



FIFTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

PARLIAMENTARY

DEBATES

(HANSARD)

SECOND SESSION

TUESDAY 29 OCTOBER 2013

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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
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Hon. Louis Hervé Aimée	Minister of Local Government and Outer Islands
Hon. Mookhesswur Choonee	Minister of Arts and Culture
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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
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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
<i>Clerk Assistant</i>	Ramchurn, Ms Urmeelah Devi
<i>Clerk Assistant</i>	Gopall, Mr Navin (Temporary Transfer to RRA)
<i>Hansard Editor</i>	Jankee, Mrs Chitra
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MAURITIUS

Fifth National Assembly

SECOND SESSION

Debate No. 21 of 2013

Sitting of 29 October 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)

PAPERS LAID

The Prime Minister: Sir, the Papers have been laid on the Table –

A. Prime Minister's Office –

- (a) Certificate of Urgency in respect of the Supplementary Appropriation (2013) Bill (No. XXII of 2013).
- (b) Estimates of Supplementary Expenditure (2013) of 2013.

B. Ministry of Finance and Economic Development –

The Securities (Recognition of Remote Custodians) Rules 2013 (Government Notice No. 245 of 2013).

C. Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development –

The Annual Report 2012 of the Tobacco Board.

D. Ministry of Youth and Sports –

The Sports (Amendment of Schedule) (No. 2) Regulations 2013 (Government Notice No. 244 of 2013)

E. Ministry of Local Government and Outer Islands –

- (a) The City Council of Port Louis (Decaen Market/Fair) Regulations 2012 (Government Notice No. 246 of 2013).
- (b) The City Council of Port Louis (Transportation Centre Fair) Regulations 2012 (Government Notice No. 247 of 2013).
- (c) The Local Government (Registration of Recycler and Exporter) Regulations 2012 (Government Notice No. 248 of 2013).
- (d) The Report of the Director of Audit on the Financial Statements of the Statutory Bodies Family Protection Fund for the year ended 31 December 2012.

F. Ministry of Arts and Culture –

- (a) The Annual Reports of the Mauritius Film Development Corporation for the years 2007/2008, 2008/2009 and for the period July 2009 to December 2010 (In Original).
- (b) The Annual Report 2011 of the Conservatoire National de Musique François-Mitterrand.

G. Ministry of Health and Quality of Life –

The Report of the Director of Audit on the Financial Statements of the Mauritius Institute of Health for the year ended 31 December 2012 (In Original).

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**TROU AUX CERFS - EMBELLISHMENT WORKS**

The Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development (Mr D. Virahsawmy):

Mr Speaker, Sir, with your permission, I would like to make a statement and clarify the issues raised by the Third Member for Curepipe and Midlands on adjournment at the last sitting of the National Assembly on the embellishment works being carried out by my Ministry at Trou aux Cerfs.

At the outset, I would like to point out that Trou aux Cerfs is an important public site which is visited by many Mauritians, tourists and joggers. The site was until recently in a state which required uplifting works; the more so as the earthen drains were affected by erosion thus preventing a free flow of water.

In fact, in the context of the project "Clean and Green Mauritius", implemented by my Ministry, strategic public sites around the country have been identified for upgrading and embellishment works.

The green space at the lower part of Trou aux Cerfs was one of the strategic sites that was identified and the upgrading works comprised of the following -

- upgrading of drains;
- construction of footpath with interlacing paviours leading to the kiosk;
- installation of handrails made up of recycling wood plastic composite materials, and
- planting and embellishment of the site.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to point out that the proposed works were fully discussed with the Municipal Council of Curepipe and with the Minister of Tourism and Leisure, my colleague hon. Michael Sik Yuen. In this respect, several site visits were effected by Officers of my Ministry and the Municipal Council of Curepipe and consensus was reached on the works to be undertaken. The works which started few weeks back are scheduled for completion by the end of this year.

In reply to the observations made by the hon. Member -

- (1) the greening and embellishment works which are not yet completed are meant to further enhance the beauty of the site and will in no way disturb the “*cachet naturel*” of Trou aux Cerfs;
- (2) no slabs have been installed by my Ministry;
- (3) barriers have been placed in specific unsafe spots for purely security reasons particularly for children. Furthermore, these handrails are eco friendly since they are made of recycling wood plastic composite materials. It is very unfortunate that after the handrails were fixed, they were damaged by unknown persons. The matter has been referred to the Police;
- (4) I wish to reiterate that the works are being carried out in close consultation with the Municipality of Curepipe. In fact, following proposals made by the Municipality, it has been agreed that the footpath should be in dressed stones instead of interlacing paviours;
- (5) as far as the points regarding the parking space, maintaining of toilets and lighting are concerned, they are not within the scope of this Clean and Green project implemented by my Ministry, and
- (6) the works have been entrusted to a contractor after normal procurement procedure.

I would like to reassure the House that once the works are completed with the planting of flowery plants, it will definitely enhance the beauty of the sites.

To conclude, my Ministry is taking action to upgrade this site as well as other strategic sites within the mandate of my Ministry.

Thank you, Mr Speaker, Sir.

ANNOUNCEMENT

PNQ OF 22.10.13 – UNPARLIAMENTARY WORDS - WITHDRAWAL

Mr Speaker: According to the transcript of the debates in the course of a reply to a supplementary question arising out of the PNQ, Dr. the hon. Prime Minister uttered the following words ‘ignorant pig’. I will kindly invite the hon. Prime Minister to withdraw the words.

The Prime Minister: I withdraw the words.

PUBLIC BILLS

First Reading

On motion made and seconded, the Supplementary Appropriation (2013) Bill (No. XXII of 2013) was read a first time.

Second Reading

THE SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION (2012) BILL (NO. XX OF 2013)

Order for Second Reading read.

The Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Development (Mr X. L. Duval): Mr Speaker, Sir, I move that the Supplementary Appropriation (2012) Bill (No. XX of 2013) be read a second time.

The Bill provides for the appropriation of a total sum of two billion eighty-one million, seven hundred and five thousand and six rupees (Rs2,081,705,006) to meet the supplementary expenditure incurred under 16 programmes in fiscal year 2012.

It is important to note that in any financial year, although the amount spent may be less than the sum appropriated by Parliament as was the case in 2012, nevertheless, there may be expenditures in some programmes which have exceeded the voted provisions.

To provide for the additional expenditures, transfers are made during the year, from one programme to another programme within a Ministry, or across Ministries, subject to the limitations and conditions laid down in the financial rules.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the House will recall that in December 2011, the Appropriation (2012) Bill was passed by the National Assembly and a total sum of Rs77.3 billion was appropriated under 134 programmes for fiscal year 2012. At the closure of accounts, the total appropriation actually spent in 2012 stood at Rs66.8 billion, that is, Rs10.5 billion less than the amount voted and approved.

In fact, there has been an underspending of Rs12.6 billion in 118 programmes. This has been partly offset by overspending of Rs2.1 billion in the remaining 16 programmes.

The additional spending in those 16 programmes was essentially met by way of transfer of funds from programme “Contingencies and Reserves” and from other programmes that had unspent balances.

Mr Speaker, Sir, section 105(3) of the Constitution stipulates that where any “head of expenditure” (now, any “Programme”) requires funds in addition to what has been appropriated, such additional funds shall require further appropriation by the National Assembly through a Supplementary Appropriation Bill.

Although the total amount spent in fiscal year 2012 is significantly below the total sum appropriated, a Supplementary Appropriation Bill of Rs2.1 billion is required in respect of Programmes that have exceeded their initial appropriations. Those 16 Programmes are listed in the Schedule to the Bill.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I shall now dwell on the main reasons requiring supplementary appropriation in fiscal year 2012.

Rs310 m. relates mainly to staff costs, as follows -

(a) An amount of Rs148 m. was required under programme “Rodrigues Development”. This was mainly additional grants provided to the RRA to meet the cost of the 2012 salary compensation and increases in pension rates.

However, these policy decisions were taken after the Regional Assembly had approved its budget. As such necessary provisions were initially made in the

programme “Centrally Managed Expenses of Government” and during the year they were reallocated to Programme “Rodrigues Development”.

- (b) A supplementary appropriation of Rs39 m. was needed under programme “Community Safety and Security” of the Police Force mainly in respect of staff costs such as payment of sick leaves and contributions to National Savings Fund. Provisions for these purposes were initially made under Programme “Security Policy and Management” of the Police Force.
- (c) An additional Rs65 m. was required under the programmes of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development mainly to provide additional grant to the MRA to meet the cost of salary review and additional capital investment in security and ICT projects.
- (d) An additional amount of Rs58 m. was needed under Programme “Curative Services” of the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life for meeting staff costs.

Mr Speaker, Sir, in addition, the following transfers were required -

- (a) An amount of Rs475 m. was spent under the programmes of the Ministry of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping, especially to cater for the upgrading of additional roads, implementation of additional land drainage and watershed management projects, and a loan to Mauritius Shipping Corporation Ltd to finance dry-docking operations of Mauritius Pride.
- (b) Rs82 m. was required under Programme “Land Management and Physical Planning” of the Ministry of Housing and Lands for payment of compensation in connection with compulsory land acquisition for implementation of various projects.
- (c) An amount of Rs4 m. was required under Programme “Technical and Vocational Education and Training” for providing an additional grant to the MITD to meet the cost of salary compensation and consultancy services for development of a business plan for MITD.

- (d) An amount of Rs190 m. was required under Programme “Environmental Policy and Management” of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development for the implementation of Phase III of the Solar Water Heater Scheme.
- (e) A further amount of Rs222 m. was needed under Programme “Facilitation to Local Authorities” of the Ministry of Local Government and Outer Islands mainly for implementation of projects financed under the Local Infrastructure Fund (LIF).
- (f) An extra amount of Rs54 m. was required under Programme “Destination Promotion” of the Ministry of Tourism and Leisure as grant to the MTPA to revisit its marketing strategy in view of the economic crisis in the Euro Zone.
- (g) Finally, Mr Speaker, Sir, a supplementary amount of Rs745 m. was required under Programme “Centrally Managed Expenses of Government”. The bulk of this was for an increase of Rs700 m. in equity participation in the State Investment Corporation (SIC) Ltd in connection with the investment opportunity of purchasing the shares of Air Mauritius in the Mauritius Estate Development Corporation Ltd (MEDCOR) which owns the Air Mauritius Centre building at Port Louis.

However, I wish to inform the House that this transaction has not materialised and accordingly, in 2013, the SIC has returned the total amount together with interests to the Consolidated Fund. The Supplementary Appropriation for 2012, Mr Speaker, Sir, represents only 2.7 per cent of the total appropriation for that fiscal year. The House may note that for fiscal year 2012 the budget deficit has turned out to be 1.8 per cent of GDP, as opposed to the 3.8 per cent previously estimated and the discounted public sector debt stood at 53.1 per cent, instead of 54.1 per cent previously estimated.

Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members will note that there has been a printing error in the Schedule to the Bill. In the first column, row 9, the words ‘*Ministry of Local*’ have been omitted.

Mr Speaker, Sir, with these remarks, I commend this Bill to the House.

The Deputy Prime Minister rose and seconded.

(12.00 p.m.)

Mr K. Li Kwong Wing (Second Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière): Mr Speaker, Sir, this year, again, we are here late in the year to examine the supplementary budget of last year and approve the Supplementary Appropriation (2012) Bill to give legislative sanction to the additional public expenditure over the amount appropriated in late 2011.

Allow me, Mr Speaker, Sir, to make a few background points, first, about the appropriateness of these estimates. As I have just said, we are now in October 2013 and the Government accounts have been closed since the end of 31 December last year because Government accounting is on a cash basis. So, all payments have been made and all receipts collected. And these accounts have been closed and submitted to the Director of Audit and the Director of Audit has already submitted his report on these accounts since June/July this year. So, the question that I have to ask is: The Annual Report of the Accountant General is already submitted, the Annual Audit Report has already been submitted; why is it that we are put in front of these additional estimates to be appropriated so late in the year? The question is that the authorisation and necessary clearance and adjustments have already been made by the Ministry of Finance and have been submitted by the Accountant General, yet, we are only now, late in the year, after 10 months, presenting these figures which give us only the opportunity to give an ex-post approval to what has already been incurred without any possibility of challenging, without any possibility of blocking or whittling down these expenditures. You will remember what happened in the US Congress, where the US Congress had protracted the debate to even block the amount of additional expenditure. The question which I ask is: Are we left with any choice? Is this a model of democracy that we are having? Because it means that we are having a weak Parliament to approve these expenditures in front of a strong Executive. So, the legislature, in practice and, in fact, has little control over the Executive in the incurring of these excess expenses which we are called to approve today.

The second point which I want to make, Mr Speaker, Sir, is about the timeliness of these estimates because we have to approve them on the eve of the next budget. In fact, this supplementary budget, ideally, should have been presented before it is spent, as in the private sector, where the revised budget is presented before the closing of accounts. However, so much for the timeliness and the appropriateness of this Bill!

This Bill, as we have just heard the hon. Minister say, provides for a supplementary budget of Rs2.08 billion which is 2.7% above the original estimates of Budget 2012. This, he said, is an improvement over previous year's supplementary budget which was over Rs6 billion. So, there has been a marked improvement; there has been a reduction of the amount of the supplementary budget. This supplementary budget has been reduced by over 3 times, and that is a big improvement insofar as it concerns the excess expenditure which has to be approved today. But do we have to praise the hon. Prime Minister for this budget or do we have to be thankful to Mr Ali Mansoor for leaving this improvement in the supplementary budget? Be it as it may, when we look, however, at the total voted budget 2012 compared with the aggregate actual expenditure 2012, we find a completely different picture, Mr Speaker, Sir. The original budget in 2012 was Rs77.2 billion and the actual expenditure incurred was only Rs66.8 billion, that is, an underspending of Rs10.5 billion. If we take into account this supplementary budget, the underspending, as the hon. Minister himself has pointed out, is more than Rs12.5 billion.

Mr Speaker, Sir, this is a gaping difference which is to the order of nearly Rs10.5 billion and, therefore, represents 13.5% of the original estimates. So, there is a shortfall in public expenditure actually of the order of 13.5% which is far above the threshold that is allowed by the IMF for African countries. This is a serious blow, Mr Speaker, Sir, to the credibility of the budget because over 13.5% of the budget was underspent. That is why the original budget deficit which was estimated at 3.8% was not reached. It is even brought down - as the hon. Minister has just said - to 1.8% according to his latest estimates. So, the low budget deficit was achieved through significant underspending and, therefore, has caused what can be termed as a fiscal squeeze because it has reduced the actual expenditure much less than its estimates. This shortfall, Mr Speaker, Sir, is termed as fiscal consolidation. But let us see what has been the actual state of this fiscal consolidation and how has this underspending changed the whole budgetary situation.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the total appropriation for the Budget 2012 was Rs77.3 billion, but we managed to spend only Rs66.8 billion, a shortfall of Rs10.4/Rs10.5 billion. But, in 2011, Mr Speaker, Sir, the total appropriation for the Budget 2011 was Rs72.3 billion and the actual expenditure in 2011 was Rs68.5 billion, that is, a shortfall of Rs3.8 billion. Last year, there was a shortfall of Rs3.8 billion; this year there is a shortfall of Rs10.5 billion which resulted in an

actual fall in the actual aggregate expenditure of Government. The actual expenditure of Government in 2011 was Rs68.5 billion, but the actual expenditure in 2012 was Rs66.8 billion. So, the actual expenditure has shrunk by Rs1.7 billion. So, that is what I call a fiscal squeeze. That is why, I said, this budget is short on its estimates. I would not say it is short and sweet, Mr Speaker, Sir. Maybe, it is short and weak, and definitely not long and strong enough to stimulate what was called growth for the greater good.

This shortfall, in fact, has caused the economy to come down in a downward direction towards a slower growth. It is this kind of fiscal consolidation and squeeze which has caused the growth to decline from 3.6% to 3.4%, and this certainly does not reflect the lofty ambition of the Prime Minister who has always projected the Government as a strong and robust Government which means business and which is bent on delivering the goods and the undertakings. So much for this shortfall, so much for this miss, whatever may be said by Mrs Christine Lagarde or whatever be the fulsome praises of Moody's of this fiscal consolidation, I think I agree more with what hon. Ms Deepalsing has called the Tina Wallahs' policy.

