which item?

The Chairperson: The hon. Member must quote the page and the item under which she is speaking.

Mrs Radegonde: But I wanted to ask under which item, since I did not see any budgetary...

The Chairperson: The hon. Member cannot ask under which item. She has to look up the item and put questions on that item.

Mrs Radegonde: I don't see any budgetary provision made; I am asking...

The Chairperson: No!

Mrs Radegonde: I have another question then at page 337, *item 22130001 Study on setting up Quality Assurance Function within Early Childhood Care and Education Authority*. I note that there is no budgetary provision for 2012; I would like to know the status of this study.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, under page 338, under *item 26323071 Capital Grant - Early Childhood Care and Education Authority*, may I know from the hon. Minister whether this amount of Rs10 m. includes the construction of a Pre-primary school at Chamarel and maybe the

hon. Minister could let us know where are we going to have additional Pre-primary Units under this Capital Grant?

The Chairperson: The hon. Member is asking under the Grant?

Mrs Labelle: Yes, Mr Chairperson.

The Chairperson: Hon. Minister!

Dr. Bunwaree: For Chamarel everything has been taken on board. Under the Capital Grant of Rs10 m. the school at Chamarel will be taken care of. I replied a PQ a few weeks ago. For the ECCEA, I have been surprised while listening to my friend and colleague, hon. Bhagwan. So far as I am concerned, this institution is doing extremely well. If ever there is any complaint, I would like to get the information...

(Interruptions)

Well, in order to remove whatever suspicion in the mind of people! This is doing wonderfully well and, in fact, in the course of the last two years, we have increased access by about 10% to pre-primary schools in this country and quality of education also is good.

Mr Bodha: Mr Chairperson, at page 338, under *item 26313071 Current Grant - Early Childhood Care and Education Authority*, we have the sum of Rs179 m. I presume it is for the operation of the pre-primary schools. May I ask the hon. Minister whether we can have the number of schools involved and the number of children involved under this Authority?

Mr Obeegadoo: I refer the hon. Minister to the objectives of the programme which include ensuring all pre-primary schools to offer quality education. Now, I note, looking at the indicators on page 332, that the indicators are purely quantitative in nature and I would like to ask the hon. Minister how, within the budget we are being asked to approve, provision is being made for some sort of standardisation in terms of minimal conditions these schools are to meet? That is my first question. Should I go to another question, Mr Chairperson?

The Chairperson: Yes!

Mr Obeegadoo: The second question concerns the staffing of the ECCEA. I understand the details no longer appear on the budget because they are now consolidated within the grant. Is that correct? The details of the expenditure under this item, at page 337, are not spelt out because they are now consolidated and included in the grant at page 338. If so, I will again raise the question I put to the hon. Minister last year, and from what hon. Bhagwan said, there is very significant dissatisfaction within the staff because conditions of employment still have not been

standardised. A lot of the old employees predating the creation of the ECCEA do not have all their benefits included in their package. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether he intends, in the course of next year, from the budgetary estimates we are approving, to look into it, personally, and ensure that once and for all, these problems are addressed and resolved.

Dr. Bunwaree: To answer the last question, I am aware of some *grogne* in the staff, but then this is also due to the fact that order has started to be put *dans la maison* because there is a national curriculum framework and all schools have to go according to that and then those people whose work need to be of certain standard, some may not be, all this is being looked into. I take the point that has been raised just now. I must also give the information that there are 183 schools. I think the number of schools was asked just now.

Concerning all the operational expenses HR under the ECCA budget, that question also has been asked. I have a list of schools that have been completed in the course of the year and another number of schools that are going to be set up in the course of the coming year. I will circulate this for the information of hon. Members. There is also, I must inform the House, of a vast programme of capacity building. The first batch of diploma holders will be for December 2011, that is, in a few days.

Mr Seeruttun: Mr Chairperson, let me go back to page 33, *item 22130 Studies and Surveys*; some Rs 2m. were earmarked in 2010. I would like to know from the hon. Minister if any survey was carried out. If it was, what has been the outcome of it? And whether any Action Plan is being thought of to be put in place in the coming months or years?

Dr. Bunwaree: I am getting the information.

Mrs Ribot: Mr Chairperson, I have two questions. First of all, I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether the current grant for the Early Childhood Care and Education Authority does include a serious inspection unit for the pre-primary schools.

Secondly, on page 332, we see that the percentage of children being enrolled between the ages of 3 and 5 in pre-primary schools is only 93.1% and we are aiming at 97.5% in 2014. I would like to ask the hon. Minister which mechanism he intends to use to make sure that the percentage is going to go up.

Dr. Bunwaree: The inspection unit, first, Mr Chairperson, does exist. 26 Supervisors and 7 Senior Supervisors are attached to this unit and I must say also that there is the study concerning the question that has been put and, in fact, it is the reply to two questions at the same

time; study on the setting up of a Quality Assurance Division within the ECCA which is very important because this is what is going to help the ECCA go fast ahead. The figure of 93.1% has been mentioned. In fact, it is slightly more than that; it is near 95%. We expect next year this figure will be further improved with the allocation of Rs200 being given to families. I think I have replied to most of the questions.

Mr Obeegadoo: I would like to go back to the Quality Assurance Mechanism. I would like to ask the hon. Minister quite apart from the curriculum guidelines, what are the measures that are included within the budgetary provisions we are asked to approve for Quality Assurance in the pre-primary sector in terms of minimal conditions being met?

A second question, if I may. The Budget announces the extension of the grant - Rs200 per head grant - to the 3 to 4 age group. I take it this is budgeted within the grant being offered to the Early Childhood Education Authority. May we know precisely how much this will cost the State and by means of what mechanism will it be implemented?

Dr. Bunwaree: The Rs300 will be in the same sense that it is for the four years. I don't have the exact figure about Rs18 m. for the three plus. What I am informed is *per capita* grant: Rs29 m. I believe it is for both at the same time, 4 and 3, unless I stand to be corrected. From memory, I think it was about Rs18 m. I have given the figure of Rs29 m. here. So, either it is the two, help me to correct.

For Quality Assurance, the training is going to be taken care of by the MIE on the implementation of the curriculum. Quality Assurance, I have already mentioned, is as per ECCA regulations. It has to be taken care of. Regarding the setting up of the Quality Assurance Division within the ECCA, provision has been made in the Budget 2011 with commitment of UNDP for technical assistance. Unfortunately, this did not materialise. The proposed course of action is for the Ministry which has opted to recruit a Project Manager in the capacity building programme and funding will be made under the new *item Capacity Building Programme* for which a provision of Rs9.5 m. has been made.

Mr Obeegadoo: Will the hon. Minister confirm that within the present provision, there are measures and plans to ensure that all schools meet minimal standards in terms of physical infrastructure, pedagogical tools and that financial assistance is being provided for the upgrading of the below standard schools?

Dr. Bunwaree: Yes, definitely this is the fact. In fact, this is one of the reasons why my colleague has, over and above capital grant, given Rs 500,000 for each school. In fact, it goes in line with this. We are going to see to it that the standards will have to be maintained in all the schools of the country wherever they are to be found. In fact, the quality assurance goes in line with what I am saying.

Mr Obeegadoo: Is the hon. Minister telling us that the budget now provides for Rs500,000 per pre-primary public school? That was not our understanding.

Dr. Bunwaree: No, for primary schools, in general; for schools and secondary schools.

Mrs Ribot: Mr Chairperson, I would like to ask the hon. Minister on page 338, under *item 22070 Cleaning Services* whether it is one company which is responsible for the cleaning of the...

The Chairperson: We are on Programme Code 422. Any further question on Programme Code 422? No!

Programme Code 422: Pre-Primary Education (Rs189,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to

Programme Code 423: Primary Education was called.

Mrs Ribot: Mr Chairperson, under *item 22070 Cleaning Services*, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether it is one company which is responsible of the cleaning of all the primary schools. If yes, which company is it and if tender has been launched?

Coming to the next *item 22090 Security*, how is it that the estimates has come from Rs25 m. to Rs22 m. when we are talking of increasing the security in our schools?

Mr Bhagwan: There is a reduction of Rs2 m. in the *Fees for Oriental Languages Teachers*. Are we to understand that there are fewer teachers now?

Mr Jhugroo: Under *item 22060 Maintenance*, is it under this heading that the measure of Rs500,000 per school is going to be implemented? Am I right to say that there has been no real increase on that issue of maintenance for primary schools? My second question is that there is a decrease in the phase for oriental language teachers. Could the hon. Minister look into it? Another question on *item 26313034 Current Grant – Mauritius Examinations Syndicate*: why this drastic decrease in the grant for the MES?

Mr Chairperson: Let the Minister answer – reduction in the grant of MES.

Dr. Bunwaree: Concerning the cleaning services, it is All Service Maisons Limited for Zone II and for the other Zones I, III and IV, cleaning is under the responsibility of *ad hoc* contractors. In fact, this is because there was not enough satisfaction at the start apart from Zone II where we were satisfied. So, we changed the system. This is cleaning services.

Concerning fees to oriental language teachers, the question has been asked as to why there is a reduction. Government has introduced apart from evening classes programme, other programmes to facilitate the learning of Asian languages. About 80% of pupils of standard III and IV are following the Enhancement Programme for Asian languages and Arabic. The interest generated is on the increase. These programmes are conducted on weekdays and on the other hand, a number of evening schools have closed down due to teacher-pupil ratio of 1:25 is not being met. When we take the two into consideration, we understand and, I think, this gives a reply to the question that has been put.

We had the question on Security Services. I replied to this. In fact, the actual spending for this year under...

(Interruptions)

I have already replied. I said Rs500,000 per school to improve the school environment.

The Chairperson: Security services!

Dr. Bunwaree: I mentioned Security Services Ltd.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, I am on page 338, Programme 423. We see that under *item 22130001 Independent Evaluation of Enhancement Programme*, there is a sum of Rs1.5. May I know from the hon. Minister whether this evaluation has effectively been carried out as per the Budget of 2011 and if so, what are the findings of this evaluation? Can we have a copy of the report?

Dr. Bunwaree: No, I can't give the findings because the evaluation is still on. I am told that the Enhancement Programme has been implemented, as we know, in Standard IV. The evaluation has started already and it is supposed to end in the month of December. The question was put also on Mauritius Examinations Syndicate as to why the funding seems to be drastically reduced. Government partial funding is to the tune of Rs28m. to the budget of the MES amounting to Rs68m. There is a shortfall of Rs40 m. and will be funded by MES own savings.

Mr Chairperson: Is it a follow-up question?

Mrs Labelle: Yes, a follow-up question. Thank you, Mr Chairperson. I am still on page 338, the Independent Evaluation of Enhancement Programme. It is an independent evaluation. May we know who is carrying this evaluation?

Dr. Bunwaree: In fact, it was written like that since the last Budget, that is, the funds were already provided. But I said that we could not evaluate the programme which has just started. We had to give it some time to settle and we have tried to contact international associations. But they will help us to independently evaluate the programme next year. We are going to use this fund to evaluate the programme at the level of the Ministry, but with people at the MIE, MES together, will give us a first-hand evaluation and this will be used in the course of next year for another evaluation wherein international institutions will help us.

Mr Uteem: I refer to *item 21 Compensation for Employees* and *items 062952 and 062551 Teacher/ Senior Teacher (Oriental Languages)*. I know that there is a reduction in the number of Oriental Language teachers. Is that reflected in the number of student at CPE taking Oriental language?

Dr. Bunwaree: I don't think there is a relation *cause à effet*, but I will have to check and then I will report.

Mr Seeruttun: Mr Chairperson, on page 338 *item 22900006 School Requisites*, some Rs45 m. have been earmarked for 2012. Would the hon. Minister enlighten the House as to what other items are included in that item?

Mrs Ribot: Mr Chairperson, I have got two questions. First of all, I would like to get some clarification about the contribution to *item 26210073 Contribution to International Network for Educational Transformation* and secondly, I come to *item 22900 Other Goods and Services* which amount to Rs47 m., of which school requisites, as my colleague said, are Rs 39,000. Could we have an idea of the usage of the difference of the money?

Dr. Bunwaree: First of all, I will come to school requisites. I think I would better circulate it because it is quite long. A question was put concerning iNet. My Ministry carried out an analysis on the contribution and activities of iNet to Mauritius for the year 2011 and in view of the low level of input from iNet and low involvement of schools in 2011, the Ministry will withhold its financial contribution for the year 2011. A detailed plan of activities for 2012 is awaited from iNet and then the issue of payment will be sorted out.

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, at page 333, concerning *Performance targets*, there is a mention on the Programme 423 of the pass rates in ZEP schools. However, when the budget is detailed at pages 338 and 339, there is no specific allusion to ZEP schools as if it is not a separate and a specific project. I would like some explanations as to that. The second issue is a follow-up on questions ask earlier. For the maintenance budget for primary schools, just like last year, there is no increase and then we are told that spending on security for primary schools is being reduced by Rs3 m. This is not administrative buildings of NCC or RD or whatever; we are talking of primary schools where there are security threats to children as brought up in a PQ last week. Then again we are offering Rs500,000, but only to public schools, State schools. Could some explanations be offered on these issues. Finally, one point concerning my constituency. There is a primary school at Dubreuil where a sum of Rs5 m. is to be spent for construction or extension. Could I have some details as to what is envisaged here?

Dr. Bunwaree : *Pour Dubreuil, je pense qu'il n'y a pas de problèmes.* As an annex, to my speech at the Second Reading, I did table a list of all schools where *il y aurait eu des constructions, des renovations etc. Je vais vérifier pour Dubreuil, mais je pense que nous n'allons pas leur laisser tomber.*

En ce qui concerne *ZEP schools*, on fait un travail remarquable, je dois le dire, pour l'infrastructure des écoles. Il suffit de faire le tour un petit peu pour voir. La seule chose dont je ne suis pas encore satisfait concerne les toilettes des écoles, mais ce sont des endroits qui sont utilisés tous les jours par les enfants et cela pose un problème un peu particulier. On est en train de faire le suivi. Je dois dire que, de toute façon, les R 500,000 additionnelles qui ont été allouées *over and above is there already in the Budget for us to use for rehabilitation and so on.* L'environnement des écoles va sûrement changer avec cela.

(Interruptions)

On a revu les *grants* pour les *ZEP schools* depuis quelque temps et ils ont une possibilité, sur une base mensuelle, de retrouver les moyens pour pouvoir garder le niveau. Cela a été fait et ils l'ont eu avec un arriérage représentant une somme assez conséquente. Ils étaient très satisfaits, mais je surveille, s'ils ont des problèmes ils viendront me voir.

J'ai des choses plus valables maintenant pour Dubreuil. There is the conversion of three existing classrooms into new pre-primary units; four new additional classrooms and new playgrounds for PPU and a new staircase. The cost estimates is Rs6.7 m. and the expected start

date is August 2012. The project duration will be eight months and status tenders to be launched shortly.

Mr Bodha: Mr Chairperson, at the end of page 338, there is the current grant of the Mauritius Examinations Syndicate and there is a drastic difference.

Dr. Bunwaree: Je viens de répondre.

Mr Bodha: Je n'étais pas là .

Dr. Bunwaree: La question a été posée.

Mr Li Kwong Wing: With regard to page 339, under *item no. 28212004 Other Current Transfers - Primary School Supplementary Feeding Project* it is worth Rs15 m. Can the Minister enlighten us on the criteria for choosing the service providers and what mechanism is there to ensure quality assurance of the food being provided?

Secondly, with regard to upgrading of schools, there is an additional item (g) *Improving School Environment & Facilities* worth Rs115 m. Can we know what is this all about because there is provision for renewing the primary schools and now they have improving the environment. Can we have some clarification on what that means?

Mr Bhagwan: Under item improving the environment of Government schools, can I appeal once again to the Minister? I don't see the school of my constituency - Barkly Government School. He was expecting that I will ask this question. This school needs assistance. Can I request the Minister to, at least - his officers - use some money which will be voting for this particular school?

Dr. Bunwaree: Pour Barkly, cela va être la même chose que j'ai dit tout à l'heure. For Barkly, there is the construction of a new classroom block ground plus one with pre-primary unit on the ground floor. The project cost is Rs7.28 m. The expected completion date is end December 2011. Status: 90% completed; ça va finir dans les jours qui viennent. Contingency arrangements: the whole school is accommodated at Marcel Cabon for the time being. So, this is good news for hon. Bhagwan.

School feeding: in fact, there is the responsibility of the PTAs and it goes through tendering procedures. This is what I am informed.

Mr Gungah: At page 339, under *item 31112002 Construction and Extension of Schools*, may I ask the Minister when the construction of the R. Moosun Government School of Goodlands will be completed?

Mrs Navarre-Marie: On the same item, Mr Chairperson, I would like to have details on *item 31112402 Upgrading of Schools (h) Others* for 2011 and 2012. I have the same question for the next item.

Mr Baloomoody: Under *item 31112402 Upgrading of Schools (e) Upgrading of Toilets*, the hon. Minister just mentioned that one of the main problems in our primary schools is the toilets, but we found that the same sum is being allocated – Rs12 m. for this year, Rs12 m. last year, Rs12 m. the year after. Can I get some clarification?

Dr. Bunwaree: Il y a un processus de trouver les fonds. Il y a plusieurs moyens. Donc, je demande à l'honorable membre d'être patient parce que le travail se fait quand même correctement. C'est un minimum qu'on a pour mettre à la disposition ; cela ne veut pas dire qu'on va utiliser les R 500,000 pour cela, mais seulement dans certains cas, si c'est urgent ; mais il y a encore d'autres moyens. J'ai vu moi-même, dans le courant de l'année, à part le budget qui a été alloué, qu'on a réussi à faire bien plus que ce qui paraît dedans. En ce qui concerne l'école Moossun, *I am informed that the status phase 1 is still ongoing, 65% completed and the new expected completion date is end December 2011.* Je ne sais pas s'il y a un délai – *due to the performance of the contractor*, il faut mettre un peu de pression. Je vais voir avec mon collègue, le vice Premier ministre et ministre de l'infrastructure, comment on peut faire pour que cela aille plus vite encore. Je vais veiller à cela. J'ai visité cette école-là.

Mr Jhugroo: Under *item 22120 Fees*, there was a decision of the Government to introduce Creole in some primary schools next year. Will the teachers teaching this language be paid a special allowance?

Dr. Bunwaree: Which language?

Mr Jhugroo: Creole.

Dr. Bunwaree: They are going to be as other teachers and they are going to follow the same pattern as Oriental language teachers.

(Interruptions)

They are in the system. Ils sont comme des professeurs des écoles.

The Chairperson: Le ministre a répondu. Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. In respect to the *Primary School Supplementary Feeding Project*, may I know from the hon. Minister whether the same allocation is given to ZEP schools and non ZEP schools?

Dr. Bunwaree: Les *ZEP schools* ont une discrimination positive et puis il y a beaucoup plus de moyens aussi parce qu'on travaille avec les NGOs, les sponsors. *It is completely different.* Ce n'est pas le même système.

Mr Obeegadoo: I go back to my question which has remained answered. Why does ZEP project not appear as a specific item in the budget whereas there are specific performance targets pertaining to ZEP? That is a clear direct question.

Second point: Open School Programme announced in the Budget Speech. What has it cost? How is it going to be implemented and when?

Third question: as regards quality benchmarking, in the past the Ministry participated in the SECMEC and PASEC programmes. I do not see any mention of those anymore. May I know whether we have terminated our participation in those programs or not?

The final question at page 347, I note that there is no increase actual, past; actual or foreseen for the post of mentors. Do I understand that no provision is being made for the post of mentor; that it is now to be an evanescent post and that we are going back to the whole system of teaching and non-teaching DHTs?

Mr Seeruttun: On page 339 under item 31112402 – *upgrading of schools*, item (b) *Bois des Amourettes Government School*, I can see that some Rs6 m. were earmarked in 2011 and Rs1 m. in 2012. Can the hon. Minister give us the status of the work that has been carried out so far in Bois des Amourettes school?

Dr. Bunwaree: Bois des Amourettes was a project concerning upgrading works with the boundary block wall, drain works, waterproofing works and the implementing agent was the MPI. The contract was awarded to Modern Jurassic Building & Construction Ltd. The project cost is Rs5.2 m., the start date was 31 August 2011 and the contractual completion date is 30 December 2011. The test works seem to be ongoing more or less satisfactorily and if there is any delay, it is probably due to CPE exams and clearance of Forestry Department for felling of trees. Therefore, there would be a short delay and it is expected not to be at the end of December, but in the course of February 2012.

ZEP Schools : je crois l'honorable Obeegadoo est venu encore une fois avec cette question. Les écoles ZEP ont, comme je viens de dire tout à l'heure, une attention particulière. Je crois que cela va de soi, tout le monde connaît, mais les budgets sont dans divers items. Alors, de toute façon, je ne regrette pas ; au contraire, je vois qu'on est en train de faire le maximum pour

ZEP. Il y aura un forum qu'on va organiser parce que il y a un tiers des écoles ZEP qui ont eu une performance honorable pendant plusieurs années et qui ont dépassé la barre de 40% *well above*. On est en train de voir s'il ne faut pas enlever ces écoles sans enlever les moyens qui sont à leur disposition. Donc, cela va se faire très bientôt. *For Moosun School, I have already replied.*

Mentor: in fact, there was a question on Open School Programme also. But on Open School Programme, I think there are so many things that we are doing. Of course, as I replied, when we go to the Ministry of Finance before the Budget, we discussed, all this is taken on board. Participation is by rotation. Other countries are given their chance also to participate, but we are expecting our performance in PISA. PISA: for the first time Mauritius has participated. There are 42 posts of mentors which are provided for in the Budget.

Mr Obeegadoo: For mentors, I know there are 42 posts, this is clear. The question was: why is it not evolving? Does the Budget not provide for any additional increase and that we are getting rid of this category, it's going to be evanescent?

Dr. Bunwaree: No, no, it is not evanescent, because there are posts, as I mentioned, but we are looking at it in another perspective of quality assurance and so many other things are being done at the same time. So, we are using the mentors, we will use them more and more, but in the context of the other jobs that we are also doing in the primary sector.

Education and Human Resources - Programme Code 423: Primary Education (Rs3,165,074,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

The Chairperson: I suspend for 1 hour and 15 mins.

At 8.54 p.m the sitting was suspended.

On resuming at 9.13 p.m. with the Deputy Speaker in the Chair.

Ministry of Education and Human Resources - Programme Code 424: Secondary Education was called.

Mr Obeegadoo: I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to page 333, *Programme 424: Secondary Education*, which sets out the performance targets and in particular targeted improvements in the pass rates for the school certificate, higher school certificate as well as the survival rate of students joining in Form I and graduating in Form V. I would like to ask the Minister what specific provision at pages 340 and 341 would allow the Ministry to anticipate an increase in the pass rate. How can we relate the performance targets to what is

provided for at pages 340 and 341? That would be my very first question. But I will ask a few questions just to get us going.

The second issue is on page 340, *item 22100 Publications and Stationery*. I presume that the budget here would cover procurement of material for school libraries. I note there is absolutely no change in the amount budgeted for 2010 and 2011. Presumably, there is not even any consideration for inflation from one year to the other. I would be grateful for some explanation here.

I would go further down to *item 26210152 Contribution to OECD (Programme for International Student Assessment)*. The Minister referred to it earlier. Would he kindly indicate when a sample of students will take the PISA assessment and when we expect the results to be out?

Dr. Bunwaree: So far as PISA is concerned, I think the assessment is already on, and we are expecting the results in the course of next month. So far as stationery for libraries is concerned, I think we have to look into the global picture because we are modernising all our schools and we have to see that at the same time. We are putting our libraries online, we are investing that much in the Sankoré project; it is in our plan to get all the classrooms and schools of the country within the forthcoming years to have the new system of interactive blackboard and, of course, internet in schools everywhere and Wifi, wherever the possibility has to be. This means that funding of library should not be looked into in isolation.

