



## **FIFTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

### **PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)**

#### **SECOND SESSION**

**WEDNESDAY 27 NOVEMBER 2013**

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## Members

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Dr. the Hon. Navinchandra Ramgoolam, GCSK, FRCP	Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Affairs and External Communications, Minister for Rodrigues
Dr. the Hon. Ahmed Rashid Beebeejaun, GCSK, FRCP	Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Energy and Public Utilities
Hon. Charles Gaëtan Xavier-Luc Duval, GCSK	Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Development
Hon. Anil Kumar Bachoo, GOSK	Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping
Dr. the Hon. Arvin Boolell, GOSK	Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade
Dr. the Hon. Abu Twalib Kasenally, GOSK, FRCS	Minister of Housing and Lands
Hon. Mrs Sheilabai Bappoo, GOSK	Minister of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions
Dr. the Hon. Vasant Kumar Bunwaree	Minister of Education and Human Resources
Hon. Satya Veyash Faugoo	Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security, Attorney General
Hon. Devanand Virahsawmy, GOSK	Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development
Dr. the Hon. Rajeshwar Jeetah	Minister of Tertiary Education, Science, Research and Technology
Hon. Tassarajen Pillay Chedumbrum	Minister of Information and Communication Technology
Hon. Louis Joseph Von-Mally, GOSK	Minister of Fisheries
Hon. Satyaprakash Ritoo	Minister of Youth and Sports
Hon. Louis Hervé Aimée	Minister of Local Government and Outer Islands
Hon. Mookhesswur Choonee	Minister of Arts and Culture
Hon. Shakeel Ahmed Yousuf Abdul Razack Mohamed	Minister of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment

Hon. John Michaël Tzoun Sao Yeung Sik Yuen	Minister of Tourism and Leisure
Hon. Lormus Bundhoo	Minister of Health and Quality of Life
Hon. Sayyad Abd-Al-Cader Sayed-Hossen	Minister of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection
Hon. Surendra Dayal	Minister of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment
Hon. Jangbahadoorsing Iswurdeo Mola	Minister of Business, Enterprise and Cooperatives
Roopchand Seetaram	
Hon. Mrs Maria Francesca Mireille Martin	Minister of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare
Hon. Sutyadeo Moutia	Minister of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms

## PRINCIPAL OFFICERS AND OFFICIALS

<i>Mr Speaker</i>	Peeroo, Hon. Abdool Razack M.A., SC, GOSK
<i>Deputy Speaker</i>	Peetumber, Hon. Maneswar
<i>Deputy Chairperson of Committees</i>	Deerpalsing, Hon. Ms Kumaree Rajeshree
<i>Clerk of the National Assembly</i>	Dowlutta, Mr R. Ranjit
<i>Deputy Clerk</i>	Lotun, Mrs B. Safeena
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**MAURITIUS**

**Fifth National Assembly**

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**SECOND SESSION**

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**Debate No. 33 of 2013**

**Sitting of 27 November 2013**

**The Assembly met in the Assembly House, Port Louis,**

**At 11.30 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.*

**STATEMENT BY MINISTER**

**OECD GLOBAL FORUM - PEER REVIEW – MAURITIUS RATING**

**The Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Development (Mr X. L. Duval):** Mr Speaker, Sir, I wish to bring to the attention of the House the following important information regarding the rating of Mauritius by the OECD Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes.

Mauritius has undergone the Combined Phases 1 and 2 Peer Review carried out by the Global Forum. The review assessed whether Mauritius has in place a proper system for maintaining, accessing and exchanging tax information, which meets the OECD international standard. The Global Forum also assessed the effectiveness of our Exchange of Information system. It concluded, following the review, that the Mauritius Exchange of Information system was effective and efficient and was compliant with international standards.

The next step following the Peer Review process was to allocate ratings to the jurisdictions that have been reviewed. Mr Speaker, Sir, at the sixth meeting of the Global Forum held in Jakarta on 21 and 22 November 2013, the ratings for the first 50 reviewed jurisdictions were assessed. I am pleased to inform the House that the Global Forum has rated Mauritius as largely compliant with the international standards on transparency and exchange of Information.

More importantly, the House may appreciate that Mauritius has scored the same rating as countries like the United States, United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, Singapore and Hong Kong. This rating confirms the position of Mauritius as a sound jurisdiction of good repute, transparent and compliant with international standards.

Thank you.

**PUBLIC BILL**  
**THE APPROPRIATION (2014) BILL**  
**(NO. XXIII OF 2013)**  
**COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY**

*(Mr Speaker in the Chair)*

*Consideration of the Appropriation (2014) Bill (No. XXIII of 2013) was resumed.*

*National Audit Office – Programme Code 041: External Audit and Assurance Services was called.*

**Mr Bhagwan:** Mr Speaker, Sir, can I seek your guidance before we resume the debates? Can we be allowed to take programme by programme and then we will refer to other pages. Say we have a programme 041 and then it goes to the next page and to the other pages, instead of taking it page by page?

*(Interruptions)*

I am just asking! I am making a request! I think it is my right to make a request. It can always be accepted or not. If we take a programme and it refers to the other page...

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** I decided yesterday that we should go page by page!

*(Interruptions)*

There is no question on Programme Code No. 041?

**Mr Uteem:** On page 27, item 22120 – *Fees*, may I know from the hon. Prime Minister what these fees relate to? Under item 22180 – *Overseas Travel (Mission and Capacity Building)*, may I know from the hon. Prime Minister what are the criteria that are used to select officers to go on these overseas missions?

**Mr Baloomoody:** Sir, under the same item - *Overseas Travel (Mission and Capacity Building)*, one of the constraints is that there is a...

**The Chairperson:** Which item?

**Mr Baloomoody:** Item 22180 - *Overseas Travel (Mission and Capacity Building)*, we find that the Budget has been reduced for next year...

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** I want some silence!

**Mr Baloomoody:** And one of the constraints is capacity building at the Audit Office. May I know why Government has decided to reduce the budget for *Capacity Building*?

**Mr Bodha:** Mr Chairperson, as regards item 21111 – *Other Staff Costs*, we have an increase from Rs10 m. to more than Rs17 m. May I ask the hon. Prime Minister to enlighten us about this?

**Mr Bhagwan:** Programme Code 041: *External Audit and Assurance Services*, can I ask the ...

**The Chairperson:** Please give the item number!

**Mr Bhagwan:** Item 041: *External Audit and Assurance Services*.

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** On page 27?

**Mr Bhagwan:** Yes, under item 21110 - *Personal Emoluments*, can I ask the hon. Prime Minister to obtain from the Audit Department as to whether the Director of Audit Office has the capacity in terms of personnel and so on to audit the accounts of Government-owned companies?

**Mr Jhugroo:** For sub programme 04102: *Performance Audit*, being given that there has been a lot of criticisms in the past against the National Audit Report - even the hon. Prime Minister had criticised the Audit Report - can we know what mechanism is in place to assess the performance of the National Audit Office?

**The Chairperson:** To which page is the hon. Member referring to? We are on page 27.

**Mr Jhugroo:** Page 26.

**The Chairperson:** We are on page 27.

**Mr Jhugroo:** But someone started by 27!

**The Chairperson:** The hon. Member should follow!

**Mr Jhugroo:** The problem is that someone started by 27.

**The Chairperson:** There is no problem! You have no right to put questions on matters of policy! This is Committee of Supply! We are on page 27. Yes, hon. Mrs Labelle!

**Mrs Labelle:** I am on page 27, item 22180....

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Some silence! Yes?

**Mrs Labelle:** I am on item 22180 regarding the *Capacity Building*. I would like to know what amount will be allocated to training in forensic audit because it is a major constraint as

stated on page 23 - *Major Constraints, Training in forensic audit*. I would like to know whether this will be taken under *Capacity Building*.

**Mr Seeruttun:** Mr Chairperson, on page 23 on *Major Achievements*...

**The Chairperson:** 23? We are on 27.

**Mr Seeruttun:** We have not started replying the questions....

**The Chairperson:** We are on page 27. Next question, hon. Ameer Meea, do you have a question?

*(Interruptions)*

**Mrs Navarre-Marie:** Mr Chairperson, I am on item 26210 – *Current Grant to International Organisations*. I would like to know what are these organisations and we see that the sum has been increased from Rs335,000 to Rs375,000. I would like to know if among these organisations, there are new organisations to which we are paying grants?

**Dr. Sorefan:** On page 27, item 21110, may I know from the hon. Prime Minister who is the Director of Audit presently?

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Mr Chairperson, I am still on page 27, item 21110 - *Personal Emoluments*, where there is a significant increase from 2013 to 2014 and I suppose this relates to the increase in the post of Auditor which is reflected on page 29 at 01 53 75. Now, Auditors are being increased from 26 to 34, from one year to the next. I would be grateful for some explanations.

**Mr Seeruttun:** At page 27, item 22120 - *Fees*, some Rs2.145 m. have been earmarked for 2014. May we know to whom the fees are being paid and for what services?

**Dr. S. Boolell:** On the same page, under the item of 22030 – *Rent*, I would like to know to whom are we paying that rent of more than Rs4 m.?

**Mr Jhugroo:** At page 27, under item 22180 - *Overseas Travel (Mission and Capacity Building)*, can we know from the estimates for year 2014, which part will be for the mission and which part will be for the capacity building?

**The Chairperson:** Do you have another question, hon. Seeruttun?

**Mr Seeruttun:** Yes. Under item 22900 - *Other Goods and Services*, we can see a drastic drop in the amount earmarked for 2014 and onwards compared to 2013, may we know why there was such a big amount earmarked in 2013 and a drop in 2014?

**The Chairperson:** No more questions. Yes, hon. Prime Minister!

**The Prime Minister:** At Page 27. I will go in the order that they are here, Mr Chairperson. First of all, on the *Personal Emoluments*, the provision is for the basic salary for 179 funded positions. Then, you have the *ad hoc* allowances to three officers: one Confidential Secretary and two Office Care Attendants, plus you have extra duty allowance for one Assistant Director of Audit, plus there is the driver's allowance to the Director of Audit and the two Deputy Directors. And then, you have the special duty allowance for the Director of Audit and the Head Office Care Attendant and two Office Care Attendants. Plus, the usual cash in lieu of leave.

The increase in the provision - I suppose that's what hon. Members want to know - the increase is, first of all, there is the implementation of the Errors, Omissions and Anomalies Committee Report. Then, there is the refund of cash in lieu of sick leave, payment of increment and the filling of the following vacancies -

- 8 posts of Auditor
- 11 posts of Examiner of Accounts
- 2 posts of Assistant Director, and
- 6 posts of Principal Examiner of Accounts, after the promotion.

There was a question also: is it enough Auditors and another question as to why we are recruiting more. The reason is, as you rightly said, we need more Auditors because the activities are increasing, Government expenditure is increasing and we need more auditors. In fact, I should say also that not only that, but from now onwards, I understand we will also get an interim report from the National Audit Office which we didn't have before, which means that you are going to get even more information. So, that's one.

Number two, hon. Members wanted to know about *Other Staff Costs*. The increase is due, again, to the implementation of the Errors, Omissions and Anomalies Committee. And then, the

Auditors formerly being paid a monthly travel grant of Rs6,600 or an average mileage allowance of Rs5,500 are eligible, from January of this year, to a monthly payment of Rs10,200 plus a monthly duty remission allowance, that is, if they are not enjoying duty remissions on a purchase of car. So, 24 Auditors are being paid.

Then, you have the Examiners of Accounts, four Senior Examiners of Accounts who were formerly being refunded an average bus fare of Rs1,800 are now eligible to a monthly average mileage allowance of Rs6,500 or more. There are 45 Examiners of Accounts. There is also provision which includes the payment of the benefits to eight Auditors and 11 Examiners of Accounts who will be promoted against existing vacancies in early 2004 and also, there is the refund of bus fares which has increased from August 2013.

Then, there was a question on rent. The provision is for rental of building, the office occupies a rented premise of 8,100 square feet at Rs37 per square feet at the Mauritius Centre Port Louis and the monthly rent is Rs363,000 plus there is the rental of parking slots at a rate of Rs8,750 and there are five such slots.

Then, we had a question on fees. The increase is due to the 100% refund of ACCA subscription fees as per the PRB Report of this year.

Concerning overseas Travel, I must clarify something, Mr Chairperson, because I see the same question is coming up, because we put Overseas Travel plus Mission and Capacity Building. Let me clarify this, perhaps, for hon. Members. Expenditure for overseas travel has now been decentralised. Therefore, the Accounting Officer, in each Ministry, is responsible now for managing the Budget in respect of overseas travel. The percentage of the vote devoted to overseas travel and capacity building, therefore, rests with the Accounting Officer himself or herself, and the problem is that we cannot determine this in advance, Mr Chairperson, because it depends on the priorities that the Ministry has and what they want to do. So, this is how it is being done which is a better way of doing things.

Now, most of the training facilities provided by international agencies are free. They do not cost Government anything, but the local training is organised by the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms. Now, provision is made for capacity building if a specific training is required and there are no foreign funds available, in other words. In that event, the

organisation has to meet the cost of the training from this Budget. Perhaps, this has made it a bit clear, because everywhere we will have the same question. I noticed that yesterday.

The next one was, I think, *Other Goods and Services*. There is a decrease in the provision - I think somebody on this side put the question - because there was a one-off Conference in 2013. That was put in there, that's Rs500,000 less because of that Conference.

As for the *Current Grant to International Organisations*, there is the African Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions. The African Organisation of English-Speaking Supreme Audit Institutions, international Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions, Asian Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions and there is an increase in provision as the fees for the English-Speaking and Audit Institutions have been revised from 6000 US Dollars to 7000 US Dollars. I think that's more or less.

**Mr Bhagwan:** I have asked whether the Audit Office undertakes the audit of the Government-owned companies.

**The Prime Minister:** No. In fact, as far as I remember, we published a list of the...

*(Interruptions)*

They published a list themselves, they don't do it themselves, it's different. There was also the question of who is actually - I answered a question in Parliament on this. Mr Jugurnath was the Director of Audit and he has retired on 19 November of this year. The present Director of Audit is, therefore, Mrs Kwee Chow Tse Yuet Cheong. I answered a question in Parliament on this.

**Mr Jhugroo:** At page 28, *Sub-Programme 04102: Performance Audit*. Being given that there have been lot of criticisms in the past against the Audit reports, can we know what mechanism is in place to assess the performance of the National Audit Office? At page 28, *Sub-Programme 04102: Performance Audit*

**The Chairperson:** It is a matter of policy. It is not admissible.

**Mrs Labelle:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. On page 28, item 22: *Goods and Services*. The hon. Prime Minister has just explained for the other programmes, but this programme which seems to be a smaller one, we see that the sum for goods and services is Rs375,000, it is a bigger

amount, there has been an increase. Is there any particular reason for this increase and what will be the goods and services under this programme?

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Li Kwong Wing!

**Mr Li Kwong Wing:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. The budget for *Performance Audit*. We have seen in the *Major Achievement for 2013*, that only four performance audits have been completed. Given the importance of evaluating and assessing the performance of a lot of these statutory bodies and extra budgetary units, can the hon. Prime Minister inform us how many performance audits are being envisaged for 2014 and whether they are going to cover the state financed bodies?

**The Chairperson:** This is a question on policy. Next question!

(*Interruptions*)

**Mr Seeruttun:** Under the same issue, Mr Chairperson, four performance audits have been carried out in the year 2013. I would like to know whether reports have been submitted and what has been the outcome of that performance audit?

**The Chairperson:** No more questions!

**The Prime Minister:** First of all I can say besides the Public Accounts Committee, Government has decided to set up, in other words, an Independent Board of Enquiry with the powers to review matters raised in the report of the Director of Audit. Then, they will refer the findings to the Secretary of the Cabinet and Head of Civil Service so that he will go to the Public Service Commission. I need to remind hon. Members that the Director of Audit is independent. I can't go and tell her to do this and that. I answered the question regarding the four reports. This is what is going to happen to the reports. I don't think there were other questions that I have missed.

(*Interruptions*)

I don't get the question!

**Mr Seeruttun:** I am asking what were the four entities that were audited during the year 2013 or Ministries, whatever they were?

**The Prime Minister:** If you ask me such questions, I will tell you exactly what are the four reports.

**The Chairperson:** Page 29, there are two minutes left!

**Mr Uteem:** On page 29, under item 01 33 65. May I know from the hon. Prime Minister why has the number of Examiner of Accounts/Senior Examiner of Accounts been reduced?

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Under the same issue, how does the hon. Prime Minister reconcile this with the earlier statement that the number of auditors had to be increased due to the number of challenges facing the unit?

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Prime Minister!

**The Prime Minister:** The question is why we have increased the number of auditors and why we have decreased the number of Examiners. I suppose, it is because of what they decide in the service. There are some people who will get promotion so other people will be recruited. That is why other people will be recruited. That's what the issue is about.

**The Chairperson:** So, I put the question.

*National Audit Report - Programme Code 041: External Audit and Assurance Services (Rs133,859,000) was, on question put, agreed to*

*Public and Disciplined Forces Service Commissions - Programme Code 051: Public and Disciplined Forces Service Affairs was called.*

**The Chairperson:** Page 30, if you wish to put any question! With regard to page 30, no policy question is allowed!

**Mr Baloomoody:** Can I ask with regard to page 30, we have a list of *Major Achievements*, but how many officers are suspended?

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Till the hon. Prime Minister gets the answer, may I?

**The Chairperson:** Yes, put your question!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** On page 30, it is stated – *Major Achievements* – 339 case files prepared for the PBAT, this is not a policy question, it relates to Personal Emoluments for next year. I would wish to know what percentage this represents? How many decisions of the Public and Disciplined Forces Service Commission, what percentage of the decisions are being appealed before the PBAT, firstly. Secondly, over the past year 2013, how many appeals have been allowed against the Public and Disciplined Forces Service Commission? Under *Major Constraints – work schedule of scrutiny division has been reviewed* – I suppose again, this relates to expenditure for next year and the past year. May we know what has happened concretely and how has this work schedule been reviewed? My third question, at the bottom the page, Strategic Directions – Safeguard the impartiality of appointments and promotions in the Civil Service. I would like to know whether for next year, the Personal Emoluments, we are being asked to approve will include addressing the issue of bringing amendments to allow for appeals to PBAT as the Equal Opportunities Commission has requested?

**The Chairperson:** Well, I have to remind hon. Members that questions should not be based on policy matters and many questions are proper as PQ. We are examining item by item of expenditure, so we have to limit ourselves to the item with regard to expenditure. We are not going to indulge into questions relating to policies and questions that should be properly answered in PQ.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** I bow to your ruling, Mr Chairperson and I will be quite happy to take up the question on page 33 in relation to a specific item of expenditure.

**The Chairperson:** Yes, specific items, but relating to expenditure!

**Mrs Labelle:** We are..

**The Chairperson:** Which page?

**Mrs Labelle:** We are on programme 051, page 33!

**The Chairperson:** Exactly, page 33! Yes, you are right.

(*Interruptions*)

Yes, if you have an answer, it's okay!

**The Prime Minister:** Let me just say that you are quite right, Mr Chairperson, regarding policy decisions, questions can be put in Parliament. Let me say about the cases file at the PBAT - I think you asked me that question. By October 2013, there were 364 cases filed by aggrieved officers and which were dealt with by the Public Service Commission. I understand some 375 cases - from the 365 by the end of the year - my understanding is that the number would reach 375. As from January 2013, that is, from the beginning of the year none of the decisions of the PSC has been quashed by the PBAT. Actually, none has been quashed. There was a question about officers.

(*Interruptions*)

I can't give you the exact number. I understand the point that sometimes - I think you made the point - they are suspended for too long. That is something we have to look at. It will be part of the reorganisation of the Police that we are looking at the moment, because this is unacceptable as if they won a lottery. You get suspended, you don't have to go to work, and you still get paid.

**Mrs Labelle:** Mr Chairperson, I did not receive answer to my previous question regarding Goods and Services. I would like to put the same question under this programme Goods and Services, particularly there is a considerable increase from this year to next year. If we can have some details regarding these goods and services. Also, on the same page, Mr Chairperson, item 22120 – *Fees*. The fees relate to what, and to whom these fees will be paid?

**Mrs Ribot:** *Programme 051*, item 22070, can we have the name of the company responsible of the cleaning services?

**Mr Uteem:** Mr Chairperson, item 22040 - *Office Equipment and Furniture*. There has been a substantial increase from Rs500,000 to Rs3.5 m. May we know the reason and the details of this item?

**Mrs Navarre-Marie:** Mr Chairperson, same question for item 22040, under same programme; also item 22020 – *Fuel and Oil*, we are being asked to vote a sum of Rs240,000 for

next year, as well as item 22170 – *Travelling within the Republic*. I would like to know what is the difference between the items *fuel and oil* and the one named *travelling within the Republic*.

**Mr Seeruttun:** Mr Chairperson, on item 22030 – *Rent*, I can see that Rs450,000 have been earmarked for 2014, and nothing for the years onwards. May we know why there is nothing provided for the years 2015 and 2016, and to whom the rent is actually being paid?

**Mr Obeegadoo:** I want to go back to my earlier questions. I now raise them under *Personal Emoluments*, item 21110, on page 33. The personal emoluments are being increased from one year to the next, and I have tried to relate this to positions on the establishment at page 35. The only category where there is significant increase is Management Support Officers.

Now, going back to page 30, *Major Challenges*, we know that delivery of services needs to be faster, and we have now two major issues - the Prime Minister will agree - PBAT, which was not there, and the delay with which the Prime Minister himself has raised the issue concerning processing after you have exams in the Police Force and so on. So, my question is: we are asked to vote more money for 2014; what is being done to address those issues, either through increase in Management Support Officers or other additional expenditure?

**Mrs Labelle:** Mr Chairperson, under the same *Programme 051*. On the following page, we have item 22900 – *Other Goods and Services*. So, if the hon. Prime Minister could relate that to the goods and services, questions I put earlier. What are the goods and services? Some clarification, please. Thank you.

**The Chairperson:** It is item 22010 - *Cost of Utilities*, which is on page 33. This is linked to item 22900 at page 34.

**Mr Soodhun:** Under item 22070 – *Cleaning Services*, I would like to know whether this has been contracted out, and if yes, whether there has been tender procedure. I would like to know which contractor has obtained this contract.

**Mr Uteem:** Item 22170 - *Travelling within the Republic*. When we talk about *travelling within the Republic*, may I know whether that includes travelling to Rodrigues and Other Islands, and if so, how many trips have been carried out last year by the Public and Disciplined Forces Commission in the Outer Islands?

**Mr Nagalingum:** Page 34, Mr Chairperson, the last item, *Acquisition of IT Equipment*, the amount is more than Rs4 m.

**The Chairperson:** We are still on page 33.

**Mr Nagalingum:** It is the same programme on page 34! It is the same programme on the next page!

**The Chairperson:** Okay, carry on.

**Mr Nagalingum:** My question is whether there has been a tender for that item.

**Mr Baloomoody:** On the issue of *rent and office expenses*. We know one of the main constraints...

**Mr Baloomoody:** Yes, page 33 – *rent*, item 22030; if I may link it to the *cleaning services* under item 22070. We find that one of the main constraints is the problem of office space, and we see no provision for extra office space. Although there is no increase in office space, the sum for cleaning has increased by Rs200,000. May we know why?

**Mr Jhugroo:** Page 34, item 31112001 - *Construction of New Wing at P&DFSC*. Can I know whether tender procedures have been used before awarding the contract, and can we know who is the contractor who has been awarded this contract?

**Dr. Sorefan:** Under the same item *Construction of New Wing*, may we know from the hon. Prime Minister the cost of that new wing, and when is it scheduled to terminate?

**Mr Seeruttun:** Page 34, item 31 - *Acquisition of Non-Financial Assets*, and *Upgrading of Office Buildings*, I can see that Rs400,000 were earmarked in 2013, and Rs1 m. in 2014. May we know the status of that work and to whom the upgrading work is being paid, and whether this is a continuous upgrading work, which is going to carry on throughout 2016?

**The Chairperson:** Do you have a question?. Yes, one last question!

**Mr Gungah:** Page 34, item 31122! There is a sum of Rs4,176,000 estimated for 2014. May we know what will be the machinery and equipment?

**The Prime Minister:** I will start with page 33, Mr Chairperson. I will start with the *personal emoluments*. There is basic salary for 1,900 funded positions, then there are allowances for the Chairperson, two Deputy Chairpersons, four Commissioners for PSC, and four Commissioners for the Disciplined Forces. Then, there is extra assistance. There is also the usual cash in lieu of leave. I suppose what hon. Members want to know is the increase in provision, what are the reasons. First of all, it is the filling of the post of one Assistant Permanent Secretary and seven Management Support Officers. There is also the additional post of one Procurement and Supply Officer. Then, you have the same thing, the implementation of errors and omissions and anomalies, and the refund of cash of sick leave and the payment of increments. I must say that I have not understood the question of hon. Labelle on goods and services. She is saying that the amount is decreasing, while actually it is increasing. I did not quite catch it. Maybe she could clarify.

*(Interruptions)*

Anyway, let me go through it. I think there was a question on item 22020 *Fuel and Oil*. This is provision for two vehicles and one plant and equipment; it is a lawnmower, in fact. As for the rent, it is provision for the rental of the PSC sub-offices at Frédéric Bonnefin Street. The lesser is Mr Goburdhun. Although the construction period for the new building is from September 2013 to July of next year, the provision for rent has been made for the full year, just as a precautionary measure – because, you know, when you are building, there can be a bit more delay. If there is no delay, then, of course, this will be reduced. The monthly rent is Rs35,900 to Rs37,125. This naturally goes to the Valuation Department; they decide on whether it is value for money.

Office Equipment and Furniture. Maybe, I should answer the question on the Construction of New Wing first. The construction was awarded to Kistnen Enterprises; it was on 04 July. The contract value is Rs35,075,000, which is inclusive of VAT. The expected date of completion is July 2014. There was a tender exercise. Usually, there is a tender exercise on such things. About the office equipment, in fact, it is for that building. Additional office equipment and furniture will have to be purchased, precisely for that building.

There was a question about Cleaning Services. I see that many people are asking questions about the Cleaning Services, I don't know why. For the Cleaning Services, I can tell

you that the contractor is Mauriclean Ltd. and the amount is Rs15,059.25. A tender exercise was carried out.

There was another question on fees. You wanted to know why there is an increase. I suppose that's a relevant question. There was an increase because of fees to Chairperson and Members of the Boards and Committees, and revised fees payable as per the High-Powered Committee recommendations.

As for the travelling within the Republic, in fact, there are missions to the outer islands. As you rightly said, this is basically to Rodrigues for the conduct of examinations and interviews. I don't see any other islands here. Maybe, they will go later on, but so far, no.

You wanted to know about Other Goods and Services. This is for uniforms to the eligible staff. The service charges are for payment of registration fee, ISO certification and bank charges for impressed accounts. There is also the provision for expenses whenever the office actually organises some functions.

I already answered the question on the new wing. There is a question of what is the additional equipment for. I think, one hon. Member asked this question. This is for provision of a new unique server and associated equipment. There is also the upgrading of office building; it is to heighten the boundary wall for CCTV cameras.

**The Chairperson:** You are left with one minute. Yes, hon. Lesjongard!

**Mr Lesjongard:** Thank you, Chair! With regard to the Construction of the New Wing, I heard the hon. Prime Minister say the contract was awarded for a sum of Rs35 m. and we see in the estimates that for 2013 it is Rs31 m. and for 2014 it is Rs17.5 m., that is, an excess of Rs12.5 m. Can we have an indication about the excess of Rs12.5 m.? It is meant for what?

**The Prime Minister:** The total amount, as I explained, is Rs35,075,000, which is inclusive of VAT. There is an advanced payment that is made for them to start the work, which was Rs3,370,375. That was made in October of this year. A part payment of Rs7 m. will now be effected by 31 December of this year. Then, there was the remaining balance of Rs24,704 m. This will be done next year.

**The Chairperson:** Time is over!

*Programme Code 051: Public and Disciplined Forces Services Affairs (Rs89,550,000) was agreed to.*

*Ombudsman's Office - Programme Code 061: Ombudsman's Office was called.*

**The Chairperson:** Page 38!

**Mr Roopun:** On page 37, Chair, *Major Achievements for 2013*. I see that the number of cases has not been mentioned; we mention only percentages of cases. Since we are asked to vote Rs9.6 m., I would like to know what is, in fact, the number of cases where the intervention of the Ombudsperson has been solicited during the year 2013?

**The Chairperson:** I have to guide hon. Members that this is an independent institution. It is independent with regard to policy matters.

*(Interruptions)*

May I be allowed to finish? You may put question on expenses.

**Mr Roopun:** I wanted to know, because we are asked to vote Rs9.6 m.. How many cases have been referred to this office altogether? This is my question.

**The Chairperson:** Yes!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** On the very same issue, we are asked to vote the amount which my hon. friend has just mentioned for 2014 on the basis of 2013 Estimates. So, before agreeing to this budgetary allocation, I would like to know for the period 01 January 2013 to date, how many complaints were received? Of those complaints received how many have been addressed by the Office of the Ombudsman, and thirdly, how many have been resolved to the satisfaction of the Ombudsman's Office?

**The Chairperson:** Yes, any further question!

**Mr Seeruttun:** Again, on that item...

**The Chairperson:** Which page?

**Mr Seeruttun:** On page 38, we are asked to vote for Rs10,337,000 for 2014 while Rs9,639,500 for 2013 was earmarked. We can see that one of the problems encountered by the service of the Ombudsman's Office was that the authorities which had to submit information did

not submit comments within the prescribed deadline. May we know what are the authorities concerned that did not submit those comments within the prescribed deadline?

**The Chairperson:** I have still to repeat that the nature of the hon. Member's question should be best reserved for a PQ. I am here to guide the hon. Members. If you are prepared to listen to my guidance, then it will be good. We are concerned, I repeat, with the expenses.

*(Interruptions)*

Yes, any question!

*(Interruptions)*

Yes, the expenditure item! Do you have any question? Yes, hon. Obeegadoo!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** I refer to the overall expenditure.

**The Chairperson:** Which page?

**Mr Obeegadoo:** At page 38, where we have the total expenditure moving in 2013 from Rs9.6 m. to Rs10.3 m. for 2014. I would like, as a factual question, to know whether, by virtue of the coming into operation of the Equal Opportunities Commission and the PBAT, the number of cases being referred to the Ombudsman's Office has not diminished and why, therefore, we are being asked to vote more resources.

**Mr Ameer Meea:** At page 40, item 22030 *Rent*, may we know...

*(Interruptions)*

I said page 40.

**The Chairperson:** Which page?

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Page 40.

**The Chairperson:** We are on page 38. Yes, if the hon. Member wants to move to page 40, there is no problem.

**Mr Ameer Meea:** I asked you.

*(Interruptions)*

It is the same programme, can I?

**The Chairperson:** Yes, we are still at page 38.

**Mr Ameer Meea:** But there is no question!

**The Chairperson:** Let the hon. Prime Minister answer and then we will come to your question. Yes, hon. Prime Minister!

**The Prime Minister:** First of all, let me say on page 37, I believe percentages have been given, but not the number of cases, but I can give you the number of cases. To date - the question was as at to date - 305 cases have been received and the number of cases which have been investigated and finalised is 210.

The hon. Member asked the question, I think, on the number of times cases where the Ombudsperson's intervention has been solicited. I am told this is already in the report of the Ombudsman. Every year, they put that in the report. But I need to point out that the PBAT deals with the cases for the Civil Service, whereas the Ombudsperson deals with all the other types of cases. Perhaps that is the confusion.

Anyway, I did not quite understand the question of hon. Obeegadoo where he is saying the amount is actually diminishing, but it is actually increasing because there is more work and we are recruiting more people. Whenever they need people, they will recruit. Perhaps on the other pages, the hon. Member will get the clarification.

**The Chairperson:** Do you have any further question on this page?

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Yes. On the same page, the hon. Prime Minister did not quite understand my question. I was raising the issue since we are increasing budgetary allocation from 2013 to 2014, whether the coming into operation of the PBAT and the Equal Opportunities Commission has not impacted on the workload of the Ombudsman's Office and how this tallies with the increase in expenditure for next year.

**The Chairperson:** This is a proper question for a Parliamentary Question, hon. Member!

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Obeegadoo:** We have been asked to vote the expenditure, Sir.

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** This is the Ombudsman, an independent organisation. It is different!

(*Interruptions*)

I have given my opinion that this is a proper question for a Parliamentary Question!

(*Interruptions*)

But if the Prime Minister wants to answer, he may answer!

(*Interruptions*)

**The Prime Minister:** I think you are right, but if you want satisfaction, in Mauritius everybody complains, as you know. So the complaints are increasing.

**The Chairperson:** Page 39. Page 40, yes hon. Ameer Meea!

**Mr Ameer Meea:** On page 40 item 22030 - *Rent*, may we know to whom this rent is being paid, the surface area and also the owner's name?

**The Chairperson:** Under which item is the hon. Member talking?

**Mr Ameer Meea:** *Rent*.

**The Chairperson:** 22030? Right!

**Mrs Labelle:** On the same item 22030 - *Rent*, we see that there is a decrease between 2013 and 2014 amount, if we can have an explanation on that issue? Also, item 22100 – *Publications and Stationery*, it has been doubled. Is there any particular publication which is being scheduled for the coming year?

**Mr Jhugroo:** On page 40, Programme Code 061, item 22100– *Publications and Stationery*, can we know why the staff has doubled for next year?

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Well, shall I guide Members that there should be no repetition of questions!

(*Interruptions*)

**Mr Seeruttun:** Mr Chairperson, on page 40, item 22180 – *Overseas Travel*, earlier on the hon. Prime Minister stated that it is not clear how that expenditure is going to be made over the year. Do we understand that this amount is only a provision just made like that without proper planning on how many people are going to be trained, how many people will be going on mission?

**The Chairperson:** I do not know whether what I have been saying so far has been understood by some Members of the Opposition!

(*Interruptions*)

Yes, if the Prime Minister wishes to answer, he may answer!

(*Interruptions*)

**The Prime Minister:** I bow by your ruling, Mr Chairperson. Just to clarify for them.

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Silence!

**The Prime Minister:** It is all provisional if you want to know.

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** I do not want any disturbance!

**The Prime Minister:** It is all provisional depending on the...

(*Interruptions*)

It is provisional, but it follows the trend that they see and they think. It is provisional. That does not mean that necessarily it will be spent or maybe there will be a slight amount, but it is provisional.

As for the three questions on *Rent*, it is for the rental of the building at Baroda Bank and also for the rental of parking slots. It has been approved by the Valuation Office, but I think somebody asked what is the size of the building. I do not have the details of the size, but I can give it to you later.

For the *Publications and Stationery*, I know that it is probably misleading when they say publication and stationery, people think why has it been increased and what new magazines are they getting or whatever. But, in fact, this is for the purchase of toners for printers, photocopying and fax machines. They had to purchase new toners; it is not new magazines.

As for the *Overseas Travel*, again, it is for missions and training basically. But, as I said earlier, the capacity building training is different from the other training.

**The Chairperson:** Page 41. If there is no question, then I put the question.

*Ombudsman's Office - Programme Code 061: Ombudsman's Services (Rs10,337,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Electoral Supervisory Commission and Electoral Boundaries Commission - Programme Code 071: Supervision of Electoral Activities and Review of Electoral Boundaries was called.*

**Mr Bhagwan:** On page 42, Sir, since I am very much interested in elections...

(*Interruptions*)

On the item - *Supervision of Electoral Activities and Review of Electoral Boundaries*, we are being asked to vote Rs2.75 m., can we know from the hon. Prime Minister what is the fate of this Electoral Boundaries Commission Report? We have had a report and I think this Electoral Boundaries is long outstanding. Can we have an idea from the hon. Prime Minister about this Rs2.75 m. which we are being asked to vote? Are we going to have a new report, a new study for the delimitation of the boundaries of the different Constituencies?

**The Chairperson:** No, the question is not proper!

**Mr Bhagwan:** For this vote!

(*Interruptions*)

We are being asked to vote!

(*Interruptions*)

Why, Sir?

**The Chairperson:** In fact, you should have started at page 43!

**Mr Bhagwan:** 43 then!

**The Chairperson:** This is a summary!

**Mr Bhagwan:** So, I will take it on page 43 item 071.

**The Chairperson:** Yes, yes!

**Mr Bhagwan:** 071 – *Supervision of Electoral Activities...*

**The Chairperson:** Yes, you are perfectly right if you start as from page 43.

**Mr Bhagwan:** This is what I asked...

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** These are items of expenditure, if you want to hear the reason. Yes, you may start!

**Mr Bhagwan:** Rs2.645 m. give us the latest from the Prime Minister coming from the previous report which is in the drawer and the new report which is scheduled because our Constituencies are now outdated. Can the hon. Prime Minister inform the Committee and the nation what is the latest concerning - I am not asking about the electoral reform...

(*Interruptions*)

Electoral boundaries.

On the same page, I have another question, Sir, about *Legal Fees* under Programme 071 item 22120017. We are being asked to vote Rs2 m. for *Legal Fees*. So, can we know to whom these legal fees are being paid, on more missions?

**The Chairperson:** Page 43.

**Mr Bhagwan:** Under Item 22180 - *Overseas Travel*, an amount of Rs100,000 has been earmarked. I find this Rs100,000 much less, because we have a very competent Electoral Commissioner, whom we applaud, we put on record our appreciation for the work done and his staff. So, Rs100,000 appears to be ...

(*Interruptions*)

Can we ask the hon. Prime Minister...

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Please, some silence!

**Mr Bhagwan:** '*Ferme to la bouche, écouté do Aimée!*'

**The Chairperson:** May I have some silence, now!

**Mr Bhagwan:** '*Ale lacaz, ale dormi!*'

**The Chairperson:** Silence! Hon. Bhagwan, withdraw the words that you have just said.

**Mr Bhagwan:** I withdraw, but ask them to stay silent!

**The Chairperson:** Just listen to me! This is the Electoral Supervisory Commission, not the Electoral Commissioner.

**Mr Bhagwan:** They are doing a marvelous job. So, Rs100,000 also is less.

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Obeegadoo!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** If I may raise similar issues to my hon. colleague. Under item 21-*Compensation of Employees*, there is a drastic reduction in sums budgeted from 2013 to 2014. I would like some clarifications because the posts on the establishment remain the same and 2013 was not an electoral year. So, I would like some clarifications, the more so, as public expectation is that for next year, this infamous Electoral Boundaries Report might be submitted

anew to the Commission, I don't know. And secondly, the hot topic of electoral reform, will the Electoral Supervisory Commission be called upon? This is not a policy issue. I want to know how this tallies with the reduction in funding for the Commission in terms of staff.

**Mr Uteem:** Mr Chairperson, under items 22040 - *Office Equipment and Furniture* and 22050 - *Office Expenses*, may I know from the hon. Prime Minister whether this Electoral Supervisory Commission has an office? Where is that office? Is it paying any rent and, if not, why is it not being given a proper office and proper staff, because I notice also that there is no staff, no human resource, no Confidential Secretary, to help this Electoral Supervisory Commission?

**Mr Seeruttun:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Again under item 21110 - *Personal Emoluments*, the amount earmarked for 2014 is Rs1.6 m. compared to Rs3 m. for 2013. May we know why there has been a decrease in the amount earmarked for 2014 although the number of employees is the same? And also, under item 22010 - *Cost of Utilities*, there is an increase of nearly 50% of the amount earmarked for 2014, may we know why there is that increase and for what item they are?

**Mr Bhagwan:** May I come again on this page 43. Under item 22 - *Goods and Services*, an amount of Rs2.6 m. has been earmarked. Can I know from the hon. Prime Minister whether any further study has been forecasted concerning electronic voting, a new mode of voting? We have had some expenditure in the past. Can we know whether there is budgetary provision for this electronic voting because we will have anyway, a by-election for a Village Council in my Constituency very soon? The law is coming with an amendment. So, can we know whether the Electoral Commissioner's Office is working again on the procedures for electronic voting?

**The Prime Minister:** First of all, let me go one by one. I think at page 43. I will not go necessarily by the way they have asked the questions. I will go one by one. The *Personal Emoluments*, in fact, there is a decrease in the provision because the contract for the two Advisers has not been renewed. There is no need to renew them, so it has not been renewed, if need be...

*(Interruptions)*

Yes, the two Advisers who were working there. They have been working for a long time, but this year...

*(Interruptions)*

Very good officers, you are right. And you are saying good officers, you are praising them, but you did criticise the Electoral Commissioner, you remember?

*(Interruptions)*

Yes, here. You did.

*(Interruptions)*

There were a lot of criticisms against the...

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Alright! I want some order!

*(Interruptions)*

Silence! I say silence we are dealing with the Electoral Supervisory Commission, okay!

*(Interruptions)*

**The Prime Minister:** I had to stand here and defend the Electoral Commissioner.

*(Interruptions)*

I had to do it here.

*(Interruptions)*

So, you criticised, because I defended him. But, let me say, to come to the question, whatever it...

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** I say, silence! No interruptions! No more interruptions!

**The Prime Minister:** Anyway, since I am referring to the electronic voting, I understand even when the hon. Member was in Government, we were all for it, and then there were some questions raised. But, in fact, I have rechecked this; the Indian Electronic Voting System is the best system in the world. Many countries are actually adopting it. So, we will propose that we adopt it as well. I, in fact, informed ...

*(Interruptions)*

It's probably, good news because people won't be able to cheat, double voting, and all these will stop.

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Silence now!

*(Interruptions)*

Silence!

**The Prime Minister:** Do you want me to answer? I'll sit down!

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** I want some silence, now! Allow the hon. Prime Minister to answer!

**The Prime Minister:** If you allow me, if you say no, I will not continue, Mr Chairperson, but let me tell you, hon. Minister Ritoo and hon. Minister Faugoo are here. On the day of the counting, we went in the room, there was counting. Fortunately, I did Additional Maths. So, I was looking...

*(Interruptions)*

The last election, I was being cheated of 500 votes right in front of me. On the counting! I had to ask the Electoral Commissioner to come in and see. Counting against me, cheating after the vote...

*(Interruptions)*

So, they stole 500 votes, *500 votes pe coquin moi là’.*

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** All right, let’s come...

*(Interruptions)*

**The Prime Minister:** ...people don’t know all this, but I am telling you, still I came out first, but still they were cheating me of 500 votes, Mr Chairperson.

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Alright! Allow the hon. Prime Minister to continue!

**The Prime Minister:** Let me carry on. We must ensure...

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** I said enough now!

**The Prime Minister:** We must ensure that the votes are counted properly and this does not...

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Don’t interrupt, hon. Aimée! Hon. Aimée, don’t interrupt the hon. Prime Minister! Hon. Aimée, you have ears not to hear! Don’t interrupt the hon. Prime Minister. Hon. Lesjongard also! Yes, proceed!

**The Prime Minister:** Now, for the electronic voting machines, my understanding is that when the hon. Member was in Government in 2004, he had a demonstration, it was successful and I think Bharat Industries came and in the presence of Members apparently. Now, the whole issue again is being...

*(Interruptions)*

But I am all for it, to answer the question. About the office, the Electoral Supervisory Commission occupies part of the 9<sup>th</sup> floor of Max City Building. Now, the remaining part of that ninth floor is occupied by the Office of the Electoral Commissioner.

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** No interruptions!

**The Prime Minister:** Now, the Electoral Commissioner had a separate office and its own equipment. It meets its own expenses except for rent as the whole of the ninth floor...

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** No interruptions, I have said! Questions have been asked and I don't want any interruptions!

**The Prime Minister:** If they continue, I will just sit down. Don't worry. You continue, continue.

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** I would like to say that when the hon. Prime Minister is answering the questions, I expect some silence from some hon. Ministers. Have some respect for the Leader of the House! Yes, hon. Prime Minister!

**Mr Bhagwan:** Mr Chairperson, we are doing our job here according to the rules. Can I appeal to you to ask the hon. Members on the Government side, especially the hon. Ministers, to stay silent and pay respect to the hon. Prime Minister!

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** I have just done so. I have just said that, at least, when the hon. Prime Minister is answering questions, Ministers should listen. Right! It's over!

**The Prime Minister:** But, I don't know whether they are interested in my answers or not!

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** If you have answered...

**The Prime Minister:** If you want, then listen; if you don't want...

*(Interruptions)*

But, I have already answered.

**The Chairperson:** Well if the hon. Prime Minister has answered, he has answered. Page 44!

**Mr Baloomoody:** With regard to the office of the Electoral Supervisory Commission...

**The Chairperson:** Which page?

**Mr Baloomoody:** On page 44, *Office*. We understand that there is no office.

**The Chairperson:** Let us listen to the question!

**Mr Baloomoody:** As far as our information is concerned, there is no office for the Electoral Supervisory Commission. In fact, they squat in the office of the Electoral Commissioner Office. They don't have any staff. Does the hon. Prime Minister find it proper that such an important institution does not have an office and use the staff of the Electoral Commission to support his work?

**The Prime Minister:** The hon. Member seems to forget what was the situation before!

*(Interruptions)*

He was there, why didn't he change it?

*(Interruptions)*

If he is so concerned, why didn't he change it!

**The Chairperson:** Silence! Let us have the answer!

**The Prime Minister:** In fact, it is not quite correct what the hon. Member is saying. It is a separate office. It might be in the same building, but it is a separate office. For the staff, I have

no indication whether actually it is the same. They say they have their own expenses except for rent which is on the whole of the 9th floor. Therefore, they can have their own staff.

*Electoral Supervisory Commission and Electoral Boundaries Commission - Programme Code 071: Supervision of Electoral Activities and Review of Electoral Boundaries (Rs 4,250,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Electoral Commissioner's Office - Programme Code 081: Electoral Services was called.*

**The Chairperson:** Page 47!

**Mr Bhagwan:** On page 47, can I ask the hon. Prime Minister on item *Rent*

**The Chairperson:** Let me put the question before you proceed! Yes, hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** For the item 22030 *Rent*, Programme 081.

**The Chairperson:** Yes, okay hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** Can I ask the hon. Prime Minister whether it is envisaged to move the Electoral Commissioner's Office which is a very important institution especially - in terms of security and the region where it is situated *laissez beaucoup à désirer* - during the period of election? Can I know from the hon. Prime Minister whether it is envisaged - in this Rs10.4 m. - to move the office in a more secured area?

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Obeegadoo!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Page 47, item 22120 *Fees*. I would like some clarifications. Firstly there is a sub-item concerning registration of electors. I would like to know what the fees are. I presume those are people who do the door to door registration. Why is the sum being reduced although as we know we are getting very close to the next elections? Secondly, *Fees in connection with Election*, Rs185 m. in 2013, nothing in 2014; what are those fees and who are the beneficiaries?

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Jugnauth!

**Mr Jugnauth:** With regard to item 22120016 *Fees in connection with Elections*, I see that 2013 – I presume it is for the Village Council Elections and for the Municipal Elections.

Those were held in 2012. Why is it that this amount is now being deducted in 2013? We already have - even if it is an unforeseen event – a fund for contingencies. Why was it not included for 2012 during the year in which they were held? Why is it now that we are having it for 2013?

**The Chairperson:** The hon. Prime Minister may answer!

**The Prime Minister:** First of all, let me go to the question about *Fees*. There are lot of provisions here; for training, then you have the usual registration of electors, then they do house to house enquiry and also, with the registration of electors. Exactly as the hon. Jugnauth has said, the decrease in provision, there were Municipal and Village elections in 2012 and it is being paid now. The question was: why is it not from the contingencies? The reason was because nobody knew when I would call the elections.

(*Interruptions*)

By the time the elections were held, we were at the end of year. As you know it was in December. They prefer to do it that way. There was a question about fees. I think you said why there was no provision in 2014. It is because there is no election that I am predicting for 2014. There is no election! The elections will be in 2015. So, we have not put any money there. There is no need.

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Silence!

**The Prime Minister:** *To kapav réver!*

(*Interruptions*)

I am sorry! That is the reason why it is there.

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** I said no comments on policy matters!

**The Prime Minister:** I totally agree with hon. Bhagwan on what he said about the office for the Electoral Commissioner. I totally agree with him. In fact, my understanding is that a plot of land has been identified - I think that question was asked before also – in Réduit. Therefore, they are doing the procedures.

**The Chairperson:** We move to page 48! We have finished with page 47!

**Mrs Labelle:** Mr Chairperson, with due respect, we are still on programme 081. Are we?

**The Chairperson:** Yes.

**Mrs Labelle:** Under this programme, I would like to have a clarification regarding *Fees in connection with Elections*. Since for the Budget of 2012, we had Rs200 m. and now for 2013 it is Rs185 m. The hon. Prime Minister has mentioned that there was Municipal election and so on. What amount has been spent in total because I can see a forecast of Rs250 m. for 2015? So, I have some difficulties in tallying the figure for Municipal elections and Village Council elections with General elections. So, what amount has been spent in total because we had Rs200 m. for 2012 and there is an amount of Rs185 m. for 2013?

**Mrs Navarre-Marie:** On page 47, *Programme 081*, item 22120016 *Fees* in connection with Election. Following the logic of the hon. Prime Minister who said that the sum which has been voted in 2013 has been spent for elections 2012. For the same item, in 2015, the sum of Rs250 m. is being asked to vote. Are we to understand that the elections are to be held next year?

(*Interruptions*)

**The Prime Minister:** Let me clarify! The reason to clarify for this; why it is Rs185 m. because that is the amount that has been spent and has been paid and it will be paid now. It is not more than that. The other one, I thought I had explained since there is no election in 2014, there is no amount here. But obviously, we were having elections in 2015. So, we have put this here, but it will depend.

(*Interruptions*)

No, they will not! I can tell you they will not!

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** If you have no further questions, I put the vote!

*Electoral Commissioner's Office – Programme Code 081: Electoral Services (Rs 68,485,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

**The Chairperson:** This is a proper time to break! I suspend for one hour fifteen minutes.

*At 1.01 p.m. the sitting was suspended.*

*On resuming at 2.30 p.m. with Mr Speaker in the Chair.*

*Employment Relations Tribunal – Programme Code 091: Industrial and Employment Dispute Resolution was called.*

**The Chairperson:** We are at page 50.

**Mr Baloomoody:** Page 50, *Industrial and Employment Dispute Resolution*. The major constraint is that the number of industrial and employment disputes is on the rise. There has not been any increase in the personnel of that institution. May I know the reason why?

**The Chairperson:** Is it 'major achievements'?

**Mr Baloomoody:** Page 53, *Code 091. Industrial and Employment Dispute Resolution*.

**The Chairperson:** Yes, Code 091! This is the Code 091. Which item? Go a little down!

**Mr Baloomoody:** *Item 21 Compensation of Employees.*

**The Chairperson:** Item 21, that's correct. Yes, hon. Lesjongard!

**Mr Lesjongard:** Thank you, Chair. On page 53...

**The Chairperson:** Which item?

**Mr Lesjongard:** With regard to item 22030 *Rent*, we find that there is an amount of Rs5 m. Can we have an indication which building we are renting, because it comes to almost Rs500,000 per month?