(Interruptions)

The problem in front of the House when we realise the amount of underspending which is tremendous is that at a time when our export markets in the Euro Zone, when their conditions are in the doldrums, under the stress of sovereign debts and under a Euro Currency Crisis; we have, in fact, in this Budget 2012, delivered not a counter cyclical budget to counter the recessionary pressures from Europe, but rather a procyclical budget of fiscal squeeze and fiscal consolidation to the detriment of the poor and the middle class of this country, and this is what is called in Creole: '*ser sintir*'. This is what is causing the poor and the hardworking class to suffer from a fall in their real income.

Mr Speaker, Sir, we have talked about the appropriateness and timing of this Budget and the credibility of the Supplementary Budget which is a far cry for the hallmark of performance, efficiency and modernity of our Prime Minister. We want now to ask some simple naive questions. Why is it that in spite of the increase of qualified personnel at the various Ministries, not least through the Service to Mauritius Programmes and the Capacity Building Programmes, in spite of the announcement that 92% of the Budget measures in 2012 had been realised, in spite

of the fact that significant budgetary reforms have been made through the Programme-Based Budgeting which is in its - I don't know - fifth or sixth year of implementation in spite of all the sophisticated software that has been purchased from Microsoft at more than Rs100 m., in spite of the E-Budget, the Online Monitoring System that has been installed to follow all the budget programmes; why in spite of all this, there is such underspending of more than Rs10.4 billion, Mr Speaker, Sir? I am really perplexed, Mr Speaker, Sir! I am perplexed, Mr Speaker, Sir, by this wide variation which gives a serious blow to the accuracy, the integrity and the soundness of public financial management in Mauritius, especially as it is recurring year in, year out.

May I, therefore, appeal to the hon. Prime Minister, who is fond of finding the truth, who is fond of going to the core of problems, who is fond of setting up Fact-Finding Committees - in view of this perplexity, to set up a Fact-Finding Committee to look into the causes of such wide variation and underspending? I don't know what would be the reasons, but this raises some questions. What is the accountability of the Executive and the public officers to ensure that the public money voted is actually spent; how are they answerable to Parliament? Because today, we are voting this Supplementary Budget and the Executive has already incurred these expenses.

Let us look at some of these items of underspending, Mr Speaker, Sir. This will cast a better light on the extent of the underspending. If you look at, for example, Programme 443: Water Resources, an amount of Rs1.9 billion under Programme 443 was appropriated for the Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities. The actual amount spent is only Rs921 m. That is, Rs1 billion short of expenditure, under-expenditure, and yet we know what is the problem of water shortage in Mauritius and why people are manifesting their anger in all nooks and corners of Mauritius with pipes that are laid since 100 years ago, not being replaced. So, a budget of Rs1.9 billion was voted, but only Rs921 m. was spent when we have such acute problems in the water sector.

If we look at Programme 642: Social Housing Development, Mr Speaker, Sir; Rs300 m. was voted, but, again, in spite of that acute shortage of low cost houses, only Rs242 m. have been spent, a shortfall of nearly Rs60 m. The singular damning example is the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology which is now responsible for the National Identity Card, biometric card. We are trying to turn this country into a cyber island. A budget of Rs1

billion has been voted for his Ministry and you know how much has been spent? Only Rs577 m., to turn Mauritius into a cyber island!

So, why are these projects not executed? Why are these expenditures not made? A Fact-Finding Committee would throw light on this. Let us look at another example! Programme 363: Socio-Economic Empowerment and Widening the Circle of Opportunities. We remember that former Minister, Dr. R. Sithanen, earmarked Rs1 billion for this programme of empowerment every year for five years. Instead of Rs1 billion, only Rs665 m. was voted for the Minister of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment, my good friend hon. Dayal. Rs665 m. voted out of an earmarked amount of Rs1 billion and yet, how much has been spent for social empowerment out of Rs665 m.? Rs270 m.! So, 60% of that Budget has remained unspent.

How much of this is current under-expenditure and how much of this is capital underspending? Because, of course, in the case of capital expenditure sometimes it takes time, it takes delays and there are studies to be made. So, expenditure is not incurred, but out of the Rs10.5 billion, how much is current expenditure not made and how much is capital expenditure deferred or postponed? This is the question which we would like the hon. Minister to answer.

So, while there has been actual total underspending, there has also been overspending in some programmes. The amount of overspending is over Rs2 billion which, as I said, is less than the Rs6 billion, of last year. But, obviously, even this smaller excess expenditure calls for explanation. Was the additional expenditure now to be voted caused by any change in Government policy during the year?

Was it due to cost overruns in some infrastructure projects caused by implementation capacity constraints, variation in scope and design of projects, delay in decision making, inefficient planning or wrong estimates? Were any of these excess expenditures not reasonably foreseeable? Here, I would like to quote the findings of the IMF in its report 'Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability Assessment'. What did the IMF find in the budget implementation and Public Financial Management? On page 8, it is said –

"(...) the strategic planning capacity in government remains limited and the links between macroeconomic projections, fiscal strategy, ministry-level strategic plans, and the budget process require strengthening. In particular, insufficient time is available at the early

stages of the budget process for discussions between line ministries and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED) to determine strategic priorities within the fiscal framework.

This is particularly apparent on the capital side of the budget, where significant capacity constraints result in substantial underspending.”

The IMF report goes further –

“There is no fiscal policy paper produced prior to the budget circular and a three to four week period does not provide enough time for agencies to prepare meaningful budget submissions. Linkages between macroeconomic projections, fiscal strategy, ministry level strategic plans and the budget process remain limited. A number of major departments noted that they struggle to meet the deadline, and the quality of some of the submissions related to capital projects is inadequate as a result of the need to meet budget deadlines.”

It further states that –

“The setting of expenditure ceilings for the budget circular however, receives limited policy inputs from budgetary bodies, leading to relatively weak policy rationales behind the ceilings, and weak acceptance of the ceilings by ministry policy makers. This is evidenced by the subsequent submission of line ministry bids, which in some cases exceed the ceiling by 15-20 percent.”

Hence, the underspending of 13.7% which we have now seen.

Mr Speaker, Sir, this is what the IMF said, but whatever be the reason, yet we are still called upon to approve these excess expenditures. So, let us look at some of the items of the Supplementary Appropriation requested. If we look at page 21, there is an item under the Ministry of Public Infrastructure known as ‘Fees to Consultants’. Nothing was provided for Programme 22120008, but now suddenly, an additional provision has been required to meet the costs of consultancy services for the implementation of the Action Programme of Mauritius Light Rapid Transit. Mr Speaker, Sir, Rs30.6 m. have been provided in this Budget 2012 as an additional provision to pay for consultants for the implementation of the Action Programme. So,

may I ask: Has there been a feasibility study on this project of Light Rapid Transit? Has there been any costing made? Where is that Action Plan? The hon. Minister is always on a fast track. He wants action. So, where is that Action Plan? Because we talk of implementing an Action Plan, when we have not got any feasibility study, any study, any design. We don't know what exactly has been done. So, this expenditure is really uncalled for.

Secondly, of course, the usual culprit, the massive over-expenditure in the upgrading of roads to the tune of Rs284 m., the land drainage works to the tune of Rs220 m. So, massive and additional expenditure has been incurred, except in Constituency No. 20, that's the problem.

(Interruptions)

And Constituency No. 19 also! We hope that there will be correction to this injustice, Mr Speaker, Sir.

Mr Speaker, Sir, we have just heard the Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Finance say that there was a provision of Rs700 m. to buy the building of Air Mauritius. I was on the point of asking whether any feasibility study has been done by the SIC to buy that building and how was the costing made to arrive at that figure of Rs700 m. But now that the Vice-Prime Minister said that the money has been returned back to Government by the SIC, so we will not pursue the matter further. The next question that needs an answer is the amount of over-expenditure in relation to the IMF. We have a lot of subscriptions to the IMF: Rs95.5 m., Rs162 m., which was not provided for. More than Rs250 m. was not provided for to subscribe to the IMF. I ask myself, we are having consultations regularly with IMF, how is it that we have not provided, not estimated, not foreseen that such subscriptions were due and we have now come to this House to make this additional provision of more than Rs250 m.

Mr Speaker, Sir, we always hear the mantra that 'this is a Government that means business'; 'this is a Government that will deliver'. *Mais gouverner c'est prévoir!* I don't see why there should have been such divergence et cela n'a pas été un plaisir, *M. le président*.

Je vous remercie de votre attention.

(12.27 p.m.)

Mr M. Seeruttun (Second Member for Vieux Grand Port & Rose Belle): M. le président, l'honorable vice-Premier ministre et ministre des Finances vient de présenter le *Supplementary Appropriation (2012) Bill* et demande qu'on approuve des dépenses additionnelles de l'ordre de R 2,081,705,006 encourues supposément pendant l'année 2012.

On est à la veille de la présentation du Budget 2014 et c'est maintenant que ce *Bill* est présenté, soit dix mois après la fin de l'année financière. Déjà, je vois cela, M. le président, comme un mauvais signal car la présentation de ce *Bill* à l'Assemblée, fin octobre 2013, me donne l'impression que cet exercice n'est ramené qu'à une simple formalité. Les dépenses ont déjà été encourues et nous nous retrouvons devant un fait accompli.

Le budget initial de l'année 2012 était de l'ordre d'un peu plus de R 77 milliards et je me souviens que lors de la présentation de ce budget, des belles paroles ont été dites sur ce budget par les honorables membres de la majorité. Ce budget allait remettre le pays sur la voie des développements, un budget de relance et plein d'autres qualificatifs. On avait parlé de *Growth for the Greater Good* et qu'il y aurait eu une croissance de l'ordre de 4%, la création d'emploi, la création de la richesse et aussi des mesures pour réduire l'écart entre les riches et les pauvres.

Le discours de l'honorable vice-Premier ministre et ministre des Finances nous a fait même croire que c'était un budget visionnaire sous la seule commande d'un seul Premier ministre et de sa vision uniquement.

Presque 24 mois plus tard, Anne, ma sœur Anne, ne vois-tu rien venir?

(Interruptions)

Mr Speaker: No interruption, please!

Mr Seeruttun: 'Ce peuple admirable de l'île Maurice' - 'C'est un Plaisir' - est resté toujours sur sa faim.

(Interruptions)

Ces slogans sont restés que des slogans creux et ces mesures ont eu un effet d'annonce.

(Interruptions)

A entendre parler...

(Interruptions)

Mr Speaker: I say no interruption.

Mr Seeruttun: A entendre parler encore d'une économie résiliente, je me pose la question: est-ce qu'ils savent vraiment ce que veut dire ce terme 'économie résiliente'? Comment peut-on parler d'économie résiliente quand la croissance ne dépasse pas le cap de 3.2% ?

Mr Speaker: I am sorry; I have to interrupt the hon. Member. This is not Budget time. It is the Supplementary Appropriation Bill.

Mr Seeruttun: M. le président, c'est une extension du budget.

(Interruptions)

Mr Speaker: Silence!

Mr Seeruttun: M. le président, permettez-moi quand même, c'est une extension du budget de 2012, on nous demande d'approuver un budget supplémentaire.

Mr Speaker: I cannot allow you to go on the course on which I have already decided. You have to speak on the different items, as contained in the Supplementary Appropriation Bill.

(Interruptions)

I say please, order!

Mr Seeruttun: M. le président, *I go by your ruling*. On nous a demandé de voter un budget d'alors de R 127 milliards; aujourd'hui, l'honorable ministre des Finances nous parle des économies de l'ordre de R 10 milliards. Or, la question que je me pose est: comment se fait-il qu'il avait fait de belles promesses ? Aujourd'hui, quand on regarde le bilan, la question que je

me pose est: est-ce qu'on a pu atteindre les objectifs fixés de ce budget ? Pourquoi on n'a pas pu atteindre et dépenser la somme appropriée à l'époque pour aujourd'hui se retrouver avec une croissance qui ne dépasse pas les 3.2%, avec le chômage qui dépasse les 8.3% ?

Mr Speaker: Well, it appears hon. Member...

(*Interruptions*)

Silence, please! I am on my feet. It appears hon. Member that you have not understood my ruling.

(*Interruptions*)

Mr Speaker: No interruptions!

Mr Seeruttun: M. le président, on nous demande d'approuver les dépenses supplémentaires de R 2 milliards. Le ministère le plus gourmand, si je peux dire, c'est le ministère des infrastructures publiques à avoir, M. le président, presque R 475 millions sur un budget initial de R 850 millions de ce ministère qu'on nous demande d'approuver. Comment peut-on cautionner des dépenses aussi grotesques quand nous savons pertinemment bien que c'est l'argent des contribuables, que nos routes ont pris autant de vies humaines et qu'en temps de pluies torrentielles, elles deviennent mortelles ? Si seulement cet argent était dépensé d'une manière responsable ! Au nom des inondations meurtrières de cette année, on démontrait à quel point il y a eu des mauvaises utilisations de nos ressources.

Les bouchons sur nos routes, à toute heure de la journée, démontrent la faillite totale du ministre concerné à gérer le problème de décongestion de nos routes.

Le rond-point de Phoenix restera dans les annales, comment des centaines de millions de roupies ont été dépensées pour rien. Une faillite totale, M. le président !

Sous le programme 321, il y a une somme de R 30.6 millions juste pour les frais des consultants pour la mise à exécution de l'*Action Plan of Mauritius, Light Rapid Transit*. Je suppose encore une fois que c'est aux Singapouriens qu'ira cet argent.

Sous le programme 325, M. le président, un prêt de l'ordre de R 45 millions au *Mauritius Shipping Corporation*, une entreprise de l'État, cette belle entreprise où on connaît la manière dont le recrutement se fait et de quelle circonscription la majorité de ces employés viennent.

M. le président, sous le programme 404 – *Upgrading of Roads*, on nous demande d'approuver des dépenses additionnelles de R 284 millions, alors que le budget initial était de seulement R 85 millions. Est-ce qu'on a dépensé en une année R 369 millions pour le *Upgrading of Roads*? Je voudrais bien savoir où ces travaux ont eu lieu et qu'on nous explique comment nos routes sont plus meurtrières.

Sous le programme 405, M. le président, *the Land Drainage and Water Shed Management Programme*, on nous demande d'approuver R 209 millions de plus sur les R 250 millions prévues initialement. Je ne sais pas si c'est de la mauvaise gestion ou de l'incompétence tout court quand on connaît le *cost overruns* de bon nombre de projets.

M. le président, R 3 millions comme frais payés aux consultants pour la préparation d'un *business plan* pour le MITD. Ce même MITD qui a été secoué par certains nombres de scandales, j'espère que ce ne sont pas les cours de dance et de massage qui coûtent si chers, M. le président.

(Interruptions)

Je pense que ce nouveau *business plan* c'était pour peut-être rehausser l'image de cette institution à qui on a payé les R 3 millions alors qu'initialement c'était R 1 million prévues. R 2 millions de plus.

M. le président, sous le programme 462 – *Facilitation to Local Authorities*, plus de R 30 millions ont été dépensées en plus pour le district de Pamplemousses/Rivière du Rempart alors que seulement R 1.8 millions additionnelles pour le district de Grand Port/Savanne. Pour combien de temps encore le sud de l'île restera l'enfant pauvre de ce pays, M. le président ?

(Interruptions)

Mr Speaker: Silence!

Mr Seeruttun: Il est clair que le nord est toujours gâté, M. le président.

Sous le programme 343, la promotion de la destination de Maurice, il faudrait encore R 54 millions en sus de R 390 millions allouées à la MTPA. J'espère que ce n'est pas pour couvrir les frais de la fameuse tombola organisée par la MTPA. Peut-être tout à l'heure le ministre pourra nous donner plus de détail dessus, M. le président.

Sous le projet 401, M. le président, le projet MID, Maurice Ile Durable, il y a une somme de R 200 millions.

(Interruptions)

Mr Speaker: I say no interruption.

Mr Seeruttun: On nous demande d'approuver R 200 millions alors qu'on connaît bien le parrain même de ce projet, M. Joël de Rosnay, qui a traité ce projet d'être timide. On a vécu la semaine dernière à Mare Chicose une catastrophe et je me demande comment ce pays est en train de gérer tout l'aspect environnemental que fait face ce pays.