I am told that all targets will be attained through reforms, in fact, to improve quality in education. It would take too long for me to go into the whole innovation of what is happening in schools. The Form III assessment, for example, is one of the major things. Then the curricular base has been enlarged. We have introduced sports and physical education in schools as an examinable subject. So, many things have been done. Well, if a proper question is put by way of a PQ, I will certainly reply, Mr Chairperson.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: The hon. Member should put his question and the Minister is going to respond.

Dr. Bunwaree: With regard to the International PISA report 2009, students have already participated. I have the confirmation here and the results will be released on the website of the OECD on 14 December 2011, I am told.

Dr. Sorefan: Mr Chairperson, on page 341, under *item 31112402 Upgrading of Schools*.

The Chairperson: Is it another item?

Dr. Sorefan: It is the same item, but at different pages.

Dr. Bunwaree: What is the item?

Dr. Sorefan: It is *item 31112402 Upgrading of schools (g) Improving School Environment & Facilities*. Will the hon. Minister tell us what facilities he is talking about? Can we know the meaning of 'others'?

The Chairperson: Under which item is the hon. Member putting his question?

Dr. Sorefan: At page 341, *item 31112402*.

Mrs Bholah: At page 340, under *item 26313123 Current Grant - Mahatma Gandhi Institute*, there is an increase of over Rs100 m. Could the hon. Minister give details of such an increase?

The Chairperson: I will take a last question from hon. Mrs Labelle.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, I am at page 333, Programme 424. When I look at the *Indicators SS3: Percentage of students entering Form I and graduating in Form V*, for next year, we are talking about a percentage of 61.7%. My question, Mr Chairperson, relates to those who dropped out before the age of 16 years. As education is compulsory up to 16 years, I would like to ask the hon. Minister what the mechanism is regarding those who dropped out of school before the age of 16.

Dr. Bunwaree: First of all, concerning the question of drop-outs which was mentioned by the hon. Member, I must say that I have, in fact, replied to PQs in this House. I have mentioned all that are being done, like having a tracking system, the enrolment of a statistician also for the first time in the Ministry to help us look at the statistics. We have already announced the review of the Pre-Voc system in schools, whereby we are increasing the duration of the studies to four years instead of three. All this is meant to prevent the drop-outs and there are so many other things that are also in the pipeline.

Mr Chairperson, someone asked the question about what is 'others'. In fact, 'others' are for other schools; there are other works being done, mostly *gymnases* in so many other schools.

The question was also put about upgrading of secondary schools. We have so many schools that also fall under the 'others': Rajcoomar Gujadhur, the Rabindranath Tagore Institute (RTI), Sookdeo Bissoondoyal State College, Sebastopol, Sir Sir Leckraz Teelock, Swami

Sivananda and improving schools environment. An amount of Rs500,000 will be allocated to each school; we talked about that in the primary sector, but it is also valid for the secondary sector. My Ministry is working out the mechanism for the disbursement, the monitoring and control of the money will be managed by the Parent Teachers' Association.

We are working in such a way, Mr Chairperson, that all the schools, especially secondary schools which are located everywhere around the country, have the same facilities in all aspects, be it infrastructure, IT, playgrounds and gymnasium, etc. We will see to it that all schools have the same *environnement dans toutes les écoles secondaires du pays pour que les enfants ne sentent pas qu'il y ait deux poids deux mesures.*

Mrs Ribot: Mr Chairperson, I have a few questions for the hon. Minister. First of all to reiterate the question of my colleague with regard to the percentage of students entering Form I and graduating in Form V. We are not referring to Pre-Voc students since these are students who have passed the CPE since they are in Form I. I would like to know what mechanism the Ministry intends to set up to address that issue.

The second question relates to page 340, *item 26313073 Current Grant*. I am referring to the decrease in funds of the Private Secondary Schools Authority. That Authority has been complaining for years of shortage of staff and now we see that grants are decreasing. I would like to know what the Ministry intends to do to address that issue.

The third and final question, I am referring to *item 22060, 22070 and 22090 Maintenance; Cleaning Services; Security* respectively in secondary schools. I would like to know the companies responsible of the maintenance, cleaning and security services.

Mr Bodha: At page 341, under *item 3112 Acquisition of IT Equipment*, we had a budget of Rs19 m. and now we have a budget of Rs14 m. for next year. May I have the particulars of the expenses on IT equipment? Mention is also made for the acquisition of other machinery and equipment. If the hon. Minister can enlighten us as to what this budget has been earmarked for?

Mr Nagalingum: At page 341, under *item 28211041 MSSSA*, can I know what are these activities?

Mrs Labelle: My question relates to the question of drop-outs, Mr Chairperson. I am not going to talk about the figure of 2011, but that of 2010. We were told that 58.5% of students entering Form I went up to Form V. I take it that we have about 42% of students entering Form I who have dropped out. May I ask the hon. Minister whether he has a mechanism to clearly state

the number of students out of this 42% who have dropped out and who are below 16 years? Do we have a mechanism and do we have some figures? I am talking about 2010.

Dr. Bunwaree: To answer this part, I need notice of this question because we have to go into the details of figures and so on. But the figures that have been mentioned in the Budget is one thing and we are having so many innovative projects to try to fight against this question of drop-outs. I am convinced that the result will be very positive. We have to be a bit patient because there are so many measures that have been taken, the results will not come immediately.

Let me reply to a few of the other questions about PSSA. For the PSSA, I have not found the funds going down.

Insofar as the PSSA is concerned, a new grant has been reviewed, everybody is happy and they are still happy. On top of that, you will see in the estimates for Item Code *32145801 – Loans to Secondary Education Institutions* there is Rs120 m. at an interest rate of 4% per annum. This will be implemented by the DBM Ltd. I must say that Rs120 m. loan which is now at the disposals of these colleges is also a breakthrough.

Insofar as the PSSA is concerned, it is on the same basis as the Government colleges, on performance base, that is, if they do very well, they will be compensated. You will see that there is an item of Rs30 m. that has been kept for them to be able to get other help.

As for the PSSA is concerned, I do not think that there is a question of lack of funds. In fact, we have progressed quite a lot in the past few months.

There is a new tracking down mechanism which has been put in place. Maybe, I have to inform you that it will be set up to follow pupils throughout their schooling and beyond and better understand the reasons for early drop-outs and, consequently, devise appropriate policies and measures to minimise such leakages in the education system. This is the reason of the tracking system.

Monitoring out of schoolchildren requires a robust statistical base which will keep track of the school population in Mauritius and their progression throughout the education system. As I said, we have enrolled the services of a statistician for the first time.

Mr Chairperson, I think mention was made about cleaning and security services. I am going to give the same information which I gave because it is the same contractors for the cleaning of Zone 2: *Service Maison Ltée* and Security RSL Ltd. which got the contract. The contract has been renewed recently on 01 July. For the Cleaning services, the contractor for the

cleaning of toilets is Mauriclean Ltd and for the cleaning of premises the contractor is *Service Maison Ltée*.

Acquisition of IT equipment - I think a question was put on IT equipment. Funds are used for the purchase of 610 PCs and setting of a second computer laboratory in six additional State Secondary Schools.

The Chairperson: I will take four more questions. Hon. Jhugroo, hon. Mrs Hanoomanjee, hon. Obeegadoo, and a last one from hon. Mrs Labelle.

Mr Jhugroo: On page 341, under *item 31112402 Upgrading of Schools*, is the hon. Minister aware that one star college, the QEC, is in a very bad state. There is no water ...

The Chairperson: The hon. Member must come direct to the point, please.

Mr Jhugroo: There is no water in the toilets.

The Chairperson: Under which item?

Mr Jhugroo: Under *item 31112402 Upgrading of Schools – Others*. At the QEC, there is no proper water supply; there is no water in the toilets. Due to no supply of water, practical exams had to be postponed. I am sure that my hon. friend ...

The Chairperson: The hon. Member has made his point: problem of water, not permitting practical exams.

Mr Jhugroo: If the needful could be done to review the water supply network within the school.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Mrs Hanoomanjee! Which item?

Mrs Hanoomanjee: On page 340, *item 22120 Fees*, can we know to whom these fees have been paid? Under *item 22900006 School Requisites*, can the hon. Minister tell us who have been the beneficiaries and on which criteria? Under *item 26323034 Capital Grant - Mauritius Examinations Syndicate*, can we know for which projects?

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Obeegadoo. We take the two and then you take the last.

Mr Obeegadoo: Yes. I have a few questions, Mr Chairperson.

The Chairperson: We are left with two minutes.

Mr Obeegadoo: Yes, on page 340, under *item 26313073 PSSA*, the question has been put. I note that Rs500,000 are being offered to Public Secondary Schools, which represents 50% of the student body. I would like to know, before we vote on these provisions, whether the hon.

Minister can provide us with the *per capita* spending of students in public and private schools, respectively.

My second issue is *Pre-Vocational Education* at page 342. Now, we are told that the Pre-Vocational scheme is being extended for one year whereas the budget does not reflect this in any way. I would like to know what is the cost of extending the Pre-Vocational Scheme for a year, and whether, after six years, there has been an independent assessment of this Pre-Vocational Education.

My third question goes back to page 341 *Construction and Extension of Schools*. These are old schools where the classrooms had already been built in 2005. I would like to ask the hon. Minister how is it that six years later we are still constructing or extending those schools, not only for 2012, but with projections for spending in 2013 and 2014.

Finally, under item 31112402, *Royal College, Curepipe*, I would like to know why it is that we are still trying to upgrade Royal College, Curepipe and where is the sum of Rs5 m. going to be spent.

Mrs Labelle: I am on programme 42402 ...

The Chairperson: Short question, please!

Mrs Labelle: Yes, but I have to mention the programme.

The Chairperson: Yes, no problem!

Mrs Labelle: Under Sub-Programme 42402: *Pre-Vocational Education*, my colleague has just mentioned this question of extension of one year, but when I go to page 349, there is no increase in the number of teachers. We have got the educators from 83 to 94, but the teachers in secondary Pre-Voc are from 38 to 28 teachers. I would like to have some explanation regarding the number of teachers needed for the extension of one year. Moreover, Mr Chairperson, with your permission, I would like to know, out of these teachers, how many are only under contracts. They are not on the establishment, they are under contract. Thank you.

The Chairperson: Hon. Minister!

Dr. Bunwaree: Mr Chairperson, secondary schools, I must say, are being constructed in phases 2. I am replying to the question of hon. Obeegadoo. You will always find this; it is a constant feature, but, of course, there is a team which works and studies all these things, and the reason behind is to try to give the same facilities, as I said previously, in all the schools of the country. Where there is no gymnasium or where the gymnasium is not in a good condition, it

has to be done again; where there is lack of space for IT labs, etc., it has to be done again. I must say that more than Rs1.3 billion have been spent in the past five to six years in the construction and renovation of schools.

As I have said previously, I have joined an annex to my speech and those hon. Members who are interested can go into that and they will see all the construction works that have been going on and are still going on in all schools of the country. It is, of course, to provide maximum amenities to all the children.

I have a note here for cleaning, I have already replied, but I must say that on top of what I have said, there are also caretakers and labourers who are on the permanent staff in addition to contractors who do the work of cleaning in schools.

A question was put on school requisites. Provision is required for school materials, book loan scheme for needy students, laboratory chemicals, consumable and breakables, materials for specialists' rooms and e-learning materials. There are various suppliers for these materials and everything is done through tendering procedures.

There was another question put by hon. Jhugroo concerning QEC. I will have to look into this particular case. From time to time, we do have some problems which cause some disruption in organisation of examinations. The MES is well prepared for all these types of things. Everything is done so that students *ne payent pas les pots cases, comme on dit*. But I will look into this particular case of water supply at QEC. There could have been some problems. I don't have the reply off-hand.

Regarding Pre-Vocational education, questions were asked as to whether there has been a costing, whether there has been a study. This question was put to me but, of course, we have had a few surveys carried out. Many experts have come to us, we have discussed with them, but more importantly, we have organised a forum and we have put all the stakeholders together. It was decided on that forum of a few things, including that increase in the number of years, from three to four years at Pre-Voc level.

The costing, of course, has been done. I must say for hon. Members to understand, that the system is going to be a mixed system, that is, we are going to have Pre-Voc schools, but then as from the second and third year, the student will be partly in the secondary schools and partly in the MITD schools because it would be better for practical.

We have observed that the assessment that we have had insofar as students in Pre-Voc system in secondary schools is concerned is that they do neither well on the academic side nor well on the vocational side. On the contrary, at MITD schools, the results are very good. 80% of the MITD students have already found jobs, they get good results. After thinking deeply about this, we have come to the conclusion that we are going to have a mixed – it was an important question. I said that they are going to do as they do in Pre-Voc schools and, of course, from the second year or third year, they will be partly; two days here and three days there.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: No, we are four minutes late.

(Interruptions)

Mr Obeegadoo: Last year, I put the same question.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: No, I am going to put the question.

(Interruptions)

Please, order!

Ministry of Education and Human Resources - Programme Code 424: Secondary Education (Rs5,957,682,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Education and Human Resources - Programme Code 425: Technical and Vocational Education and Training was called.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Obeegadoo!

Mr Obeegadoo: I am on page 342, programme 425, again, it would seem that ...

The Chairperson: Which page?

Mr Obeegadoo: Page 342, programme 425, it would seem that the individual provision for different items have now been consolidated into one comprehensive grant to the MITD. I would wish to know having regard to the all the trouble we have had at the *Lycée Politechnique of Flacq* over the last year, what provision is being made to offer suitable appropriate learning and learning environment to students of the *Lycée Polytechnique*. Secondly, there has been much talk of introducing the *Baccalauréat Professionnel* in Mauritius. I would like to know again what provisions are being made under the present budget for the introduction of the *Baccalauréat Professionnel* indicating in which institutions such an examination will be offered inasmuch as the existing or techniques are being converted into tertiary institutions.

Dr. Bunwaree: Insofar as the MITD is concerned, I must say that, in fact, after some difficulties, we settled the problem of the *Lycée Polytechnique*. There are French consultants who came and advised. We are working together with them and the French Government. In fact, the BACPro will be introduced. We have already opted for this system, but we have some students who had already enrolled for the usual BAC. When this is over and in the course of the coming year, I am convinced that we will move to the BACPro taking into consideration the transitional period. I must say that the BACPro is, in fact, internationally recognised and this is the way we should go. Concerning the grant for MITD, I am told that the capital generated from MITD fees and services are taken into consideration and we have sought the technical assistance to replace BACPro, I have said. There is the possibility of donation of equipment by a French delegation coming to Mauritius because *le matériel qui est utilisé là-bas date déjà depuis quelque temps et nous sommes tombés d'accord qu'il faut changer tout cela. Donc, on va dans cette direction avec le concours du gouvernement français.*

Mrs Labelle: I refer to *Programme 425*. When I look at the *Capital Grant* for the MITD, from Rs10 m. in 2011 to Rs1 m. in 2012, taking into consideration what the hon. Minister has just stated regarding the extension of Pre-Voc, namely that the MITD will have more students and so on, will the hon. Minister explain how we are having such a decrease, particularly, when we are stating that the extension of one year from Pre-Voc will have an influence on the number of students at the MITD?

Mr Gungah: Mr Chairperson, at page 342, *item 22130001 Development of a Business Plan for the MITD to Emerge as a Regional Training of Geneve Centre*, I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether this has been achieved?

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, I am very surprised, last year in the indicators targets we had referred to enrolment in higher polytechnique education, provision of top-up higher polytechnique education and this year the indicators have very conveniently disappeared. We have a new indicator here speaking of enrolment generally without us knowing whether it is lower secondary or upper secondary. How come we seem to be playing around with these indicators?

Dr. Bunwaree: Maybe my colleague is not aware that we are in the full ...

The Chairperson: The Minister should make his reply as short as possible.

Dr. Bunwaree: Maybe he is not aware that we are in the whole process of renewing in the MITD sector. Now, there are possibilities from going on the horizontal, moving from one academic side to a vocational side. There are various avenues on the vertical side as well. All this has to be taken into consideration to reply to the question of the hon. Member. I must say the MITD will have a third year in 2013. We are putting a fourth year, that is, those who are going to get enrolled will go now on this system. They are not going to enter the fourth year this year. They are going to go into the first year, but then for them there will be four years ahead instead of three years.

(Interruptions)

Bien sûr parce qu'ils doivent être formés dès le départ. Nous avons le temps pour arranger tout cela.

(Interruption)

The Chairperson: No argument, please!

Dr. Bunwaree: This is the system. The system is a system of four years now. It is not a system of three years. Concerning the decrease in the capital grant, I must say that necessary equipment has been acquired already in 2011; IT laboratory equipment and renewal of kitchen equipment at *Ecole Hôtelière* purchased in November 2011 at the cost of Rs6.1 m.; acquisition of other equipment for Rs1.4 m. We have already acquired a lot of equipment which explains that the grant will be less in the coming budget.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, we are talking about the most needy students. Maybe I am a bit confused. I put a question regarding the non-increase of teachers in the Pre-Voc and how many teachers do we have in establishment, if they are on contract, I have not received an answer. The hon. Minister stated that we have not increased the number of teachers in the Pre-Voc because there is a change and as from the second year there will be a share between the Pre-Voc and the MITD. Now I heard the hon. Minister saying that we have time because it will be only the fourth year. I want to have some clarification concerning the extension of one additional year in the Pre-Voc sector. What will be the influence on the MITD? Will these students have courses at the MITD as from the second year? If it is the fourth year, Mr Chairperson, we need more teachers at Pre-Voc.

Dr. Bunwaree: If you give me more time I will explain everything. I will take one hour.

The Chairperson: Don't be sarcastic, please!

Dr. Bunwaree: Let the hon. Member understand that it is a new system. Those who are going to enter as from January next year will be in the new system, the system of *partage* will be there for them as from first year, second year and third year. *La quatrième année va venir dans quatre ans.*

The Chairperson: She made her point and the Minister explains it.

Programme Code 425: Technical and Vocational Education and Training (Rs395,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 428: Special Education Needs of School Age Children was called.

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, I refer to the performance targets. I would like to know whether these refer to children with disabilities enrolled at pre-primary, primary or secondary level. That is my first question. For my second question I refer to page 343. I note that Personal Emolument of employees with regard to Special Educational Needs education actually decreases. I would like some explanation as to what this implies and thirdly, at page 343, there is mention of a study on enhancing quality of education for students with Special Education Needs. Would the hon. Minister kindly explain to us what this refers to exactly?

Dr. Bunwaree: It is *Special Education Needs*, especially for primary, secondary and lower secondary; mostly primary, I must say, because there is going to be there also some sort of revolution and I think all hon. Members know how much this is close to my heart. In fact, we made something very special last year. We started by saying that parents who have got children with a handicap have to come to the school of their locality to get their children enrolled as any other child. In fact, we have come to realise that there are children who would have stayed at home, who would not have ever come to school. Much is being done insofar as special needs are concerned.

The study which is mentioned is, in fact, a study that is being carried out with the help of foreign stakeholders involved with us and all those who have got some interests in this problem in Mauritius itself, and I invite all hon. Members who would like to participate in this *grand mouvement pour les enfants handicapés dans des écoles. C'est pour le primaire aussi bien que pour le secondaire. Pour le secondaire, on en a fait beaucoup. Ma collègue de la sécurité sociale a fait beaucoup d'effort pour qu'on puisse scolariser les enfants et donner des facilités de transport pour les enfants qui en ont besoin.*

The study I was speaking, in fact, concerns an international organisation, *il s'agit de l'Union Européenne* and the Ministry has opted to carry out the study with the assistance of the European Union. In this regard, the services of two consultants have been made available by the EU and the latter have already started their assignment a few days ago.

Mrs Ribot: I would like to ask the hon. Minister - I come back to the question of my colleague – about the decrease in personal emoluments, the more so since on page 350, there is no decrease in personnel.

The Chairperson: Decrease in Personal Emoluments, *item 21110* at page 343.

Dr. Bunwaree: This is a technical problem. There should be some reason for that. I will give the information.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, regarding this special need, if I go to page 350, the number of staff remains the same but, at the same time, when I go to the target, we are looking forward to an increased number of enrolment, we remain with the same number of teachers. Maybe the hon. Minister can enlighten us. How he thinks this will be achieved?

Dr. Bunwaree: There are so many other things being done at the same time. I can't elaborate all here, for example, the grants for the NGOs being taken into consideration. We have special schools being set up in three regions of the country which we are going to start early next year and this is what they have given me as a reply. We have three specialised schools which are going to start next year in three different parts of the country, and which are going to work at the same time with the help of NGOs and with the Ministry of Education to make it happen.

The Chairperson: Hon. Seeruttun and then, hon. Obeegadoo!

Mr Seeruttun: Mr Chairperson, at page 343, *item 28211 Transfer to non-profit Institutions*, we can see that for 2012, a sum of Rs26.4 m. has been earmarked for transfers to non-profit institutions. Will the hon. Minister inform the House how many institutions are we talking about and what are they?

The Chairperson: Hon. Obeegadoo!

Mr Obeegadoo: I would like to go back to the figures. The Budget Speech refers to 3,000 children who need special education. I would like to know whether that figure of 3,000 includes the 1,620 which, according to the document before us at page 334, are already enrolled. Or is the 3,000 in addition? But, whatever is the case, why then, if the budget is proposing a

grant increase of 25% and this question is so close to the heart of the hon. Minister, that we are envisaging only 230 more children enrolled in a year?

Dr. Bunwaree: Well, of course, we try to do our best we can. We are going to stimulate our efforts and the 3,000 include the 1,620, as I was saying to the hon. Member from a sitting position.

I must also say that insofar as the transfers are concerned - the question has been put - I must say that, as announced in the Budget, the grant has been increased by 25% as from 2012 already. Therefore, January 2012. Such an increase will definitely go a long way in alleviating the financial hardships of these NGOs and also the need to review the granting aid formula was already announced in the Government Programme 2010-2015 and, therefore, we are continuing our work. But, I must say, that this year will be an important year for special education needs children.

Programme Code 428: Special Education Needs of School Age Children (Rs41,412,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 429: Human Resource Development was called.

Mrs Ribot: Mr Chairperson, at page 330, the objective of that Human Resource Development, more precisely, Careers Guidance, reads as follows -

“Ensure that every student with the necessary skills/information to make...”

How does this tally with the Rs350,000 decrease in that Sub-Programme?

The Chairperson: Hon. Dr. Sorefan!

Dr. Sorefan: Regarding *item 21 Compensation of Employees*, at page 343, to meet the objective of this Sub-Programme, does the hon. Minister consider that five officers are enough to give careers guidance when we know that there are so many students going abroad and that this is a very important part of their life to be well guided for a future career?

The Chairperson: Hon. Obeegadoo, have you got any questions?

Mr Obeegadoo: I refer to the performance targets on page 335, *Sub-Programme 42903: School Staff Development, Research and Curriculum Development*. Now, the indicator here is the number of Educators in Pre-primary, Primary and Secondary Education trained, and the numbers increase in 2012 then they decrease in 2013 and 2014. I am not quite sure what to make of this and I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether he would be willing to express those figures in percentage terms so that we can see clearer what it refers to?

I have a further question which relates to *Sub-Programme 42904*. I am surprised that there is no performance indicator - if I may catch the hon. Minister's attention - that refers to the National Qualifications Framework and, in particular, recognition of prior learning.

Dr. Bunwaree: Recognition of prior learning is already now well involved in our system. In fact, the MQA has done quite a lot in that respect and we are going to continue. The question was asked about career guidance. I must say that the Government Programme 2010-2015 specified that an ICT-based '*Centre d'Orientation Académique et Professionnelle*' will be set up and we have worked quite a lot on that and we want to make it become a reality very soon.