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** Thank you, Chair. On item 22120 *Fees*, may I know from the hon. Prime Minister what do these fees relate to and why there has been an increase?

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Obeegadoo!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** On page 53, item 21*Compensation of Employees*. Being given that we are aware - if I may catch the attention of the hon. Prime Minister - that the president of the ERT does private work, disciplinary hearings within working hours on the premises of the ERT, I would like to know how this is being taken into consideration so that we, in this Assembly, are not voting a salary, whereas the working time is being used for private purposes? I want to raise the same issue as well, under item 22050 *Office Expenses*. Since this building we are renting is being used for private work, how is this being apportioned in respect of the monies that we are being asked to vote? Then, I will have a third question under item 22120 *fees*, there is a 50% increase in the expenditure budgeted on the fees...

**The Chairperson:** The question has already been put.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** So, if I may...

**The Chairperson:** You are repeating the question of hon. Baloomoody!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** I am emphasising the magnitude of the increase by 50% and I thank you, Chair...

**The Chairperson:** In a way, you are repeating! Is there any other question?

**The Prime Minister:** So, should I start in the order that they have asked the questions, Mr Chairperson? First of all, I think when the hon. Member said compensation of employees, he wanted to know about the personal emoluments. Now, the basic salary is for 22 funded positions, plus there is an allowance paid to the Confidential Secretary and to their Ag. Procurement & Supply Officer, and there are also judicial and legal allowances, plus the President and two vice-Presidents. Also, the same thing, Mr Chairperson, the cash in lieu of leave, and then you have the end-of-the year bonus. Now, the increase is due to two additional posts, one Shorthand Writer, one Confidential Secretary, refund of cash, as I said, payment of increments and the implementation of Errors and Omissions and Anomalies.

A question was asked about rent. It is again for the premises and the parking lots at Newton Tower which amounts to Rs403,502 monthly. A decrease in provision is due to the fact

that the payment of rent has remained unchanged upon renewal of contract from May 2013 for the next three years. A 50% increase in rent was provided for the year 2013, but the rent actually has not increased.

I think somebody asked about the office expenses. The increase is due to the postage expenses.

As for the fees, the provision is for fees to Chairperson and Members of the Boards and Committees and then there are fees for training. The increase in provision is due to the appointment of two new Members for their Employment Promotion and Protection Division and one additional for the Employment Relations Tribunal.

There was a question about working in the same premises and all these things. There is an advice; we did ask for an advice from the State Law Office. It appears that it would be in order for him to align the authority given to Mr Hossen to undertake private arbitration, the same as others have got. But, however, because of the nature of Mr Hossen's duties at the Employment Relations Tribunal and Employment Rights Tribunal, his office has been informed that any private works he undertakes should not involve any employment dispute or other matter which may be the subject matter of proceedings before any of the said Tribunals. No question was asked whether he can - I take it that where else would he be able to do these, because it is a matter of private work which he is doing related to the same as Judges. So, this is as it is now. Whether this will change – I think the president has asked again for advice for the Judges. So, we will see when that comes whether he will fall into the same category.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** The hon. Prime Minister will forgive me and I am grateful for his answer, so far. Just to have a straight answer: is the hon. Prime Minister telling the House that for year 2014, we, representatives of the people, are being asked to vote a Budget which will fund for private remunerated work undertaken by the president during office hours, using the staff of the Tribunal? Is this the case for 2014?

**The Prime Minister:** Until the matter is resolved from the new advice that the president has asked, this will stay as it is until we get the new advice which, I suppose, we will get very soon. He is not in the country at the moment, but when he comes back, I will take the matter with him.

**Mr Bhagwan:** I come back to my question again. Can I make a request to the Prime Minister that he is going to take the matter with the Chairperson of the Tribunal? There are so many cases which are pending and there have been so many representations made, not less than Mr Jack Bizlall, officially and publicly, that the Prime Minister could take this as a priority with the concerned authority so that this should stop immediately?

**The Prime Minister:** My information is that there have been up to - I think 23 November of this year - hundred cases and he has disposed of 73 cases, so far. I understand that he has increased the number of hearings as well. So, it is not as many, as people are saying, but I am sure he is looking into it obviously because he has increased the number of hearings.

**The Chairperson:** Page 54!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** One last question! Under either page 53 or 54, this is a general question which I will take under the overall vote for the programme. We are told in the strategic note that the number of industrial unemployment disputes is on the rise. Would the hon. Prime Minister give us some indication as to how the figures have evolved, say for 2012 and 2013 to date, which justifies the Budget we are being asked to approve next year?

**The Prime Minister:** Probably we have been told that it has been on the increase, and I am not surprised. We do not have the exact figures. If the hon. Member wants it in percentage, I can get it to him later on, if he'll ask me.

*Programme Code 091: Industrial and Employment Dispute Resolution (Rs22,725,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Local Government Service Commission - Programme Code 101: Local Government Human Resource Affairs was called.*

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Mr Chairperson, let me take it under the general vote on page 58, item 21 *Compensation of Employees*.

On page 58, first item - *Compensation of Employees* and I go back to the Strategic Note on page 55 which mentions PBAT cases. I would wish to have some indication before we approve this Budget of the percentage of decisions of the LGSC that are subjected to appeal, that become the subject of an appeal and the percentage of the decisions of the LGSC. That is the first question.

The second point, and I will now go on *Fees*...

**The Chairperson:** I am sorry to interrupt, could you identify the item number?

**The Obeegadoo:** The first question was *Compensation of Employees* on page 58, the first item Code 21.

**The Chairperson:** Thank you.

**The Obeegadoo:** I am asking the question whether this takes into account an increase in the workload because of PBAT appeals, and if so, what percentage of decisions are presently going on appeal and how many cases, how many decisions of the LGSC have been overturned, have been quashed by the PBAT during the years, let us say, 2012 and 2013? So, we have a clearer picture as to that.

The second question is, Mr Chairperson, on the item 22120 *Fees* at the bottom of page 58. The figures increased by Rs35,000 which is reasonable, but on page 55, it is stated that one of the *Major Constraints and Challenges* is that we “*need for adequate resources and officers of appropriate calibre at top management level*”. How are we ensuring that the Board members of this LGSC for which we are paying fees are of appropriate calibre at the top level?

My third question is at page 59 item 22180 – *Overseas travel*, I would be grateful for some explanation as to the overseas travel that is foreseen for LGSC staff.

Finally, last question, at the last item on page 59, *Acquisition of Software*. This is apparently a new item of expenditure and we know that the LGSC has been blamed for the delays at its registry. I would like to know whether this relates to processing of correspondence at the registry.

**Mrs Ribot:** Under item 22060, I would like to get some details about the maintenance for which more than Rs1 m. is earmarked every year.

**Mr Nagalingum:** On page 58, Mr Chairperson, on *Personal Emoluments*, does it cover salary for staff of Unified Local Government Service Board and, if I can have the answer of who is currently serving the Board, who is the Chairman of the Board and is there a clash of

overlapping of responsibilities between the Board and the Local Government Service Commission?

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Mr Chairperson, on the same item - *Personal Emoluments*, there has been an increase of almost Rs2 m. in the *Personal Emoluments* figure, whereas the number of funded positions, that is, the number of employees has remained the same. Can we know why such an increase?

**Mr Jhugroo:** On page 58, item 22120, can the hon. Prime Minister inform the House who are the members of the Board and what are their respective qualifications?

**The Chairperson:** Which item is it?

**Mr Jhugroo:** 22120.

**Mr Seeruttun:** On item 22040 – *Office Equipment and Furniture*, I see that for the year 2014, there has been a considerable increase in the amount earmarked compared to 2013 and I believe that is recurrent expenditure. May I know what they comprise of that expenditure relating to *Office Equipment and Furniture*?

**Mrs Labelle:** Mr Chairperson, I am on item 31132801, the last item on Programme ...

**The Chairperson:** Are you still on page 58?

**Mrs Labelle:** 59, the last item...

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Mrs Labelle, page 58?

**Mrs Labelle:** On page 59, it is the last item on the Programme 101.

**The Chairperson:** Yes.

**Mrs Labelle:** The *Acquisition of Software*, Mr Chairperson, I would like to know whether this software is being acquired to improve service and, if so, when I go to page 59, the *Average processing time of applications*, the target will be 20 instead of 21, that is, only one week. This has been the trend in the past. It is decreasing by one week. If we are acquiring new software, what will be the impact of the new software on the processing time?

**Mr Uteem:** On page 59, item *31112 – Non-Residential Buildings*, there is a budgeted amount of Rs3.5 m. for 2015 and Rs31 m. for 2016. May I know from the hon. Prime Minister where would that office building be located and whether any tender exercise has been launched for the construction of that building?

**The Chairperson:** But I have to draw the attention of the hon. Member that we are dealing with 2014!

**Mr Uteem:** But there is no provision for rent. That is why I want to know...

**The Chairperson:** Yes, you may put a question as to why there is no provision for 2014, but you cannot jump to 2015. Right! So, can you rephrase your question?

**Mr Uteem:** Thank you Mr Chairperson. I would like to know why there is no provision made for the construction of office building in 2014; provision is made for 2015 and 2016?

**Mr Seeruttun:** Mr Chairperson, on item *22120 – Fees*, on page 58, last line...

**The Chairperson:** Page 58 last item.

**Mr Seeruttun:** Last item *22120 – Fees*, Rs435,000 are earmarked for 2014 and I believe that is the fees paid to Board Members. Will the hon. Prime Minister confirm whether one of the Board Members is the daughter of the Minister of Local Authority?

**Mr Obeegadoo:** On page 60, Mr Chairperson.

**The Chairperson:** Yes.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** I refer to the general vote under this programme. 46 posts in 2013, 46 posts in 2014 and yet we are being told at page 55 that there are more and more cases being referred to the PBAT. So, I would like to know how it is proposed to handle this issue if there is no increase in the staff and maybe the Prime Minister could give us some clarification, I note there is one category which is called Management Support Officer, not just at the LGSC, but in all Departments. What is the position?

**The Chairperson:** If there are no more questions, the hon. Prime Minister will reply.

**The Prime Minister:** Let me start again in order, first of all the *Personal Emoluments*. Again, it is the salary for the 46 funded positions and the various allowances that go with it. Then, there is the provision for further refund of unutilised sick leave, as I said before and the end of the year bonus. But the increase is the revision in allowance to staff following the implementation of the PRB Report and the Errors, Omissions and Anomalies Committee. There is a refund for cash, as I said, in lieu of sick leave. Then there is the payment of increments.

I think there was a question on office equipment and furniture. They are replacing the IT equipment, Mr Chairperson, and that is the reason why you see the increase there.

As for the maintenance, it is the provision for the maintenance of the building, the plant and equipment, vehicles, IT equipment and the usual maintenance. In fact, the prices have been kept.

Now, as for the *Fees*, this is again provision for the Chairperson and members of the Board. Fees are payable as and when required. Services of Advisers are often retained with a view to assisting interviewing Board in respect of certain posts requiring professional or technical skills and also, there is the training of staff, the fees for examination and interview, and in fact, there have been more examinations than interviews. That is what is provided for, for the increase. Let me say, you wanted to know the members of the Board, the Chairperson is Mrs Aleear and then, you have Mrs Ballah, Mr Husnoo, Mrs Raymond and Mr Roodurmun.

Now, as to the number of cases, there were 46 cases as at to date. I don't have the figures - you were asking for the two previous years, but I have the figure for the year concerned. The number of cases as at date is 63 and 46 have been finalised, 20 have been set aside. The hon. Member wanted to know exactly the number of cases which has been quashed, quashed 11. There are 15 cases which were withdrawn by the applicants. And then, I think, you asked why no provision is made for the acquisition of Non-Residential Buildings. You know I said that in my speech, unfortunately, some hon. Members were not here. There are lots of things we want to do, but I suppose, you know there has been a world recession. You know what is the economy scene. We have to balance the Budget. We don't want to be irresponsible and we will do what we can do. We must have priorities. Now concerning this building, it is envisaged that no

provision has been made in 2014 because we will make the provision, we have decided, in 2015. I think basically these are the questions that you asked.

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Nagalingum!

**Mr Nagalingum:** My question was not members of the Local Government Service Commission. My question was the Unified Local Government Service Board. Who is the Secretary and who is the Chairman of the Board?

**The Prime Minister:** This does not fall under this item. That's why I think you don't see it there. It's for the...

*(Interruptions)*

Yes, under Local Government. That is why it is not there.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** I raised a question which I think may have been overlooked by the hon. Prime Minister. I noted on page 60 that the number of staff remains the same from one year to the next; 46 fully funded positions whereas at page 55, it is said that there is a need for adequate resources and officers of appropriate calibre at top management level which would suggest that the present situation is not satisfactory. So, how are we addressing this issue in voting the Budget for next year?

**Mr Baloomoody:** On the same issue, if we look at page 60, the post of Deputy Permanent Secretary has not been filled this year and there is no intention, it would seem, to fill this post.

**The Prime Minister:** It is for them to decide whether they want additional posts or not, but I must say, Mr Chairperson, that they are working more efficiently. There was a question asked about why we are doing all these, I think, software and all those things; this is precisely to get them to become more efficient. Efficiency is increasing and, therefore, we don't see the need for additional.

*Local Government Service Commission - Programme Code 101: Local Government Human Resource Affairs (Rs25,345,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Independent Broadcasting Authority - Programme Code 121: Supervision of Broadcasting was called.*

**Mr Bhagwan:** On page 62, Mr Chairperson. *Programme Code 121: Supervision of Broadcasting*, we are being asked to vote nearly Rs10 m. We have been informed, year in and year out, even on page 61, that there would be amendments to the law. The hon. Prime Minister himself has informed us on many occasions that there is urgent need to amend the law, can we have a timetable to know whether this has started?

Secondly, can the hon. Prime Minister inform us of the composition of the Board of the IBA, as it is now, the members and also the Complaints Committee; how many times the Complaints Committee has met and the fees paid to the members of the Complaints Committee, and whether he has been informed that the IBA has been given directives to act as a Gestapo against private radios? The IBA is issuing daily directives to the radio acting as a Gestapo. So, we are all for *la libération des ondes*, we agree that the radio cannot just transmit whatever is abnormal and can create problems, but at least there is need for the radios to operate.

Secondly, can the hon. Prime Minister inform the House - the institution itself is called Independent Broadcasting Authority, I think it is the fourth or fifth year that I am raising this issue about one famous member, Mr Dulthumun. I think the hon. Prime Minister can put him elsewhere, but not in this independent institution.

*(Interruptions)*

How can somebody like him be independent? So, we respect his right not to be independent, but this institution deals with broadcasting which has a wide range of responsibilities. So, can I, at least, once humbly make an appeal to the hon. Prime Minister to change, not even the person, the Board also and put some order and also, to ask this institution for which we are being asked to vote Rs10 m., to stop dealing like a Gestapo. And they are all acting like Gestapo, I am telling you.

**The Chairperson:** Well, I am sorry to say that hon. Bhagwan has not convinced me as to the expense aspect of the question!

*(Interruptions)*

Yes, but I have explained, hon. Bhagwan! Yes, hon. Baloomoody!

**Mr Baloomoody:** Mr Chairperson, concerning the Independent Broadcasting Authority, we have been given a Budget only with the grant that they receive. We don't have any detail whatsoever about how this money is being used. Who benefits from this sum of Rs9,100,000? How much is paid to these people who are supposed to act as independent people on that Board? Who are the members of the Board? What expenses do they incur? How do they operate? But, we are not in a position to ask these questions. So, we would like the hon. Prime Minister to enlighten us about this institution and to give us a breakdown of how this sum of Rs9,100,000 is being spent.

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Lesjongard!

**Mr Lesjongard:** Mr Chairperson, with regard to the Strategic Direction for 2014 and 2016 of the IBA, can we have an indication on the Budget regarding the Audio-Video logging system and a central storage system which they are planning to acquire?

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** Mr Chairperson, on page 63 - *S2: Monitoring of programme content*, we are provided with the number of programme hours monitored for radio. May we know the number of hours monitored for TV, especially in the light of the comments made on page 61 that insufficient monitoring over contents of public and private channels broadcasters?

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Jhugroo!

**Mr Jhugroo:** At page 64, Programme Code 121, under item *26 - Grants*, can I ask the hon. Prime Minister out of Rs9.1 m. for year 2013, how much has been paid to Mr Dulthumun?

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Obeegadoo!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** I have a general question. I will take it under the *Grants* at item 26313025. Now, this is the overall sum and my colleague, hon. Baloomoody, has requested a breakdown, and I want to link this to the first bullet on the major constraints on page 61 - Insufficient monitoring over contents of public and private channels broadcasters. And I will then take the hon. Prime Minister to page 63 where when I look at Service Standards S2; Service

Standards, that is, the performance indicators, relate to the *Number of programme hours monitored for (radio)*, but not television. So, let me ask the question directly to the hon. Prime Minister. If we are going to vote the Budget for 2014, I would like to know for 2013, how many notices have been issued by the IBA to private radios and how many notices have been issued to the MBC?

**The Chairperson:** Yes!

**Mr Bodha:** Mr Chairperson, still on page 62, on the Supervision of Broadcasting, we have a study which was carried out with the IBA and the ICT as regards the level of penetration of digital television. May I ask the hon. Prime Minister whether there is a report and what is the percentage of this penetration of digital television in Mauritius? There is also another issue regarding a workshop organised in 2013. May I ask how much was spent on this workshop and the theme was '*Mener un débat à la radio et recherches d'informations sur le web*'? May I ask the hon. Prime Minister whether we can have a list of journalists who attended this workshop and whether there are other training sessions which are envisaged for the Budget of 2014?

**The Chairperson:** The second part of the hon. Member's question is not admissible.

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. On page 64, there is only one item – *Current Grant*, Rs9 m. and relating to page 61, under *Major Constraints* whereby it is stated that the –

“IBA is not mandated to regulate internet and contents of many social platforms like facebook, twitter, web radio and Internet Protocol Television. It is proposed to have necessary amendments to the law”

Can I ask the hon. Prime Minister what type of amendments he is contemplating with IBA?

**The Chairperson:** No. The question is not proper. It has nothing to do with expenses! If there are no more questions, the Prime Minister may answer!

**The Prime Minister:** First of all, let me say at the very beginning, it has always been like this, I didn't change it. The Act itself, Mr Chairperson, clearly says that it is independent. It is not subject to the control of any person. Now, you want me to go and control the IBA as well!

*(Interruptions)*

I can't go and ask them why they are sending queries to that radio, whatever. I can't! I am not meant to do that. I will come to the other question. The hon. Member wanted to know how much he gets. He gets the same as every member; the same allowance, the same amount is paid to all the members.

*(Interruptions)*

Let me tell the hon. Member then! The Basic salary of Rs13,520. He gets travelling and all that.

*(Interruptions)*

The hon. Member doesn't seem to know that there is also the IBA Complaints Committee which is different. We have three, I think, if I am not mistaken. I will tell you. There is the Standards Committee. There are three of them. It is not just one. The hon. Member wanted to know about the estimated – I don't know who asked – digital penetration: it is about 70%. They have done a study, in fact, to check how much it is. I think there were other questions. I am sorry if I have missed something here.

*(Interruptions)*

Board members! You want to know all the Board members! If I am not mistaken, a question was asked in Parliament, but I will repeat it. The Chairperson is Mr Trilock Dwarka, then you have the members, the Secretary to the Cabinet, the Solicitor General, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Arts and Culture, one person who is experienced in media issues, one person with the planning activities, one with experience in other related activities and one with experience in entertainment. If you want the names I will give you: Mr Trilock Dwarka, the Chairperson; Mr Suresh Seebaluck is the Secretary to the Cabinet; Mr Dheerendra Dabee is the Solicitor General and the other members, Mr Bhugun, Mr Yousoof Mungroo, Mr Rajen Sunasy, Mr Somduth Dulthumun and Mr Gérard Telot.

**The Chairperson:** Yes.

**Mr Lesjongard:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. I think the hon. Prime Minister has missed my question. I had put a question with regard to the Budget earmarked for putting into place an audio video logging system and a central storage system.

**The Prime Minister:** In fact, that is precisely the problem because they can't do all the follow up, be it TV or radio. That is why they have to set up this automated audio video logging system and the central storage system which then they will be in a better position. But they are going through the procedure. We don't know yet. They have to do all the procedures.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Obeegadoo, it appears you have a question!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** There was a question of hon. Baloomoody asking for a breakdown of the grant that we are being asked to approve which has not been answered and I have a specific question since the mandate mentions public and private broadcasters, but the performance indicator relates only to radio. I asked how many notices have been issued by the IBA, for the year 2013, on the one hand to the private radios and on the other hand to the MBC.

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Ameer Meea!

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Thank you Chairperson. Coming back to the current grant, we have asked for a breakdown of the Rs9 m. budgeted. I understand, if the hon. Prime Minister doesn't have it, maybe he can table it.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bhagwan, do you have a question!

**Mr Bhagwan:** There is an ethics committee. Can we know from the hon. Prime Minister who chairs that committee and how much has been paid to the Chairman and members of the committee? And also, Mr Chairperson, who has been the legal adviser during the past year of the IBA? How much has been paid to the legal adviser and how much has been spent by the legal adviser for overseas mission? The hon. Prime Minister will be surprised.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Jugnauth!

**Mr Jugnauth:** With regard to the grant of Rs9.1 m., may we know how much has been spent on overseas mission for this year?

**The Chairperson:** Yes.

**The Prime Minister:** Perhaps I should have mentioned what I did not mention because the hon. Member talked about ethics and all those things. We all know that we are waiting for the report of Mr Geoffrey Robinson and the media. He asked stakeholders to give their views. I think he has put a date of 15 October for people to be able to reply. Some people have asked if they could have an extension. It was given. I know all the reactions have been communicated to him. He is looking at them and probably depending on what cases he will come early next year to finalise everything. This is why we want to see that it is done properly. I think you ask the question – the hon. Member used the word ‘dictatorial’ – about the radios because every day, I am afraid to say, the radios are broadcasting false news. He has to react.

*(Interruptions)*

MBC! you have the right to go and complain. There is a Complaints Committee where you must go and complain. As for the legal adviser, it is Mr Nawaz Dookhee and the hon. Member will be surprised to know that he has done no overseas mission at all.

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Uteem:** Following on what the hon. Prime Minister has just said, can I know from the hon. Prime Minister how many complaints has the IBA received relating to MBC/TV?

**Mr Soodhun:** Concerning the Strategic Directions, may I know from the hon. Prime Minister if there is any provision for the survey before new type of radio licences on thematic themes are granted?

**The Chairperson:** Mr Baloomoody!

**Mr Baloomoody:** The hon. Prime Minister mentioned that he has a copy of the breakdown in his possession. Can we have the breakdown, please?

**The Prime Minister:** Let me give the breakdown first. The personal emoluments are meant for fees to Chairperson - it is a long list - cost of utilities, maintenance, overseas mission - Rs2 m., rent, legal and professional fees, provision - it is a provision - for duty to be paid on a vehicle, staff for conference – I think Rs1,500,000. This is the Government grant for year 2014, excluding the PRB of 2013. This is basically the breakdown.

**Mr Ameer Meea:** If the hon. Prime Minister can table the figures, because we could not quite follow what he explained.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** I just wanted to remind the Prime Minister that I am awaiting the answer to the question concerning the number of notices issued to private radios and the number for the MBC?

**The Prime Minister:** That will be better answered by way of a PQ. I can give it; it's a long list. It is not detailed in number, unfortunately. But there have been notices. Not many from what I see. I thought, the way the hon. Member was asking the question, there were many. But, in fact, there are not many. I can tell for the MBC. The figures are not on a yearly basis, Mr Chairperson. They have the figure from 2005 to date. Radio 1, 1; Radio Plus, 3; Top FM, 1; MBC, 2.

**Mr Roopun:** Can I seek clarification from the hon. Prime Minister? If I heard him correctly, out of Rs9 m. for the whole budget, there is Rs2 m. nearly for overseas trip. This is what I understand? Could the hon. Prime Minister confirm and give us details about it?

**The Prime Minister:** I think the hon. Member asked me to table it. I will table the whole list.

**Mr Soodhun:** I repeat my question. Concerning the strategic direction, is there a provision for a survey before new types of radio licence on thematic themes are given?

**The Prime Minister:** What the hon. Member is referring to was announced in the Budget.

*(Interruptions)*

Survey! There was no survey done before it was given to the other three. So, why should we do a survey now?

**Mr Baloomoody:** The hon. Prime Minister is asking us to vote a budget for this institution, where 20% of it has been budgeted for overseas mission. May we know what specific mission? Why do they have to travel? 20% of the budget on overseas mission!

**The Prime Minister:** It is projected, Mr Chairperson. They have not actually spent that money. It is projected. Sometimes, they do have to go to missions, like everybody else. They have to follow all these new laws that are coming up. I can't say what mission, because they haven't gone to the missions yet.

**The Chairperson:** We are left with one minute.

**Mr Jugnauth:** I heard the hon. Prime Minister saying that it is projected. Therefore, I thought that my question was answered, but I was speaking about 2013. So, money has already been spent for overseas mission. May we know what amount has already been spent for this year, 2013?

**The Prime Minister:** I don't think I have the amount for 2013, because we are discussing the projected amount of 2014. In fact, it is not what the hon. Member is saying. One of the problems is that we are looking at the Rs9 m., but in fact, we must look at the Rs31 m. when taking the whole list. I have not tabled the list. Probably, that's why there is confusion. So, it makes 6%, not 20%. The Rs9 m. is the Government grant for the year 2014, which excludes the PRB report of 2013. Rs31,780,850 is the total amount if you minus the Rs9 m.

**Mr Baloomoody:** On a point of clarification. In this document, we have only the figure of Rs9,900,000. Now, the hon. Prime Minister is mentioning Rs31 m. for IBA!

**The Prime Minister:** Is the hon. Member talking of the Rs9 m. for the grants? But, there is other projection expenditure for the year 2014. Apart from the 9 m., there are other expenses. When the hon. Member asked about overseas mission, I said Rs2 m. The Rs2 m. falls under that Rs31 m. It is in detail, in fact, on the other pages. I will give the whole list; I will table the whole list. The hon. Member was asking me about the overseas mission of the IBA. They went, in fact, to five missions. They also receive fees. The fees, in fact, are around Rs20 m, and there have been five overseas missions. There was a conference in Asia, one in Malaysia, one in Australia on broadcasting, one in Johannesburg, and there were lectures at London City University about regulation, about what the regulator can do, and all this.

**The Chairperson:** Time is over! I say time is over since two minutes ago.

*Independent Broadcasting Authority – Programme Code 121: Supervision of Broadcasting (Rs9,900,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Independent Commission Against Corruption – Programme Code 131: Combating Corruption was called.*

**Mr Bhagwan:** Mr Chairperson, on page 68, *Combating Corruption*. Apart from the Rs143 m. for the new headquarters at Ébène, I am very much surprised – if the Prime Minister can explain to the nation - by the sum of Rs18 m. for motor vehicles.

**The Chairperson:** Under which item?

**Mr Bhagwan:** We are being asked to vote Rs18 m for *New ICAC Headquarters (Reduit)*, under item 26323026...

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bhagwan, I am sorry to interrupt you. Could you indicate the item so that we can follow?

**Mr Bhagwan:** The last item! Item 26323026 *Combating Corruption, Programme Code 131.*

**The Chairperson:** Alright. Thank you.

**Mr Bhagwan:** Apart from the Rs143 m. for the new building at Ébène, big building, we are being asked to vote Rs18 m. for motor vehicles. We are very much surprised. What type of vehicles? For whom? How many vehicles? I think there is something wrong somewhere.

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Seeruttun!

**Mr Seeruttun:** Again, on page 68, the grant amounts to Rs344,400,000. Can we know the total budget of the ICAC?

**Mr Ameer-Meea:** For the new ICAC Headquarters for 2014, there is a budget of Rs143 m. Last year also, there was an amount budgeted, and I can see that in 2015, there is also another amount. So, can I ask the hon. Prime Minister what is the total cost of this building?

**The Chairperson:** Hon Jugnauth!

**Mr Jugnauth:** With regard to the same item, *Compensation to Employees*, I see that the budget has increased quite a lot. So, may we know what it is for? I suppose it must be for remuneration. What criteria, and how it came about that this amount has been increased?

**The Chairperson:** This is item 26313026! Yes, hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** Mr Chairperson, under the same item 26313026, may we have a breakdown of what others mean, that is, the other compensation that is being paid to the employees of ICAC?

**Mr Baloomoody:** On the same item, Compensation of employees, may we have a breakdown as to the fees or salaries of the Director-General and the Board members, because here again, we don't have a breakdown of the expenses. May we also know how much is going to the legal and how much is going to other things?

**Mr Ameer Meea:** In relation to compensation of employees with regard to this amount, is there a monitoring system related to success fee to enquiry made by ICAC and paid to employees?

**Mr Obeegadoo:** At page 68, I will take the general item 26 - Grants. The hon. Prime Minister is surely aware that there is some questioning within public opinion of the cost-effectiveness of our spending on ICAC. Given that there have been many recommendations to bring changes to the law to make ICAC more effective, will the hon. Prime Minister kindly indicate why we are to vote yet another huge amount for ICAC, including a huge amount for a building, whereas there has been no changes, so far, to the law to make ICAC more effective? I will not refer to the Parliamentary Committee but, since time immemorial, that committee has been making recommendations.

**Mr Jhugroo:** On page 68, under item 26313026 *Compensation of Employees*. Can I know the names of the three Legal Advisers?

**The Chairperson:** If there are no more questions, then the Prime Minister may answer.

**The Prime Minister:** First of all, let me take them one by one. I see there are lots of questions about the grants. First of all, there is the personal emoluments which include the salaries of 174 funded position which comes to Rs142 m. You have the other staff costs, the utilities, rent, maintenance; there is also an item on International Corporation which they go to,

that is, only Rs1,200,000 m. Then, you have the Community Relations and Preventions; a sub-office in Rodrigues, office equipment and furniture, and IT.

As for the acquisition of motor vehicles, Mr Chairperson, it is in the contract that they have by the year whatever, so many years they have to change. So, they are all - including the Director, the members of the Board and the staff as well - renewing the vehicles because it is in the contract. I did not change the terms of the contract since I came in.

You wanted to know the salary of the Director. This is known by the Parliament. I thought somebody asked it about the Parliamentary Committee. I think you wanted to ask questions about the building itself. This was done, obviously, through a tender exercise. There were four bids and it was given to the lowest bidder for the sum of Rs248,167,598.40. There were four bidders. I will give you the names of the four bidders, if you want. The Ramloll Bhooshan Renovation & Building Ltd, Gamma Construction Ltd, Padco Ltd and Joint Venture Laxmanbhai and Ereco Construction Ltd. They did the tender exercise and it is Ramloll Bhooshan Renovation & Building Ltd which was awarded the contract as they were the lowest bidder.

*(Interruptions)*

You wanted me to go to the highest bidder? The works have already started and it appears, in fact, three weeks ahead of its schedule, which is rare in Mauritius, and they have their meetings.

You then asked the question about the Legal Division. ICAC has one Legal Adviser, it is Mr Kaushik Goburdhun and one Principal Legal Adviser, Miss Preesha Bissoonaauthsing; one Senior Attorney, Mr Mahmood Sultan Sohawon; one Senior Legal Advisor, Mr M. Roopchand – I don't know whether it is the same. There are four Legal Advisers, Mr H. Ponen, Mrs Pooja A. Callichurn, Mrs A. F. Subratty, Miss S. Mohung and Mrs C. Paupoo Nilamber, who was at the State Law Office before.

**Mr Bhagwan:** Can I know from the hon. Prime Minister whether he can inquire and let the House know whether in this contract for the building, they made provision for one dark cell and a persecution room - from what I've heard - and whether this is confirmed, a torture room?

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bhagwan!

**The Prime Minister:** I wish I could put a torture room in my Office! I tell you, do not listen to rumours, they are fabricated every day!

*(Interruptions)*

Well, you are asking, and I am telling you it is a rumour; it is false.

**Mr Ganoo:** The hon. Prime Minister does not seem to have answered the question put by my friend, hon. Obeegadoo, on item 26 *Grants*, wherein he took up the question of the amendments to be brought to the law to make the ICAC more effective. The ICAC Parliamentary Committee has, on several occasions, as far as we understand, recommended to the Prime Minister's Office the need to update the law, especially with regard to the definition section, the need to redefine the word 'assets' and review the declaration of assets by Parliamentarians and other important matters. Can we know from the Prime Minister where matters stand? Has the PMO decided upon the amendments to be brought to the PoCA?

**The Prime Minister:** I have asked to have lots of discussions and what would be the changes. They work with the State Law Office. It is quite, in fact, detailed. I understand the Bill would be ready. It should be ready - perhaps it is already ready - then we will have to bring it to Parliament, it is a question now of looking at the timetable.

*(Interruptions)*

It is already ready, from what I understand. So, we will have to bring it to Parliament.

*(Interruptions)*

Including the declaration of assets, yes!

**Mr Uteem:** The hon. Prime Minister did not answer my question on the breakdown of others for compensation.

*(Interruptions)*

Item 26313026!

**The Prime Minister:** I think there are no details here, because you have the compensation for the PRB Report, the Errors and Omissions. All these are included in this generally. I do not have extra details on whether there is something else here for the compensation – I am getting it now. I believe it is covering this. The problem is that by its very

nature, Mr Chairperson, the Prevention of Corruption Act itself says that it is independent. I do not want to go and start querying why they are taking this one and not that one. Basically, I let them do their work, but it is under the control and direction of nobody else, certainly not me.

*Programme Code 131: Combatting Corruption (Rs344,400,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Programme Code 141: National Human Rights Commission was called.*

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Baloomoody!

**Mr Baloomoody:** Again, this year, we are being asked to vote a provision of Rs18 m. for the Human Rights Commission. Unfortunately, we know that the Human Rights Commission has not been very active recently. We have just voted an amendment to the law, where we were supposed to have three Divisions of the Commission. May I know from the hon. Prime Minister whether the members of these Divisions have been appointed and, if not, why not, because we have to vote the budget?

**Mrs Ribot:** Mr Chairperson, I am referring to item 26313060 on page 74, the *Current Grant – National Human Rights Commission* and there is the item – *Others* which is increasing from Rs6,700,000 to Rs10 m. next year. We would like to get some clarifications on that issue.

**Mr Uteem:** May I know from the hon. Prime Minister the number of complaints which the Human Rights Commission has received under each of the three Divisions that have been set up?

**Mr Obeegadoo:** I will refer to the general item – *Compensation to Employees* on page 74 and ask the Prime Minister to consider page 71. 900 complaint cases received from the CIB have supposedly been examined and are being investigated. Could I ask the Prime Minister, considering the number of employees at page 75 and especially the fact that there is no Barrister-at-Law, Senior Investigator or Investigator to be recruited, how is it proposed within the money that we are asked to approve, how will the Commission investigate 900 or so complaints? Is the Prime Minister aware that right now statements are being taken by persons who have a lot of goodwill but no training for that job and that identification parades are still being done by the Police and taking even more time than when the CIB was there?

**The Prime Minister:** First of all, let me say that, in fact, I said in Parliament why we are having these three Divisions. I explained all those things. The problem has been that we wanted to make sure, first of all, that we could get the law, which has been passed, which has been proclaimed. The big problem we have was to try to find people to accept to take the job. But, in fact, I can tell the House now that we expect the three Divisions will be constituted by the end of this year. There are only a couple of things that we have to clarify.

The hon. Member was asking about the current grant and the compensation to employees. Again, the provision is for the administrative and running expenses of the Commission and you have the personal emoluments, fees to Members, other staff costs. Then we have the usual things like the utilities, maintenance. They have two vehicles, the rent, office equipment and we have some incidentals on IT and all these things. That is why it comes up to that.

The other point that was raised by hon. Obeegadoo is that we have too many...

*(Interruptions)*

You said we have too many cases referred to and that we should have more staff!

*(Interruptions)*

The problem is where do we get the money. I pray and I will get the money!

*(Interruptions)*

We have to decide on priorities.

*(Interruptions)*

I remind you there was no National Human Rights Commission at all until I came to power and I passed the Bill the first time!

*(Interruptions)*

But we have to do according to our means.

*(Interruptions)*

There is a recession in Europe. I think the hon. Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Finance explained, we cannot do everything even in America they cannot do everything. So, why do you expect us...

*(Interruptions)*

No, but then we have to stop having other things if we want to do it. We stop hospitals, we stop building houses. It is a question of priorities. There are people there. When we are able, we have just paid the PRB for Rs6 billion, we have to find that money to pay that PRB. So, we will do what we can do.

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Mr Chairperson...

**The Chairperson:** I have to decide who to give the...

**Mr Obeegadoo:** I am sorry?

**The Chairperson:** It is okay! It is okay!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Does the Prime Minister know that we have abolished the CIB. The Complaints Investigation Bureau of the Police no longer is. There is no staff; all the staff has been redeployed, all the files have been sent to the National Human Rights Commission. At the very least, we must provide funds for that Commission to do its job! If you look at the staff on page 75, you have the Permanent Secretaries and so on, that is, general administrative cadre of the Civil Service and then you have the Shorthand Writers and Attendants and Word Processing Operators. So, my question is very simple: since this is a very important institution, we all agree on that, where are the funds and where is the staff to take over the job of the CIB and deliver?

**Mr Uteem:** On page 75, there are 20 posts for 2013 and 32 posts budgeted for 2014. May I know from the hon. Prime Minister how many of these posts as at today are vacant?

**Mr Baloomoody:** If I may carry on from where my friend hon. Obeegadoo has left. In fact, there is no Police Complaint Bureau now. The Human Rights Commission has itself in its Annual Report complained many times that it does not have proper staffing. When all these

Police complaints will go to the Human Rights Commission, can I know from the hon. Prime Minister when do we intend to budget for a Barrister-at-law, for a Senior Investigator, for an Investigator because no money has been put aside for these people? We need that professional middle management to manage that institution.

**Dr. S. Boolell:** Mr Chairperson, may I ask the hon. Prime Minister whether there are funds earmarked to cover the expenses of witnesses who come to depone in front of the Human Rights Commission because apparently the independent witnesses are expected to pay out of their own pockets.

**Mrs Labelle:** I would like to ask some clarification regarding the staffing because from what we read here, all the officers who are serving administrative, are on secondment from other Ministries. When can the country expect to have a proper staffing of its own for this Commission together with the technical persons needed? Even now, we do not have the personnel. They are on secondment from other Ministries.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Mr Chairperson, at the bottom of page 71, I read under *Protection and Promotion of Human Rights, Catering for cases relating to reviews of Criminal Convictions under the Criminal Appeal (Amendment) Act 2013*, which we have just voted. I would like the Prime Minister to indicate what funds are being allocated to that specific purpose and what technical staff there will be to ensure that the objects of the legislation, as desired by Government, will be followed upon because I cannot see any indication from what is being budgeted.

Maybe one other question, if I may, on page 73, there are again the performance indicators. The second performance indicator very strangely refers to percentage of requests acknowledged within five working days. Surely, the business of this Commission is not to acknowledge requests! May I make a suggestion that if we are to approve the Budget today, that this be amended so that the performance indicator does not relate to acknowledgement of requests, but rather to a time frame for enquiry and disposal of cases?

**The Prime Minister:** Let me start by saying, Mr Chairperson, this is a problem that we had actually envisaged when we passed the Act. We knew this was going to happen and that is why at the beginning we allowed it to go because we knew there was going to be a practical

problem. How are they going to investigate? The people who are trained to investigate are from the CID. They are the only people trained at the moment who can go and investigate. We will have to go and start a whole new training for people who have never done Police work or whatever. That was one of the problems and there were several complaints. In a country like UK, they have a lot of resources. We do not have the resources here, of the people who are trained to investigate. That is why it is being felt that it will have to be, in fact, the people from the CID who will do it.

The hon. Member asked me a question about the percentage. If you see for the cases themselves, they have been increased and that is precisely why there has been an increase. We have increased it from Rs10 m. to Rs18 m. I think it has been increased.

As for the percentage, maybe they should not have put it, they were trying to be more transparent and they put it. But, in fact, if you look afterwards you will see the number of cases that have been resolved. But, it is all a question of having the time to investigate and there are no people available at the moment, except from the Police, to investigate. That is what the situation is.

**Mr Uteem:** Mr Chairperson, the hon. Prime Minister has not answered to the main query of each hon. Member on this side of the House which is: when will the vacancy be filled and when will Government put money so that the Human Rights Committee can run professionally and efficiently in enquiring about complaints against the Police and also, to reopen enquiry for those who claim they are innocent?

**The Prime Minister:** You didn't listen obviously, because I said the money has been increased from Rs10 m. to Rs18 m. and I also referred to the difficulties, we had to find people who want to work there, but this is being regulated. I also said by the end of the year, it will be filled. I did say that.

**The Chairperson:** Yes, at the very beginning.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Mr Chairperson, the hon. Prime Minister must have overlooked a point I raised. It was the wish of the hon. Prime Minister that this institution should cater for review of

criminal convictions under the new legislation. So, may we know for 2014 what resources - moneywise and human wise - are being allotted to this very important task?

Secondly, I had made a suggestion and I would wish to have the views of the hon. Prime Minister. If we are to vote this Budget, will the hon. Prime Minister agree that the performance indicators should be altered so that they are performance-related in terms of investigation and disposal of cases rather than administrative acknowledgement of receipts of letters?

**The Prime Minister:** I say again, Mr Chairperson, look at the line afterwards, the hon. Member is sticking himself to this acknowledgement. It almost gives the percentage of the case and this is quite high if you look at it. We are planning it to be higher. It's as good as it can be, but, I think, the other question was about the review. Well, let's not forget, I brought the law myself. That was my intention. But let's not forget, there is also the Supreme Court, the avenue is still available. It is not as if people have no avenue, but we have to find people to fill the job. Basically, it's about to be filled, I know, by the end of December, it should be filled.

*National Human Rights Commission - Programme Code 141: Protection and Promotion of Human Rights (Rs18,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Ombudsperson For Children's Office - Programme Code 151: Protection and Promotion of Children's Rights and Interests was called.*

**Mrs Ribot:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. On page 79, Programme Code 151, under item 21 and 21110 - *Compensation of Employees and Personal Emoluments*, in both cases there is a decrease and we would like to get a justification of that decrease?

**Mrs Labelle:** On the same issue, particularly, Mr Chairperson, when we are being told on page 76, under the major constraints there is an increasing number of cases in child abuse/child neglect and so on, and with this increased number of cases, we see that the Budget has decreased. So, how are we going to cater for the needs, actually, when we are decreasing the Budget on *Personal Emoluments*?

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Ganoo!

**Mr Ganoo:** Mr Chairperson, at page 80, with regard to human resources, I take the same point that has just been made by hon. Mrs Labelle. When we look in terms of staffing also, the number in post by December 2013 is 13 and this figure stays the same, especially, in view of the fact that the Ministry itself, in the strategic note, as has just been remarked by my hon. friend, the increasing number of cases in child abuse and child neglect. So, can the hon. Prime Minister agree that the staffing has been the same, there has been no change, no increase and does he not think that this is a wrong option?

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Baloomoody!

**Mr Baloomoody:** If I may join the voices of those who are concerned about the decrease in the Budget of this institution, because not only there is increasing number of cases in child abuse and child neglect and there is a difficulty to convince stakeholders to invest in prevention and to engage in rehabilitation. They are crying. They say we need money, there is an increased number. Can I ask the hon. Prime Minister why is it that we have not, at least, listened to that cry from that institution to invest more in the interests of our children?

**The Chairperson:** If there are no more questions, the hon. Prime Minister may answer.

**The Prime Minister:** Basically, Mr Chairperson, let me go through the *Personal Emoluments* first. There are 13 funded positions there, plus they get *ad hoc* allowances, plus there is the cash in lieu of leave. Now, there is the - normal as it is – end-of-year bonus and then, we have the payment for the allowances - I don't need to go into the details - under the Service to Mauritius Programme. One of the reasons why there is a decrease in provision is that there was a Word Processing Operator who was there, but they wanted to have appointed, from what I understand, a Confidential Secretary. So, that post is now not going to be filled because that person can do it, from what I understand.

Now, whether they have asked for more, I don't see evidence that they have asked for more money. But, as I have said, the number of cases is increasing, we agree with that. Everywhere the number of cases is increasing, but if they do ask later on, we will be able to do it. Sometimes, I must tell hon. Members, when we see, for example - I see whether there is an example here; well, in that case, it seems there is not - sometimes you see the post is unfilled, it does not mean it's going to stay unfilled, but there are the procedures that are going on and if it's

terminated, it would be filled, but we don't want to put it there because it is still unfilled at the moment. But, I take the point that they want more, but this is an important, it's a different situation. But, in fact, everywhere they want an increase but the Minister of Finance and Economic Development has to find the funds to be able to do it. But, from what I also understand that they are looking into this. I think I was told that it's not here at the moment, but there will be provision, if need be, to increase it, but not to the extent perhaps that they want.

**Mrs Labelle:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Mr Chairperson, if I heard the hon. Prime Minister rightly, he seems to justify the decrease in *Personal Emoluments* by the fact that a Word Processing Operator will no longer be in post next year, but this position has been replaced by Secretary to the Ombudsperson's Office. So, I have some difficulties to understand that this is the reason why there is a decrease, because one position has been cancelled and another position has replaced it and maybe this position is more expensive than the position of Word Processing Operator. Also, Mr Chairperson, regarding the staffing, as we can notice, there is no technical person, it is merely administrative. And this is where we think that the work of the Ombudsperson is very difficult to go with the mission of the Ombudsperson's Office.

**The Chairperson:** Yes, you have a question, hon. Seeruttun!

**Mr Seeruttun:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. On page 79, under item 22030 - *Rent*, here again, we find a decrease in the amount earmarked for 2014 compared to 2013. Do we take it that they have moved to a new premise which explains the reduction in the rent or some other arrangements made to get the rent down?

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Ganoo!

**Mr Ganoo:** Mr Chairperson, I insist on the point I just made and wish to make my point in another way now. I come back to page 80 about *Inputs - Human Resources*. I come to the same code, *Investigator - 08 49 75*; we remember, Mr Chairperson, how in her last Report, the Ombudsperson for Children's Office underlined very strongly the role of these investigators. In fact, they visited different shelters and they discovered and unearthed many problems. They made comments on the situation in these shelters. So, the point I am making is that the number of investigators has stayed the same and we know of the increase in cases of abuse and neglect of

children. The investigator being a crucial position in the arsenal which is available at the Ombudsperson Office, how is it that the number of investigators has not been increased?

**The Chairperson:** Yes!

**The Prime Minister:** First of all let me correct – I am sure the hon. Member is aware – that the Commission is actually presided by, in fact, by former Supreme Court Judge, Mrs Narainen. Somebody said there was nobody there. She is presiding there. As I explained for the investigators and all this, we will have to go through the process unfortunately. That's the process. I can't just go and name people there. They are going through the process from what I understand. As for the question that hon. Mrs Labelle asked as to why is it if you have changed the one to the other. In fact, that person was already there from what I understand, that is why and he has been doing the job. I think that is why they have done this. This is the reason why there is a decrease in the provision. As I explained earlier on, Mr Chairperson, if there will be need, of course, we will give. At the moment that is the situation.

*Ombudsperson for Children's Office – Programme Code 151: Protection and Promotion of Children's Rights and Interests (Rs10,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions – Programme Code 161: Criminal Advisory and Litigation was called.*

**Mr Baloomoody:** On the Office of the DPP, if I may take it on page 84, the *Piracy Unit*. May I know from the hon. Prime Minister how many persons we have in that Piracy Unit and how much does it cost us, now that we have pirates in Mauritius? How much does it cost us, firstly, per day to stay in Mauritius and the costs of the hearing? I understand that they are all being defended by *forma pauperis* lawyers who have been appointed form office and they receive – cases that are taking many days – Rs800 per case. May I know how much does it cost us to have these pirates in Mauritius to be tried?

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Obeegadoo!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** I refer to page 81, *Major Constraints – Need to improve effectiveness of Criminal Registry* and if the Chairperson so wishes, I can relate this to items of Office Equipment and Furniture and Office Expenses on page 85, if need be. My point is: since there have been many representations from the Bar to the effect that the Criminal Registry is not effective in terms of providing briefs so that counsels can do justice to their cases of giving

proper service to litigants, to accused parties before courts, I would like to know whether this point has been taken into account having regard to next year's Budget to make the Criminal Registry of the DPP's Office more responsive to the requirements of court cases and the Bar's representations in particular.

My second, Mr Chairperson, relates to the very same point: pirates. On page 84, sub programme 16101: Piracy Unit; there is a performance indicator which refers to the percentage of cases of suspected pirates referred to court within three months. Now, the hon. Prime Minister is surely aware of the havoc caused by these prosecuted pirates before the Intermediate Court claiming that trials were not being taken in good time and that their rights to an early and fair trial was not being responded to. So, I would like to know since our target for next year is 100% of cases within three months, how is it on the basis of the Budget we are voting, again in the terms of equipment or human resources, do we propose to go from a situation that is patently unsatisfactory to 100% success next year?

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Soodhun!

**Mr Soodhun:** On page 85, item 22090, concerning the Security. I would like to know from the hon. Prime Minister which contractor has been allocated this contract of the security?

**The Chairperson:** Page 85, last item!

**Mr Soodhun:** Can I ask another question?

**The Chairperson:** Yes!

**Mr Soodhun:** Concerning the rent, item 22030, here we see that there is a decrease of Rs200,000 and I would like to know whether there is a change of the building or it is the same building?

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Baloomoody!

**Mr Baloomoody:** Mr Chairperson, I refer to the sub *Programme 16103: Assistance to Victims and Witnesses of Crime*. So, we are supposed to reach a target of 70% at page 84 and if I refer the hon. Prime Minister to the personnel list at page 89. We see that in this subsection there is no Senior State Attorney and no provision is made for one, no Senior State counsel, no State Counsel and there is only Management Support Officer. I am sure the hon. Prime Minister will agree with me that with these two people, we will never reach the 70% target with regard to assistance to victims and witnesses of crime. Can I ask the hon. Prime Minister why is it that we are not providing for these posts?

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** On page 86, under item 22120 Fees, may we have a breakdown to whom the Rs7.2 m. has been paid? On page 87, sub programme 16103: Assistance to Victims and Witnesses of Crime, may I know from the hon. Prime Minister the number of persons who have in 2013 benefitted from Protection of Witness Programme?

**The Prime Minister:** Can you give me the two items?

**Mr Uteem:** Item 2120 Fees at page 86. The second was on page 87, *Assistance to Victims and Witnesses of Crime*. I wanted to know the number of victims and the number of people who have benefitted from this protection programme.