(Interruptions)

Mr Speaker: I have said no interruption.

Mr Seeruttun: M. le président, on nous demande d'approuver R 2 milliards de plus. Je crois que parmi ces dépenses encourues, surtout en cette période de crise, on aurait pu éviter certaines dépenses. Je prends l'exemple de cette somme de R 37,817,709 qu'on nous demande d'approuver en sus de R 70 millions déjà prévues dans le budget sous l'item - *Acquisitions of Vehicles for Ministers and Senior Civil Servants*. R 107 millions en une année dépensées pour des nouvelles voitures, M. le président. Si ce n'est pas de la provocation, M. le président, alors qu'on sait très bien combien de familles qui n'ont pas de quoi nourrir leurs enfants.

L'autre exemple qui frôle l'indécence, M. le président, ce sont les missions à l'étranger de nos ministres. Plus de R 96 millions ont été encourus pour les frais des missions des ministres à l'étranger. Même en période de crise, il semblerait que le déplacement des ministres n'ait pas connu de crises car on nous demande d'approuver une somme additionnelle de R 11.7 millions...

(Interruptions)

Mr Speaker: No cross talking!

(*Interruptions*)

I have said no cross talking.

Mr Seeruttun: M. le président, c'est de fonds public qu'on parle. Il y a le programme 951 - *Centrally Managed Expenses of Government*. M. le président, sous ce programme, on ne voit que des centaines de millions de roupies additionnelles à dépenser. On ne connaît pas suffisamment les détails pour pouvoir faire des commentaires. On ne comprend pas pourquoi on nous demande de voter autant d'argent additionnel. Pour le *IMF Training Institute* presque R 90 millions de roupies de plus alors que R 75 millions étaient prévues. On nous dit c'est pour *host the Africa Training Institute in Mauritius*.

Comme je le dis encore, M. le président, s'il y avait beaucoup plus de transparence dans ce programme-là, on aurait pu vraiment analyser ces dépenses comme il faut. En Inde, M. le président, les ministères sont obligés de préparer des comptes mensuels qui permettront au bureau du directeur de l'audit d'analyser les dépenses; d'assurer que les dépenses soient faites comme il faut et de prendre des mesures correctives d'une manière beaucoup plus rapide. Aujourd'hui, comme je l'ai signalé, on se retrouve dix mois après la fin de l'année financière à être appelé à approuver un budget supplémentaire de deux milliards de roupies. Donc, ce que je demanderai, moi, au ministre des Finances c'est d'adopter cette pratique qui, pour moi, est une pratique qui va dans le sens de la bonne gouvernance, de la transparence et d'une meilleure maîtrise de dépenses publiques; si on pouvait inculquer ce principe de préparer des comptes mensuels au niveau des ministères pour assurer qu'à l'avenir il y ait une meilleure gestion des finances publiques.

Sur ce, M. le président, je vous remercie.

(12.44 p.m.)

The Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Development (Mr X. L. Duval): Mr Speaker, Sir, let me say that the words that come to my mind after hearing the Opposition are the following: *face tu gagnes, pile je perds*. You know when we spend more, we are criticised for spending more; when we spend less, we are criticised for spending less. But to understand why this particular Bill is presented in Parliament, first, one has got to understand the law and second, one needs to understand how Government accounts are prepared. Government accounts are not prepared like company accounts; Government accounts are prepared on a cash payment basis. A payment, I'll make on 31 December will fall into this year; the same payment made one day later on 01 January, it will fall in next year.

For instance, Mr Speaker, Sir, one of the reasons why we had discrepancies coming up, that we need supplementary appropriation is because of timing differences. For instance, the Municipal Elections were held in December. Much of the expenditure actually was made in January. That caused some Rs200 m. excess expenditure in January as opposed to December. So, it is purely timing. Many of the issues that actually cropped up in this Bill are because of timing differences. A lot of the projects are not cancelled, but they are delayed. Look at the Bagatelle Dam! There will come a time when we will be criticised for overspending on Bagatelle Dam. If we look at the accounts for 2012, we will see that we underspent on Bagatelle Dam something like Rs600 m. It is a timing difference. It is nothing more than that. So, let us not make a hullabaloo about underspending, etc. when we know that these huge projects often have timing delays. We just cannot and will not throw money out of the window just to be able to show that we have spent a lot, that we have stimulated the economy, Mr Speaker, Sir. We will be criticised and justly so.

Mr Speaker, Sir, Mauritius is a country of good governance. For years on end now, we have maintained our first ranking in the Mo Ibrahim Index and justly so. That is why, Mr Speaker, Sir, in a democracy, things take time. I listened to hon. Li Kwong Wing just now saying: "we have underspent, but, at the same time, when we buy a building - just a building - which has tenants and everything, why don't we do a feasibility study?" That would have taken us another six months, another year; cost millions of rupees. Have we ever heard of anybody doing a feasibility study before buying a building that has already got existing tenants and has

been valued? We know what is the rent; we know what is the cost of the value and that's it. We don't need a feasibility study. Just, therefore, Mr Speaker, Sir, to illustrate the point that what the Opposition really wants is for Government not to spend. You will see in a few weeks' time when the Appropriation Bill comes, we will have a completely different story. Government has done this and why have we done that. So, there are timing differences that the public needs to understand and needs not to get confused by the Opposition; a lot of it is timing differences.

Also, Mr Speaker, Sir, we have real savings and we are pleased that we have real savings. In 2012, we spent Rs72 m. less on rent. That is good; that is to be applauded. We spent Rs67 m. less on stationery, that's excellent. This should be again, Mr Speaker, Sir, applauded. In terms of compensation for Government liability, we spent Rs92 m. less. So, there are real items of saving that are also involved in this.

Now, Mr Speaker, Sir, in terms of the Rs2 billion that are actually overspent, half of that is made up in some very easily explainable amounts: one, the famous building of Rs72 m.; this year the money has been returned. So, that's going to affect the deficit this year, and secondly, the salary increases, Mr Speaker, Sir, were not foreseen at the time; the salary increases happened, and these two: Rs700 m. for Air Mauritius building and Rs300 m. for the salary increases which were unforeseen, it comes to Rs1 billion and that is half the appropriation that we are asking for. It is easily explained. The rest, Mr Speaker, Sir, the Rs1 billion that is left is split across all the other Ministries representing some overspending.

Now what is the overspending? Again, Mr Speaker, Sir, we are not asking one cent more from the taxpayer. In fact, Mr Speaker, Sir, we have borrowed Rs10 billion less than we had planned to borrow. The public sector debt, as I mentioned, fell from 54 to 53 at the end of 2012 because we borrowed less, but because the law says that programmes are voted in Parliament and when you transfer monies from one programme to another and that goes beyond a certain amount that has been voted, we have to come to Parliament to get it voted. So, these are also technical adjustments that are being made. I have mentioned just now the question of timing differences. When we look at the underspending, ideally speaking, to be able to stimulate the economy, we ought to have spent more.

I would also like to say, Mr Speaker, Sir, that 3.8%, the original plan deficit, was high budget deficit. It is high by any standard. Whether you take 3%, it is reasonable. 3.8% was high. So, I was pleased that we reduced the 3.8%, because it was a high deficit. That's not to say that our growth suffered, because just last month, Statistics Mauritius uplifted the growth of 2012 from 3.3% to 3.4 %. So, that has just recently been uplifted for 2012.

We don't forget also that Moody's upgraded our sovereign debt from Baa2 to Baa1, the same as South Africa, Russia and Thailand. Big countries, Mr Speaker, Sir, have the same rating as Mauritius today. Why is that so? Because also our public sector debt is low. Not to forget - I heard hon. Members saying: "I wish they have borrowed loans which have stimulated." The same hon. Members will criticise us if we don't meet the 50% debt ceilings that we have set ourselves in 2018. That is also an issue that the Ministry of Finance and the Government have to bear in mind all the time. We set ourselves a maximum limit of 50% of public sector debt in 2018. We have to abide by that. There is a limit to what fiscal stimulus can do.

Also, Mr Speaker, Sir, very often, people get mixed up between the budget deficit and the public sector borrowing requirement because it is good to understand that many loans, for example, to parastatal bodies, etc., are below the line. They don't show up in the budget deficit, but they show up in the public sector borrowing requirement. It is the public sector borrowing requirement that represents the fiscal stimulus, not the budget deficit. That is also a good thing to understand. Sometimes people get a little bit mixed up between the two and tend to concentrate in Mauritius, on the budget deficit, whereas, in fact, it should be the public sector borrowing requirement. The public sector borrowing requirement - I don't have the exact figure - runs about 5% in Mauritius. All through these years, it has been running around 5%, which is a lot of stimulus. And I am surprised, Mr Speaker, Sir, when people say that this year we don't have enough fiscal stimulus when we know that the budget deficit this year will be around 3.7%.

As far as the delay in presenting it in Parliament is concerned, we presented it at the first available opportunity. We would have liked to have presented it last week, but we have to have the First Reading and then the Second Reading. We presented it at the first available opportunity after the accounts were prepared. Mr Speaker, Sir, it is within the law and totally within practice to present it as it is, in October.

Also, mention has been made by hon. Li Kwong Wing about 2013. I would just like to say that in 2013, we will have an overspending, but it has again to do mainly with the drainage works following the floods and the additional payment of the Errors and Omissions Commission. But that will be dealt with, of course, next year.

Every year, Mr Speaker, Sir – and I have the years here when we were not in power; the previous Government was in power - we have these large amounts of underspending; it is nothing new. Every year, Mr Speaker, Sir, we have these large amounts, and we can make a song and dance about it. In fact, Mr Speaker, Sir, I can take a few figures. Let me take for the year 2001/2002. In the Capital Budget of that period, Mr Speaker, Sir, we had planned to spend Rs8 billion, we actually spent Rs6 billion. At that time, we spent Rs2 billion less than what had been planned. That is a lot, if you take the percentages. Rs2 billion or 25% of that amount was not spent. So, every year, there are things like that happening and it goes on like this every year nearly since it happened. That's not to say that we should not get it better, but it is nothing new at all, Mr Speaker, Sir.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the hon. Member referred to the report of the IMF. They can quote selectively, as they like, but the proof of the pudding has been in the upgrading by Moody's. The proof of the pudding has been when Mrs Christine Lagarde came here personally and congratulated the Government of Mauritius. In her own words and totally of her own volition, she congratulated Mauritius, and I think she said the same thing to the hon. Prime Minister, that Mauritius had shown remarkable resilience during the crisis. So, a country that has 60% of its export to Europe - and Europe is in crisis and recession since 2008 - we are still able to be over 3%, we are still able to have done 3.4% in 2012. Let us see what the final figure is for 2013, Mr Speaker, Sir!

I don't think I have much more to say on this. I would perhaps be circulating one piece of information to the hon. Members concerning the actual performance, the actual underspending. I did not give the figures. I think it is only fair that I should give all the figures to the hon. Members so that they don't have to actually add and minus all the Budget Programmes. As I have said, finally, Mr Speaker, Sir, underspending Rs5 billion of the Rs10 billion underspending relates to projects which have been delayed or time indifferences on projects; Rs3 billion relate to time indifferences on loans that we ought to have disbursed and we did not disburse during the

year. So, the bulk of 80% relates to these two figures and the rest are actually spread out across Ministries, but are relatively small amounts, Mr Speaker, Sir. Of course, as far as the individual comments made about the items are concerned, each Minister and myself, we will obviously be available to respond to each query from the Opposition and from hon. Members on this side.

Thank you.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time and committed.

Mr Speaker: This is a proper time to break. I suspend for one and a half hours.

At 12.46 p.m. the Sitting was suspended.

On resuming at 2.24 p.m. with Mr Speaker in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

ESTIMATES OF SUPPLEMENTARY EXPENDITURE (2012) of 2013

Ombudsperson for Children’s Office – Programme Code 151: Protection and Promotion of Children’s Rights and Interests was called.

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, I would wish to have some explanation on item 21111: *Other Staff Costs – Additional provision required for payment of travelling following filling of vacancies.* We know that there has always been a scarcity of resources here, but the implication is now that the travelling provision should increase by some 20% of the sum originally budgeted. I would like to have some explanation on what this refers to and why. Of course, we are all in favour of the service offered being more effective.

The same would apply to the transport provision at the bottom of the page. When I say the same would apply, it is that we are all in favour of the effectiveness of the Ombudsperson’s office being reinforced. But why was this purchase of a new service car not budgeted for initially? I assume that is the case since there was no sum at all appropriated.

My third and last point concerns item 22100: *Publication and Stationery – Additional provision required for the printing of annual report of the Ombudsperson for Children’s office*. We know that this report is a very important document and it does cost a lot of money to the State. However, we have always been intrigued by the lack of follow-up in terms of implementation of the recommendations and in the course of debates in this House recently, having regard to the old people’s homes and children. There have been a lot of instances which we have raised where recommendations from the Ombudsperson’s Commission are not being followed. I would like to know when we are now *post facto* approving this said sum...

(Interruptions)

I am looking at item 22100, whether there have been consultations to ensure that there is some sort of a follow-up mechanism.

The Prime Minister: I will take one by one, Mr Chairperson. The hon. Member, in fact, himself answered the question. If we take more people, we have to pay for travelling. There were two posts of investigators for whom no provision was made; this was additional and, therefore, that is the explanation for the additional cost.

As for item 22100 - *Publication and Stationery*, there are two things: one is for publicity and the other one is for the report to be printed on time and that is why it has cost.

As for the item 31121 - *Transport Equipment*, I think the question was asked, it is because the vehicle is 12 years old, Mr Chairperson, and that is why it has been replaced.

As for the policy matters, when Budget time comes the hon. Member can ask a question.

Ombudsperson for Children’s Office - Programme Code 151: Protection and Promotion of Children’s Rights and Interests (Rs523,719) was, on question put, agreed to.

Rodrigues - Programme Code 311: Rodrigues Development was called.

Mr Uteem: Mr Chairperson, at page 11, under item 22120 - *Fees*, may I know from the hon. Prime Minister how many Psychologists are we talking about here and whether this amount represents only their salary or other expenses?

The Prime Minister: It is said here, Mr Chairperson, that it is for the services of an Educational Psychologist – one. If you see the price of Rs868,800 there, who would work for less than that?

(Interruptions)

Mr Obeegadoo: Sir, I would like to talk on the very same issue. Again, we welcome the fact that there is provision, there has been provision and there has been spending. We just want to have some clarification. Is this a full-time Educational Psychologist who is now posted to Rodrigues? We would like to have some details as to what arrangements have been made that would justify this payment under the Ministry of Rodrigues.

If the hon. Prime Minister would allow, can I raise another sub item? Yes. At page 12, item 26321 - *Other General Government Units*, the sum spent in excess includes *(ii) construction of additional classes to Terre Rouge Government School and Terre Rouge College*. Now, without going into policy issues, could we just be made to understand what was the reasoning? As we know, in Mauritius, we have gone through the demographic transition; the school going population is now on the decrease, so, there is more space available.

Do we have an increasing school population at Terre Rouge, and, in the case of the college, may we have some explanation as to whether - as has been suggested by the Chief Commissioner - there has been a revision of the curriculum to adapt to Rodriguan needs? Is that why there is now need for more space? We would just like to have some information.

The Prime Minister: Mr Chairperson, the first item was 21210, I think. This is additional provision required for the payment of contribution to the National Savings Fund for the staff of the Rodrigues Division. Now, I must explain that this provision was initially made under Programme 751, that is, the *Policy and Strategy for fisheries and Rodrigues of the Ministry of Fisheries and Rodrigues* and, subsequently, transferred to the appropriate Programme 331 for Rodrigues, when Rodrigues came under the responsibility of my Office. That is basically what it is, because before it was in a different Ministry.

The hon. Member mentioned about additional classes in Terre Rouge. These are the two additional classrooms at Terre Rouge Government School and Phase II of the Terre Rouge

College with the construction of six additional classrooms. The construction of the classrooms has been completed.

As for the policy, as I said, Mr Chairperson, the policy is for Rodrigues to decide.

Rodrigues - Programme Code 311: Rodrigues Development (Rs147,708,255) was, on question put, agreed to.