So far as career guidance is concerned, the question concerning five officers was put; in fact, it is not sufficient. I want to do something different and we can't expect to have one Career Guidance Officer in each college neither. It will be *trop superflu*. What we are doing is that there is two-pronged approach. One very important measure is being taken *dans le sens d'orientation académique* which is going to be led by the Human Resource Development Council. *Et eux, ils ont leur fonds, ils ont leur budget. Donc, il faut voir les deux en même temps. Ce n'est pas seulement nous, mais ce sont les deux en même temps. Donc, il y a un travail qui se fait au niveau des écoles, il y a un travail qui se fait au niveau de Human Resource Development Council. Il faut que les deux travaillent ensemble pour donner de bons résultats.*

At the level of the MQA, that question raised by hon. Obeegadoo concerning recognition of prior learning, it is already a fact. I don't have in mind the various fields where they are already applied, where people without an academic qualification, but thanks to their experience, they get the same level of recognition as someone who has been to the academic side.

The Chairperson: Hon. Uteem, then Hon. Labelle!

Mr Uteem: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. On *item 28 212 Transfers to Households*, in relation to scholarships, Are the beneficiaries of the Scholarships required to sign a bond that they will return to Mauritius after their studies and has there been any case where the bonds have been forfeited?

The Chairperson: Yes, Mrs Labelle.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, still on the item scholarship that is *sub-programme 42902: Scholarships* on page 344. When I go back, Mr Chairperson to page 335, we talk about provisions of financial support to meritorious and needy students for tertiary education. Mr Chairperson, I would like to know from the hon. Minister what do we understand by meritorious

and needy students? And also, since we are targeting to allocate more scholarships under this item from some 500 to 930, I don't see this being reflected in the budgetary allocation. I would like to know where are we going to have funds to increase the number of scholarships?

Mr Chairperson: Yes, hon. Baloomoody, you have got a question on that?

Mr Baloomoody: Yes, I have a question regarding the career guidance. It is a fact that today in Mauritius we have got unemployed graduates. Can I ask the hon. Minister whether the career guidance is at the university level or in private sector level? If it is at higher school level, what actions are being taken to ensure that we don't have so many unemployed graduates in our country today?

The Chairperson: Hon. Minister, you have got scholarship.

Dr Bunwaree: So far as University level is concerned, at the Ministry of my colleague of Tertiary Education, there is a system set up there also. I am aware where that is taken care of, but I am talking of higher secondary level where we are setting up career guidance also in conjunction with the HRDC and all this is taking care of. So far as the bond is concerned, I must say, yes, there are many cases. In fact, SLO is taking legal actions in many cases. Last Friday, Cabinet announced a review of the scholarship schemes. In fact, I am going to have a press conference to explain to the public in what way it is going to perform.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Obeegadoo!

Mr Obeegadoo: A boycott, Mr Chairperson, now, it has been settled! I was saying that there is a drop in the budgetary allocation both for the HRDC and also for the MQA. I would like to ask the hon. Minister how does one reconcile the lesser resources being offered to HRDC and MQA with what he just said in response to the question of my hon. colleague. Now, under *item 42902 Scholarships*, I would very much like to know what the HRKAD Fund is? It would appear that for the first time we are budgeting Rs 70m. for that purpose. Finally, concerning the new scholarship schemes to which the hon. Minister just referred to, I have three specific points there. Will he spell out - because we are making provision, of course, in the budget that we are asked to approve - what the social criteria will be, since a number of scholarships will be based on means, not just on academic results? Secondly, whether there will be an increase as regards scholarships to Rodrigues which presently stand at two? Thirdly, this issue of the bond which my hon. friend Reza Uteem just raised, the bond is not just to give priority of employment, but what sort of conditions of employment will be offered to returning laureates in the public sector?

Dr. Bunwaree: Let me say a word on the scholarship because I have already mentioned a few things and I said that I am going to give a press conference. Cabinet's communiqué has announced the public that the review is on. We are going to have the regulations made. It was already announced last year by the previous Minister of Finance in his Budget. He has already spelt it out. In the Finance Bill, it has already been taken care of. Now, we need a regulation. What the conditions will be? *Aujourd'hui, je ne vais pas tout dire parce que cela va venir. Mais on a pris les critères comme salaires des parents, conditions sociales. Mais il aura deux choses; une partie, les bourses basées sur l'académique et une partie, académique et critère sociale. C'est la première fois. C'est un breakthrough extraordinaire. Maintenant je pense que tout le monde est d'accord là-dessus. Patientez deux ou trois jours, vous allez avoir tous les renseignements concernant le nouveau système de bourse!* For the bond, I have already replied.

The Chairperson: HRDC and MQA!

Dr. Bunwaree: HRKAD Fund - *Rodrigues est considéré. Il y aura une augmentation au contraire avec le nouveau système dans le package que j'ai annoncé. Le fund existait déjà.* Now, the fund is being wound up *jusqu'à la fin de décembre.* A sum of Rs 70m. has been put in the budget for us to continue the work that we were doing. That fund has gone to the Consolidated Fund and from there the hon. Minister of Finance has already announced - *il n'y a pas que ce fonds là, il y a plusieurs fonds* which are being wound up. And this Fund also is there. But that Fund was being used for projects like arts and culture, infrastructure projects for tertiary education, the second chance programme. Wherever these projects were existing, they will continue their work. They are getting direct allocation from the Budget. But the Fund is no longer going to be there.

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, I have a question on the reduction of the amount budgeted for HRDC and MQA.

Dr. Bunwaree: HRDC has got a certain amount in its reserves. *Très justement, le ministère des finances a demandé à HRDC d'utiliser cet argent. Quand cela sera utilisé, je pense que cela va être rétabli dans les années à venir.*

The Chairperson: Hon. Jhugroo!

Mr Jhugroo: *Item 28212008* regarding scholarships to foreign students. Can we know students from which country we are referring to for these scholarships?

Dr. Bunwaree: I cannot answer offhand, but if a proper question is put I will certainly give the information.

Programme Code 429: Human Resource Development (Rs478,362,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Agro Industry and Food Security.

Programme Code 481: Policy and Strategy for Agro-Industry and Food Security was called.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Obeegadoo! Is the hon. Minister ready?

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, at page 361, *Personal Emoluments and Compensation of Employees*, I would like some explanation from the hon. Minister since, considering the staffing positions, there is hardly an increase in the number of employees. I would very much like to know why we have such a significant increase in provisions for *Personal Emoluments and Compensation of Employees*. That is the first question.

My second question relates to *Acquisition of Non-Financial Assets* on page 362, where there is a very significant increase again, from Rs7.7 m. to Rs44.5 m. this year. I would like very much to know from the hon. Minister what explains this increase.

My third point relates to *Programme 481* generally. There has been a lot of questions lately of encouragement to bio-agriculture, and I would like to know what is being provided for in this programme to encourage organic farming generally.

Mr Bhagwan: On page 362, concerning refurbishment works at Garden Tower for office accommodation, are we to understand that the Ministry has just changed address? Can we have some explanation about this request for vote?

Mrs Hanoomanjee: Mr Chairperson, on page 361, *item 22130 Studies and Surveys*, can the hon. Minister say whether there has been any study made to promote agro-industrial development?

My second question relates to *item 26323202 Food Security Fund* on page 362. I see that there are no provisions made for 2012. Why is that?

My third question relates to *item 31132401 e-Government projects*. Can we know where we have reached with this project?

Mr Faugoo: Let me start by the last question which was put in relation to the Food Security Fund, Mr Chairperson. In fact, under this item, a sum of Rs150m. is being voted for

2012, but these funds are provided for under respective programmes, meaning that those for food crop are under food crop sector, programme 483. For livestock, it is under livestock, programme 484. Then, there is a sum of Rs50 m. which is being voted outside these programmes and which caters for schemes that have been put in place and financed by different banks, namely the MPCB and also the Development Bank.

Secondly, for studies and surveys, this is in connection with a study which was carried out by the DCDM on Agricultural Marketing Board. We have a report and there were recommendations made in the report. This sum is being voted to pay the consultants. This is for fees.

With regard to the third question asked by hon. Mrs Hanoomanjee about e-Government projects, this is in line with e-Government and the e-Agriculture Action Plan is being prepared. The plan aims at harnessing information and communication technologies to enhance the operations and service delivery of the Ministry and parastatal organisations involved in agriculture, including livestock.

A consultancy report has been submitted and provision made for payment for the consultant.

Concerning the question asked by hon. Bhagwan in relation to Garden Tower, provision is being made for some of the sections of my Ministry to be transferred to Garden Tower. They have not gone there yet. So, the sum of Rs36 m. is for refurbishment works at Garden Tower and also for office accommodation and furniture, etc.

On the question put by hon. Obeegadoo on personal emoluments, Mr Chairperson, the increase is in connection with provision for cash in lieu of unutilised sick leave for employees for the whole Ministry, previously met from the Treasury's vote together with contribution to the National Savings Fund and payment of salary compensation 2012.

Increase in provision to meet payment of salary compensation 2012, cash in lieu of unutilised sick leave and contribution for employees for the whole Ministry as I said; that reflects the increase, Mr Chairperson.

As far as bio-agriculture is concerned, we are encouraging planters in the food crop sector to adopt climate smart agriculture. For example, one item which is being provided for in this budget is conservation of resources, use of biological agents and also bio-fertilisers, development and promotion of bio-fertiliser packages in crop production, promotion of rational

use of fertilisers through the use of specific recommendation packages and development of fertigation systems to promote conservation agriculture, soil conservation and minimum tillage.

Promotion of micro-garden technology, fruits and vegetables, to optimise limited space through roof gardening and backyard gardening, Mr Chairperson.

Dr. Sorefan: Mr Chairperson, regarding *item 22030 Rent* to the tune of Rs13m. This is a huge sum and the hon. Minister has replied that they are moving to the Garden Tower. May I know from him why, since 28 May 2010, the floors at the Garden Tower were allocated to the Ministry of Agro-Industry, and why no provision was made in the last financial year to move in, saving about Rs13 m?

Mr Bodha: Mr Chairperson, as regards studies and surveys, we had a budget of Rs10.5 m. Can I ask the hon. Minister, out of a budget of Rs10.5 m., how much was used in the year 2011? Can he confirm that there was only one study as regards policy and strategy for agro-industry and food security?

Mr Baloomoody: On *item 22030 Rent*, we find that a sum of Rs12 m. is provided for rent this year; Rs12 m. for another year and, at the same time, we are hearing that they are going to move to Garden Tower. May we know whether the rent which is provided is for Garden Tower or are we going to ask two buildings that the Ministry is going to occupy?

Mr Faugoo: Let me start with the question asked by hon. Baloomoody. Money voted for rent includes Garden Tower; provision has been made for Garden Tower. On the question of increase in rental, in fact, there is hardly any increase, Mr Chairperson. It's Rs12.8 m. for 2011. It is Rs12.925 m. - a very small increase which is due to increase in rent.

On the question put by hon. Bodha on Studies and Surveys, I believe that it is correct. A very small sum has been used from this amount. In fact, I am told that the TOR for the consultancy is ready and a sum of Rs3.5 m. has been provided for that.

Mr Seeruttun: I have two questions under *item 22130 Studies and Surveys*. The hon. Minister talked about a survey carried out for the AMB by Informatics DCDM. Is he prepared to lay the report to the House plus what the outcome has been and the Action Plans that are going to be taken?

With regard to *item 26323202 Food Security Fund*, the hon. Minister said that funds have been allocated to specific projects, but I fail to understand why for 2013 and 2014, they earmarked the grants under Programme 481.

Mr Faugoo: For Food Security Fund, Mr Chairperson, as I said, the funds are provided for under different programmes for livestock and food crops. An additional sum of Rs15 m. is being provided for special schemes which have been put in place in the context of food security for Mauritius. If the hon. Member goes to page 668 he can find the details of all the schemes there. This is a project earmarked for 2013.

Mr Uteem: At page 362, under *item 31133801 Refurbishment works at Garden Tower for office accommodation*, may I know from the hon. Minister whether a contract for refurbishment has already been awarded, if so, to whom? If not, what procurement method is being used to select the contractor?

Mr Faugoo: I am told that the consultant has already been appointed and work is due to start in January next year.

The Chairperson: The name of the contractor?

Mr Faugoo: I am not aware, Sir.

Mrs Hanoomanjee: At page 354, under *Programme 481: Policy and Strategy for Agro-Industry and Food Security*, it says support to SMEs in agro-industry. I would wish the hon. Minister to say why when funds were available studies could not be carried out in that sector?

Mr Faugoo: I didn't get the question, Mr Chairperson.

Mrs Hanoomanjee: When you look at page 354, under that same programme 481, one of the major services which is being offered, it says support to SMEs in agro-industry. I understand from *item 22130 Studies and Surveys*, that funds were available. I am asking the hon. Minister why funds were not used to carry out surveys to promote the SMEs in agro-industry.

Mr Faugoo: That fund was specific to AMB, Mr Chairperson.

Programme Code 481: Policy and Strategy for Agro-Industry and Food Security (Rs233,412,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 482: Competitiveness of the Sugar Cane Sector was called.

Mr Jhugroo: At page 358, under *Programme Code 48202 Field Productivity*, can I ask the hon. Minister – I think it is the second time that I asked this question - why the derocking scheme project has not yet been brought forward for small planters in the region of Holyrood and Henrietta?

Mr Faugoo: I cannot give any answer to this specific question. What I can say is that the program is working out well. In fact, there is a target of 12,000 hectares to be covered until the

year 2017. We have already covered 5,000 hectares. There is provision in this budget to cover another 1,300 hectares. Now, I am sure if there is a request, they must be considering it. I will pass on the message to the Sugar Authority, Mr Chairperson.

Mrs Hanoomanjee: At page 362, on Programme Code 482 - *Competitiveness of the Sugar Cane Sector*, generally I am asking the Minister whether the formula for the determination of quantum of sugar and by-products accruing to planters and millers will be reviewed.

Second, on page 363, under *item 26323028 Capital Grant - Irrigation Authority*, why is it that the provisions have been reduced and what type of irrigation is being favoured? I would like to have some clarification under *item 28225001 Other Capital Transfers – Accompanying Measures for Sugar Sector Derocking of Small Sugarcane Planters' Lands (incl FORIP and Fair Trade projects)*. Out of the provisions which were made in 2011 - Rs325 m. - how much has been used? How many planters have benefited? What is the acreage which have been derocked and in which regions?

Mr Faugoo: The first question relates to formula. This is a question of policy, so we have to take a decision when the time comes.

Secondly, with regard to the question of Irrigation Authority, there is a provision of Rs18 m. for Capital Grant.

The Chairperson: Irrigation Authority - why has it been reviewed?

Mr Faugoo: It has been reviewed because the total project value was Rs27 m. Work has already started in May this year and is expected to be completed by next year. A sum of Rs10 m. from this year's Fund has been voted from the Rs32 m which will spill over next year; this is why we are providing only Rs18 m.

The Chairperson: For derocking, how much is spent? What is the acreage?

Mr Faugoo: For derocking, I said just now we have covered already 40% of the targeted area which stands at 12,000 by 2017; this covers for approximately 5,000 planters, Mr Chairperson.

Mrs Hanoomanjee: My question was, out of the Rs 325 m. provision which was made for 2011, how much has been used? Can we know in exact terms how many planters have benefited and in which regions?

Mr Faugoo: As at September of this year, 1,190 hectares have been completed and the amount spent for this year so far is R268 m., Mr Chairperson.

Mr Soodhun: On page 363 under *item 26313014 – Current Grant – Farmers Service Corporation*, there is a decrease of Rs2 m. We know that we have to encourage the farmers and to help them and now I see that there is a decrease of Rs2 m. Can the hon. Minister give us some clarification?

Mr Faugoo: We are encouraging the Farmers Service Corporation. We are also encouraging all the small planters, Mr Chairperson, Sir, but because of the reform that we are bringing, the Farmers Service Corporation will go in the merging of all the six SPIs.

Mr Bodha: At page 364, under *item 31113407 – Upgrading of Site Infrastructure for Rehabilitation of Sugar Camps*, we had a budget of Rs9.5 m. for the year 2011. May I ask whether this budget has been used and why there is no provision for 2012? Does that mean that the infrastructural works have been completed?

Mr Faugoo: Mr Chairperson, Sir, in fact, there were, in the beginning, 133 sites altogether. In fact, it was supposed to be done in two phases. The first phase was for 66 sites which have been completed for a long time. There is a fund amounting to Rs43 m. which has been accumulated, which is lying with MSA. In fact, this amount has not been used and they are going to transfer this to the other fund of Rs43 m. and there are only six remaining sites which are supposed to be completed by next year, Mr Chairperson, Sir. There were certain difficulties; there has been a short delay in the implementation of this project due to certain problems in regard to the land quality. There has been some geological problems with the lands which were chosen to be given to these occupants.

The Chairperson: Two last questions! Hon. Seeruttun and hon. Baloomoody! On the same issue!

Mr Baloomoody: I just wanted to know which sugar camp we are talking about.

Mr Faugoo: *Il y avait 133, on a complété presque tout, il nous reste que six.* If you want the list, I can table it.

Mr Seeruttun: On page 363 under *item 28225 Transfers to Private Enterprises*, an amount of Rs325 m. was earmarked for 2011. Would the Minister inform the House how much has been spent so far?

The Chairperson: On which item?

Mr Seeruttun: *Item 28225*, the last item on page 363. Some Rs325 m. were earmarked for 2011.

Mr Faugoo: Mr Chairperson, Sir, this fund is for derocking. I just answered that the sum of Rs268 m. has been spent so far.

Mr Seeruttun: Allow me to ask another question. With regard to the reform in the cess funded institutions, would the hon. Minister inform the House where matters stand as at to date?

Mr Faugoo: In fact, we had prepared the report to be submitted to EU and we had the deadline of 30 June. The report was ready; it was endorsed by Government in Cabinet which has been sent to the EU. We have a deadline of 31 March next year to implement whatever has been recommended in the report, meaning the reorganisation of the six SPIs, Mr Chairperson, Sir. We have set up three committees: one is to work out the legislation, we are bringing amendments to the existing legislation, we are coming up with a new law; there is one committee which is looking in redeployment, and there is another committee which is working on the social package, Mr Chairperson, Sir. There is also a Ministerial Committee which has been set up to oversee the whole process.

The Chairperson: Two last questions, hon. Gungah and hon. Baloomoody.

(Interruptions)

Silence, please!

Mr Gungah: On page 362 Programme 482: *Competitiveness of the Sugar Cane Sector* under *item 22060 Maintenance*. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether any particular contractor is responsible for the maintenance. My second question, Mr Chairperson, concerns *item 22160 Overseas Training*, how many officers have benefitted from these trainings and what are the criteria for eligibility?

Mr Faugoo: As far as maintenance is concerned, Mr Chairperson, Sir, there must be a contractor who is providing the services. But I am not in a position to say who is the contractor. This is one. Secondly, on overseas training, there was a sum of Rs160,000 which was voted. The criteria are on meritocracy. I think there must be an internal advertisement and then I do not know what are the criteria. It should be in all transparency those who are qualified.

(Interruptions)

I am not in a position to say how many benefitted from this.

Mr Obeegadoo: I have just one question, Sir, in the context of the institutional reform.

The Chairperson: Which item?

Mr Obeegadoo: On page 362 I am on *Programme 482: Competitiveness of the sugar cane sector*. I am referring to the institutional reorganisation in the context of cess reform. I wanted to know whether any provision had been made for a redundancy fund and, if so, where in the budget?

Mr Faugoo: There is a sum of Rs400 m. which is being voted for and this sum would be transferred to my Ministry. A loan will be given to the MSPA because, according to the ERCP, it says it is MSPA which is supposed to meet the cost of the reform.

Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security - Programme Code 482: Competitiveness of the Sugar Cane Sector (Rs1,235,352,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security - Programme Code 483: Development of Non Sugar (Crop) Sector was called.

The Chairperson: Hon. Mrs Hanoomanjee.

Mrs Hanoomanjee: On page 364, under *item 25210005 Subsidies – Freight Rebate Scheme*, there is a sum of Rs10 m. for 2012. Can I know from the hon. Minister how he proposes to reapportion between producers and exporters? What is the apportionment and how he proposes to do this?

Mr Faugoo: It is a new scheme which is being put in place, it is replacing the old scheme which was there and this is going to be operated by the AMB. In fact, the subsidy given is 25% of the cost involved and the 25% will be divided into two, 50% will go to the planter from where the food crop will come from for export and 12.5% to the exporter.

Mr Baloomoody: I refer the hon. Minister to page 365 *item 28223003 Capital Transfers to MSIRI*. I find that there is no provision made for crop research at the MSIRI. Can the hon. Minister enlighten the House?

Mr Faugoo: Yes, Mr Chairperson, there is a small fund which is being transferred. What is happening? In the process of reform of the SPIs, we will be asking, as a matter of policy, for MSIRI to concentrate on the research of sugar and the funds, of course, come from cess, whereas the research in connection with food crop will be done by AREU.

Mr Bhagwan: At page 366, *item 31113032 Setting up of Quarantine Facilities*, can we know where exactly that quarantine will be situated?

Mr Faugoo: From what I understand, this is not a quarantine for livestock. It is a quarantine for treatment of plant for safety and for horticultural products for export, Mr Chairperson.

The Chairperson: Where is it going to be situated?

Mr Faugoo: At Redit.

Mr François: Mr Chairperson, at page 365, *item 28225006 Capital Transfers under FSF – Foodcrop (b) Land preparation and fencing (Rodrigues)*, may I know from the hon. Minister how much money has been disbursed so far separately for land preparation and fencing? Who is doing the land preparation and whether any tender procedures has been launched? What is the actual perimeter of land fenced so far under this item and whether he is aware of a discriminatory process of fencing agricultural land in Rodrigues? Under this item, planters ...

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: This is a new question.

Mr Faugoo: This is done by the Regional Assembly, Mr Chairperson, Sir. I won't be in a position to give any details.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Order! Order, please! Hon. Leopold, please! No comment, please!

Mr Bodha: At page 365, under *item 26313019 Current Grant – Food and Agricultural Research Council/AREU...*

The Chairperson: Order, hon. Baloomoody! I can't hear!

Mr Bodha: ... we see that there is a decrease in the allocation of funds between 2011 and 2012 and *item 26313084 Current - Small Planters Welfare Fund*, we have a budget of Rs4 m. Can the hon. Minister confirm whether there is any Crop Insurance Scheme which will be funded under this item?

Mr Faugoo: For the first one, Mr Chairperson, Sir, there is a decrease in provisions as AREU and FARC expected to claim and increase the fees for services provided. The hon. Member must be aware that there was a paper which was brought and we were asked to charge more for whatever services we are providing. This is what exactly they are supposed to do. This is why we are decreasing the provisions being made in favour of AREU. They have to raise funds to meet their extra financial implications.

The second question regarding the Crop Insurance Scheme, in fact, there was a crop insurance in place, but it did not work out for the simple reason that the insurance company pulled out because there were too many claims in one particular year. The money which is being given there is for the recurrent budget, it is the grant which Government is giving. But there is in place now a scheme which has been launched called the Calamity Scheme. It is contributory and we are also giving a grant to the planters.

Mr Gungah: Mr Chairperson, at page 364, *item 22060 Maintenance*, I would like to know if the Minister can inform the House who is the contractor responsible for the maintenance.

Mr Faugoo: I am not aware, Mr Chairperson.

Mr Bodha: At page 365, under *item 28225006 Capital Transfers under FSF – Foodcrop (a) Land preparation (Mauritius)*, we have land preparation with a budget Rs10 m. and we move to a budget of Rs33 m. in the year 2012. May I ask the hon. Minister who will carry out those works now and how will the works be funded?

Mr Faugoo: It is Capital Transfer under Food Security Fund There is land preparation. In fact this is ..