**Mr Jhugroo:** On page 85, *item 21111 Other Staff Costs*. Can the hon. Prime Minister explain to the House why there is an increase from Rs6.4 m. to Rs 8.3? Second item 22060 *Maintenance*, there is a provision of Rs560 m. for next year. Can we know for what maintenance?

**The Chairperson:** Maintenance is 22060 and Staff cost is 21111. Yes hon. Jugnauth!

**Mr Jugnauth:** At page 81, *Major Constraints and Challenges*, I see that there is a need to improve the effectiveness of Asset Recovery. But, with regard to the vote at page 86, *Programme Code 16102 - Asset Recovery*, I see that the budget has decreased quite a lot, from Rs17m. nearly to Rs9.2 m. It seems that there is a contradiction. So, if the Prime Minister can explain.

**Mrs Dookun-Lutchoomun:** Page 86, *Programme 16102*, item 22030 - *rent*. May I ask the Prime Minister why the amount estimated for rent is of Rs2,700,000 for the year 2013, and nothing is being planned for the years 2014,2015 and 2016?

**Mr Ganoo:** Mr Chairperson, under Strategic Note of Department, eighth bullet - Signature of a MoU with a Prosecutor General of the Russian Federation. May I ask the hon. Prime Minister to provide the House with the details of that MoU, and to elaborate what is the reason for our country to sign this MoU with the Prosecutor General of the Russian Federation? Is it connected in any way with the 'Pussy Riot' in Russia?

Secondly, on the same page, *Major Constraints and Challenges and how they are being addressed - Need for specialist knowledge and staffing of the newly set up units to deal with the white-collar frauds*. The Budget announced, Mr Chairperson, the criminalisation of the Ponzi

scheme. Can we know from the Prime Minister when will this amendment be brought to our law? Will it be to the Criminal Code, or to the POCA? Can you provide the House with details about when this law will come before the House, that is, when will the criminalisation of the Ponzi scheme be proposed to the House?

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Member, your first question is a matter of policy. The second one is a proper question for a PQ. If the hon. Prime Minister wishes to answer, no problem. Yes, hon. Jhugroo.

**Mr Jhugroo:** Page 85, item 22090 - *Security*. Can I ask the hon. Prime Minister why there has been an increase of nearly 50%, whether there has been a tender exercise, and to whom this contract has been granted?

**Mr Baloomoody:** With regard to page 86, Code 26 - *Grants*, but specifically item 2610104 - *Contribution to the International Criminal Court*, can I know from the hon. Prime Minister - we have been asked to vote a contribution to that Court - whether we will continue to be a member of that Court, in view of the stand taken by Mauritius at the Heads of State Summit in Addis Ababa?

**The Chairperson:** Again, this is a matter of policy. But, anyway, I leave it to the discretion of the hon. Prime Minister. Hon. Ameer Meea!

**Mr Ameer-Meea:** On page 85, last item, 31133 - *Furnitures, Fixtures & Fittings*. There was an amount of Rs10 m. last year, and again Rs10 m. this year. May we have the detailed breakdown of it? May I ask the hon. Prime Minister whether it is a major refurbishment, or is it for new offices?

**The Chairperson:** If there are no more questions, the hon. Prime Minister may answer.

**The Prime Minister:** They have asked questions for 12 minutes. So, I will have eight minutes to answer. They are asking too many things; they are repeating the questions. I am fine with it. There is no problem. Let me start by going one by one.

Let me just mention that thing about piracy. We have signed a Memorandum of Understanding, as you probably know. We are getting training and financial assistance as well.

Actually, there are 15 pirates. I think two of them have complained, but I understand that the complaint is not valid. This is what I have been made to understand. This is something that we decided, but at the same time, hon. Ganoo asked why we signed the MoU with the Russian Federation. The answer is very simple. We need to be able to have this cooperation in the area of extradition; and the legislation of our two countries, we need to be able to do. I am not saying this about a particular country, but there are cases - I think the hon. Member himself has asked questions about the possibility of trying to money laundering and all these things. I don't want to go into the details, but we need this cooperation with Russia, and they agreed. That is the only reason. Nothing to do with what the hon. Member thought.

Let me go to assistance to victims, for example. The staff, in the sub-programme, in the Asset Recovery is actually working with the Unit for the assistance of victims. There are Senior State Attorneys and State Counsels already posted at the DPP, and they are providing the assistance to the victims of crime, as and when required. But, the new posts are going to be filled. They have not been put here, because they have not been filled yet. But, during the course of next year, we expect it to be filled.

The hon. Member asked also about rent. There is, in fact, a decrease in the provision, as there will be no need for rental for parking slots.

As for the Security Services, it was through a tender again. There have been additional floors that have been added. So, we need additional security services. The contract for security services during office hours, for access control has been awarded to Mauriguard Ltd. As I explained, the increase in provision for this new contract is because of the additional floors.

There was a question on the *personal emoluments*. There are 124 funded positions, Mr Chairperson, and they have the same thing; cash in lieu of leave, the end-of-the year bonus. There is also something that perhaps is not clear. There are 18 interns who are actually under the Service to Mauritius Programme to assist law officers with research and all that. There is a case preparation and salary for one Public Relations Press Officer. I think it is not mentioned there. That is why perhaps it appears like this. There are certain vacant posts, which are hopefully going to be filled. There is also going to be a revision of the allowances to staff because of the Errors and Omissions Commission Report, and the usual things.

With regard to contribution to the reform of the criminal justice system, I understand they have set up a Law Update Unit to review criminal legislation, and make suggestion to the Attorney General's Office for the changes to be made to the criminal law. I understand they are working closely with the Attorney General's Office. We have already brought in for First Reading the Police and Criminal Evidence Bill and the codes of practice. Also, they are collaborating in the drafting of the criminal legislation, because it appears we will need some amendments to the criminal laws.

They also say that they publish their monthly Newsletter, explaining the functions. All these functions are in their Newsletter. It is also publishing a Criminal Law Review yearly, which will contain a criminal analysis of the criminal justice system.

New posts are also being created with the Assets Recovery Unit. New posts will be created, but they need again specialised expertise. The Ministry of Finance already had discussions. The Ministry of Finance has not put it here, but will provide the funds when they find that the additional post can be filled and they find the expertise that they need.

*(Interruptions)*

ICC is still going to be there. We have taken that position; it is a united position that we have taken, but that does not prevent us from being there.

**The Chairperson:** One last question! Time is running out!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** It is not a question. Chair, I wish to make a motion. I refer to page 83, where the total vote, which we are being asked to approve for the DPP's Office, in respect of all programmes and sub-programmes is Rs127 m. Before we go on to the vote, I would wish, on behalf of the Opposition, to move that the sums to be attributed to the Asset Recovery, be removed from the Budget we are being asked to vote.

As the House is aware, after this law was voted, the Opposition, in the light of the experience, both in Mauritius and abroad, has come to a conclusion that to entrust the DPP's Office with this responsibility, is against the spirit of our Constitution which defines the role of the DPP as that of instituting and undertaking criminal proceedings.

To that extent, it is our considered belief that to ask the DPP, through the Asset Recovery Unit, to become an investigation agency is not proper, does not serve the interest of justice and is not in conformity with the principle of clearly established responsibilities under the Constitution for the DPP's Office, accordingly, to be coherent. To the stand we have taken outside the House, I would wish to move that this sum be deleted from the vote for the DPP's Office.

**The Chairperson:** I would invite the hon. Member to be precise with regard to the form of the motion, because we have to write it down.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** So, my motion is to remove, under item *16102 Asset Recovery*, on page 83, the amount of Rs9,200,000, which is the sum to be attributed to the Asset Recovery for the year 2014 to be removed from the Budget under the Office of the DPP. Am I specific enough, Chair?

**The Chairperson:** This is your motion?

**Mr Obeegadoo:** It is indeed.

**The Chairperson:** This motion is made under which Standing Order?

**Mr Obeegadoo:** If the Chair wants me to go and look into the Standing Orders I will, but...

**The Chairperson:** If the hon. Member needs some time, we can break.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** No, no! I know, and I speak under your guidance. From my long years in this House, it has been the practice at, Committee Stage, to move for a reduction of a budget or deletion of an item from a Budget to be voted.

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** I say, silence! The hon. Member is addressing the Chair. I want to listen to him. The Chair has put a question: under which Standing Order this motion is being moved? I want to hear the Member. So, hon. Members should not interrupt him.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** I cannot offhand quote the Standing Order. I am referring to my experience of parliamentary practice for the very many years during which I have been a Member of Parliament here, that at Committee Stage, it has been the standard practice to vote

either for the wholesale deletion of the sums to be attributed to a specific item or to symbolically reduce a sum from the Budget.

**The Chairperson:** So, there is a fundamental difference between removing and reducing. So, you are referring to Standing Order 73, subsection 7, which speaks of, any Member may move an amendment to reduce. Therefore, you have to say by how much.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** I move to reduce the global amount of Rs127 m. by the amount of Rs9,200,000. So, a reduction of Rs9,200,000 which is...

**The Chairperson:** The hon. Member is going too fast.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** My motion, Chair, is to remove from the total amount budgeted under this vote for the DPP's Office. The total amount being Rs127 m., I am moving for a reduction of Rs9,200,000, which corresponds to the estimates under item *16102 Asset Recovery*.

**The Chairperson:** So, I still find myself in a predicament. The hon. Member started with removing and then he ends up with reducing.

*(Interruptions)*

Yes, I am helping him. I have given him the relevant Standing Order.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** This is a linguistic subtlety, Mr Chairperson.

**The Chairperson:** Yes, I want some clarification.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** My point was...

**The Chairperson:** Let us listen to the point.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** ... removing the sum attributed to that specific vote is tantamount to reducing the global sum by that specific amount. So, by removing the sum attributed to that item, we are, in effect, reducing the total sum by that vote. So, I shall be happy to phrase it as 'reducing'.

**The Chairperson:** You phrase it as 'reducing'.

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Which is Standing Order 73, subsection 7.

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Yes.

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Obeegadoo:** I shall, therefore,...

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** No interruptions! I do not want any interruptions!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** I shall, therefore, phrase it in exactly the same terms, if the Chairperson so wishes.

**The Chairperson:** No! I am sorry, hon. Member! You have already made your motion. I need time to consider. So, it is time to break. And then I will come back and give my ruling.

*At 4.20 p.m. the sitting was suspended.*

*On resuming at 5.45 p.m. with Mr Speaker in the Chair.*

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Obeegadoo!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Mr Chairperson, I have had the opportunity of discussing the matter with Mr Speaker, and since we have a long night ahead and far from me the intention of delaying matters, I will not insist on the Motion.

**The Chairperson:** I thank the hon. Member for his wise decision. So, we proceed with Code No. 161.

*Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions - Programme Code 161: Criminal Advisory and Litigation (Rs127,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Public Bodies Appeal Tribunal – Programme Code 171: Determination of Appeals by Public Officers was called.*

**Mr Obeegadoo:** I refer to page 92, the issue of *Rent* under item 22030.

**The Chairperson:** Yes, proceed!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Item 22030. The Prime Minister might have been made aware of the space constraints of the one single room that serves for hearings for the Tribunal to sit. I would

like to know whether provision has been made for next year either for a change of premises housing the PBAT or structural alteration to the present premises to allow for a proper chamber, if that is the term, for the Tribunal to sit.

I have a second point under the item *Fees 22120*. I note a drastic reduction in the fees from 2013 to 2014 on the assumption that *Fees* refers to the Chairperson and the two other members of the Tribunal; I would wish to have some clarification as to the meaning of this reduction in the fees.

I turn finally to page 93. We know that this institution is becoming increasingly popular with officers of the Civil Service and of the Local Government Bodies and yet I note that the position of Secretary of the PBAT has remained vacant and is to remain vacant in 2014. The Prime Minister might wish to provide some explanation.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

**Mr Baloomoody:** May I refer the hon. Prime Minister to page 92, item *22170 - Travelling within the Republic*? May I know whether the Tribunal will have the opportunity to sit outside Mauritius for the hooligan people and does that include that the Tribunal will sit in Rodrigues as well?

**Mr Soodhun:** On page 92, concerning item *22060 – Maintenance*, I am sure that the Prime Minister will agree with me the rent is for Rs1 m. and the maintenance will cost about half a million. I would like to know if really it is needed for half a million.

**The Chairperson:** It is roughly quarter of a million, Rs270,000.

(*Interruptions*)

Yes, alright. Is there any further question? No question! Hon. Prime Minister!

**The Prime Minister:** First of all, let me just remind hon. Members that again my Government, I brought this Appeal Tribunal. There was none before. So, where there was none, now you say - it is a question of how do we balance the budget. All those things come into play. At least there is something where there was none.

But let me say on the rent issue, it is actually the TM Building and there is no provision for the moment to go and get another building. But I think the hon. Member was asking why the maintenance is costing so much. In fact, there is a car allocated to the Chairperson and one full time member. We have to put this and then there is IT equipment and the rest is just for this. So, I suppose, after that it will be less because of the two cars involved in this.

Also, I think there was a question about whether it will travel to Rodrigues. The answer is yes. It includes fees for Rodrigues. I think that is all they have asked, as far as I know. They also asked about why there is no post for Secretary which has not been funded. There is an Assistant Secretary, Mr Chairperson, who is posted there and he is covering the day to day administrative work. Again, I say to hon. Members we cannot just increase the number of officers in the Civil Service, then we will go back to the years when we will have a deficit, a public debt of 70%, we cannot afford this anymore.

*(Interruptions)*

*Public Bodies Appeal Tribunal - Programme Code 171: Determination of Appeals by Public Officers (Rs13,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Prime Minister's Office - Programme Code 201: Prime Minister's Office was called.*

**Mr Bhagwan:** On page 105, Mr Chairperson, under item 22900930 - *Culture et Avenir Activities*, we have been asked to vote Rs13 m. Can I know from the hon. Prime Minister whether there is any specific major activity which this Unit will be engaged into in the coming year and also, if we can have a list of activities organised by that section during this year?

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Soodhun!

**Mr Soodhun:** On page 105, under item 22180 - *Overseas Travel*, there is an increase of nearly 81%. Can the hon. Prime Minister enlighten us on this?

Second, concerning item 26313008 - *Competition Commission*, and there is no provision for 2014.

**Mrs Ribot:** Referring to Programme Code 201, item 22120 – *Fees*, on page 104, there is a 500% increase of the fees from Re1 m. to Rs5 m. We would like to get some clarifications.

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. On page 105, item 26313008 - *Competition Commission*, there is an amount of Rs38 m. for 2013 and then, nothing for 2014. Can we have a breakdown of this sum of Rs38 m., roughly, what represents salary, what represents other expenses and then, if the hon. Prime Minister can confirm whether the Executive Director has been confirmed to her position?

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Seeruttun!

**Mr Seeruttun:** Mr Chairperson, at page 104, item 22050 - *Office Expenses*, here again, there is a substantial increase in the year 2014 from Rs1,340,000 to Rs1,840,000. May we have some details about what justifies that increase?

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Obeegadoo!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Mr Chairperson, this is a long programme, we are proceeding, is it page by page, I am not too sure how we are proceeding? Is it sub programme by sub programme? I am just asking, I am not suggesting anything, Mr Chairperson.

**The Chairperson:** Well, let us confine ourselves to pages 104 to 105. Two pages and then, we move.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Alright! There is, firstly, on page 104, very last item 22120 - *Fees*, the estimates for 2013: Rs1.1 m.; 2014: Rs5.1 m. I would like to ask the hon. Prime Minister who the prospective beneficiaries would be?

On page 105, the very top item 22180 - *Overseas Travel*, I don't know whether somebody has asked this already, but here the figures practically doubled between 2013 to 2014. We are talking here of the Cabinet Office. So, I would like to know what are these anticipated missions of the Cabinet Office that would cause the budgeted amount to double. Further down, under item 26313040 – *Mauritius Oceanography Institute* Rs28 m., I would like to know firstly who is the Head of the Oceanography Institute and whether we have somebody appointed in a substantive capacity? I seem to recollect that the former Head has taken up a position at UNESCO. Secondly, we have learnt that the Republic of India has approached the relevant UN

Body for agreement to prospect in the Indian Ocean Region. I would like to know whether our Oceanography Institute has any cooperation agreement with India in that regard?

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Jhugroo!

**Mr Jhugroo:** At page 105, item 26323040, *Construction of Administrative/Research/Laboratory Complex*, there was a sum of Rs40 m. earmarked for this year. Can we have some more details from the hon. Prime Minister as to who is in the construction and at what stage the actual building is?

**Mrs Hanoomanjee:** On page 105, under item 26313040 - *Mauritius Oceanography Institute*, Rs28 m. was voted for 2013. Can the hon. Prime Minister say whether the whole amount has been used or whether only part of it has been used?

**The Chairperson:** A question has already been asked on this item.

**Mrs Navarre-Marie:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. On page 105, right at the bottom, under item 22900901 - *National Day Celebration*, last year there was a sum of Rs30 m. which was voted for that item. I would like to have a breakdown of expenses incurred during that occasion?

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Soodhun!

**Mr Soodhun:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. At page 105, under item 22900930 - *Culture et Avenir Activities*, provisions have been made for Rs13 m. I would like to know the number of staff involved in this activity?

**The Chairperson:** If there are no further questions, the hon. Prime Minister may answer.

**The Prime Minister:** All the questions being asked, Mr Chairperson, I would be more prepared through a PQ or whatever, but because you are talking of policy decision, not any other thing, but let me try to answer whatever you have asked.

First of all, you wanted to know about fees at page 104. The fees are for training of staff, legal fees, but it has been increased because of the payment to foreign lawyers for specific assignments. You must know, surely, that we have had lots of cases which have gone to the

Privy Council. We need advice from lawyers because cases might eventually go to the Privy Council. We want some investigation to be done on the legal side, I mean, and that is why it has increased. The hon. Member wanted to know, I think, who are the lawyers. I can give him. There is a firm called Agri LLP. I don't even know who it is and they have had most of it here and then, you have Geoffrey Robertson for the media law. There is Thomas More Chambers and that's all. I think, on this page, that's all.

Mr Chairperson, then the hon. Member went to the Overseas Travel, capacity building. It's all the expenditure that we are going on the trend, I think, you must know that the air travel tickets have increased. Everything has increased. So, you have to pay. You want me to travel by boat or my people to travel by boat. So, that is the reason and it's not just me, I explained about capacity building. I don't have to repeat the same thing here.

Then there was a question about *culture et avenir*. I have it here. The list of the activities which were held – there are 14 activities. I will circulate or you want to ask a question then I will give you more details that you would like to have. There was a question about the Competition Commission. It is fully staffed now. The hon. Member was asking me whether there is a Director.

*(Interruptions)*

You just asked about her, not other person. Just her! The Director is Former Judge Pillay. You are talking about the Chairperson. Yes, she is confirmed. She was doing the job before, acting. Now, she has been confirmed. There was a question about the Mauritius Oceanographic Institute, whether we are cooperating. Yes, we are. There was a question in Parliament which was not answered because it did not come up; the whole story is false. India is not doing anything in our territory, but there is cooperation National Oceanography of Goa in India. Then, there was the question about the National Day celebrations; my Office, there is Rodrigues, Agalega, Public Infrastructure, Land Transport, Foreign Affairs. It is a whole list, Mr Chairperson. Maybe I will be able to give it. It includes the State House, the Garden Party and all this. I think there was another question about what!

**Mrs Hanoomanjee:** I was asking whether the whole amount which was earmarked for Mauritius Oceanography Institute Rs28 m. has been used during year 2013?

**The Prime Minister:** The hon. Member is in 2013, we are talking about 2014.

**Mrs Hanoomanjee:** Whether the amount which was earmarked has been used?

**The Prime Minister:** If the hon. Member asks me a question, I will have to look into whether they have actually used every cent of it. I can't say at the moment unless the hon. Member asks me a question, I will be very glad to answer. I don't have this figure with me here. I suppose, they have otherwise there would have been some note here about what happened. Exactly, what I said. The whole amount has been used. What else, I think that's it!

**Mrs Labelle:** I think my colleague hon. Obeegadoo asked a question regarding the Director of the Mauritius Oceanography Institute as to whether a Director has been appointed following, maybe, the resignation of the previous one. I don't think I have heard an answer from the hon. Prime Minister.

**The Prime Minister:** The post has been advertised internationally. A Director is going to be appointed.

**Mr Baloomoody:** Can we go to page 106?

**The Chairperson:** Yes, pages 106 and 107.

**Mr Baloomoody:** On page 106, item 22130, I have found that for next year we have budgeted Rs 5m. for studies and surveys. May we know some particulars about the studies and surveys that will be carried out? For item 22900915 *Multi-sectoral Response to HIV/AIDS project*, I have found that for this year we have budgeted Rs14,500,000. May we know from this sum, how much has been spent or, at least, what projects there have been? With regard to item 22900928, Environment and Land Use Appeal Tribunal, I have found that for next year we are really tripling the sum which was allocated for this year. Last year it was about Rs5 m. and this year it is Rs16,200,000. May we know that substantial increase? On item 22900932 *Human Rights Awareness*, it was Rs2 m. last year, Rs2 m. this year. May we know what activities have been organised for this year in that sum of Rs2 m. which was budgeted for?

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Mrs Radegonde-Haines!

**Mrs Radegonde-Haines:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. At page 107, item 31113430 *Espace Culturel et Artistique, Chateau Mon Plaisir*, a sum of Rs100 m. is earmarked and no sum earmarked for 2014. Can we know if it is a project and what is the status? Can we have a description of it?

**The Prime Minister:** Which item?

**Mrs Radegonde-Haines:** 31113430 *Espace Culturel et Artistique, Chateau Mon Plaisir* at page 107.

**Mr Bhagwan:** At page 107, about the NSS.

**The Chairperson:** Which item?

**Mr Bhagwan:** Item 2290002 *National Security Service* Rs6 m. We are being asked to vote nearly Rs10 m. for the NSS, can the hon. Prime Minister say whether there has been a re-organisation of that unit? We know what type of job these persons are engaged in, especially now that we have other types of crimes, will he say whether the NSS also is engaged apart from the normal political duties to help the Police in chasing *l'homme à la cagoule*?

**The Chairperson:** I would appeal to hon. Members to put short questions because we are left with three minutes.

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** On page 106, item 22900927, *National Institute of Civic Education* for which Rs20 m. was earmarked for this year, another Rs5 m. next year. May I know from the hon. Prime Minister what are the activities carried out by this Institute?

**The Chairperson:** I would not take any more questions! The hon. Prime Minister is left with two minutes to answer.

*(Interruptions)*

You will receive no answer, it is your problem! It is better to give opportunity to the hon. Prime Minister to answer the question put!

**The Prime Minister:** Let me try to answer some of the questions. I will try to answer some of the questions that I can.

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** No interruptions! We are left with two minutes!

**The Prime Minister:** The studies and surveys are for provision for consultancy for review and upgrading of the electrical network, believe it or not, and systems at the Government Centre, but it falls under me. Then, there is the Human Rights Awareness. As you can see, the amount is being repeated because they have sensitisation programmes. One is on the MBC. Then, there is training at the Youth Centres in all the regions. They are also doing it for public officers and secondary school students and there is a trainers' programme.

As for the Environmental and Land Use Appeal Tribunal, it has started operations since October 2012 - it has just started operations. Now, we find there must be utilities, furniture, equipment. There needs to be a partition at one level, and other sundries. That is why it has increased, but at the moment, there is also an allowance for the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson and members.

There are two things that have been asked by the hon. Member. One is on the National Institute. He wanted to know what NICE is all about. I would have hoped he would have known what NICE is. NICE is the new programme that we are taking with young children; it is a project that I started for form IV students in 2012. Then, there was a second project that we have done. There was a pilot project in 2012. It was very successful. We have started it. Now, I want it to be a regular project. We have to increase the budget for it, and we also want to do it in Rodrigues. Basically, it is a project for young people, to show them discipline, patriotism, about how you leave in multi-ethnic society. You don't go and put things on the wall, on computers, Facebook and all this, because we are a multiracial, multicultural society. We need to be able to realise that we have to live together. So, these are the kind of things that they are learning about the real values of life, instead of doing things that some of the people around here do.

There was also a question about AIDS. We will receive, in 2014 - thanks to my intervention with President Clinton, as you know – Rs46.1 m. from the Global Clinton Fund in the following year.

There is a grant of Rs14 m. which we will use for multi-sectoral response, and then there is the different training, monitoring, evaluation, and Government, on this side, will contribute an amount of Rs3.5 m. for the running expenses of the Secretariat.

The hon. Member also wanted to have more detailed information. I suppose with a PQ, I will be able to, because it is very long. I think I have answered most of the questions. I don't know if I have missed something. Yes, that's it!

**The Chairperson:** Time is over!

*Prime Minister's Office – Programme Code 201: Prime Minister's Office (Rs971,345,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Prime Minister's Office – Programme Code 311: Rodrigues Development was called.*

**Mr François:** Mr Chairperson, at page 111, I have two questions. My first question relates to item 2521000 - *Freight Rebate Scheme*. Will the hon. Prime Minister enlighten us as to why the decrease from Rs3.4 m. for 2013 to Rs2 m. for 2014, being given the valuable support of this scheme to Rodrigues?

My second question is a matter of general observation.

**The Chairperson:** No matters of general observation, please. Put question on expenses.

**Mr François:** It is related to the expenses. Item 26321001 as well as on page 99 the programme is to sustain the socio development of Rodrigues. Mr Chairperson, with many projects in the pipeline...

**The Chairperson:** I can't follow. Which item?

**Mr François:** The same item 26321001 - *Capital Grant to Rodrigues Regional Assembly*. Is that correct?

**Mr Chairperson:** Yes, correct.

**Mr François:** Thank you. May I be enlightened by the hon. Prime Minister why there is a decline trend by 12% under this item vote, from Rs400 m. to Rs 350 m., which is contrary to the Relative Development Index on page 103, and which is on an increasing trend?

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** I want some silence!

**Mrs Labelle:** Mr Chairperson, with due respect...

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** It is a period of 20 minutes as agreed by the Whips for each Programme Code.

*(Interruptions)*

Well, the 20 minutes per Programme Code has been agreed by the Whips. So, I am abiding by their decision. Proceed, hon. François!

**Mr François:** Do I have to repeat it, Mr Chairperson?

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Silence!

*(Interruptions)*

Silence! No interruption! Any more questions on Programme 311?

**Mr Obeegadoo:** On page 111, ...

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Silence! Hon. Obeegadoo is putting a question! Yes, hon. Obeegadoo!

*(Interruptions)*

Silence!

(*Interruptions*)

Silence! I want some order!

(*Interruptions*)

I say silence now! I don't want to hear any noise! Proceed, hon. Obeegadoo! I say stop it now! It is too early for some of you to go home!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** On page 111, item 22120 - *Fees*, an amount of Rs3.6 m. is budgeted for 2014. I would like to know, for the Estimates of 2013, Rs4,410,000, how much has been spent as to date, who are the beneficiaries of this sum, and why is this sum being reduced for 2014.

Further down, item 25210 – *Non-Financial Private Enterprises*, I would wish to have some clarification; what this refers to, and why, again, there is significant reduction from one year to the next.

Finally, under item 26321002 - *Water sector development projects in Rodrigues*, are we referring here to projects which have been agreed upon with the Rodrigues Local Council?

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Mrs Hanoomanjee!

**Mrs Hanoomanjee:** On page 111, item 25210005 - *Freight Rebate Scheme*. Can I know from the hon. Prime Minister on which items freight rebate has been given, and why this amount has been reduced for next year?

**The Chairperson:** Hon Soodhun!

**Mr Soodhun:** Page 113, Sub-Programme 20103 - *Defence and Home Affairs*. I have two questions, Mr Chairperson.

(*Interruptions*)

**Mr Chairperson:** Silence! Listen to the question!

**Mr Soodhun:** The number of 170 officers has been increased to 221 officers. It means that there has been an increase of 43 officers, and still the post of the Secretary of Home Affairs is vacant. I would like to ask the Prime Minister whether this is going to be filled.

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Baloomoody!

**Mr Baloomoody:** Mr Chairperson, page 111, item 31111401 - *Upgrading of accommodation facilities for patients from Rodrigues*. May we know, out of the Rs200,000 which was budgeted for this year, how much has been spent? Can the hon. Prime Minister tell us the location of this dwelling, the accommodation facilities for Rodriguans?

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Mrs Hanoomanjee!

**Mrs Hanoomanjee:** At page 113, under item 090093 *National HIV/AIDS Coordinator*, can I ask the hon. Prime Minister whether this post has been abolished?

**The Chairperson:** Yes, any more questions? Yes, hon. Ganoo!

**Mr Ganoo:** Mr Chairperson, may I go on to page 116, please?

**The Chairperson:** Yes!

**Mr Ganoo:** *Sub-Programme 20110: National Disaster Risk Reduction*. I want to ask the hon. Prime Minister...

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** At page 116, *National Disaster Risk Reduction*.

**Mr Ganoo:** Yes, *National Disaster Risk Reduction*. Is this the same programme as the Disaster Management Centre? Has the new Director-General been appointed? If the hon. Prime Minister could provide us with some explanations as regards the recruitment of the Director-General? Has this been done?

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** At page 113, Mr Chairperson, under item 020099 *Director General, Counter-Terrorism Unit*. May I ask the hon. Prime Minister who is the Director-General of that Unit?

**Mr Jugnauth:** At page 116, *Sub-Programme 20109: Strategic Policy*. I see that there will be no one as Director or Lead Analyst or Analyst. So, may I know who is going to do the work to analyse the socio-economic issues of national importance and who is going to formulate, propose, at least, the formulation of policies for sustainable development and poverty alleviation.

**Mr Baloomoody:** At page 114, Mr Chairperson, under the National Adoption Council, may I know whether we are going to do away with the National Adoption Council inasmuch as there is no projection to fill these posts?

**The Chairperson:** We are left with 10 minutes for the hon. Prime Minister to answer.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** A last point!

**The Chairperson:** Last question!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** I take it on page 112, first item, *Prime Minister*. In the Budget, there has been this confusion about private television. It is according to the Budget to be licensed by the PMO...

*(Interruptions)*

I was there! And the hon. Prime Minister corrected to say the IBA. I note from the timeframe that by June of this year, private TVs are to be licensed. I would like to know whether the hon. Prime Minister will have any role to play in that process, and whether the Prime Minister intends to go on to the so-called second phase, whereby private TVs will be able to broadcast news item in the course of 2014?

**The Chairperson:** It is a policy matter.

*(Interruptions)*

I should draw the attention of Members that we are under programme 311. Yes, hon. Prime Minister!

**The Prime Minister:** I am trying to see which page - I should start really. First of all, there was a question about fees. Everybody wants to know about the fees. The fees, first, is for training. I could go through the whole list for capacity-building and training. Why there has been a decrease in provision is due to the fact that the services of some service providers will not be required towards the end of next year, which is why there has been a reduction.

I think there was on freight rebate - I have it here actually. We decided to some subsidies.

Let me answer the question on water sector, because it is just in front of me. Everything we have agreed is through – because there is autonomy, so we have to agree beforehand. We are not doing something that is not agreed with them. There are lists of projects which are being

funded by the European Union, including the setting up of the desalination plant and also the construction of three concrete reservoirs, rainwater harvesting, water monitoring, construction of *retenu à Colinière* and upgrading of the existing pumps which are very important, because otherwise you will get the same problem that we used to get here, in the past.

I don't know whether I have satisfied your question. There was also a question about the National Adoption Council. I think you asked whether it is abolished. It is a bit misleading. In fact, what is happening is that a new structure is being set up for the National Adoption Council to be in conformity with the Hague Convention – the actual one is not – especially on the protection of children and we are getting cooperation from other institutions? Therefore, necessary amendments will have to be brought to the legislation governing these matters the schemes of service for the above post, I must stay, are already established. So, as soon as the posts are ready, we will do this, the Ministry of Finance will give us the funds that need to be given.

I think there was a question about strategic policy. You were asking me why there is no Lead Analyst. We made provision for four funded positions for the support team, that's what I thought. The Director of the Lead Analyst will be from the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development. As such, therefore, there is no additional provision for that, because it is going through this; it is better that they do it, instead on this side.

There were questions about expenditure in 2013, but we have not ended 2013, it is going to end on 31 December. So, I cannot say exactly what is the actual expenditure.

*(Interruptions)*

Upgrading of accommodation - in fact, the quarters at Britannia Park at Vacoas have been completely renovated. There will be no major maintenance to be carried out as they have just been renovated. So, only a provision of Rs20,000 has been made; that's the reason.

*(Interruptions)*

Freight Rebate Scheme - you are talking about exports? We subsidise the freight from Rodrigues. I think I have it actually here. It follows my visit to Rodrigues in 2012. I announced that the freight cost of milk powder, infant, tea leaves, edible oil will be met by Government. The amount for the subsidy is being provided in the Budget. So, that is the reason.

*(Interruptions)*

I am going to come with a Bill for Disaster. Maybe, I should clarify matters. We already have a person in charge and that is the Commander in Chief of the SMF. He is in charge. We made it separate from others, because one of the things that we notice - that very often happens - is that they need this coordination. That is why it is going to be a separate Disaster Management. So, there is one person who is in charge.

*Programme Code 311: Rodrigues Development (Rs2,059,100) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Government Information Service – Programme Code 211: Government Information Service and Provision of International News was called.*

**Mr Bhagwan:** At page 122, *Government Information Service and Provision of International News*, we are being asked to vote Rs18.8 m. about this Government publicity and every year we ask whether...

**The Chairperson:** Under which item is it hon. Bhagwan?

**Mr Bhagwan:** Government Information Service!

**The Chairperson:** Yes, this is a programme title, but then do you have the item number?

**Mr Bhagwan:** It is under Programme Code 211, *Goods and Services* Rs18.8 m.

**The Chairperson:** Yes. *Goods and Services* item 22, yes.

**Mr Bhagwan:** I am asking the Prime Minister the details about how much is being earmarked for Government publicity and whether there has been an overhaul of the previous policy of giving publicity to newspapers. Which are the newspapers which are being debarred from publicity by Government? Whether it is l'Express? At one period of time l'Express was debarred, so I am asking the Prime Minister whether l'Express is still on the black list.

Secondly, on page 123 *Current Grant - Media Trust Fund* item 26313048, we still have this Rs2 m. being earmarked. Can I know from the Prime Minister whether there is staff? We all know that Government is waiting for this Robertson Report. What do we do every year with this

Rs2 m. whether there is staff, whether Government sponsors courses for the journalists out of this Rs2 m.?

**Mr Uteem:** On page 123 item 22100 – *Publications and Stationery*, may I ask the hon. Prime Minister - being given that we spent a lot of money on the e-Government project and the new Governmental portal - why is it that there is no reduction in the amount budgeted for *Publications and Stationery*?

**Mr Jhugroo:** Page 123 item 22120 – *Fees*, can we know to whom these fees are being paid?

**The Chairperson:** Do you have a question?

(*Interruptions*)

You have already put the question! No more questions? Yes, the Prime Minister may answer!

**The Prime Minister:** First of all, let me say about Government publicity to newspapers. It is wrong to say that l'Express had been boycotted. There was a Court case. I do not know whether the new Court case is going ahead or not. But it is not true to say what the hon. Member has just said. We go by groups and there is not just l'Express in that group, there are lots of others which are getting. But, in any case, l'Express is also getting, from what I see. So, all the newspapers are getting it.

(*Interruptions*)

For publications and stationery, the hon. Member is right to say that. In fact, we are going to bring it down. Some of the things we are already doing, I do not have the details. I am just speaking out of what I remember. I know some of the things are going down because we are using new technology. But there are certain things that still are going up because, for example, there is a new service prescription to Reuters on a yearly basis plus *Agence France-Presse*. We need printing and stationery, books and periodicals, public notices, publications. But the hon. Member is right to say and, in fact, we are considering. I had it somewhere here. I am speaking from memory. I know that we are trying to use the web portal and emails of Government for the advertisement because I suppose everybody can use them now.

There was a question about fees. The fees is for provision of training, capacity building is falling into that. But there is a payment for consultancy fee at the rate of Rs150,000 to an Indian broadcast engineer at the MBC. It is for two years for capacity building. I think that is all. Did they ask anything else?

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Media Trust Fund.

**The Prime Minister:** I am sorry; it was current grant about what?

*(Interruptions)*

Oh yes. This Media Trust, obviously, as the hon. Member said, it is imminent now that we will have this report. He just got all the responses because he had advertised and he wanted to see what response he would get. I do not know whether he is going to modify the report or not and he will then prepare the report. But this is imminent from what I see. It is not going to be this year, but it is going to be early next year.

*Government Information Service - Programme Code 211: Government information Service and Provision of International News (Rs52,132,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Forensic Science Laboratory - Programme Code 221: Provision for Forensic Services was called.*

**Dr. S. Boolell:** At page 126 under *Major Achievements for 2013*, 13,000 DNA profiles have been generated. There has been a special mention by the Jury of the Service at the Public Service Excellence Award and FSL has been identified as a training centre for DNA analysis by Interpol after training three Tanzanian scientists. So, I would like to know whether under *Goods and Services* or any other item, we are still having recourse to the services of foreign labs in either South Africa or Europe for DNA investigations.

The next item is, do we have a Director at the FSL and, if we do not, shall we have to wait a long time to get one? I also note an increase in the rent for the next year, threefold which will go down again eventually.

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** But I find it very difficult to follow you!

**Dr. S. Boolell:** Sorry!

**The Chairperson:** Under which item?

**Dr. S. Boolell:** It is under the item Programme 221.

**The Chairperson:** On which page?

**Dr. S. Boolell:** Page 129. There is only one page anyway!

**The Chairperson:** Yes, yes, 129, that is good! Which item?

**Dr. S. Boolell:** *Goods and Services* Rs29 m. going to Rs44 m.

**The Chairperson:** Yes.

**Dr. S. Boolell:** For forensic services, we are using additional help from foreign labs and that despite all our decorations. *Rent* comes at 22030 from Rs500,000 to Rs1,500,000 and to go back down again the year after to Rs500,000. Why has it gone up? For the *Publications and Stationery* again there is a twofold increase. I would also like to know whether these facilities of the lab can be offered to locals who wish to avail themselves of DNA typing, without need to have recourse to a Court Order. I also ask whether we do have a Director, Mr Chairperson. The *Medical Supplies, Drugs and Equipment* item 22140, I note an increase from Rs20 m. to Rs30 m. All the more so as on the next page, under the item 31122 – *Other Machinery and Equipment*, we do have another estimate in 2014 of no less than Rs60 m. I would like to have a breakdown of the initial medicines, drugs and vaccines bought by the Forensic Services, vaccines especially, and again, on the other side, the *Upgrading of Laboratory Equipment*. That would be all.

**Dr. Sorefan:** May I know from the hon. Prime Minister regarding page 130 item 31122404 – *Upgrading of Laboratory Equipment, High Resolution Mass Spectrometer* whether there is an operating technician because I cannot see one listed on the human resources and whether there will be maintenance contract with the supplier when this is going to be procured.

**Mr Jhugroo:** On page 129 item 22060 – *Maintenance*, can the hon. Prime Minister explain why there has been a rise from Rs5 m. to Rs7.9 m. Then again for year 2015, it is back to Rs6 m.?

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. On page 130, under item 31122404 - *Upgrading of Laboratory Equipment*, there is an amount of Rs5 m. May we have a breakdown of this Rs5 m.?

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Baloomoody!

**Mr Baloomoody:** On page 129 under item 22120 - *Fees* again, an amount of Rs560,000 has been earmarked. May we know for what purpose and who are the beneficiaries? We found that we have put Rs1 m. for item 22130 - *Studies and Survey*. May we have some more details about in which field that study and which survey?

**Mr Li Kwong Wing:** *Studies and Surveys*, under item 22130, on page 129, can we have some details on what surveys are going to be carried out for Rs1 m.?

**The Chairperson:** This question has already been put.

(*Interruptions*)

Yes, hon. Prime Minister!

**The Prime Minister:** First of all, the post of the Director of the Forensic Lab was advertised following the departure of the then Director who had to go because of his children who were at school. It has been re-advertised in July 2013 and the PSC will now carry out the interview for that exercise.

Now, to answer the question of hon. Dr. S. Boolell, from what I see there has been no recourse to foreign lab for DNA testing in 2013 at all. Now, you asked whether you could have access to that, they will wait until the new Director is there. There might be a legal problem, so that is why it is being done like this.

As for the question about the equipment, let me just look at it properly. There was a question about maintenance. It's a long list, Mr Chairperson, but I can say the additional amount

is due, they need to do the partitioning of the building, and there is cabling and electrical installations.

Then, there was a question about the fees of the Chairperson and Members of the Board and also, for training for Forensic Technologist and Forensic Scientist in fields such as scene of crime investigation and all this. Why the provision has decreased, it's because the expenditure for overseas training has been provided under *Overseas Travel* this time. That's the only reason.

There was a question about fuel and oil. This is just to meet the cost of fuel and oil for one vehicle. And, for studies and surveys, provision is being made for Consultancy services for the feasibility study for the new Forensic Science Lab at La Vigie, this is where it is going to be.

There was a question about *Medical Supplies, Drugs and Equipment*. You know there are lots of consumables under this item, the chemicals, the reagents, you need special kits and reagents for DNA profiling and you also need helium gas for chromatography. Therefore, there has been analysis. The provision is allocated for analysis of 6,000 DNA samples for next year and you need control of reference drugs and this, basically, is the reason why the expenditure has been revised.

**Dr. Sorefan:** The question has not been answered regarding the *High Resolution Mass Spectrometer*, regarding the operator and whether there will be a maintenance contract, there is a supplier.

**The Prime Minister:** Sorry, I forgot about that. The equipment has not been acquired. I thought I answered a PQ on this. Why we did, there was a question about the new synthetic cannabinoids , I think it is called, that they are being used and it's not detectable on this machine. But very soon we are going to do it. There are other ways of doing it, but we want to have that machine as well, and obviously the maintenance, of course, will have to be included in that contract.

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Some silence!

**Mr Baloomoody:** Are we to understand that DNA tests are being done in Mauritius, now? They are not being done abroad.

**The Prime Minister:** I am informed that for this year, there has been no recourse to foreign lab for DNA tests. That was what I have been informed. As you know, I am not there myself. I have to rely on the information. That is what I am told.

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Ameer Meea!

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Yes, Mr Chairperson, my question was at page 130, the last item, item *31122404 - Others*, Rs5 m. I did not get an answer.

**The Prime Minister:** This, again, is for this High Resolution Mass Spectrometer, as I said, just what hon. Dr. Sorefan was referring to. And then, we need some specific refrigerators, Mr Chairperson, and also there is the Toxicology Unit which we want to expand and upgrade.

*Forensic Science Laboratory - Programme Code 221: Provision for Forensic Services (Rs10,255,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Pay Research Bureau - Programme Code 231: Public Sector Compensation and HRM Policy and Strategy (Rs34,100,000) was called and agreed to.*

*Civil Status Division - Programme Code 241: Civil Status Affairs was called.*

**Mr Roopun:** On page 142, under item *22040 - Office Equipment and Furniture*, I see a drastic reduction in the amount budgeted. Can we know the reason? And, we see down on this page, under item *22100 - Publications and Stationery*, the amount doubled. Could we have some indications from the hon. Prime Minister as to the reason for these?

**The Prime Minister:** Yes.

**Mrs Labelle:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. I am under Programme Code 241, the Civil Status Affairs, but I would like to refer to page 139 - scanning and electronic archiving of data of Civil Status Registers from 1920 to 2001. I would like to ask the hon. Prime Minister about the data previous to 1920, since we know that they are in a very bad state and to what extent we are

going to be able to preserve these data? So, is there any particular arrangement which is being made to preserve the data previous to the period which is being stated under this programme?

**The Chairperson:** Your question is about arrangement, not expenses. Proceed, hon. Obeegadoo!

**Mrs Labelle:** I was referring to what is being stated, Mr Chairperson, on page 139.

**The Chairperson:** Yes. I don't want my observation to be challenged. Yes, hon. Obeegadoo!

**Mrs Labelle:** No.

**The Chairperson:** I have said; I am not going to repeat myself.

**Mrs Labelle:** Either you want me to hear what you say.

**The Chairperson:** I don't want to hear you!

**Mrs Labelle:** Either you want me to hear what you say.

**The Chairperson:** I don't want to hear you right now. Hon. Obeegadoo! And don't try to argue with me! I don't want to argue with you! Don't try to argue with me! Hon. Obeegadoo!

**Mrs Labelle:** You don't want me to hear what you say then.

**The Chairperson:** I have said. I don't want to say anymore. Yes, hon. Obeegadoo!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Mr Chairperson, at page 140. I am referring to the global sum which is budgeted under the National Identity Card Services. Now, there was nothing in the 2013 estimates, whereas we know that the programme has already been rolled out. I would wish to know from the hon. Prime Minister what is the actual expenditure so far in respect of the National Identity Card Service?

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** No noise! Allow the hon. Member to put his question!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** I am trying to, Mr Chairperson. I would like to know what the actual expenditure is so far and whether we can have some idea of the breakdown of the money spent as yet and for next year. My second question, we have Rs10.2 m. estimated. I presume this will cover expenditure in respect of 2013 since we had nothing budgeted unless there has been reallocation plus the expenditure for next year. Now, I would wish to know from the hon. Prime Minister being given that he has proved to be very controversial issue. There has been a legal challenge. The experience of the UK is that huge amounts were spent and then a new Government came in and everything was cancelled, terrible waste of funds. I would like to know...

**The Chairperson:** Yes, I am waiting for your question!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** I would like to know whether the hon. Prime Minister being given, the legal challenge now which is pending whether Government intends to spend, to go on with the expenditure of this Rs10.2 m. budgeted? My third question, if I go down under positions, sum funded positions and ID card services in post by December 2014; 20 . This is reflected on page 144, the second part which lists 20 posts. Now, again I would like to know for year 2013 what is the personnel? What is the staff that has been rolling out this programme? Has it been entrusted to private operators, at what cost? And for next, these 20 positions, when are they to be filled? Are they to be filled from with the service by redeployment or are these new positions to be advertised externally? Could we have some ideas as to the proposed rolling out of the programme?

**Mr Seeruttun:** Refer to 143, *item 22040 Office Equipment and Furniture*, for the year 2013, Rs10.3 m. was earmarked. I would like to know how much has been spent so far and if we could have some details on the amount spent and on which items?

**Mr Uteem:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. On page 143, *item 28212 Transfers to Households*, may I know from the hon. Prime Minister whether this relates to the money that is paid to the new born or that relates to some other matter?

**The Chairperson:** Wait a minute! Page 143, *item 21210*.

**Mr Uteem:** My second question would be, on the same page, item 21 *Compensation of Employees* and this is linked to the staffing on page 144. I noted that there is a reduction in some positions for the civil status affairs and then new positions created for the National ID card service. May I know from the hon. Prime Minister whether it is just a matter of shifting existing personnel from the Civil Status Division to this new National Identity Card Division or are we creating new positions?

**The Chairperson:** This rather deals with administration. Yes, hon. Mrs Labelle! Hon. Labelle has a question! Proceed!

**Mr Baloomoody:** Can I ask the hon. Prime Minister with regard to the Civil Status Services on page 142, I will take it under item *Rent*, I don't find any provision made for security with regard to the regional office of the Civil Status. I take the example of the one in Curepipe which is found in Remono Street. It is a small building in a commercial building, very crowded place which stores very important documents? My birth certificate is stored there, the original one.

*(Interruptions)*

There is no security service.

**The Chairperson:** That makes it more important!

**Mr Baloomoody:** It makes it more important. There is no security and we know that it is a commercial building. Not only in Curepipe, the one in Souillac and in other rural areas. I think we should make provision for security services to have a guard in these buildings because the original ones are kept there. Can I know whether provision will be made, at least, for security? Especially when they are in commercial buildings like the one in Vacoas, in Phoenix. With regard to rent for the National Identity Card Services, on page 143, item 22030 *Rent*, do we take it that there are many Regional Officers now for the identity card or do we have to concentrate only in Rose Hill, Curepipe and Port Louis and may we know how many?

**Mr Jhugroo:** On page 143, sub programme 24102, item 21111 *Other Staff Costs*, can I ask the hon. Prime Minister about the provision of Rs1.6 m. for next year? Can we have some more details whether the staff have already been recruited or are going to be recruited?

**The Chairperson:** Yes.

**Mrs Labelle:** I am on page 142, item 28211 *Transfers to Non-Profit Institutions*, may we know which institutions have benefited from this transfer?

**Mr Obeegadoo:** May I have one last question before the hon. Prime Minister answers?

**The Chairperson:** Yes.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** On page 143, I note that the sums voted for upgrading of ICT are only Rs1 m. The hon. Prime Minister is aware that the major criticism levelled against the Civil Status Office is the delay in delivering copies of birth certificates and so on. I would like to know how this is going to be addressed as we have only Rs1 m. for the upgrading of ICT?

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Prime Minister!

**The Prime Minister:** First of all regarding the National Identity Card. I think I have answered a question from the hon. Leader of the Opposition as to why it is the hon. Minister of IT answering the question. It is because there was a perception that was created that this has come under the PMO. It hasn't. It is still with the hon. Minister. Therefore, the National Identity Card Project is still under the Ministry of IT. Perhaps that is why the hon. Member doesn't see all the answers that he wants to see. As for the shifting of existing officers, that is so in addition because there have been three new posts created. For the additional post, it will come under the vote of the Ministry of Information and Technology. One of the things that we are trying to do precisely, I think hon. Labelle asked the question at the beginning and then the hon. Member said his birth certificate is at risk!

*(Interruptions)*

His age is at risk! If I could say he is 17, he won't be able stand. Apart from that, the hon. Member is right, the problem is this. That is why we are shifting to IT. We want to have everything computerised. There are some problems, I must tell the hon. member, that we have found. It has been going on for some years. This is why we want to shift it. As for the security, really I am not aware that there is no security there. I must tell the hon. Member. Maybe that is the case, it should not be because...

(*Interruptions*)

You live next door! You can provide the security yourself and watch your birth certificate!

(*Interruptions*)

I find it a bit strange. Is the hon. Member sure there are no CCTV cameras? Maybe the hon. Member has not seen them. I find it strange and I will have to look into this: why there is no security.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** May I have some clarifications from the hon. Prime Minister? The hon. Prime Minister has informed the House that the National ID card project is still under the hon. Minister of ICT then why is it that we have 20 new positions created under a so-called National Identity Card services at page 144? Moreover the amount of Rs10.2 m. overall budgeted for National Identity Card services. Are we referring to the old ID cards and then why 20 new positions?