Police Force – Programme Code 262: Community Safety and Security was called.

Mr Baloomoody: We will go page by page?

The Chairperson: Page 13.

Mr Baloomoody: Page 13, under item 21110006 - *Cash in lieu of Leave*. May I know from the hon. Prime Minister, this provision is made to which rank of Officers because it repeats itself in other pages? May we also know who are the beneficiaries and whether this is due as we have to pay cash in lieu of leave, because there is a shortage of staff, of Police Officers in the Police Force?

The Prime Minister: Mr Chairperson, I should perhaps have explained at the very beginning. It used to be under one item; it has been transferred to another item. That's all it is. For example, this cash in lieu of unutilised sick leave was initially made under *Programme 261: Security Policy and Management of the Police Force* and now it has been appropriated to the different programmes and sub-programmes. There's nothing changed otherwise.

Mr Uteem: Mr Chairperson, at page 13, under item 21111 - *Other Staff Costs*, may I know from the hon. Prime Minister whether this amount of Rs21 m. is meant for travelling allowance paid to the Trainees and Police Constables or is that money paid to any contractor to transport the staff?

The Prime Minister: This is payment - as it says here - for travelling allowance. There were 395 trainees enlisted in 2010 and appointed Police Constables in 2012; the trainees were paid under a different Programme. Again, it is a transfer; it is also for Police Officers performing official travelling for investigations and inspections and all these things.

Mr Baloomoody: The hon. Prime Minister has not replied to the second part of my question. Who are the Officers who can benefit from that, is it all members of the Police Force or is it a specific rank in the Police Force?

The Prime Minister: This is here because we have recruited 395 Trainee Police Officers in 2010 and they were appointed Police Constables in 2012. As for the others, it is the Police Officers who are officially going to investigate cases and they have to travel or do different inspections.

Mr Baloomoody: I was talking about cash in lieu of leave.

The Prime Minister: This has been a policy since quite some time.

Mr Baloomoody: Are all Police Officers going to benefit or is it a specific rank of Officers?

The Prime Minister: I think the hon. Member needs to ask a specific question on this, because this is an item that has just been transferred.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Dr. S. Boolell!

Dr. S. Boolell: At page 14, under item 22060 – *Maintenance*, I would like to know which companies are the beneficiaries of this amount given for maintenance, whether it is locally done or whether it is companies which import and maintain vehicles?

The Prime Minister: If you remember, we decided quite some time back to close the Police garage which was doing all those things. Now, if they are of different makes, they go to the different people who import those cars.

The Chairperson: Hon. Obeegadoo!

Mr Obeegadoo: At page 14, I refer to the very first item 22010 - *Cost of Utilities*. This refers to electricity consumption and use of telephone. I have just one factual question. I have raised, for several years now, the issue of the Police telephone exchange switchboard at Police Headquarters, Curepipe. I would like to know of the sum we are approving, whether there was

any amount and, if so, what amount was allotted for that specific purpose at the Curepipe Police Headquarters telephone exchange.

The Prime Minister: This is basically to meet the increase in consumption of cost for electricity and telephone charges following the implementation of the Crime Occurrence Tracking System and also due to the coming into operation of two newly constructed Police Stations, one at Bambous and one at Black River.

Mr Baloomoody: I just wanted to know whether on this specific item, this includes the cost of the telephone provided to the Police Officers now, because there are quite a lot of complaints that it does not work - the specific Police internal telephone which is given to each and every Police Officer in the Police Station.

The Prime Minister: Basically, it is for the Crime Occurrence Tracking System that they use. So, whether they are using it for that purpose, that is what is covered and also for the other two Police Stations.

Mr Jhugroo: Sir, I would like to talk on item 22020 - *Fuel and Oil* regarding consumption due to a higher number of Police patrols. Can we have some details and the specific regions, being given that we have got CCTV cameras installed in many places over the country?

The Prime Minister: CCTV cameras might be there, but we need the patrol as well. You would probably agree with me that we need the patrol as well. That is what it is for.

Mr Uteem: Under the same item of *Fuel and Oil*...

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Item 22020!

Mr Uteem: Under 22020, the same item, it has been reported in different quarters about possible excesses by certain Police Officers who would use Police vehicles for private purposes. Is there any controlled mechanism that has been set up to confirm that these additional sums are properly being utilised for patrols?

The Chairperson: Well, this is a matter of policy, hon. Member!

Mr Bodha: Mr Chairperson, still on the same item 22020 - *Fuel and Oil*, we are referring to a higher number of Police patrols. May I ask the hon. Prime Minister whether geographically there are areas where we have had more patrols because of the law and order situation?

The Prime Minister: This is a matter for day to day. As you know, I don't go into the day-to-day administration of the Police Force. The Commissioner of Police decides on the information he gets; where he wants to send the patrol. That's how it works.

Mr Baloomoody: Under item 22070 - *Cleaning Services*, may I know whether we have a private contractor who is offering this service or is it internal, between the Police? Because we know that, especially the Police cells, many of them are in such an inhumane condition.

The Prime Minister: This is precisely why this has been increased. Yes, there are private contractors for pests and cleaning generally, but they are private contractors.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Jhugroo, which item?

Mr Jhugroo: Regarding item 22160 - *Overseas Training*, can we know who decides about how to choose Officers who are going to pursue training and...

The Chairperson: No, this is a matter of policy! Next question!

(Interruptions)

Mr Jhugroo: And can the hon. Prime Minister...

The Chairperson: I said this is a matter of policy! Next question, please! If you have any other question, you may put! Page 14, no question! Page 15! Yes, hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: Mr Chairperson, on page 15, last item 22900 - *Additional provision required for purchase of crash helmets, special boots and gloves for Traffic Branch following acquisition of additional motorcycles*, can I know from the hon. Prime Minister with regard to

additional motorcycles whether the Police Department has changed the types of *la selle enbas* and *guidon la haut* of the motorcycles which is causing lots of harm to the health of our Traffic Officers? There are also complaints about the types of helmets. Can the hon. Prime Minister transmit this to the Commissioner of Police? They don't have trade unions, Mr Chairperson; they rely on us.

(Interruptions)

So, can I know from the hon. Prime Minister whether the type of motorcycles has been changed?

(Interruptions)

The Prime Minister: The question was asked in the National Assembly by the hon. Member, himself, I will pass this on to the Commissioner of Police because apparently some...

(Interruptions)

No, but he is the new one. He is looking at it very carefully.

The Chairperson: Page 16! The question is that the sum of Rs38,619,4...

Mr Obeegadoo: Sir...

The Chairperson: It's over!

(Interruptions)

It's over! You are late!

(Interruptions)

Mr Obeegadoo: We were waiting for 16!

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: But it's over!

(Interruptions)

Mr Obeegadoo: No. After page 15, there is page 16!

The Chairperson: Of course, I have called page 16 and nobody...

(*Interruptions*)

Mr Obeegadoo: No.

The Chairperson: Alright! I use my discretion to allow you.

Mr Obeegadoo: Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. Item 22020 - *Fuel and Oil*, this apparently refers to the ADSU and we are asked to approve an additional expenditure that represents practically 40% of what was appropriated. Can we have some information as to what this refers to because it is a very significant increase on what was appropriated and does this relate to the reorganisation of ADSU that would have occurred this year, or are we referring to a new set of operations of which the public is not generally aware?

The Prime Minister: There has been an increase in the number of vehicles that are given to ADSU. As you know, you have probably seen how many people are being arrested and how many cases are being followed up. There is an increase in the number of operations by ADSU and there has been purchase of additional vehicles for ADSU.

Mr Bhagwan: Mr Chairperson, under item 22900 - *Other Goods and Services – Additional provision required for: (i) the granting of rewards to an increased number of police informers*, can I know from the hon. Prime Minister whether there is any control of these informers; whether there are grades of informers and whether there are special tariffs paid to these informers...

(*Interruptions*)

...and whether these informers are engaged only in Police duties or also in political duties?

(*Interruptions*)

The Chairperson: Hon. Seeruttun!

Mr Seeruttun: Under *Acquisition of Non-Financial Assets*, item 31121 *Transport Equipment*, we have been asked to vote an additional sum of Rs847,825 for the acquisition of

transport equipment. May we know what sort of transport equipment we are talking about and how many of them have been bought which will be sufficient for Rs9 m.?

The Chairperson: Yes, you have a question?

Mr Nagalingum: Yes, under item 22900, can I know from the hon. Prime Minister what is the number; how were they chosen and what were the criteria used?

The Prime Minister: The first one, in fact, it's the same one; it is item 22900 - *Other Goods and Services*. First of all, there has been an increase in granting of cash rewards by the Police and also there has been an increase in cost of uniforms.

Now, the hon. Member asked the question about the cost about Police informers. This is Police informers. As you probably know, there is a reorganisation of the whole Police Force which is going to take place. That, I can tell you. This question is not related to this particular reorganisation. We have been very successful in tackling lots of crimes because we get the right information; we need to be able to do that.

As for the *Acquisition of Non-Financial Assets*, there was provision for the purchase of the following vehicles –

- 5 double cabs, that is, 4x4;
- 4 cars, and
- 18 motorcycles.

Police Force - Programme Code 262: Community Safety and Security (Rs38,619,447) was, on question put, agreed to.

Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development - Programme Code 362: Public Financial Management was called.

The Chairperson: Page 17! Yes, hon. Obeegadoo! No questions? Page 18!

Mr Obeegadoo: I just want to seek some clarification from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister under item 26323043, sub-item (ii) *expenditure relating to CCTV Camera System*. Is the hon. Vice-Prime Minister with me?

Mr Duval: Yes.

Mr Obeegadoo: I just want to know since the amount here is, of course, very significant, Rs26.6 m., what precisely are we referring to. Is this Customs? Where is the CCTV Camera System being installed? And, secondly, why was it not foreseen? Presumably, the Supplementary Expenditure intervenes when we have an unforeseen item of expenditure. So, why is it that such an important investment was not in the first place foreseen?

Mr Duval: I am not sure why it was not foreseen. Maybe they decided to install it, but it is a good idea to install it. The CCTV camera system cost Rs4.7 m. It is part of a long list of programmes that they have done. ICT equipment Rs37 m., acquisition of furniture, it is not all for the system and for the new Customs House. For both, there is furniture, air conditioner, etc. There is also a Drug Interdiction Programme. The whole thing comes to Rs50 m. Rs24 m. had been provided, so, Rs26 m. is the difference.

Mr Uteem: Mr Chairperson, on the same item, in relation to software, may I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister, what does that software relates to? Is it the same Microsoft software which was given to the Civil Service or is it a new software?

Mr Duval: It is not Microsoft. Out of the Rs37 m. for ICT equipment and software, Rs12 m. is for the telephone network. And then, we have 300 SAP and that cost, in fact, Rs20 m.; and then, we have ICT equipment for Rs12 m. But, as you know, MRA is probably the most ICT professional Parastatal Body that we have.

Mr Baloomoody: Mr Chairperson, can I follow up on the question of my colleague, hon. Obeegadoo? Where are the CCTV cameras placed? Are they used at the customs, at the entries of our island or is it used to spy on people?

Mr Duval: It is not a roving camera. It is installed at the new Customs House, Mer Rouge.

Mr Seeruttun: Mr Chairperson, I just heard the hon. Vice-Prime Minister stating that Rs20 m. was the cost of the SAP software. Can we know which firm got that contract?

Mr Duval: I don't have the information. I can provide it to the hon. Member later.

Mr Jhugroo: Regarding the acquisition of the ICT equipment and software, can we know who got the contract and whether a tender was launched?

Mr Duval: I don't have the information. I will provide it to the hon. Member if my colleagues there will send it to me in a moment.

Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development - Programme Code 362: Public Financial Management (Rs62,172,705) 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.

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, under item 22130 - *Studies & Surveys*, just for clarification purposes, I would like to know how many Enumerators and Chief Enumerators were actually involved in this exercise. Who were the persons concerned? Are we talking of persons in the service who are given additional duties as apparently has been the case in the past? And thirdly, if the Vice-Prime Minister does not mind my asking again, given the magnitude of this exercise, how is it that we could not foresee the sums involved?

Mr Duval: In fact, Mr Chairperson, what I am told is not so much an increase in the number of people. The additional provision is required to meet increase in the rate of fees payable to Chief Enumerators and Enumerators. I have the increase in rates, I can circulate it. It is an increase in the rates.

Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development - Programme Code 366: Provision of Statistics (Rs2,736,465) was, on question put, agreed to.

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 was called.

Dr. Sorefan: Mr Chairperson, regarding item 22040 - *Office Equipment and Furniture*, may we know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister - especially equipment for the newly set up Mass Transit Unit - what are those equipment?

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, the equipment are the following -

1. Filing cabinets
2. IT equipment

3. Notebooks
4. Personal computers
5. Printers
6. Heavy duty photocopier
7. Fax machine
8. PC servers
9. Plotter
10. Specialised equipment for printing of drawings.

Mr Obeegadoo: On the same item, Mr Chairperson, this Mass Transit Unit which is supposed to be a new unit, we are voting, therefore, a large amount of money, Rs2 m. something like that, may I know when was this unit set up, how many officers are attributed to this unit and what is the purpose?

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, this unit was set up in 2012 and that forms part of the light rail which is an integral part of the public transport system. Actually, it is manned by a skeleton staff comprising of one Acting Chief Executive, one Confidential Secretary, one Senior Finance Officer, two Engineers, Office Attendants plus one clerical staff who will be responsible to the light rail system.

Mr Bodha: Mr Chairperson, under item 22100 - *Publication and Stationery*, may I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister how many driving licence counterparts have been delivered and whether there are still drivers who don't have this counterpart certificate?

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, 750,000 DLCs with security features were issued, and out of that, around 650 driving licence holders in Mauritius have been delivered. And these are the figures which have been given to us by the Police representatives from the Traffic Branch. It means everybody has it.

The Chairperson: Hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: Mr Chairperson, on the same item, penalty point system, can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister inform the House whether there is a new unit which is being set up to review this penalty point system? In the light of the numerous representations received, the Chief Adviser of the Prime Minister's Office has stated that he is working on a review. I know you would tell me policy matter, but *dimouunn...*

(*Interruptions*)

The Chairperson: No, this question is a matter of policy. Next question, hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: Mr Chairperson, under item 22030 - *Additional provision required to meet cost of rental of facilities provided for religious activities and festivals*, can I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether he has been made aware of the frustrations, among even Government MPs, concerning the choice of the associations which have been asking for sponsorship for the erection of *salle verte*, whether there is a definite criterion for official religious activities and whether it is given on a piecemeal basis as per the request? I have myself received representations. Lots of requests made by people from my own constituency - official requests - are being turned down, while others in the same constituency are being approved. So, the hon. Vice-Prime Minister must, at least, clarify the population about the criteria which are being used. What are the official festivals, whether it is being also given for *la tente marriage* from what I have heard?

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, in fact, the sky can't be the limit. We have got thousands of applications which are received, but, normally, it is Cabinet that puts up a Task Force and priority is given to the main festivals. But, at times, whenever requests are made, on a case to case basis, these things are decided upon. I can assure the hon. Member that all constituencies do receive, but, unfortunately, we cannot give each and everybody.

(*Interruptions*)

No, we can't. We can't give individually to Members of Parliament. But requests are normally made and whenever funds are available...

(*Interruptions*)

The Chairperson: Silence, please!

Mr Bachoo: ...my Ministry tries to do the utmost best and irrespective of political parties.

Mr Nagalingum: Under the same item, Mr Chairperson, regarding Constituency No.19.

(*Interruptions*)

The Chairperson: Silence, hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Nagalingum: We have had many complaints that their demands are not acceded to.

Mr Bachoo: Which item!

Mr Nagalingum: On the same item, Mr Chairperson.

The Chairperson: Let us hear the question! What is the question?

Mr Nagalingum: I would like to know the criteria used?

Mr Bachoo: Normally, that is the priority given to the Task Force Committee set up by Cabinet on different national festivals. That is the main criteria.

Mr Jhugroo: Under item 22030 – *Rent*, can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister inform the House whether any tender is launched to choose the contractors for the supply of rental of facilities?

Mr Bachoo: In all cases, normally a tender exercise is carried out.