(Interruptions)

Yes, it is Rs10 m. out of Rs33 m. It was Rs10 m. and this year it is Rs33 m. This is done by SPMPC.

Mr Seeruttun: Mr Chairperson, allow me to go back to page 364, *under item 22120 Fees*. I can see that some Rs4.8 m. are being earmarked for the four years 2011 to 2014. May I know from the hon. Minister for what purpose are fees being paid to?

Mr Faugoo: It is fees for consultants for different studies.

Mr Seeruttun: I would like to know for what purpose. They are fees for consultants, but for what project?

Mr Faugoo: As I said, it is for consultant fees, Mr Chairperson. I don't have the details for which projects. I may table it later on.

The Chairperson: The hon. Minister will table it. Hon. Mrs Hanoomanjee!

Mrs Hanoomanjee: Mr Chairperson, I will come back on page 364, *item 25210005 Subsidies – Freight Rebate Scheme (modified)*. I think the hon. Minister said that 50% will go to the producers and I think 12% will go to exporters. But freight concerns exporters, I can't understand why producers also will benefit.

My second question is on page 365, *item 26323019 Capital Grant – FARC/AREU (Production and Marketing Information System – FSF)*. Can we know in what fields AREU has conducted research and whether some of the results of the research have been published?

My third question is on page 366, *item 31133801 Quarantine Treatment Plant Facility/National Biotechnology Lab*. Can we know whether the Ministry is going ahead with a full-fledge national biotechnology lab, whether the study which had been carried out formerly has been updated and whether we will be going ahead with it?

Mr Faugoo: Mr Chairperson, on the question of Freight Rebates Scheme, I explained clearly that 25% of the cost is subsidised and from the subsidy which is granted, 50% is given to the planter and 50% to the exporter. This is a new scheme which is being given to encourage planters to grow quality products for export purposes to enhance the export market.

Secondly, on the National Biotech Lab, I don't have any information, but as far as I know, this is a policy issue which has to be decided. I cannot today pronounce on this. On the third issue which the hon. Member raised concerns AREU research, there have been research projects in crop production and protection in respect of strategic crops, namely potato, onion, garlic, tomatoes and pulses. The results have been publicised through public lectures and papers are also published.

The Chairperson: We will take a last one from hon. Bodha.

Mr Bodha: At page 366, as regards the *Construction of a Multipurpose Containment Facility (Plant) and the Construction of an Onion Curing Unit*, may I ask the hon. Minister when are these projects being implemented and when will these facilities be offered to the small planters?

Mr Faugoo: As far as Onion Curing Units are concerned, this is a *grande première*; it is given to enhance post-harvest facilities especially to improve the quality of the products for onions.

Government on its own account built about 13 of them in the different areas where onions are grown because it was so popular and there was a high demand of this. We have put in place a scheme where we give a grant of 40% to associations, but not to single individual planters and the cost of one curing unit is about Rs200,000. We are giving a grant of Rs80,000 for those who are interested. We are also encouraging them to use it off crop season to grow seedlings. So, it is being used all over the year.

Mr Seeruttun: At page 366 under *item 31133 Furniture, Fixtures and Fittings*, some Rs5 m. have been earmarked for 2012 to cater for amongst others, the National Biotechnology Laboratory. Do I take it that the laboratory will be operational in 2012?

Mr Faugoo: It looks like, I must confirm. It is going to be operational.

Programme Code 483: Development of Non Sugar (Crop) Sector (Rs582,825,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 484: Livestock Production and Development was called.

Mr Faugoo: Mr Chairperson, there are two pages on the list programme. Can we go page by page starting with 367 and we proceed to 368?

The Chairperson: Yes, on page 367, hon. Soodhun, which item?

Mr Soodhun: *Item 22120028 Fees for Laboratory Test/Food Technology Laboratory.* Provision was made in 2011 for Rs7 m. and decreased considerably in 2012. We know the problems of food contamination that people are really facing which cause a lot of deaths.

Mr Faugoo: This was in connection with accreditation of the Laboratory; we have already paid 40%, Mr Chairperson, and the provision of Rs2 m. which is being voted here is for the validation of results with accredited laboratories abroad.

Mrs Labelle: On page 367 *item 22900 Other Goods and Services*, there is an amount regarding the *Control of Animal Pests*. For the current year, we had an amount of Rs1 m. and, for next year, it is Rs11 m. and it goes down afterwards. Is there any particular reason for this increase? Do we have any particular project under *Control of Animal Pests*?

Moreover, Mr Chairperson, with your permission, maybe the hon. Minister could give us some information on the balance of the amount of *Other Goods and Services*.

The Chairperson: Which other items?

Mrs Labelle: I am talking about item 22900, Mr Chairperson, on page 367, *Other Goods And Services* of which control of animal pests. I was asking the question why this amount has increased by Rs10 m. and also the remaining balance under this item, for which project are we allocating this sum?

Mr Faugoo: This amount is being voted for the MSPCA to continue with the campaign that we have launched to catch stray dogs, Mr Chairman, Sir. There is a provision of Rs4 m. as grant which is being given to the MSPCA, but this is over and above the grant. It is especially for the campaign of stray dogs.

Mr Bodha: Mr Chairperson, at the middle of the page, *item 22130002 Livestock Census FSF*, we had a budget of Rs5 m. and now we have a budget of Rs1 m. May I ask whether the census has been carried out or whether it is going to be carried out next year?

Mr Faugoo: The census was carried out, I think, last year, Mr Chairman, Sir, and the money which was voted there has been used already. The sum of Rs1 m. is being voted for the tagging of the animals.

Mrs Hanoomanjee: On page 367 *Item No. 25210001 – Subsidies-Incentives for Livestock*, can we know the number of persons who have benefited from these incentives and what type of incentives have been given?

Mr Uteem: Under *item 22900 Other Goods and Services*, may we have a breakdown of what the sum of Rs17.4 m. refers to and, in particular, whether there is any amount budgeted for curing of bats?

Mr Faugoo: I did not get the question.

Mr Uteem: Under 22900, there is a sum of Rs11 m. for the control of pests. But then what the balance out of the Rs27 m. will be used for, in particular, whether there is any amount budgeted for curing of bats?

Mr Faugoo: May I come to this one first, Mr Chairperson, curing of bats is under another programme *Conservation* and it will come after, but this one is meant for stray dogs. It is a grant which is going to be given to MSPCA.

As far as the question asked by hon. Mrs Hanoomanjee on incentives for livestock feed is concerned, this is a subsidy which is being given to the farmers after the closure of the feed factory at Richelieu. The present subsidy scheme was introduced in October 2009 and the subsidy already existed and it was increased from the existing one Rs1500 – Rs2000 per tonne of feed.

For the subsidy to cow breeders, there are details which I can table a copy.

Mr Chairperson: Yes, please.

Mr Seeruttun: Mr Chairperson, under *item 21 Compensation of Employees*, I can see a reduction in 2012 for the amount earmarked under that item, but when I go to page 377 the number of employees has gone up from 814 to 835. How do you explain that reduction in the amount earmarked while the number of employees has gone up?

Mr Faugoo: The decrease reflects the number of vacancies, Mr Chairman, Sir, because if people will be recruited in the next financial year, they will be paid basic salary. This reflects the decrease.

Mr Bodha: Mr Chairperson, as regards the grant to the MSPCA of Rs3.5 m. for the stray dogs, may I ask the hon. Minister how can he see to it that we have good value for money?

Mr Faugoo: What is happening, in fact, is that we are going to work out a scheme where we are going to give grant on the number of heads, which are going to be called by the MSPCA.

Mr Obeegadoo: On page 368, the same point raised by hon. Bodha, I just wanted to understand, this is a one off grant of Rs10 m. with the initial normal grant of Rs3.5 m. Just for this one year, there is that much more in terms of resources. How is this going to be implemented? Will it be contracted out because surely there would be no rationale in building up capacity just for one year? I want to ask the hon. Minister whether he has any idea at this point in time, how to make use of this money to be effective without burdening the State for future years when there might not be the same resources available.

Mr Faugoo: In fact, the MSPCA was operating under capacity. They have a capacity, they have six vehicles, but they are utilising only two vehicles because of lack of funds. The funds are going to be used and they will be able to use all the capacity that they have. This is being given to use for next year. We will have to see how we can sustain this programme because we have around 200,000 of stray dogs, which is an eyesore for the country, especially for the tourist destination. We will have to look for funds for other years, but at least for next year, we are giving Rs10 m.

The Chairperson: We take two last questions on page 368 because we have one more page on this item.

Mrs Labelle: On page 368, item 28225 *Transfers to Private Enterprises*, there is an amount of Rs34 m. budgeted for this current year. Mr Chairperson, last year, we made a provision of Rs29 m. for this current year, but in this present Budget, I don't find any amount. Maybe the hon. Minister could enlighten us on this issue and also regarding this amount of Rs34,000 whether the whole amount has been spent during this present current year.

Mr Faugoo: This is where I have said, Mr Chairperson, if you look at the details here, they give the information about all the different schemes which have been put in place. For this

year, this amount is a special fund which has been provided for in the budget and it is to be found at page 668 of the Budget.

Mr Uteem: Last item on this page 368, *item 32145515 Loans to Mauritius Meat Authority*. Can we know from the hon. Minister what is the purpose of this loan?

Mr Faugoo: It is for equipment.

Mr Bodha: Under *item 31113026 Other Structures*, we have the Model Dairy Farm and we have a budget of Rs4 m. this year and a budget of Rs9 m. next year. Can the hon. Minister enlighten us about this project?

Mr Faugoo: In fact, Mr Chairperson, we are making two model farms for cattle, which are to be found at -

- (i) Petit Merlot, and
- (ii) Mare d'Albert.

There is a goat multiply of farm on State land that is being built at Mare d'Albert and works have already started.

Mr Jhugroo: On page 368, is the MSPCA coming up with a new sensitisation company to eliminate stray dogs?

Mr Faugoo: We just launched the sensitisation campaign a few months ago. It is going on with the same campaign.

Mrs Hanoomanjee: On page 368, under *item 32145515 Loan to Mauritius Meat Authority*, the hon. Minister just said that it is for purchase of equipment whereas when I look at the same page under *item 28223004*, I see *Other Capital Transfers to Mauritius Meat Authority - Rehabilitation of Central Slaughter House*. I think this is where equipment is being purchased. Can the hon. Minister enlighten us on this issue?

Mr Faugoo: The sum, which is above, is in terms of grant. We have not approved extra funds. This is why a loan is being given for Rs5 m. for equipment.

Mr François: On page 368, under *item 28225007 Cattle Breeders Scheme Rodrigues*, it is a new scheme. Can we be enlightened on this scheme as there is a provision of Rs4 m. under extra budgetary funds?

Mr Faugoo: There is a scheme which is in place. There is a sum of Rs50 m. which is being voted for that scheme.

Mr François: Allow me to carry on, Mr Chairperson. With regard to *item 26321001 Abattoir*, where grant has been given to Rodrigues Regional Assembly, may I know whether tender has been launched for this project, and if so, what is the contract value?

Mr Faugoo: Is the hon. Member talking about *Abattoir* in Rodrigues? Again, it is for the Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

Programme Code 484: Livestock Production and Development (Rs300,632,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 485: Forestry Resources was called.

The Chairperson: Yes, Mrs Labelle!

Mrs Labelle: Regarding the Programme 485: Forestry Resources, ...

Mr Faugoo: Which page?

Mrs Labelle: Page 369.

The Chairperson: We will go page by page.

Mrs Labelle: Yes, the programme is on one page. Mr Chairperson, when I link that with page 359, the objectives, the planting of native trees and other plants to protect watershed around reservoirs and main river systems and to reduce soil erosion, I would like to know whether these include the area around the Mare aux Vacoas - since we are all aware of the problem of deforestation and so on - whether this area is being included under this programme.

Mr Faugoo: It is indeed included, Mr Chairperson.

Programme Code 485: Forestry Resources (Rs187,289,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 486: Native Terrestrial Biodiversity and Conservation (Rs69,819,000) was called and agreed to.

Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development

Programme Code 401: Environmental Policy and Management was called.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: I will ask all my questions at one go, Mr Chairperson.

The Chairperson: No, page by page.

Mr Bhagwan: On page 386, I will ask one question on the Personal Emoluments. Can the hon. Minister inform the House what is the latest position, from him, of the *Police de l'Environnement*. I'll take this on this item. The hon. Minister can give us a brief, how many

Police Officers remaining, how many vehicles whether the scope for a re-engineering of that unit.

Under Social Contributions, an amount of Rs2,400,000 is being identified, what is the social contribution?

Under Item, Fees, from Rs300,000 to Rs3,125,000. Next page 387 ...

The Chairperson: We will take these two items

Mr Bhagwan: Under the same programme code 401, I will give the hon. Minister the list and then he can provide us with the information.

The Chairperson: The first one is *police de l'environnement*.

Mr Virahsawmy: I will start by the last one, Mr Chairperson, if you don't mind, namely social contribution, which is a new item and makes *Provision for Payment of Contribution to the National Savings Fund*.

With regard to the *police de l'environnement*, I believe everybody heard the Prime Minister yesterday when he said that he has personally talked to the Commissioner of Police, and there is going to be a reengineering of the *police de l'environnement*.

With regard to fees, these are paid to the chairman and members of the Environment Appeal Tribunal, and also fees paid under the capacity building programme where we are recruiting staff for the MID programme.

The Chairperson: We move to page 387 now.

Mr Bhagwan: With regard to *Contribution to UN Framework Convention on the Climate Change (UNFCC)*, can I know whether Mauritius - I asked the question last time - would be attending the next Conference of the Parties in South Africa and whether there would be a common stand of the Small Islands Developing States?

As regards *Contribution to Regional Coordination Centre on the Regional Contingency Plan*, can the hon. Minister tell us whether this item is linked with the Oil Spill Contingency Plan? On the last item *Maurice Ile Durable Fund*, can the hon. Minister explain why there are no funds earmarked for 2011 and 2012?

Mr Virahsawmy: Concerning the *Maurice Ile Durable Fund*, the amount of Rs200 m. has been provided as extra budgetary funds; it appears at appendix (c) of the Budget.

For climate Change, the Ministry will be represented at COP 17 in Durban. We will be having a common position for the SIDs through the AOSIS. In fact, I have to inform the House

that, at the last meeting which I have attended in Johannesburg two weeks back on climate change, Mauritius made a formal motion that the situation of certain SIDs countries, which is very dangerous and very alarming, should be considered as a human rights issue. This motion will be taken up at COP 17.

Mr Bhagwan: Can I ask whether there has been any meeting of the African Ministers of Environment, where there is a common stand of the African Ministers in G77?

Mr Virahsawmy: I don't know; I'll have to check.

Programme Code 401: Environment Policy and Management (Rs70,500,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 402: Environmental Protection and Conservation was called.

Mr Bhagwan: On page 388, *item 22900099 Miscellaneous Expenses, (b) Persistent Organic Pollutants*, can the hon. Minister inform the House where we have reached with regard to the implementation of this POP?

Secondly, *(c) Climate Change Adaptation Plan*, there is a vote of Rs19, 358,000 m. Can the hon. Minister later on circulate a brief on the Action Plan of the Ministry?

Item 22900903 Awareness Campaign, a sum of Rs3 m. has been earmarked. I think it is awareness for environmental protection. The Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance have both stated firmly in their speech that there is a problem of littering in Mauritius. Can the hon. Minister inform the House whether there would be a sort of special campaign prepared by his Ministry as far as littering is concerned and, if so, can he give us some details?

Concerning *item 31122804 Air monitoring*, can the hon. Minister inform the House whether new equipment has been received or purchased for air monitoring, especially now that we have better quality of fuel, we have unleaded fuel, better quality of diesel? Can the hon. Minister give us a brief as to whether there has been an air monitoring campaign to see about the quality of air, especially in the capital? Can the hon. Minister let us know whether there were two monitoring equipments in the yard of the Royal College of Port Louis?

With regard to *item 31122999 Acquisition of Other Machinery and Equipment*, can we know what type of equipment has been purchased?

Mr Virahsawmy: We will start with air monitoring. In fact, the National Laboratory has three equipments instead of two, that is, three the Air Monitoring Caravan. We have one which we have just bought and one in 2010. They are functioning very well, and that is why Mauritius

came out second in the world for air quality; we rank second in the world and first in Africa in terms of air quality. This is because the equipment is working very well, and there is no need to replace any equipment next year. We will see perhaps afterwards....

(Interruptions)

Mr Virahsawmy: Then, the hon. Member has asked me about *Persistent Organic Pollutants (POP)*. This is the POP which concerns mainly pesticides, industrial chemicals and by-products, including DDD - everybody knows, we have exported under full security nearly 90 tonnes of DDD. We have been able to export through technology from Greece; Greek experts came here to ensure full protection and these have been exported to Europe.

With regard to *Climate Change Adaptation Plan*, these are projects to mainstream the climate change adaptation programme into core development policies. About 25 proposals have been identified and 21 have been retained and that's why we say it is an important amount of Rs19,358,000. In fact, I have to mention that this amount forms part of the grant; this is a grant amount from JICA. Mauritius is contributing very little in these Rs19 m. Most of it is donated to the country.

The Chairperson: Hon. Baloomoody!

Mr Baloomoody: Still on the Programme 402 on page 387, *item 22120007 Fees for Training*. We found that there has been a tremendous increase from Rs8 m. to Rs35 m. Again, for *Fees to Consultants*, there has been a little decrease. May we know who are the beneficiaries of the training and the name of the consultant on the other item?

Mr Virahsawmy: In fact, the House will note, Mr Chairperson, that these are two important amounts which we have negotiated - the Ministry has negotiated funds - regarding payment to consultant and fees for training. For example, from the first amount of Rs35,258,000 there is a sum of Rs34,808,000 which is a grant from JICA - again, the same principle. With regard to the amount of Rs58,989,000, there is a sum of Rs56,989,000 which is again grant from JICA. These cover different projects, for example, for the consultants there is a sum of Rs13.3 m. which will go to POPs and sustainable buildings; Rs2.7 m. for the third national communication; Rs154,000 for technology need assessment; Rs400,000 for RIO reporting; Rs385,000 for national sustainable consumption; Rs38 m. for the African adaptation programme which falls directly under JICA and Rs2 m. for the Adaptation Fund Board. All these will be done through proper consultancy services, by qualified firms of consultants, under the

supervision of JICA. They will appoint consultants. The terms of reference are being prepared because it is a major programme, as you would see the amount involved. It is a very important programme for climate change and adaptation programme.

Mr Jhugroo: At page 386, *Programme 402 Environmental Protection and Conservation*, the hon. Minister just mentioned Mauritius is first, but in his Budget Speech...

The Chairperson: We are at which page?

Mr Jhugroo: At page 387, Programme 402.

(Interruptions)

In his Budget Speech the hon. Minister of Finance mentioned that the island is dirty. So, what are the measures taken by the Ministry to clean up the country?

The Chairperson: No! Which item and which page? I am lost!

Mr Jhugroo: At page 387, *Programme 402: Environmental Protection and Conservation*. Is it clear now?

The Chairperson: Which item under Programme 402?

Mr Jhugroo: I am asking a general question because it was mentioned in the Budget Speech.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: No, no! No, general question! The hon. Member has to come with an item! Please, no comment! Hon. Mrs Labelle!

Mrs Labelle: At page 387, Programme 402, under *item 22120007 Fees for Training*, I have heard the hon. Minister explaining that it is a grant but, I think, the question is which training we are talking about and who will benefit from this training?

Under the same issue, Mr Chairperson, when we refer to the targets mentioned last year, there were several items, namely rehabilitation of beaches and so on. May I know from the hon. Minister whether these targets have been reached regarding the number of coastal sites rehabilitated and protected; whether these have been targets under this Programme?

Moreover, Mr Chairperson, still under the Programme 402, when I go to page 383, we talk about the development of a climate change adaptation framework. May I know from the hon. Minister under which Code, this framework will be developed and are we going to have recourse to a consultant or has this already been started - the development of the climate change adaptation framework?

The Chairperson: Hon. Dr. S. Boolell has got questions on the same item. We will take it.

Mr Virahsawmy: Let me first reply.

The Chairperson: It concerns the same item.

Dr. S. Boolell: It is the same thing, concerning the same item, if you will bear with me. On item 3140402, page 389, concerning the rehabilitation of beaches and the sum which has been increased for the next budget, doubled almost from Rs41 m. to Rs93 m. Could we be informed about which beaches have been subject to any form of rehabilitation? Which beaches, which rivers and which lakes?

Mr Virahsawmy: There is a list of beaches which we can circulate. It is important that I inform the House - hon. Bhagwan knows the problem - that we have a major problem in Mauritius. Everybody has got to realise that one of our main natural resources is the beaches which we have and with climate change problems most of our beaches - there are about 20 beaches - are eroded and some beaches are very heavily eroded, I must say. We have to rehabilitate our beaches because the beach is one of our assets which is required to support our tourism industry. That's why you will see that we have increased the amount to Rs70 m. to be able to work on the main beaches like Mon Choisy. We have rehabilitated Flic en Flac already, and we are doing Grand'Baie now. We have to work on Belle Mare, and a lot of other beaches; Cap Malheureux, Poudre d'Or, Baie du Cap; we have a lot of problems in Baie du Cap because of erosion. So, that's why you will see that the amount in terms of beaches has been increased to Rs70 m. With regard to the climate change framework, this is covered by the fees for training. There is an important element under the Adaptation Fund Board which covers, in fact, the climate change and we will be appointing qualified consultants. You realise that it is not easy also to get consultants for climate change because this is a phenomenon which is affecting the whole world.

Mrs Hanoomanjee: Sir, on page 388, under *item 31122804*, can the hon. Minister say whether the National Environment Laboratory is fully operational?

Mr Virahsawmy: Yes, the NEL is fully operational since many years. This is the NEL which is responsible for the quality of air. The NEL also have specialised equipment like a laser spectrometer which can analyse the quality of underground water. The NEL is fully operational.

Mr Bhagwan: Mr Chairperson, on page 388, we have the *Rehabilitation of Beach* and then there is *Beach Reprofilng*. The hon. Minister can circulate the list of the main beaches afterwards.

As far as *Upgrading works along river banks* is concerned, we all know the problems along river banks. Can the hon. Minister inform the House which rivers have been identified for rehabilitation?

As far as the islets are concerned, I think this should be a joint venture with the Ministry of Agro-Industry. There was a survey of all the islets. I won't go into the saga of Ile Plate and so on. The hon. Minister of Agro-Industry knows what crime has been done by the previous operators.

The Deputy Speaker: Please!

Mr Bhagwan: Can the hon. Minister inform the House whether there is an Action Plan for the cleaning and uplifting of all the islets which form part of our *patrimoine*?

Mr Virahsawmy: In fact, there is a draft plan for the rehabilitation of the islets together with the Ministry of Agro-Industry. This is also a very important aspect of our natural resources and our beaches. I'll have perhaps to explain very quickly...

The Chairperson: Briefly!

Mr Virahsawmy: ... the difference between rehabilitation of beaches and beach reprofiling. Rehabilitation of beaches, these are hard measures. We use gabions and rock revetment, whereas the beach reprofiling is soft measures where we use more sand as has been done in Flic en Flac and part of Choisy. For river banks, we have a long list, so, I will circulate it.

The Chairperson: Last question, hon. Seeruttun!

Mr Seeruttun: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Allow me to go back to page 383 on the Priority Objectives for *Programme 402 - Provision of Education on Sustainable Development and Promote Environmental Awareness Strategies and Sensitisation Campaigns*. Would the hon. Minister inform the House what are the campaigns that he intends to undertake in year 2012 to promote that sensitisation campaign so that the population is aware of environmental issues that we are facing, the more so that the hon. Minister of Finance did mention in his speech that the island is dirty.

The Chairperson: The hon. Member has made his point.