**The Prime Minister:** You remember we signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Singapore enterprise. That is why I said in my PNQ - I am not sure whether the hon. Member was here - the operations themselves for the recruiting and this falls under the PMO. I said in my answer that the PMO has an overall view, because it's such an important project. We must have an overview of how things are being done, just to make sure that things go correctly. It is such an important document. The Ministry concerned is still the IT Ministry, but the overview is from the Prime Minister's Office. We also have this Memorandum of Understanding. We want to make sure because these are two countries which are dealing with others. That is why.

**The Chairperson:** Do you have a question?

**Mrs Labelle:** With your permission, I would like to reiterate my request for information regarding *Transfers to Non-Profit Institutions* on page 143, item 28211, and also the point raised by my colleague, hon. Uteem, with regard to *Transfers to Households*. Some clarifications on these two issues.

**The Prime Minister:** The *Transfers to the Non-Profit Institutions* is a provision of annual grants to Muslim Family Council, which was established in 1990, and it needs to meet the cost of administration and other expenses. From January to October, I believe they had 33 meetings. As for the *Transfer to Households*, again, this is a provision for meeting payment of Rs200 per child born, in line with the Savings Culture Scheme which was introduced in 1997, and that Scheme is being implemented through the Post Office Savings Bank.

**Mr Jugnauth:** With regard to page 144, *National Identity Card Services*, since there are no officers for 2013, does that mean to say that those who are involved in the collection of data from citizens of Mauritius for the new Identity Card Project, there are no officers from the National Identity Card Services?

**The Prime Minister:** I didn't say that. This is a different type of card. We are having a private enterprise. All that we do is to check, but they are the one who do the tenders and everything. We don't go into those details. There was also a question as to whether there will be more officers around. I don't know whether they have actually done it or not, but that is the intention.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** On the same issue, since the Prime Minister is offering clarification. I am on page 140, the global budget for the National Identity Card Services, Rs10,280,000. May I know from the Prime Minister what, therefore, this is for? Did I understand that this is for payment of services from Singapore, or is it for payment of the private company that has been in charge of issue of ID cards initially? It is not very clear. What is going to be paid from the budget of the Ministry of ICT, what is going to be paid from the PMO's budget, and what about actual expenses already incurred for 2013?

**The Prime Minister:** It is difficult to give you the exact amount that has been spent. It is a complex issue. So, I am not surprised the hon. Member asks the question. It is not for the Singaporean company. It is for local, as far as I can see. There are lots of things that they have to collect; it costs a lot of money. That is why it is like this. It is for the NIC Unit itself; nothing to do with Singapore. The Rs10 m. has nothing to do with Singapore.

**Mr Seeruttun:** Mr Chairperson, I did not get a reply to my question. So, I will like to ask again the question with regard to page 142, item 22040 - *Office Equipment and Furniture*.

Rs10.3 m. has been spent in 2013. I would like to have the details as to how that amount has been spent, and also why the big decrease in 2014 and onwards.

**The Prime Minister:** The provision is for the purchase of office equipment, that is, there were air conditioning, fans, computers and printers. The total expenditure for 2013 was expected to be Rs4 m., but there was a decrease in the expenditure, to the fact that they had to purchase less equipment. With the present status of the existing server, and one procured under the MNIS project, there was no need to acquire an additional server. So, the price then got down. Therefore, only a provision of Rs400,000 has been made for 2014, because there is no need, as I said, to purchase another server. It will be for other things.

**The Chairperson:** One last question!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** I have raised the question, which the Prime Minister has not answered, about the criticisms within public opinion about delay in delivery of certificates, and this is mentioned as a major constraint and challenge; the fact that a significant portion of Civil Status records is paper-based. I ask how, if we are budgeting only Rs1 m. for upgrading of ICT, on page 143, under item 31, are we to address this issue next year?

**The Prime Minister:** Under what item you said?

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Item 31, on page 143, there is only Rs1 m. budgeted for upgrading of ICT.

**The Prime Minister:** The provision, in fact, is for software. We have already done some work. There has been some progress. They are starting a software and I think they need other peripherals to modernise the Division. I think that is the reason why you asked that question - I am not sure. Is the hon. Member talking about the upgrading at the national ID card, or about the Civil Status?

*(Interruptions)*

Okay. Then, I can say that they have started to digitalise their records. A contract was awarded, I think, in August of this year to State Informatics Ltd. With regard to the cost for the scanning and indexing of Civil Status documents, it is for the implementation of the project in partnership

with Software Activities and Images Management Ltd. The project is in two phases. Perhaps this is what leads to the confusion.

First, there is the scanning and indexing of 1,600,000 birth certificates, including the hon. Member's, I suppose, and 415,000 marriage certificates. The other documents will be done afterwards, but that is the phase that is expected to be completed by the middle of next month, from what I understand. Then, there will be a phase two, which will be a provision to a turnkey solution, to allow the Civil Status to continue the scanning and the indexing of the remaining documents. That is what it is.

**The Chairperson:** Time is up!

*Civil Status Division – Programme Code 241: Civil Status Affairs (Rs87,080,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Religious Subsidies - Programme Code 251: Financial Support to Religious Organisation was called.*

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** On page 146, under item 28211024 - *Religious Bodies*, may I know from the hon. Prime Minister whether it is the same religious bodies, as were approved last year, that are going to get the same grant, or has there been any change?

**Mr Ameer-Meea:** Mr Chairperson, there is only one line in this Programme, that is, Rs74 m. for religious bodies. May I ask the hon. Prime Minister a detailed breakdown; a list of all this Rs74 m? If it is a lengthy one, can he table it in the Library of the National Assembly?

**The Prime Minister:** Every year, the same question is being asked, and I table it. So, I will table it.

*Religious Subsidies - Programme Code 251: Financial Support to Religious Organisation (Rs74,600,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*External Communications - Programme Code 345: Civil Aviation and Port Development was called.*

**Mr Uteem:** Page 152!

*(Interruptions)*

We are on page 152, that's the *Civil Aviation and Port Development*. On item 21110 *Personal Emoluments*. May I know from the hon. Prime Minister the reason for a decrease in the emoluments for 2014, and then it goes up again? I have verified the human resource list on page 155; it seems to be the same. On item 22030 *Rent*, may I know the reason for the increase in rent and which building we are talking about here?

**Mr Obeegadoo:** I hope I am not repeating. On page 152, under item 21 Compensation of Employees - I don't think this was raised by my hon. colleague – could the hon. Prime Minister explain the reduction in compensation for employees? Indeed, in *Personal Emoluments*, inasmuch as the number of employees on the staff list does not seem to have been reduced, on the contrary. This is my first question.

Secondly, on page 154, item 31122 *Acquisition/Renewal of the Other Equipment (Air Traffic Management System)* Rs15 m. estimated in 2013; Rs30 m. estimated in 2014. May we have a status report of where we stand inasmuch as I believe the new terminals coming into operation must have entailed other requirements for the air traffic system? So, where are we? Is this to be completed soon? I note there is Rs5 m. still for 2015, presumably we are looking at new equipment to be acquired and installed rather than maintenance here.

Secondly, on that same page, item 31122, sub-item (b) Replacement of Ultra High Frequency Radio Link. Again, could we have a status report since the major expenditure is supposed to be in 2014 and, finally, sub-item (d) *New Control Tower*. We know that this was a major concern expressed. This has been a major concern as the hon. Prime Minister is surely aware, and yet, it seems that we are budgeting here for consultancy fees only. So, do I take it there will be no new control tower in 2014? Could we have some explanations there?

**Mr Jhugroo:** At page 152, under item 22030 *rent*. Can we know why there is an increase in rent from Rs3.6 m. to Rs4.2 m. and to whom it is being paid?

Second point is under item 22180 *Overseas Travel*. Can we have the list of all those persons who have been travelling during the year 2013?

**Mrs Labelle:** I am on page 153, *Sub-Programme 34502 item 22060002 Other Structures*, it is maintenance of other structures and there is an amount of Rs35m. May we have some information of what structures exactly and which maintenance companies are doing the maintenance?

**Mr Baloomoody:** At page 153 on item *22120020 Inspection and Audit Fees*, we find that for next year we are budgeting around Rs8 m. extra for this item. May we know who carries these audits? Are they Mauritian citizens of foreigners?

*(Interruptions)*

It is under *22120020 Inspection and Audit*, at page 153. Why such an increase?

**Mr Uteem:** Under the same item *22120 Fees*, the inspection and audit fees represent only a portion of the total fees. May I know from the hon. Prime Minister what the balance of fees relates to?

**Mr Seeruttun:** At page 153 item *28217001 Insurance*, R5.5 m. was earmarked for 2013, it goes up to Rs11 m. May we know why that increase and who is the beneficiary of that amount?

**Mr Ameer Meea:** On page 152 item *21110 Personal Emoluments*, we can see that there has been a decrease from Rs13 m. to Rs9 m., but in relation to that, as the Prime Minister stated yesterday, about social contributions, which is in relation to the personal emoluments, it has decreased from Rs1.1 m. to Rs100,000. Can we know why there is such a drastic decrease, because the personal emolument has not decreased to the same percentage?

**The Prime Minister:** First of all, let me say, for the New Control Tower, the Ag. Director of Civil Aviation says there is no problem, but we think we should have a New Control Tower to have a perfect view. Today, they use all sorts of cameras and computers and all those things, but still we need to provide for a control tower, but they want to go through the usual procedure. The AML has decided to start the negotiations. It will take a little bit of time, but it should not take that long. This is not something that is going to be extremely difficult to do.

I must also say that the Department has contracts with the Bureau Veritas of France and also with the United Kingdom Civil Aviation Authority - all these provisions are for technical assistance in their worthiness and flight operations and all these things. We are still doing this and the costs are recouped through the scheme of charge which is in place, I think, since February of 2010.

I think there was a question about insurance, whether the airport liability insurance covers the Department of Civil Aviation and also the airport of Rodrigues. In fact, it does. That is why the total sum insured is Rs15 billion for Mauritius and Rs900 m. for Rodrigues. With the coming into operation of the new passenger terminal, we expect to have, as we have said many times, large aircrafts like the AA3, plus the Dreamliner; the sum insured will have to be increased from Rs15 billion to actually around Rs40 billion. There has been a consultative meeting between Airports of Mauritius and the Department of Civil Aviation and this is what we think the minimum airport liability will have to be. Therefore, this will naturally have to increase the insurance premiums altogether. I am not sure whether you asked other questions, maybe you did.

*(Interruptions)*

Audit Fees? There was a question also about overseas mission. The Permanent Secretary went to Canada and Sweden and the Deputy Secretary went to Singapore. The Ag. Director of Civil Aviation had to go to the ICAO Meeting, because normally it is the Director who goes. There have been some provisions for missions in respect of officers in this region.

As for the other question, I need to get an answer from them. They were talking about the inspection of audit fees. All I can tell you at the moment - from what I have, it does not seem to be complete, whether they miss something or not, I don't know - there is no coverage. They have not given me the details. All I know is that many things fall under the fees, but for auditing specifically, they must have done a tender and decide which audits. I don't know what firm is doing the auditing, if that is the question.

**Mr Soodhun:** At page 153, item 22060 – *Maintenance*, can the hon. Prime Minister inform the House whether it is being done in-house or it has been contracted out especially to a foreign contractor?

**Mr Seeruttun:** On page 153, *Personal Emoluments*, item 21110, may we know if the Civil Aviation Services has a full-fledged Director at the moment, if not, whether that post will be filled in the near future?

**Mr Jugnauth:** On page 154, under item *New Control Tower*, may we have an idea as to how long it will take for the consultant to submit his report?

**Mr Ameer Meea:** On page 153, there is an amount for maintenance of almost Rs50 m. out of which Rs10 m. is for maintenance of plant and equipment. But there is another amount of Rs35 m. for Other Structures. May we have some details on the Other Structures?

**The Prime Minister:** First of all, somebody asked me about the post at the Civil Aviation. The post became vacant following the retirement of the former Director, Mr Gungah. The senior most Deputy Director has been appointed to act as Director of Civil Aviation as from 12 July 2013 with the approval of the Public Service Commission, of course, until the filling of the vacancy. That is the procedure. We are going through the procedure, but he is the most senior.

The hon. Member wanted to know about audit. I actually mentioned it, but I did not give you the figures. It is with Bureau Veritas of France and then the United Kingdom Civil Aviation Authority. But the hon. Member wants to know actually the amount? The present annual cost is as follows: for air worthiness, it costs Rs10 m. approximately and for the flight operations, that is, with the UK CCA it is approximately Rs15 m. These contracts will be expiring this year and a tender exercise for a new contract is being completed.

The increase in provision is to cater for VAT, Income Tax and increase in tender price due to inflation. But, all these costs, as I said earlier, will be recouped through the scheme of charge which we put in place in February of last year.

I think there was another question about other machinery and equipment, if I am not mistaken, and you asked about how long the consultant – we have already told them that this is not such a difficult thing to do because there are already controlling towers in so many countries and we are hoping that - they have told us the control tower will be functioning by 2015. We are saying perhaps if we can have it earlier so much the better, but we have not actually asked him

about the report, but my understanding is that it will be done smoothly. There is no big difficulty about this.

There was a question about the replacement of ultra high frequency radio link. This is used to connect the area control centre, that is, at Plaisance with the radio equipment at Bigara and that equipment has reached the end of its useful life and this is why provision has been made for replacement. I cannot see anything else.

*(Interruptions)*

There is one issue about maintenance; it is about provision for maintenance of buildings and other structures. There is also a contract for the Euro Cab System for air navigation. There is also the calibration of radio navigational aids which needs to be done. They need to be recalibrated. There is the support contract for aeronautical fixed telecommunication network. There is also the maintenance of the control tower of the aviation database for the voice switching communication system. But provision is being made also for the maintenance of the yards and in the area of that control. We are increasing it because we think that the price will increase.

*Police Force - Programme Code 345: Civil Aviation and Port Development (Rs358,800,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Police Force - Programme Code 261: Security Policy and Management was called.*

**Mr Obeegadoo:** May I make a suggestion, Mr Chairperson, procedure wise since the programme is spread over different pages, can we take it programme by programme instead of page by page? Because you have the first part which is the general expenditure and then staff at the back. So, it will be easier if we take it programme by programme.

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** We are taking Programme Code 261. Of course!

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Baloomoody:** On page 168...

*(Interruptions)*

It starts at 167 and it ends at page 169. With regard to the Acquisition of Vehicles at page 168, again this year ...

*(Interruptions)*

It is *Acquisition of vehicles* item 31121801 we have been asked now to vote Rs50 m. for acquisition of vehicles again for the Police. May I know from the hon. Prime Minister what is the fleet of the vehicles of the Police now and who is doing their maintenance? Again, on the *Acquisition of Security Equipment* item 31122805, Rs5 m. more than last year. On page 169 item 31122999, *Acquisition of Electronic Bracelets*. Last year, we budgeted Rs5 m.; this year Rs18 m. May we know where matters stand with regard to the electronic bracelets and how much has been spent this year on the electronic bracelets? The Crime Occurrence Tracking System (COTS), Phases I and II, for this year we budgeted Rs40m.

*(Interruptions)*

Same page! Item 31132401 (b), may we know how much we have spent in this year's Budget regarding the Rs40 m. and how many stations are equipped with that equipment because my information is that in some stations they have the equipment, but they do not have the toner. The printer does not work. They are not supplied with accessories and they are not properly serviced thereafter. So, may we know in how many stations we have this system for this year? For the Rs60 m. we are budgeting for next year, it is with regard to which phase or which stations?

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Jhugroo!

**Mr Jhugroo:** Page 168, Programme Code 261, under item 31122811 – *Acquisition of CCTV Street Surveillance System*, can the hon. Prime Minister inform the House how many monitoring units exist in the country, where are they allocated and how many Police Officers are attached in each monitoring unit? Under the same item number, can the hon. Prime Minister state why only 96 cases have been detected while monitoring the CCTV system in Port Louis and Grand Baie, and why no cases have been detected elsewhere?

At page 168, item 31121801- *Acquisition of vehicles*, can the hon. Prime Minister inform the House what vehicles have been purchased during this year for an amount of Rs11.6 m. and why this amount has been increased to Rs50.2 m. for year 2014. At page 168, item 22060004 –

*Vehicles and Motorcycles*, can the hon. Prime Minister inform the House who is doing the maintenance of the Police Vehicles and Police Motorcycles? Under item *31122408 – Upgrading of Radio Communication in Mauritius and Outer Islands*, can the hon. Prime Minister give us some more information regarding the Budget of Rs10 m. which had been earmarked for 2014 and Rs30 m. for year 2015?

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Member, I have two observations to make. Your first two questions have nothing to do with expenses and I will appeal to you to give some chance for other hon. Members to put questions. If one hon. Member puts too many questions, then others will be denied the right to put questions.

**Mr Bhagwan:** I will be very short, Mr Chairperson. At page 168, under item *31121801 – Acquisition of Vehicles*, an amount of Rs50,213,000 has been earmarked. My colleagues had asked the same question on the same code. Can I ask the hon. Prime Minister - with the problems we have had, like as today, we have had flash floods - whether the Police in the course of the purchase of vehicles will change its specifications and buy heavy duty vehicles? Even today there have been many vehicles of the Police having problems because of the flash flood - like we had this big Land Rover or whatever. Today, you have these Peugeot-type vehicles which are of short dimensions and the Police is definitely having problems. So, can I appeal to the hon. Prime Minister - at least, for the purchase of these vehicles - to make sure that they are heavy-duty vehicles?

**Dr. Sorefan:** Mr Chairperson, may I know from the hon. Prime Minister, at page 167, sub item *22030007 - Rental of Lines for CCTV and other Security Network Systems*, whether this is to the Mauritius Telecom? And on page 168, under item *31122811- Acquisition of CCTV Street Surveillance System, Beau Bassin-Rose Hill and Quatre Bornes*, can we know whether this is through a tender? To whom it has been awarded? Whether there has been due diligence on this company because I see the sum of Rs60 m. has been earmarked for 2013? And whether they have started delivering any cameras?

**The Chairperson:** Your second question has nothing to do with expenses and I appeal to hon. Members not to put too many questions, to give chance for others to put questions. Yes, hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Page 167, the *Rent...*

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Jhugroo!

**Mr Uteem:** Under item 22030007 - *Rental of Lines for CCTV and other Security Network Systems*. I note that the amount budgeted of Rs80 m. is remaining the same. I would like to know from the hon. Prime Minister...

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** I want some silence, now!

**Mr Uteem:** I would like to know from the hon. Prime Minister whether this is this not going to impact on the rent of the line for CCTV in the Budget as it was announced that there would be a reduction in private leased line?

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. On page 168 item 22900001- *Uniforms*, there has been a substantial increase from Rs27 m. to Rs40 m. this year. Can I ask the hon. Prime Minister - surely there must be a tender exercise for such an amount for the uniforms - to see to it that tenders are asked internationally?

**The Chairperson:** I appeal to the hon. Member to put question, not to make appeal, please.

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Alright! Can I ask the hon. Prime Minister whether tenders could be done on an international basis as well due to the poor quality of uniforms by Police Officers, they are complaining about the quality of the uniforms.

**The Chairperson:** We are left with 10 minutes. Hon. Mrs Labelle!

**Mrs Labelle:** Mr Chairperson, I am on Programme Code 261. I am referring to page 176 that is the funded positions, and I am referring to items 14 29 58 - *Band Constable* and 14 18 20 - *Trainee Band Constable*. I would like to know whether female officers are included under this item.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Bodha!

**Mr Bodha:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. As regards page 169, under item 31132401 - (c) *Upgrading of Passport Personalisation System*, it is a project over three years, costing Rs133 m., there was an estimate of Rs50 m. for this year. May I ask the hon. Prime Minister how much of the Rs50 m. has been spent. We have Rs58 m. for this year, may I ask him whether he can enlighten the House as to whether it is with regard to a new passport to each Mauritian citizen and, if that is so, I would like to know the cost of one unit of each passport?

**The Chairperson:** We are left with eight minutes. I think we should give the chance to the hon. Prime Minister to answer all the questions.

(*Interruptions*)

Let the hon. Prime Minister reply and then, if time is available, we will...

(*Interruptions*)

**The Prime Minister:** Let me see if I can start with this, because this is still fresh. Hon. Mrs Labelle asked about whether women constables can form part of the band. The answer is yes. Whether they actually are or not, I can't say, but there is a new person in charge of the band now, as you probably are aware. I am not sure whether you are aware. So, he will probably look into it, but my understanding is there is no bar. Whether they actually have or not, I can't really say at this point.

Now, the other question was about electronic bracelets and provisions were made for some 1,800 electronic bracelets, but they have to be accompanied by the ICT network. That's how they work. On 23 July 2013, the Consultant submitted a final report to the Police and proposed three scenarios for the acquisition of either 500 or 1,800 or 300 electronic monitoring devices for a period of five years.

Now, in view of the high financial cost for the implementation of the project and its expected benefits, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development was approached to discuss the project anew taking into consideration the cost benefit analysis. That is why the project will now be implemented in 2014. But, there have been some criticisms. You have seen

recently in the UK, somebody who had a bracelet actually managed to easily break it and get off. So, we are asking questions, but we are looking at it very carefully. That is why it is not done yet. As for the Crime Occurrence Tracking System, it has enabled the Police Department to acquire state-of-the-art IT systems and that has helped better monitoring and all this, I don't need to go through all this.

There was a pilot phase which has started in November of 2011 and it has been implemented in two divisions: Western Metropolitan South Division and the units at Line Barracks. This was completed in December 2012. The second phase which consists of gradually replacing the system to the whole force is expected to start, in fact, by December of this year. The amount earmarked for phase II was Rs80 m., but in order to implement the Phase II, a new set of servers will be required to cater for the use of the system. It will be about 1,400 users and they use it not one by one, but concurrently. Presently, the server caters for only 700 users and the cost of the new set of the servers would be around Rs100 m. which is not in it because a request has been made to the Ministry of Finance for the availability of the funds for the 2014 Budget, but for the moment provisions are only for Rs60 m. Simultaneously, the clearance of the project Prime Committee at the Ministry of Public Infrastructure is sought according to the Investment Project Manual. It will be only, Mr Chairperson, after all these clearances and approvals have been met that we will then start with the direct purchase. It would be from the State Informatics.

There was another question about maintenance and servicing of repair cars. I think I did answer a question, in fact, we changed it and we closed it. Now, cars are maintained and repaired depending on who has the concessionary garage. The police garage has been changed and regarding some equipment for the SMF, this is still done separately because this is something different. I think we have closed the workshop in 2008. As at 31 October 2013, the police have 1,550 vehicles. To answer your question directly, in fact, that's what they are doing; part of what they are doing. They have 4X4 vehicles, but we need a mortuary van, a new one.

*(Interruptions)*

And also there are two vans – I don't know whether actually I should say it, maybe I can – equipped with CCTV like they are doing in Europe. Even if you don't see, you might be seen.

You don't want to know all of them, otherwise the list will be long. I can table it. The hon. Member asked about CCTV cameras.

*(Interruptions)*

There is somebody who asked! You wanted to know actually how many people have been arrested and all this. Well, in 2009 –14.

*(Interruptions)*

What did you ask? Flic-en-Flac was the first one. We have already done it. Long time ago we have done it. The first one we put was at Flic-en-Flac.

*(Interruptions)*

You stop going to Flic-en-Flac because of this. I know!

*(Interruptions)*

What we have done, we haven't put. As for the uniforms, I am told these are qualified local suppliers and the Mauritius Standard Bureau (MSB) gives advice on the quality. I have not heard this complaint; I must say maybe you have. I think the hon. Member asked something about the passport if I am not mistaken. The current Passport Personalisation System is operational since 2005. I think you know the problem we had with the Global Enterprise Technologies which is a US based company. There were questions. Even when I was the Leader of the Opposition, I was asking questions. The initial contract was for a period of five years, renewable thereafter. GET has an exclusive copyright, Mr Chairperson, for a period of 20 years. Apparently, it is the usual practice.

Now, the present passport system, the Passport Personalisation System, is upgradeable. It cannot do what we want to do. Therefore, with a view to enhancing security, it has been decided to introduce the use of biometric ID passport as the existing arrangement with GET has an exclusive copyright clause for 20 years. The Attorney General Office has advised that there are huge financial implications for the early ending of the contract although I am asking them to relook at it because we are putting new things that they didn't have at that time. Maybe this is something that we will have to reject. They have been asked to give a quotation in the meantime

and they have given a quotation of 1,244,064 dollars. They are apparently carrying negotiations, but I am hoping that they will come and tell me before they decide to implement it because I am not sure that we have to go through these financial expenses as they are saying here because these are new products that we want to put. So, if we signed a contract in 1930, we are going to be struck by it! I don't tend to agree with this advice that is why I am asking them to look at it again. Just to recap for hon. Jhugroo, I think we are running out of time, Mr Chairperson.

**The Chairperson:** Time is up.

*Police Force – Programme Code 261: Security Policy and Management (Rs1,993,225,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

This is a proper time to suspend. One hour fifteen minutes.

*At 7.48 p.m the sitting was suspended*

*On resuming at 9.30 p.m with Mr Speaker in Chair.*

*Police Force – Programme Code 262: Community Safety and Security was called.*

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Baloomoody!

**Mr Baloomoody:** With regard to community policing, they say that thousands of people have been sensitised. May we know how these people are invited to that community policing, and whether Members of Parliament, be it in the Opposition or the Government, do form part of that Community Policing Sensitisation Programme? Because I must say that we were invited only to one in Pailles, and then we have never been invited. So, I would like to know if Members of Parliament are involved for the community policing.

I come to page 170 - *Construction of Police Stations*. I am sure that other hon. members will talk about their constituency. There is item 33112012(n) *Bain des Dames Police Station*. May I know whether land has been acquired for that Police Station, and if so, where exactly that Police Station will be?

On the same page, item 31112014 - *Construction of Regional Detention Centres*. I find that we did budget Rs10 m. for this year, and we are projecting another Rs5 m. for next year. May I know exactly where these detention centres will be, and in which areas, of course?

Now, with regard to Police Stations, there is an item for *Maintenance of Vehicles*. I come back to page 169. I take it that the difference will be for Police Stations. In fact, there have been a few new Police Stations which have been constructed, be it in Curepipe and in different areas, but unfortunately there is no maintenance. Today itself, I was, at lunch time, at Pope Hennessy Police Station, where there are three air-conditioners, and none of them is working. All the Police Officers were sweating, taking the statement of my client, and they told me that they made requisition since two years. May we know whether there is an administrator, somebody who is in the Police, or who should not be a Police Officer; a proper administrator...

**The Chairperson:** The hon. Member is making a speech.

(*Interruptions*)

**Mr Baloomoody:** I want to know...

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Silence! Silence! Hon. Member, you have already put three questions. So, if you keep on putting questions, others will not have the chance to do so. I made a remark earlier to hon. Jhugroo. So, the same applies to you. Yes, hon. Jugnauth.

**Mr Jugnauth:** Can I put three questions?

(*Interruptions*)

I need your guidance!

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Okay. Silence! Allow the hon. Member to put questions!

**Mr Jugnauth:** With regard to *Crime Control and Investigation*, at page 169, I see that we are supposed to have spent an amount of some Rs2.8 billion.

**The Chairperson:** I am sorry to interrupt. Which item is it?

(*Interruptions*)

Silence!

**Mr Jugnauth:** It is the amount that has been spent supposedly for 2013. Rs2.8 billion!

*(Interruptions)*

It is the amount that has been spent. Which item!

**The Chairperson:** Guide us to the amount, so that we can follow.

**Mr Jugnauth:** I am talking about Programme 262, *Crime Control And Investigation*, and the estimate for 2013 is Rs2,840,412. Because I see in the Strategic Note that the crime rate for the island of Mauritius has been reduced, but it says excluding drugs. So, may I know the crime rate, including drugs? That is the first question.

The second question is with regard to page 170, *Road and Public Safety*. Again, at Strategic Note, 418,353 Driving Licence Counterparts have been issued. May I know how many people have not taken their Driving Licence Counterpart, and what measures have been taken, if any, against them?

The third question is at page 171, about *Sub-programme 26204 - Combating Drugs*. I would like to know whether any amount has been earmarked, if ever Government intended to come up with a Commission of Enquiry on drugs.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Page 170, item 31112 – *Non-Residential Buildings; Construction of regional detention centres*. Concerning the Vacoas Detention Centre, building which cost us a lot of money but which one floor has never been utilised apparently because of infrastructural defects, I would like to know whether this is being remedied next year.

There is on that page a list of Police Stations to be constructed. I would like to ask about the Police Stations of Eau Coulée and Phoenix, where Police Officers work in very cramped premises. I would like to know whether this is being addressed, as well as the toilets of the old Curepipe Station, which is now the CID Office.

Turning to page 175, Mr Chairperson, I refer to item 146074 - *Assistant Superintendent of Police*. I would like to know how many vacancies we have right now on the establishment,

and whether it is foreseen that such vacancies will be filled for next year, keeping in mind that, for the CID, even for the Central Division, there is not even a DASP. There are Acting Chief Inspectors who are now in charge for the CID for that region, and likewise, if under the item...

**The Chairperson:** Your question is on Programme 261. 261 is over!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Programme 262, Mr Chairperson! Item 146074 - *Assistant Superintendent of Police*, on page 177!

**The Chairperson:** On which page is it?

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Page 177, *Sub-programme 26201 - Crime Control and Investigation*. I am referring to CID, and item 146074 - *Assistant Superintendent of Police*. Further down, item 145569 - *Chief Inspector of Police*. It is now 13 years since the last promotion exercise from Inspector to Chief Inspector. So, I would like to know how many vacancies there are out of the 77 posts on the establishment, and whether provision has been made for filling up those posts this year, and finally, under *Police Inspector - 145165*, it is more than five years.

**The Chairperson:** This is the problem. If one Member is going to put too many questions.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** No, I am done. This is my last question. In the same vein, to be logical, whether, after 5½ years, we can know how many vacancies exist on the establishment, whether that will be addressed this year. Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

**The Chairperson:** Yes hon. Mrs Labelle!

**Mrs Labelle:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. I am on *Programme 262 - Community Safety and Security*.

**The Chairperson:** I am sorry to interrupt. On which page are you?

**Mrs Labelle:** Page 169, *Programme 262 - Community Safety and Security*. I relate that to page 159 - *Bicycle Patrol Scheme*. I would like to know the number of Police Officers who are in this Unit of *Bicycle Patrol Scheme*, and which regions are being serviced.

**Mr Uteem:** At page 170, item *31112012 Construction of Police Station (m) Vallée Pitot Police Station*, an amount of Rs2 m. is earmarked for next year and Rs17 m. thereafter. So, I would like to know from the hon. Prime Minister whether the land has already been identified and if tender procedures have been launched for the construction of the Police Station. Then, on the same item *22050 Office Expenses*, there is a big jump from Rs870,000 to Rs6.8 m. so, I would like to know what accounts for that increase.

**Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun:** Mr Chairperson, at page 169, item *22060 Maintenance*, the amount earmarked for 2013 was Rs67,235,000, out of which a certain amount went to the repairs of vehicles and motorcycles and IT equipment, a total of around Rs48,000. May I ask from the hon. Prime Minister, the remaining amount accounted for which type of maintenance?

**Mr Seeruttun:** On the same item *Maintenance...*

**Mr Seeruttun:** At page 169, item *22060004 Maintenance of Vehicles and Motorcycles*, Rs41 m. is earmarked for 2013 onwards. May we know which firm is servicing those vehicles? At page 170, on item *31112012 Construction of Police Stations* paragraph (m) *Cent Gaulette Police Station*, Rs5 m. earmarked for 2014, may I know if the land whereby this station was going to be built has already been earmarked and bought, if not, whether within that Rs5 m., it includes also the cost of the land and the construction of the building to house the Police Station?

**The Prime Minister:** Let me start page by page, it might be better and easier for them to follow. So, I will start with page 169. What does it matter if I do not go one by one? Let me start by the Bain des Dames Police Station, I think it was the first question that was asked. Yes, the land has already been vested and construction is starting early 2014.

*(Interruptions)*

I would have to ask, because I am not sure which area. For the Community Policing Officers - I would have thought when it says community every person who forms part of that community, including MPs, but ...

*(Interruptions)*

What probably happens, they cannot have everybody at the same time – I would think. I know they either invite by telephone or they tell people...

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Silence!

**The Prime Minister:** But politicians are certainly free to attend any of those. I am sure the problem is that they cannot invite everybody at one go. So, maybe that's why you were invited at one time or you asked too many questions, they decided to...

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Mohamed, are you listening to me?

*(Interruptions)*

**The Prime Minister:** Yes, you asked questions, it was as if...

*(Interruptions)*

Yes, I am sure, but if you ask too many as you are doing today, you won't get the answer. One thing we must remember...

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Don't interrupt!

**The Prime Minister:** Unfortunately, you were not here, but I see you keep going in that direction. Mauritius is not the United States of America. We have limited funds, limited amounts and we have a recession that is going on still in Europe. When we have to prioritise we cannot do everything we would like to do. Of course, we would like to do, but we cannot. You do as if we can do everything at one go. We cannot! Neither you could neither we can! Anyway, at Vacoas, I am told that the repair will be contracted out soon; it is at the evaluation stage.

I think there was a question about the maintenance of Police Station, the recurrent cost. The SSU Technical Unit, in fact, carries out the maintenance, but also through the MPI and private contractors, but when it is through private contractors, it is by tender, Mr Chairperson.

*(Interruptions)*

I will come back to the question. At the DLC, I think, somebody asked how many holders. There are 650,000 holders. Out of that, 418,353 have been issued. Now, with regard to the remainder, either some passed away, some are overseas and some have just not come to collect; they do not know for what reason.

Now, about the Bike Patrol Scheme, in April 2001 it was set up under the Emergency Response Unit. On June 27 of this year, the Bike Patrol Scheme was restructured with a view to enhancing the Unit. 200 bicycles have been allocated to Police Stations and Branches.

*(Interruptions)*

But you wanted to know where. 200 bicycles have been allocated to Police Stations. Generally, they are trying to see where it would be helpful to have bike patrol; they are going by this, but if you want to have the whole list, I will have to ask them to give it to me.

*(Interruptions)*

Probably, we have fewer criminals there.

I think there was a question about the construction of regional detention centres. On average 12 persons are detained in each Division but since the Bail Act of 2011, it appears that more detainees are released on bail on parole. There are currently three detention centres used by the Police, namely at Moka Police Station, Vacoas and the Line Barracks. At Moka, they can hold 14 males and 4 females; at Vacoas 15 males and 5 females. At Line Barracks, they have 15 male cells. These cells are equipped with CCTVs (Close Circuit Television Cameras).

The one at Moka has actually some snags with it and it is being replaced at the beginning of the year. At Piton Detention Centre, 24 cells would be available there; Rs40 m. will be made available for the construction in the Budget and it going to be phased in 2014/2015. Concerning the project, the design has been the problem. They have not made the design in conformity with space. So, it is expected to start, in fact, in 2014, but late 2014.

*(Interruptions)*

At Piton! I don't know where it is, but at Piton. The project at Rose Belle Detention Centre again is at planning stage and is projected to start either late 2014 or early 2015.

There was a question about crime rate.

*(Interruptions)*

I am sorry! I think they put it together, but anyway, the crime rate for 2012 was 2.87%. It is projected that the crime rate, from what we see, but it is only a projection, might be 3.04%.

*(Interruptions)*

I have a list somewhere, but it is a long one. I think there was a question on La Gaulette Police Station. The project will be implanted in 2014, the bids have been evaluated and the contract, I believe, will be awarded shortly.

You wanted the contravention rate with regard to drug cases, including this year or whatever year. If you want to look at it that way, then in 2011, it would be 3.7% and last year it was 3.4%. It is going down in other words because it was much higher before. That is with the drug rate. Is there anything else? The time is up!

**The Chairperson:** Time is up, yes!

*Police Force - Programme Code 262: Community Safety and Security (Rs3,325,685,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Police Force - Programme Code 263: Defence, Emergency, Disaster Management and Surveillance was called.*

**Mr Obeegadoo:** I asked a question on Code 262 that was left unanswered. So I will take it up on 263. I refer to page 179, the positions of *Assistant Superintendent of Police* item 146074, *Chief Inspector of Police* item 145569, *Inspector of Police* item 145165 and I will renew my questions which relate to the Police Force in general. Can I know how many vacancies are there on the Establishment and when will these positions be filled?

On that same page, item 142958 - *Police Constable*, the Budget has come up with the figure of 700 new Police recruits. I would like to know how many of those will be effectively posted in Police Stations? The operations of the 700, if the hon. Prime Minister would wish to indicate since on this particular item, it is only a figure of 30 extra Police Constables on item 26301, for instance.

**The Chairperson:** But, hon. Member, this is an administrative matter! We have to deal with expenses! Time is running!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Yes, the point is taken. I am only asking, the Budget says 700, we are voting and I would like to know how many will be effectively posted in Police Stations.

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** I have said!

(*Interruptions*)

I have ruled.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Mr Chairperson, I would like to know how many Chairpersons there are in this Chamber. I am doing my job! We cannot constantly be interrupted by Members on the other side!

**The Chairperson:** Yes, you should not. Well, I do agree also that no interruption should occur!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. May I relate these figures on page 179 to the *Major Constraints* identified on page 160.

**The Chairperson:** I have to review my appeal that if an hon. Member is going to put many questions, others will be denied their chance to do so!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Yes, I have one last question.

**The Chairperson:** You know...

(*Interruptions*)

I have to make it very clear. I'll feel very sorry that I could not give a chance to hon. Mrs Navarre-Marie to put a question because there were so many questions asked by a single Member!

(*Interruptions*)

Silence!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** So, may I have one last question?

**The Chairperson:** If time permitting, you will be given a chance, but give others their chance to put questions.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Certainly! One last question, if I may? At page 160 first bullet, under item *High Number of Police Officers leaving the Service*, will the Prime Minister kindly indicate for, let us say, year 2012 how many officers left the service and what percentage it represents for the whole Police Force?

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** No disturbance! Yes, no disturbance, please! Okay, it is alright. Proceed!

(*Interruptions*)

**Mr Jhugroo:** At page 173, sub Programme Code 26303, item 22060007...

**The Chairperson:** Which page?

**Mr Jhugroo:** On page 173, programme Code 26303, item 22060007.

(*Interruptions*)

*James Bond! Taler to pu coner!* Being given that there is a provision of Rs30 m. in the Estimates for the year 2014, can the hon. Prime Minister inform the House how old are our helicopters and who is doing their maintenance?

On the same page, sub programme 26303...

**The Chairperson:** That is why exactly I have made an appeal and it appears...

**Mr Jhugroo:** Two questions, not more, but at least two.

**The Chairperson:** No, you have put two questions. It is enough. If time permitting, you will be given a chance to put further questions!

**Mr Jhugroo:** The second question! We have got some more.

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Listen to me!

**Mr Jhugroo:** Okay, okay.

**Mr François:** On page 172 Programme Code 263 – *Defence Disaster Management* item 31122805: *Acquisition of Security Equipment*. May I ask the hon. Prime Minister whether provision is being made from the provision of Rs53.5 m. for security equipment for the purchase of an armoured vehicle or ambulance for Rodrigues for the protection of any person during any natural disaster?

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Mr Chairperson, on page 172, item 31121: *Transport Equipment*, there has been a massive increase from 2013 to 2014 from Rs73 m. to Rs316 m. May I have the details of this sum?

**Mr Baloomoody:** Can I come to page 173, item 31121 – *Transport Equipment*. There has again been not a massive, but a double or triple massive increase in the estimates for 2014 from Rs9 m. to Rs139 m. with regard to transport equipment. May we have some details about the composition of this high increase?

**Mrs Ribot:** Mr Chairperson, I am referring to sub programme 26302 on page 173, item 22900005 – *Provisions and Stores*. Could we have some details about the increase from Rs12 m. to Rs16 m. as well as the increase in the *Publications and Stationery*, item 22100 from Rs1 m. to Rs1.3 m.?

**Dr. S. Boolell:** Sub programme 26303, the item *Helicopters* 22060007, I would like to ask the hon. Prime Minister whether these helicopters, including the item under *Maintenance* are now equipped to fly by night to intervene like in the flash floods when they had to return home early?

**Mr Uteem:** Mr Chairperson, I would like to talk on page 174, the first item on top of the page, *Acquisition of Patrol Vessels*. There was an amount budgeted for 2013 of Rs1.1 billion and next year another Rs1.1 billion. May I know from the hon. Prime Minister whether any of these patrol vessels which were supposed to be acquired this year, has been acquired and whether any tender exercise has been launched for the acquisition of these vessels if they have not yet been acquired?

**Mrs Navarre-Marie:** Mr Chairperson, on page 173 item *31121403 – Upgrading of Patrol Vessels*, we are asked to vote an amount of Rs34 m.; last year it was Rs2 m. I would like to know the number of vessels that we have and the nature of the upgrading works to be done to these patrol vessels.

**The Chairperson:** One last question to hon. Soodhun.

**Mr Soodhun:** At page 174, item *31122805 – Equipment for Commandos*. I would like to know for which commandos this equipment will be used.

(*Interruptions*)

Is it for fighting against natural commandos or professional commandos?

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Mrs Labelle.

**Mrs Labelle:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. I am on page 173 sub programme ...

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Some silence! Some silence! The hon. Member is interrupting hon. Mrs Labelle!

**Mrs Labelle:** Under sub programme 26303, my colleague has just asked this question of upgrading of vessels. My concern also relates to the *Upgrading of Aircrafts* from Rs42 m. last year, now it is Rs33 m. How many aircrafts are concerned with this upgrading?

**The Chairperson:** Last question to hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** On page 174, item *31121803 – Offshore Patrol Vessel*, can we know from the Prime Minister when that vessel would be commissioned and also whether provision has been made for vessels for the Coast Guards, even small dinghies for St Brandon?

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Prime Minister!

**The Prime Minister:** I don't have it probably in order, but I will start, Mr Chairperson, first of all, I would like to point out, because you were asking me, I don't know whether you did not agree to the question, I give general directions or policy to the Commissioner of Police. I don't do the administration, he decides. The Constitution, 71(3) is clear. So, you are asking me whether I will ask him to post, I don't know how many Policemen there and there, it's not me. He decides on administration. I don't give him that kind of instruction.

Now, there was a question about vacancies and questions have been asked in Parliament about vacancies and I explained. The process is ongoing, but there is going to be a reorganisation of the Police. We need to make sure that we get the best Police Officers in certain positions. Not necessarily as it was done before, on seniority. That is why the reorganisation is going on at the moment. So, as soon as that is done, they will. The process is ongoing. You have asked about those who have been promoted, you are asking about those who have not yet been promoted. But, they are going to be promoted as soon as this exercise is finished.

You wanted to know how many Police Officers are retiring. I can give you the figures. For this year, we have the figures of 02 October, it is 274. I also want to point out, we have put the figure of 700 Police Officers for new recruits. As I say, I will not ask the Commissioner of Police where he will put these recruits. But, obviously, they will go to Police Stations. But there is a possibility that if we feel there is need to increase we will increase it during the year.

Now, as for the question about whether the helicopters can fly at night, two of them can fly at night. But I must point out that - I think I answered a question in Parliament - it is very risky anywhere for helicopters to fly at night. But, they can fly at night, two of them. I think somebody wanted to know about the fleet vessels, National Coast Guard. In fact, we have four. I can't remember who asked that question. We have four National Coast Guard vessels and as you know, they have asked questions in Parliament, we are getting a new offshore patrol vessel which will be fully equipped and this is under construction. I think it is going to be here very soon.

We are also looking for ten Fast Interceptor Boats and two Waterjet Fast Attack boat. Now, there is a draft agreement on the line of credit with India, but it is the Exim Bank which will have to sign the agreement. They take a bit longer than we expected for processing, but it is

expected that the ten Fast Interceptor boats, these agreements will be signed by early next year. As for the two Waterjet Fast Attack Crafts, it was initially proposed that it could be done under the *Grant* element, but it is now being shifted to the line of credit element. The second ship will be funded under the Indian Line of Credit, because it will come from the same yard. It might be administratively easier for us to do so.

There was also a question about the number of aircrafts. I thought somebody asked a question about the number of aircrafts. I thought, maybe I am wrong. Well, in fact, I must tell you we have two Dornier aircrafts and one defender aircraft, but one of the Dornier aircraft was acquired in 1990 and the other one in 2004. Now, the one acquired in 1990 had to be sent to India, this is the usual, it's what they call a midlife upgrade and we are expecting it back early next year. They were acquired in 1992, but the spares were given by the Indian Navy; so, that's it. But, we are also planning to acquire another new Dornier aircraft and again, it appears it will be the problem, whether it would be under the Line of Credit or through guarantee. It's probably going to be one or the other.

And then, the hon. Member is asking about commandos. I am not sure what the hon. Member wanted to know actually.

*(Interruptions)*

**The Prime Minister:** Yes. They received training by the Indian MARCOS team in different commando operations. I must tell you, they are very professional and very good and they have also training. They participate in exercises with the Indian Navy, the US Navy and the French Navy.

**Mr François:** I did not catch the answer of the hon. Prime Minister with regard to the purchase of an armoured vehicle for Rodrigues.

**The Prime Minister:** There is an agreement purchase for Rodrigues specifically.

**Mr Jhugroo:** Mr Chairperson, regarding helicopters, I am still waiting the answer from the hon. Prime Minister regarding the maintenance.

**The Prime Minister:** We have two Chetak helicopters. One was given in 1976 and the other one in 1987. Then, there is an Alouette which was donated by the French Government in 1987. There is a Fennec twin-engined helicopter which was acquired in April 1997 and then, there is the twin-engined helicopter acquired in November 2009. Generally, they go to India if they have major servicing to be done.

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Mr Chairperson, I did not get an answer for the *Transport Equipment* of Rs316 m.

**The Prime Minister:** Time is up, but I can try to accommodate. Under which item?

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Item 31121.

**The Prime Minister:** What page? At Page 172, yes, the *Transport Equipment*, there is a provision here for acquisition of vehicles, in fact. There is one unit for an armoured vehicle which will - I don't want to give too much detail - be remotely controlled, let's say. There is one unit for explosive handling unit. We already have, but we need one unit for armoured pay loader, 10 double cabs, 5 double cabs. I am sorry, the 10 double cabs will be four by four, then, five double cabs, one high roof station wagon, there would be six light armoured personnel carriers. If you wanted to ask why new vehicles, it's because they are old and we have to replace them. And the purchase of six light armoured personnel carriers will be under the new Indian Line of Credit.

**The Chairperson:** We are left with two minutes. Yes, hon. Labelle!

**Mrs Navarre-Marie:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. On page 174, under item 31122805 - *Acquisition of Security Equipment, (a) Equipment for Commandos*. We are invited to vote a sum of Rs18 m. for 2014. I would like to know from the hon. Prime Minister if this 'Commandos' is the same one which the Commissioner of Police referred to in one newspaper?

**The Chairperson:** Is this a question, hon. Mrs Navarre-Marie?

*(Interruptions)*

Yes, one minute left. The hon. Prime Minister may answer.

**The Prime Minister:** Let me answer about the equipment.

(*Interruptions*)

They don't want to listen.

**The Chairperson:** We are left with one minute!

**Mr Ameer Meea:** If I can add to what my hon. colleague just stated, this *Equipment for Commandos*, is it the equipment that would be used to combat the commando that the Commissioner of Police stated in the newspaper?

**The Prime Minister:** I don't want to comment on what he commented on the newspapers, but what I can say is that is that we need the equipment.

(*Interruptions*)

**Mr Jhugroo:** On page 173, item 22020009, being given that there is a provision ...

**The Chairperson:** Time is over!

(*Interruptions*)

I don't want any comment! I decide who to stay in this Chamber and who to go!

*Police Force - Programme Code 263: Defence, Emergency, Disaster Management and Surveillance (Rs3,411,090,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Government Printing Department – Programme Code 271: Government Printing Services was called.*

Yes, hon. Obeegadoo!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Mr Chairperson, I note on page 182 that the very first item in terms of *Strategic Directions for 2014 – 2016* is improving quality. Since there have been some quality issues...

**The Chairperson:** You said page 182!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Yes, indeed. *Strategic Directions – improve quality.* My question is since we do know there have been some quality assurance issues at the Department, I would like to know what has been budgeted to ensure to meet the strategic directions and adequate quality assurance in the work of the department for 2014?

**Mr Bhagwan:** On page 185, item 22 *Goods and Services*, Rs 41.9 m, can I know from the Prime Minister whether the Government Printing Office contracts out Government works outside to private printing companies as well?

**Mr Uteem:** Mr Chairperson. Still on page 185, last item 22100001 *Paper and Materials*, may I know from the hon. Prime Minister who is the supplier who won the award to supply Rs25m. worth of paper?

**Mr Soodhun:** On page 186, item 31122802 *Acquisition of IT Equipment*, in 2013 a sum of Rs1.5 m. was earmarked and the provision for 2014 is Rs500,000. I would like to know why it has been decreasing?

**Mr Jhugroo:** On page 185, item 22090 *Security Services*, can the hon. Prime Minister inform the House which company is doing the security services?

**The Prime Minister:** First of all, let me say about the Printing Department. It is because it is embarking on ISO Certification Project. It has to ensure quality and service. The other question was whether it contracts out: no, it doesn't. Regarding Papers and Materials, there is an increase in provision for paper; it is due mainly to the fact that some items of paper whether they call white bond paper 70 and 80 GMS. It is apparently an essential paper used for various works and manifold green paper used for lottery tickets. A reasonable stock level should always be maintained. Hence, the quantity of these items has been increased for the year 2014 compared to the year 2013. Regarding materials such as plates ink and printing solutions, an increase of 2% in cost has been noted in 2013. As for the other question, I take it because it is together with the security services. These machinery cost a lot of money hence provision has been made for 2014 for a more effective and efficient security service on a 24-hour basis. Presently, the contract for security services has been awarded after tendering procedures to security and property protection agency company limited for Rs162,150 monthly which ends at

the end of this month. The contract price may also increase following the tender exercise. There has been a new tender exercise for the new contract by whoever.

**The Chairperson:** On page 186, acquisition of the IT!

**The Prime Minister:** I see that there was a question about acquisition of IT. In fact, they need one heavy duty printer for the graphic section. There is a need for upgrading of pre-press work flow. It is called in position software. They need to be fully compatible and to the speed of the work processes, the work flow has to be upgraded because of the software version incompatibilities. Therefore, the priority objective is to invest in the new technologies, for example, Graphic Design. You might ask the question because you have noted a decrease in provision. This is due to the fact that only two printing equipment namely – one is called a stitching machine and the other one digital black and white press. They would be purchased in 2014 compared to six printing machines purchased in 2013, there is less, two instead of six.

**Mr Uteem:** The hon. Prime Minister did not answer my question on page 185. Who won the award to supply Rs25 m. worth of paper materials?