Mr Jhugroo: Can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister table a list of those who have been selected?

The Chairperson: Please, one question at a time.

Mr Bachoo: As far as the contractors are concerned, I don't have any problem, I'll table the list of contractors who give those services.

The Chairperson: Hon. Li Kwong Wing!

Mr Li Kwong Wing: Mr Chairperson, with regard to item 22120008 – *Fee to Consultants*, may I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether...

The Chairperson: We are still at page 20. Hon. Obeegadoo!

Mr Obeegadoo: Under the same item raised by hon. Bhagwan before me, item 22030 – *Rent*, would the Vice-Prime Minister be agreeable - having regard to the expenditure in 2013 which we have been asked to approve both the sums appropriated and the supplementary sum - to circulate, to lay before the House a breakdown of that sum so that we may know how it was spent; where public money went?

Secondly, being given that from year to year, it is the same divinities, the same religious festivals, why is it that suddenly in 2013, the budget overruns by this amount of Rs3.5 m. as compared to what was appropriated?

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, in fact, out of Rs17.5 m., Rs10.3 m. is for rental of buildings at Moorgate House, Jade House and Max City as well as rental of parking lots. So, I am going to submit these as well and, at the same time, there has been an increase because the cost per square foot also for the construction has slightly gone up.

Mr Obeegadoo: If the hon. Vice-Prime Minister would forgive my ignorance, but I am not too sure I understand what the rental of Max City had to do with this item, would he explain?

Mr Bachoo: That includes the rental of buildings as well. It is not only for the social and cultural festivals. It also concerns the rental of buildings, this amount of Rs17.5 m.

The Chairperson: Page 21.

Mr Seeruttun: Under item 22050 - *Office Expenses*, I note an increase of nearly 20% of the amount appropriated. Would the Vice-Prime Minister inform the House what justifies that increase?

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, my Ministry normally chairs all infrastructural committees. So, that definitely involves an additional amount which requires additional expenses following an increase in the number of committee meetings at the Ministry.

Mr Jhugroo: Same page, item 22030 – *Rent*, can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister circulate a list of all those religious institutions of Constituency No. 12 which have benefitted from this item?

Mr Bachoo: It is not the money matter at constituency level; it is at the central level. It is not that one particular constituency gets X, Y and Z. It is never dealt in such a way.

Mr Baloomoody: With regard to the same item 22030 – *Rent*, the hon. Vice-Prime Minister replied that it is also for the renting of Max City Building. Is it what he said?

Mr Bachoo: Yes.

Mr Baloomoody: So, are there religious activities...

Mr Bachoo: No, no, no.

Mr Baloomoody: It is written additional provision required to meet the cost of rental of facilities provided for religious activities and festivals. Is it that the building at Max City is rented for religious activities?

Mr Bachoo: I meant that the amount of Rs17,596,000 includes the rental of buildings also. I just wanted to draw the attention of the House.

The Chairperson: Page 21!

Mrs Hanoomanjee: At page 21 under item 22120008 – *Fee to Consultants*, can we know who were the Consultants and how they were chosen? Was it out of a tender exercise? Secondly, has any local staff of the Ministry benefitted from any allowance from this amount?

Mr Bachoo: Well, it is an additional provision required to meet the cost of consultancy services. The consultancy services in respect of Mauritius Light Rapid Transit Project have been procured within a Government to Government agreement; between the Governments of Mauritius and Singapore in August 2012. This is the information that I have.

The Chairperson: Hon. Li Kwong Wing!

Mr Li Kwong Wing: Can we know what is the total amount of that consultancy and which company has been awarded that consultancy? Can we have the specific name of the company?

Mr Bachoo: The company which is a parastatal body of Singapore, is Singapore Cooperation Enterprise (SCE) and the total fee is 7,800,000 Singapore Dollar and it has to be paid for the task of undertaking stage I of the project.

The Chairperson: Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. Under the same item 22120008 – *Fee to Consultants*, may I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether this consultant has submitted any report to date?

Mr Bachoo: In fact, stage I is already in operation and the task of that stage I is the project inception, selection of a preferred alignment, reparation of reference designs which include depot layout, station development, engineering drawings, strain operation models, traction power study and preparation of the execution plan which include north bound and south bound extension study; operational plan; project management plan; procurement and implementation plan; transport modelling which includes household surveys and traffic survey analysis; financial and economic appraisals, preparation of expression of interest documents and preparation of the request for proposals. All these things have nearly been completed.

The Chairperson: Hon. Dr. Sorefan!

Dr. Sorefan: Mr Chairperson, regarding item 26313010 – *Current Grant – Construction Industry Development Board*, may I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether this Board has been set up, and, if yes, the names of those members?

Mr Bachoo: The Board had been set up long back, Mr Chairperson. Well, I do not have the names of those who form part of that Board, but, in fact, we have got the members of the private sector and as well different Ministries are represented on that Board.

The Chairperson: Hon. Mrs Hanoomanjee!

Mrs Hanoomanjee: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. I am coming back to the second part of my question which was not replied. I asked the Vice-Prime Minister whether any local staff of his Ministry has benefitted from any allowance out of this amount and, if so, what amount.

Mr Bachoo: As far as I am aware, nobody has inherited because that is meant for consultancy services only. I had already stated, we had got a skeleton staff which is working on that.

The Chairperson: Hon. Li Kwong Wing!

Mr Li Kwong Wing: I heard the Vice-Prime Minister say that under this consultancy service, the economic and financial study has been completed.

Mr Bachoo: Yes.

Mr Li Kwong Wing: Can we know what was the conclusion on the rate of return of that project and the cost of the project, and also whether the report of the study can be tabled?

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, this is a very important question, but I need to have a question to be put in Parliament so that I can come with a substantive answer.

The Chairperson: Yes. Hon. Obeegadoo!

Mr Obeegadoo: Same point made by my colleague. We are being asked to approve additional expenditure to the tune of Rs30.6 m. on this item which sum was apparently not planned for, not appropriated. What we want to know is very clear, very simple. There is a report, the terms of reference the Minister has just provided us with. He has told us that the first part is completed or nearly completed. Since we are being asked to approve Rs30.6 m. of public

money, for the sake of transparency, will Government, will the Vice-Prime Minister agree to lay on the Table of the Assembly the conclusions of that consultancy?

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, I get the feeling it is too premature. I will request the hon. Member to bear with us. In fact, we are going fast with the project. We should not forget that this started as far back as 1987 and nothing was done. Since we are going very fast, documents are ready, bear with us a little bit; we will look into the possibility of providing you the maximum amount of information.

Mr Baloomoody: Can I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister, on item 26313010 - *Construction Industry Development Board*, where was it sitting before and why is it that it has moved to Port Louis, costing the taxpayers around more than Rs175,000 per month?

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, earlier it was housed in a Government quarter at Floreal and paying a nominal monthly rental charge of Rs20,000. It was transferred from Floreal to Port Louis due to its remote location. It was a very small room; it was difficult for them to operate. Being given that the Construction Industry Development Board is now expanding, that comprises all the contractors, starting from the minor grade to the highest, so, it was important for them to have a better place. Two, part of the finance will also come from the private sector.

Mr Bhagwan: At page 21, I come again to item 22120008 – *Fee to Consultants*. Can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister inform the House now that the study has been completed, whether it has been finalised; whether the population can be made aware? Even in my own constituency, I have been informed that the LRT would go through Rue Vandermeersch, Cité Barkly and so on. There has been encroachment. We have raised this issue on many occasions. There has been encroachment on State lands and there was a decision of Government that dates back many years; that encroachment on the *tracé* should be avoided. We all know that there are cases where Government has allowed people to go and construct on these *tracés*. Can I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether these have been identified and whether Government is planning to pay a sort of compensation to these people or, at least, inform them right from the outset to move from there?

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, the preferred alignment is being finalised, that is, we have been able to locate the corridor. It is only then we are going to move for compulsory acquisition. I can assure the hon. Members of the House that we won't need too much of land to acquire. For

example, in the past, we had to pull 45 to 70 houses, but we have minimised it, because the corridors are being worked out in such a way that the minimum problem will be created for the public.

Mr Ameer Meea: On item 26313 *Extra-Budgetary Unit*, with regard to the Construction Industry Development Board, may I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister the name of the building where this Board has been moved to, the owner of the building and also if he has the information of the floor area occupied?

Mr Bachoo: The building is the Mutual Aid Building which belongs indirectly to the Government of Mauritius. I don't know the exact area.

Mr Jhugroo: Under item 22120 – *Fees for the Light Rapid Transit*, can we know if he can give us a time frame when the *tracé* will be ready for this light railway?

Mr Bachoo: I have just mentioned that the alignment is being worked out, is being finalised.

Dr. Sorefan: Regarding Construction Industry Development Board, the hon. Vice-Prime Minister has said that he does not know the Members of the Board. Will he be prepared to circulate the list, please?

Mr Bachoo: Of course, it is a pleasure, there is no problem.

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 (Rs4,283,070) 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.

The Chairperson: Page 22! Hon. Jhugroo!

Mr Jhugroo: On item 22090 – *Security Services*, can we know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister what procedures are being used for the purchase of this equipment?

Mr Bachoo: We have purchased it through the Mauritius Telecom.

Mr Obeegadoo: I have two questions, Sir. Item 22040 – *Office Equipment and Furniture*, concerning this Ballast Water Management, may we have some information what this is about? I am referring to the *Mauritius Oceanographic Institute (Ballast Water Management)* on item 22040. May we have some information what this Ballast Water Management is about?

Secondly, at the bottom of the page, item 2209006 - *Salvage Assistance to Vessels in Distress*. There was no sum budgeted and we are being asked to approve, *post facto*, the expenditure of Rs1.2 m. Now, when we had this ship that was caught on the reefs, I think it was to the East of Mauritius and the question was raised in the House, I seem to recollect the Minister having said that this had to be accounted for through the private insurers of the ship or the ship owners. May we be provided with some information about the assistance that we had to provide and why the State of Mauritius had to bear the cost?

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, the Ballast Water Management Project is being implemented by my Ministry, in collaboration with the Mauritius Oceanographic Institute, which is providing technical assistance to Shipping Division to monitor and compile ballast water data. In this connection, the Mauritius Oceanographic Institute has been provided with certain basic IT tools, namely, 4 computers, special software, two for Shipping Division and two for MOI for ballast water data. That concerns the ballast water. You know ballast water normally, that is, the water...

(Interruptions)

I'll explain to you. It is partly empty ship which is heading for another destination as to pump in seawater, known as ballast water, to make the ship more stable and to help it navigate smoothly without the risk of capsizing. Ballast water prompting in a particular region of the world may carry disease, harmful to mankind and may contain dangerous marine species, which may lead to the extinction of native marine organism, fisheries or pose a serious threat to the marine environment and marine structures.

As regards the second part of the question, you have asked me regarding the salvage assistance to the vessels. This additional sum is required to meet the cost of salvage for timely removal of the damaged vessel to avoid oil spill and obstruction to other vessels. Lloyd's Open Form for salvage operation takes some time and just to avoid any disaster the Flag State

intervenes as a buffer, thereafter, the cost is recuperated from the insurance company. So, we are waiting for the insurance company to give us back our money.

(Interruptions)

Yes, of course.

Mr Seeruttun: Allow me to go back to item 2209003 - *Global Maritime Distress and Safety System Services*. In his reply, the Vice-Prime Minister stated that the Mauritius Telecom purchased that equipment. May we know who is the supplier of that equipment and whether the lowest bidder got that to supply that equipment?

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, as far as I am concerned, I am made aware that Mauritius Telecom is the supplier, in fact, of that equipment. We have procured through Mauritius Telecom and the contract was signed between my Ministry and Mauritius Telecom. We are supposed to pay in installments until 2015. The first installment payment of Rs4.3 m. excluding VAT has already been effected. In fact, we have decided that the rest of the money will be paid, let us say, next year - as early as next year - so that - I know the question which will be raised will be regarding the interests - we won't have to pay the interests.

The Chairperson: We are still on page 22.

Mr Uteem: Under item 2209003 – *Global Maritime Distress and Safety System Services*, may I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister which company was awarded the contract for providing security services?

Mr Bachoo: I'll give you the name. Security Services: Contractors New Security Guard Ltd. for the cost of – well, the cost is already mentioned here.

(Interruptions)

Security New Security Guard Ltd.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Jhugroo!

(Interruptions)

Hon. Bhagwan, silence, please! Yes, hon. Jhugroo!

Mr Jhugroo: At page 22, under item 22090 - *Security Services*, is the hon. Vice-Prime Minister aware that it is a French company which supplies this equipment to Mauritius Telecom?

Mr Bachoo: Whether it is French or Indian, whoever got the contract, I do not have any problem with them.

The Chairperson: Page 23! Hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: On the last line of this page, Sir, under item 32145 *Loans (Disbursement)*, with regard to “MV Mauritius Pride”, we are being asked to vote Rs45 m. for the dry-docking operations. Can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister inform the House where the dry-docking operations have taken place and whether we have used our installation here and, if not, where, and which company was awarded that contract, whether the procedures were followed and why the Mauritius dry-dock was not chosen?

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, in fact, the dry-docking operations took place in Durban and all the tender procedures were properly followed. Normally, the Shipping Corporation Ltd is a State-owned private company governed by the Companies Act. Transparent exercise had been conducted and the lowest contractor was awarded the contract.

Mr Bhagwan: Mr Chairperson, the hon. Vice-Prime Minister has not clarified why is it that when we have a dry-dock here, the Mauritian dry-dock was not chosen?

Mr Bachoo: I am sorry, when expression of interest was invited, the Mauritian companies were invited. There are two companies, namely Taylor Smith Group Mauritius and *CNOI Shipyard (Chantier Naval de l'Océan Indien)*. Again, the deadline for submission of tenders was set up and the following four shipyards submitted their bids for dry-docking. Mauritius was included, but, unfortunately, Mauritius did not get it; the lowest contractor got it. It was a transparent and fair exercise and the lowest had to get it.

Mr Bhagwan: Can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister inform the population whether it is not the duty of Government to protect local industries and people at least instead of taking South Africans there?

The Chairperson: No, no!

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, I am not a member of the Shipping Corporation. We cannot tamper...

(Interruptions)

We cannot tamper with tender exercise! The tender was free and fair and, as I have mentioned, they were too high and not the lowest bidders. It would have been difficult for us to give them.

Mr Bhagwan: Can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister inform the House on that particular contract who were the persons, apart from the technicians, who travelled to Durban *aux frais de l'État*, whether the Chairperson, the Director General or other people went to South Africa just for pleasure and sightseeing and taking advantage of that contract?

Mr Bachoo: If the hon. Member comes with a substantive question, I will answer. I will definitely answer, there is no problem!

The Chairperson: No, the question is not fair! Are there any more questions?

Mr Obeegadoo: At page 23, under item 26210 - *Current Grant to International Organisations*, regarding the International Maritime Organisation, I am just a bit confused. My understanding is that whatever is appropriated is what was budgeted. Why is it that for something as straightforward as our annual contribution to the IMO, we have to resort to a supplementary budget which is the same, that we are doubling the figure?

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, it is because a two-year subscription had to be paid in the year 2012.

(Interruptions)

No, earlier we were not made aware. It was due to a change in the mode of payment of membership fees that they had decided, and contribution for IMO; the contribution for the year 2012 was paid in advance, that is, in December 2012. They set the rules of the game.

Mr François: At page 23, coming back to item 32145 - *Loans (Disbursement)*, with regard to the “MV Mauritius Pride”, were the operations done as a matter of emergency or were they just normal dry-docking operations?

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, this is a mandatory exercise undertaken every two years and being given that this vessel, the “MV Mauritius Pride”, is almost 22 years old, we had to undertake that repair.

Mr Jhugroo: Can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister ask the Mauritius Shipping Corporation to table a copy of the decision taken while awarding this contract for the dry-docking operations?

Mr Bachoo: Of course, if the hon. Member comes forward with a substantive question, I will give him all the answers. Okay, I am going to lay a copy.

Vice-Prime Minister’s Office, Ministry of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping - Programme Code 325: Maritime Safety and Development (Rs41,597,275) 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.

The Chairperson: Page 24! Yes, hon. Dr. Sorefan!