Mr Virahsawmy: Yes, this is a sensitisation programme which is ongoing. We will continue to have these programmes through all the primary schools and colleges. We have a team at the Ministry who has been trained to go everywhere, in village halls, in all associations to explain people the problems of climate change and measures which should be taken, for example, we should have to go for renewable energy. We have introduced rainwater harvesting and we are encouraging people to plant. These are measures which are ongoing.

Mr Bodha: Mr Chairperson...

The Chairperson: The hon. Member must be very short! He has got only one minute.

Mr Bodha: At page 388, under *item 31410402 Improvement/Upgrading/Rehabilitation of Beaches*, can the hon. Minister enlighten the house as to what is happening at Ile aux Cerfs for the dredging between the two islands?

Mr Virahsawmy: The item which the hon. Member is referring to is mainly for consultancy fees. With regard to Ile aux Cerfs where we have already authorised the Sun Group to go ahead with the dredging of the sand, there are about 15,000 tonnes of sand which will be dredged from Ile aux Cerfs and will be used for rehabilitation of Ilot Mangenie. Now, they are waiting for the appropriate time to do the work because the tourism season has peaked up and we don't want them to upset the tourists. They will wait for the appropriate time and they will do it.

Mr Bhagwan: Can I ask the hon. Minister whether any EIA Certificate has been prepared and given to the Touessrok operator for this beach work?

Mr Virahsawmy: No, it doesn't require any EIA Certificate. It is being done under the supervision of the Ministry. We are using specialised dredging equipment for that.

Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development - Programme Code 402: Environmental Protection and Conservation (Rs278,253,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development - Programme Code 403: Uplifting and Embellishment of the Physical Environment was called.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: Under *item 31113425 Embellishment of Infrastructural Works*, there is a vote of Rs18.7 m. Can I ask the hon. Minister whether consideration is being given for the uplifting of health track at Signal Mountain. From what I gather, Montagne des Signaux, where investment was made by Government, is very popular, and it is in the Constituency of the

Deputy Prime Minister. There has been a lot of *dégradation* by civil contractors putting all sorts of cables. Can I know whether in the plan for the coming months, works have already started?

From what I have read in the newspapers, Dauguet was a *parcours de santé*. I have not been there. If it has been rehabilitated, so far so good! If it hasn't, can I ask the hon. Minister if he can use the sum allocated to have a complete uplifting of this *parcours de santé* at Dauguet. In Camp Thorel also I have had a site visit personally and where the Ministry of Environment has made investment for the construction of a *parcours de santé*. Since hon. Dayal cannot put parliamentary questions, I am replacing him now.

The Chairperson: The hon. Member has made his point.

Mr Bhagwan: Another item, Mr Chairperson. As far as *rivers and canals* are concerned, is there a list which has already been prepared for all these rivers and canals? There is another item *Grounds* for which a sum of Rs13.5 m. has been earmarked. What is this item about?

The Chairperson: Let the hon. Minister respond first!

Mr Virahsawmy: Yes, let's start with *Grounds* which is fresh in my mind. This item represents Rs 3.6 m. for mainly bins and plastic bags – partly not the whole amount - which are distributed to regions which require them. The amount also provides for the cleaning of certain regions like Grand Bassin. This is for an amount of Rs13.5 m. Then, there was a question on *Montagne des Signaux*?

The Chairperson: Camp Thorel, Dauguet and Montagne des Signaux.

Mr Virahsawmy: Camp Thorel, Dauguet and Montagne des Signaux - in fact, we have had a meeting with the Mayor of Port Louis regarding *Montagne des Signaux*. The Ministry is taking the lead, but since it is under the responsibility of the Municipality and we realise that it is important, we will take care also of Dauguet to provide the security services there. We will have to clean it and we will maintain Camp Torel also as required.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Mrs Labelle and then hon. Bodha.

Mrs Labelle: Thank you, Mr Chairperson, at page 389 under *item 31410402 Improvement, Upgrading, Rehabilitation of Rivers, Beaches/Mountain Reserves/Islets*, maybe the hon. Minister can give us a list of rivers that have been rehabilitated for the current year 2011. If I link that to *Programme 403* at page 384, one of the major services is the setting up of

endemic gardens and other green spaces. May I know from the hon. Minister the number of endemic gardens that has been set up during this current year and where they are situated?

The Chairperson: List of rivers rehabilitated and green spaces.

Mr Virahsawmy: We have a list of 96 rivers.

The Chairperson: The Minister can circulate it.

Mr Virahsawmy: I am giving the list and we have a list of 40 endemic gardens which we have done also during the year.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Bodha!

Mr Bodha: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. As regards the *item 31410402 Improvement/Upgrading/Rehabilitation of Rivers/beaches/Mountain Reserves/Islets and item 31410403 Improvement/Upgrading/Rehabilitation of Public and Other Sites*, may I ask the hon. Minister whether the Grand'Baie project falls under one of these two items and if we can enlighten the House as to the state of progress of the project of Grand'Baie? Regarding Grand'Baie, in the bay we have a number of problems with garbage and litter which are thrown in the bay by the pleasure crafts and the cruise ships. Is the hon. Minister aware of this problem?

Mr Virahsawmy: The Grand'Baie project, in fact, falls under the *item 31410402 Rehabilitation of Beach*. Work is under way there. There is a small problem with the fishermen and I hope we will be able to sort it out. But I can report that work is well under way and we hope to be able to complete it very soon. The hon. Member asked me about the improvement and upgrading or rehabilitation. These are mainly for health tracks, green corners, public gardens, Children Development Unit, children garden, some gardens for schools, for handicaps and orphans. We try to attend whenever there are requests.

Mr Baloomoody: If I may come back to the issue of grounds. It is written here 'maintenance of grounds'. I come back to the question put by my hon. friend Bhagwan. The reply we have got from the Minister is for bins and plastics.

Mr Virahsawmy: We have to give the bins for them to collect the garbage to keep the grounds clean.

Mr Baloomoody: May I know how these bins and plastic bags are distributed? Is it through what organisations they are given to members of the public or local authorities?

Mr Virahsawmy: Mr Chairperson, whenever there is a request from the *Force Vives* of the different regions, we have a team at the Ministry which makes an inspection. We have a look

and we see if it is justified, if the bins and the plastic bags would be used properly and if it is going to serve the purpose. Then we organise with the *Forces Vives*, with the Village Council for the distribution of bins and plastic bags. Everybody gets it.

Mr Jhugroo: Mr Chairperson, under the same item, can I know from the hon. Minister how many bins and plastic bags have been distributed in Constituency No. 12 and Constituency No. 7 since May 2010?

Mr Virahsawmy: At the Ministry, I don't work for one or two Constituencies. I have distributed 11,955.

Mr Li kwong Wing: Mr Chairperson, in terms of Programme 403, the title is 'uplifting and embellishment or physical environment' at page 389. If we look at the Programme the total cost is Rs180 m., but the cost of labour, of compensation of employees is more than Rs107 m. So, more money is spent on employment than on the Programme of embellishment of environment itself. In terms of performance budgeting, can we have some enlightenment on what kind of an output performance is there?

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Hon. Hossen, there is no need for you to give the explanation.

Mr Virahsawmy: I don't know whether it is their policy to throw people out of job.

Mr Soodhun: I take the same point raised by hon. Bodha concerning the cruise ships. At the end of the day when they come near the bay, they throw all the plastic bags and garbage in the sea there. There is a temple there and I think my hon. friend knows it. We can see a lot of plastics in front of the temple. I personally have intervened through the *Police de l'Environnement*, but nothing has been done.

Mr Virahsawmy: We will organise to clean it.

Programme Code 403: Uplifting and Embellishment of the Physical Environment (Rs 180,563,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 406: Sustainable Development was called.

Mr Bhagwan: Mr Chairperson, at page 390, under *item 2212008 Master Plan for Eco-Village Project*, we have a vote of Rs5 m. Can the hon. Minister inform the House who has prepared the Master Plan? Have there been consultants or experts who have advised Government? Also under *item 31113425 Eco-Village Project*, there is a sum of Rs 45m. May we know the final list of the villages which have been identified and the criteria which have been

adopted by the Ministry or Government, and also the criteria used to identify and choose these villages? May we know also whether there is a forecast of other villages which have been identified for years 2013 and 2014?

Mr Virahsawmy: Yes, Mr Chairperson, we have advertised for consultants to be appointed to prepare the Master Plan and this month itself I understand the consultant has been appointed. It is the GIBB International through an open competition. With regard to the regions which have been chosen, there are nine villages for the eco-village project - eight in Mauritius and one in Rodrigues. In 2012, we will start with Pointe aux Piments, Panchavati and Rivière Coco in Rodrigues; in 2013 in Vieux Grand Port, Poudre d'Or and Souillac and in 2014, in Vuillemin, le Morne, la Gaulette and Clemencia.

Mr Bodha: With regard to the Master Plan, may I ask the hon. Minister for the Eco-Village whether it is totally a Mauritian model or whether the Master Plan has been inspired by any other project which has been implemented successfully elsewhere?

Mr Virahsawmy: No, no. it is the consultant who will now work on the Master Plan. The consultant will design the Master Plan, alright! They are Mauritian consultants. It is GIBB. I believe they will take into consideration the Mauritian context, the local situation.

Mr Baloomoody: Mr Chairperson , may I refer the hon. Minister to page 385 where we have targeted the percentage of the sustainable development for action for Maurice Ile Durable. I found that in the years 2010 and 2011 there has been no achievement and our target is only 10% for 2012; 40% in 2013 and 50% in 2014. Can I ask the hon. Minister whether he can clarify the House as to why we are so much behind on this issue of Maurice Ile Durable?

Mr Virahsawmy: In fact, it is very sad to note that up to now Members of the House have not realised all the important works that have been done under Maurice Ile Durable. The Prime Minister launched Maurice Ile Durable in 2008. In 2008 itself, we appointed Professor Odendaal to prepare the Green paper. He had 53 national consultations with all the people in Mauritius, the Young Women's Association, everybody. He prepared his Green Paper in 2010. Using that Green Paper, we appointed six national consultative committees which are made up of about 50 Mauritian people from different stakeholders - private sector, ONGs - and they started to work on six committees and to work on the five Es' which the Prime Minister explained, yesterday, in his speech. These committees which total about 300 people, all voluntarily who left their work to come and help; to build up the Action Plan for Maurice Ile Durable. Now these

have been appointed and with the help of AFD we are appointing an International consultant to work out the White Paper. The White Paper will define now the Action Plan. It is very unfair to say that nothing has been done. A lot has been done because Maurice Ile Durable is not a small project. It covers all the activities of Mauritius.

(Interruptions)

That's what I am saying.

Mr Baloomoody: It is not proper for the hon. Minister to say that I am unfair. I am just quoting what there is in the Budget, what it has been projected.

Mr Virahsawmy: I am telling the hon. Member that it has been said in the newspaper...

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: No argument, please.

Mr Virahsawmy: Yesterday, the Prime Minister explained lengthily on all the procedures, and now today....

The Chairperson: Hon. Minister, please, you made your point. Now we move to hon. Seeruttun!

(Interruptions)

Order!

Mr Seeruttun: Allow me to go to the Eco-Village project! In 2011, a sum of Rs30 m. was earmarked for the project of the Eco-Village. Do I understand that nothing has been done this year and it is only next year that this project will start to take form? That is the question.

Mr Virahsawmy: I have already replied that we are being in the process of appointing the consultant who will work the Master Plan.

Programme Code 406: Sustainable Development (Rs51,535,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 741: Policy and Management for Tertiary Education, Science, Research and Technology was called.

Mr Obeegadoo: I will like to start with page 395 - Main Constraints. We are referred to a comprehensive and coherent sector strategic plan. Will the hon. Minister please tell us on the programme 741 where is provision being made for the finalisation, I take it, of this plan which has been underway for some time and when will it eventually be published?

Mr Jeetah: Mr Chairperson, my Ministry is in the process of working out the strategic plan and we have had a first consultative meeting with a facilitator in the name of Dr. Shahid Yusuf from the World Bank. The World Bank has sent its comments, its suggestions in a draft document and these will be taken on board in an implementation plan. The draft document has been sent to the Tertiary Education Commission, Mauritius Research Council and all the stakeholders in this field. We are hoping that the strategic plan will be launched early next year.

Mrs Hanoomanjee: At page 400, *item 31112037 Construction of New University Parks*, can the hon. Minister say where this construction will take place and whether there has been any feasibility study before going ahead with this project?

Mrs Labelle: On the same item of University Parks, Mr Chairperson, last year we had the provision of Rs423 m., but now we see that it has been reduced to Rs100 m. Has there been any change regarding these parks? Will the hon. Minister enlighten us? What change has been brought to this project?

Mr Gungah: At page 400, *item 22090 Security*, there is no estimate for the years 2012, 2013 and 2014. May I ask the hon. Minister to give us some information?

Mr Jeetah: The last question is an easy one. We don't have any need for security because we are in Cyber Tower I. With regard to the construction of new University Parks, Mr Chairperson, there is a sum earmarked here in my budget whereby we are going to build a new site at Montagne Blanche and in Pamplemousses. Yes, there has been a change earlier on. It was provided for to build a new site in Ebène Triangle, but now we have extended this proposition to other parts of the island whereby we will have a site in Montagne Blanche, Pamplemousses and Ebène. I can report to the House that a consultancy amounting to Rs42,163,116.25 has been offered to Luxconsult to work on a Master Plan and we are expecting works to start by mid of next year in Montagne Blanche and in Pamplemousses. These are lands that have been made available from the 2,000 *arpents* schemes in these two sites, whereas at Réduit it would be constructed on land belonging to SLDC.

Mrs Hanoomanjee: Can I ask the hon. Minister whether there has been any feasibility study before going ahead with these projects – I do not think he has replied?

Dr. Jeetah: This has been done well before I was in this Ministry and we have been through all the procedures that are required.

Mr Obeegadoo: I will go back to my initial question, the so-called strategic plan. My question to the Minister was: is there provision in next year Budget for that plan to be finalised? What I am referring to here is high level international expertise - apart from the comments from Yousuf Shahid. Is there provision for consultancy services, high level technical assistance from abroad in order to finalise this so-called strategic plan? That is my first question.

Now the second question at page 400 under *item 3112037 Construction of New University Parks (HRKAD Fund)*. Could the hon. Minister please help me to understand what HRKAD stands for, because I am at a loss? Hon. Mrs Hanoomanjee referred to a feasibility study. Our concern is not with the physical infrastructure, that is secondary. We are talking here of university parks, campuses; we are talking of a pedagogical project, of a major socio-economic venture. The question is: has there been an in-depth study not on the basis of projections of the TEC, but an in-depth market analysis, assessing demand, future demand for tertiary studies, unmet demand and, if so, would any such study plan be circulated in the House?

Dr. Jeetah: Yes, Mr Chairperson. There has been a study, there is a demand. If you look at the rent being paid currently by UTM and University of Mauritius, you would understand for yourself. As you well know...

The Chairperson: Please, address the Chair!

Dr. Jeetah: Mr Chairperson, as you well know initially the University of Mauritius was built to accommodate a few thousand students. Today, the student population stands at around 12,000 and the same goes for UTM, whereby today they have to have off site campuses. So, they are in dire needs for additional space. There is nothing wrong in having a University in Montagne Blanche, Mr Chairperson. This is not a so-called strategic plan. This is a strategic plan for the tertiary sector that is being devised by my Ministry for the first time for this country.

I must say that I am happy with the collaborators that we have in Mauritius. I have the support of the vice-Chancellor, Mr Morgan. I have the Director General of UTM and I have all the heads of institutions, the Director of MRC. I think that we have necessary local expertise here to be able to do whatever we want to do to prepare our plan and work forward. With regard to the HR KAD Fund, the Fund was created a while ago and, as my hon. friend from the Ministry of Education suggested that there was about a sum of Rs800 m. in the Fund that has now been transferred to my Ministry. With regard to demand, Mr Chairperson, we are in the process of

increasing the tertiary enrolment rate to 70% and we would need to make additional space for the increase in student population to be in the tertiary sector.

Mr Obeegadoo: May I follow up the question?

The Chairperson: Yes.

Mr Obeegadoo: It is now clear that on the so-called – I call it - strategic plan, because the appellation appears rather odd to me. Anyway! The Ministry has local expertise. On the second question raised by hon. Mrs Hanoomanjee, the hon. Minister says that the feasibility plan has been done and he was referring to rent paid by the UTM. May I request the hon. Minister to lay on the Table of this Assembly this feasibility plan since we are being requested to approve an investment of R101 m. in this project? I have one additional question. On page 400 under *item 26210071 Contribution to Commonwealth of Learning*, could we have some indication of the nature of our collaboration with them these days? Is it simply the virtual university for small islands States or is there any other project that is on the way?

Dr. Jeetah: I do not have any problem to lay the plan on the Table of the Assembly. I do not have it with me, but I can certainly circulate it. With regard to the other question, as the hon. Member may know, this is a Governmental organisation created by Commonwealth, to help member States expand the scope and quality of learning by using new technologies and distance education methodologies. I can name three benefits for Mauritius. It is providing us direct support for capacity-building and training in areas of relevance to small States of the Commonwealth. Secondly, it is assisting my Ministry to ensure that the Open University project which is in the pipeline becomes a regional beacon in the provision of distance education. Thirdly, it is assisting my Ministry in finalising the national open and distance learning policy document, currently under preparation. As you well know the Commonwealth of learning has a network of focal points in each country of the Commonwealth which acts as a link with the relevant Ministries of the country, the Ag. Director is our focal point.

Mr Bodha: Mr Chairperson, to continue under the same line of thought as my colleague, hon. Obeegadoo, when we see page 395 we come to the *Main Constraints and Challenges*, we see that there is a need to clearly articulate the countries expectations: a comprehensive and coherent sector strategic plan. There is a lack of collaborative arrangements between the tertiary education providers and stakeholders. It is clear that there is a need for the best between the needs of the country and the projects that we want to implement. The hon. Minister mentioned a

study. Can I ask the hon. Minister who did that study? When was it done and whether the report could be placed here, in the House?

The Deputy Speaker: The Minister stated that he is going to lay the information.

Mr Obeegadoo: I would like the hon. Minister to explain to me about the location of these new university parks. There was a talk in this House today about Montagne Blanche and Pamplémousses. Prior to that, there was talk of other sites in Rose Belle, Piton, Rodrigues, Curepipe, Camp Levieux...

The Deputy Speaker: Please, address the Chair!

(Interruptions)

The hon. Minister will be able to respond. Put the question first!

Mr Obeegadoo: The problem is that the Minister of Finance in his Budget Speech does not refer to those sites, instead he refers to the project we launched in 2003/2004 in the wake of the Illovo deal, the knowledge triangle in Réduit for campuses of renown, foreign tertiary education institutions. So, which is which? Is the sum of Rs101 m. to finance the pet projects of the hon. Minister or is it to fund...

(Interruptions)

The Deputy Speaker: Please, rephrase!

(Interruptions)

Order! Order! The hon. Member should rephrase his argumentation.

(Interruptions)

Order!

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, the English dictionary is there. Pet project has nothing offensive, it means the favourite project.

The Deputy Speaker: Order!

Mr Obeegadoo: I shall bow to the experts of the English language and we shall call it the preferred projects of the hon. Minister if that English is more acceptable to hon. Aimée. Now my question is, therefore, why is all the funding that we are invited to approve is that funding..

(Interruptions)

Do we have other English experts who still object to my language?

(Interruptions)

The Deputy Speaker: Please, address the Chair!

The Chairperson: Please, address the Chair! Order! Order! Order! I don't want any cross-talking!

Mr Obeegadoo: Is the funding for the five, six or seven campuses all around the island and Rodrigues, or is it for the project mentioned expressly by the Minister ...

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: The hon. Member has made his point. Let the Minister answer!

Dr. Jeetah: Let me bring to the attention of the hon. Member that, for the year 2012, we have a provision of Rs101,500,000; for the year 2013, there is a provision of Rs225 m., and for the year 2014, there is a provision of Rs450 m., which makes a sum of around Rs800 m. that I just mentioned; this is from the HRKAD Fund that the hon. Member could not understand. Let me say it again. This is not a pet project of one Minister; this is the vision of a Prime Minister who would like to see one graduate per family. We would like to delocalise our University campuses ...

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Can the hon. Minister stick to the question, namely whether the project of Rs100 m. is for Ebène or for the whole set.

Dr. Jeetah: I was trying to explain, Mr Chairperson. As I said, we are going to start construction in Montagne Blanche and in Pamplémousses. We also have the ex-MBC building which is being vested in my Ministry and where we are going to offer courses as from next year. I would like to invite my hon. friend to read my lips. We are going to open a University in Camp Levieux. This is a merger between *l'Institut Supérieur de Technologie* and Swami Dayanand Institute of Management.

Mr Bodha: May I bring to your kind attention, Mr Chairperson, that the hon. Minister has not replied as regard to the study, that is, when was it carried out, who carried it out, and whether he can lay a copy on the Table of the House?

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: It is going to be laid.

(Interruptions)

Can the hon. Minister state who carried out the study and when?

Dr. Jeetah: I don't have the exact date; it is a couple of years. The Tertiary Education Commission conducted the study, and I can lay it on the Table of the Assembly.

Mr Uteem: Mr Chairperson, still on the same item, may I know from the hon. Minister whether we have received any proposal from any top five Universities of any country in the world, be it in Ivy League, Cambridge or Oxford?

Dr. Jeetah: My hon. colleague might ...

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: We have got only two minutes. The hon. Minister should be as brief as possible.

Dr. Jeetah: ... want to know that we have the University of Mauritius starting a postgraduate programme with Imperial College, London, as from next year. That's a Master's in Public Health. We are now discussing with the University of Manchester to start a Master's in Surgery. We are already working with l'Université de Bordeaux - that has been for quite a while before I came here - for medical studies. Mr Chairperson, next year, we are going to have a collaboration between the University of Geneva and the University of Mauritius for a medical degree.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: The hon. Minister should be brief. Hon. Obeegadoo, last question!

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, we are called to vote Rs101 m. My question is very simple. Will the Minister tell us to what end the Rs101 m. will be used during the course of the next financial year?

Dr. Jeetah: It is for the construction of a new University campus in Pamplemousses and in Montagne Blanche.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: We put the question now.

(Interruptions)

No, time is over! I am sorry!

Ministry of Tertiary Education, Science, Research and Technology – Programme Code 741: Policy and Management for Tertiary Education, Science, Research and Technology (Rs142,876,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Tertiary Education, Science, Research and Technology – Programme Code 742: Tertiary Education was called.

Mr Obeegadoo: At page 398, performance targets. As the Chairperson will note, there are only two indicators here. One is the number of quality audits effected, and the other is the number of Mauritian students completing a graduate courses. I would like to ask the Minister, in line with his much publicised statements, why is it that we do not here have as targets one graduate per family? Is it 1,000 foreign students? I can't remember what the objective was.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Can the hon. Member put his question, please?

Mr Obeegadoo: Second, the number of University campuses to be created, thirdly, a gross tertiary enrolment ratio of 72%, and fourthly the coming into operation of an Open University. Why have these five major ideas of the Minister not been formulated here as specific targets?

Mr Seeruttun: If you will allow me, Mr Chairperson. The Minister wants to move forward with the new sector, which is the knowledge hub. Is he prepared to do away with institutions that are providing courses and giving certificates that are only recognised in Mauritius and in only one State in India, Sikkim?

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: The Minister is noting down.

Mr Baloomoody: I will come again to Tertiary Education.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: On which page?

Mr Baloomoody: It is at page 400, under *item 21 Compensation of Employees*. We are very concerned about the way tertiary education is being provided in this country. We know, as a matter of fact, that we have today unemployed graduates in this country. We know, as a matter of fact, that graduates are not performing the work for which they have been trained, especially if we go to the BPO, we will see how many graduates are working in BPOs today. This is one of the major constraints. May I refer the hon. Minister to page 395? Now we just learned from a question by hon. Bodha that there was a study which was done years ago. He could not even remember the year.