**The Chairperson:** Publications and Stationery!

*Government Printing Department – Programme Code 271: Government Printing Services (Rs122,063,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Programme Code 281: Meteorological Services was called.*

**Mr Bhagwan:** On page 193, Mr Chairperson, item 31 *Acquisition of Non-Financial Assets*, can I know from the hon. Prime Minister whether there are new equipment which have been bought by the Meteorological services with regard to the early Tsunami warning and where these equipment have been installed? And also whether new equipment have been bought for early warning with regard to flash floods, as we have the case today?

**Mr Jugnauth:** The third programme of 281, item *Acquisition of Doppler Weather Radar*, in fact, for four years we have earmarked about Rs658 m. to buy that equipment whereas I can recall, in the past, the hon. Prime Minister has said that we have been given a grant of Rs500 m. by JICA. May I know the total cost of this radar?

**Mr Baloomoody:** Shall I take it on compensation of employees, on page 192, my question here is a general one.

**The Chairperson:** No general question! Questions should be on an item of expenditure.

**Mr Baloomoody:** Can I ask the hon. Prime Minister, whether provision has been made for SMS messages to be sent to the inhabitants with regard to flash flood warnings? Like today, there has been flash flood, be it in Pailles, Curepipe, Quatre Bornes or Richelieu, but we have not received any SMS. I would like to know whether any provision has been made for a flash flood warning.

**Mr Jhugroo:** Page 193, item *31122817 - Acquisition of Doppler Weather Radar*. Can the hon. Prime Minister inform the House whether the radar has already been purchased, and if so, where it has been installed?

**Mr Ganoo:** I come on the same item *Acquisition of Doppler Weather Radar*. I don't think this question has been asked. Would the hon. Minister tell the House what will be the final cost of this radar. The answers that the Prime Minister has given to the House, or the impression that he gave was that the only investment that we would have to make would be regarding the building, and that the radar would be given to us by way of a grant, as hon. Jugnauth has said. Would he clarify the situation?

**Mr Obeegadoo:** I would refer the Prime Minister to the very first bullet on page 189. I am sure he shares my surprise at the achievement mentioned there, when we remember the 11 casualties of the flash floods earlier this year. I would then take him to page 191, the Performance Indicator, under Meteorological Services, which says '*Timely provision of weather, water and climate information for the citizens*', and then there are percentages, which I simply cannot understand. What are we measuring here? What are these performance indicators about? How can we have percentage of timely provision? Could the Prime Minister enlighten the House please? Page 191, under S2, Service Standards (Indicators), timely provision, which is not quantifiable, and then precise percentages for 2012, 2014, and so on.

**Mr Soodhun:** Page 194, under Salary Code *19 00 96*, can the hon. Prime Minister inform the House who is the Director?

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Jhugroo!

**Mr Jhugroo:** Page 193, under item 31113027 - *Construction of wall*, there is a provision of Rs800 m. for year 2013, and Rs1 m. for year 2014. Can we know where is the wall being constructed?

**The Chairperson:** The hon. Prime. Minister may answer.

**The Prime Minister:** Let me just clarify about the Doppler radar that the hon. Member was asking. The hon. Member got it right; I answered a question in Parliament on this. This is following discussions with the Japanese Government. They have signed an agreement. It is a grant agreement between the Government of Mauritius and the Government of Japan. The amount, if I convert it from yen to rupees, is Rs345 m. The project is scheduled to start in April 2014, and they hope to complete it by September 2015. But the problem is that we have to pull down this actual building, because they have to do it differently. The experts came from Japan. They had a look. They decided how this building has to be. So, we have to pull it down, and this could be to our cost. The yearly cost will also be ours. They are just giving us the radar, which is costing Rs345 m. It is the same location, but not exactly the same place, from what I understand. They might be moving it slightly.

As for the SMS, - and I am trying to find out - I think Telecom and Emtel have agreed to give the SMS service for warnings.

As for equipment for tsunamis, I think somebody asked. Again, I must say that I go to the Clinton Global Initiative, and already he is helping us. I tried to persuade President Clinton to try to help us on different areas if it is possible. The problem is, as you know, Mauritius is qualified as a middle income country, and therefore, we don't get a lot of things that other countries get. He accepted, and has given us a grant of \$300,000, with which certain equipment would be acquired. We won't have to pay for it.

As for the Director, it is Mr Beebeeaun. I don't know whether I have missed anything. I don't think so, but if there is anything else, I will tell.

*Prime Minister's Office – Programme Code 281: Meteorological Services (Rs395,709,500) was, on question put agreed to.*

*Mauritius Prisons Service – Programme Code 291: Management of Prisons was called.*

**Mr Baloomoody:** Mr Chairperson, if I may take the hon. Prime Minister to page 196 with regard to - I don't know why the Prison calls it a major achievement - 12 Somalian pirates kept in custody. Can I ask the hon. Prime Minister, with regard to the 12 Somalians, whether there is special regime for them at the prison? When I look at the personnel, I don't find any interpreter for the Somalians in the Beau Bassin Prison. So, can I ask the hon. Prime Minister whether we have budgeted for special regime for them or an interpreter? Because apparently this is creating much tension in the prison.

With regard to overcrowding at the prison, on the same page, we know that the Melrose Prison will be operational apparently next year, but no provision has been made for additional staff. So, can I ask the hon. Prime Minister whether the prison will be operational in 2014 to alleviate the overcrowding problem?

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Soodhun! Hon Bhagwan! Hon. Obeegadoo!

**Mr Soodhun:** Item 292!

**The Chairperson:** Put your question, hon. Obeegadoo!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Programme 291, page 199, my question concerns the Outcome Indicator. The Prime Minister usually doesn't answer my questions concerning indicators. I hope he will answer this one about the reduction in percentage of detainees in prisons more than once. The target moves from 77% in 2012 to 60% in 2014. This is the target. I would like to know how, in terms of the budgetary provision, we are going to move significantly from 77% to 60%?

I come to my second question. Under *Programme 291*, further down the line, *S2, Prisons Management, SS1, Service Standards (Indicators)*, the average occupancy level, by reference to the certified normal accommodation, I would like to know from the Prime Minister what this means when it says 130%, I take it for 2012, and even it will take us up to 2016 to reach 100%.

Could the Prime Minister please explain to us what these indicators actually mean? I have one last question.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** This year, we had this unfortunate incident where a Police Officer – I think it was from Midlands – went to the prison accompanied by somebody who was not authorised, and managed to get in. So, I would like to know, looking at the items here, at page 201, maybe under item 22 *Goods and Services*, what steps are being taken within the Budget provided for 2014 to ensure that security is tightened and no such incident occurs again.

**Mr Baloomoody:** On page 201, *Programme 291: Management of Prisons*. Under item *Overseas Travel*, I find that there is 100% increase over what we are budgeting this year and what we have budgeted for last year.

**The Chairperson:** Item 22180!

**Mr Baloomoody:** Exactly! Item 22180 *Overseas Travel*, if we can have some particulars about the mission.

**Mr Uteem:** Same page, last item 28211 *Transfers to Non-Profit Institutions*. May we know which non-profit institution we are talking about here?

**The Chairperson:** The Prime Minister may answer.

**The Prime Minister:** I think I was asked about interpreters for Somali pirates. We don't have to pay for this. This is provided by the UNODC.

(*Interruptions*)

Yes. They say they are providing. So, I assume they are providing when they need, but they say they are providing.

(*Interruptions*)

There is a special Unit at Beau Bassin Prison, that's where they are.

I think you asked about the new prison which the European Union is doing. It is going to house around 50 pirates. As I have just said, it is temporary at the Beau Bassin Prison.

You wanted to know about staffing at Melrose Prison. It was reported in the press, I think, that they say they have an acute shortage of staff. In fact, no shortage of personnel is

envisioned. This is what the Prison Department is saying. Training is underway for officers to be deployed, including 123 trainee Prison Officers who have been recruited in May of this year. So, there will be a deployment of staff with respect to the number of Officers. I have a list here; also upon the closure of La Bastille, the 39 Officers thereat will be redeployed at Melrose Prison so that they do not expect to see a shortage, which is what we are being told.

Regarding the Somali prisoners who have made complaints, I have to point out that it does not seem to hold water. Also, you might be interested to know that where they were complaining they were brutalised by the Police in the search room, this is actually equipped with CCTV. On the same day, a Magistrate on the Intermediate Court started an enquiry and the CCTV footage - but we are quite sure, there is nothing there.

*(Interruptions)*

Yes, - the CCTV camera is there; people do all sorts of things.

Another point was raised about the transfer to non-profit institutions. This is to cater for payment of subsistence allowance to detainees on release. An amount of Rs60 is payable to the detainees for each year of imprisonment and there is a committee which is responsible to determine the quantum payable to the detainees. I think there was a question on mission...

**The Chairperson:** Overseas travel!

*(Interruptions)*

**The Prime Minister:** I will tell you in a minute, I'll have to see where I have put it. Hon. Obeegadoo said that I don't tell him about percentage. I just mentioned the percentage and crime statistics just now. So, I don't know what you are referring to.

*(Interruptions)*

Either you do not hear or you are referring to something which is absolutely wrong.

*(Interruptions)*

Indicators? I always tell you about the percentage when you ask! Tell me one that I did not tell you! Don't say things when you do not know what you are saying. Now, you wanted to know about the percentage...

*(Interruptions)*

No, no! You cannot say what is not true. Tell me which percentage I did not tell you, I will tell you then.

*(Interruptions)*

But go back wherever you want to go, I don't care! But, tell me where, because I have just given you a few statistics just now.

*(Interruptions)*

What, you cannot hear? I won't answer you then!

*(Interruptions)*

No, no! Don't think I will let you get away with it! This is your manner. I know your manner!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** On a point of explanation. All I was saying, Prime Minister, and this is no...

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Silence!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Chair, what I meant and this is not intended to be offensive in any way, that amongst the many questions that the Prime Minister answers on previous items, he missed out on questions pertaining to indicators, because those do not require precise figures.

I was asking explanations as to the nature of the indicators and the significance of the indicators. For instance, under this vote, I had asked - if I may clarify for the Prime Minister - how we are within the Budget for 2014 meant to move from 77% of prisoners reoffending to 60%. I wanted to understand how that target is reflected in the Budget we are being asked to approve and I was more specific, I went to average occupancy level and I asked to be explained what that meant this issue of certified normal accommodation. Are we to understand that our prisons are presently overpopulated to the extent of 130%? Is this a percentage? It is rather obscure. So, without being offensive, the question was simply an appeal to the Prime Minister to answer such questions.

**The Prime Minister:** As you ruled out, Mr Chairperson, they asked 50 questions and I am supposed to answer in five minutes. So, I have to choose which ones. I can tell you for this one.

*(Interruptions)*

Don't ask 50 questions then, just ask one question, I will tell you; and you have this habit of doing that.

I think you mentioned about the percentage. You asked about how 77% will become 60%. Measures are taken to address this issue. They have the rehabilitation programmes where they allow them to do some earning scheme. There is a pre-release programme to facilitate social reintegration of released detainees – once they are released. They are aiming at reducing the rate of re-offenders, which is high in every other country as well, not just Mauritius. They want to introduce what they call the world best practices.

In the Prison administration there is the vocational training and then they collaborate with the NGOs. Also they get help under the CSR programme. But, as you said yourself, it is not a precise figure, but they are going in the direction of improving the service.

As for the average occupancy level, the target, in fact, indicates the level of occupancy - not the way you are working it out. It is calculated by dividing the number of detainees by the bed capacity, as it is usually done. It is a standard level. For example, the maximum capacity at Beau Bassin - I am told - is 1,034 and the present number of detainees is 1,273. So, the occupancy rate actually is 11% - not as you are thinking, that it is higher. Therefore, it is the same if you calculate it. So, it is not as you are thinking, it is not 130%. From my understanding it is the average occupancy that we are talking, and this is how it is worked out.

There was something else about outcome indicators. Again, it is a percentage - as is said here - when there is sentence for more than one year and they have had vocational training or they are doing something else. It is a target; whether they will reach the target or not, but they think they hope to reach the target. That is what they are saying here.

*Programme Code 291: Management of Prisons (Rs63,618,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Mauritius Prisons Service - Programme Code 292: Custody and Rehabilitation of Detainees was called.*

**Mr Baloomoody:** Can I take the hon. Prime Minister to page 205 under the 292 Programme Code. We find that under the *Custody and Rehabilitation of Detainees*, no provision

has been made for *Prisons Medical and Health Officer*. There is no provision for a *Principal Hospital Officer (Female)*. No provision is made for a *Psychologist*, for a *Prison Pharmacist* and, if we turn to the next page, hon. Prime Minister, the *Prisons Dental Assistant*. May I know what is the position with regard to these posts as, of course, they are quite important for the rehabilitation of detainees?

**Mr Bhagwan:** On page 202, *Upgrading of Prisons (a) Beau Bassin Prison*, can I know from the Prime Minister whether...

**The Chairperson:** Which item?

**Mr Bhagwan:** Beau Bassin Prison, I find that a sum of Rs12 m. is being earmarked. Can I know whether consideration has been given to the grievances of the inhabitants in the neighbourhood of Beau Bassin Prison which is the Mont Roches region, where we have been having a lot of problems concerning an equipment which was placed in the prison and they are still, up to now, using their normal telephone apparatus? May I ask whether in that particular project of Rs12 m. action has been taken to renew this equipment?

Concerning the security equipment, there is need to update the security equipment around Beau Bassin Prison.

**Mr Jhugroo:** At page 202, under item 31112011, being given that there is a planned provision of Rs1 m. in 2015 and Rs25 m. for year 2016, can I ask the hon. Prime Minister...

**The Chairperson:** 2016?

**Mr Jhugroo:** Yes.

**The Chairperson:** No question on 2016.

**Mr Jhugroo:** For the construction of prison wards in Jawaharlal Nehru Hospital?

**The Chairperson:** No question on 2016! Put your question on 2014!

**Mr Jhugroo:** I want to know whether there is any provision for wards in other hospitals actually in Mauritius.

**The Chairperson:** 2014.

**Mr Jhugroo:** For 2014?

**The Chairperson:** Yes. Yes, hon. Soodhun.

**Mr Soodhun:** At page 203, under item *31122811 concerning the Acquisition of CCTV Surveillance Systems*, I find that there is no provision for 2014.

**The Chairperson:** Page 203?

**Mr Soodhun:** Yes, 203.

**The Chairperson:** Yes, page 203.

**Mr Soodhun:** So, I think that there is no provision for 2014.

**The Chairperson:** Yes.

**Mr Soodhun:** Can the Prime Minister inform the House as to whether all the prisons are provided with CCTV camera services?

**The Chairperson:** Yes. Hon. Bodha!

**Mr Bodha:** Mr Chairperson, with regard to item *31122*, we have the *Other Machinery and Equipment* for Rs24 m. spent in 2013. May I ask the hon. Prime Minister whether it has been envisaged to have a telephone jamming system in the prisons?

**Mr Uteem:** I would like to go to page 202, item *31112011 – Construction of Prisons (a) New Prison at Melrose*. Last year, the hon. Prime Minister told us that this year the prison would be ready and now it is still not ready and it is expecting to open next year. May I know from the hon. Prime Minister what is the total cost incurred to date on the construction of this prison and whether any penalty clause has been applied for late delivery, if there is any late delivery?

**Mrs Labelle:** I am on item *31112011*.

**The Chairperson:** Which page?

**Mrs Labelle:** Page 202.

**The Chairperson:** Yes.

**Mrs Labelle:** I am on item *Construction of Prisons*. Regarding the *Prison for Pirates*, there was a sum of Rs46 m. voted for last year and there is a sum of Rs2 m for this year. May I ask the hon. Prime Minister where matters stand regarding this prison? What is the status of this building?

Also, with your permission, regarding the *Open Prison Facility for Women*, I find that there is a sum of Rs13.8 m. earmarked for next year. May I ask whether a location or land has been identified for the Open Prison Facility for Women?

**Mr Obeegadoo:** May I?

**The Chairperson:** Yes.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** At page 202, item 22140 – *Medical Supplies, Drugs and Equipment*, I remember the Prime Minister had agreed that we should move towards compulsory medical screening of prisoners at the time they are admitted to a prison and at the time they are released, having regard to HIV Aids and also drug addiction. May I know how, within this budget of Rs2 m., we are moving towards that target in 2014?

The second question, further down, item 22900021 – *Clothing and Bedding*, the budget increases threefold from one year to the next, maybe the Prime Minister would care to explain.

**The Chairperson:** The Prime Minister may answer.

**The Prime Minister:** I will start one by one. Let me first say about the jamming equipment. Jamming equipment will be installed at Melrose and the Melrose Prison is ready. We are about to open it.

As for Beau Bassin, we had this complaint that people could not use their phone. We have asked that this equipment be removed, a new equipment is being given, I think, by the UNODC, but I will have to check whether it is going to create the same problem, we hope not.

As for the CCTV cameras, somebody asked me whether they have it in all the prisons; in fact, no. We have the Beau Bassin Central Prison, the New Wing Prison at Beau Bassin, the Phoenix Prison and the GRNW Remand Prison. They are equipped with CCTV cameras.

The Women Prison at Beau Bassin is going to be completed. It should be about to be completed this month. At Petit Verger, it is again expected to be completed this month and at Barkly, for the women, it is still at evaluation stage. I must also say that the CCTV system at Beau Bassin is being actually upgraded.

As for the Correctional Youth for boys and the Richelieu Open Prison, we cannot do it this year. So, it will be done at a later stage. The three CCTV control rooms are being manned on a 24-hour basis by two officers.

I am trying to answer as many as I can. Somebody asked a question about psychologists. This is being provided for by NGOs at the moment.

*(Interruptions)*

There was a question about Open Prison Facility for Women. The hon. Member wanted to know where it will be located. It is going to be adjacent to the present Barkly Women Prison at Beau Bassin. It will be constructed in the next financial year. Tenders are, in fact, being launched this month and it is expected to be completed in 2014.

I think there was something about the medical tests, the hon. Member wanted to know how we do the screening.

*(Interruptions)*

In fact, I must say, first of all, there is a voluntary repeat test which is being undertaken, I think, between six and eight weeks and prior to release also. But it is voluntary, I must say at this point. All detainees are being screened at the moment on admission and then, if they are found to be positive, they are being treated. Two Nursing Officers have been recruited on a contract basis to dispense that. Four Prison Medical Officers and 33 male and eight female Nursing Officers are the ones who provide the healthcare.

I thought the hon. Member said, at some point, that he feels that the amount is not enough. We are trying to get, again, additional fund from the Global Initiative. Actually, I think they are giving, if I am not mistaken, already. This is why the amount is not increasing. But, I will have to confirm this.

**Mr Baloomoody:** Mr Chairperson, we just learned from the hon. Prime Minister that in this Budget provision is made for allowing NGOs to enter the prison. Can I ask the hon. Prime Minister whether provision is made for NGOs who are in the human rights field to be allowed to visit prisoners as other NGOs who are allowed to visit prisoners for medical reason?

**The Chairperson:** This question has nothing to do with expenses. Hon. Mrs Labelle!

**Mrs Labelle:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Mr Chairperson, the hon. Prime Minister has just mentioned that in lieu of psychologists, NGOs are providing psychological support to the prisoners. May I ask the hon. Prime Minister which NGO is providing this psychological support to the prisoners?

**The Prime Minister:** In fact, the reason, maybe I should have elaborated a bit more, there is a scheme of service for the post which has been prescribed, but eventually, it will be taken over by the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life. But in the meantime, they have just said NGOs; I can't tell you, maybe they will be able to tell me which NGOs actually are doing it.

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** The hon. Prime Minister has not replied to my question about Melrose Prison. What was the total cost incurred to date and whether there has been any penalty clauses applied in this case?

**The Prime Minister:** I did not reply, because I answered a PQ on this recently giving all the details. If you look at it, you will see it, because I answered the PQ. I did not bring it here with me.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Mr Chairperson, the hon. Prime Minister gave us an answer concerning medical screening. I did not quite understand the answer. I had referred, on the one hand to HIV aids, on the other hand, to drug addiction. I heard the hon. Prime Minister say there is a

voluntary test six to eight weeks after admission and then, he said later: all prisoners are actually screened. So, which is which? Are we talking here about HIV or are we talking about drug addiction?

**The Prime Minister:** I can clarify it immediately. You know when I said all detainees are medically screened on admission; it is all. It is not voluntary, it is all. But, when they leave there is a possibility of a voluntary, then, repeat test if they want to take it; if they don't, they don't, because it is voluntary. But on entry they are all tested. As for the NGO, you wanted to know, it's PILS and I am told that *bona fide* NGOs are allowed to in the prisons subject to the clearance. They need to have clearance before they can go because of security. I suppose, I have answered the question.

**Mr Baloomoody:** Can I take the hon. Prime Minister to page 204, under item *17 74 88 - Assistant Commissioner of Prisons*; no provision has been made. *Female Assistant Commissioner of Prisons*, no provision has been made. *Superintendent of Prisons/Senior Superintendent of Prisons*, no provisions. *Superintendent of Prisons/Senior Superintendent of Prisons (Industries)*, no provision. So, can I ask the hon. Prime Minister what is the position with regard to these posts?

**The Prime Minister:** It is the same procedure that we are using even though there is no provision.

**The Chairperson:** No, but this question is under Programme Code 291. We are at Programme Code 292. So, no need to answer the question.

*(Interruptions)*

**The Prime Minister:** But, in any case...

**The Chairperson:** Yes, but we have already voted Programme Code 291. We can't go back. Yes, Programme Code 292.

**Mr Uteem:** On Programme Code 292, Mr Chairperson, under item *22900 - Other Goods and Services*.

**The Chairperson:** Which Page?

**Mr Uteem:** On Page 202, under items 22900 - *Other Goods and Services* and 22900029 - *Enhanced Earnings for Detainees*, may I know from the hon. Prime Minister whether there has been any increase in the rate that is paid for work done by prisoners or how he justifies the increase in the budgeted amount?

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Prime Minister!

**The Prime Minister:** I am not quite sure whether you are talking about whether there was an increase in rate?

(*Interruptions*)

Yes. There is an increase in rate from 400 to 500 monthly and it concerns 1,300 detainees and then, there is also in that the purchase of clothing and bedding for the new Melrose Hospital. They have also had to increase the quantities of flour and bakery and all these. I suppose that covers it.

There was something else. I think you asked me that - maybe I did not answer. There was a question about - I did not say it - whether there was a penalty clause for Melrose Prison. I did not answer it because it's in the PQ. But, penalty clause was not in the PQ. It is not applied since the Government of Mauritius decided that when we went to Singapore, the prison was already being constructed and there was a change of Government. When I went to Singapore, I saw some projects that we could do here, but it was not in the project. So, we decided that we will change it for better security. So it cannot be a penalty clause, because we are the ones who changed it.

*Mauritius Prisons Service - Programme Code 292: Custody and Rehabilitation of Detainees (Rs807,714,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

(*Interruptions*)

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

**Mr Lesjongard:** Mr Chairperson, may I refer the hon. Deputy Prime Minister to page 213, Programme Code 441, item 22130 - *Studies and Surveys*, can we have an indication from

the hon. Deputy Prime Minister what are the studies for the year 2014 and can we also have an indication of the studies carried out in 2013 and whether those studies are available?

Under item 22180 - *Overseas Travel (Mission and Capacity Building)*, can we have an indication as to who were those who benefitted from those overseas travel and which were the countries they went to? And on page ...

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** No. Time permitting, I will allow you.

**Mr Ganoo:** On page 214, under item 26313098 - *Utility Regulatory Authority*, the sum of Rs1 m. has been budgeted for this year, Rs1.5 m. for next year, and Rs3 m. in 2015, can the hon. Deputy Prime Minister provide information to the House as for the figure of Rs1 m. for this year, how this money has been spent and who is the...

**The Chairperson:** Page 214.

**Mr Ganoo:** On page 214, item 26313098 - *Utility Regulatory Authority*.

**The Chairperson:** Yes, proceed.

**Mr Ganoo:** Has the Authority been set up? Who is the Chairperson of this Authority and who are the other members of this Authority?

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Bhagwan!

**Mr Bhagwan:** I see on this page 213, *Studies and Surveys*, I take one particular case which the hon. Deputy Prime Minister is aware concerning Cité Marcel Cabon at Albion. Can I know from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister whether in that particular vote - *Studies and Surveys* - the study for the work at Cité Marcel Cabon - which you are aware - has been done and whether provisions will be made for the implementation and purchase of land to alleviate the problem of the people of Cité Marcel Cabon, Albion? I think the hon. Minister is aware of the particular problem.

**The Chairperson:** But, hon. Bhagwan, your question is about Programme Code 442 - *Power Services*

(*Interruptions*)

Which page? Page 218, which item? Item 22130. Hon. Seeruttun!

**Mr Seeruttun:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. On page 213, item 22030 *Rent*, there has been an increase in the amount earmarked for 2014 compared to 2013. May we know what justifies that increase? Whether there has been an increase in the surface area being rented and who is the lessor?

**Mr Nagalingum:** On page 214, item 28222014, *Water Tank Grant Scheme*, I do not find any sum earmarked for 2014?

**Mr Soodhun:** On page 214, 28222014, *Water Tank Grant Scheme*, no provision has been made.

**The Chairperson:** What is your question?

**Mr Jhugroo:** Mr Chairperson, on page 214, same item, *Water Tank Grant Scheme*, can I know from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister how many persons have benefitted from this scheme in year 2013?

**Mr Obeegadoo:** On page 213, Item 22130 *Studies and Surveys*, questions were raised by two hon. colleagues before me. Is this dramatic reduction linked to the NEC which is now producing its own report and will the hon. Deputy Prime Minister clarify whether within the sums budgeted, there is something for the NEC or is the NEC something under PMO and with no relation whatsoever to the DPM's office?

**Mr Baloomoody:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Can I refer the hon. Deputy Prime Minister to page 218 with regard to staffing personnel...

**The Chairperson:** Sorry, page 218. Programme 442, not yet!

**Mr Baloomoody:** It is right. On page 218, with regard to the staffing, can I know why no provision has been made for an Assistant Permanent Secretary on item 02 50 75, for a Principal Planner 26 64 79, for Manager of Internal Control, for Internal Control/Senior Internal

Control Officer and for Higher Executive Officer? Why is it that no provision has been made for these posts?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Yes, Mr Chairperson. I go to *Rent*. The increase is for additional parking space. Item 22130 *Studies and Surveys*, Marcel Cabon is not included in this programme. Then *item 22900 Goods and Services*, Mr Chairperson, for the year 2013 the Rs36 m. were not utilised for the simple reason that we could not get the appropriate consultancy for it. Part of the problem has been to secure consultants who were not working in Mauritius, who never worked in Mauritius. It is a very difficult situation. Regarding the sum of Rs16 m. that has been programmed, there are two consultancy services. One is for technical audit, Rs6 m. The consultancy firm is to be appointed to carry out a full technical audit of sewerage consultancy and contract works. This will also tell us why there have been so many delays, what went wrong with the wastewater services work that has been going on. This is one of it. The Expression of Interest has been invited in July 2013. The short list is being prepared. Secondly, there is the Asset Management Consultancy, Rs10 m.; consultant to be appointed to update Asset Register for CWA and WMA because of the merger. There is a lot of confusion between the three institutions: Irrigation Authority, CWA, Wastewater Authority and it is time that we put order and that we have a proper Asset Management Consultant. The last updating was carried out for CWA in 1998. The updating for WMA in 2000 and the request for proposal issued on 18 April 2013, closing date July 2013. The evaluation of proposal is in progress. Regarding overseas travel, Mr Chairperson, it is for conferences on the African continent and Europe by Officers of my Ministry and it's been mainly to do with EIAE and other institutions. The Water Tank Scheme has left my Ministry, so it is no longer with me. For the record, it has gone to the Ministry of Housing.

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Okay, silence!

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** But for the record it is good to note that over the past three years, there have been 15,000 who have benefitted from water tanks and of which 8,000 this year.

**Mr Ganoo:** The Utility Regulatory Authority, please!

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Regarding the Utility Regulatory, it is the same question that has been repeated year after year. What we are doing now? It was passed in 2004 and proclaimed in 2008 and, as I said last year, and I repeat it this year, with the ongoing water sector reform and the development in the power sector, further amendments to the URA Act may be required. This is being considered in the context of the new legislation for the water sector under preparation. The objective is to have a fully operational URA to cover water and electricity sectors.

**Mr Ganoo:** How is it going to be constituted? Is there a Chairperson?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Not yet.

**Mr Baloomoody:** Mr Chairperson, the vacancies which I have mentioned, the list of personnel who has not been filled: Assistant Permanent Secretary, Principal Planner, Manager of Internal Control. Why no provision has been made for these posts?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** It is as required.

**Mr Lesjongard:** Mr Chairperson, I will get back to the item 26313098 *Utility Regulatory Authority*. Last year we had put forward a motion that the budget be reduced to Re 1 and our motion was defeated. Now, we are being told again that we are waiting for reforms in that sector. Why do we put again that amount which is of Rs1.5 m. and we are asked to vote when Government knows that this will not come next year also?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** This is provision, just in case.

(*Interruptions*)

Mr Chairperson, it is good that the hon. Member repeats himself year after year to say the same thing!

**The Chairperson:** Any more questions! If there is no further question I have to put the question.

*Deputy Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities – Programme Code 441: Utility Policy, Planning and Management (Rs63,637,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Deputy Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities – Programme Code 442: Power Services was called.*

**Mr Lesjongard:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. With regard to programme 442, item 21 *Compensation of Employees*, there is a drastic decrease and we understand that that division is also going to the Ministry of Public Infrastructure. Can we know from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister what will be the role of that division now attached to his Ministry?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** This is what is remaining, or what is being removed.

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Silence!

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Do I have to explain this again? This is what is left.

**The Chairperson:** There is a question from hon. Soodhun. Yes, put your question!

**Mr Soodhun:** Page 214, item 22130001 - *Studies and Project Preparation*. I would like to know from the Deputy Prime Minister who has carried out the study. Second, under item 25110008 - (e) *Others (MID Fund)*, provision has been made for Rs77 m. I would like to know who the others are.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Mr Chairperson, this covers electricity supply for hardship cases, and displacement of electric lines/poles for hardship cases. I would like to inform the House that there is no waiting list for any of these items. But, so far spent in 2013, for extension Rs1,534,000, and displacement of poles Rs448,770; 10 cases.

**Mr Ganoo:** Mr Chairperson, I would like to ask the hon. Deputy Prime Minister, on the same item, that is, 25110008 - *Electricity Supply and Displacement of Electricity Lines/Poles for Hardship Cases*. A sum of Rs3 m. has been budgeted for this year, and Rs3 m. for next year. Can the hon. Deputy Prime Minister indicate to the House, or circulate a list of the beneficiaries of these hardship cases, and tell us what are the criteria which have been taken into account before deciding who these beneficiaries are?

Secondly, with regard to (d) *Feed in Tariff to Small IPPs (MID Fund)*, can the hon. Deputy Prime Minister give us the number of the beneficiaries? This is a subsidy to these small

IPPs. But, can the hon. Deputy Prime Minister tell us what is the nature of the subsidies which have been given to these small IPPs? Because as far as I understood, the small IPPs had offered to sell the surplus energy, or to provide this surplus energy free to the CEB! So, what was the need for any subsidy to be given to these small IPPs?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Let me answer this, because it is an important point. I am a little bit surprised, because the feed in tariff for small IPPs had an incentive attached to it in the form of financial support. The scheme is far below 50 kW. The incentive varies accordingly, and they have to use at least 70% and what is exported is at a very advantageous rate. It can go up to Rs25 per kW hour. This is the incentive, and it is oversubscribed.

Unfortunately, as I said last year, and I repeat it this year, we have a long list. We gave people time to join the scheme. They did, and at the last minute, they dropped out, and so others came in. This is why there is a waiting list. At the moment, we have 195 installations already commissioned; adding up to 1.6 MW. There have also been applications in Rodrigues. We have nine installations in Rodrigues for 51.5 kW. The total would be 3 kW in all; 2.8 kW in Mauritius, and 200 kW in Rodrigues. It is going well. It is working very well, and I must say that there is a lot of interest in it.

*(Interruptions)*

Stop laughing! Do you think it is funny? This is what we have been doing to encourage renewable energy. They are talking about renewable energy, and they don't even know what it is about!

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Dr. Sorefan!

**Dr. Sorefan:** Thank you, Chairperson. Page 214 ...

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Silence! Hon. Dr. Sorefan!

**Dr. Sorefan:** Page 214, item 25110008 - *Purchase of Electricity from Landfill Gas - Mare Chicose (MID Fund)*. May we know from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister whether there was a tender for this project, how many kilowatts have been produced, and the cost per kilowatt sold to the CEB?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Mr Chairperson, what is this project? This project is about landfill gas. Who has got landfill gas? What tender do you want for landfill gas?

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Silence!

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Mr Chairperson, this again was an incentive to produce renewable energy from waste. This was the idea. Now, you have asked about the tariff. The tariff is Rs4.86 compared with a marginal cost of Rs4.50, and we expect a production of 20 GWh annually.

**Mr Jhugroo:** Page 214, item 22060 - *Maintenance*. There was a provision of Rs1.7 m. for maintenance this year. I would like to ask the hon. Deputy Prime Minister why this has been reduced to...

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** I want some silence!

**Mr Jhugroo:** ... only Rs10,000 for next year. Second item is 22120 - *Fees*. Can I know to whom these fees have been paid; the amount of Rs16.6 m. for year 2013?

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** I want some silence, so that hon. Deputy Prime Minister may follow and answer!

**Mr Lesjongard:** I will refer the hon. Deputy Prime Minister to item 25110008 - (e) *Others (MID Fund)*, where an amount of Rs77 m. is earmarked for year 2014. Can I know from the Deputy Prime Minister whether that subsidy, which will be given to the Central Electricity

Board, for *Others (MID Fund)*, includes the Sarako Project, and the amount earmarked for that project in that Rs77 m.?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** This has been well ventilated. We have talked about this endlessly. The answer is yes.

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** I don't want any interruption. Yes, hon. Deputy Prime Minister.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** The Sarako PV Farm Project is on the list. It is expected to produce 22 GWh annually, and the incentives, the financial support will be the difference between Rs6.06 and Rs4.50, which is a marginal cost. It is according to what it produces. It can be 30 m., it can be 35m. It depends on the energy production.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Nagalingum! You have no question? Hon. Seeruttun!

**Mr Seeruttun:** Mr Chairperson, on page 214, item 25 *Subsidies*.

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Some silence! Could you repeat, please!

**Mr Seeruttun:** On page 214, item 25 *Subsidies*, item 25110008 (c) *Purchase of Electricity from Landfill Gas – Mare Chicose (MID Fund)*, may we know for the year 2013, how many megawatt of electricity has been produced and how much was paid for the production of that electricity?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Mr Chairperson, it is expected to produce 20 GWh annually. The plant has been in operation since November 2011, the installed capacity is 2 MW to be upgraded to 3 MW in 2013 and the subsidy over five years is Rs100 m. So, whether we spend it now or we spend later, it will be Rs100 m. over five years.

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** No question from a sitting position!

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** You would like to know as at date? As at date, Rs40 m. have been spent.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** Thank you, Chair. Item 22130 *Studies and Surveys*, sub item (a) *Energy Efficiency and Solar PV Projects (SIDS Dock)*, the budgeted amount is Rs28 m. for this year and Rs24.5 m. for next year. Can I know from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister whether any survey/study has been submitted, so far, and if so, by whom?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** The survey is ongoing. It is a grant from *SIDS Dock* Programme under the UNDP for Small Islands Developing States. Rs24.5 m. have been earmarked for activities as follows –

- (EAMS) Energy Audit Management Scheme: Rs7.5 m.
- National Registry for Database for EEMO: Rs5 m.
- Accreditation of Energy Audit Scheme: Rs2 m.
- Recruitment of Technical Adviser: Rs1.5 m
- Undertaking of Additional Energy Audits: Rs2.5 m.
- Payment of UNDP Fees: Rs1.5 m.
- Organisation of Workshop and Training: Rs4 m. and
- Miscellaneous , which comes to Rs24 m.

This is an essential tool so that we are able to do Energy Audit which is a key to reducing our demand side and improving our energy consumption.

**Mr Jugnauth:** Under power services, at page 208, can the hon. Deputy Prime Minister circulate the list of the 199 small independent power producers that are connected to the CEB network.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Yes. It has been asked previously, I will only be too happy to do so.

**Mr Ganoo:** Mr Chairperson, on page 214 item 22100001 *Studies and Project Preparation*, I come to item (b) *Energy Efficiency Management* Rs400,000 have been estimated for this year. Can the hon. Deputy Prime Minister tell us what was the study about and what use it has been made of? I am referring to the *Energy Efficiency Management*, Rs400,000.

Secondly, I come back on item...

**The Chairperson:** One question!

**Mr Ganoo:** But this question has not been answered!

**The Chairperson:** We don't have much time, only six minutes.

**Mr Ganoo:** This has not been answered. It is about the list, the number of hardship cases, the subsidy to hardship cases of beneficiaries who have benefitted.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** The sum of Rs400,000 was really to set up the Energy Efficiency Management Office. Secondly, I will circulate the list of what was asked.

**Mr Jhugroo:** Hon. Deputy Prime Minister, I am still waiting for my answer regarding...

**The Chairperson:** Put your question again! The page!

**Mr Jhugroo:** On page 214, item *22060 Maintenance*. There was a provision of Rs1.7 m. and this had been reduced to Rs10,000. I want to know the reason thereof. Second, item *22120 Fees*, there was a provision of Rs16.7 m.. May we know to whom it was paid?

**The Chairperson:** One question is enough because we have to give the chance to others. Maintenance!

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** It is about maintenance of IT equipment computer.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Mr Chairperson, on page 214, item *25110008 (b) Installation costs and electricity charges for prepaid meters*, this is on the *Subsidy to CEB*. There is, should I say, a meagre sum of Rs340,000. Would the Deputy Prime Minister kindly tell us what are the modalities for the rolling out of this programme and what will this sum of Rs340,000 be for?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** This item has been much discussed and we have had participation from both sides of the House with different approaches. Most people seem to think it is a very good idea – most people, not everybody, of course, there must be exception – and the provision is made by the CEB for the payment of the connection of Rs750 and the prepaid card of Rs200.

Let me point out what it is all about. The idea is to get, especially the vulnerable groups to manage their electricity consumption. That was the idea, and we have started with a project of 400 consumers from the vulnerable group. In case there is any problem whatsoever, we will open it up, but at the moment, the priority is for the vulnerable group. They do not have anything at all

to pay. Nothing! Neither for connection nor anything else and they have been given Rs100 special to start with. So, it is a very good scheme and, as has been promised by certain Members, on the other side of the House and by everybody here, we have to explain it, and explain to those who need it most. We will launch it; the Minister of Finance and I will go together and make sure that is taken up.

**The Chairperson:** Last question!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Do people go to the CEB and register for this? Do they apply or does the CEB go by the Social Register of Mauritius? What are the modalities, how is this...

**The Chairperson:** No! This question is not allowed, it is administrative. Hon. Seeruttun!

*(Interruptions)*

This is an administration question. I have ruled!

**Mr Seeruttun:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. On page 214, item 21110 - *Personal Emoluments*. I see that there has been a drastic decrease in the amount earmarked for 2014, yet on page 218...

**The Chairperson:** No, one question! We are left with two minutes.

**Mr Seeruttun:** On the same question, the number of employees...

**The Chairperson:** Allow the Minister to answer!

**Mr Seeruttun:** Same question. The number of employees has gone up, how does he reconcile the fact that the number of employees is going up, yet the amount earmarked to be paid to them is going down.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** The *Personal Emoluments*, as I have said, I repeat it again, the Electrical Services Division has left us.

**The Chairperson:** One minute!

*Programme Code 442: Power Services (Rs173,023,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Programme Code 443: Water Resources was called.*

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Lesjondard!

**Mr Lesjongard:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. I will refer the Deputy Prime Minister to page 215, item 31113002 *Construction of Dams (a) Bagatelle Dam*, can we know from the Deputy Prime Minister the status of the Bagatelle Dam as at today.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** If only...

(*Interruptions*)

I am not excited. I feel sorry that this question is being asked when it was fully addressed yesterday. They were not here, that was a problem. If you were here, I gave a full explanation ....

(*Interruptions*)

Hon. Members only have to read!

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** If hon. Members are going to interrupt the Deputy Prime Minister, well, they are wasting time!

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** If the hon. Member asking the question will remember, this Bagatelle site was altered by the previous Government...

(*Interruptions*)

No, I am not laying any blame! I am not laying any blame on anybody!

(*Interruptions*)

When the work started...

(*Interruptions*)

When the work started the nature of the foundation was found to be very unsatisfactory and in the course of the construction there were two basic design changes. One is the spillway and the second is how to secure the foundation to make it impermeable. Grouting was used and, at one time, it was realised that the grouting was inefficient and the design has been changed to a cut-off wall, meaning two things: the cost has increased and also the extension of time, both. This is where we stand.

**Mr Soodhun:** On page 215, item 22090 – *Security*, I would like to know from the Deputy Prime Minister the name of the contractor for the security.

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Yes, item 22090 - *Security* on page 215.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** I thank the hon. Member; he asks the same question every year, so, I will give him the same reply.

(*Interruptions*)

The security services are provided by RSL Security Services after a proper tender exercise.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** On page 215, I will go back to the question raised by hon. Lesjongard, *Bagatelle Dam*. May I ask the Deputy Prime Minister, regarding the two dams, *Rivière des Anguilles Dam*, where are we, and *Bagatelle Dam*, what are now the prospects? Are we maintaining the same site or what do we expect will happen in 2014 with the spending of Rs1,700,000,000? Where will we be at the end of 2014?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** There are two things, Mr Chairperson. We are pursuing with the construction of the dam. There is no question about it.

(*Interruptions*)

We have to go ahead with the same site, but with different design. The basic change is from grouting to cut-off wall. The lesser change has been from the Ogee spillway to the morning-glory type of spillway. But we are going ahead with it and, as I have said, it will mean an extension of time. So, we expect a delay. Probably, at the worst, it might be 2016.

In view of what has happened at the *Bagatelle Dam*, we are not entirely satisfied with the performance of the consultant and, therefore, we have cancelled the consultancy for the *Rivière Des Anguilles Dam* and launching a new consultancy.

**Mr Ganoo:** I come on the same item, Mr Chairperson, that is, *Bagatelle Dam* and *Rivière des Anguilles Dam*. Can the hon. Deputy Prime Minister tell this House how much more it will cost the Exchequer now for this Dam with the new works and new proposals that have been

made? Does the Ministry intend to sue the consultant, Coyne and Bellier, for having failed in its duties because it is as a result of the consultancy works that we are now finding ourselves in this situation?

With regard to the *Rivière des Anguilles Dam*, since the same consultant, namely, Coyne and Bellier, had been selected at that time, the hon. Deputy Prime Minister just told us now that Government is revisiting this *Rivière des Anguilles Dam* project, what is the reason for reviewing the *Rivière des Anguilles Dam* Project? Is it because there has been a huge massive private development in the vicinity of *Rivière des Anguilles* - I am referring to the *Bois Sec Project* - and this has impacted on the Dam Project. Is this why the *Rivière des Anguilles Dam* project is being revisited, i.e. because the *Bois Sec Project*, which is a huge and massive Property Development project

**The Chairperson:** This is not a question!

(*Interruptions*)

This is not a question!

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** I can assure the hon. Member that I am not even aware of what the *Bois Sec Project* is. What is for sure is that the *Rivière des Anguilles Dam* Project will go on at the site that has been chosen, but will have a new consultant.

To the question of the hon. Member, yes, we are looking into the legal implications and taking appropriate action. We intend to declare a dispute with the consultant and if the amicable settlement does not work, we will go on to arbitration.

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** No question from a sitting position. Hon. Bodha!

**Mr Bodha:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. May I ask the hon. Deputy Prime Minister what will be the final cost of the *Bagatelle Dam*?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** At this juncture, it will be difficult to have a final figure. I can assure the House, once again, that we are looking very seriously at the *manquement*, at the

failings of the consultant and we are taking appropriate action and, in due course, we will have a new consultant for that project.

**Dr. Sorefan:** Regarding page 215, same item on *Construction of Dams, construction of the Feeder Canals – Arnaud*, may we know who is the contractor and whether any problem has been faced with this contractor?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Yes, I thank the hon. Member for drawing my attention in a Parliamentary Question on this contractor and we have reported him to the PPO for disqualification. The works are proceeding and we expect that there will be diversion of water by mid December.

**Mr Roopun:** May I, again, come to this infamous Bagatelle Dam?

*(Interruptions)*

Famous or infamous, it does not matter. But I understand that the hon. Deputy Prime Minister is not satisfied with the way the consultant has advised and we are now embarking on further expenses. Has there been any independent survey done by somebody else to confirm that the works which are now being carried out are going to suit our needs and will give satisfaction?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Since December 2012, we have been accompanied by an independent expert and we are getting more expertise this month as well as the next months from various funding agencies.

**Mr Jugnauth:** With regard to non-revenue water, I see the performance of 51% to 50% target for 2014, may I know why the Ministry is not putting more resources, because an improvement of only 1% is really ridiculous! Why is the Ministry not putting more resources to address this problem?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** I think if we get 1% within a year, we should be happy because the state of the network is such that you repair one part and the distal part gets damaged and we go on and on. We have spent a lot of money in the past three years on several projects where there has been improvement, but further down the network, there has been deterioration. So, we have to look at it in a sustained manner and this is what we are doing at Mare aux Vacoas

Upper and it will be extended to the rest of the country. Unless we do a comprehensive programme, we will not succeed.

I remind you, if you look at the Singapore projects for water supply.

*(Interruptions)*

...do you know how long it took them? I am not saying that it will take us the same time, but they took 20 years to get to where they are now from the time when they started! 20 years! It is in the report.

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Baloomoody:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Can I take the hon. Deputy Prime Minister to page 216, under item 32145503 - *Loan to CWA, Rehabilitation of Pailles Water Treatment Plant*, Rs100 m. has been earmarked for this year and Budget for next year is Rs350 m. May I ask him where matter stands with regard to that rehabilitation project? On the same item (c) *Replacement of other old and defective pipelines*. This year we budgeted Rs39 m., may I know from this year's Budget how much has been spent for the rehabilitation or replacement of old and defective pipelines?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** With respect to item (c) *Replacement of other old and defective pipelines*, we have spent Rs13.5 m. at Camp Fouquereaux, Alma, - this is the end of an ambitious project which started three years ago - Plaine des Papayes, Triolet, Pierrefonds, Bemanique, Balisson, Quartier Militaire, Mont Ida and l'Unité and this is the same. Now, regarding the *Pailles Water Treatment Plant*, the work has started and the completion date will be 2015.

**Mr Jhugroo:** With regard to Bagatelle Dam, can I ask the hon. Deputy Prime Minister whether any legal action has been taken against the consultant and, if not, why not?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** I have already replied. The answer is: yes, we are looking into this issue.

**Mr Lesjongard:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Coming to the Bagatelle Dam again, is the hon. Deputy Prime Minister saying that actions have been taken against the consultant who is

supposed to follow the implementation of the project? And the hon. Deputy Prime Minister is saying that the project is ongoing, can I know who is looking after the implementation of the project by the contractor right now?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Right now, it is the consultant in question, but it won't be the same in the days to come and we already have - as I said - an independent expert who is following the project.

**Mr Ganoo:** Mr Chairperson, I refer the hon. Deputy Prime Minister to another item 31113402 - *Upgrading of Dams - La Ferme*, at page 215, of course. Is it concerning La Ferme Reservoir? I see that a sum of Rs5 m. has been budgeted for this year and next year Rs120 m. and Rs160 m. in 2015. So, the question I wish to ask the hon. Deputy Prime Minister: is the provision of Rs120 m. for next year and Rs160 m. the year after? Does that mean that the Ministry has decided to convert La Ferme Reservoir into a dam for domestic purposes in view of the difficulties that the people of the region meet very often during the dry season?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** The La Ferme Reservoir dam, will be upgraded, Mr Chairperson, and the work contract is expected to start in May 2014 for a duration of one year. The dam will be raised by one metre and we will have a treatment plant so that we can use it for potable water as well.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Li Kwong Wing!

**Mr Li Kwong Wing:** With regard to item 25 – *Subsidies*, Rs200 m. has been earmarked. May I know from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister on what basis this amount of Rs200 m. has been determined and what actions have been taken by his Ministry to ensure better performance of CWA, because every year Rs200 m. has been earmarked for subsidies for the last years and for the next three years?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Mr Chairperson, this is compensation to CWA for loss of revenue upon abolition of levy of Rs1.50 on each litre of locally produced soft drink, bottled water and fruit drink as announced in the Budget. This is it.

**Mr Uteem:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. On the same item of *Subsidy to Central Water Authority*, may I know from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister whether any amount has been

earmarked under that item for water tankers that go around filling swimming pools in times of water supply shortage?

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Seeruttun!

*(Interruptions)*

Hon. Seeruttun, put your question!

*(Interruptions)*

No. Withdraw the word ‘*crétin*’.

*(Interruptions)*

No! Wait a minute! I have heard the word ‘*crétin*’. Withdraw! Who has used the word ‘*crétin*’?

*(Interruptions)*

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Which word? I have used three words, Mr Chairperson. I withdraw all three!

**The Chairperson:** All right! Hon. Seeruttun!

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Seeruttun:** Page 215.

**The Chairperson:** Yes. Put your question, because time is running out.

**Mr Seeruttun:** Page 215, Mr Chairperson, under item 31113011 - *Drilling of Boreholes*, Rs16 m. earmarked for 2013 and Rs12 m. onwards. May we know how many new boreholes have been drilled during the year 2013 and how many new ones are going to be drilled in the next few years?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** In 2013, three boreholes have been drilled; one at Pont Fer, one at Fond du Sac and one at Clairfonds. The total amount is Rs5.5 m.

For 2014, boreholes will be drilled at Camp Ithier, Cluny and Bel Etang at a cost of Rs6.5 m. The contract will be awarded in 2014. These sites have been chosen for areas that were affected during the dry season.

**The Chairperson:** Last question. You are left with two minutes. Be fast with your questions.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** At page 215, under item 22130 - *Studies and Surveys*, Rs23.8 m. last year, Rs14.4 m. next year. May I know, all in all, how much we are paying to the Singaporean consultants for their survey concerning water resources and whether, in 2014, this report will be finally available and made public?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** The question is not appropriate for that item. That item is about regional project involving Small Island States. There is a project in the region involving Seychelles, nothing to do with what you have said.

*(Interruptions)*

The cost is Rs8.2 m.

*Deputy Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities - Programme Code 443 - Water Resources (Rs2,979,910,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Deputy Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities - Programme Code 444: Sanitation was called.*

**Mr Lesjongard:** With regard to *Loan to Wastewater Management Authority* at page 216, (i) *Construction of Wastewater Infrastructure (a) Plaines Wilhems Sewerage Project*, can we get an indication from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister of the cost overrun on the project as at to date and delays incurred on the project?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Again, what a shame that the hon. Member was not here yesterday. I spent about 20 minutes!