Dr. Sorefan: Under item 31113403 - *Upgrading of Roads – Additional provision required for the implementation of additional work orders in respect of upgrading of roads*, can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister provide us with a list of roads which have been upgraded and the additional works that have been ordered, because there has been an increase to threefold from the Appropriated Bill and it has gone to Rs284 m.?

Mr Bachoo: Yes, definitely I am laying a copy of all the works which have been undertaken on the Table of the Assembly, that is, only for the NDU.

Mr Nagalingum: Mr Chairperson, at page 24, under item 21111*Other Staff Costs – Additional provision required to meet payment of overtime to staff of Citizens Advice Bureaux following Government’s decision to open its offices on Saturdays to improve access to public services*. May I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister what period we are talking about and the reason why?

Mr Bachoo: We are talking of the year 2012. An additional amount was required to meet payment of overtime to Officers, Drivers, Word Processing Operators, Office Care Attendants and Officers of the CAB Coordination Unit because normally on Saturdays the offices were not opened, but now we are opening up because there was pressure on the part of the public. This is the reason for the opening up of offices on Saturdays.

Mr Ameer Meea: At page 24, under item *31113403 Upgrading of Roads* where a sum of Rs284 m. is earmarked, may we know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister to which contractors this sum has been allocated and what are the names of the contractors?

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, I do not have in mind all the contractors, but they are all the NDU contractors who have been selected through proper tender exercise by the CPB. In fact, they are given the contract for one year.

(Interruptions)

Colas Maurice Ltée is not one of those contractors.

The Chairperson: Hon. Seeruttun!

Mr Seeruttun: At page 24, under item *22060 Maintenance – Additional provision required for: (i) renovation of offices for newly appointed Parliamentary Private Secretaries; (ii) repairs of vehicles; and (iii) maintenance of equipment*, where some Rs3.5 m. have been spent for the upgrading of offices of the PPS. May we know which building we are talking about and how much the repairs of vehicles and the maintenance of equipment did cost?

Mr Bachoo: We are talking of item 22060? Well, that concerns the building which houses all the Parliamentary Private Secretaries. We have spent on maintenance of vehicles for Parliamentary Private Secretaries; for maintenance of building in respect of refurbishment of newly appointed Parliamentary Private Secretary, maintenance of plant and equipment and IT equipment.

Mr Baloomoody: At page 24, under item *31122 Other Machinery & Equipment – Acquisition of Lighting Equipment, Provision required to meet cost of street lanterns*. May we

know who are the suppliers of the lighting equipment? Because we are all very much aware that if one comes from the Airport to Port Louis, most of the lights are not working.

Mr Bachoo: It is because there has been the case of...

Mr Baloomoody: But who is the supplier, or do we have an after sales service?

The Chairperson: Hon. Vice-Prime Minister, let the hon. Member finish!

Mr Baloomoody: Do we have an after sales service with these suppliers?

Mr Bachoo: Here, when we are talking of lighting equipment, it basically means the sodium lamps which are provided to the non-classified roads. I do not have the name of the contractor. If the hon. Member comes with a substantive question, I will give him the answer.

Mrs Hanoomanjee: At page 24, under item *31113 Other Structures; 31113403 - Upgrading of Roads, Additional provision required for the implementation of additional work orders in respect of upgrading of roads*, Rs284,336,024 is a huge amount. Can we know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister why this amount could not be forecast and why out of a sudden there was need for upgrading of roads? Is it a lack of planification?

Mr Bachoo: All these could not be forecast, Mr Chairperson, because I never knew, and nobody knew in the whole country that there would have been so much rain and flood. That started in 2008 and most of the roads - here we are talking of non-classified roads - were in a dilapidated situation. Therefore, we had to disburse money in order to clear the roads and, at the same time, to resurface them. I would also say that still much needs to be done.

Mr Bhagwan: Under item 22060, can the hon. Minister inform the population of my constituency, who is our PPS? Since the departure of hon. Reza Issack on holidays - we all know he is on holidays - can we know who is that phantom? '*Ki ça fantôme là ça?*' The population must know. I hope you know whether the hon. Prime Minister has appointed. I am not sure because all the CAB Offices of my constituency have been closed.

Secondly, Mr Chairperson, as far as *Upgrading of Roads* is concerned, I have raised this issue; not only roads, but the road markings also. I think I am raising this issue on the 20th occasion. The quality of the road markings is very bad and we are penalising the people on the

point system and, in many places, there are no road markings. Even the road markings which have been painted, after two days, it's gone. So, can the hon. Minister inform the House, since the last time I raised the issue, what action has been taken and whether in this *Upgrading of Roads*, road markings are concerned? We also have the problem of lighting. It's a horrible mess.

The Chairperson: Hon. Bhagwan, you are asking a series of questions. You are allowed to ask a question at a time.

Mr Bhagwan: I prefer just to help the hon. Minister; he's a bit tired. Yes, Sir.

The Chairperson: You are allowed to ask a question at a time.

Mr Bhagwan: On the same page?

The Chairperson: If each Member is going to ask a series of questions, then it is going to be a problem. I have to be fair to other Members. Okay, proceed! You have already taken the time of the Assembly.

Mr Bhagwan: One last question concerns street lighting, not only on the highway, but even in the cyber city area. It is our national pride. Go and see hon. Minister, what's happening! Even on the new bypass you have just constructed, the St. Pierre bypass.

The Chairperson: But you must put your question! You are making a speech, hon. Rajesh Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: No. We are being asked nearly Rs700,000, Mr Chairperson, for 2012.

The Chairperson: Yes, but you should not argue with me. Don't make a speech! Put your question, please! Hon. Rajesh Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: I am acting as his inspector.

(Interruptions)

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, the question of road marking falls under the RDA and other items which are not being voted now. But, at the same time, I would like to inform the

hon. Member - the matter was raised in the House many times by him – that we have given instructions to those who are in the Procurement Office of my Ministry to see to it that we procure the best quality of paints, we have already given, and a vast campaign has already started.

Secondly, regarding the PPS, now it is hon. Mrs Bholah who has taken over.

(Interruptions)

She is there. We are...

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson, until such time that someone is appointed, we are requesting her to look into the matter.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Silence, please! Now, I say please, silence! It's enough now!

Mr Bachoo: Regarding...

(Interruptions)

We have requested her to look into until such time that someone is appointed.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Hon. Seeruttun!

(Interruptions)

Mr Seeruttun: Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Hon. Bhagwan, please!

Mr Seeruttun: Under item 31122807 *Acquisition of Lighting Equipment*, will the hon. Vice-Prime Minister inform the House whether any lamps were bought to replace those not working on the motorway from the Airport up to the La Vigie Roundabout?

Mr Bachoo: Well, that does not fall under this item, please.

(Interruptions)

Mr Seeruttun: They are still not working, Mr Chairperson.

Mr Bachoo: That does not fall under this item.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Mrs Hanoomanjee, do you have a question?

Mrs Hanoomanjee: On item 22060 again.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Some silence, now!

Mrs Hanoomanjee: Did I understand from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister that the sum of Rs827,000 and so, was only for the office of hon. Mrs Prateebah Bholah?

Mr Bachoo: I have already mentioned that the additional amount is meant for maintenance of vehicles for Parliamentary Private Secretaries. That comprises of Rs269,071. Maintenance of building in respect of refurbishment of newly appointed Parliamentary Private Secretary: Rs289,724; maintenance for plant and equipment, that involves Rs215,330, and IT equipment Rs53,269.

Mr Nagalingum: I would speak under the same item, Mr Chairperson. We have heard in this House that with the penalty system, there is the installation of Belisha flashing lamps on our crossings. Can we know where matters stand?

Mr Bachoo: That is actually not in our programme.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Obeegadoo!

Mr Obeegadoo: I have two questions, Mr Chairperson and I will ask one by one.

The Chairperson: Of course.

Mr Obeegadoo: Now, item...

The Chairperson: That's a good example.

Mr Obeegadoo: Certainly! Under item 22060 *PPS*, we are being asked to vote for an additional amount, to approve. To follow from the question of my Colleague, hon. 'Inspector' Bhagwan, there is genuine confusion as to who are these new PPSs. Who are these new PPSs? Is there only one? I would like to ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether this supplementary amount includes PPS for Constituency No. 17. I am asking the question, because on the rare occasions I watch MBC/TV and there are infrastructural developments in Constituency No. 17, I never see my good friend, hon. Thierry Henry, but I only see hon. Yeung Sik Yuen. So, I would like to know whether the PPS for Constituency No. 17 is now hon. Yeung Sik Yuen.

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, when we are talking about the amount of Rs827,000, that does not mean one PPS. I have mentioned Parliamentary Private Secretaries. This is what I have mentioned already. So, this is meant for the office.

The Chairperson: Page 25, please!

Mr Obeegadoo: Now, item 2111 *Other Staff Costs*. Here, again, we are being asked to vote Rs796 m. already spent. Now, my question to the hon. Vice-Prime Minister is the following: we know that the State provides a free service to Ministers and backbenchers of the majority and PPSs who can carry out their constituency surgery, meet with their constituents for free in CAB Offices, whereas this privilege is denied to Opposition MPs and...

The Chairperson: What is your question, hon. Obeegadoo?

Mr Obeegadoo: I would like to know whether - since we are asked to vote this sum - there has been a calculation of the cost to the public of providing this service to Government MPs whereas we had stopped this practice between 2000 and 2005.

(*Interruptions*)

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, in fact, this additional amount is required to meet the payment of overtime to officers who are working on Saturdays and they are trying to help the public in return. There is no problem in that.

The Chairperson: Page 25. Yes, hon. Jhugroo!

Mr Jhugroo: Can I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister why...

The Chairperson: Which item?

Mr Jhugroo: Under item 22030 *Rent*, can I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister why NDU is looking for additional office space when there is an occupied office reserved for the Minister there?

The Chairperson: Hon. Vice-Prime Minister, this is a matter of policy, you may not answer.

Mr Bachoo: Alright.

The Chairperson: Next question!

Mr Obeegadoo: Which page are we on, Mr Chairperson?

The Chairperson: Page 25.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Hon. Jhugroo, please!

(Interruptions)

Hon. Jhugroo!

Yes, proceed hon. Obeegadoo. We are at page 25.

(Interruptions)

So, the question is that the sum of Rs226 m...

(Interruptions)

Who has uttered this word? Who has uttered the word 'Judas'?

(Interruptions)

Right! No comment!

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 (Rs226,076,888) was, on question put, agreed to.

Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping - Programme Code 405: Land Drainage was called.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: Mr Chairperson, on the last item *31113015 - Land Drainage and Watershed Management Programme Additional provision required for the implementation of additional work orders in respect of land drainage works*, we are being asked to vote Rs209,354,991. Can the hon. Vice-Prime Minister, at least, circulate a list of these works - which I am sure he has at hand - to hon. Members? Can he also circulate a list of new prone areas which have been identified and can we know the time schedule for the implementation, especially following the recent heavy rains? Can I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether this also is taken into consideration and whether - I know Local Authorities are being helped by the Ministry to carry out additional works - this amount could be increased because of the load of works which has to be done for the cleaning of drains?

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, I am submitting a list of all the drain works which have been conducted in 2012 and as far as the other lists are concerned...

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: No cross-talking!

Mr Bachoo: ...next week we are coming with the details. A third list also is under preparation and the work is going to start as from January. But the most important ones, wherever there is danger to human lives, we have already undertaken.

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Mr Chairperson, may I come back to the same item?

The Chairperson: Which item, please?

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Item 31113015 - *Land Drainage and Watershed Management Programme.*

The Chairperson: Alright!

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: May I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether the additional work orders are for new drains or whether they are meant for additional drainage works that have already been carried out, and, if so, whether any consultancy services were obtained for these projects?

Mr Bachoo: We have got different types of drains. Firstly, instructions were received that all the existing drains have to be cleaned, and that is being looked into together with NDU and the Local Authorities. The work has already started. Secondly, the existing drains are being simply cleared. New drains are being constructed and drains which are damaged are being repaired.

Mr Nagalingum: Mr Chairperson, under the same item, can we know how many flood prone areas there are constituency-wise, and whether there has been a consultant who has been working on these flood prone areas?

Mr Bachoo: Normally, it is not done constituency-wise, but wherever there is a danger to life, for example, there is one constituency where we have gone up to the extent of Rs400 m. because that was a dangerous area. Port Louis needs additional sum. Secondly, in a few cases - not in all - consultants have been appointed. And we have also got the support of the World Bank which is supporting us in Drainage and Watershed Management Study, and the report is already on.

Mr Baloomoody: Mr Chairperson, under the same item 31113015 *Land Drainage and Watershed Management Programme*, can I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether the work at Canal Dayot has been completed because it seems that the work has stopped there? And where

it has stopped, if ever tomorrow there is a heavy rain, there will be more flood than what we have witnessed.

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, the first part of the work had been completed to the satisfaction of the Ministry. Unfortunately, there had been a court case against one of those occupiers of land and he is creating a hell of problems for us. We are trying to negotiate and the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Health have also been contacted to help us because the proprietor of that plot of land who has a factory is creating problems for us. We are trying to negotiate and I think that in the days to come the second part of the work will start.

Mr Bhagwan: Mr Chairperson, this issue should not be a political issue, as rightly pointed out. I have to draw the attention of the hon. Vice-Prime Minister of this very dangerous case at Morcellement Hermitage, Coromandel where we had a promoter. He should have been sent to jail. I am not mentioning names, and hon. Dr. A. Boolell knows that VIP. That person, Mr Chairperson, has done lots of construction works illegally, and the Municipality, which is a newly elected Body, is trying its best to deal with the problem. The Ministry of Public Infrastructure has its responsibility in that as far as follow-up and investment is concerned. Can I appeal to the hon. Vice-Prime Minister - for the security of these inhabitants - to have a fresh look at that file together with the Local Authorities and to do whatever investment which has to be done, same as at Marie Reine de la Paix, in Port Louis where a very good job is being done? This Morcellement Hermitage, Coromandel should have been a top priority project for the Ministry.

Mr Bachoo: Mr Speaker, Sir, it is a fact because we had conducted many visits also. We have requested the Local Authorities and Municipality to take actions, and definitely as far as Government is concerned we are going to come in anytime. Any danger to human life, we have to help the inhabitants, I can assure the hon. Member, but I must have a look at it over again.

(Interruptions)

Mr Uteem: Mr Chairperson, on the same item, would the hon. Vice-Prime Minister table a copy of a list of all the contractors who were awarded the work, and also an indication of any cost overrun compared to the initial contract amount?

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, because this is a very important issue, I have to inform the House that there have been many cases, for example...

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Silence, now!

Mr Bachoo: ...in Port Louis, where there has been cost overrun because of the refusal of the inhabitants to allow access to the land, way leave issues. Then, matters, at times, had gone to the Court and that has created slight difficulties. But I am going to submit the list of the contractors who are working throughout the island and 99% have been appointed through the Central Procurement Board.

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Under the same item, Mr Chairperson, the hon. Vice-Prime Minister has mentioned that there are certain times when consultants are required and consultancy services are taken by the Ministry. May I know which company has been given the contract for consultancy services?

Mr Bachoo: That is after the heavy flood, after the big debacle that occurred. The following day, two or three consultants were approached and we have requested them to take over. That is what I am aware of. Most of the works had been done in-house by the Engineers of my Ministry with the exception of one which the World Bank is financing.

Mr Bhagwan: Regarding Morcellement Hermitage, Coromandel, again, can I make a request to the hon. Vice-Prime Minister - being given the urgency of the work - to request his consultant GIBB, which is the official consultant of Government, at least, to have a look at that project? We are ready, with the MPs of the Constituency and the one who will be appointed as PPS, if ever, to have a site visit as a matter of urgency, at least, in the interest of these inhabitants of Morcellement Hermitage, Coromandel.

Mr Bachoo: Apparently, I am told that the Municipality of Beau Bassin/Rose Hill has taken the matter to Court. And, secondly, the consultant is a private consultant, he is not appointed by the Government.

The Chairperson: Hon. Baloomoody!

Mr Baloomoody: Mr Chairperson, on the same item, with regard to Canal Dayot itself, where the works have stopped now, it is a real danger to the inhabitants of Pointe aux Sables and down there. Can I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether he will take some actions pending the court case because the court case will be dragged to Privy Council for five years?