(Interruptions)

The report in my hand has been written a few weeks ago. There is actually a lack of collaboration, arrangement between tertiary education providers and the rest of the economy,

which creates mismatch in the labour market. I know the objective of Mauritius is to have one graduate per family. Are we going to make sure that this one graduate per family will work in the field in which he has been trained or are we going to have one graduate unemployed per family?

Dr. Jeetah: Mr Chairperson, I think that's a very valid question. We have conducted studies that show that 88% of our graduates are in employment. It shows that our graduates are able to be employed easily.

With regard to the targets, I am informed, Mr Chairperson, that we did suggest a number of targets to the Ministry of Finance, and it happens that two were retained. But I will try to be a bit more forceful next year, so that I can please my hon. friend there.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Please, don't interrupt!

Dr. Jeetah: With regard to recognition, what I can say to the hon. Member is that the Tertiary Education Commission regulates the tertiary education sector, and all the institutions here have to abide by the laws of the land. They are recognised here; our students are able to go overseas, and overseas institutions do allow them to pursue post graduate studies in Europe, in France, in India. I can give you a whole list of students from our institutions here who do well overseas. This is a sign of recognition of our institutions. You would have to understand that it does take some time. The University of Mauritius has started making some inroads overseas. I am given to understand that some of our students are amongst some of the best in overseas universities.

Dr. Sorefan: On page 400, regarding *item 26 Grants*, we see that there is a drastic cut. Can the hon. Minister explain why for the Tertiary Education Commission the grant is going up to Rs10 m., whereas for the University of Mauritius, for the next 4 years, the grant is still the same; they are complaining that they are not getting enough and we are talking about one graduate per family and the Minister has mentioned that there are other courses, like the MSc coming to the University of Mauritius. Can the hon. Minister also tell us why for Mahatma Gandhi Institute the grant has been cut by Rs100 m. and for the capital grant, the Tertiary Education is getting another Rs60 m.?

Dr. Jeetah: Mr Chairperson, with regard to grants, there has not been a cut. The main difference is that if you look at *item 26313088 Mahatma Gandhi Institute*, you will see a

reduction in the grant there. This is because we have now separated tertiary education and the other departments. Part of the money involved has been transferred to my colleague, the hon. Minister of Education. We will have to discuss the whole issue because we would need some of the fund back. But the core business, that is, tertiary education, has been kept within my Ministry and this is a reflection of it.

Mr Obeegadoo: At page 400, under *item 22130001 Study on review of Regulatory Framework for Tertiary Education*, a sum of Rs1.5 m. was approved last year. I would like to know how much of that sum has been utilised, whether the study is over and done with, whether there is a report that can be shared with us and why no provision is made in relation thereto for this year?

The second question concerns the University of Mauritius, we are to approve a huge sum of nearly Rs352 m. The Minister mentioned the tracer study, presumably relating to the University of Mauritius. A tracer study relates not only to percentage in employment, but to other factors also. Could such a tracer study, if it has been done, again, be placed on the Table of the Assembly?

The third issue is on the University of Technology; a provision of Rs57 m. is placed before us for approval. I would like to know what percentage of the budget of the UTM is presently self-financed from revenue generated by the UTM itself and whether there has also been a tracer study having regard to the UTM.

Finally, could we have the composition of the present Board of the UTM?

Dr. Jeetah: Mr Chairperson, I can circulate the composition of the UTM Board. With regard to the tracer study, we have one which is being compiled and we will get the results early next year.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Please!

Dr. Jeetah: There is a recent one that we are conducting. I think there was a PQ and I have answered that. I am laying on the Table of the Assembly the composition of the UTM Board of Governors.

With regard to the study, there has been a sum of Rs1.5 m. which was made available in 2011 for this project and three international organisations, namely: UGC India, Australian Universities Quality Agency, the Council for Higher Education of South Africa were approached

by my Ministry in early 2011 for the identification of one consultant to form part of a team that would carry out the study. We did not get any response and TEC has now approached UGC accordingly. A team of four consultants will be deputed to Mauritius to carry out the study. Funds are being transferred from the Ministry's budget allocation to that of TEC which will now implement the project.

With regard to the financing of the UTM, I must say that UTM generates 90% of its recurrent budget.

Mr Uteem: At page 400, under *item 26313088 (g) Fashion & Design Institute*, may I know from the hon. Minister where is the Fashion & Design Institute currently housed?

Dr. Jeetah: It is housed in Ebène.

Mrs Hanoomanjee: Still on page 400, under *item 26313088 Current Grant – Tertiary Education Commission/Tertiary Education Institutions (b) University of Mauritius* which remains the same until year 2014. The University is being put in a position where it does not have any other alternative than to go for self-funding, which means an increase in the fees. Can the Minister say whether there will be increase in fees for students of the University of Mauritius?

The Chairperson: Any other question on this issue? Please respond!

(Interruptions)

Hon. Henry, please!

(Interruptions)

Order, order! I take it that hon. Members know the Standing Order and what is permitted and what is not.

Dr. Jeetah: Mr Chairperson, efficiency measures are being adopted to reduce costs. In particular, these relate to maintaining acceptable ratios for academic staff and non-academic staff, student number and number of teaching hours and so on. What we are doing here is that we are ensuring that our institutions are able to stand on their own feet and this does not necessarily mean that fees have to increase. We are encouraging them to engage in consultancy, research and many other projects that could bring in revenue.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: No cross-talking, please!

Mr Bodha: On page 401, as regards University of Mauritius, we have a capital grant of Rs44 m. Can the hon. Minister enlighten the House as to the projects which are going to be funded by this item?

The Chairperson: Hon. Bhagwan, do you have a question? The Minister will respond later on.

Mr Bhagwan: On page 400, under *item 26313088 the University of Technology, Mauritius*, can I ask the hon. Minister whether he has been made aware of the catastrophic situation prevailing at the UTM as far as the very top management is concerned, where even the Chairperson and very top members of the Board are involved in corrupt practices and there have been cases recently referred to the ICAC? Can the Minister inform the House when we are being asked to vote Rs57 m. - I will not add the Rs100,000; the situation prevailing there in terms of recruitment and maladministration - whether he will take the undertaking to the House, while we are being asked to vote public money, that such corrupt practices be stopped in that institution and that the Minister takes immediate actions and follows up the cases which have gone to the ICAC for necessary corrective measures?

Dr. Jeetah: First, Mr Chairperson, I do not interfere with ICAC matters and these are allegations. I think the hon. Member has to take responsibility for whatever he is saying. But I would like to bring to the attention of the hon. Member that ...

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Order!

Dr. Jeetah: Out of these Rs57 m., you would note, Mr Chairperson, that the sum of Rs24.5 m. is for SDIM, that is, Swami Dayanand Institute of Management and the sum of Rs27.4 m. is for IST. In effect, it is for these two institutions.

There was a question with regard to expenditure at the University of Mauritius. I can give the details if the hon. Member would like to have them.

The Chairperson: Table the details if the Minister has it.

Dr. Jeetah: It is Rs8 m. for Health and Safety, Rs6 m. for Centralisation of Information Systems and so on and so forth. I can table it.

The Chairperson: All right! Yes, hon. Obeegadoo!

Mr Obeegadoo: Sir, at the bottom of page 400, we are being asked to provide a sum of Rs70 m. as *Capital Grant for the Tertiary Education Commission/Tertiary Education Institutions*. Could the hon. Minister tell us what specifically is being provided for?

As regards the Mauritius College of the Air/Open University of Mauritius, last year, a sum of Rs2.5 m. was provided for on the understanding that the University would go into operation this year, 2011. It has not done so. Why not? How much of the sum has been utilised, and why are we being asked to approve an identical sum for next year?

Dr. Jeetah: Could the hon. Member repeat the first part, please?

Mr Obeegadoo: Which part, the first or the third?

The Chairperson: The first one.

Mr Obeegadoo: The first was the global budget of Rs70 m.

Dr. Jeetah: Mr Chairperson, which item was that?

The Chairperson: We are left with two minutes.

Dr. Jeetah: What is the item, please?

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Obeegadoo, please! The Minister could not...

(Interruptions)

Mr Obeegadoo: I was referring to the general *item 26323088 Capital Grant – Tertiary Education Commission/Tertiary Education Institutions*, at the bottom of page 400.

The Chairperson: The very last one.

Dr. Jeetah: With regard to the sum allocated to MCA and Open University, the hon. Member may wish to know that these provisions are for MCA as well, which already exists. We are now on the point of finalising the setting up of the Open University.

With regard to the next item, I can table all the information required by the hon. Member.

Mr Obeegadoo: For instance, we are being asked to approve Rs44 m. for the University of Mauritius. At least, we should be provided with some information.

The Chairperson: The hon. Member is on the last item.

Mr Obeegadoo: Yes. The breakdown mentions Rs44 m. for the University of Mauritius.

Dr. Jeetah: I have already answered, Mr Chairperson. It is Rs8 m. for Health and Safety regulation; Rs6 m. to centralise all Information Systems; Rs4.5 m. to provide lifts, ramps and footpaths to enable disabled students to have easy access to the buildings, and Rs2.5 m. to

replace damage or stolen cablings. Another infrastructure at MRC, Rs3 m. for refurbishment of the buildings for setting up of a School of Medicine and purchase of related equipment, Rs20 m. for Lab equipment for teaching of modules and upgrades office furniture, student desks, chairs, renovations at library, photocopiers, network printers, equipments for running of courses, which make a total of Rs44 m.

Ministry of Tertiary Education, Science, Research and Technology - Programme Code 742: Tertiary Education (Rs732,612,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Tertiary Education, Science, Research and Technology - Programme Code 743: Harnessing Research, Innovation, Science and Technology for National Development was called.

The Chairperson: Yes hon. Mrs Labelle.

Mrs Labelle: Under the Programme 743, when I link it to page 398, Mr Chairperson, one of the targets is SS1, number of participants in outreach activities in science and technology. For the year 2010, it was Rs1,500, but for the year 2011, when I referred to the budget, for the amount of Rs64 m., the target was 1,400 participants. With a budget of Rs62 m. the target is 8,000 participants.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Please, order!

Mrs Labelle: Maybe the hon. Minister could enlighten us how the figure increases from 1,400 to 8,000 for nearly the same budget.

Dr. Jeetah: Mr Chairperson, we went out to the community. Instead of sitting at Rajiv Gandhi Science Centre and waiting for people to come and visit us, we launched a '*Caravane de la Science*'. I can report that we have reached about 19,000 people. The staff of Rajiv Gandhi Science Centre could exposed scientific equipment and displays and could thus discuss with the students the importance of studying science, adults and to the community at large.

Mr Bodha: On page 401, *item 22130001*, as regards Studies and Preliminary Projects, there has been a provision of Rs2 m. for a study on linkages between Research/Innovation and Industry. May I ask the hon. Minister to enlighten the House as to whether the study has been carried out and whether the report is ready because I think that would be a very interesting instrument to charter a roadmap in this area and whether this report can be laid on the Table of the Assembly?

Dr. Jeetah: Any other question? I am waiting for the information.

The Chairperson: Hon. Obeegadoo!

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, I have a few questions. My first question is that I note at page 395, at the bottom of the page, we are told that the Tertiary Education Institutions are being encouraged to enter into greater strategically alliances and other forms of partnership with the economic players. That is why the UTM was founded. Was it not? I am looking at the list of Board of Governors of the UTM. I would like the hon. Minister to tell us: of the ten members of that Board, how many is from the world of industry? That is the first question I would like to put.

(Interruptions)

Should we let the hon. Minister answer so as not to confuse him?

Dr. Jeetah: Mr Chairperson, with regard to the question asked by hon. Bodha, I am informed that the MRC is currently conducting a study on linkages between Research/Innovation and Industry. The draft report will be submitted in March 2012.

The Chairperson: There was a question about the Board members.

Dr. Jeetah: I have to confirm, Mr Chairperson, because these members were there well before I joined this Ministry.

Mr Obeegadoo: I have a second question, Mr Chairperson. On page 398, Mauritius Research Council, at the bottom of the page, these are the performance targets, number of research outputs developed for potential commercial utilisation, baseline 2010 - 10 outputs and then for the next year, it goes down to 6, 6 and 6. Maybe the hon. Minister could explain the rationale behind such a trend, when these are supposed to be performance indicators?

My third and final point concerns again the MRC, at page 401, where we are being invited to vote, on the one hand, Rs25 m. for the current grant of the MRC and then - unless I am mistaken - a second sum of Rs12 m. for research projects.

I do not deny that the MRC has been doing some good work in the fields of natural science and technology. I would like to know how many projects there have been in the field of applied social research.

Dr. Jeetah: With regard to members, I am informed that Mr Bruno Dumazel and Mr Jean Michel Lee Shim are from the private sector.

(Interruptions)

Whether they like it or not, these are facts! With regard to ...

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Order!

Dr. Jeetah: Concerning the projects being carried out by the MRC, if I heard the hon. Member right, I know that we have a seaweed farming project in Mauritius and Rodrigues..

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Could hon. Mrs Bappoo and hon. Duval tone down?

Dr. Jeetah: Some of the projects that have been carried out by the MRC are seaweed farming in Mauritius and Rodrigues. As for food products derived from local seaweeds we are going to make a study. I can let the hon. Member have the information in a minute.

Mr Obeegadoo: May I have information on the performance targets for the MRC at the bottom of page 398?

Dr. Jeetah: In fact, Mr Chairperson, I did raise the question with the Director of the MRC and I must admit that this is on the low side and I don't have any doubt that we would do much better than what is stated here.

Mr Gungah: On the same page 401 under *item 26323077 Current Grant – Rajiv Gandhi Science Centre*, there is an estimate of Rs2.8 m. in 2011 for repairs of building at the Rajiv Gandhi Science Centre. Has the building been repaired and who was the contractor?

Dr. Jeetah: I don't have the information as to who was the contractor, but I can certainly let the hon. Member have the information at a later stage.

Mr Obeegadoo: On page 403, we are informed that on the *Programme Code 743*, there is now a Director at the Ministry. May I know from the Minister who is presently the Director in charge of *Programme Code 743* and what strategy has been put in place at the level of his Ministry to link tertiary institutions with industry so as to bring courses dispensed closer to labour market requirements?

Dr. Jeetah: The Director is Mr Luximon who is a former staff from the Ministry of Education. We have a number of strategies to link industry and the tertiary sector. We have projects such as collaborative Mauritius, business angels meeting and a number of actions that we have taken that I can circulate.

Mr Obeegadoo: My question was the name of the Director and not different measures taken, but whether a strategy has been put into place?

Dr. Jeetah: I have answered, Mr Chairperson. We have taken a number of actions to be able to achieve what the hon. Member is suggesting.

Mr Bodha: At page 397, on the *Programme 743*, we have the Priority Objectives and the Major Services which are to be considered. At page 401 under *item 26323*, we have research projects and a budget of Rs12 m. in 2011 and another budget of Rs12 m. 2012. May I ask the hon. Minister what are the research projects which have been implemented this year and what are research projects to be implemented next year in line with what were the objectives of this programme?

Dr. Jeetah: I have a list of some of the projects that we are currently implementing, as I have said earlier, on seaweed farming in Mauritius and in Rodrigues, food product derives from ...

The Chairperson: The Minister can table it.

Dr. Jeetah: The repairs has nearly been completed.

Mr Bodha: Who got the contract?

Dr. Jeetah: The contractor is the MPI.

Programme Code 743: Harnessing Research, Innovation, Science and Technology for National Development (Rs62,424,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 661: Policy and Management for ICT was called.

Mr Uteem: Mr Chairperson, at page 411, under *Programme Code 661, item 22030 Rent*, I know that the rent is above Rs91 m. for each of the years, which is more than three times the amount which we paid in terms of remuneration. May I know from the hon. Minister where are these buildings located and why do we pay so much - three times more for the building than for the people who are in that building?

Mr Nagalingum: On the same item, Mr Chairperson, is this building going to accommodate only 56 people?

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: The rent is made of rental of building: Rs9, 275,000; rental of parking slots: Rs250,000; rental of facilities for events: Rs100,000, and rental of line for network systems: Rs85 m. In all, it makes a total of Rs94,625,000. The increase of rent is due to the new office at Ebène.

Mr Uteem: Does the Ministry need a lease line of Rs85 m.? Is that being optimally used by these 56 users?

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: In fact, there is a lot of improvement that is being carried out in the Ministry and that is why we need these lines.

Mr Uteem: The line is being leased from which company?

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: We have rental of lines for Network System, Government Intranet System, Centralised Telecoms at JOC, Mauritius Telecom.

Mr Jhugroo: Page 412, *item 31132102 Mauritius National Identity Card and Related Projects*, can we know where matters stand regarding this project?

Mr Baloomoody: Concerning the Identity Card - it was called a smart card - may we know what contents there will be in that card with regard to identity of an individual?

Mr Li Kwong Wing: Mr Chairperson, for this item an amount of Rs200 m. has already been voted last year. May we know from the hon. Minister whether this amount of Rs200 m. has been spent and if so, to who was the contract awarded and was there an international tender that has been issued for this contract?

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: Mr Chairperson, in fact, the advisory service has been completed and a report has been submitted. Singapore Corporation Enterprise has recently submitted its proposal in October of this year. It is being assessed and evaluated by the World Bank.

Mr Chairperson, Government has embarked on a project to replace the existing laminated ID card with a highly secure identity document-based smart card technology. The new ID card, besides being a secure identity document, will also open up opportunities for the citizens and the business community to interact with Government electronically. It will contain the name, addresses, gender, fingerprints, photos etc.

As per Government Notice No. 2359 of 2008, the project has been exempted from the Public Procurement Act for reasons of national security and defence in compliance with Section 3(1) of the Public Procurement Act. A Government to Government agreement was signed with the Singapore Cooperation Enterprise and CrimsonLogic for the provision...

The Chairperson: Hon. Minister, could you please just reply all the issues which have been raised! There has been no tender exercise. This is what I understand the hon. Member asked!

(Interruptions)

Please! No comments!

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: Mr Chairperson, why has it been exempted; for reasons of national security and defence and this in compliance with Section 3 (1) of the PPA.

The Chairperson: Hon. Baloomoody!

Mr Baloomoody: I am very surprised, indeed, to hear...

The Chairperson: No. I want to hear the Member's question!

Mr Baloomoody: I want to know if the identity card will have the fingerprints of each and every citizen of this country? Is the hon. Minister aware that it is the constitutional right of each and every citizen not to give their fingerprints without their own consent? Is the hon. Minister telling us that Government intends to come forward to amend the Constitution so that we will be deprived of our constitutional rights and we will be forced to give our fingerprints on this smart card?

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Order!

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: Mr Chairperson, as I said before, the Singapore Cooperation Enterprise has recently submitted its proposal. That proposal which had been submitted is now being assessed and evaluated by the World Bank. We are still at this stage. So, we have to wait. Once we get the assessment report then we are going to see what will happen.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Hon. Jhugroo!

(Interruptions)

Order!

Mr Jhugroo: May I know from the hon. Minister if there any tender exercise...

The Chairperson: No. This has been answered! Yes, hon. Uteem!

(Interruptions)

Order!

Mr Uteem: Two follow-up questions on the same item, Mr Chairperson. First of all, why the choice of Singapore when we know that European countries like France has much more advanced technology...

The Chairperson: No. This is a question of policy.

Mr Uteem: Second question: with respect to this World Bank Report that has been asked to be carried out, will that report also consider the state of e-Governance in Mauritius and being given the state of e-Governance in Mauritius, whether such a smart card is justified?

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: The hon. Member must be aware that Singapore ranks first in anti-corruption, fraud, and ranks first in technology adoption and particularly, in e-Government.

(Interruptions)

For the information of the hon. Member, I want to inform him that the law has been amended for biometric under the Finance Act No. 2 of 2009.

The Chairperson: Hon. Li Kwong Wing!

Mr Li Kwong Wing: With regard to World Bank, can we know what the remit of the World Bank is in this project and is it financing the project? Has the Government of Mauritius applied for a loan from the World Bank for this specific project and what are the terms of reference for that loan and the conditions of the loan?

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: Mr Chairperson, once we got that report, as I said, from Singapore, the Advisory Service Report, we don't want to act on it and to take any stand. That's why we have remitted it to the World Bank so that it can make an assessment and a proper evaluation and from there onwards, we can decide what will be the next step forward. The World Bank, Mr Chairperson, is involved in assessment of such types of report and that's why we want to have that comfort before taking any further steps.

The Chairperson: Hon. Bodha!

Mr Bodha: May I ask the hon. Minister why did not we go to the World Bank before going to Singapore?

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: No. *On ne peut pas mettre la charrue devant les bœufs!* Now, we have got that report...

The Chairperson: Please, hon. Minister! We are here on an issue of expenditure. We are not here on a question of policy. Please, if the hon. Member wants to have certain details, the hon. Minister will be able to give him, but we are not going to embark on issues of policy. Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: I abide to your ruling, Mr Chairperson. Being given the magnitude of the amount I just want to have a confirmation from the hon. Minister whether a survey had been

carried out by the State Informatics Corporation which recommended a technology other than Singapore technology.

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: From day one, we have decided to go with the smart card technology. Anyway, we have it in our presidential reports and we are still in the process of implementing it.

The Chairperson: The question is whether a study has been carried out before? Yes or no?

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: Yes, Mr Chairperson!

The Chairperson: Hon. Li Kwong Wing!

Mr Li Kwong Wing: Mr Chairperson, since the amount for the project for this year is Rs600 m., can the hon. Minister inform us whether this amount is being funded out of a loan of World Bank or is it paid out of Mauritius own budgetary resources? And, if the Government of Singapore is embarked on this project, has the Government of Singapore provided any financial support for this project?

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: The fund comes from Central Government.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Another *item 31122802 (a)*, I see on the *Acquisition of IT Equipment*, there is a sum of Rs78.5 m.

The Chairperson: At which page?

Mr Uteem: At page 412, the *item 31 Acquisition of Non-Financial Assets*, the sub-item is *Acquisition of IT Equipment*, servers and related equipments; there is a budget of Rs78.5 m. May I ask the hon. Minister whether any amount has been budgeted for the acquisition of servers which are required in order to make optimal use of the 7000 Pro Desktop Listed Licenses which the Government acquired from Microsoft - which, according to all these reports, was not required?

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: Insofar as the Microsoft license is concerned, the delay expires in the year 2013. So, we still have time to use those licenses. Anyway, in fact, we are using it.

Mr Uteem: The Audit Report says that in order to make optimal use of these licenses, you need to upgrade your servers. I want to know whether provisions have been made in this

budget under the sum of Rs78 m. that is being voted to upgrade the servers and infrastructure so that we can make use of those licenses.

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: As at to date, Mr Chairperson, we are left with only 800 licenses and it is still being used.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Seeruttun!

Mr Seeruttun: Mr Chairperson, *item 31132801 Acquisition of Software*. It has been earmarked here, Rs4 m. every year as from 2012 up to 2014 for software. May I know which software we are talking about and why are we buying softwares every year?

The Chairperson: Page 412, last item! Yes, hon. Nagalingum!

Mr Nagalingum: On page 411, *item 22120 Fees*. Can we know more about the fees? For what services and was there any tender for these services?

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: On the issue of fees, what did the hon. Member want to know, please?

The Chairperson: First of all, on the acquisition of software, has the Minister got the information? Page 411, last item - details about the fees.

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: The fees stand for fees to Chairman and members for Board and Committees: Rs490,000, fees to Assessors: Rs50,000, fees to training: Rs750,000; fees to consultant: Rs13m., and fees in connection with information Security Management standards: Rs280,000. It makes a total of Rs14,170,000.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Nagalingum!

Mr Nagalingum: Can I know the name of the consultants?