*(Interruptions)*

It is a shame!

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Next question, hon. Obeegadoo!

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Let me reply to him.

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Wait! Wait a minute!

(*Interruptions*)

**Mr Lesjongard:** Like the hon. Minister has said, related to expenses. I am asking the hon. Deputy Prime Minister on this project; what is the cost overrun on the project as at to date and the delay? I don't think you said in terms of money spent on the project in your speech when you intervened.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** I intervened extensively yesterday to explain the difficulties we had..

(*Interruptions*)

...because the Government of 2000 to 2005 embarked on that project on a conceptual design. This is the bottom of it all; conceptual design without detailed topography. The lot 1 B; Plaisance, Rose Hill, Roches Brunes and Mont Roches, the project has just been terminated.

(*Interruptions*)

I am talking about the three projects! The three projects of Plaines Wilhems. One project has ended and there is no cost overrun on that one. The second project is still ongoing and it will probably be extended to 2017 instead of 2016. At this juncture there is no cost overrun. In lot 2, Quatre Bornes, Sodnac, Belle Rose, the contract value will be exceeded, but it is too premature at this stage to say by how much. I repeat, the problem has been conceptual design. Note those words 'conceptual design'!

(*Interruptions*)

**Mr Soodhun:** On page 216, item 32145517 (e) *Minor Infrastructure work.*

(*Interruptions*)

*To coner kan mwa mo amerder pou éna problem sa!*

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Withdraw the word!

**Mr Soodhun:** He should not provoke!

**The Chairperson:** Wait a minute!

**Mr Soodhun:** He should not provoke!

**The Chairperson:** You withdraw the word!

**Mr Soodhun:** What word, Mr Chairperson?

**The Chairperson:** ‘Amerder’. You said ‘amerder’!

**Mr Soodhun:** Yes.

**The Chairperson:** Withdraw the word!

(*Interruptions*)

**Mr Soodhun:** It’s not unparliamentary!

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Silence! I say withdraw! I do not want any provocation, right!

(*Interruptions*)

**Mr Soodhun:** Mr Chairperson, I withdraw ...

**The Chairperson:** Time is running out!

**Mr Soodhun:** On page 216, item 32145517...

**The Chairperson:** You, be careful!

**Mr Soodhun:** Item 32145517 (e) *Minor Infrastructure Works at Parisot/Riverside* in my Constituency. You know very well that today itself *on a eu des inondations? Le pont était complètement inondé ce matin.*

(*Interruptions*)

I would like to ask the hon. Prime Minister what is the situation concerning the minor infrastructure work at Parisot Bridge?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Parisot/Riverside, we expect the contract to be awarded in March 2014 and the duration of work will be about 12 to 15 months. I would like to remind the House these projects are very expensive. So, please note because for 250 houses, we are spending Rs90 m. and that is on the low site for wastewater.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ganoo! Silence, hon. Soodhun!

**Mr Ganoo:** Mr Chairperson, can I refer the hon. Deputy Prime Minister to the same item which has just been raised but to (d) *Infrastructural rehabilitation in Ex CHA estates & Low Cost Housing*, Rs16 m. this year, Rs7 m. next year and Rs10 m. in 2015. Can the hon. Deputy Prime Minister provide us with information regarding the list of these Ex CHA estates and tell us which are the estates where rehabilitation has been carried out this year and will be carried out next year? The next item ..

**The Chairperson:** No, one question! One by one! Give chance to others. There is a long list!

**Mr Ganoo:** It is the same item.

**The Chairperson:** Yes, if time permitting you will be given the chance.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** For the infrastructure, Ex CHA estates which have been requested. There are six housing estates, Cité Atlée, Cité Malherbes, Cité Palmerstone, Cité Plaine Verte, Cité La Cure, Cité Vallée des Prêtres. These have been chosen out of a list of 27 sites which have been examined and they are being given priority.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under the same heading *32145517 (e) Minor Infrastructure Works Tranquebar/Vallée des Prêtres*, may I know from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister what is the percentage amount for Tranquebar because it is being lumped into Tranquebar/Vallée des Prêtres. What is the amount earmarked for the region of Tranquebar and where will the minor works be carried out?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** This question was asked last year and I will repeat the same answer. It is a consultancy service that has yet to establish a number of houses in each sector so we are not able at this juncture in time to determine the number of houses and their apportionment, but we are going ahead with it and it will start next year.

**Mrs Navarre-Marie:** Mr Chairperson, on page 216, under same item *32145517 (e) Minor Infrastructure Works at Bain des Dames*, last year we voted a sum of Rs40,500,000. I would like to know the nature of the works carried at Bain des Dames. Secondly, *(h) Pailles-Guibies Sewerage Project* where we voted a sum of Rs122 m. last year. I would like to know what is the status of works there?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** I will start with the Pailles-Guibies project because it is very important and the consultancy services were awarded recently, but unfortunately the consultancy contract had to be suspended temporarily because of the emergency dredging works undertaken by the NDU along River St Louis following the flash flood at Canal Dayot. We have now to redesign the trunk main sewer.

**Mr Seeruttun:** Mr Chairperson, on page 216, *item 21 Compensation of Employees*, the amount paid under Personal Emoluments has gone down whereas the number of employees has remained the same. Do we take it that those employees will have a reduction in their salaries for the year 2014? On page 216, *item 21 Compensation of Employees*. Personal Emoluments have gone down compared to 2013, yet the number of employees has remained the same. Do we take it that those employees will have a cut in their salaries for the next year?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Regarding Bain des Dames, the feasibility study is ongoing.

**Mr Roopun:** May I come again to the Plaine Wilhems sewerage project not especially Quatre Bornes. I do not hear the hon. Deputy Prime Minister stating whether the contractors are behind schedule and when the works are likely to be completed?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** There are three projects in Quatre Bornes. Which one?

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Ganoo!

**Mr Ganoo:** Can I ask the hon. Prime Minister, I am still on item *32145517 Loan to Wastewater Management Authority (g) West Coast Sewerage project*. A sum of Rs3 m. has been budgeted this year, but no funds have been earmarked for the following years. Mr Chairperson, I have made - in this very House - an appeal to the hon. Deputy Prime Minister, Flic-en-Flac is a fast developing area, high tourist zone, just as we have had a Grand' Baie sewerage project. It is high time to have a Flic-en-Flac west coast sewerage project. This project was launched a few years ago. A study had been conducted years ago. Can I appeal to the hon. Deputy Prime Minister to see to it that this project be provided with the necessary funds in the years to come, so that we protect our lagoon of Flic-en-Flac, and we introduce in that area a sewerage network?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** I completely concur with what you have said, hon. Member, but if you can do me one favour. Talk to Médine, and ask them to give us access, because they are going to Court to stop access to their site.

(*Interruptions*)

**Mr Ganoo:** Some time back, the hon. Prime Minister inaugurated the mega project of Médine. The hon. Deputy Prime Minister could have talked to Médine!

**The Chairperson:** The hon. Member is interrupting his friend!

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** It is a compliment I am paying you!

**Mr Lesjongard:** Mr Chairperson, may I refer the hon. Deputy Prime Minister to the Baie du Tombeau Sewerage Project. This is a project which is worth almost a billion rupees. Can I know from the...

**The Chairperson:** Just wait a minute! Which item is it?

**Mr Lesjongard:** Page 216, item 32145517 - *(f) Baie du Tombeau Sewerage Project*. Can I know from the hon. Deputy Prime Minister why is it that no amount is earmarked for this year? Do we have a problem in implementing this project?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** With the experience in Plaine Wilhems, we are now being doubly cautious. So, we are going to make sure that the proper studies are done before we embark on it.

**Mr Baloomoody:** I come back to page 216, item 32145517 - *Minor Infrastructure Works, (e) Bain des Dames*. Last year, we voted Rs40 m. for that project. The hon. Deputy Prime Minister just replied that we are still at feasibility study. Do we understand that for the one year, no work has been done, and no money has been spent with regard to the sum budgeted last year for that project?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Mr Chairperson, let me read the whole thing. Bain des Dames Sewerage Project - Consultancy services for feasibility study: consultants Servansingh Jadav & Partners, and the duration of the contract was 18 months. Expected number of house connection, 250; expected date to start work, 2015; estimated cost of project, Rs175 m; no objection of the Ministry of Housing and Lands; it is being awaited in respect of the location plan for the pumping station, and amount spent so far is Rs2.5m.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Page 216, item 32145517 - *Loans to Wastewater Management Authority*. The Deputy Prime Minister referred earlier, in reply to hon. Ganoo, that ex-CHA Estates included Cité Atlee. Will he tell us whether the budget for next year includes the NHDC complex, Atlee, where there has been a request for individual billing? Right now, people are billed collectively, and that creates a lot of injustice. For next year, is it provided that an individual billing system will be introduced at NHDC complex, Atlee?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** I cannot answer at this juncture what will happen, but for sure Cité Atlee is one of the housing estates that have been included.

**Mr Seeruttun:** Mr Chairperson, let me go back to my earlier question, which has not been replied. May I ask the Deputy Prime Minister, again, to explain how come that, on item 21

- *Compensation of Employees*, it has gone down, and yet the number of employees is still the same? Do I take it that those employees will have a reduction in their salaries next year?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** From a movement of staff drawing lower salary.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Page 212, I am looking at the *Performance Indicators*. I am surprised that we only have 22% of premises in Mauritius connected to the public sewerage system, and moving at a snail's pace to 24% next year. So, could I know from the Deputy Prime Minister, who has been at this Ministry, I believe, for six years now, how is it that, despite the sum we voted last year and next year, we are still moving at such a snail's pace?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** The House should appreciate the cost of wastewater work; the difficulties of wastewater work. I have just said that it costs almost Rs800,000 to connect one house. So, if we realise that, we will realise what progress we will make over the years. As the hon. Prime Minister has said, we cannot afford everything at once. But it will be done over time.

*Deputy Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities - Programme Code 444: Sanitation (Rs 1,218,310,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Deputy Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities - Programme Code 445: Radiation Protection was called.*

**Mr Lesjongard:** Mr Chairperson, may I refer the hon. Deputy Prime Minister to page 217, item 3112001 - *Construction of RPA Office*. Can we have an indication from the Deputy Prime Minister whether construction has already started with regard to that office, and what is the progress as at to date?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** The construction is due to start early next year. It will be at Helvetia, St. Pierre, and land has been vested in the Ministry from the Ministry of Housing and lands. So, we are ready to start work.

**Mr Soodhun:** Page 220, Salary Code 19 64 79 - *Senior Radiation Protection Officer (New)*, I see that it is still vacant, and I would like to know when the post will be filled.

If you allow me, Mr Chairperson, on page 217, item 22120 - *Fees*, I would like to have some details from the Deputy Prime Minister.

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** The *fees* are for the Chairperson and members of the Radiation Protection Council. Would the hon. Member like to know the composition of the Council? I will circulate it.

**Mr Baloomoody:** Can I take the hon. Deputy Prime Minister to page 217, item 22090 - *Security*. There has been more than 100% increase for security. This year, it is Rs40 m., and next year it will be Rs93 m. So, can I ask the Deputy Prime Minister why that increase, and what is that security firm which is offering that service?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Security, it is rental for burglar alarm system Rs7,000 per month – rental from Brinks.

**Mr Seeruttun:** On page 217, on item 31121 *Transport Equipment*, Rs1.6 m. earmarked for 2014. May we have some details as to what are those transport equipment to be purchased in that year?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** *Transport Equipment* - this is for purchase of vehicles.

**Mr Lesjongard:** With regard to item 26 *Grant*, we see that we have to contribute on a yearly basis R1.9 m. to international organisations. Can we know how many such organisations, the names of those organisations and what do we benefit from those organisations?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** The organisation in question is the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The membership fee on a regular budget is Rs1.350 m., contribution in relation to projects, technical cooperation Rs550,000. I must say that the IAEA is very important for the development of our services.

**Mr Soodhun:** I am still waiting for the reply concerning the *Senior Radiation Protection Officer* - item which is found at page 220.

**The Chairperson:** On page 220, under Programme 445: *Radiation Protection*, item 19647975 *Senior Radiation Protection Officer*

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** The scheme of service is being done.

**Mr Ganoo:** On page 217, item 31122 *Other Machinery and Equipment*, we are budgeting Rs1.5 m. for year 2014 and this service, as we know, is for the inspection and the monitoring of our radiation practices. So, can the hon. Deputy Prime Minister tell us what are the equipment and the machinery which his Ministry intends to acquire or purchase with the Rs1.5 m. for next year?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** Purchase of electronic scale and consumables for personal radiation per Dosimetry monitoring badges...

**Mr Obeegadoo:** On page 212, Performance Indicator under *Radiation Protection*, I note that the *% Compliance with the IAEA standards as at 2012 was 30%*. I want to ask the Deputy Prime Minister, having regard to what has been budgeted last year and proposed for next year, whether there has been an assessment of the incidence of the low level of compliance with IAEA standards on the public health of our population?

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** It is a very complex issue. I mentioned this last year. The IAEA is helping us, but progress is going to be slow, because it is a very difficult subject that has to be attended to. What I do know is that new regulations have to be published and measures taken, but it is in line with the IAEA recommendation. I don't think one needs worry too much that it is only 30%, it will improve, but there is no serious risk to the population. I am informed that there has been no incident in compliance with the basic safety extended by regulations.

*Programme Code 445: Radiation Protection (Rs21,240,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

(00.10 a.m.)

*At this stage, the Deputy Speaker took the Chair.*

*The Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Development - Programme Code 371: Policy and Management was called.*

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Can I have some clarification? There are also programmes which start, I think, by 365, 361 later on. So, in what order are we proceeding?

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Li Kwong Wing:** On page 239, with regard to *Programme 371: Policy and Management*, this has to do with formulation of budget policy and economic policy of Government. On Item 21 *Compensation of Employees*, may I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether we still have under *Compensation* three posts, the post of Financial Secretary is still on contract after seven years, two posts of Deputy Financial Secretaries where Officers are still being assigned the duties? Can we know, therefore, whether under item 22120 *Fees*, on page 240, the sum of Rs18,500 m. is being paid? Is it being paid for international consultant and advisers since we don't have any substantive officers confirmed in these three important posts after seven years and how does the other item of Rs12.5 m. under capacity building impact on the issue of appointing proper Officers in these substantive posts?

**Mr Duval:** Mr Chairperson, yes, we have a Financial Secretary on contract, two Acting Deputy Financial Secretaries are waiting for the PSC. No, Mr Chairperson, the rest is not concerned with these vacancies.

**Mr Li Kwong Wing:** On page 240, item 22120 *Fees*, can I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister what are these fees of Rs18.5 m. meant for and for what purpose?

**Mr Duval:** Mr Chairperson, these are fees meant for Chairman, Members of Board and Committees, etc., provision of R2.5 m. Fees for training, fees to meet expenses, local training, internal control cadre: Rs2 m; Workshops: Rs3 m.; Seminars Rs3 m.; fees to consultants for feasibility study for construction of building to house MOFED and SLO: Rs1.2 m., For the capacity building programme: Rs6.7 m.

**Mr Seeruttun:** Mr Chairperson, at page 240 under item 22900 – *Other Goods and Services*, there is a sum of Rs9,550,000 which has been earmarked. May we have some details as to what does that comprise of?

**Mr Duval:** Mr Chairperson, we have uniforms for Rs200,000; accommodation cost; provision to meet expenses of board and lodging of experts coming to Mauritius: Rs2 m.; we have passage cost to meet air tickets of experts: Rs1.2 m.; there is catering for the year: Rs1.7 m. for seminars, etc.; service charges: Rs500,000 for the syndic fees at Garden Tower, hospitality and ceremonies for foreign dignitaries: Rs850,000, contribution towards cost of UN technical assistance, we have a UN technical expert: Rs3.1 m.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** At page 232, at the top of the page, there is mention of a Reform Strategy to deliver long term ESTP. Throughout the Budget and for different departments, there is reference to ESTP and at page 224, the unequal technical capacity to formulate the ESTP is referred to as a major constraint. Would the hon. Vice-Prime Minister kindly offer to the House some clarification as to this ESTP process and what Ministries are expected to do?

**Mr Duval:** ESTP stands for Economic and Social Transformation Programme. It is a planning side of the Ministry of Finance and each Ministry is required to do a 10-year plan. That fits in to the ESTP for the whole country. So, each Ministry provides input to the Ministry of Finance for the Economic and Social Transformation Plan.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** How is this tied up with the Medium Term Expenditure Framework?

**Mr Duval:** It does not necessarily have to do with that. It is a planning exercise, it is a vision exercise of how do we see each Ministry, Department or parastatal body operating and in ten years' time what they have done to improve the situation and what they have done to face any challenges that they may have.

*(Interruptions)*

It is outcome related.

**Mr Uteem:** On page 240, item 31132 – *Intangible Fixed Assets, e-Projects of which (a) e-Budget*, there is an amount of Rs26.8 m. earmarked for next year. May I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister what does this e-Budget project relate to and who is going to implement that project?

**Mr Duval:** The implementation agency is States Informatics Ltd (SIL). It is in fact, as the name would suggest, computerising the budgetary process.

*(Interruptions)*

Does the hon. Member want more information? The complete automisation of the budgeting system will comprise budgetary analysis, budget preparation, budget printing, publication as well as budget execution, monetary and reporting for ease of project management. The project will be

implemented in two phases. The first phase is Rs32 m., which we are talking about now, and the other one is analysis and monitoring Rs17 m. It is quite expensive, but it is an IT project.

**Mr Li Kwong Wing:** With regard to the Acquisition of non-financial assets...

**Mr Duval:** Which page and which number?

**The Chairperson:** Kindly mention the page!

**Mr Li Kwong Wing:** Same page.

**Mr Duval:** Which number?

**Mr Li Kwong Wing:** Same page 240 item 31, we have two sub items: the *Non-Residential Buildings* Rs5 m., *Other Machinery and Equipment* Rs13.5 m. Can we have more details about which building is going to be acquired and what are the items of machinery and equipment?

**Mr Duval:** In fact, it is upgrading of our offices at Emmanuel Anquetil Building and that is going to be Rs5 m. Then, we are acquiring a server for the Debt Management Capacity Project and that is Rs3.5 m. Then, there are various printers, photocopiers, laptops and other IT equipments for the Office of Rs10 m.

**Mr Seeruttun:** Just as a matter of clarification, why in the column 2013 we do not have any breakdown of the expenses?

**Mr Duval:** I am sorry?

**Mr Seeruttun:** In the column 2013, why don't we have any breakdown of the expenses?

**Mr Duval:** Thank you, it is a good question! There has been a whole reorganisation of the Ministry. The programmes have changed, the various names have changed. We have got many more programmes than before. So, they cannot put the comparatives. The hon. Member will get the comparatives at the end.

**Mr Nagalingum:** At page 240, under item 22060 – *Maintenance* Rs6,800,000, can I have some details?

**Mr Duval:** Mr Chairperson ...

**The Chairperson:** Which item you referred to hon. Nagalingum?

**Mr Duval:** I have got it!

**Mr Nagalingum:** Maintenance.

**The Chairperson:** Which item?

**Mr Nagalingum:** 22060.

**Mr Duval:** Mr Chairperson, I have got it.

*(Interruptions)*

MOFED offices at Government House: Rs400,000; plant and equipment for air conditioners, photocopiers, etc.: Rs700,000; vehicles and motorcycles: Rs1.5 m.; IT equipment Rs4.2 m.

*Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development - Programme Code 371: Policy and Management (Rs246,520,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development - Programme Code 372: Public Financial Management was called.*

**Mr Li Kwong Wing:** Still on page 240, under the sub programme 37201: *Public Debt Management*, item 22120 – *Fees*, the last line. Can we have some details from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister as to what are these fees for and to whom they are being paid? Is it going to pay back the IMF for their experts who advise us to borrow more money from them?

**Mr Duval:** I think we can do without the comments maybe. Provision required for recruitment of one resident adviser and two short term consultants for the purpose of *Debt Management Capacity Building Project* which is being financed by the African Development Bank.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Page 241 sub programme 37203: *Revenue Policy and Mobilisation*, I heard the Vice-Prime Minister speak of major reorganisation which explains the absence of the

2013 column. Could we be given a sense of the evolution of the Budget, the grants to the Gambling Regulatory Authority and to the MRA under item 26: *Grants*? What are the corresponding figures for 2013 and what is the trend?

**The Chairperson:** It is on page 241.

**Mr Duval:** Yes, the grant is to GRA of Rs23 m. Provision required to meet the administrative and running cost of the Authority as follows - should I read it for the hon. Member?

**Mr Obeegadoo:** The comparison for 2013.

**Mr Duval:** Comparison for 2013? I do not have it; perhaps I will wait for that.

**Mr Uteem:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. On page 241, the very last item, *Capital Grants to Mauritius Revenue Authority*, may I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister where will this building be constructed for Mauritius Revenue Authority to be located and whether tender procedure has already been launched and the contract awarded?

**Mr Duval:** It is a Capital Grant Rs120 m. It is a provision for a whole number of things, not a building. Do you want me to read it to you or circulate it? I can read it. It is up to you. Integrated tax administration solution...

**The Chairperson:** Is it a long list?

**Mr Duval:** It is about 12 items, Mr Chairperson.

*(Interruptions)*

I will lay it on the Table of the Assembly.

**Mr Seeruttun:** On page 241, under Sub Programme 37203, item 22030 - *Rent*, I can see that Rs3,570,000 is earmarked for 2014 only. There is no more rent for the years onwards. May we know why it's only a one-off payment for rent?

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Jugnauth, we can take a question from you.

**Mr Jugnauth:** May I know, on page 241, with regard to GRA and MRA, what re-organisation is taking place in both those institutions?

*(Interruptions)*

For 2013, there are no provisions because there is a re-organisation.

**Mr Duval:** All right! Mr Chairperson, for the rent, which is no longer appearing, now, the Assessment Review Committee which was at the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development is now being consolidated into the various revenue tribunals. So, this is why the rent has gone. What other questions were there?

**Mr Jugnauth:** For 2013 there is no provision, because there is a re-organisation.

**Mr Duval:** It will be there under different programmes. If you look at page 250, for instance, you will see the GRA coming up again. It is not the GRA that is being - it is the various titles of the various programmes that have changed. It is still there, you can look at it, at page 250.

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Li Kwong Wing.

**Mr Li Kwong Wing:** On page 241, under Sub Programme: Macro-Fiscal Strategy and Budget Management, Programme Code 37202, there is item 22060 - *Maintenance* to the value of Rs5.1 m. Can we have details of what maintenance costs are they? And then, again you have item 22120 - *Fees*, Rs2 m. Can we know what are these fees being paid for and to whom?

**Mr Duval:** For maintenance, Mr Chairperson, the breakdown is: - these are provisions for next year - Plant and Equipment - Rs200,000; Repairs and Maintenance of Vehicles - Rs100,000; IT Equipment - Rs4.8 m. That's provision for maintenance of hardware and software. As far as the other question is concerned which is *Fees*, Rs2 m.; provision for the payment of fees to the University of Technology for officers of the Finance Cadre following Certificate, Diploma Courses.

**The Chairperson:** There are no more questions.

*Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development - Programme Code 372: Public Financial Management (Rs1,497,234,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development - Programme Code 373: Planning and Socio-Economic Transformation was called.*

**Mr Li Kwong Wing:** Under Programme 373, page 242, item 21 - *Compensation of Employees*. I see there has been creation of new posts of Directors. If we look at page 255, there are different posts of Directors which have been created. Can we know how many new posts of Directors have been created and what is the reason for increasing the number of Directors, and whether it is going to be a post which will be filled by internal promotion or is it by external recruitment?

**Mr Duval:** Mr Chairperson, there are four Directors - Economic and Finance in post. Two are performing the duties of Deputy Financial Secretary, one is posted to the Prime Minister's Office, and one is on leave without pay. The new challenges faced in the Ministry have required a revamping of the structure which makes provision for eight positions at Directorate level. As you know, we have many more programmes now. In the process of delayering and having a flatter structure for more effective decision-making, the three intermediate posts of Deputy Director are being abolished and three additional posts of Directors have been created against the three posts of Deputy Director. Is that enough?

**Mr Li Kwong Wing:** Is it by internal promotion or is it recruited from outside?

**Mr Duval:** I presume it is by internal promotion.

**Mr Seeruttun:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Looking at the expenditure for that particular Sub Programme, apart from the emoluments, all the others are the same for the three years, 2014 onwards. Do we take it that the expenditure has been properly provided for or just thrown the figures like that?

**Mr Duval:** Well, firstly, we are voting for 2014. So, this is just to give us an idea of what, obviously, we try and get it as accurate as we can. But yes, you are right, it has not changed, maybe no inflation next year.

*Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development - Programme Code 373: Planning and Socio-Economic Transformation (Rs56,290,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development - Programme Code 374: Unlocking Growth and Investment was called.*

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Li Kwong Wing.

**Mr Li Kwong Wing:** At page 243, with regard to the Current Grants to the Board of Investment.

**The Chairperson:** Which item?

**Mr Li Kwong Wing:** Item 26313004, Current Grants to *Board of Investment*, Rs182 m. Can we know the figures of this year, 2013, compared to this provision of 2014 and secondly, can we know whether there has been an increase in the staffing positions in the Board of Investment and whether the Annual Report of the Board of Investment has been submitted and audited?

**Mr Duval:** Yes. There has been an increase in the Budget from Rs154 m. to Rs182 m., but I don't know the revised estimates. These were the original estimates. So, I don't have the revised estimates. Perhaps you can get the revised estimates from my colleague there. Now, the staff costs are also going up by about Rs10 m. So, I presume there must be new staff being recruited. I don't know what else you wanted to know.

**Mr Li Kwong Wing:** When were the last accounts audited and the annual reports submitted?

**Mr Duval:** As far as I know, the Board of Investment is very up-to-date with the accounts and it's very good in filing the accounts. So, it must have respected the statutory limits.

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** Mr Chairperson, on the same item of Board of Investment, may I know from the hon. Vice Prime Minister whether any provision is made within that Budget for the Rs50 m.

that he has announced in the Budget Speech for the Marketing Initiative Public/Private for Africa.

**Mr Duval:** I don't know if it is in that Budget or it is in the NRF. I would have thought that it is in the National Resilience Fund.

**Mr Seeruttun:** Mr Chairperson, again, on the same item, may we know how much for this year 2013 has been spent for missions overseas and how much is earmarked for the coming year?

**Mr Duval:** Missions Overseas: Rs26 m. I think it is missions and the cost of conferences etc. at the same time. I don't have that breakdown, but I have a list of all the overseas missions and events that have been done by the BOI.

**Mr Baloomoody:** Can I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Finance on the Board of Investment again, the Capital Grant of Rs8 m., may we know for what purpose it is?

**The Chairperson:** Item 26323. It is the last item!

**Mr Duval:** On the missions, I will provide you with the information. I gave you the provision, not the actual one for this year. For the Capital Grant, provision is made for acquisition of IT equipment, Rs2 m. and acquisition of software Rs6 m.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** On page 243, item 26313064 *National Productivity and Competitiveness Council*, I would like to know how the expenditure budgeted for 2014 compares to actual expenditure so far in 2013. More importantly, I would like to have an indication from the hon. Vice Prime Minister of his sense of the work being achieved by the NPCC. There was a time when we heard a lot about the NPCC. It was visible. There was the famous Gemba Kaizen initiative. We don't hear about the NPCC anymore. Why are we budgeting Rs26 m.?

**Mr Duval:** The budget has been increased, in fact, to Rs26 m. this year from Rs19 m. I don't have the revised estimates, if I have it, I will give it to you. You will hear a lot more of the NPCC next year. In fact, you have started, I presume, to hear about the NPCC last month or two. They have had some sort of restructuring there. They are organising conferences. I think next

week they are starting to train the 500 SMEs that we mentioned in the Budget. So, there will be a lot, lot more of the NPCC, *inshallah*, next year.

**Mr Baloomoody:** On the same item, can I take the hon. Vice-Prime Minister on page 244, same item *Financial Intelligence Unit*, I found that for next year we are budgeting Rs40 m. May I know for this year how much has been spent for 2013 for FIU?

**Mr Duval:** There is a big increase in the Budget from Rs24 m. to Rs40 m., most of that increase has been staff cost from Rs16 m. to Rs24 m. It has to do with additional work, Ponzi Scheme, white collar crimes etc. They need to beef up the FIU. The rent is also going up. There has been a big increase. I am told that the revised estimate for 2013 is Rs29 m. In fact, the original estimate is Rs24 m. and revised estimate is Rs29 m. and provision for next year is Rs 40 m. Most of that is salary increase.

**Mr Seeruttun:** Mr Chairperson, on page 244, on the item 26313114 National Committee on Corporate Governance. May we know how much has been spent for 2013 and why for the last few years that committee has been quite dormant? I have not heard of any campaign being carried out by that Committee.

**Mr Duval:** It is a committee that paid a standing fee. In fact, they have taken a number of initiatives and they have asked now for a new - if my memory says me right – consultancy so that they can actually revamp the code of Corporate Governance. I have presumed they are waiting for that before.

**Mr Uteem:** Mr Chairperson. On page 243, *sub programme 37402: Development Cooperation and Regional Initiatives*

**Mr Duval:** Which programme?

**Mr Uteem:** On page 243, *sub programme 37402, item 21110 Personal Emoluments*, I would refer the hon. Vice-Prime Minister to page 235, sub-programme 37402: DTAAs, may I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether there is a department which is in charge of negotiating the DTAAs, if so, the number of staff allocated to that department and whether he is content that there is only three targeted new DTAAs signed next year?

**Mr Duval:** It is quite an able department which is headed by Mr Mahendra Oodiah and Mr Chellapermal, in charge, as Deputy Financial Secretary. We have signed and this is a minimum. This year, I think we have done more. This year we have signed four in terms of DTAAs and also, three IPPAs. It is the same thing and one tax information Exchange Agreement. It is the same department that does all that. We would be happy to sign more, but the four that we signed this year, only one has been ratified. That's Monaco. We see that we signed a lot with African countries and it takes a long time to get ratified. It depends. We are trying to do more if we can, but that is the minimum.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Very same sub programme and very same issue that my hon. learned colleague just raised. Firstly, what specific DTAAs and what specific IPPAs are being targeted for the year 2014? Secondly, having regard to the work of this unit, if that is the term – I take it that there is a unit – I would like to know whether there exists any concrete collaboration with the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) on the one hand and the IOR/ARC on the other hand in terms of investment promotion?

**Mr Duval:** That Unit does not do investment promotion. That Unit only negotiates and signs Double Taxation Treaties and IPPAs. That is what that Unit does. We are keen to build on our network of Double Taxation Agreements and Investment Protection and Promotion Agreements around Africa. That is our target, and you can obviously see that the more dynamic and forward looking, the more growth there is in these regions. These are the countries that we aim. But I don't know at this stage whether we have specifically targeted three or four. As you know, virtually, the whole region is doing quite well. So, we try and get whichever comes our way in those regions.

**Mr Ameer-Meea:** Mr Chairperson, page 244 - *Financial Reporting Council*, Rs20 m. May I know who is the Chairman of the FRC, and also if the hon. Vice-Prime Minister could circulate the composition of the Board? As we know, the FRC is a regulating authority for issuing licences to auditors and audit firms. May I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister how many enquiries have been made during the year to audit firms or individual auditors, and whether any sanction has been taken again audit firms or individual auditors?

**Mr Duval:** Mr Chairperson, the Chairman of the FRC is Mr Seetulsingh. Most of them are representatives of Government institutions. There is Mr Googooley from the Bank of Mauritius, Mrs Clairette Ah-Hen, FSC, Mrs Chinien, Mr Khodabux, Mr John Lamport, Mr Thierry Leung, Mr Clifford Ping Voon To Choon Kwee, and Mr James Benoit. These are the members of the FRC. In their normal course of duty, they will visit audit firms. I don't have the number; I can answer a PQ on it. But I understand that they are taking their work very seriously, and that they are having an effect on audit quality in Mauritius.

**Mr Jugnauth:** Same page 244, item 26313114 - *National Committee on Corporate Governance*. May I know how many reports they have submitted for the year 2013, if any, and if the hon. Minister will be agreeable to circulate those reports?

**Mr Duval:** I am not aware of any reports that they have provided. But, as I mentioned, their main thrust this year was to obtain consultancy services on a new code of corporate governance, which they will publish as soon as the consultancy is over.

**Mr Li Kwong Wing:** With regard to the Board of Investment again, item 26313004, same page 243, *current grant to the Board of Investment*, Rs182 m., the hon. Vice-Prime Minister mentioned that there has been provision for increase in staff costs. May I know what provision has been made for recruitment, and whether there will be open advertisement? Because we rarely see any advertisement of vacancies at BOI, and recruitment is being done in a very opaque way. Secondly, since there is now a new Africa strategy being proclaimed by Government, can we know, out of this amount, how much is being devoted for the Africa strategy?

**Mr Duval:** I believe that we need to recruit the very best people for the Board of Investment. I really believe it. How they proceed, I don't know. I agree with that they don't usually proceed by advertising. Maybe, they could for some posts. They tend to do more in headhunting at that level. But I agree with the hon. Member. I tell them all the time that they really need to have the best people at the Board of Investment. You will see there are two ways that we provide for these events. One is in the budget of the BOI itself, and the other one would be in the National Resilience Fund.

Africa, next year, will be organising the Sixth Regional Conference. That is going to take a bit of time. It will obviously cost a bit of money, and we hope the private sector will collaborate with us on that. We are going to have this in June. The Investment Promotion Agency Africa meeting in Mauritius will be inviting all the heads. That also is going to be there, and that is also going to cost a bit of money. Then, of course, we are having the Private Equity Conference, which is also quite a big target towards Africa. Added on to that, we have all the missions, Enterprise Mauritius, a lot of the private sector, and visits to other countries. So, quite a large part of the budget of the BOI is to target Africa. But, we are not forgetting China, Asia, and generally India for FDI generation and, of course, Europe as well.

**The Chairperson:** Last question hon. Ameer Meea!

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Concerning BOI, a huge sum is budgeted, that is, Rs182 m. Can I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister how many officers does the BOI have outside Mauritius, and also the number of staff employed in these offices outside Mauritius?

**Mr Duval:** In fact, the Rs182 m., if you look at some of the promotion agencies that we have in Mauritius, it's not that much – if you just check the budgets. We don't have any offices overseas. We are seriously thinking of opening an office in China, and we made provision in the budget for possibility of opening an office in China. With regard to employees of BOI overseas, I don't think we have any employees.

*Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of and Economic Development – Programme Code 374: Unlocking Growth and Investment (Rs332,175,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of and Economic Development – Programme Code 375: Inclusive Development was called.*

**Mr Obeegadoo:** I have looked at page 228, which describes the objectives of the three sub-programmes on Programme 375, and which appears to be efficient resource allocation to the three ministries that take up the greatest chunk of the Budget: education, health and social security. I would like to know whether these units already exist in the Ministry; whether this is an ongoing programme or something new. Secondly, what can we expect in return for the

monies that we are going to allocate to those programmes? The Vice-Prime Minister will surely agree that what has been surely lacking is the measure of the cost efficiency of our investment in those three sectors, and I see no item here relating to studies, surveys or reports. And yet, at page 256, there are a considerable number of Analysts and Lead Analysts. Are these units that exist, and what can we expect in return for the budget that we are going to approve under this programme?

**Mr Duval:** Mr Chairperson, I think the best time to look at the effectiveness of the various programmes is when we'll come to the Ministries concerned and we look at the Budget. This is probably not the time for us to talk about the efficiency of the other. But, we have always been trying to promote the monitoring of the effectiveness of various social programmes, whether it is social integration, whether it is the various programmes that we are promoting, including the new income support. So, this is a new programme for us, inclusive development. Really, I think we will need to wait for this new unit to be effective for me to be able to tell you more about this issue.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** To be more specific perhaps in my question, in exchange for the amounts, the budgetary allocation we are being asked to approve, can we, should we expect, in the course of 2014, a report, a study, a survey relating to the primary objective of this programme, measuring the resource allocation efficiency with regard to education, health and social security, do we have an assurance from the Minister that when we are approving this programme we will get a concrete result/report which will be made available to the public at large?

**Mr Duval:** Let us understand how the Ministry of Finance works. The Ministry of Finance has Officers responsible for all the line Ministries; we monitor on an ongoing basis all the line Ministries. We talk to them, when they need more funds we discuss and that is how we decide whether new funds ought to be allocated. That is how we decide, in fact, which Ministries should be given more funds in the next year's Budget, depending on how much they have used, how efficient they have been, etc. But, it is an internal thing, it is up to the Ministries themselves to be able to monitor, it is up to the Minister who is responsible for that Ministry to be responsible for the effectiveness towards the public and the taxpayer of the Ministry's Budget.

**Dr. Sorefan:** On page 245, item 28212019 *Decentralised Cooperation Programme*, can I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister to give us some clarification on this item, because it is voted to the tune of Rs80 m.?

**Mr Duval:** In fact, it is to fund the *Decentralised Cooperation Programme* of the EU. So, this is funded by the EU. This is the expenditure side and the money comes in, in the revenue side. What it does? It funds a lot of NGOs, it has got capacity-building, programmes for non State actors and it pays for the development of trainers. It has got a whole list of things. I can circulate it to the hon. Member if he so wishes.

**Mr Seeruttun:** On page 244, on *Sub-Programme 37502: Social Protection and Inclusion* item 22900002 *Accommodation Costs*, may we know whether there was any amount provided in 2013 or is it a new programme, if not, for whom are we providing those accommodation costs for 2014?

**Mr Duval:** I'll try and find out for 2013, but it is, in fact, provision made for Officers proceeding to Rodrigues in connection with projects relating to the Social Register of Mauritius, together with UNDP and DCP Accommodation Costs in Rodrigues.

**Mrs Labelle:** Mr Chairperson, I am on page 245, item 28 *Other Expense* and item 28212019 *Decentralised Cooperation Programme* respectively. May I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether there has been evaluation of the projects executed under this programme and is there any particular unit which evaluates or monitors the projects executed under this programme?

**Mr Duval:** Mr Chairperson, I know the EU regularly looks at this programme and, generally speaking, I don't know whether a specific report has been made. If there is, I will gladly give it to the hon. Member. But I know that, generally speaking, at the Ministry of Finance we are pleased if we find this programme is progressing, but if there is something written, I will circulate that to the hon. Member.

*Programme Code 375: Inclusive Development (Rs114,020,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Programme Code 376: Procurement Policy, Advisory and Operations Services was called.*

**Mr Li Kwong Wing:** Again, on page 245, concerning *Programme 376: Procurement Policy*, on item *22120 Fees*, we see that a sum of Rs3,950,000 is provided for fees, may we know what are these fees for?

**Mr Duval:** It is fees payable to the Chairman and Members of the Boards and Committees, Rs1.4 m.; fees for training of Rs2 m. for Officers following certificate and diploma courses at UTM and consultancy fees of Rs500,000.

**Mrs Labelle:** On page 245, the last item of the *Programme 376*, item *31132103 e-Procurement* to the tune of Rs25 m., can we have some clarification about this e-Procurement? Do we have a consultancy working on this item and, if so, can we have the name of the consultants working on this programme?

**Mr Duval:** This is e-Procurement, Electronic Procurement System for the public sector and Mauritius. The contract has been awarded to a consortium called Sify Technologies Ltd and Ni Tenders India PVT Ltd. For the supply, installation and commissioning of the whole system. The contract value is 1.455 million US dollars.

**Mr Baloomoody:** On that same programme, at page 256, we find that for this year we don't have any Director of Procurement Office, but provision has been made for one. May we know whether the scheme of service for that gentleman has already been prepared? There is no provision for the Manager of Procurement Policy Office, no provision for Assistant Manager Procurement Policy Office. May we know why there is no provision for this office?

**Mr Duval:** The general reason why positions are not funded is because with the constraints of revenue, there is need to reduce expenditure. It is not thought urgent that it should be funded and, therefore, that it should be filled. This is why it exists, but it is not funded for next year. Hopefully, it will be funded in the future. As far as the rate of procurement is concerned, this is what I have been told. The post of Director would be on contract, that's what I have.

**Mr Uteem:** On the very same issue, may I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister who is the Director and whether he is in an acting capacity or the position has been filled?

**Mr Duval:** I understand that at the moment the position is not yet filled.

**Mr Seeruttun:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

**The Chairperson:** Yes, proceed!

**Mr Seeruttun:** On page 245 item 22030 – *Rent*, I can see that under each programme an amount of rent is being provided for and I presume that this is the reallocation of rent under each programme. May we know what is the total amount of rent being paid for the year 2014?

**Mr Duval:** By the Ministry of Finance?

**Mr Seeruttun:** Yes, because it is on the reallocation of expenditure.

**Mr Duval:** I will provide the hon. Member with that information.

*Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development – Programme Code 376: Procurement Policy, Advisory and Operations Services (Rs 70,921,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development – Programme Code 377: Contract Award Services was called.*

**Mrs Labelle:** I would like to talk on item 21210. Under each programme, we see *Social Contributions*....

**Mr Duval:** NSF? Or it is NPF?

**Mrs Labelle:** So it is the NPF. Also, under this programme there is the last item *Gratuities*. May I know to whom these *Gratuities* are being paid? It is the last item on this programme, that is, item 27 - *Social Benefits – Gratuities*. To whom these are being paid?

**Mr Duval:** Provision is required for the payment of gratuity to six members and ten officers on contract. I think because they are on contract and they are not part of the pensionable establishment so they get a gratuity at the end of the year.

**Mr Seeruttun:** On page 246, item 22060 – *Maintenance*, may we have some details as to what has been maintained?

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Vice-Prime Minister, page 246.

**Mr Duval:** Yes. It is a provision for maintenance, plant and equipment: Rs500,000; vehicles and motorcycles: Rs100,000 and IT hardware and software, and I believe that is with our contractor here is SIL and that is Rs16,800,000.

**Mr Ameer Meea:** On page 246, under item *Rent*, there is a sum of Rs4.7 m. Can I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister...

**Mr Duval:** Which number?

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Page 246, *Rent*, the second item 22030, Rs4.7 m. may we know which building is being rented, where it is and for what purpose and also if the hon. Vice-Prime Minister has the details like the floor area and the owner's name.

Also, a second question, Mr Chairperson, if you allow me, on the *Fees*, there is an amount of Rs9.1 m. if we can have the nature of those fees, to whom they will be paid and a breakdown of them?

**Mr Duval:** The rent is paid to NPF; it is the NPF building in Rose Hill with 1,406 sq meters. So far as the fees are concerned, these are fees which are paid to evaluators and consultancy services, local and foreign and there is Rs9 m. for that. The sum of Rs150,000 is for training of staff. So, they have a schedule of fees that they pay to evaluators each time that there is a tender to be evaluated.

**Mrs Labelle:** Mr Chairperson, the hon. Vice-Prime Minister has just mentioned that gratuities are being paid to six members and ten officers. When I go to page 257, must I take it that all the technical officers are on contract because besides we have the administrative staff? So, technical officers under this programme are all on contract?

**Mr Duval:** I will get the information, Mr Chairperson.

**Mr Uteem:** I will take the hon. Vice-Prime Minister to page 237 on the same programme 377 - *Contract Award Services. Delivery Unit is the Central Procurement Board*. May I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether he is in a position to tell us the number or percentage of cases that are appealed against a decision of the Central Procurement Board?

**Mr Duval:** I do not have the percentage, but I know there is something like 15 or so currently in front of the IRP. Is that what the hon. Member means? I do not know what the percentage is.

**Mr Baloomoody:** I do not know whether the hon. Vice-Prime Minister has the answer for my colleague, hon. Mrs Labelle, then I will follow up probably from this.

**Mr Duval:** What I have been told is that not all officers are on contract. Some of them are on contract and some are on the Establishment. This is the answer I got.

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Baloomoody:** Hon. Vice-Prime Minister, if we look at page 257 and when we look at the personnel in that Department, there are no officers in post by December 2013!

**Mr Duval:** No, I explained that. I explained at the beginning that because of the restructuring in the Ministry, the programmes have changed and have increased, the names have changed, etc. So, you will not get the comparatives. I explained that at the beginning. It does not mean that there are not any, but it just means that last year they were elsewhere in a different programme.

**Mr Baloomoody:** So, can I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister with regard to what is funded for 2014, one Deputy Secretary, one Assistant Manager, are they already in service so that they will be permanent? Now, they are on contract or are they permanent? How does it go? We want to know because it is important.

**Mr Duval:** You ask a few more questions and I will get the answers.

**Mr Baloomoody:** Why I asked the question it is because I am sure that the hon. Vice-Prime Minister will agree that this is a very important section because it approves and awards of major contracts within a realistic time frame and achieves best value for money in terms of price, quality and delivery. So, it is a very important unit in the Ministry and we have to ensure that we have proper persons, permanent persons and professionals there.

**Mr Duval:** Yes, I am told that they are already in service.

**Mrs Labelle:** May I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether he has received the list of who are these 10 members of his staff who are on contract because we have 7 Procurement Officers, 1 Assistant Manager, 1 Deputy Secretary. These are the only technical persons under this item.

**Mr Duval:** Can the hon. Member give me the item number again and I will find it for her.

**Mrs Labelle:** I am at page 257.

**Mr Duval:** No, give me...

**Mrs Labelle:** Programme 377: *Contract Award Services*.

**Mr Duval:** On which page, please?

**Mrs Labelle:** At page 257.

**Mr Duval:** No, give me where the expenditure is and I will find it for you.

*(Interruptions)*

**Mrs Labelle:** The Compensation.

**Mr Duval:** 77?

**Mrs Labelle:** Page 245.

**Mr Duval:** In fact it was about Gratuities?

**Mrs Labelle:** Yes, I started my question with the Gratuities paid.

**Mr Duval:** Okay, I got it.

**Mrs Labelle:** 246.

**Mr Duval:** I will try and find it for you. I have the names. Do you want every name?

*(Interruptions)*

The officers employed on contract by the CPB, we are talking about the CPB here. Okay? We have the Secretary, Mr Doseeah; the Building and Civil Engineer, Mr Guljur, the Electronics Engineer, Mr Wong Min, a Civil Engineer, Mr Rajarai, an IT Specialist, Mr Roussel, the Statistics Officer, Mr Sevathian, the Procurement Officer, Mr Bilatoo, and an IT Technician Mr Shadoo, a Messenger/Driver Mr Seeburn and another Messenger Mr Dobhee.

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Duval:** You were talking about...

**Mrs Labelle:** Mr Chairperson, may I? Because I was talking about when I looked at page 257, it is entitled *Contract Award Services*.

**Mr Duval:** Mr Chairperson, not to take too much of the time of the House, as soon as I have the information, I can give it to the hon. Member, if she doesn't mind.

**The Chairperson:** Yes, if you have other questions, let us take those questions. Meanwhile, the hon. Vice-Prime Minister will furnish you with all the information that you have asked for.

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Duval:** This is the CPB, what we are looking at.

*Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development - Programme Code 377: Contract Award Services (Rs59,658,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development - Programme Code 365: Government Accounting and Payment Systems was called.*

**Mr Soodhun:** At page 246, under item 31132105 - *e-Payment Project*, I would like to know from the Vice-Prime Minister, since there is no provision for 2014, whether the project has been completed?

**The Chairperson:** Next question, hon. Li Kwong Wing!

**Mr Li Kwong Wing:** Programme Code 365, on page 246, under items *22010 - Cost of Utilities*, Rs4.2 m., and *Rent* - Rs8.3 m. So, can we have details which building is being rented and what are the details of the *Cost of Utilities*. And then, item *22060 - Maintenance* is Rs17.4 m., can we also have some details on the item of *Maintenance*, why is it so high and whether it is mainly for maintaining the IT and hardware system?

**Mr Duval:** Mr Chairperson, the *e-Payment Project* is being completed this year. Now, as far as the *Cost of Utilities*, Rs4.2 m. is concerned; electricity - Rs2.6 m., telephone - Rs1.4 m. and water charges is the difference - Rs150,000.

Now, the Rent, Mr Chairperson, provision made for payment of rental of offices as follows: Rabadia Building, that is, Rs600,000 yearly; Voucher Room at Farquhar Street, Rs53,000. We have a Flacq Cash Office, the monthly rent there is Rs7,000; Pamplemousses Cash Office Rs7,000 monthly rent and another Voucher Room at Queen Street Port Louis, monthly rent of Rs14,000.

Now, maintenance, I gave it just now, I think. Anyway, I will give it again. Plant and Equipment - Rs500,000, Vehicles - Rs100,000, IT - Rs16.8 m. to SIL. I gave that.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Seeruttun, have you got a question?

**Mr Seeruttun:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. On page 246, under item *22900 - Other Goods and Services*. Can we know what is the actual amount spent in 2013 and what is provided for in 2014 under that item?

**The Chairperson:** The hon. Minister would like to take another question in the meantime?

**Mr Duval:** Yes, for the revised estimates, I need it from my colleagues. I don't have the revised estimates here.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** I have a very simple question. On page 258, at the top of the page under *Salary Code 08 30 56*, there is a significant increase in the number of Management Support Officer. I must confess I don't know what Management Support Officers are and this appears

now in all the different departments; would the hon. Minister kindly explain to us what is a Management Support Officer, and what that person does in a Ministry?

**Mr Duval:** Basically, they are Clerical Officers; a glorified name.

**Mr Baloomoody:** Can I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Development, item 22120 - *Fees*, who are beneficiaries of the fees, because we see that there has been an increase from Rs250,000 to Rs440,000?

**Mr Duval:** The actual expenditure on *Other Goods and Services* up to 31 October is Rs2.6 m.

(*Interruptions*)

It's fees for future training and refund of subscription to professional Bodies; basically, ACCA.

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Mr Chairperson, on page 246, we have *Acquisition of IT Equipment*, Rs18 m.

**The Chairperson:** Which item No.?

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Item 31122802 - *Acquisition of IT Equipment*; may we know which equipment will be acquired and whether it will be through tender procedures or how will it be acquired?

**Mr Duval:** Yes. *Acquisition of IT Equipment*; server and data point, TAS and upgrade of the hardware Oracle Financial from one system – upgrade, anyway! The supplier is SIL.

*Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development - Programme Code 365: Government Accounting and Payment Systems (Rs127,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development - Programme Code 366: Provision of Statistics was called.*

**Mrs Labelle:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. I am on page 247 for item 22120 - *Fees*. So, there is a Budget for Rs13 m. for next year and also, we had Rs14 m. for this current year. May

we have a list of, maybe, the consultants to whom these fees have been paid for 2013 and also, whether it will be the same consultants for the coming year 2014 and the respective amount?

**Mr Duval:** Consultants for statistical capacity building under African Development Bank Grant to develop statistical business register and quality of life statistics, that is, Rs11 m. I think probably the same sum of Rs11 m. was provided this year, but has not been spent. So, it is going to be spent next year.