Mr Bachoo: In fact, the Engineers have decided that for this particular plot of land, we are going to segregate it and we are going to continue the other parts that can definitely help the inhabitants of the region.

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Under the same item, Mr Chairperson, I heard the hon. Minister mention that consultant companies were approached. Does this mean that no tender exercise was carried out?

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, human lives were lost, the whole country was mourning the death of people. In many parts of the country, people were paralysed, and in such a situation if we do not go for procurement under emergency, should we wait for four to ten months to put a consultant? They came forward and we approached them. In dangerous cases, in Port Louis in particular, it is so difficult to work. We had to get the consultants and they did the work.

(Interruptions)

Mr Bhagwan: We have to take on what the hon. Vice-Prime Minister is saying. Lives of people are in danger. Government has taken decisions. I appeal to the hon. Vice-Prime Minister; he is not listening to me!

(Interruptions)

He has just stated that lives are in danger...

The Chairperson: Hon. Bhagwan, that is your second appeal! There is not a question!

Mr Bhagwan: In the same breath, can I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister to act rapidly in the case of Morcellement Hermitage, Coromandel where there is the same danger as in Port Louis?

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, my hon. friend knows very well that in Chemin de la mort we have spent a huge sum of money. We have done a good job, unfortunately mischief was created by this fellow, one X, Y or Z, and we are going to take action. The hon. Member has made a request to us, we are looking into it.

Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping - Programme Code 405: Land Drainage (Rs203,025,635) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Housing and Lands - Programme Code 643: Land Management and Physical Planning was called.

The Chairperson: Page 27. Hon. Mrs Hanoomanjee!

Mrs Hanoomanjee: On item 22120 *Fees to Members of Board of Assessment*, can the hon. Minister say how many members form part of the Board of Assessment and in view of the high number of land being acquired by Government, is he aware that the number of members on this Board of Assessment is not sufficient and that they cannot go through the load of work?

The Chairperson: We are on page 27. If there is nothing, we go to page 28.

Mr Ameer Meea: Page 27!

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Ameer Meea!

Mr Ameer Meea: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. We are asked to vote a sum of Rs153,623,968 for acquisition of land. May we have a list of where the land has been acquired? Can he provide us with the extent of the land, the price of it and also the proprietors' names and also why has the land been acquired?

The Chairperson: Page 28, item 31410, is this the page hon. Ameer Meea?

Mr Ameer Meea: Yes!

Dr. Kasenally: At Triolet bypass: 46 *arpents 80 perches*, Terre Rouge/Verdun: 450 *arpents 84 perches*, Quartier Militaire/Valetta bypass: 81 *arpents*, Port-Louis Ring Road: 76 *arpents* and 81 *perches* and Gros Bois/Mare D'Albert link road: 4 *arpents 97 perches*, and let us see the amount of money. Acquisition of land - in all we have paid so far Rs153,623,968.

Mr Ameer Meea: Can we have the breakdown?

Dr. Kasenally: I have not got the breakdown, I have the total one. If a proper question is put, I can submit it subsequently.

Mrs Hanoomanjee: I have not yet got a reply to my question, please. On page 28, on Board of Assessment.

The Chairperson: Put your question again.

Mrs Hanoomanjee: Can I ask the hon. Minister how many members form part of the Board of Assessment and in view of the high number of land acquisition being done right now, whether he thinks that the number of people on the Board of Assessment is sufficient because things are dragging on?

Dr. Kasenally: Things are not dragging on. There has been a very substantial increase of acquisition, but my Ministry has been tackling it because now there is a tribunal which is involved and the Board of Assessment is gradually fading out, but as far as the tribunal is concerned, I am afraid I have no authority to press them. But, however, I have been given instructions that all documents are promptly processed and sent to them. I think we have had a talk with members to ensure that this is done promptly.

There is also another aspect of this because we have changed the law. They are now getting an interim payment. The Valuation Department has done an evaluation and they don't agree, they take whatever has been agreed, then the Tribunal gives the final decision and, therefore, we give the extra. First of all, this is in the interest of the people and, secondly, Government will have to pay less interest at the end of the day.

The Chairperson: Hon. Baloomoody!

Mr Baloomoody: Item 31410 *Acquisition of Land*. With regard to the Dream Bridge Project, can I ask the hon. Minister whether lands have already been acquired and, if so, whether the inhabitants of Reserve Street at Cassis have been compensated to their satisfaction?

Dr. Kasenally: Government has decided not to proceed with the Dream Bridge, for the time being, but, however, acquisition process is going on and we are not finalising it because of the possibility of alternative plans.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ameer Meea!

Mr Ameer Meea: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. The hon. Minister gave us some answers to the land that has been acquired for the sum of Rs153,623,968. For example, he stated that 450

arpents had been acquired for the Terre Rouge/Verdun project. Can he give us a table, a list of all those lands that have been acquired with the respective prices that have been paid and also the proprietors' names? If he does not have the answer, he can circulate it.

Dr. Kasenally: Of course, I don't have it. It is a very long list, and it will take time, but, in due course, we could submit it to the Library of the National Assembly.

Mr Seeruttun: Allow me to go back on page 27 on item 21111.

The Chairperson: We are on page 28.

Mr Seeruttun: It started on page 27, on the same item.

The Chairperson: Sorry! Hon. Seeruttun, I will allow this question. I use my discretion to allow you this question.

Mr Seeruttun: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. A huge amount of money...

The Chairperson: Are we going back to page 27?

Mr Seeruttun: Yes. On page 27, item 21111 *Other Staff Costs*, I can see that a huge sum of money is paid under this item. Will the hon. Minister inform the House how many cash offices are opened on Saturdays? And how many staff is concerned with that payment?

Dr. Kasenally: As far as this is concerned, in order to provide a better service to the public, we have recently been opening our offices on Saturdays. But, unfortunately, what has happened is, there has been practically no work carried out, not many people have been coming. So, we have reserved it at the time when there is a rush. For example, in the months of July and August, there is a substantial number of people who come for repayment of leases. On this occasion, we open it on Saturday, and we have extra staff. We also provide extra staff when there is this rush. This is what it is all about. The staff we have is a normal one and we are managing it rightly. There is no problem.

Mr Obeegadoo: Under item 31410801 *Acquisition of land*, there is something I do not understand, since Government has spent the amount of more than Rs353 m. during year 2013, for what appears to be acquisition of land for meritorious projects. What about concessions

regarding parking of public beach at Trou aux Biches, toilets of public beach at Mont Choisy when, in fact, we are already acquiring land for meritorious projects and they're giving concessions...

The Chairperson: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. Member. This is a matter of policy. I have said this is a matter of policy. Please, proceed, hon. Baloomoody!

Mr Baloomoody: At page 28, item 22120, I am surprised that we are paying arrears of fees to members of Departmental Tender Committee. Why is it arrears? We have not been *bons payeurs*? Is this Government a *mauvais payeur*?

Dr. Kasenally: These are very minor sums. You know for departmental committees, the Chairman gets Rs400, Members Rs330 and Rs240, and for the Bid Evaluation Committee, the Chairman gets Rs600, Members Rs500 and Secretary Rs360 and for the Board of Assessment which is, in fact, going to go out of function, the Chairman gets Rs6000, this is a Magistrate, Members Rs2250 and Secretary Rs700. This is an additional provision required to meet the payment, firstly, of arrears and, secondly, it includes the fees.

Mrs Hanoomanjee: Under item 31410801 *Acquisition of Land*, can I ask the hon. Minister as to why the planters concerned with the Phoenix-Beaux Songes link road, up to now have not been compensated at all; it appears that their case has gone into forgetfulness?

Dr. Kasenally: I don't think it is right to say 'not at all'. I think some of them have been recently because they are in my former constituency and these people know me. There is a problem as well because they have all been challenging the sum which has been stated by the Valuation Officer. But now with the new law, they will be paid that amount until the case is taken by the Valuation Appeal Tribunal, then they will pay the rest as I mentioned earlier.

Ministry of Housing and Lands - Programme Code 643: Land Management and Physical Planning (Rs81,786,485) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Education and Human Resources - Programme Code 425: Technical and Vocational Education was called.

Mr Obeegadoo: Under item 26313 *Extra-Budgetary Units*, we are asked to approve supplementary expenditure of Rs2 m. having regard to salary compensation for 2012 MITD.

Now, a recent case this year, concerning allegations against a member of staff who has since resigned, suggests that a number of staff at the MITD do not have qualifications required and are recruited without advertisement of positions. May we have an undertaking that this amount, in fact, went to properly qualified staff of MITD and not political *protégés*.

Dr. Bunwaree: Mr Chairperson, I am not aware of people working at MITD with no qualifications. What I am aware of - and I'll say it loud and clear here - there are procedures that were used to enrol certain people and were not, according to me, acceptable and this was something that existed since long and we have put an end to that.

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, on the same point, do I understand that the monies we are voting are going, at least, partly to persons who were not recruited according to proper procedures?

Dr. Bunwaree: These procedures existed since the past. I don't know whether they were proper or not proper, but I was not agreeable with that type of procedure and I stopped it.

Mrs Ribot: Mr Chairperson, I would like to ask the hon. Minister some clarification under item 26323027 *Capital Grant – Mauritius Institute of Training and Development*, on the consultancy services in respect of the development of a business plan. I would like to know the name of the consultant or the consultancy agency and whether there was any tender and the names of the bidders as well as some details on the business plan itself?

Dr. Bunwaree: Mr Chairperson, in fact, the business plan concerns a very laudable initiative of the MITD which has to position itself as a regional training of trainers' centre.

The second part of the question is that the MITD did hire the consultancy firm to conduct a business plan for the setting up of that regional training of trainers' centre which cost the sum of Rs2 m. and was financed by this additional grant of Rs2 m. The selection of the consultancy firm was done, I am informed, through restricted bidding process where nine firms were invited and at closing of bids – I can circulate the names of the nine, I don't have them here - only one consultancy firm, namely KPMG Centre, submitted its proposal for a total of Rs2 m. An appraisal committee was set up to analyse the proposal received and it was found to be responsive. This is the information I can give to the hon. Member and, of course, I'll make arrangements for the list of firms that were invited to be laid on the Table of the Assembly.

Mr Uteem: Mr Chairperson, did I hear correctly the hon. Minister under item 26313 answering to a question from hon. Obeegadoo. He stated that there may be some people who have benefited from payments when they should not have received these payments and that it was a practice that was there before.

Dr. Bunwaree: I didn't say that.

The Chairperson: Hon. Jhugroo!

Mr Jhugroo: Can the hon. Minister table a copy of all persons recruited by MITD since May 2010 with the names and addresses.

The Chairperson: Under which item is the hon. Member putting that question?

Mr Jhugroo: Item 26313.

The Chairperson: Yes, carry on!

Dr. Bunwaree: The budget is for 2012, I have been asked for 2010; I'll give the names since 2000.

Mrs Hanoomanjee: Mr Chairperson, under item 26323, again, on the payment of consultancy services in respect of the development of a business plan, can we know from the Minister whether the business plan is ready and whether he is prepared to lay a copy on the Table of the Assembly.

Dr. Bunwaree: I can certainly lay a copy of the Executive Summary because it is ready. I thank the hon. Member for her question because the setting up of the centre is going to be activated during the course of next year and we are going to have a strategic plan that is going to come out very soon. The setting up of this training centre for trainers in a region which is a very valuable initiative is going to take a very prominent place.

Mr Obeegadoo: Item 26323 *Capital Grant – MITD*, there is a business plan raised by hon. Mrs Ribot. Could the Minister be agreeable to circulating the terms of reference of this consultancy and also explain to us why it is that only Rs1 billion was budgeted. Do we understand that his Ministry for this consultancy would cost only Rs1 m., where is it now it will cost us Rs3 m. and we don't even know whether this is the total cost or it will be overrun into 2014?

Dr. Bunwaree: I have to clarify. The Rs1 m. was spent already as capital grant and was earmarked for purchase of furniture for the centres. The Rs2 m. is completely different, apart. It came in the course of the budget. This is the business plan that has been worked out through consultancy and it has cost Rs2 m.

Mrs Ribot: Mr Chairperson, in regard to item 26313, could the hon. Minister circulate a list of the names of the employees who have benefited from the salary compensation 2012 together with the post held and their qualifications?

Dr. Bunwaree: It is for the whole of the MITD: the salary compensation for the year.

Mr Seeruttun: Mr Chairperson, under item 26323, will the hon. Minister inform the House for what period that business plan is going to cover, from which year to which year and whether it is already implemented?

Dr. Bunwaree: Mr Chairperson, I must inform the hon. Member that this business plan has been prepared after much thought and is in line with the AU Plan of Action 2006/2015. Many countries from Africa have asked - because the AU Action Plan mentions the importance of having trainers in big numbers for the whole of Africa - Mauritius to help them to set up training centres there, in line with what is being done at the MITD. So, it is in this line, that this business plan has come up.

Mr Obeegadoo: On the same point, will the hon. Minister therefore give us a list of countries whose Governments have officially requested Mauritius to provide training infrastructure?

Dr. Bunwaree: Yes. Governments...

(Interruptions)

...or institutions in those countries which are equivalence of MITD.

Mr Jhugroo: Can the hon. Minister give the House a guarantee that...

The Chairperson: No, this is not a question! No, no, no, not allowed!

(Interruptions)

If you have a question...

(*Interruptions*)

How can the Minister give a guarantee?

(*Interruptions*)

Hon. Jhugroo, if you have a question, you are allowed to put it. Put the question!

Mr Jhugroo: Can the hon. Minister confirm whether this additional amount - which is asked today to be paid - is being paid to qualified persons at MITD?

The Chairperson: That's a good question.

Dr. Bunwaree: It is being paid to all people who deserve to be paid for that.

(*Interruptions*)

The Chairperson: Silence, please! I am putting the question now.

Ministry of Education and Human Resources - Programme Code 425: Technical and Vocational Education and Training (Rs4,048,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development - Programme Code 401: Environmental Policy and Management was called.

The Chairperson: Page 30! Yes, hon. Obeegadoo!

Mr Obeegadoo: Just some clarification! Under item 26323 *Extra-Budgetary Units*, with regard to Solar Water Heater Scheme Phase III, may we have some explanation as to what exactly is happening here? It does not appear to be any sum appropriated during 2013, but a very large sum, which is now budgeted as additional supplementary expenditure. Could we just have some clarification exactly as to what is happening?

Mr Virahsawmy: This is a Fund, Mr Chairperson, the *MID* Fund. We are making provision in the Fund so that then we can effect payment.

Mr Uteem: May I know from the hon. Minister how many people have benefitted from this scheme so far?

Mr Virahsawmy: We are here, Mr Chairperson, examining Phase III, but then I will give the information for Phases I, II and III. In total, about 59,000 families have benefitted.

(*Interruptions*)

The Chairperson: No interruptions! Yes, hon. Dr. Sorefan!

Dr. Sorefan: Mr Chairperson, may we know from the hon. Minister whether this amount – we know that this has already been paid – has been paid to registered suppliers only?

Mr Virahsawmy: Yes. This is the procedure set up by the Development Bank of Mauritius (DBM) which makes the payment. There are 33 registered suppliers and the procedure is they apply to the DBM. They are paid directly by the DBM.

Mr Seeruttun: Will the hon. Minister inform the House to which amount each individual is entitled to under that scheme?

Mr Virahsawmy: What amount did the hon. Member say?

Mr Seeruttun: What is the amount that each individual is eligible under that scheme?

Mr Virahsawmy: Rs10,000.

Mr Ameer Meea: Can I ask the hon. Minister what amount has been spent so far, in relation to this project of solar water heater?

Mr Virahsawmy: Some 18,000 families have been paid up to now. So, the sum of Rs180 m. has been paid as at end of September. In October and November, we will be paying another Rs20 m.

Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development - Programme Code 401: Environment Policy and Management (Rs189,801,796) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Local Government and Outer Islands - Programme Code 462: Facilitation to Local Authorities was called.

The Chairperson: Page 31! Yes, hon. Nagalingum!