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: In fact, this is the amount which has been budgeted. They have not yet been retained. We will do so in due course by tender exercise.

Mr Uteem: For 2011, were any of these amounts used for consultants and to whom were they paid?

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: I understand for the year 2011, there was Rs13,982,000.

The Chairperson: Has the whole amount been spent?

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: They are going to communicate the figure.

Mr Chairperson: The Minister has got also the question of acquisition of software from hon. Seeruttun.

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: No, it is under evaluation, not yet disbursed for the fees.

The Chairperson: For the software, does the Minister has the information?

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: It is the anti-virus licenses. It is for maintenance fees, Mr Chairperson.

Programme Code 661: Policy and Management for ICT(Rs873,729,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 662: Provision of Citizen-Centric Services through ICT was called.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Bodha!

Mr Bodha: On page 412, *Sub-Programme 66202: E-Powering People, the Public Sector and Business*, is the hon. Minister aware that in a recent report from the United States, Mauritius is among the last 10 of 200 countries as regards speed and access of the internet. May I ask the hon. Minister what is being done to improve this sad state of affairs?

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: Can the hon. Member communicate the firm which gave that ranking?

Mr Bodha: I don't have it with me, but I will pass it on to the Member.

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: We stand guided by benchmark firms of Consultants like **Gartner**, AT Kearney and World Economic Forum.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Obeegadoo!

Mr Obeegadoo: I refer to Programme 662 on page 407, Priority Objectives: transforming Mauritius into a knowledge based economy. The hon. Minister is aware that according to latest official statistics, internet dependent ratio in Mauritius is only around 31 or 32%. I would like to know why this issue of households connected to internet was not made a performance target for this programme so that we could have monitored progress there. And also, I would like to know under these specific items on pages 412 and 413, what there is that directly addresses the need to make internet accessible to more and more people rather than just courses by the National Computer Board.

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: No, Mr Chairperson, it is the first time that we are having in Mauritius our new broadband policy. This new broadband policy paper has gone through public consultations. Views expressed by the public and stakeholders were incorporated and a validation workshop was held. Even the World Bank representative participated and contributed in the policy paper. Now, Mr Chairperson, insofar as what we are doing is that we have at the same time the optic fibre to the home; we are introducing that technology as from next month.

They will start doing the work early next year. We have the optic cable SAFE and now we will have LYON II which will be implemented as from June next year. We have also the new cable which will connect Rodrigues also and there is a consortium which is working on a project with SICOM, another optic cable. We have internet in primary schools, colleges and at university level. Now, we are launching 150 computer clubs throughout Mauritius. We have in our Post Offices, the PIAP technology where we have connected them with internet facilities. By the end of the month of December, we will have the Wifi Project which has already been launched and will be implemented as from December and we safely say, Mr Chairperson, that internet, in fact will become a basic citizen's right.

The Chairperson: Follow-up on it!

Mr Obeegadoo: So, why was it not made a performance target? What about the percentage of households connected to internet? At least, we could have monitored it on a year by year basis!

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: In fact, Mauritius ranks first in Africa, insofar as internet connection is concerned.

The Chairperson: No, the question is: why does it not form part of the target? The hon. Minister has taken note of the concern of the hon. Member. He has just to say it.

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: Mr Chairperson, we have to start somewhere and you have seen that everything that we are doing is being monitored by the CSO. They provide regular updated report which gives us a clear indication where matters stand.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Gungah!

Mr Gungah: On page 412, referring to programme 662: Provision of Citizen-Centric Services through ICT. May I ask the hon. Minister about the number of e-Services that is available and the number that is operational?

The Chairperson: Yes, Minister, could you please give the reference?

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: We have 53 e-Services which have been earmarked, Mr Chairperson.

The Chairperson: How many are operational?

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: In fact, Mr Chairperson, there were 53 e-Services which were earmarked, but which were not implemented yet. What we have done is that we have set up a workshop to look into the reasons behind those e-Services which were not being implemented.

We have just got the report. We have presented a paper before Cabinet to declare those e-Services mandatory. We are in the process of making it now.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Nagalingum!

Mr Nagalingum: On page 413, *item 22030: Rent*, can I know why the rent has doubled and where is the building and who is the owner?

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: Mr Chairperson, insofar as the rental is concerned, we were renting the second and third floors of Belmont House for CIB. The increase in provision of Rs1,838,000 is due to the new office which we are going to rent at Ebène.

Mr Seeruttun: Mr Chairperson, the hon. Minister just mentioned that the Wifi service will be available as from the end of this year. Will he be able to inform the House which regions and the whereabouts where this service will be available and whether it will be free of charge?

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: In fact, it is a pilot project. For the first time, it will be at the level of five municipalities and four district councils. It is the municipalities and district councils which are going to decide where we are going to place these antennas. We will also have one in Rodrigues, and the Wifi will be free.

Mr Jhugroo: On page 413, *item 22120 Fees*, can we know why there has been an increase from Rs16.3 m. to Rs21.43 m? With regard to *item 22060 Maintenance*, why has there been an increase from Rs720,000 to Rs965,000?

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: The cost has increased because we are making provision for our shifting to Ebène, and also in the process we have recruited more staff to do our work.

Mr Uteem: Mr Chairperson, in relation to the Wifi pilot project, which the hon. Minister just referred to, may I know from the hon. Minister who is the service provider, how much it will cost and what procurement method is being used? Talking about e-Governance, the Minister said that he was going to have Wifi. I want to know where it is budgeted.

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: ICTA has launched a tender. The tender exercise will be completed by the end of November. Then, we will be in a position to know which operator has been successful and he will be allocated the contract.

Mr Bodha: Mr Chairperson, as regards *item 31132 Intangible Fixed Assets*, there was a budget of Rs20 m. May I ask the hon. Minister how this budget was spent, and can he explain why we moved from Rs20 m. to Rs100,000 the next year?

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: Intangible fixed assets is made of upgrading of ICT infrastructure for Rs8 m. and acquisition of software to the tune of Rs200,000.

Mr Obeegadoo: My colleague, hon. Jhugroo, raised the issue of fees under *item 22120* on page 413. I believe the question has not yet been answered. I would like to add a question pertaining to fees further down the page at *item 22120* under *Programme 66204*. Here, the budget goes up from Rs625,000 to Rs7.4 m., of which Rs6.8 m. relate to *Capacity Building Programme*. Who will dispense this capacity building service, and what is the nature of the programme?

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: In fact, provision has been made to meet consultancy fees for officers recruited under the Capacity Building Programme for the smooth running of computerisation projects in Ministries and Departments due to shortage of existing staff in the grade of Computer Support Officer and Assistant System Analyst.

Mr Obeegadoo: The question was: who will dispense this programme? How will the consultants be chosen?

Mr Jhugroo: I am still waiting for the answer. My second question is with regard to rent. I heard the hon. Minister saying that they will move to Ebène. Can I ask him whether there has been tender procedure and, if so, can we know who the bidders are?

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: We have BPML. Being given that the price which was quoted was less, that's why it got the bid.

Mr Uteem: Mr Chairperson, on page 414, *item 31132401 Upgrading of ICT infrastructure; (a) ICT Support Service for the Government*, may I know from the hon. Minister who provides the ICT Support Service for the Government and how many times in 2011 the official portal of the Government website has been hacked or has had problem with regard to access?

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: The ICT Support Service Centre is to facilitate the service delivery and improve efficiency. Mr Chairperson, a Computer Support Officer is designated to attend the task together with appropriate transport facilities, if required. On site, the CSO resolves the problem or refer to other stakeholders for action to be taken, for example, hardware, software, supplies etc.

The ICT Support Service Centre will act as a one stop-shop for all ICT related queries, ICT intervention requests and ICT project related requests, strategies and development, and

planning issues falling under the ambit of ICT related decision makers, namely officers from CIB or MICT. Until now there has been no hacking, no problem at this stage, Mr Chairperson.

Mr Bodha: Mr Chairperson, at the bottom of page 413, *Capacity Building Programme*, we had no budget for 2011, and we have a budget of Rs6.8 m. for 2012. Can I ask the hon. Minister to enlighten the House as regards the programme and who are going to benefit from that programme?

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: In fact, Mr Chairperson, the fees for Capacity Building Programme was initially met by the Ministry of Finance. Now, it is included in the CISD programme, and recruitment will be done by the Ministry by local advertisement.

Mr Jhugroo: I am still on the item rent. If the price is less, why has the amount doubled?

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: Which item? Which page?

Mr Jhugroo: Page 413, *item 22030*, He said that the price is less. Why has the rent almost doubled?

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: It is because the space which they were occupying at Belmont House is less than they will eventually occupy in this new building.

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson: Please, let the hon. Minister answer!

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: Now, the space that they are going to occupy at Ebène will be greater.

Mr Jhugroo: By how much?

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: I don't have the figure, but I can communicate it to the hon. Member.

Programme Code 662: Provision of Citizen-Centric Services through ICT (Rs206,406,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Fisheries and Rodrigues – Programme Code 751: Policy and Strategy for Fisheries and Rodrigues was called.

Mr Obeegadoo: This is the policy and strategy and the very first question at page 424 would be under item 21 *Compensation of Employees*. The sum has jumped. It has increased two fold and when I look at the staffing positions, we go from 68 to 73. So, this is very fishy indeed. We would like the Minister to offer some explanation. I'll let the Minister answer.

Mr Von-Mally: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the increase is due to yearly increment in salaries and provisions for additional staff. In fact, there are five more officers. The transfer of funds for salary compensation and cash in lieu of leave was previously provided under Programme 951 and it was centrally managed – the expenses of Government by the Accountant General.

Mr Obeegadoo: There are other issues like social contributions. Again, there was no provision previously and then suddenly we have to approve Rs11 m. on the item. On the other hand, under *item 22130 Studies and Surveys*, there is nothing provided under that item for this year whereas, if I may draw the Minister's attention to the priorities under this project, clearly studies and surveys for the promotion of sustainable fisheries development should still remain a priority.

Mr Von-Mally: Concerning surveys, Mr Chairperson, Sir, it concerns the acoustic survey on Saya de Malha Bank and Nazareth Bank to identify new fisheries resources. It also concerns the survey on the slopes of the banks carried out on the bilateral agreement with Norway. Replication to validate results will be undertaken.

Mr Obeegadoo: My question was: why precisely there was no sum budgeted on the surveys and the hon. Minister is telling me what surveys had been carried out.

Mr Von-Mally: Is the hon. Member talking of the fibre-optic cable for Rodrigues? In fact, there are two. Is the hon. Member talking of the surveys for Rodrigues?

Mr Obeegadoo: No, we are looking at the top of page 425. We are still on Programme 751.

Mr Von-Mally: Yes, which item?

Mr Obeegadoo: The item is *Studies and Surveys*. The item is 22130 at the top of pages 425. I am strictly abiding by the instructions of the Chair. We are sticking to Programme 751.

The Chairperson: Yes, the question was?

Mr Obeegadoo: The question was: why, given the priority defined for this programme, there is no sum proposed in next year's budget for *Studies and Surveys*?

Mr Von-Mally: This survey concerns the fibre-optic cable for Rodrigues. One million of rupees were provided. One survey is for the fibre-optic cable for Rodrigues and one survey – Rs4 m., is for the feasibility study of new runway for Rodrigues. When the survey is completed, there is no need to put more money on that.

Mr Obeegadoo: In other words, the Government of Mauritius considers that, in terms of policy and strategy to promote sustainable fisheries development, there are no studies and no surveys of whatsoever nature required for 2012.

Mr Von-Mally: I think the hon. Member is mixing issues. This is specific for the optic cable and the airport development. It is clear.

Mr Obeegadoo: The programme is: policy and strategy for fisheries and Rodrigues. I am looking on page 425, it is *Studies and Surveys* under Programme 751.

Mr Von-Mally: This is specific for that.

Mr Obeegadoo: My question is: the primary objective of this programme is the promotion of sustainable fisheries development. Now, the Budget Speech underlines the continued importance of this issue. My question is: how is it that for the year 2012, the Ministry is not proposing any study relating to the promotion of sustainable fisheries development? Are we to understand that all the studies have been done?

The Chairperson: May I just intervene to inform the hon. Minister and hon. Obeegadoo that I see under Programme 487: Fisheries Development and Management, under Item No. 22130 *Studies and Surveys*, a sum of Rs4.8 m. and Rs3.5 m.

Mr Von-Mally: Yes. I think the hon. Member is mistaken. This programme is specific for Rodrigues. There are other surveys for fisheries. We are not mixing them.

Mr Obeegadoo: I'll then invite the Minister to rectify the wording. The Programme 751 is called "Policy and Strategy for Fisheries and Rodrigues" and the primary objective is defined as promote sustainable fisheries development. So, if this is meant only for Rodrigues, then the title should be modified.

The Chairperson: If there are no other questions, I'll put the vote.

Ministry of Fisheries and Rodrigues – Programme Code 751: Policy and Strategy for Fisheries and Rodrigues (Rs58,228,200) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 487: Fisheries Development and Management is called.

Mr Obeegadoo: I am on page 425, Programme 487. My first question concerns *item 22120 Fees*. Could we have some information from the Minister as to what the sum is intended for and how the consultancy services shall be held? This is the first point. The second point, under item 22900926 *Fish fingerlings icw marine ranching project*, could some more details be provided concerning the Rs5 m. being budgeted under that item?

I shall stick to page 425 for the moment, Sir.

The Chairperson: Hon. Minister, the details about the fees.

Mr Von-Mally: Concerning the fees...

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Hon. Seetaram, please!

Mr Von-Mally: ...in fact, there is a decrease due to completion of the UNDP, GEF, Government of Mauritius, RRA project.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Hon. Mrs Martin, please!

Mr Von-Mally: Provision was made to cover cost for consultancy services and sensitisation campaign. We also have training. Training is meant to enhance...

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Hon. Bundhoo, please!

Mr Von-Mally: ...of fishers to exploit the offshore resources through new fishing techniques. Concerning the fingerlings, there are one thousand sea cucumbers which, in fact, are being imported for culture purposes and eventual marine ranching. This is a new project. Species imported are scarce in Mauritian waters and this explains the rationale behind imports. In fact, we are importing from Madagascar and this sea cucumber we find it here in Mauritius. All necessary sanitary and phytosanitary measures will strictly be adhered to and the imported consignment will be compounded.

The Chairperson: Hon. Mrs Labelle, please!

Mr Von-Mally: There will also be coral farming, marine ranching. Concerning the marine ranching, production of at least 300,000 fingerlings of sea bream, mullet and *cordonnier* over the next three years for onward release in the marine protected areas. There will be production of reef fishes for the next three years for onward release in marine protected areas and also sea cucumbers.

Mrs Labelle: I am on page 426, Programme 487: *Fisheries Development and Management* under *item 28225 Transfers to Private Enterprises*. Under this item, Mr Chairperson, 28225008 – *Purchase of Fishing Boats (Mauritius)*. We have Rs32 m. for the current year and for Rodrigues Rs40 m. May I know from the hon. Minister the number of

fishing boats purchased and for Rodrigues we have an additional amount of Rs5.5 m. for the coming year. So, how many fishing boats we are proposing to buy?

On the same page, Mr Chairperson, with your permission, I shall refer to *item 31112031 – Construction of Fish Auction Market*. Mr Chairperson, regarding the fish auction market, it was scheduled that this auction market would become operational in December, this year. May I know from the hon. Minister whether we are meeting the target for the coming into operation of the fish auction market as forecast in last year's Budget?

Mr Von-Mally: Mr Chairperson, I can start with the fish auction market itself. In fact, it is already completed and tenders have been launched for the cold storage facilities and it will be completely operational by August next year. Tenders have been launched.

Concerning *item 28225 Transfers to Private Enterprises*, a provision of Rs5,500 m. has been made to cater for retention money, that is, the purchase of five fishing boats for Rodrigues.

Concerning the transfers to non-financial public corporations, this is a one-off provision which was made to cater for the operation and administrative expenses of the Trust.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: May I request hon. Aimée and hon. Mohamed to continue their conversation in some other place!

Mr Von-Mally: Five boats for Rodrigues.

Mrs Labelle: For Mauritius?

Mr Von-Mally: For Mauritius, if I am not mistaken, there are three boats.

Mr François: On the same item, Mr Chairperson, *item 28225008 New schemes for off lagoons fishing*, there is provision for this year, but no provision for next year. May I know why?

Mr Von-Mally: Which item?

Mr François: *Item 28225008 Capital Transfers – Fisheries*.

Mr Von-Mally: The project will be completed by mid-December 2011, that is, by next month.

Mr François: No, I am asking the new scheme for off lagoons fishing.

The Chairperson: Which item? Can the Member please repeat?

(Interruptions)

Order!

Mr Von-Mally: The boats are going to Rodrigues in December.

The Chairperson: Thank you! Hon. Radegonde!

Mrs Radegonde: Mr Chairperson, at page 425 under *item 22900026 Fish fingerlings icw marine ranching project*, I understand from the Budget Speech that the Government was committed to Rs10 m. for replenishing of the lagoons by releasing 300,000 fish fingerlings. Here, I can see Rs5 m. Can the hon. Minister give us some explanation?

Mr Von-Mally: I have already replied. We will not only have the fish fingerlings, there are the amenities; we have sea cucumber, *mullet*, *cordonnier* and so on.

Mrs Radegonde: I see there is a discrepancy of Rs5 m. It says Rs10 m. in the Budget Speech and Rs5 m. in the proposed programme.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Please, hon. Mohamed! I cannot listen.

Mr Von-Mally: I have already replied. Rs5 m. for the fingerlings, but what about the equipment, Rs5 m. will go into the equipment.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Obeegadoo.

Mr Obeegadoo: On page 426, bottom of the page, under *item 31112032 Construction of Marine Park Centre (Blue Bay)*, this is a long overdue project, but sums budgeted stand for three years 2011, 2012 and 2013. I want to know why this project is being spread out over three years and what exactly will be achieved in year 2011.

My second question is on page 425 under *item 22130 Studies and Surveys*, indeed here, there is a proposal of spending Rs3.5 m. on studies and surveys of which Rs2 m. go to preliminary project preparation. May we be enlightened as to which project this refers to?

Finally, one last question, on page 427 - if that has not yet been asked by my colleague from Rodrigues – under *item 31 Upgrading of Residential Buildings*, *item 31111401 Upgrading of accommodation facilities for patients from Rodrigues*. This is, of course, the most welcome initiative. May we know what the Minister has in mind, where will these accommodation facilities be provided and as from when? Is it the Floreal building which will be upgraded?

Mr Von-Mally: Floreal, yes.

Mr Obeegadoo: When will they be ready to accommodate the patients?

Mr Von-Mally: Concerning the delay in implementation of the project at Blue Bay, the reason is that there has been an encroachment issues on the land which had to be cleared. The Traffic Management and Road Safety Unit requested that the access road to the site be cleared

prior to clearance being given by the Building Plans Committee, Trial Pits Survey requested by the Wastewater Management Authority also.

The Chairperson: Does the hon. Minister have some details to give?

Mr Von-Mally: Concerning the Marine Park, a plot of land at Blue Bay, near the National Coast Guard to an extent 9,520 m² has already been vested in the Fisheries Division. Does the hon. Member want to know why it has ...

Mr Obeegadoo: I want to know what will happen in 2012.

Mr Von-Mally: I will give the hon. Member all the information. The plot of land near the National Coast Guard to an extent of 9.520 m² has already been vested in the Fisheries Division for the construction of a Blue Bay Marine Park Centre.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: The hon. Minister should only give the details that have been asked.

(Interruptions)

Mr Von-Mally: Alright! I can circulate it if the hon. Member wants. Concerning studies and preliminary project preparation, the sum is Rs300,000 for the assessment of FAD fisheries and the IFAD project. There is a decrease as the survey for the development of Tuna fishery in Mauritius (EEZ) has been completed. I would also like to add that the construction of the Blue Bay Marine Park will be ready by next year.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Order!

Mr Von-Mally: The construction will start next year. All clearances have been received, the bidding exercise will be launched by early next year.

Mr Uteem: Mr Chairperson, on page 425, *item 22150 Scientific and Laboratory Equipment and Supplies*, I know there is a substantial increase from Rs400,000 to Rs6 m. May I know from the hon. Minister, first of all ...

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Hon. Bundhoo, please! If you have something important, you know where to go. I can't hear, you are just in the middle. Please!

Mr Uteem: With respect to this budgeted Rs6 m. for each of the next three coming years, what are the equipment for? Secondly, are they going to be used at the Albion Fisheries

Research Centre and if this is the case, being given that the Government is going to look for a strategic partner ...

The Chairperson: The hon. Member should be brief.

Mr Uteem: Is it better to wait for that strategic partner before investing?

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Order!

Mr Von-Mally: In fact, this will be for the purchase of equipment for laboratories for the New Marine Renting Project.

Mr Bodha: Mr Chairperson, as regards *item 31112 Non-Residential Buildings* at page 426, may I ask the Minister where matters stand as regards the Fish Landing Station in Grand'Baie being given that there was a problem as regards the location of that Fish Landing Station in the whole embellishment project of Grand'Baie?

Mr Von-Mally: In fact, we are revising this project. We are having discussions with the inhabitants of the region and the MPs of this region also.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, I am on page 426, *item 31112009 Construction of Fish Landing Station*. Mr Chairperson, firstly I see that there is the project for the Fish Landing Station at Grand Gaube and Pointe aux Sables, but I don't find any budgetary figure for 2012. After that, we have the construction of Fisheries Posts at Trou aux Biches and Case Noyale. These were in the budget last year, but there is one which has been added at Trou d'Eau Douce. May I know from the hon. Minister the status of these Fisheries Posts at Trou d'Eau Douce and Case Noyale? Have roads been completed there and what is the projection for the ones at Trou d'Eau Douce, Grand Gaube and Pointe aux Sables.

Mr Von-Mally: Concerning Trou aux Biches, this is already completed and payment of retention money amounting to Rs700,000 to be effected after maintenance period. A sum of Rs1 m. has been earmarked for the construction of Fisheries Post at Case Noyale; an amount of Rs700,000 has been earmarked for Grand Gaube and a sum of Rs700,000 also has been earmarked for Pointe aux Sables. For Case Noyale, it will start next year.

Mr Seeruttun: Mr Chairperson, on page 425, under *item 22130 Studies and Surveys*, I can see that a sum of Rs3.5 m. has been earmarked for 2012. Is the hon. Minister aware that in the region of Bambous Virieux there have been concerns raised by fishermen of that region with regard to the *Ferme Marine de Mahebourg* concerning the breeding of a fish called *Phare* which

is causing some concerns? Is he willing to carry up some studies and surveys to see whether the claim made by the fishermen is genuine and what he intends to do to correct that problem?

Mr Von-Mally: In fact, Mr Chairperson, Sir, this survey has already been carried out. It has been found that the *poisson phare* is not as ferocious as some people are saying.

Mr Baloomoody: I will come back to page 426, *item 31112009 Construction of Fish Landing Stations (Grand Gaube, Pointe aux Sables)*.

(Interruptions)

A question has been put, but there has been no answer. This is why I am asking the question again. I can't understand why we put this item in the budget and there was no provision last year, there is no provision for this year and the next year, but we keep that item on the budget. May we know whether a specific place has been identified, whether we are going ahead with that project and if yes, why is it that no provision has been made in this budget?

Mr Von-Mally: Concerning the Fish Landing Station at Pointe aux Sables, a sum of Rs700,000 has been earmarked. It will start in 2013.

Mr François: Mr Chairperson, I have just three short questions. At page 426 ...

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Order!

Mr Baloomoody: I have asked whether a specific place has been identified for the project.

Mr Von-Mally: We will have time to choose, maybe we will contact the hon. Member and we will choose together.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Please! Hon. François!

(Interruptions)

Order!