**Mr Bodha:** Mr Chairperson. Under same item *22130 Studies and Surveys*, we see a Budget of Rs42 m. for this year and Rs33 m. for next year and it goes on decreasing. May I ask the hon. Vice Prime Minister how can he explain this? Whether we are going to have less and less studies and surveys or are we focusing on a certain number of items? May I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister how can he explain the fact that the Budget is decreasing every year from 2013 to 2014 and onwards?

**Mr Duval:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. We don't do the same surveys and census every time and every year. Some we do every five years, some we do every two years etc. Next year, what is being planned is a census of agriculture, Rs14 m.; census of economic activities, Rs3 m. and continuous multipurpose house survey, which we do, is Rs 16m. It is not the same sort of survey every year.

**Mr Seeruttun:** Mr Chairperson, on page 247, last item under that sub programme, item *31132103 e-Business plan*, I take it that it is for the purchase of software. Is it going to be done in phases and may we know what was purchased in this year 2013, which programme is it and whether the same software is going to be purchased over the next two years?

**Mr Duval:** Provision required in connection with the development of new applications on centralised database and online survey and for the service of IT technicians to provide assistance in the support and maintenance of IT Infrastructure. This is what we are told here.

**Mr Baloomoody:** Can I take the hon. Vice- Prime Minister and Minister of Finance to page 258 on the item *01 45 65 Financial Officer/Senior Financial Officer* and *01 33 55 Assistant Financial Operations Officer*. Can I know why no fund is being provided for these two posts? They are quite important posts.

**Mr Duval:** Next question and I will come back to that!

**The Chairperson:** Next question, hon. Obeegadoo!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** On page 237, bottom of the page, this is again a performance indicator: *Adoption of the latest internationally accepted macroeconomic statistical methodologies*, I am surprised to learn that we are only 40% compliant, I take it with methodologies in 2012. My understanding so far had been data regarding public finance statistics. We went by IMF indicators. So, what is this 40% compliance amount? Could we have some clarifications?

**Mr Duval:** Good question, Mr Chairperson. We are actually in 2013 at 100%. The 40% was for 2012. For 2013, I have the present figure for this year. It is already 100%.

(*Interruptions*)

**Mr Obeegadoo:** On page 247, item 22130 *Studies and Surveys*, there is a reduction ...

**Mr Duval:** I have replied that.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** It has been replied to. I raise another issue then!

**The Chairperson:** Please do!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** One page 258, item 20 49 75, I note from one year to another an increase in the number of statisticians and a reduction in the number of statistical officers: 20 33 57, will the hon. Vice-Prime Minister care to explain to us what the difference is?

**The Chairperson:** We move to next question meanwhile. Hon. Seeruttun!

**Mr Seeruttun:** On item 22030 *Rent*

**The Chairperson:** Which page?

**Mr Seeruttun:** Page 247, item 22030 *Rent*, Rs9.3 m. has been earmarked for all those years, may we know to whom that rent is being paid to?

**Mr Duval:** You said 22030 *Rent*, Rs16 m.?

**The Chairperson:** It is page 247.

**Mr Duval:** Yes, for payment of rent and service charges at LIC building for 2000 sq meters. The statistician has been promoted to Senior Statistical officer. There was one question on that. The staffing side also, posts of assistant Financial Operations Officer is being abolished in line with PRB 2013, therefore no provision for this post. The posts of Financial Operations and Senior Financial Operations have been merged together.

**The Chairperson:** Any more questions!

*Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development – Programme Code 366: Provision of Statistics (Rs163,164,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development – Programme Code 367: Valuation of Immovable Properties was called*

**The Chairperson:** Yes, hon. Ameer Meeah!

**Mr Ameer Meeah:** Yes, Mr Chairperson. *Item 22030 Rent*, there is an amount Rs16 m. May we know which building is being rented, the floor space area, and also who is the owner of the building?

**Mr Duval:** Rent for 3000 sq metres at Ebène Nextracom at the rate of Rs1,350,000 per month.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** On page 259, Programme 367, I am referring to the technical grade from Director Evaluation down Property Valuation Inspector, short time back there was considerable controversy of these officers undertaking private work including during office hours. I would like to know for next year whether this issue has now been sorted out and what guidelines have been laid down as regards private work by Government Valuer?

**Mr Duval:** Mr Chairperson, going by memory, there has been new guideline set. There has also been resistance to these new guidelines. If the hon. Member asked me a question, I will gladly provide you with all the information.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson, under item 22120 *Fees*.

**Mr Duval:** Which page?

**Mr Uteem:** Page 247, item *22120 Fees to Chairman and Members of Board*, may I know of which Board we are talking about here?

**Mr Duval:** Fees to Chairman and Members of the Board - We are talking about the Objection Unit of the Valuation Department.

**Mr Baloomoody:** Can we know who are the Chairman and members of the Board?

**Mr Duval:** Mrs Roshnee Bissessur, Mrs Taramatee Khedun-Sewgobind, Mr Khilochand Jugun, Mr Avisnash Ramlagan, Mrs Benisha Ramlagan, Mr Kuviduth Pudaruth and Mrs Gowrea. They are paid Rs1,900 per session. Officers act as Chairperson on a rotational basis.

**Mr Seeruttun:** Again on page 247, item *22120 – Fees: 22120018 - Refund of Subscription Fees to Professional*. I can see that the amount has doubled from Rs150,000 to Rs300,000 in 2014. May we know why?

**The Chairperson:** Would you need some time to furnish the reply?

**Mr Duval:** I need some time. I can't answer like that.

**The Chairperson:** No. I was asking whether to move to the next question.

**Mr Duval:** It is okay. According to PRB, refund is now 100% instead of 50%.

**Mr Ameer-Meea:** Mr Chairperson, going back to the item *rent*, I don't know if the Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Finance will agree with me. We are paying huge sums of money as rent. Is it not beneficial for Government, for the country, for the nation to erect its own building rather than paying rent? Because, as we know, rent money is dead money, and we are throwing money to promoters who are making millions of rupees on our back.

**Mr Duval:** I don't know when they moved there, but I will tell you one thing. The Prime Minister has projected to move all the Government offices, either to Highlands or elsewhere. There is that project, but the thing is that it is going to cost billions of rupees. But there is this idea of one day moving to our own offices. It is a valid point!

**The Chairperson:** There are no more questions? We proceed?

*Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development – Programme Code 367: Valuation of Immovable Properties (Rs106,860,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development – Programme Code 368: Regulatory Framework of Companies was called.*

**Mr Baloomoody:** Item 22060 - *Maintenance*. We find that there has been a huge increase from Rs2m. to Rs11m. for maintenance. May we know the reason thereof?

**Mr Duval:** It is IT equipment, Mr Chairperson. As a result of the implementation of the Electronic Data Management System, there has been a substantial increase in the number of PCs, hardware and software etc. I don't know whether it is maintenance; I have to check with my colleagues. So, we are talking about Rs10,400,000 for maintenance of hardware and software, and also for minor repairs etc. to the tune of Rs1.2 m. This is the figure.

**Mr Baloomoody:** I want to just follow up this one because we have another item for upgrading of ICT, Rs15 m. Is maintenance Rs11 m.?

**Mr Duval:** I'll give you the maintenance agreements. It seems it is expensive. We have anti-virus. I can circulate it for you. There is maintenance on IT equipment Cyprus hardware, Rs2.5 m.; licences, Rs2 m.; scanning maintenance Rs2.9 m. I think what they do is all electronic. So, they have to scan and everything. I can circulate that with pleasure.

**Mr Uteem:** Mr Chairperson, under item 31132 - *Intangible Fixed Assets*, on page 248, 31132401 - *Upgrading of ICT*, may I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister what does this relate to?

**Mr Duval:** Implementation of Electronic Data Management System to cater for the backlog of scanning of the companies' files; that is 20 m. Then, there is implementation of XBRL, which is the electronic filing of accounts, and that is Rs35 m. But that is a very important programme for statistical data for Mauritius.

**Mr Uteem:** May I know who won the contract for implementing the XBRL? Is it SIL?

**Mr Duval:** I think it is Mauritius Network Services (MNS).

**Mr Seeruttun:** Page 248, under item 22030 - *Rent*, there is a substantial increase in the amount of rent earmarked for 2014, and it goes up every year as from 2014. Compared to 2013, the amount has gone up. May we know why?

**Mr Duval:** First, I have to correct. The XBRL has not yet been allocated the contract! The supplier has not yet been selected.

With regard to rent, this is provision for building at NPF, used for record room, and rental of parking slots for stakeholders of the Mauritius e-registry project. It must be the rental agreement.

**Mr Seeruttun:** On the same page 248, item 22090 - *Security*. There was nothing provided in 2013. It is a new item I suppose. Could you explain to us why we are resorting to security services in 2014?

**Mr Duval:** This is provision made to provide security to the public and staff to maintain directional orders in the public or queue up in order to complete formalities at various counters.

*Programme Code 368: Regulatory Framework of Companies (Rs140,987,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

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

**Mrs Labelle:** On page 248, Programme 369, item 22060 *Maintenance*, we see that the amount has more than doubled. Can we know the reason and what maintenance exactly we are talking about?

**Mr Duval:** Mr Chairperson, again, it is for IT equipment. It is provision to cater for the maintenance of hardware and software at the Mauritius e-Registry.

*(Interruptions)*

I don't know the provider.

**Mrs Labelle:** May I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether he can inform us of the name of the provider of this service, and whether it is the same provider for the different programmes?

**Mr Duval:** With regard to the Mauritius e-Registry Project, I don't know if this is the information that is asked, but the Quality Assurance Project coordination is DCDM, Scanning Deeds Infoterra, now called Astrium, and e-Registry software and hardware, Norway Registers Development and SAS Software Solutions.

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Mr Chairperson, on page 249, item *31132401 Upgrading of ICT*. Every year, we see that a huge sum is budgeted. Is it an ongoing project, if yes, what will be the total cost of the project and whether it forms part of the LAVIMS Project – because we are discussing on the registration of deeds and conservation of mortgage.

**Mr Duval:** The Registrar General has launched the Mauritius e-Registry Project. In collaboration with the investment climate facility to transform the department from a paper-based service to an e-service organisation, I am harnessing the latest technologies that can provide integrated work flows for businesses, professionals and members of the public. Stakeholders will have the possibility to submit their documents, effect payment and receive the registered documents electronically. This is the information I just gave about DCDM, etc. The total project value of the programme is Rs180 m. It is not part of the LAVIMS.

**Mr Seeruttun:** On page 248, item *22120 Fees*, the amount provided for 2014 has doubled compared to 2013. May we know why such an increase?

**Mr Duval:** It has gone up because of the Mauritius e-Registry Project. So, they are doing training for the Mauritius e-Registry Project.

**Mr Uteem:** Mr Chairperson, on page 238, under the same *Programme 369*, there is an indicator as to the *Time taken to complete formalities for registration of documents*. Is the hon. Vice-Prime Minister in a position to tell us the time that the Registrar and the Conservator of Mortgages actually take to inscribe those charges in their books?

**Mr Duval:** Presently, in 2013, it is 24 hours; they want to move to 12 hours, on average.

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Uteem:** But, it takes weeks for them to inscribe it in their books

**Mrs Labelle:** I am referring to page 249, item 31112401 *Upgrading of Office Buildings*. I think this is a rented building. Must we take it that the cost of upgrading this building is being borne by the Ministry, and what type of upgrading is being carried out at this particular building?

**Mr Duval:** I will wait for that information.

**Mr Uteem:** On page 249, item 31132 *Intangible fixed Assets*, may we know from the Vice-Prime Minister what is the targeted implementation time for it to be effective for the public to be able to file on line?

**Mr Duval:** I am told that the project will be completed in September 2014.

**Mr Seeruttun:** On page 249, item 31132401 *Upgrading of ICT*, may we know who is the supplier of the software?

**Mr Duval:** This is the third time I am giving this information.

**Mr Seeruttun:** Who is the supplier?

**Mr Duval:** I told you, it is DCDM, Infoterra. This is the same thing. Hon. Mrs Labelle asked about which building it is, it is the Emmanuel Anquetil Building, sixth floor.

*Programme Code 369: Registration of Deeds and Conservation of Mortgages (Rs154,316,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vice-Prime Minister, Ministry of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping – Programme Code 321: Policy and Strategy Development for the Public Infrastructure, Land Transport and Maritime Services was called.*

**Dr. Sorefan:** On page 274, item 22030 *Rent*, I see there is an increase of Rs1 m. Can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister tell us whether the increase is for new premises or increase in rent for all premises?

**Mr Bachoo:** The increase is due to the rental of additional floors to accommodate the Finance Section of Electrical Services Division which has been voted under the jurisdiction of my Ministry.

**Dr. Sorefan:** Mr Chairperson, on the same page 274 regarding item 22120 – *Fees*, the budgeted sum was Rs21 m. Will the hon. Vice-Prime Minister tell us what amount has been used and why it has gone down for the next year?

**Mr Bachoo:** That concerns the fees to the Chairman and the Members of Boards and Committees and it has gone down because last year there was an item of Rs15 m. included in this. That was meant for MLTA, but this has been brought to a different programme. That explains the cause why it has gone down.

**Mr Soodhun:** At page 274, item 22070 – *Cleaning Services*, will the hon. Vice-Prime Minister inform the House about the name of the contractor? Also, on page 274 item *Rent*, the sum is Rs915...

**Mr Bachoo:** Where? Rent?

**Mr Soodhun:** Yes.

**Mr Bachoo:** Yes.

**Mr Soodhun:** At the same time, the *Maintenance* is Rs1,875,000; the *Office Equipment and Furniture* is nearly Rs1 m. I would like to know how the expenditure is being combined? Can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister give some details?

**Mr Bachoo:** I have already said that this is for the rental of building, provisions for payment of rent to Jade House, the Finance Section of BST, Lesser and Jade Co. Ltd., Moorgate House and to Max City Building.

The second issue concerns maintenance. As far as maintenance is concerned, that is, provision for building to meet payments for the maintenance of Jade House, Moorgate House, Central Stores and buildings occupied by Land Transport and Shipping, plant and equipment, to meet payment for the maintenance and repairs of photocopying machines, computers, fax machines, air conditioners, vehicles and motorcycles, to meet payment for the maintenance and repair of seven vehicles. IT equipment to meet payment for the maintenance on repairs of IT equipment and renewal of software licences. That is for the maintenance.

Then, there are the cleaning services. Cleaning services have been provided by Mauriclean Ltd. The increase is due to cleaning of new office space occupied by PPC and the Central Stores.

**Mrs Labelle:** On page 274 item 28211 – *Transfer to Non-Profit Institutions*. There is a small sum. May we know which non-profit institution and the reason why this transfer has been effected to the non-profit institution?

**Mr Bachoo:** That is provision to meet annual contribution which is payable to Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport.

**Mr Baloomoody:** I just heard the hon. Vice-Prime Minister on *Maintenance* saying Jade House. But Jade House is a private property and we rent that building. How come that we have to maintain a building which does not belong to the Government?

**Mr Bachoo:** That is the petty expenses. We spend petty expenses for the maintenance of Jade House, Moorgate House, Central Stores and buildings occupied by Land Transport and Shipping. I will give the hon. Members some additional information. I will get it from my officers.

**Mr Seeruttun:** At page 274, item *Fees* again, 22120, may we know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister how much so far has been disbursed under that item?

**Mr Bachoo:** In fact, now we are going to vote for it and this is Rs6.5 m. I have already mentioned earlier that last year we had an addition of Rs15 m. that was meant for MLTA. Under one item the MLTA is coming and I am going to answer the question for the hon. Member.

**Mr Seeruttun:** I am just asking so far how much you have disbursed under that item.

**Mr Bachoo:** Apart from that Rs15 m. the rest of the money has already been exhausted.

**Mr Ameer Meea:** On the item *Rent*, can I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister if he could give us a detailed breakdown of the rent of Rs19 m. maybe if he could circulate it, I would be grateful. Also, if he can give us the relative maintenance fees paid for the buildings that are being rented.

**Mr Bachoo:** I will circulate the answer as it is a bit lengthy. But regarding the question raised on minor repairs, these are borne by the tenant and the major structural repairs are borne by the landlord. This is the information that I have.

**Mr Li Kwong Wing:** For the *Fees*, Mr Chairperson, a sum of Rs6.5 m. is provided every year. Can we know for what purpose and it is payable to whom?

**Mr Bachoo:** Fees for Chairman and members of Boards and Committees to meet the payment of fees for Motor Vehicle Arbitration Committee, Road Safety Council, Road Transport Advisory Board, Traffic Impact Committee, NTC Appeal Committee, Bid Evaluation Committee, Departmental Bid Committee, Building Advisory Council which came into operation with effect from 15 March 2013 and fees to Assessors to meet payment of fee to Chairperson, members and secretaries of Departmental Tender and Bid Evaluation Committees, fees for training to meet cost of training of staff, seminars and workshops and fees regarding parking coupons, payment to Government Printer for printing of parking coupons.

**Mrs Labelle:** The hon. Vice-Prime Minister has just mentioned different committees, may I ask him whether he is agreeable to circulate the name of the members of these different committees and the fees paid to them?

**Mr Bachoo:** Yes. The whole list will be circulated except for that of Bid Evaluation Committee because that keeps on changing for each and every tender exercise which is conducted. I am going to circulate the list.

**Mr Ameer Meea:** There is an item *Social Assistance Benefits in Cash*. May we know what is this social benefit?

**Mr Bachoo:** It is the provision for payment of funeral grants to heirs or nearest relative of deceased officer and this grant has increased.

**Mr Seeruttun:** On item *313010 Current Grant to Construction Industry Development Board*, may we know who are the members of that Board and who is the Chairman and whether that sum of Rs4 m. caters only for the fees to those Board Members?

**Mr Bachoo:** Mr Chairperson, I have got the whole list. I am going to lay a copy of what hon. Mrs Labelle has asked for on the Table of the Assembly.

As regards the CIDB, it is the Permanent Secretary of my Ministry who is acting actually as Chairman and that fund is the provision to meet the operating cost of Construction Industry

Development Board, salaries and travelling of employees, council and committee fees, cost of utilities, rental charges, office equipment and furniture and general office expenses.

As far as the constitution of the Board is concerned, it comprises the Permanent Secretary of my Ministry who is the Chairman, a representative of the Ministry of Education, one of Labour, one representative of the Mauritius Standard Bureau, one representative of the Institution of Engineers Mauritius, one representative of Mauritius Association of Architects, one representative of Mauritius Association of Quantity Surveyors, the representative of Mauritius Institute of Surveyors and two representatives of Contractors, one is Mr Ramloll and the other is Mr Uckoor.

**Mr Soodhun:** At page 274 concerning the Overseas Travel (Mission and Capacity Building), it seems to be that for five ...

**Mr Bachoo:** Which number is it?

**The Chairperson:** Overseas Travel.

**Mr Soodhun:** Item 22180 – *Overseas Travel*, it seems that Rs500,000 is every year. It means that it is permanent for four years it has been established. Can the Vice-Prime Minister give some details about what is the capacity building, the mission and for whom is the mission, is it for the officers or the Minister and for four years it has been fixed?

**Mr Bachoo:** Mr Chairperson, in fact, I never travel overseas on this account. But this is meant for passage cost, subsistence allowance, hotel accommodation and for officers who are normally invited to participate in missions and then, training as well as capacity building. I will try to circulate a list of those officers. This is meant for my officers.

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Concerning the Construction Industry Development Board, can I ask the hon. Minister what is this Construction Industry Development Board, what it does and what is the purpose of this Board?

**Mr Bachoo:** Well, this is a matter of policy. Only in a few sentences, I am going to sum it up, because this is, in fact, a matter of policy. This is meant to regulate the activities of all the contractors, that is, the big as well as the small contractors, to empower the small contractors, to

try to give them a boost, to try to train them and to provide all necessary measures and tools so that they can also come in the market and compete. At the same time, the foreign consultants who are coming to Mauritius need to be registered and the work of this institution is to look after the grading of contractors as well. These, in a nutshell, are the responsibilities of that Board.

**The Chairperson:** I would appreciate if hon. Members could confine themselves to matters pertaining to expenditure.

*(Interruptions)*

No. There is no need for any explanation regarding the Construction Industry Development Board.

*(Interruptions)*

Don't argue with me! Hon. Seeruttun!

**Mr Seeruttun:** At Page 274, under item 22900 - *Other Goods and Services*, may we know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister how much has been spent so far in 2013 and for what types of items this caters for?

**Mr Bachoo:** Well, money which was meant for this year has already been spent and this is provision for payment of cash allowance in lieu of uniforms and purchase of protective clothing and equipment and miscellaneous expenses for replenishment of imprest and purchase of urgent petty items.

*Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping - Programme Code 321: Policy and Strategy Development for Public Infrastructure, Land Transport and Maritime Services (Rs146,790,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping - Programme Code 322: Construction and Maintenance of Government Buildings and Other Assets was called.*

**Dr. Sorefan:** On page 274, item 21 - *Compensation of Employees*, may we know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister why the sum has increased to the tune of about Rs20 m.?

**Mr Bachoo:** Mr Chairperson, it is under this item that provision has been made for basic salary to meet payment of salary as per the Manraj Report, as per the recommendation for 251 funded positions, allowances to meet payment of responsibility, acting, *ad hoc*, duty retention allowance to eligible officers, extra-assistance to meet payment of salary to eight trainee Engineers, Architects, eight officers on contract, one Adviser on Building/Mechanical Engineer, two Advisers on Public Infrastructure Projects, cash in lieu of leave for payment in cash of the annual unutilised entitlement of sick leave up to the maximum of 16 days to eligible officers, end-of-the-year bonus for payment of an end of the year bonus equivalent to one month's salary, Service to Mauritius Programme - provisions to meet payment of all inclusive allowance to three interns.

Vacancies to be filled, one Principal Mechanical Engineer, seven Architects, four Principal Engineers, nine Engineers/Senior Engineers (Civil), two Technical Quantity Surveyors, two Management Support Officers, four Word Processing Operators, one Confidential Secretary, two Mechanical Engineers. So, all these come under this item.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Mrs Labelle!

**Mrs Labelle:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Mr Chairperson I am on the Sub Programme 32203: Maintenance, Repairs and Rehabilitation of Buildings and Other Assets.

Mr Chairperson, I think there has been a recommendation from the Director of Audit to set up a Central Database for Government Buildings. For example, under this programme, the maintenance will be Rs16.6 m. for next year and despite the billion of rupees being spent on building, we all know the state of the different Government buildings. There has been a recommendation regarding a Central Database for Government building by the Director of Audit in his last Report. May I know from the hon. Minister where matters stand, because I think it is not the first time that such a recommendation is being made? So, what is the status of this recommendation?

**Mr Bachoo:** Well, I am aware of the recommendations and this matter is being looked into. It is a bit complicated, but the officers of my Ministry are working on that issue.

**Dr. Sorefan:** On page 275, item 21 - *Compensation of Employees*, I see there is an increase of about Rs14 m. which is, to my information, additional of 160 General Workers. Will the hon. Minister inform the House whether the MPI is a recruiting agent for all other Ministries, because it is said that these 160 General Workers will be deployed in other Ministries?

**Mr Bachoo:** Well, under this item we have got basic salary to meet payment of salaries as per the Manraj Report for 719 funded positions. That is, permanent positions. Then, allowances to meet payment of responsibility, acting duty, retention, ad-hoc allowances to eligible officers, cash in lieu of leave for payment in cash for the annual unutilised entitlement of sick leave of up to a maximum of 16 days to eligible officers, end-of-year bonus. Then, vacancies to be filled: Head Works Cadre – one; Inspector of Works – two; Senior Laboratory Attendants – one; Technical and Mechanical Officer – one; General Worker - Provision has been made for 160 workers; but if in case these workers are recruited, we are not the agent for the Government, but if these are recruited and if Government wants that they be transferred to other Ministries, then that will be the responsibility of Government. We will have to take the responsibility.

**Mr Seeruttun:** Mr Chairperson, on page 275, Sub-Programme 32203, item 31410407 - *Rehabilitation works for Landslide Management*; I can see that some Rs19.7 m. has been earmarked for 2014 and I believe that part of that sum is going to cater for those families at Quatre Soeurs. May we know how much would go for that project to relocate those families? How many families are concerned with and whether all those families concerned will receive a uniform amount of money with regard to that relocation project?

**Mr Bachoo:** Well, that is not only meant for Quatre Soeurs, because there were 37 sites which were inspected by the JICA experts. Out of 37 sites, there were three sites which they considered to be dangerous. We have got Quatre Soeurs, then, we have got here, at Vallée Pitot and thirdly at Chitrakoot. So, we have to see to it that this has to be properly distributed, but we have taken the engagement in order to relocate the 11 families out of Quatre Soeurs and much work has already been done. Negotiations have reached a very high stage and I do hope that in

the weeks to come, the decision will be taken. But together with that, we have got Chitrakoot and Vallée Pitot, we should not forget those people.

**Mr Bodha:** Mr Chairperson, under item 31112433 at page 275, *Acquisition of Non-Financial Assets*. I am referring to *Refurbishment of Emmanuel Anquetil Building*. There was a sum of Rs11 m. for this year and another sum of Rs5.5 m. next year. May I ask whether all the repair works will be completed next year? I think there has always been a problem of lifts in that building, whether this has been taken care of?

**Mr Bachoo:** I am pleased to inform the House that this money is meant for the acquisition of two lifts and for the maintenance of the wire netting to reduce the pigeon nesting by a contractor. Then, last year, the sum of Rs11 m. was met for the bird netting and the feasibility report is being prepared and Government has taken the decision to repair the whole building, but that will take a bit of time.

**Mr Uteem:** I refer to the answer given just by hon. vice-Prime Minister about the Landslide Management in Vallée Pitot. Since February of this year, there has been a house that has been broken down and various other houses which have had cracks and since February of this year, no work has been done in Vallée Pitot with respect to this landslide. May I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister when is the implementation timetable with respect to Vallée Pitot?

**Mr Bachoo:** This is also an issue which goes out of this topic. But one thing that I have to say, *en passant*, that this is a very, very delicate issue. We wanted the contractor to do some works there, but we have been prevented from doing so by the JICA experts. We cannot play with that situation. If I am not mistaken, they have already set up a few equipment there in order to see the landslide and at what rate it is going. I do hope that they have taken the matter very seriously and sooner or later they are going to give us instruction to work, but we have to work under their directives. It is not easy, but I am told that there will be probably ten houses which have to be relocated. We are working on that.

**Mr Ameer Meea:** On page 275, under item no. 31112 – *Non-Residential Buildings, Upgrading of Office Buildings*. There is an amount of Rs37 m. for extension to technical office. Can I ask the hon. vice-Prime Minister whether there has been any bid for such extension, who are the bidders and eventually who won the bid?

**Mr Bachoo:** Being given that Government has undertaken the work, we are bound to have a tender. The cost of that building will be about Rs40.5 m. I will give you in a few minutes the name of the contractor who got the contract.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** A question put by hon. Bodha earlier, concerning Emmanuel Anquetil building. I am on page 275, item 31112433, mention is being made about bird netting and lift, but I would like to ask about asbestos removal. There was an issue of asbestos at the Emmanuel Anquetil building, and whether that has now been completed. Moving on from that point more generally, what provision has been made for next year for this ongoing task of removal of asbestos danger across public buildings in the country generally?

**Mr Bachoo:** Well, this question has been raised regarding asbestos. I have to be corrected by my officers, I am aware that the work has already been done. Just now, when the hon. Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Development was answering questions, I heard him saying that a sum of Rs5 m. has been earmarked for Emmanuel Anquetil Building. This is not under my vote. For me, my responsibility is limited to the lift, and secondly, to the bird net. As regards the contract for the Quantity Surveyors' building which was asked, the contract has not yet been awarded. Bidding documents are being prepared and tenders will be floated at latest by March 2014.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** My question was: whether for next year, there is budgetary provision for an ongoing programme of asbestos removal from public buildings?

**Mr Bachoo:** I do not know because it is not under my Ministry's item and I am limited to whatever is available before me.

**Dr. Sorefan:** Mr Chairperson, regarding page 275, sub-item 31410407 – *Rehabilitation works for Landslide Management*. Has the hon. Vice-Prime Minister got a list of any landslide that is to be taken care of?

**Mr Bachoo:** I have mentioned that the JICA experts together with the technicians of my Ministry have already visited 37 sites and three of them have been pointed to be very dangerous. In fact, Chitrakoot work has already started. The second place where they are working is at Vallée Pitot. The third one is a hopeless case, we have to remove those inhabitants and we are

nearing the conclusion that the deal is being stuck with the tenants as well as with the Ministry of Housing and Lands. This is what I have been informed.

**Mr Soodhun:** On page 275, item 22070 *Cleaning Services*, four years consecutively the sum earmarked is Rs1.5m. I would like to know who is the contractor and whether there has been a tender procedure which has been followed? Secondly, 22120 *Fees*, there is an increase of nearly half a million. I would like to know some details about the increase and what fees are being paid?

**Mr Bachoo:** Cleaning Services. The provision made for payment for cleaning of toilets and Sanitac services to Mauriclean. The contract is valid up to the 31 October 2014. All the tender procedures were followed. As regards the fees, that is fees for assessors. It is provision for payment of fees to Chairperson and Members of Bid Evaluation Committees, fees for training to meet the cost of training of staff, seminar and workshops that is Rs400,000. Then fees to consultants, provision for consultancy services for refurbishment of Emmanuel Anquetil Building. That is what I have mentioned that the feasibility study is on. Then the refund of subscription fees to professional bodies, for refund of subscription fees to staff who are registered with professional bodies. The increase is also due to the consultancy services to be carried out. That I have already explained.

**Mrs Labelle:** Mr Chairperson I am going to the item on page 275, item 22060 *Maintenance*, since there was a sum of Rs17 m. for this year and Rs16 m. for next year, may I ask ...

**Mr Bachoo:** Which item is it?

**Mrs Labelle:** *Item 22060 Maintenance*, may I know the amount spent on maintenance for this current year? This maintenance, I think, is being contracted out. Can we have the name of the service providers for maintenance for year 2013 and whether it will be the same service providers for the coming year? If we can have a list of these providers with the respective amount paid to them?

**Mr Bachoo:** Under maintenance, there has been a slight decrease. The decrease in provision is due to the maintenance of extensometers which has been transferred to another item,

that is, the rehabilitation works for the landslide management. This is first. Secondly, the rest of the sum has been spent to meet payment for maintenance, repairs and upgrading of MPI building, Government quarters, workshops and Emmanuel Anquetil building, electrical rewiring, purchase of tools and minor equipment, renovation of toilets; then, to meet payment for maintenance and repairs of photocopy machines, computers, fax machines, air conditioners and renewal of maintenance agreement, then payment for maintenance and repairs of 47 vehicles and payment of maintenance and repairs of IT equipment; renewal of software licences, payment for the maintenance of the Mechanical Engineering Division and removal of waste at the material testing laboratory in Phoenix. These are the items for which the money was spent.

**Mr Seeruttun:** Mr Chairperson, allow me to go back to my previous question on page 275, Rehabilitation works for Landslide Management, I did ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister...

**Mr Bachoo:** I have already answered.

**Mr Seeruttun:** The hon. Vice-Prime Minister didn't reply to my question, My question was how much of that Rs19.7 m. is being earmarked for the relocation of the inhabitants of Quatre Soeurs? That is what I asked for.

**Mr Bachoo:** It is mentioned here that my Ministry has received Rs19,700,000 for the three sites. Now, it depends on the experts of my Ministry how they are going to relocate it because this is not under my responsibility. They have to look and see to it that this is fairly distributed.

**Mr Uteem:** Mr Chairperson, moving to the programme 32204, I take note that the Energy Services Division will now be moved under the responsibility of the Vice-Prime Minister. May I know from the hon. Vice Prime Minister whether the Energy Services Division has submitted any report on the conditions of fans that are being used in public buildings?

**Mr Bachoo:** Mr Chairperson, hon. Steeve Obeegadoo expressed concern about asbestos removal. There is a committee under the Prime Minister's Office, which looks specifically at health and safety in public buildings, and the Technical Division of my Ministry acts on decisions of that committee.

As regards the fans, in fact, they have not submitted any report to me. But I had discussions with them, and I do hope that they are looking into the issue.

**The Chairperson:** Last question hon. Obeegadoo!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Page 284, I am referring to the posts of Architect and Engineer, and page 285 as well, the post of Mechanical Engineer. I would like to know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister how many vacancies there exist as regards those posts. Are we proposing to fill them locally, or are we still having to recruit from abroad, India and other countries, for lack of local applicants?

**Mr Bachoo:** In fact, I don't know exactly how many we are lacking, but we are recruiting about seven architects. We are recruiting engineers also from the local market. We have a sufficient number of engineers and architects, as well as Quantity Surveyors, compared to a decade ago. So, we are recruiting all locally.

**The Chairperson:** Time is up!

*Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping – Programme Code 322: Construction and Maintenance of Government Buildings and other Assets (Rs561,694,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping – Programme Code 323: Construction and Maintenance of Roads and Bridges was called.*

**Dr. Sorefan:** Mr Chairperson, page 276, item 31113003 - *Construction and Upgrading of Roads, (b) Transaction Advisory Services for Ring Road and Harbour Bridge.* We have learnt from the hon. Minister of Housing and Lands that the Harbour Bridge will be out. I would like to ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether he will confirm this, and if so, whether an amount will be deducted from the contract value of the Transaction Adviser.

**Mr Bachoo:** Mr Chairperson, the Transaction Adviser has already completed his work, and if any amendment is made, then, definitely, Government will have to take a decision. So, we have to wait; we will cross the bridge only when we reach it.

**Mr Baloomoody:** On the same item, can I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether, following the recent flash floods, Mr Soredoo, the consultant, prepared a report with regard to the Ring Road, and whether he is prepared to lay the report on the Table of the National Assembly?

**Mr Bachoo:** Well, Mr Soredoo is a consultant who is working in that area. I will have to look into it. I don't have any problem in submitting a copy of the report.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Page 270, *Programme 323, Outcome Indicator*. It says here 'percentage of the classified road network lying "average" to "very good" on the World Bank International Roughness Index Threshold Matrix.' I learn that only 50% of our roads qualify for the ranking "average" to "very good". Could I have some explanation from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister? Are our roads that bad, and if so, why?

**Mr Bachoo:** Our roads are not bad. The 50% was in 2012. By now, it must be almost 65%. We are very conservative on that. But if I am going to put up 90%, then this means that you will not be tempted to work. That is why we have kept a conservative figure. We have to strive, struggle, sweat, and we are going to succeed up till 100%. There is no doubt about it.

**Mr Bodha:** Mr Chairperson, to come back to the Ring Road and Harbour Bridge, may I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister to tell us about the status of these two projects?

**Mr Bachoo:** In fact, we haven't taken any official decision as at now when we are going to start with the Harbour Bridge as well as the Ring Road. Both projects are still in the pipeline, but it all depends on the Government, on the availability of funds, whether we are going to do the work in stages. So, these are the issues that have to be dealt by Government.

**Mr Bodha:** Mr Chairperson, does that mean that there is no budget which has been earmarked for 2014 or 2015?

**Mr Bachoo:** There is a special item, which is the Built Mauritius Programme, and the funds are in that. The funds are available.

**Mr Soodhun:** Mr Chairperson, on page 277, with regard to item 31113003 - (v) *Traffic Management Plan for Port-Louis (Study)*, I would like to know by whom the studies are being carried out and which company? Second, regarding (x) *Consultancy for Recycling of Asphalt*, I would like to know who the consultant is.

**Mr Bachoo:** Mr Chairperson, before answering this question, the mega consultant about whom the hon. Member is talking about is the consultant for the drainage problem, and is not working on the Ring Road, but rather at Canal Dayot, Pailles, Swami Vivekananda Centre, Rivière St. Louis, and the vicinity of that area. I am going to submit a copy of that report.

As regards the Traffic Management Plan for Port-Louis, the purpose of the consultancy is to prepare an integrated overall plan for traffic infrastructure, to include sustainable and intelligent transportation solution for the city, and develop an action plan implementation on the basis of prioritisation of the investment. Provision is required for payment of consultancy fees. The consultant has to be appointed. Up till now, we are still on the procurement stage. I will not be able to say who is going to get the contract.

Secondly, as far as the recycling is concerned, we have been planning for this since long, to adopt sustainable practices for road construction and maintenance project in Mauritius, and also to reduce the cost. This consultancy will look at developing and using techniques most appropriate for the local context for recycling of asphalt. This will lead to a pilot project, which will hopefully pave the way for wider use in future. Provision is required for payment of fees and upgrading of software. And here, the consultant is to be appointed - not yet appointed. We have already started the preparation of the tender document.

**Mr Uteem:** Page 276, item 26, may I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister the reason for the almost threefold increase in the current grant to the Road Development Authority?

**Mr Bachoo:** Well, in fact, it is not a threefold increase. Earlier it was divided into two items. It was Rs45m. plus Rs35 m. There were two sub-programmes, and now both of them have been brought together into this programme, plus we have the Manraj Report as well as the PRB Report. So, that gives you the impression that it is threefold. In fact, it is not threefold.

**Mr Seeruttun:** Page 278, item 32145302; *Loan to Special Purpose Vehicle - Road Decongestion Programme*, Rs4.3 billion. May we have some details as to the terms of the loan, and to which financial corporation are we talking to?

**Mr Bachoo:** This is Government's money and it was under this particular item. In fact, it was the money which was meant for our PPP projects and which has been transferred to the Ministry of Finance under the Build Mauritius Fund.

**Dr. Sorefan:** Mr Chairperson, on page 276, item 31113003 *Ring and Harbour Bridge*, we are made to understand that it was a PPP project. Now, the Vice-Prime Minister is saying that

we may go item by item, provided that we have fund. Is he confirming that the PPP project is out?

**Mr Bachoo:** When the hon. Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Finance was reading the Budget speech, he never mentioned that the PPP Programme is out. It was only mentioned that depending on the availability of funds. We are going to see how to put it into stages, that's all. I don't think that I am here to discuss the pros and cons of the project.

**Mr Bodha:** To come back to the Traffic Management Plan for Port Louis, may I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister when was the last survey on this matter carried out, and whether all the works which have been carried out to deal with decongestion in Port Louis were based on that last survey?

**Mr Bachoo:** In fact, I remember there was one Mr Menon who came from Singapore in early 2003 or 2004. Then, he had conducted the survey. But, apart from that, there were other consultants, and technicians of my Ministry in-house, who were conducting surveys – they are intelligent enough. We have not been able to work miracles in Port Louis, but we have done a lot of work.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** I refer to pages 276, item 31113003 *Construction and Upgrading of Works*. I read somewhere, today or yesterday, that the flyover at Phoenix roundabout was getting underway, and yet, I cannot find any reference to it here. So, can I have some confirmation from the Vice-Prime Minister that this is, indeed, budgeted for...

*(Interruptions)*

I am sorry, does the Minister wish to raise a point.

**Mr Bundhoo:** The hon. Member is referring to a newspaper. He cannot come to Parliament, at Committee Stage, asking questions on what he heard, Mr Chairperson.

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Minister, this is not a point of order. Please, proceed!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** The gentleman should go outside and rest if he cannot stay here!

*(Interruptions)*

*Monn mentionn la gazet mwa!*

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Obeegadoo, please, go ahead with your question.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** We have 20 minutes. Chair, you cannot allow this kind of...

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** I have already told the hon. Minister that his point does not stand.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** I think you should call for some order in this House, Mr Chairperson. My question is: will the Vice-Prime Minister confirm whether this project is, indeed, on for next year and where is it budgeted, and what can we expect to be achieved in year 2014, considering this is one of the major bottlenecks in our road network?

**Mr Bachoo:** Mr Chairperson, honestly speaking, I am sticking to the programme, but if the hon. Member comes with a question in Parliament, I will answer. At the same time, I can assure the hon. Member that the project is not out, but very much in.

**Mr Soodhun:** On page 277, item 31113004 (a) *Rehabilitation of Steel Bridges*, will the hon. Vice-Prime Minister inform the House that the steel bridge concerning highway Parisot and Highlands is included?

**Mr Bachoo:** No, that does not refer to that steel fly-over; it is the rehabilitation of the three steel bridges in the south, which are nearly completed, almost 99%. The hon. Member is talking about the footbridges. In fact, the footbridges at Wooton are under construction. The contractor is very late in that project; up till now, he has accomplished almost 65%. Unfortunately, in the past, we had invited tenders, but nobody participated. The second time, only one fellow participated. We are having difficulties with the contractor, but we are following him carefully, and I do hope that towards the end of the year, the work will be completed.

**Mr Uteem:** On page 277, item 31113003 (l) *Upgrading of A7- From Providence to Flacq*. May I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether tender has been launched, whether the contract has been awarded, whether this will form part of the PPP projects, and whether it would be a toll road?

**Mr Bachoo:** No contract has been launched, because this is a project which will be partly financed by the Arab banks, and so preparations are on.

First of all, we must prepare the specifications and get the clearances. That is already on, but it will take a little bit of time. It is not under the PPP projects; it will be financed directly by Government fund and it will not fall within the jurisdiction of toll. Forget about toll for the time being.

**Mr Seeruttun:** On page 277, item 31 (k) *Upgrading of A9 from Nouvelle France to La Flora*. Some Rs50 m. were earmarked for 2013. May I know from the Vice-Prime Minister, how much has been disbursed, so far, to the contractor, what is the name of the contractor, and when is the completion date of that project?

**Mr Bachoo:** The project was for the value of Rs85.2 m., it has already been completed. Unfortunately, we did not open the road officially, but it had been completed, and now vehicles are moving up and down.

**Mr Seeruttun:** How much has been disturbed, so far?

**Mr Bachoo:** From my information, the work has been completed and the cost is Rs85.2 m. The hon. Member can come with a question in Parliament; I will have no problem giving him an answer.

**Dr. Sorefan:** Mr Chairperson, on page 277, item 31113003 (s) *Development of Mauritian Standards for Roads*. May we know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister which standards are we using or referring to for tendering for those roads that we have constructed? We have constructed so many roads and spent so much money, and we do not have any standard. So, do we refer to any international standard?

**Mr Bachoo:** It amounts to insulting the intelligence of our technicians and engineers in our country, Mr Chairperson. We have our own specifications, but we wanted to standardise everything, and keeping this in mind, we are going ahead. We have one of the best road networks in the world. So, I tell you, I am proud of our technicians and engineers.

**Mr Bodha:** Can I come back to page 278, item 32 *Acquisition of financial assets*. The hon. Vice-Prime Minister referred to a Build Mauritius Fund, which I presume will have a contribution from the Government and a contribution from the private sector. He mentioned a sum of Rs4.3 billion as a contribution from the Government. Can we have an idea of the total sum that he has earmarked in this Build Mauritius Fund for this year?

**Mr Bachoo:** No, Sir, because that does not fall under my jurisdiction. I am only aware that this Fund was available for us for projects. It had been transferred in the Build Mauritius Fund, that's all I am aware of.

**Mr Li Kwong Wing:** Mr Chairperson, if we look at page 719, with regard to the Build Mauritius Fund, we find that there is a provision for expenditure of Rs838 m., but no amount has been provided for any road projects...

**The Chairperson:** Which page are you referring to, hon. Li Kwong Wing?

**Mr Li Kwong Wing:** I am referring to page 719, the Build Mauritius Fund. What I am saying is that in that Appendix, there is no provision for any road project, it is only for drain, bus replacement and consultancy.

Given that the Transaction Advisory Services that have been recruited for the Ring Road and Dream Bridge Project are already completed, also, given that on page 278 on the top of the page, item 32 – Loan to Special Purpose Vehicle which was specifically set up for the Toll Road Project and this money is now gone and there is no provision for any SPV, do we understand that, therefore, the project of the Dream Bridge and the Toll Road is now gone because there is no provision at all?

**Mr Bachoo:** Mr Chairperson, the money is there and that is lying with the Ministry of Finance and Government will have to take a decision on how to prioritise. That is all I can tell you because...

*(Interruptions)*

Do not worry because the Fund is there. We can do it.

**The Chairperson:** Last question, hon. Obeegadoo!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Yes, Mr Chairperson, maybe some enlightenment since we have one of the best road networks in the world. Obviously, that network has to be maintained. If I look at the bottom of page 270, the last indicator in 2012 we maintained, rehabilitated and upgraded 89kms of road and yet in 2014 we aspire to tackle only 40kms. How are we maintaining this world class network?

**Mr Bachoo:** Because we have spent billions of rupees in the construction of new roads. We have already spent billions of rupees and, at the same time, as you just heard, for A7 Road, we are going to spend about Rs950 m. Throughout the country, in the North, South, East and West, everywhere we have spent. That is the reason why we have tried to reduce a little bit because capital projects are already on.

**The Chairperson:** Time is up!

*Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping – Programme Code 323: Construction and Maintenance of Roads and Bridges (Rs912,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping – Programme Code 324: Land Transport Management was called.*

**Dr. Sorefan:** Sub programme 32401 at page 279, may we know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister why the...

**Mr Bachoo:** 324?

**Dr. Sorefan:** Under item 25210003 *Free Travel Scheme for Students, Old Aged Pensioners and Disabled Persons*, can we know why the sum has gone up for public corporations and for private also?

**Mr Bachoo:** It has gone up because there has been an increase in the bus fares by 12% and that is reflected here.

**Mr Baloomoody:** On the same page 279, under item 31113035 – *LRT – Preparatory Works*, we find that last year we budgeted Rs180 m. and for the next year, there is no fund provided. May we know what is the fate of this LRT Project?

**Mr Bachoo:** The good news is that this year, towards the end of October, we are going to start the construction of the network itself. There is no bad news. The Request for Proposal is already on, so they have to bear with us. When we get the Request for Proposal, evaluation will take place and then we will go ahead.

**Mr Soodhun:** On page 279, concerning item 22030 – *Rent*, there is an increase of nearly more than 50%. I would like to have some details from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister.

**Mr Bachoo:** About Rent?

*(Interruptions)*

There has been an increase that is due to TMRSU having moved to new building in March 2013 because now we are supposed to have a back office for the speed camera. Additional place was required and that was the reason.

**Mr Gungah:** Mr Chairperson, on page 278, items 22070 and 22090, can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister give the name of the contractors for the cleaning and security services?

**Mr Bachoo:** For the cleaning services it is only Rs150,000. I do not have the name. Cleaning of office premises, provision for cleaning of toilets and sanitac services. As far as security is concerned, security services at the NTA Head office and Vehicle Examination Centre is provided by GMR & Co. Ltd. There is another contractor which is Brink's Ltd. So, there are two contractors for the security. And for the cleaning services, I will try to find out the name.

**Mr Bodha:** Mr Chairperson, to come back to the LRT, the hon. Vice-Prime Minister has just informed the House that the works are starting in October 2014. May I ask him then what is the Budget which has been earmarked for these works?

**Mr Bachoo:** As far as MLRT is concerned, we had to go for the consultancy services and the Rs180 m. were earmarked for the first stage of the consultancy services and now we are in the second stage.

In the second stage, the cost is around Rs220 m. and the following tasks, among others, are covered under stage two: issuing and evaluation of request for proposal to shortlist the bidders; negotiations with the proponents during the bidding period; the contract clause and concession agreement signature, and financial clause stage 2 completion. These are the works which are being undertaken actually by the consultants and, at the same time, concurrently, the request for proposal has been launched. We are going to receive it next year. Evaluation will be done and then the one who is the most competitive will get it. There is no problem.

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Mr Chairperson, to come back to non-financial private enterprises for free travel, there is an amount of Rs808,000,000. Can I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister how this sum is being distributed among private enterprises and whether his Ministry intends to review the whole mechanism of Free Travel Scheme? As he is aware, there have been severe criticisms in the last report of the Director of Audit concerning this issue.

**Mr Bachoo:** Mr Chairperson, even the PAC and the previous MAB had gone through the whole exercise and they had checked the exercises. Not only that, I can say that after studying different modes and alternatives, the system that we have, had been recommended by all. There was a British Consultant who came to Mauritius, he submitted a report. Government had to pay for the report and he himself concluded that the method that we have is the best one. Now, how the money is channelized to the different bus companies, that is the responsibility of the NTA. I do not have any hesitation to say that those who are the topmost management of NTA do their work professionally well. We do not have any problem as far as they are concerned.

**Dr. Sorefan:** At page 279, under item 26313129 – *Current Grant – Mauritius Land Transport Authority*, may we know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister the composition of the Board and the Chairperson of the Board?

**Mr Bachoo:** Regarding the Mauritius Land Transport Authority, I do not have the list, but I know the Chairman is Mr Serge Petit and the Officer-in-Charge, Dr. Reesaul, is actually on a temporary basis. I am going to give you the names of the other members.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** I will go on to page 279, last item *Road Safety Devices* and then on page 280 the first item on top *Other Machinery and Equipment*. I would like to know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether we are taking steps within the Budget for next year for the maintenance of traffic lights to be addressed, who by? I note that at the entrance of Port Louis every morning we switch off the traffic lights and Police Officers have to direct traffic. So, I would like to ask him whether we are going to get out of this ridiculous situation next year and whether steps will be taken. I do not know, a unit at the Ministry or reliable service providers for traffic lights and also for road markings and traffic signs to be reviewed with the enlargement of the M1 into a three-lane motorway.

**Mr Bachoo:** Well, as far as the traffic lights are concerned, I know there had been problems in the past. But, we have taken every step to ensure that we won't have the same problem that we used to get in the past. Often, you will find that traffic lights are not on. I know, I am aware of that, and as far as the markings are concerned, we have given strict instructions to the technicians of my Ministry that we have to be very careful. We must get the best paint that is available.

Here, the hon. Member has asked me a question on *Road Safety Devices*. Here, there is this item regarding the civil work for traffic lights for ten junctions and ten pelican additional footpaths, handrails and guardrails, footbridges, pelican crossings, speed reducing devices, road studs, lay-by for buses; this money is meant for that.

Then, the other issue was regarding *Other Machinery and Equipment*. Here, under this item, we have got supply, installation and commissioning of traffic signal equipment for Rs10.8 m.; supply of speed cameras - Rs50.6 m. Contract for supply, installation and commissioning and operation of speed cameras, 50 fixed and six mobile, and this has already been awarded. The hon. Member is aware of it. So, this item concerns the speed cameras.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** On the point concerning traffic lights, in the past, the hon. Minister had told us that the problem was that the provider of the traffic lights did not win the tender. Therefore, there was no know-how to maintain those traffic lights. I would like to know for next year what is going to change. It is the same for road signs; the Ministry had recourse to an outside provider of services. What is going to change? Are we still dependent on one single company? Within the Budget for next year, how is the problem going to be concretely addressed?