Mr François: My question is at page 426, *item 28212016 Other Current Transfers – Compensation to Heirs of Fishermen i.c.w Accidental Death at Sea*. May I know the amount of money paid for this year and the number of cases awaiting compensation?

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: I will allow only one question, we are out of time.

Mr Von-Mally: In fact, there is a whole list for compensation. I can table the list.

The Chairperson: Yes, the hon. Minister can table it.

Ministries of Fisheries and Rodrigues – Programme Code 487: Fisheries Development and Management (Rs228,509,800) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 311: Rodrigues Development was called

Mr François: Mr Chairperson, at page 427 concerning *Rodrigues Development*. I just ask for your guidance, in the Budget Speech there is a provision of Rs600 m. under Rodrigues for the submarine fibre cable. I cannot find the item anywhere, Mr Chairperson.

(Interruptions)

Mr Von Mally: It is a loan. It is under the Ministry of Finance

Mr François: May I know where is the provision and why is it not under the acquisition of financial assets, that is, loan?

Mr Von Mally: I would like to inform my hon. friend that the matter is being taken at the level of the Ministry of Finance.

The Chairperson: Yes, any question?

Mr François: Mr Chairperson, again I seek your guidance with regard to capital grants for Rodrigues Regional Assembly. We have the public sector investment programme which gives us details about the various programmes for the Rodrigues Regional Assembly...

Mr Von Mally: Which Item?

Mr François: *Item 263211001 Capital Grant – Rodrigues Regional Assembly* on page 427, *Programme 311: Rodrigues Development*. I ask for your guidance, Mr Chairperson, we are asked to vote this item and there are few projects. I do not know whether I am allowed to query these projects because it is under the PISP. I would seek your guidance first, Mr Chairperson.

The Chairperson: I think that this is a bulk amount for Rodrigues and the projects have been approved.

Mr Von Mally: Mr Chairperson, Sir, maybe if my hon. friend has not got a copy of the Budget that has been voted in the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, I can table one so that he can have all the information that he needs because all these have been discussed at the level of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and I am not prepared to talk about this here.

(Interruptions)

Mr François: On a point of clarification, Rodrigues Regional Assembly voted an estimate and now we are being asked to vote the provisions for the Rodrigues Regional

Assembly which will be appropriated under this Budget. That is why I am asking whether I am allowed to query some of these projects because they represented an estimate.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Please, the hon. Member has got the right to ask for clarification and also to ask for any detail. There is no need for any Member to interrupt the hon. Member when he is talking and also refrain to make remarks from a sitting position. Hon. Minister, I want your response on it.

Mr Von Mally: Mr Chairperson, according to the RRA Act the Estimates for Rodrigues is approved by Cabinet.

The Chairperson: Alright!

Mr François: In that case, I am allowed to query then.

The Chairperson: No, it is a lump sum which has been approved in Rodrigues. If the Minister has the possibility to answer, I have no objection.

Mrs Ribot: Mr Chairperson, just for my information, I would like to know under *item 31111401 Upgrading of accommodation facilities for patients from Rodrigues*, the number and location of those residential buildings for patients from Rodrigues.

Mr Von-Mally: This has already been answered. In fact, we have proposed to use unutilised government quarters which are being identified for upgrading.

Mr Baloomoody: Sir, I just wanted to put a question. Is it only for the patients or also for those who are accompanying the patient?

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Please, there is no need for others to comment. Hon. Choonee, please!

Mr Baloomoody: So, it is for the relatives as well, that is good news.

The Chairperson: Any question?

Programme Code 311: Rodrigues Development (Rs1,657,978,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Order! Order! Please!

Ministry of Youth and Sports - Programme Code 681: Policy and Management for Youth and Sports was called.

Mr Quirin: *M. le président, je vais tout d'abord poser quelques questions par rapport aux contraintes auxquelles le ministère de la jeunesse et des sports...*

The Chairperson: On which item, please?

Mr Quirin: A la page 432: *Major Constraints and Challenges*, tout d'abord....

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Hon. Minister, you know the Standing Order, you are here to help the Chair.

(Interruptions)

Mr Quirin: M. le president, tout d'abord concernant les *limited sponsorships*...

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Order now!

Mr Quirin: *...for sports and youth activities, the Ministry proposes to sensitise sports federations and youth organisations to enable them to tap CSR Fund. Le ministre peut-il nous dire comment il va procéder vu que les fédérations ne sont pas CSR compliant.*

Ma deuxième question concerne *le shortage of coaches* et le ministère propose d'employer des athlètes à la retraite. J'aimerais aussi que le ministre nous dise comment il va procéder avec le recrutement. Troisième question....

The Chairperson: No, please, let the Minister respond and we have to go item by item on expenditure.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Hon. Mohamed, please!

Mr Ritoo: Mr Chairman, Sir, Sports federations are not CSR compliant to beneficiate the CSR Fund, however, sports federations through the Club Maurice and the Trust Fund for Excellence which are both CSR compliant can beneficiate of same and we are helping them on that.

Regarding the shortages of coaches, we will be recruiting the retired athletes on contractual basis.

Mr Quirin: M. le président, comme mentionné dans le budget *le low participation of women in sports* et comme le ministère propose de promouvoir les activités pour les femmes à travers la commission nationale des sports féminins, je dois dire que cette commission...

The Chairperson: No, the Member has to put his question

Mr Quirin: Je dois faire référence à la commission, M. le président.

The Chairperson: Non, cela doit être sur un item du budget.

Mr Quirin: Le ministre compte-il revoir le fonctionnement de cette commission, vu que cette commission n'est pas très performante, comme il le sait lui-même, et compte-il apporter les changements nécessaires ?

Mr Ritoo: M. le président, cette commission fonctionne très bien et ils sont en train de faire leur travail...

The Chairperson: Hon. Duval, and hon. Deputy Prime Minister, please!

Mrs Ribot: Under Programme 681, item *21 Compensation of Employees* at page 438, I would like to know from the hon. Minister the justifications of the increase in Personal Emoluments; since on page 443, we can see that the number of employees has increased from 24 to 27 only.

Mr Ritoo: Well, the increase is for payment of extra remuneration, salary compensation and for the additional staff of the Ministry.

Mr Ribot: I just pointed out that according to the table on page 443, there are only three additional employees. I don't think that they can account for Rs7 m.

The Chairperson: The hon. Minister will give the details of how the sum has been reached.

Mr Ritoo: The increase is due to the fact of granting of yearly increments, payment of salary compensation. Also we have got the transfer of social contribution to a new item of National Savings Fund and earlier it was not there.

The Chairperson: We are under programme code 681.

Mr Seeruttun: On page 438, under *item 22100 Publications and Stationery*, the amount earmarked for 2012 has more than trebled. Would the hon. Minister explain to the House why this increase in the amount earmarked for 2012 compared to 2011?

Mr Ritoo: The increase is due to an inclusion of a sub-item to meet the cost of newspapers.

Mrs Labelle: Under programme 681 at page 433 regarding the major services, we have provision of framework for a better management of the sport federations to achieve good governance. May I know from the hon. Minister, how is he contemplating to go forward with the

provision of the framework for good governance and whether it will be outsourced to prepare this framework or whether this is actually under preparation?

Mr Ritoo: It is actually done at the level of my Ministry, that is, with proper scrutinisation and we asked the federation to set the objectives. We, of course, at the level of the Ministry, have the Finance Officers who verify the financial account. We ensure that all the athletes participating are the licensees of the federation. We also ensure that the athletes have an insurance policy and we also insist for the technical report regularly before we give any grant to the federation.

Mr Baloomoody: On this issue of good governance, can the hon. Minister tell us whether the MFA is following the directives of good governance?

Mr Ritoo: Again, the federation is autonomous and when they come to the Ministry, we just verify the accounts.

Programme Code 681: Policy and Management for Youth and Sports (Rs23,075,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 682: Promotion and Development of Sports was called.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Quirin!

Mr Quirin: On page 439, *Sub-Programme 68201: High Level Sports, under item 22120, Fees, je constate qu'en 2011, la somme qui avait été earmarked est de R 8,700,000 et qui est passée en 2012 à R 2,575,000. L'honorable ministre peut-il nous donner les raisons pour cette baisse ?*

The Chairperson: Hon. Choonee, please!

Mr Ritoo: M. le président, en 2011 cette année-ci, nous avons eu les Jeux des Iles. Nous avons à peu près 375 athlètes qui avaient participé et il fallait payer les *participation fees*, donc en 2012, il n'y aura pas les Jeux des Iles, donc nous n'aurons pas à payer ces *fees*.

The Chairperson: Hon. Hossen, please! Yes, hon. Obeegadoo.

Mr Obeegadoo: At the bottom of page 439, Trust Fund for Excellence in Sports, there is a significant increase from Rs3.8 m. to Rs12.5 m. would the hon. Minister could care to comment?

Mr Ritoo: The Trust Fund for Excellence in Sports as you know, Mr Chairperson, there is a new orientation for the Trust Fund for Excellence in Sport and for the awards of the new

scholarships, and also for the increase of 80 beneficiaries to 250. There is a new orientation, and therefore, the budget has therefore been increased.

The Chairperson: We are at page 439. Yes. hon. Mrs Labelle.

Mrs Labelle: On page 439, item 26313055, *National Council for Drug-Free Sports*, could the hon. Minister give us some information on this item because there is no budgetary allocation and so on. Where are we going with this Council?

Mr Ritoo: Well, we are waiting for the amendment of the Sports Act and same will be established once the amendments are being brought to the Assembly.

The Chairperson: Order please! Yes hon. Quirin!

Mr Quirin: A la page 439, *item 2613032 Mauritius Arbitration Commission for Sports*, tout comme l'a fait remarquer ma collègue, l'honorable Mme Labelle, aucune somme ...

The Chairperson: Please! The Member should put your question.

Mr Quirin ... n'est mentionnée aussi pour cet item et le ministre peut-il nous dire, pourquoi?

Mr Ritoo: M. le président, cet item tout comme le *Drug-Free*, c'est dans le *Sports Act*, et donc c'est supposé être mis en place par le *Mauritius Olympic Committee*, mais à ce jour, cela n'a pas été mis en place, donc, c'est le ministère qui va mettre en place cette commission avec le nouvel amendement.

Mr Quirin: M. le président, si c'est le ministère qui va mettre en place cette commission, je pense qu'on devrait tout abord *earmark* une somme de façon à ce que la commission puisse être mise sur pied.

Mr Ritoo: Once it is set up, then funds will be provided.

The Chairperson: We move to the next page. Yes. hon Mrs Labelle,

Mrs Labelle: May I come back to the National Council for Drug-Free Sports? For previous years we did have an amount earmarked of Rs300,000. Can we know how this amount was spent?

Mrs Ribot: Under Sub-Programme 68202: Sports for All, first of all, *item 31113406* ...

The Chairperson: Which sub-item?

Mrs Ribot: Under sub-item *Others*, where there has been an increase of Rs3 m. I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether there is a list of projects - which will fall under this item - which have already been identified.

The Chairperson: I can't follow myself. I don't know if the hon. Minister can follow. Which item?

Mrs Ribot: On page 440.

The Chairperson: Have we finished with page 439?

Mrs Ribot: It is the sub-programme, Mr Chairperson.

The Chairperson: If there is no question on page 439, we move now on page 440. Yes, hon. Bodha.

Mr Bodha: On top of the page, Mr Chairperson, Transfers to Households, we have the high level athletes and the allowances paid to them. May I ask the hon. Minister how ...

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Order!

Mr Bodha: ... many such athletes do we have - we have the same sum for 2011 and 2012 - and what are the criteria for being a high calibre athlete?

Mr Ritoo: In fact, we have got 54 high calibre athletes.

Mr Ameer Meea: Mr Chairperson, the reconstruction works of St. Francois Xavier Stadium have been going on since two years. May we know when the works are supposed to be completed? It is budgeted in 2012 as well as a sum in 2013.

Mr Ritoo: For the St. Francois Xavier Stadium, the works are supposed to be completed in February 2012.

Mr Bodha: Under *item 31113406 Upgrading of Sports Infrastructure, (b) Lightings at New George V Stadium*, can I ask the hon. Minister whether the works have been completed, whether they are to international standards and when will the stadium be ready to be used?

Mr Ritoo: The works at George V Stadium is nearing completion, and we hope that the stadium will be opened in March. It is according to international standards.

Dr. S. Boolell: On the same *item 31113406 (c) Lighting of training grounds*, I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether he has a policy in areas where winter creeps in early - the Curepipe area.

Mr Ritoo: We have a policy for *lighting of training grounds*. It is in the context of the professionalisation of football, where we see which are the first teams, that is, those in the Super League. We try to give them lighting, so that they can have proper training grounds. In line with

this, we are providing lighting to all the football grounds where the First Division teams will be trained.

Mr Seeruttun: On page 440, *item 28211056 Other Current Transfers - Football Clubs*. Do we know how many clubs are involved in that programme and whether the amount is paid equally or is it done through some other mechanism?

Mr Ritoo: All the First Division football clubs have got their amount increased from Rs500,000 to Rs1 m. and the Second Division teams from Rs200,000 to Rs400,000. This is the amount that will be paid to them yearly at the start of the season. On Saturday, they will be paid the amount.

Mr Uteem: Under *item 31113406 Upgrading of Sports Infrastructure, (f) Others*, may I know from the hon. Minister whether any provision has been made in this budget for the construction of the football ground at Tranquebar, and whether any sum has been used since last year in terms of advice?

Mr Ritoo: It is under the NDU project.

Mrs Ribot: Under *Sub-Programme 68202* on page 440, I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether the *Commission Nationale des Sports Féminins* has a separate budget or otherwise under which item we can find the funds related to that *Commission*.

Mr Ritoo: The *Commission Nationale des Sports Féminins* is being financed by the Ministry. As and when there is requirement for any competition, we finance the *Commission*.

Mr Quirin: M. le président, la question de l'honorable Mme Ribot est simple. Est-ce qu'il y a ...

The Chairperson: No, the Mmember should put his question!

Mr Quirin: Est-ce qu'il y a un code où le budget de la *Commission Nationale des Sports Féminins* ...

The Chairperson: The hon. Minister answered that, as and when there is need, funds are made available, which presupposes that there is no particular item. This is what I understand.

Mr Baloomoody: Can the hon. Minister tell us under which item in the budget, allocation has been made for this specific issue?

Mr Ritoo: I have already replied that, as and when there is requirement for any competition, we give them the money; it is like a grant.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, with your permission, the major constraint is low participation of women in sports. It is being said that, to address this, we have to promote activities through the *Commission Nationale des Sports Féminins*. The hon. Minister just mentioned that when there is request, then they do it. Must I take it that the hon. Minister will wait for requests to promote the activities through the *Commission Nationale des Sports Féminins*?

Mr Ritoo: There is a Chairperson and a team working for the promotion of sports among women. As at date, the Ministry has not refused any request regarding the promotion of sports among women. We give all assistance to the *Commission Nationale des Sports Féminins*.

Mr Ameer Meea: Concerning the St Francois Xavier Stadium, can I ask the hon. Minister whether it will be available to local teams or only First Division teams?

Mr Ritoo: Normally, the stadium will be put at the disposal of the First Division teams and they will see how they can arrange. We have the stadium, but we can't arrange for all the clubs to come and train there. We give the ground to the First Division teams, and they arrange with the Second Division or other clubs there.

Mr Bodha: Under the same item, in regard to the Maryse Justin Stadium, a budget of Rs15 m. is being granted for next year, which means that we have a very ambitious project. Can we have an idea about what is being done at that stadium?

Mr Ritoo: We will change the synthetic track, which is used out.

Mr Quirin: M. le president, toujours à la *page 440, item 26 Grants*, an amount of Rs22 m. is being earmarked for 2012 and Rs19 m. in 2011. Le ministre peut-il nous dire à qui ces *grants* seront alloués?

Mr Ritoo: The amount will be given to the Mauritius Sports Council, which is responsible for the management and maintenance of all the sports infrastructure of the Ministry. We will also enable the Mauritius Sports Council to use it for their operational cost and maintenance of all infrastructures.

Mr Baloomoody: Under *item 31113406 (f) Others*, the Minister just replied to my hon. friend that, with regard to St. François Xavier stadium, the football ground will be given to First Division teams. Can I ask the hon. Minister whether a plot of land has been identified for Pointe aux Sables Mates football club, which is also a First Division football team and, if so, where exactly?

Mr Ritoo: I think Pointe aux Sables Mates has a football ground there, but it is not vested in my Ministry. In fact, it pertains to the Municipality of Port Louis. If it pertains to the Ministry, then we can put lighting, cloakrooms and everything. So, in our quest to provide a proper training ground to all 1st Division Football Clubs regarding the professionalisation of football in Mauritius, then it would be possible but, in fact, as at date it is for the Municipality of Port Louis.

Mr Seeruttun: Mr Chairperson, at page 440, under *item 22130001 Studies and Preliminary Project (a) Football Stadium in the South*, will the hon. Minister inform the House whether the study has been completed already and in which region of the South the project will go ahead, if it will go ahead?

Mr Ritoo: Yes, definitely, we are going ahead with the stadium in the South. Actually, we are working on a site at Tyack. The project land has already been identified and a technical groundwork is being completed. A sum of Rs1.5 m. is provided for the feasibility report and everything is provided.

Programme Code 682: Promotion and Development of Sports (Rs340,038,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 683: Youth Services was called.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, under *Programme 683: Youth Services*, I refer to the target set for the current year. Under this programme, the indicator was the number of young persons from 14 to 29 trained in youth leadership. There was a target of 18,000 for the current year. I would like to know whether this target has been reached; how many young persons have been trained in youth leadership and how many trainers were attached to this programme to train this number of 18,000 young persons.

Mr Chairperson, I have other questions under the same programme, because we have two indicators under the Youth Empowerment. The number of young people enrolled: 7,000. May we know whether from the number of young persons who have completed the programme - because it is said that 7,000 would be enrolled - how many have completed the programme or the number of drop-outs from this programme?

Mr Ritoo: Mr Chairperson, 17,000 young people have been trained in the Leadership courses, courses in Club Management, Life Skills Management, Climate Change and Disaster

Management, and Leadership and Citizens Training. The courses are run in secondary schools, Youth Centres, MITD and Social Welfare Centres.

The Chairperson: Order!

Mrs Ribot: On page 442, under *item 31112407 Upgrading of Youth Centres*, there is a sum of Rs2.6 m. earmarked for the Upgrading of Bambous Youth Centre and this year it was Rs800,000. First of all, I would like to know if the sum of Rs800,000 has been completely used, which works have been carried out and the timeframe for the upgrading of that Youth Centre.

Mrs Radegonde: I would like to know the status of the Bel Ombre Recreational Centre.

Mr Ritoo: Mr Chairperson, there is a sum of Rs2.6 m. for Upgrading of Bambous Youth Centre and Rs1 m. for the Bel Ombre Youth Centre.

Mrs Labelle: I think I have heard the hon. Minister mentioning that 17,000 youths have been trained. I asked the hon. Minister about the number of trainers who were involved in this programme. How many trainers have trained the 17,000 youths? I also put a question regarding the National Youth Achievement Award. May we know how many have completed this programme?

Mrs Bholah: On page 442, *item 31112007* regarding the construction at Anse La Raie Youth Training Centre, a sum of Rs8 m. has been earmarked for the year 2012. Could the hon. Minister explain the nature of the work being carried out?

Mr Ritoo: At Anse La Raie Youth Training Centre we are constructing new dormitories. As for trainers, we have got 15 Principal Youth Officers (PYOs) and 20 Senior Youth Officers were involved.

Mrs Radegonde: Mr Chairperson, I understand from the hon. Minister that a sum of Rs1 m. has been earmarked; I know that. But what I asked is the status of the project implementation. Where has it reached?

Mr Ritoo: We are not going with the project right now because we have got a big plot of land at Bel Ombre which we have received. Together with the Bel Ombre Foundation, we are going to put up the Centre there.

Mr Seeruttun: Mr Chairperson, at page 441, *item 22060 - Maintenance*, the amount earmarked for 2012 has increased substantially to Rs5,180,000. Will the hon. Minister inform the House about the nature of the work being carried out in 2012?

At page 441, *item 22060 Maintenance*, it has been increased substantially to Rs5,180,000. If the hon. Minister could give us the nature of the work being carried out, whether the works has been outsourced and who is the contractor doing the work.

Mr Gungah: At page 442, *item 31112407 Upgrading of Youth Centres - (d) Others*, I presume the hon. Minister must be having a list of projects under *Others*, can he circulate the list?

Mr Ritoo: Yes. I will circulate the list.

Mr Quirin: At page 441, *item 26313068 National Youth Council*, où une somme de R 1,250,000 *earmarked* pour 2011. De cette somme, le ministre peut-il nous dire ce qui a été utilisé jusqu'à présent et si en même temps il peut déposer une liste des activités organisées par le *National Youth Council* et le coût de chaque activité?

Mr Ritoo: I have no problem to table the list.

Mrs Ribot: Mr Chairperson, we just heard the hon. Minister saying that there are 17,000 young people who have been trained by 35 trainers, which would make about 490 young persons per trainer. We would like to know from the hon. Minister the duration of the training sessions.

(Interruptions)

Mr Ritoo: Mr Chairperson, it is a programme. So, it is spread over a long period.

The Chairperson: The hon. Member wanted to know the duration.

(Interruptions)

Order! It is a fair question and the hon. Minister will give the answer.

Mr Ritoo: It is a programme carried out together with the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Gender Equality and the Mauritius Family Planning Association as well.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Seeruttun! Last question!

Mr Seeruttun: Mr Chairperson, I am still waiting for my answer to my first question I asked regarding maintenance works.

I have got another question on page 442 with regard to *item 22090 Security*. A sum of Rs1.5 m. is earmarked for that item. Will the hon. Minister inform the House to which company this contract has been awarded to?

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Please! Hon. Peetumber, no need to supplement!

Mr Ritoo: Rapid Security Services.

The Chairperson: Yes, anything else coming.

Mr Ritoo: Regarding the question, it is for 6 to 9 sessions for 9 weeks. There are also residential courses at Anse La Raie

Mrs Labelle: I did not receive any answer to a question which I put to the hon. Minister. I don't know whether the hon. Minister can provide me with an answer. Regarding the National Youth Award, there were 7,000 enrolled. I asked whether the hon. Minister has the number of young persons who have completed this programme.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Hon. Hossen, I don't want any interruption!

Mr Ritoo: The increase is for the servicing of swimming pools and for maintenance and repairs of sports infrastructures.

The Chairperson: Can I put the question now? Is there any question?

Mr Quirin: Merci, M. le président. Toujours sous l'item *Upgrading of Youth Centres*, est-ce que l'honorable ministre peut nous dire si son ministère a déjà identifié les sites ...

The Chairperson: Which page and which item ?

Mr Quirin : Page 442, *Upgrading of Youth Centres*. Est-ce que l'honorable ministre a déjà identifié les sites à être rénovés car une somme de R 3.3 millions a déjà été *earmarked* pour 2012?

Mr Ritoo : Concerning upgrading of Youth Centres, these are Barkly Youth Centre, Floreal Youth Centre, Trèfles Youth Centre and Malherbes Youth Centre.

(Interruptions)

Ministry of Youth and Sports - Programme Code 683: Youth Services (Rs88,988,000) was, on question put, agreed.

The Deputy Prime Minister: Sir, I beg to move that you do report progress and ask leave to sit again.

Question put and agreed to.

On the Assembly resuming with the Deputy Speaker in the Chair, the Deputy Speaker reported accordingly.

ADJOURNMENT

The Deputy Prime Minister: Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this Assembly do now adjourn to Wednesday 23 November 2011 at 11.00 a.m.

Mr Duval rose and seconded.

Mr Speaker: The House stands adjourned.

*At 2.34 a.m. the Assembly was, on its rising, adjourned to Wednesday 23 November 2011
at 11.00 a.m.*