**Mr Bachoo:** Mr Chairperson, unfortunately, we have to pass through the tender exercise and the one to whom the tender is awarded, we cannot go against it. We had tried and tried many times, for the last 10 to 15 years we have been trying to get better providers of such traffic lights. Unfortunately, we have failed. There had been one or two years ago, I remember when some X or Y got the contract; unfortunately, they got the contract, they could not provide the services.

So, we have a problem and that is the reason why we have requested TMRSU, the Traffic Management and Road Safety Unit of my Ministry, to try to outsource from outside any possibility, if we can get other providers. Because, how many traffic lights do we have? And if we want to give it to any foreign company also, they don't want to come. So, that is a big problem. We are trying to improve on what we have and now, things are improving a bit. I do hope that by next year, we can get other service providers to whom we can give the contract if they are competitive.

**Mr Baloomoody:** Yes, if I may come back again to the item *Free Travel Scheme*.

**Mr Chairperson:** Which page is it?

**Mr Baloomoody:** Item 25210, *Free Travel Scheme*; we are being asked, in this House, to vote a Budget of nearly Rs1 billion for this project.

(*Interruptions*)

Yes, Rs1 billion for this project, and we are not being informed as to how this money is being distributed to the bus owners. I am sure the hon. Minister, although it is done by the NTA or whatever institution, but the hon. Minister must be aware. So, can he, please, inform the House how this money is distributed to the bus owners, be it the private or the public owners?

**Mr Bachoo:** No. On average it comes to around Rs50,000 per bus and they have calculated the number of students who travel by those buses and that work is done by the NTA. But, it comes to around Rs50,000 per bus monthly. At the same time, I can say rigorous inspections had been going on and since the beginning of the project up till now, we have already retained Rs50 m. We have not paid for those reluctant bus owners and drivers who have not been doing their work properly and actions have also been taken against bus conductors and drivers who had been insulting old-aged people as well as students.

So, we have been very rigorous about it. I can circulate, definitely, a plan of the details of how the money is channelized through different organisations, different companies and cooperatives. I don't have any problem. I will give you.

**Mr Baloomoody:** Are these owners of bus being paid even during school holidays? So, for 12 months they get Rs50,000 per month? '*Zot gagne treizième mois.*'

**Mr Bachoo:** Let me circulate the list. You will have a look at all the details.

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Baloomoody:** We know that now all the Secondary Schools are on two months' holidays. Are they being paid during that period?

**Mr Bachoo:** I don't know. I don't think so.

**Mr Baloomoody:** You don't know?

**Mr Bachoo:** I will get you the details in a few minutes.

**Mr Chairperson:** The hon. Vice-Prime Minister will circulate the information. Hon. Ameer Meea!

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. To come back to the *Free Travel Scheme*; according to the words of the hon. Minister, he stated that we have the best method, the best mechanism to distribute this *Free Travel Scheme* and he also stated that there has been a British Consultant who prepared a report and Government had to pay for that Report. So, can I ask him if he is ready to table that report.

**Mr Bachoo:** I have got no hesitation. Now, the payment for free travel is made on the basis of the number buses used from each operator and on the basis of the annual returns. They are paid for 180 days yearly.

**Mr Chairperson:** Hon. Seeruttun!

**Mr Seeruttun:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. At page 279, Sub-Programme 32402, item 26 – *Current Grants - Mauritius Land Transport Authority*, Rs22 m. have been earmarked for 2014. May we have some details as to how that money is being spent within that Authority?

**Mr Bachoo:** Well, that is meant for the recurrent post, that is, for the salary, the travelling, grant, utilities, office equipment. That is the item.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** I would like to return to the question of hon. Bodha earlier, the LRT issue, which is on page 279. The hon. Minister answered that the whole process of request for proposal and eventually, the award of tender would be completed and works would start by October. Now, if works are to stop, then there must be funding and how is it that there is no budgetary provision at all for 2014 in respect of the light rail system, the transit system, LRT? Can we take Government seriously and, if so, where are the funds?

**Mr Bachoo:** We have got the special fund which is there, the special fund which is under the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development. I get the feeling that we have to outsource from that fund.

**Mr Chairperson:** Hon. Baloomoody!

**Mr Baloomoody:** Yes, with regard to the Traffic Management and Road Safety Unit. We find that the *Rent* - 22030 has gone up threefold.

**Mr Chairperson:** At which page?

**Mr Baloomoody:** At page 279. The rent has gone up threefold and even the security under item 22090. May we know the reason why?

**Mr Bachoo:** I have already answered the question as far as the rent is concerned because we had to move from one building to the other. I have given the reason why we had to move because we needed additional space to provide for the backup office for Police Enforcement Unit of the Police speed Camera. So, additional staff had to be recruited. There was insufficient parking and I will give the hon. Member the name of the owner.

*(Interruptions)*

Samlo, yes! It is Samlo. But the tender procedures were followed and he got it through tender.

Secondly, as far as the security is concerned, security services are being provided for the TMRSU as per the contract agreement with Rapid Security Services - Rs65,994 monthly. The contract period will end on 20 February 2015.

**Dr. Sorefan:** Mr Chairperson, regarding the LRT, now that the hon. Minister has said works have been completed from the consultant, is he prepared to table the *trajet* from Curepipe to Port Louis for the public to know?

**Mr Bachoo:** Well, it is too early because anybody who is involved in such type of work, any Ministry, they know that when the Request for Proposal is invited, there are certain documents which are kept confidential. This is the property of the Government of Mauritius.

I would like to add up one more thing, Mr Chairperson. I have spoken about the special fund, but at the same time when the Request for Proposal has been made, most probably it can be financed through the RFP, itself, the Request for Proposal, any proponent who come they will bring their money or it can also be G to G. So, it is too early for me to come to a conclusion.

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Obeegadoo:** At page 271. Performance indicators, Sub-Programme 32402. Second indicator, S2 and then SS1, is the hon. Minister with me? Number of road traffic accidents per 1,000 vehicles registered, for 2012 - 51. Now, arithmetically this would mean that 5% of vehicles registered in 2012 are involved in road accidents. Is that what the hon. Vice-Prime Minister is telling us?

**Mr Bachoo:** Mr Chairperson, the figure, again I maintain, has been a bit conservative together with the speed cameras that we have introduced and secondly, the penalty point; we are getting the results. Even though we have put 47 here, it may fall down drastically, but this has been a conservative figure which they have mentioned.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** The actual figure maintained here is 51 over 1000, that is, 5%. Are we to understand that as at 2012, 5% of vehicles registered are involved in road accidents?

**Mr Bachoo:** On an average! That was 2012, we didn't have the penalty point and the speed cameras. With the introduction of all these measures definitely it will have to fall down.

*Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping - Programme Code 324: Land Transport Management (Rs1,465,989,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping - Programme Code 325: Maritime Safety and Development was called.*

**Dr. Sorefan:** Mr Chairperson. On page 280, regarding item 22120 *Fees*, the fees have gone up. May we know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister, why?

**Mr Bachoo:** These are the fees to assessors of Mauritius Standards Bureau in respect of Quality Management system, fees for training of technical staff, fees to consultants, computerisation of shipping sector and preparation of business plan for Mauritius Marine Training Academy (MMTA), fees in connection with examinations and interviews payable to examiners' in-house technical staff, capacity building programme, provision of services and support in the field of training in seamanship and navigational study at MMTA against payment of salary.

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Mr Chairperson, on page 280, last item *Acquisition of Non Financial Assets*, there is an amount of Rs21 m. May we have the details of this sum?

**Mr Bachoo:** Yes, that is the balance which was due on the purchase of a new GMDSS equipment. We had bought a new GMDSS equipment and we had to pay for it.

**Mrs Labelle:** Mr Chairperson. I am on page 280, item 25210002 *Ferry Boat Operators*. The amount is remaining the same for the coming years, there has been a very slight increase. I just want to have a clarification whether we are talking about the ferry boat at Grand River South East and whether there has been a revaluation of the criteria because we are not increasing the amount. There has been a review of the criteria for payment for this ferry boat?

**Mr Bachoo:** No, normally it is through tenders. We launch tenders and the lower tenderer gets this. This is how they got it. One Mrs L. Monique for a period of two years with effect from 17 September 2012 and the fixed monthly rate of Rs45,900.

**Mr Gungah:** On page 280, item 22070, again I would like to ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister who has been allocated the contract of cleaning services and item 22130, *Studies and surveys*, may we know which are those studies and surveys that will be carried out?

**Mr Bachoo:** The first is the cleaning services: cleaning of office premises, that is, by Maxiclean and the contract is ending on 31 January 2014 and Professional Cleaners Limited is looking after the shipping office and his contract is ending on 16 May 2013. The second one is about the *Studies and Surveys*, that is, the studies are in cleaning operation of vessels. The vessels which are in our country, what they do is that consultancy has to be carried out to look after the various species which are brought by ship from outside and this impacts very badly on our marine life. That is the consultancy.

**Mr Soodhun:** Page 280, item 28211 *Transfers to Non-Profit institutions*, I would like to know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister who are the non-profit institutions?

**Mr Bachoo:** That is an annual grant contribution we make to the secretariat of Indian Ocean Regional Port State Control.

**Mr Seeruttun:** Mr Chairperson, on page 280, item 22060 *Maintenance*, it seems that there is a decrease in the amount provided for in 2014. May we have some explanation as to why the maintenance cost is going to go down onwards from 2014?

**Mr Bachoo:** This is because we have already bought a new GMDSS equipment. On maintenance cost, we are not spending money.

**Mrs Labelle:** Still on page 280, item 22090 *Security*, out of the Rs25 m., we see there is a sum of some Rs16 m. for Global Maritime Distress and Safety System Services. May we ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister to give us some details on these services and also out of this Rs25 m., there is a balance of something like Rs9 m. and the balance will be applied to what sector or services?

**Mr Bachoo:** This one I have to explain. Let us say in 2013, it was Rs20,605,000. So, that sum of Rs20 m. includes Rs4 m. which we have already paid as an advance for the GMDSS here. The other Rs16 m., that is, the money we have to pay to Mauritius Telecom in order to look after our GMDSS. That is the money we pay yearly to the Mauritius Telecom.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** On page 271, bottom of the page, *Outcome Indicator*. Is the hon. Vice-Prime Minister with me?

**Mr Bachoo:** Yes.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Detention rate of vessels registered under the Mauritian flag in foreign countries, I don't quite understand. Does that mean the rate at which our vessels are being detained in other countries? Could the hon. Vice-Prime Minister, please, explain?

**Mr Bachoo:** We have got 160 vessels which fly the Mauritian flag and you know what happens, 90% or 75% of the cases, here our officers are so strict, that they keep them for hours and hours here. So, this is reflected here. It is only one of our vessels in Reunion Island which was detained for about 4-5 hours. Most of the time it is the Director of Shipping and the other officers who try to detain vessels if they don't comply with certain criteria of the SOLAS Convention. It is not the foreign countries that try to detain our vessels. No.

**Mr Baloomoody:** On page 280, item 22130, *Studies and Surveys*, we have found that for this year we are budgeting a sum of Rs2.5 m. for studies and surveys. May we know in which specific area and who will conduct the studies and surveys?

**Mr Bachoo:** Definitely, we will go for procurement, because this is a very, very complicated study, in view of the vessels situated in our harbour. I have mentioned that some invasive species get stuck, I don't know how. A consultant has to look into it, how we have to clean those vessels, because that will impact very negatively on the marine life of our country. So, definitely, we are going to appoint a consultant to do the job.

**Mr Seeruttun:** Mr Chairperson, I would like to go back to the question asked by hon. Mrs Labelle with regard to security expenditure, item 22090 on page 280! Out of the Rs25.3 m. earmarked for 2014, Rs16.5 m. will go for the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System Services. I would like to know to which services the remaining balance is going to go.

**Mr Bachoo:** The rest will go for security services provided by new security guards, where we are paying Rs73,140 monthly, and then we have communication costs and operating costs, as per the contract. So, we pay Mauritius Telecom the rest of the money, and whatever is left, the security guards are paid for that.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Page 280 - I don't know whether the question has been asked - the very last item - *Other Machinery and Equipment*. The hon. Vice-Prime Minister is requesting us to give him Rs15 m. additional. May we know the purpose thereof?

**Mr Bachoo:** Here, under *Other Machinery and Equipment*, it is for Mauritius Marine Training Academy (MMTA) students. These are training equipment to train students. All our seamen are trained there. Recently, there has been an increase in the number of students. They are trained for that.

*Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping – Programme Code 325: Maritime Safety and Development (Rs91,376,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping – Programme Code 404: Community-Based Infrastructure and Public Empowerment was called.*

**Dr. Sorefan:** Page 281, *sub-item 31112022 - Construction of Market Fairs*. May we know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether he can table a list of market fairs that will be constructed in 2014?

**Mr Bachoo:** There is no need to submit a list. The Rs87 m. has been earmarked for the market fair at Goodlands, and the rest of the money will go for the upgrading of the CAB offices. There is only one. No need for me to give in writing.

**Mr Gungah:** Page 281, with regard to item *31113019* and item *31113021*, may we know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister where these bus shelters, stands and children's playgrounds will be situated?

**Mr Bachoo:** The hon. Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, in his Budget Speech, has mentioned Rivière du Rempart. They are small bus shelters, and wherever the need is felt - it all depends on the PPS - they make the request together with the SRDO, and they prepare the list. Similar is the case with the children's playgrounds as well. A few football playgrounds have already been announced in the Budget Speech.

**Mrs Labelle:** Mr Chairperson, I am on item 31112022 - *Construction of Market Fairs*. There was a sum of Rs10 m. for this current year. May we know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister where these market fairs have been constructed, if any? And also, with your permission, regarding the upgrading of the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB), may I ask the hon. Minister which bureau is concerned, and whether the Rose Hill CAB is included in this item?

**Mr Bachoo:** Rose Hill is very much in that, because that reparation work is long awaited. Secondly, as far as the market is concerned, if I am not mistaken, it is at Roche Bois that we are constructing a market, and it is nearly completed.

**Mr Uteem:** Mr Chairperson, under the same item 31112022, may I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether, out of the budgeted amount of Rs87 m., there is any amount earmarked to construct any shelter or fair for the hawkers of Port Louis?

**Mr Bachoo:** That does not fall under my vote. That falls under Local Government.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Page 272, *Outcome Indicator, Programme 404, SS1*. I just discovered that there is something called Information, Education and Communication (IEC) campaigns/activities. May we know what this is about? I have never heard of this.

**Mr Bachoo:** Anybody in the country, if they have any problem, they want to get any information, any advice, they go to the CAB office; officers are there, they help and take a record of the number of people to whom they have given advice.

**Mr Gungah:** Mr Chairperson, item 31113406 - *Upgrading of Sports Facilities*. May I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister when will the Belin football ground be ready? Because it is almost one and a half years now since it has been closed for upgrading.

**Mr Bachoo:** I can assure the hon. Member. Hon. Choonee is here; just a few days back, we had a talk on this. The hon. Minister of Health and myself, we are going to make site visit. I know there was a problem. I can assure the hon. Member that the work will be completed. Not only that; you will see, next year, you will have another football playground in Constituency No. 6.

**Mr Soodhun:** Page 281, item 22060 - *Maintenance*. There is provision for Rs2,410,000, and I would like to have some clarification. Also, concerning sub-item 31113006 - *Construction of Sports Facilities*, I would like to know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether the sports facilities project of Petit Camp is also included in this item. I would also like to ask a question to the hon. Vice-Prime Minister on sub-item 31113019 - *Bus Shelters and Stands*. Can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister inform the House who is responsible for the selection of these bus shelters and stands?

**The Chairperson:** How many questions do you have hon. Soodhun? Three is enough!

**Mr Bachoo:** As far as this item is concerned, the maintenance of building at Sterling House, maintenance and repairs of photocopy machines and fax machines, air-conditioners, alarm system and for payment of maintenance agreements, vehicles and motorcycles, maintenance of three cars for NDU and 10 cars for PPSs – it is not 10, now it is about 6. Also it is for IT equipment, maintenance and upgrading of computers and the purchase of software and for payment of maintenance agreement payable to SIL, and for upkeep of the yards at the CAB offices.

Then, the other issue was construction of sports facilities. Yes, for the Petit Camp, the financial clearance has already been given to the Municipality of Vacoas/Phoenix. They are supposed to do the job. I have made requests many times – the work is almost completed, we have to check.

(*Interruptions*)

I am going to check with the PPS, because we have already given financial clearance.

(*Interruptions*)

Normally, bus shelters will be the responsibility of the PPS. Together with the SRDO, they will have to locate the sites.

**Mr Bodha:** On page 281, item 31113015 - *Land Drainage and Watershed Management Programme*, where we have a budget of Rs235 m. this year and no budget for next year. May I know whether this programme has been shelved?

**Mr Bachoo:** No, no! We have got a special item in the Budget. The hon. Member was present for the Budget Speech. In the Budget Speech, it was announced that there is going to be a Land Drainage and Watershed Dept. We have a Land Drainage Agency. So, we have got an item.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** On page 281, item 22120 - *Fees*. I would wish to know whether the CAB has legal advisers with retainer fees to whom people requiring legal advance are referred to. Because, I came across somebody in Curepipe and he was referred to an Attorney, by the CAB office, and when I inquired, I was told the name was given by NDU in Port Louis, by the Ministry to the CAB office. So, I would like to know whether there is a list of legal advisers, of Attorneys that are provided to CAB offices, and recommended to people coming for legal advice. If not, will the Minister see to it that there is no such improper directing of persons coming for help to income generating activities for Attorneys?

**Mr Bachoo:** Well, it is for the first time that I am hearing this. I have never heard that in the past, but I will give instructions to all the SRDOs to convey the strict warning to all those who are working in CAB offices.

**Mr Seeruttun:** On page 281, item 31122999 - *Other Machinery and Equipment* where Rs2.2 m. is earmarked for 2014. May we have some details as to how that money is going to be spent on machinery and equipment?

**Mr Bachoo:** This is meant for provision for the replacement of PABX system at NDU. That system dates back to the year 1995 and the manufacturing firm, Nortel Company of Canada has closed down. Parts are not readily available. The Mauritius Telecom has condemned the equipment and has recommended its immediate replacement, as existing PABX imminent breakdown may lead to communication chaos. So, we are trying to replace that machine.

**Mr Baloomoody:** Mr Chairperson, I refer the hon. Vice-Prime Minister to page 281, item 22060 - *Maintenance* and item 22070 – *Cleaning Services* respectively. I understand that the office of the NDU and the PPSs are at Sterling House, which is a private building rented to the Government. So, can I know why is it that we are spending Rs2.3 m. this year and we are budgeting Rs2.4 m. for maintaining that building, which is on the property of the Government? I can understand about the Cleaning Services, which, in fact, has increased from Rs80,000 to

Rs300,000. So, I understand we have to pay for the cleaning. But maintenance of building which does not belong to Government!

**Mr Bachoo:** I am told that for petty valuation and small works we have to do it. This is what I have been told. I think we have to check the contract, what it specifies.

We have got plant and equipment; repairs of photocopy machines, etc.; the maintenance of all the cars that belong to the PPSs; maintenance and upgrading of computers and all the yards of the community centres which have to be maintained. Money is lost into that.

For Cleaning Services, I have already mentioned that the contractor is Sotra Clean and Sotra Hygiene Ltd, they do the sanitary works.

*(Interruptions)*

I have to find out.

**Mr Gungah:** On the same item 22070 - *Cleaning Services*, can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister inform us why there is such a big increase in the Estimates of 2014, that is, from Rs80,000 to Rs300,000?

**Mr Bachoo:** I even asked the same question to my Officers. I was made to understand that it is because they have introduced the hygienic sanitary services for female staff in all the CAB offices.

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Going back to the construction of market fairs, Rs87 m., now we are being told that there will be only one market fair that will be constructed in Goodlands. I suppose this has been done through way of tender. Can I ask the Vice-Prime Minister who were the tenderers and who eventually won the tender?

**Mr Bachoo:** The Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Finance has announced in the Budget Speech...

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Some order, please!

**Mr Bachoo:** I can assure the hon. Member that tender procedures will be very, very strict. All the procedures will be followed and whoever deserves it will get it.

**Mr Nagalingum:** Under the same item, the Vice-Prime Minister announced a few weeks ago that a market fair is going to be consolidated in Rose Hill. Is that included in that item?

**Mr Bachoo:** I did not announce it officially. Requests were made and we said that we have to look into the possibility, if we can do it. I will request my hon. friend to be a bit patient. We are going to see what can be done.

*(Interruptions)*

What can be done, we are going to do! We don't say, no. It does not appear here, but we will see.

*Programme Code 404: Community-Based Infrastructure and Public Empowerment (Rs441,702,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Programme Code 405: Land Drainage and Watershed Management was called.*

**Dr. Sorefan:** On page 282, item 31113015 - *Construction of Drains* and item 31113415-*Maintenance and Cleaning of Drains* respectively. Can the Vice-Prime Minister circulate the list of drains and those to be maintained?

**Mr Bachoo:** Yes. In fact, the list has been prepared by the engineers of my Ministry. Just today, in the evening, we learnt that there had been heavy downpour in many places, so the list gets upside down. Now, attention has to be given to those regions which are badly affected. That is the reason why we cannot follow any established list. My Ministry's first preoccupation will be to care for the places where there had been that much of flood.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** On page 282, under the same item, *Maintenance and Cleaning of Drains*. Has the Minister learnt that, today, again, there have been flash floods at Cité Malherbes in Curepipe, and will he see to it that this alignment next to the football pitch at Cité Malherbes is urgently attended to? I gather from the MBC that Mr Thierry Henry is no longer the PPS and that it has been taken over by Mr Yeung Sik Yuen. The new PPS for No. 17...

**Mr Bachoo:** I am not aware.

*(Interruptions)*

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Will he see to it that the matter be addressed urgently?

**Mr Bachoo:** Mr Chairperson, I have just mentioned that there have been flash floods in many parts of the country.

(*Interruptions*)

**The Deputy Speaker:** We are about to round off. Please, observe some silence. Let us continue with the business.

**Mr Nagalingum:** May we know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister if any sum has been earmarked for Constituency No. 19?

**Mr Bachoo:** I have just mentioned that we have learnt about the flood also in Beau Bassin/Rose Hill. The Chief Project Co-ordination Officer of my Ministry was in contact with different sites and, as from tomorrow, works will start.

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Mr Chairperson, on the last item - *Maintenance and Cleaning of Drains*, there is a sum of *Rs20,000,000*. Can I ask the hon. Minister if this amount of *Rs20,000,000* is adequate for the *Cleaning and Maintenance of Drains*?

**Mr Bachoo:** This is an amount which has been put at the disposal of my Ministry and we have retained the services of the different local authorities. We have requested them to do the drain works wherever it is possible because it would be difficult for the NDU to do the whole lot, but, at the same time, we are going to put up a bit more of money because we have got money under the item *Drains*. We do have money and we can transfer and do the cleaning work.

**Mr Seeruttun:** Mr Chairperson, on that item, for the year 2013, *Rs225,000,000* were estimated under that item. May we know to date how much of that amount has been spent already?

**Mr Bachoo:** Mr Chairperson, we have gone beyond *Rs1.5* billion and only in the vicinity of Port Louis – I was checking the list in the evening, the works orders we have issued about ten days ago and if we take all, it will make an amount of about *Rs450* m. in Port Louis - in Rivière du Rempart *Rs435* m. In the Constituency No. 4, wherever there were the effects of flash floods, luckily we have been able to do the job. Part of the work is still missing in Canal Dayot which we have already started. Near Swami Vivekananda Conference Centre in Pailles, work has already started. So, for that matter, as far as drain works are concerned, wherever the need was felt, we have put money. Now, we have problems in a few places we have heard, we are going to start the work.

**Mr Baloomoody:** Can I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether this Land Drainage Watershed Management Unit is a new one?

**Mr Bachoo:** Yes.

**Mr Baloomoody:** The posts which have been earmarked for next year, have they been filled or are they ...

**Mr Bachoo:** They are on transfer from NDU.

**Mr Baloomoody:** They have been transferred from NDU to that unit. Can I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister on the *Maintenance and Cleaning of Drains*? Today itself, we have witnessed the flood at Pailles. In fact, the bridge was overflowed; no traffic could go through. Apparently, one of the main causes is the construction of the Ring Road. The watershed comes from the mountain and there is a problem with regard to the Ring Road. Apparently, according to the inhabitants this never happened before. Can I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether he will look again at that area now that we have had a specific flood there today, so that we can see if any alteration has to be made for the drains?

**Mr Bachoo:** Mr Chairperson, the Singaporean experts were there. After the flood, they came. Other experts also visited the site. They have made certain recommendations, but that is not the cause of the flood. The flash flood, everybody knows, I don't have to tell anything about it. The whole world has become a victim of these flash floods. So, we are going to do whatever is humanly possible. We will do it, we can't blame X, Y or Z for that.

**Dr. Sorefan:** To my question, the hon. Minister answered that there was a list and the list has been revisited as per the flash flood of today. Does that mean that tomorrow or the day after if you have a flash flood in the north this will be revisited again?

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** I think...

(*Interruptions*)

Please! Please!

**Mr Bachoo:** Mr Chairperson, I take my responsibility as a Minister ...

**The Chairperson:** I'll just rule out this question! Yes, hon. Ameer Meea!

**Mr Ameer Meea:** There is an amount of Rs3,500,000 for *Fees*. Can we have details of this amount and the nature of this amount to whom it is being paid?

**Mr Bachoo:** That is part of the payment we are going to pay to the Consultant for the Watershed Management Study and that money has been provided to us by the World Bank, but it has to come under the item you are paying.

**Mr Uteem:** Under *Construction of Drains and Maintenance and Cleaning of Drains*, may I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether his Ministry is still having recourse to emergency procurement to allocate these works.

**Mr Bachoo:** Actually, as at now, we are not having recourse to emergency, but in the evening when I learnt that there have been big floods, I was tempted to appoint any contractor under emergency, but we have not done that. But if the need is felt, we are bound to take such decisions. If I am going to depend only on the District Contractors and they are not able to perform, I cannot wait for human lives to get lost and then I come in. We won't do that; we will go for emergency if the need is felt.

**Mr Bodha:** May I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether we have a flood prone map of Mauritius?

**Mr Bachoo:** We do have in the Ministry at the NDU. I can provide you a copy, but, unfortunately, now everything is changing upside down. Places where you never had floods, now you are having floods. So, that has been tilted a little bit.

**Mr Ameer Meea:** Mr Chairperson, in relation to *Construction of Drains*, a sum of Rs400,000,000 has been earmarked. Can I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether he is aware that recently there has been construction of drains and many of those drains have been damaged? Especially, today we found pictures in the papers for Gokoola, whereby the whole wall has collapsed. Is the hon. Minister aware of such works being carried out and what action he intends to take against such things?

**Mr Bachoo:** Mr Chairperson, I am not here to defend the contractors, I have the report. It is not the whole barrier which had collapsed. The picture shown on the said newspaper is a previously taken picture around 04 November 2013, when a stone masonry wall, on part of a drain works, of a total length of 4.2 km, a part of it, a small patch had collapsed due to a sudden impact which occurred accidentally by an excavator while carrying out backfilling works behind the said masonry wall. In fact, remedial action is in progress and the above referred picture does not reflect the reality on the site. We have not yet paid the contractor, but we have insisted that he has to complete the work, and that is being done strictly under the supervision of the engineers.

*Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping - Programme Code 405: Land Drainage and Watershed Management (Rs430,217,000) 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 Ameer Meea:** Can I ask the hon. Minister, there is an amount of *Rs11,100,000* for *Rent* ...

**The Chairperson:** Kindly refer to the specific page and item number.

**Mr Ameer Meea:** At page 305, item 22030 - *Rent*, there has been an amount of *Rs11,100,000*, may we know which building is being rented, the floor space area and also to whom it is being paid?

**Mr Obeegadoo:** While the hon. Minister finds the answer to the first question asked, on page ...

*(Interruptions)*

No, I thought I was helping you by putting the next question. On page 302, Mr Chairperson under *Outcome Indicator - Cumulative number of diplomatic initiatives to respond to the*

*development needs and national interests of the country*, there is number 2 as the 2014 target. Will the hon. Minister kindly indicate which are these two initiatives to be taken in 2014?

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Minister, you would like to get all the questions from this Programme Code?

**Dr. A. Boolell:** Yes.

**The Chairperson:** Yes. Hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** At page 305, Programme code 381: *Policy and Management for Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade*, item 21110 - *Personal Emoluments*, I would like to refer the hon. Minister to page 296, *Contribution to finalisation and signature of Agreements*, where the second and third bullet refers to *DTAAs signed with Monaco, Rwanda and Gabon and IPPA's signed with Kuwait, Turkey and Gabon*. We have just heard from the hon. Vice Prime Minister that there is a special cell in the Ministry of Finance to deal with DTAA's. So may I ask the hon. Minister whether there is also a special dedicated cell in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which deals with agreements and DTAA's?

**Dr. A. Boolell:** Thank you very much. No, there is no special cell. In fact, we work very closely with the Ministry of Finance and whenever we have the opportunity to interact and interface with my counterparts, I always make it a point to raise issues which are relevant to the financial services sector. For example, with Monaco as the Vice Prime Minister has stated, we have signed a Double Taxation Avoidance Convention Treaty. That was signed on 13 April 2013 and then in respect of Rwanda, we have renegotiated the Double Taxation Avoidance Treaty. The internal procedures are being completed and then, of course, you know it will be ratified.

As far as Gabon is concerned, following the visit of the President, the two heads have made it possible for investors to grasp opportunities to invest in Gabon and we have created enabling environment by making sure that, as far as investment is concerned, IPPA and Double Taxation Avoidance Treaty are put in place. But with regard to Gabon on the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement, I must say that the internal procedures are being processed. We have also revised Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement with South Africa and IPPA which we have negotiated with the State of Kuwait. And on February 2013, we entered into an IPPA with

Turkey. So, as far as these issues are concerned, I have replied to the question that the hon. Member put. Now, in respect of *Rent*, I can circulate it, but it has to do with the floor that we rent from Belem in Port Louis in the Newton Tower.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Is the hon. Minister ready with the question I raised earlier?

**Dr. A. Boolell:** In respect of outcome indicator.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Maybe I can be more specific. The page I quoted mentioned two specific diplomatic initiatives in 2014. May I ask whether there is any new initiative envisaged having regard to our claim for recognition of our sovereignty over the Chagos in the light of the latest *manoeuvres* by the British?

**Dr. A. Boolell:** Well on the issue of Chagos, I would refer my friend to the reply given by the Prime Minister several times when questions were put to him. But let me make it quite clear that we are stepping up our lobbying and it is a three-pronged approach based on our legal, diplomatic and political approach. Now, in respect of the sensitisation process we have moved several resolutions, there is the continued and equivocal international support for the sovereignty of Mauritius over the Chagos Archipelago. If I referred to the last Nam summit and the AU summit, and the hon. Minister's declaration of a group of 77 in China, which we affirmed the need for peaceful solution to the meeting in New York in September 2013.

Then, of course, there is the Malabo declaration of the third South America Summit and then there are proceedings under the United Nations Convention Law of the sea, on the Marine Protected Area. On the 20 December 2010, Mauritius initiated proceedings against UK under article 7 of the UN Convention of the Law of the Sea and its Annex 7 to challenge the legality of the MPA around the Chagos Archipelago.

**Mr Seeruttun:** On page 305, on item 22010 - *Cost of Utilities*, I can see that the amount for 2014 has gone down and then it goes up again in 2015 and 2016. Can we have the reasons why it goes down in the year 2014 and then it goes up again for years 2015 and 2016?

**Dr. A. Boolell:** In respect of the rent, it means that there has not been an increase.

(*Interruptions*)

Yes for the year 2014!

(*Interruptions*)

Well, concerning the cost of Utilities, the figures are indicative in nature for the compensation of the employees.

**Mr Ameer Meea:** On page 305, item 22180 - *Overseas Travel*, there is an amount of Rs14 m. which is budgeted. May we have a breakdown of this figure?

**Dr. A. Boolell:** I don't have a breakdown, but it would not cost me anything to circulate.

**Mr Bodha:** On the same page, under item 26210047 - *Contribution to the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations*, may I ask the hon. Minister to enlighten us as to whether it concerns military expenses?

**Dr. A. Boolell:** No it's a military contribution to various keeping organisations and this is mandatory. We don't keep personnel, but we have to contribute and it is mandatory.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** My question remains unanswered. I have asked: which specific diplomatic initiatives are being targeted for year 2014?

(*Interruptions*)

Mr Chairperson, I think there are many competitors for your job from what I can understand.

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Order please!

**Dr. A. Boolell:** We've been kind enough to reply to the question being put to us.

(*Interruptions*)

Yes, because it's our right also to reply. You have the right to put questions. I think the exercise is going well. So, you've asked for a specific question, I don't know whether it is policy-related and if it is so, we are not going to reply.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** I thought things were clear so, I make it more explicit. We are being asked to vote a budget under this programme of ...

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Order please!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** *Rs71,295, 000*, now in that respect at page 302...

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** I want some order in the House!

**Mr Obeegadoo:** If the hon. Minister can get just what I am saying in respect of the sums we are being asked to vote, specific outcome indicators are being mentioned, so I believe I am entitled to ask the hon. Minister very kindly to respond to our request to know what these initiatives are. Now, since he has said that he is awaiting the answer I will ask another question on page 310, item *02 00 100 - Ambassador (Roving)* and there is also a *Non-Resident Ambassador*, could the hon. Minister kindly indicate the identity of those Ambassadors and what their role precisely is?

**Dr. A. Boolell:** The Roving Ambassador is Mr Dhomun, and the Non-Roving Ambassador is Mrs Roussety to whom specific responsibilities and duties have been assigned. Mrs Roussety is a Non-Resident Ambassador to Seychelles and also has been assigned countries like Congo, Kinshasa and another country. Ambassador Dhomun is Roving and as and when required sent on special assignment to Africa.

**Mr Uteem:** Chairperson, just on a point of clarification on the *Roving Ambassador*, there used to be two *Roving Ambassadors* should I take it from now on there will be only one?

**Dr. A. Boolell:** Yes, there is one; Mrs Sidaya who has been appointed Ambassador to Russia.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** I will put another question, if I may, I will take the issue under page 305, I am still on programme code 381, well I will take it under *Compensation of Employees*, I am taking an issue under the same programme – let me take it rather under the outcome

indicator, the question I asked earlier. I would like to know one of the important issues that arose recently concerns the request of the Republic of India for prospection rights ...

**The Chairperson:** Please, I want some silence in the House.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** Prospection rights on the ocean bed mineral resources and ....

*(Interruptions)*

Yes, I would like to know having regard to the expenditure we are budgeting for next year, we are identifying this as a diplomatic initiative in order to connect with the Republic of India and see whether we can have collaboration and joint ventures in that respect.

**Dr. A. Boolell:** No, if you had listened to what the hon. Prime Minister stated earlier – the reply was in the negative and we have our own policies which we are constantly and clearly defined. There has been the national dialogue on the ocean and we are coming up with a road map and that will spell very clearly policies of Government.

*Programme Code 381: Policy and Management for Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade (Rs80,435,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

*Programme Code 382: Foreign Relations was called.*

**Mr Obeegadoo:** On page 302, again the outcome indicators, this time reference is made to a number of framework and sectoral agreements with more than five targeted for 2014. May I ask the hon. Minister to give us some indication as to the nature of these agreements which had been earmarked to be signed in 2014?

**Dr. A. Boolell:** Let me reply to the first outcome that you are seeking. Of course, you know we are talking of appointment of new Consular, appointment of Ambassador to Moscow that has been said, increase in the appointment of Ambassador to Moscow that has been done. Increasing the high level visits, next year we are having the visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs from Rwanda to be followed by the visit of the Indian Minister of Foreign Affairs...

*(Interruptions)*

Then we have meeting of operators on specific issues, in respect of the visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of India, nothing stopped us from raising the issue of CECPA, I think former Minister Bodha put that question because in 2006 negotiations were stalled on the issue of CECPA and precisely one of the issue that has to be dealt with is the issue of Double Taxation Avoidance Treaty which is being reassessed and there is a team which is in Mauritius and discussions are ongoing. That is why I made it a point to highlight the relevance and importance of the forthcoming visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of India.

Rwanda. There is so much that we can do with Rwanda, notwithstanding that we are also addressing the issue of transnational qualification or mutual agreement on qualification because the possibility of young people taking on employment in Rwanda has become a reality. What is true for Rwanda is equally true for Botswana. Now agreement to be signed while examining a number of agreements with different countries, but at this stage we cannot indicate whether they will be signed as they request further consultation and we need to make sure that we consult the SLO also.

**Mrs Labelle:** Mr Chairperson, I am on page 302, regarding sub-programme 38201 and it is being stated that the indicators – *S1: Consolidating the political presence of Mauritius in countries/international organisations pertinent to our national interests and sustainable development and strategy* and we are being told that the target is five countries. *SS1: Number of priority African and other emerging countries, on which specific strategic approaches will be formulated and pursued*, is five, may I ask the hon. Minister which are these five countries if he has already established a list?

**Dr. A. Boolell:** Well, there are more than five countries, in fact. We have a Coordination and Coherence Committee which address issues which are relevant to the interest of Mauritius and countries on the African Continent with which we deal with. For example: Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique. With Tanzania, we did not have a consul, we have started the process and somebody has been identified to be the consul of Mauritius in Tanzania and we are waiting for them also to agree to the name of a person which we have submitted.

**Mr Seeruttun:** Mr Chairperson, page 306, item 22030: *Rent*, can the hon. Minister explain to the House ...

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Minister Bundhoo!

**Mr Seeruttun:** So, my question is if the hon. Minister can explain to the House how come the rental is fluctuating from one year to the other, that is, Rs14,700,000 goes down to Rs14,500,000 then goes up to Rs14,600,000 then goes up to Rs14,700,000, may we know to whom that rental has been paid to?

**Dr. A. Boolell:** I can circulate the information, but in respect of the specific question put by the hon. Member, the provision increase in 2013 is due to the expiry of the lease agreement during the course of the year. But, the lease was renewed under the same terms and conditions for a specific period of three years.

**Mr Ameer Meea:** On the same issue, but under the Sub-programme 38202, page 307, item 22030 – *Rent*, there is a massive rent of Rs130 m. May we know which building is being rented, the floor space area, and to whom this massive rent of Rs130 m. is being paid to?

**Dr. A. Boolell:** I can circulate the information. We are talking about overseas missions. If you read it, you will see. Do you want me to read it or to circulate it?

**Mrs Labelle:** Mr Chairperson, I am on page 307, *Sub-programme 38202*, item 31112408 – *Upgrading of Chanceries*. Mr Chairperson, regarding the London Chancery, we note that there were Rs80 m. for last year, Rs85 m. for this year, and Rs10 m. for 2015. May we know the project value of the upgrading works that have to be carried at this Chancery, and also the upgrading of the other Chanceries, because it is mentioned *Other Chanceries*? Can we also know which Chancery we are talking about, the project value, and the completion date of these works; when are we expecting these works to be completed for these Chanceries?

**Dr. A. Boolell:** Again, I have all the relevant information with me in respect of rehabilitation and refurbishment of the Chancery building in London, the rehabilitation and refurbishment of the Chancery building in New Delhi, and the land that we have acquired in Addis Ababa for the construction of an Embassy. If the hon. Member wants, I can circulate all these.

**Mrs Labelle:** What about the other Chanceries?

**Dr. A. Boolell:** I will circulate the information; they are all there.

**Mr Bodha:** Mr Chairperson, my question relates to the London Chancery. At one point in time, the idea was to sell this building and to buy something else. So, have we decided to, in fact, refurbish it?

**Dr. A. Boolell:** Well, of course, it is strategically well located. There was a time when it was almost condemned by the Local Council, but there was a team from the MPI, which travelled to London, to examine the documents submitted by consultant, and finally it has been agreed that it would be to our advantage to rehabilitate and to refurbish the Chancery. Work has started, and in the meantime, our friends from the High Commission have moved temporarily into another building.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** While the hon. Minister gives me the answer concerning the framework and sectoral agreements, can I put a three in one to go fast? On page 303, *Sub-programme 38202: Support by Mauritius Overseas Missions*, the target SS1 is: Number of international and regional organisations agreeing to set up their headquarters or representative office in Mauritius; one in 2014. May I know which is being targeted?

And then on page 304, *Sub-programme 38203: Regional Integration*, we are targeting four common – I do not know if you say actions – initiatives pursued for expanding economic space. There are some indications here. Is this confirmed?

Finally, at the bottom of the page, *Sub-programme 38301 – Number of new Trade Agreements*, there is one targeted for 2014. May I know which it is?

**Dr. A. Boolell:** In respect of the regional organisations, we have stated in the Budget that we are going to come up with a legislation entitled ‘Host Country Agreement’. Mauritius, as of now, is becoming a headquarters for many regional organisations. I’ll start with the Regional Multi-disciplinary Centre for Excellence, the COMESA Infrastructure Fund, the AFRITAC South, AfriNIC etc. The purpose is to create the enabling environment by coming with an umbrella organisation, to make it easy to attract those regional headquarters of multilateral organisations, or for the matter of global companies.

Now, on the issue of concluding Free Trade Agreement, my hon. friend should know that, due to the crisis in the euro zone, it has become difficult for us to gain as much market as we had, and we have opted to sell our products on the SADC and COMESA markets. These have enabled us to make up for the shortfall in respect of export to EU. In the meantime, the regional economic communities are becoming a Free Trade Agreement. We hope that by 2017, Africa itself will become a continental Free Trade Agreement, which means that Africa is not only aspiring, but is a market that holds a lot of promises, notwithstanding the amount of investment that is flowing into Africa.

Our economy is becoming service-oriented, and 80% of the economy will be service-oriented in the years to come. It is up to us to grasp the opportunity to cross the frontier, and make it possible for those in the services sector to take advantage of the numerous facilities that Africa offers. What we are doing also is working on an accelerated programme for regional economic integration, working with like-minded countries, identifying constraint, and see how best we can encourage mobility of professionals.

In respect of the Indian Ocean Rim Association, which was previously a talk shop, has now turned into an organisation which is delivering on cross-cutting issues. One of those cross-cutting issues is education. They have agreed to set up a virtual university which will be hosted in Mauritius; an interlink with other universities which are members of the Indian Ocean Rim. We are talking about 20 countries, and this will enable us to empower our youngsters who are keen to go into fields of specialisation, for example, oceanography.

Now, notwithstanding the field of education, there are other cross-cutting issues like maritime safety, security, and climate change. It is also a forum, which will enable us to act in unison when we have to address issues which are of concern to Small Island Developing States. Besides, there is the conference which is going to be held in Samoa to address the issue of Small Island Developing States, notwithstanding that the existential threat of many of the Small Island Developing States, has become the ...

*(Interruptions)*

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Uteem!

(*Interruptions*)

**Mr Uteem:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Order, please! Allow the hon. Member to speak.

**Mr Uteem:** Mr Chairperson, under item No. 22030 – *Rent*, where an amount of Rs130 m. is budgeted ...

**The Chairperson:** Which page is it, hon. Uteem?

**Mr Uteem:** Page 307. Under item *Rent*, there is an amount of Rs130 m. and under item No. 22190 - *Overseas Travel*, there is an amount of Rs13 m. May I know from the hon. Minister whether, out of this money, any fund has been budgeted to open a mission in Saudi Arabia next year?

**Dr. A. Boolell:** The question has been put to me by hon. Ameer Meea. Earlier, hon. Baloomoody was telling me how efficient our staff is in our Embassies. But, of course, we are understaffed; we would like to recruit more and do more. If only we have the resources to open new Embassies, we would do so. But, in the meantime, our Ambassador in Cairo has been accredited in Riyadh, so we are looking forward. Of course, when the time is ripe and circumstances are better, we will certainly entertain the request to open Embassies in Gulf countries.

**Mr Seeruttun:** On page 307, on sub-programme 38202, item No. 31121 – *Transport Equipment*, an amount of Rs18 m. has been earmarked for 2013. May we have some details as to how that money has been spent and in which country?

**Dr. A. Boolell:** I will circulate it.

**The Chairperson:** Last question, hon. Bodha!

**Mr Bodha:** Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Yesterday itself, the Director of the WTO expressed his pessimism as regards the World Trade Agreement. May I ask the hon. Minister

whether – he says that he is understaffed – we have a proactive team at the International Trade for Mauritius to play a prominent role in those negotiations and talks?

**Dr. A. Boolell:** Let me reply to the question put by hon. Seeruttun. The amount of Rs18 m. has to do with the acquisition of vehicles, provision for renewal of vehicles and for cars reaching five years old.

On the specific question put to me by hon. Bodha, I met the Director General of the World Trade Organisation in Geneva. Of course, there is concern as to whether there would be an outcome. I would not call it pessimism, but there is concern as to whether there will be an outcome. Of course, these are issues which are raised in all International Forums because everybody wants Bali to deliver on what we call a mini-package, addressing the issues of least developing countries; I hope that the LDCs will have a common position on duty free quota.

On the question of food security, there are people in India who need to be properly fed with basic commodities and we know what it means when there is speculation on food products. I have stated the other day, a drop in production of basic food commodities by 3% can ...

*(Interruptions)*

...cause an increase in the price of the products by 25%. So, that is why, food security will be an issue in Geneva and there will be, what they call, a peace clause, to ensure that those who are very vulnerable, who need to walk on a full belly, at least, have the basic commodities. And, on development, the issue of special and differential treatment is being looked into to ensure that the concern of countries like Mauritius, with middle income, is taken abroad. So, let's hope that there will be an outcome; there is a ray of hope. Everybody is erring on caution, but I feel that there will be an outcome to re-energise the Doha Development Round.

**The Chairperson:** Time is up!

*Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade - Programme Code 382: Foreign Relations (Rs902,541,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*  
*Programme Code 383: International Trade was called.*

**The Chairperson:** I will request hon. Members to keep aside policy matters and concentrate on matters pertaining to expenditure. Yes, hon. Uteem!

**Mr Uteem:** Mr Chairperson, on page 309, item No. 21110 - *Personal Emoluments* and then on page 312, under sub-programme 38302 - *Controller, Industrial Property Office* respectively. Can I know from the hon. Minister whether the registration of Intellectual Property Trademark is now being handled by his office because, previously, it was done by the Ministry of Industry?

**Dr. A. Boolell:** No, it has always been taken care of by the International Trade ...

(*Interruptions*)

**The Chairperson:** Hon. Minister Bundhoo, you are interrupting the Minister!

(*Interruptions*)

No, you cannot make a point!

(*Interruptions*)

You have to remain silent, hon. Minister Bundhoo! You cannot afford to interrupt the hon. Minister!

**Dr. A. Boolell:** There is a unit at the International Trade Department and it operates under the aegis of the International Trade. We work very closely with WIPO and we have technical assistance. We have prepared a draft legislation to deal effectively because we need a proper legislation to give support to the services sector - in respect of staff also to give support to us when we attend the meeting.

**Mr Seeruttun:** On page 308, under item No. 22060 – *Maintenance*, we can see a substantial increase in the amount provided for in 2014. May we know what justifies that increase?

**The Chairperson:** Which page?

**Mr Seeruttun:** On page 308, under item No. 22060 – *Maintenance* costs, the amount provided for in 2014 has gone up substantially. May we know what explains that increase?

**Dr. A. Boolell:** Under item No. 22060 *Maintenance*, it is for maintenance of Government-owned buildings, plants and machinery, maintenance of IT equipment, insurance, maintenance and repairs of vehicles. A decrease is envisaged due to the rehabilitation works at the Chancery and staff residences in London, Chancery and official residences in Brussels and in Canberra and the renewal of six vehicles in overseas mission.

**Mr Seeruttun:** What I am asking is why is there an increase of more than Rs800,000?

**Dr. A. Boolell:** It relates to a decrease. On which item are you talking? Is it under item 22060?

**Mr Seeruttun:** Yes.

**Dr. A. Boolell:** But, this is the reply.

**Mr Seeruttun:** But it used to be Rs300,000.

**Dr. A. Boolell:** No, I have already replied to the question that has been put to me.

**Mr Baloomoody:** Can I refer the hon. Minister to page 309, *Compensation of Employees, item 21110 – Personal Emoluments*, and at page 304, under sub-programme code 38302 - *Industrial Property Office*, where it is said that one of the objectives is the finalisation of the draft Intellectual Property Bill. Can I know whether provision has been made in this Budget for the finalisation of this Bill, and if so, whether it is his Ministry who will be concerned with the operation of that Bill?

**Dr. A. Boolell:** Yes, unless we have the persons who have the expertise, it becomes very difficult. We have enlisted the services of a person whom we consider to have the acumen, but we are also liaising with our friends in Geneva, with our friends at the World Intellectual Property Organisation. In the past, we have enlisted the services of experts, but we have to prepare a legislation which meets the needs of Mauritius. So, we have prepared a draft legislation and we hope that we will be able to come with a final draft in the months to come.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** On the very same issue raised so far on page 309, *Contribution to World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO)* and *Contribution to World Trade Organisation (WTO)*, may I seek some clarification from the hon. Minister, having regard to the expenditure

foreseen on the compensation of employees, under either sub-programme? Do we still have a small dedicated staff in Geneva with special responsibility for WTO and WIPO? Is this the staff that appears at pages 311 and 312 or does it fall elsewhere? Can he give us some details as to the dedicated staff that we do have, based in Geneva, having regard to WTO and eventually WIPO?

**Dr. A. Boolell:** We have a dedicated staff both at the International Trade, there is a specialised unit dealing with intellectual property, and, of course, our people in Geneva. Although we have, again, a limited staff, they work very closely with WIPO and with the World Trade Organisation.

As far as I am concerned, I think, we have no problem to handle the issue. But, as I have said, it is a very specialised field and we constantly need to know, over and above what our staff is doing, to enlist the services of those who have specialised in the field.

**Mr Obeegadoo:** My question was whether within our mission in Geneva, we have dedicated staff focussing essentially on WTO and WIPO.

**Dr. A. Boolell:** No, it has always been the same, but we do not have dedicated staff as such. We have a member of the staff who attends meetings relating to Intellectual Property Rights, but we do not have a dedicated person as such nor a dedicated team. But our staff takes care of the responsibilities conferred upon them and they relay all the relevant information. They interact with the resource person, Sir.

**The Chairperson:** No more questions?

*Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade - Programme Code 383: International Trade (Rs42,449,000) was, on question put, agreed to.*

**The Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Development (Mr X. L. Duval):** Mr Chairperson, I beg to move that we 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 Thursday 28 November 2013 at 11.30 a.m.

**The Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Development (Mr X. L. Duval)** rose and seconded.

*Question put and agreed to.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** The House stands adjourned.

*At 4.37 a.m., the Assembly was, on its rising, adjourned to Thursday 28 November 2013 at 11.30 a.m.*