Mr Nagalingum: Mr Chairperson, I refer to item 26312 *Current Grant to Local Authorities*. We have seen different amounts for different local authorities. Can we know why there is this difference and why the Municipal Council of Port Louis received three times less than Pamplemousses/Rivière du Rempart?

Mr Aimée: Mr Chairperson, we cannot grant to local authorities additional provision required for -

- (i) payment of salary compensation 2012 to employees and pensioners of local authorities: Rs35,472 m.;

- (ii) the purchase of 4 compactors and 5 tipper lorries for District of Council of Pamplemousses/Rivière du Rempart, where they were allocated Rs30 m., but spent only Rs19 m., and
- (iii) additional scavenging cost for District Council of Black River: Rs11 m.

Mr Bhagwan: However, the hon. Minister received representations from the Association of Urban Authorities and also the Rural Authorities concerning the balance which often had to be given to them for the PRB. The Government has not given the full PRB compensation to the local authorities.

Can I ask the hon. Minister whether he has made a plea to the Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Finance to seek additional fund to give to all local authorities in view of the additional expenditure for PRB?

The Chairperson: It is under which item?

Mr Aimée: Mr Chairperson...

The Chairperson: Wait a minute! It is under which item?

Mr Bhagwan: Under item *26312 Current Grant to Local Authorities*.

The Chairperson: OK.

Mr Aimée: Mr Chairperson, as and when there is a need to allocate fund, that is, if there is any shortage in the Budget provision, the Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Finance gives them grant for that every time. For example, we have four local authorities which have got Rs35 m. recently and Quatre Bornes Rs9 m.

Mr Bhagwan: Government has not compensated the local authorities...

(Interruptions)

I have not finished! Government has not compensated the local authorities for the amount spent on PRB. All local authorities have made a plea to the Ministry or the Ministry of Finance.

Mr Aimée: Mr Chairperson, that is why I say as and when need be, because I am not the Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Finance. PRB also includes in that amount of money to re-establish the level...

(*Interruptions*)

Mr Seeruttun: Mr Chairperson, at page 31, under item 26312008 *District Council of Grand Port/Savanne*. Will the hon. Minister inform the House what was the cash position of the District Council as at the end of the Fiscal Year 2012?

Mr Aimée: I think the hon. Member will have to give notice of this question.

The Chairperson: Which item? Repeat the item! It is 26312008. Yes, hon. Obeegadoo!

Mr Obeegadoo: May I go back to the question raised by hon. Bhagwan under *Current Grant to Local Authorities*, will the hon. Minister agree...

(*Interruptions*)

The Chairperson: Silence, hon. Hossen!

Mr Obeegadoo: Will the hon. Minister agree that the sums appropriated and the supplementary expenditure provided for in 2013 are not sufficient to meet the additional expenditure resulting from implementation of the PRB Report as corrected by the Manraj Report and, if he agrees, will he inform us whether in the light of representations received from all local authorities, he has made representations to the Minister of Finance so that the next Budget may bring them some relief?

Mr Aimée: Mr Chairperson, as I mentioned before, each and every time when the local authorities come to the Ministry of Finance via my Ministry to ask for provision for more budget in the local authority, we are there to come forward. But when the hon. Member says PRB, I do not think even the Ministry of Finance can predict how much money will be paid to these officers!

(*Interruptions*)

Mr Obeegadoo: Is the hon. Minister asking us to approve the sums...

(*Interruptions*)

Does the Minister...

(*Interruptions*)

If hon. Hossen will allow the hon. Minister to hear what we are saying! Is the hon. Minister saying to the House that his Ministry has not computed the extra costs which local authorities have to pay as a consequence of PRB?

Mr Aimée: Mr Chairperson, I have already said, we have already computed all the amounts of money that, let us say, in case we owe for PRB to the local authorities. But then, as and when they send us their requirements, the Ministry of Finance is there to support. As the hon. Member probably knows, each Ministry in this Government has got a ceiling at a certain time without properly assessing what PRB will be.

Mr Ameer Meea: Can I ask the hon. Minister if this amount of Rs9 m. that is being allocated to the Municipality of...

Mr Aimée: Which item, please?

Mr Ameer Meea: We are talking of *Current Grant to Local Authorities* for the Municipality of Port Louis! Can I ask the hon. Minister if this amount for the Municipality of Port Louis includes a sum that has been provided for the distribution of dustbins that will be provided to all residents of Port Louis, which has not been done for the last seven years! Can I ask the hon. Minister if...

(*Interruptions*)

And this will be distributed to all residents with an electricity bill without political connection. Can I ask the hon. Minister...

(*Interruptions*)

...if this amount is budgeted?

(*Interruptions*)

Mr Aimée: Mr Chairperson...

(*Interruptions*)

The Chairperson: Well, hon. Members, there is a question, do you want the Minister to answer or not?

Mr Aimée: Mr Chairperson, I think the hon. Member has to ask some more information from the Municipality of Port Louis. In fact, there was no provision for dustbin!

(Interruptions)

They have asked me to reallocate the budget to buy dustbins. Now, the hon. Member is asking me whether everyone in Port Louis will get dustbin! I am not aware!

The Chairperson: Hon. Quirin!

(Interruptions)

Silence!

Mr Quirin: M. le président...

(Interruptions)

M. le président, l'honorable ministre...

(Interruptions)

...peut-il nous expliquer comment est calculé...

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Please, speak up! Speak up! There is too much noise! There is too much noise! Some Members want to be noisy! Okay! For those who want to be noisy, I'll ask them to go outside! Yes!

Mr Quirin: M. le président, l'honorable ministre peut-il nous expliquer comment est calculé le *Grant-in-aid* qui est alloué aux différentes collectivités locales?

Mr Aimée: It is a specific question but I am going to answer the hon. Member. This *Grant-in-Aid* formula is there for the last five or six years. Now, we are reviewing the *Grant*

formula in collaboration with the IMF. The allocation of fund is based on the ancient *Grant-in-Aid* formula that we have.

Mr Uteem: On the same item 26312 *Current Grant to Local Authorities*, may I know from the hon. Minister whether the additional amount of Rs18 m. that we are asked to approve was the same amount which all these local authorities requested or is that an amount less than what was requested by all the Municipal Councils?

Mr Aimée: This is the amount that they have asked for. It is the exact amount for fund.

The Chairperson: Page 32. Hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: On the Rs210 m. which has been earmarked, may I ask the hon. Minister if he can circulate details as to how it has been apportioned?

Mr Aimée: The *Extra-Budgetary Units* is the *Local Infrastructure Fund*. In fact, after the Budget of last year, the Minister of Finance allocated Rs10 m. to each constituency and we have 21...

(*Interruptions*)

The Chairperson: Do not interrupt the Minister, please!

Mr Aimée: We have 21 and we got Rs210 m. We asked for the proposal for each local authority. The works are ongoing now and some of them will finish this year. Otherwise the next part of the money is to be spent next year and the Fund will not lapse, it is there.

(*Interruptions*)

The Chairperson: I want some silence! Yes!

(*Interruptions*)

Mr Obeegadoo: On the same point, the question...

(*Interruptions*)

The question being asked on this side of the House is whether this sum included the expenditure on macaroni for Curepipe!

(*Interruptions*)

Mr Aimée: Not for macaroni but for *bouteille*, yes.

The Chairperson: This question is not allowed! Hon. Ameer Meea!

(*Interruptions*)

Silence now!

Mr Ameer Meea: Thank you, Mr Chairperson...

(*Interruptions*)

The Chairperson: Hon. Bhagwan! I want some silence now! Yes, proceed!

Mr Ameer Meea: Can I ask the hon. Minister if this amount is a one-off amount for 2012 or will it be a recurrent amount to each local authority, or was it done purposely for the Municipal Elections in 2012?

Mr Aimée: Mr Chairperson, the *Local Infrastructure Fund* is a special Fund which never lapses. Each and every time that the Minister of Finance, on our demand, feels that there must be money to put in the Fund, we will do it...

(*Interruptions*)

The Chairperson: Do not interrupt!

Mr Aimée: That is the only way that the Fund works. But the Fund never lapses; it is not as the Budget exercise which at a certain time is finished.

(*Interruptions*)

The Chairperson: Hon. Jhugroo!

(*Interruptions*)

Hon. Jhugroo!

(Interruptions)

I will not say more, you have understood my silence! Okay?

Ministry of Local Government and Outer Islands - Programme Code 462: Facilitation to Local Authorities Grants (Rs222,282,422) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Tourism and Leisure – Programme Code 343: Destination Promotion was called.

The Chairperson: Page 33. Hon. Obeegadoo!

Mr Obeegadoo: Would the hon. Minister explain to us how the revisiting of the marketing strategy would have accounted for an additional Rs54 m. whereas this revisiting has been announced since very long ago as far as I am aware. This is concerning, I presume, diversification of our markets. This was announced a long time ago. Why would it not have been foreseen and how do we account for the additional Rs54 m.?

Mr Yeung Sik Yuen: Mr Chairperson, the MTPA was called upon to come with tactical measures in selected markets to mitigate the adverse impacts of the Euro Zone crisis. These measures have contributed towards positive increases of 12% for the German market and almost 11% for the British market last December. The overall tourist arrivals for 2012 increased to 965,441, tourism receipts reached an all-time record figure of Rs44.4 billion representing an increase of almost 4% over the year 2011. These measures, Mr Chairperson, are paying dividends today and these figures for the period of January to September 2013 disclose tourist arrivals increased by almost 3% compared to the same period in 2012. And if we look at the figures, especially during the last three months, in August, we got an increase of 11.5% and last month we got 8.4%.

Mrs Hanoomanjee: Mr Chairperson, on item 26313, *Extra-Budgetary Units...*

(Interruptions)

Can I continue?

(*Interruptions*)

The Chairperson: Hon. Mrs Hanoomanjee has a question, please!

Mrs Hanoomanjee: On the same item, Mr Chairperson, can I know out of this Rs54 m. how much has been spent on missions abroad and *in toto* how much *per diem* has been paid?

Mr Yeung Sik Yuen: None.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: Mr Chairperson, out of this Rs54 m., can the hon. Minister brief us as to how much has been spent on the concept of the Ile Vanille? Out of this Rs54 m. whether there has been money given for that specific project and what has been...

(*Interruptions*)

...the outturn concerning this concept of Ile Vanille?

The Chairperson: I don't understand why some hon. Ministers should interrupt hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Yeung Sik Yuen: No amount was used from this extra budget on the Ile Vanille concept, but I am pleased to elaborate on the breakdown of the expenditure incurred by the MTPA. So, we have used Rs9.8 m. on the German market; Rs3.3 m. on the British market; Rs5 m. on the Indian market; Rs3.7 m. on the South African market; Rs4.8 m. on the Reunion Island market; Rs9.8 m. on the French Market; Rs3.8 m. on the Italian market; Rs0.5 m. on the Australian market, and Rs13.3 m. on the organisations of events.

Mr Uteem: Mr Chairperson, may I know from the hon. Minister who was the Chairman of the MTPA during that period?

Mr Yeung Sik Yuen: Well, it was the ex-Chairperson who is Robert Desvaux.

Mr Ameer Meea: Can I ask the hon. Minister whether this amount includes any sum financed by the lottery that has not been sold in relation to cars?

Mr Yeung Sik Yuen: Not at all, Mr Chairperson.

(*Interruptions*)

Mr Baloomoody: The hon. Minister just mentioned around Rs13 m. on events. Can he, please, elaborate what are the events which have been organised?

Mr Yeung Sik Yuen: Mr Chairperson, the events were *Festival International Kreol*, golf and the fashion show.

Mr Seeruttun: Mr Chairperson, the hon. Minister just gave a list of all the different markets where that Rs54 m. were spent. Can he give us the details of the different kinds of promotional events that took place in those markets?

Mr Yeung Sik Yuen: Well, Mr Chairperson, we have done a lot of joint marketing campaigns with airlines and tour operators. Well, I don't mind to table the list.

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, I would like to return to my initial question. Will the hon. Minister explain to us what does this revisiting of the marketing strategy consist of, because we were made to understand that we were talking about diversification looking east while consolidating our markets in Europe, but we are told that tactical moves targeted Germany and Britain brought in more tourists from those two countries? So, which is which? What is the revisiting of the marketing strategy?

Mr Yeung Sik Yuen: Mr Chairperson, the traditional market which is Europe is very important for the destination, and if we look at the figures from year 2000...

(*Interruptions*)

'Atann mo koz ar twa!'

The Chairperson: Hon. Minister, answer the question! And I don't want any interruption!

Mr Yeung Sik Yuen: For Europe, in year 2000, 68% of our tourists came from Europe. Mr Chairperson, if we look at the figure today, it's 53%. If we look at the figures, we will see that our strategy is working. We are diversifying a lot. Two years or three years ago, our Stats

were only on one page, A4; today, it is on two pages, because we are working a lot on the GCC and CIS countries. We are working a lot on new markets and...

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Hon. Ameer Meea, no interruption!

Mr Yeung Sik Yuen: ...the figures are positive, Mr Chairperson.

The Chairperson: Any other questions?

Ministry of Tourism and Leisure - Programme Code 343: Destination Promotion (Rs54,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Health and Quality of Life - Programme Code 582: Curative Services was called.

The Chairperson: Page 34.

(Interruptions)

I want some silence before we proceed! Hon. Dr. S. Boolell!

Dr. S. Boolell: Mr Chairperson, on page 34, Programme Code 582, under items *21110004 Allowances to Employees* and *21111 Other Staff Costs*, I note under these two items that excess expenditure is being requested for overtime and arrears payment. I would ask the hon. Minister whether he considers it to be good financial management not to make provision for payment of overtime and arrears in the service which he knows carries these two constraints?

Mr Bundhoo: Mr Chairperson, these items were for overtime and arrears for the year 2011 that is being paid in the year 2012 and I must admit this is not good management practice and this is why at present my Ministry is making recruitment in order to assess with regard to all these workers and to reduce overtime payment with regard to what we are discussing today.

The Chairperson: Page 34. Hon. Jhugroo!

Mr Jhugroo: Under item 2111, the recruiting of staff, can the hon. Minister give us a breakdown of the recruitment made and the posts which were vacant and can he confirm whether the vacant posts were advertised and the procedures followed?

Mr Bundhoo: Yes, Mr Chairperson, all the posts were advertised. The recruitment was done through the Public Service Commission for 320 Medical and Health Officers and with regard to all those recruited for the internship; it is the first come first serve basis.

The Chairperson: Page 35! Hon. S. Boolell!

Dr. S. Boolell: I would like to refer to item 22040 *Office Equipment and Furniture (i) renovation of hospital wards*. I would like to know whether there has been competitive bidding towards these refurbishing and renovations which would have avoided to have an excess amount being requested which is Rs2,113,127.

Mr Bundhoo: Mr Chairperson, with regard to the Brown Sequard Hospital, it was done through the District contractors through the Ministry of Public Infrastructure. With regard to Block C of Flacq Hospital, the same procedure has applied and with regard to new Accident and Emergency Department at SSRN Hospital, again, that was done as is the usual practice through the District contractor under the guidance and award by the Ministry of Public Infrastructure.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Dr. S. Boolell!

Dr. S. Boolell: Could I know which hospital wards do we have in mind which have been renovated considering that some hospital wards are purely derelict?

Mr Bundhoo: The hospital wards requested for will be circulated and I must say that it is an ongoing procedure for renovating wards after wards in all five regional hospitals, Mr Chairperson.

Mr Ameer Meea: Mr Chairperson, I would ask you if I can come back to *Other Staff Costs* since it has not been voted yet. Can I ask the hon. Minister how many foreign doctors have been recruited on contract by his Ministry in relation to Mauritian doctors?

Mr Bundhoo: Mr Chairperson, the item we are being asked to vote has no bearing at all with foreign doctors.

Mr Jhugroo: Under item 22140002, can the hon. Minister give us a breakdown of the Rs4.2 m., and whether we have got any problem with the CT Scan or MRI materials used?

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Dr. S. Boolell!

Dr. S. Boolell: Under the same item, may I ask the hon. Minister to inform us how much money is being paid to the private sector from this amount allocated for the CT Scan and MRI?

Mr Bundhoo: Mr Chairperson, the information sought is with me and it will be circulated.

Mr Uteem: Under the same item 22140002, may I know from the hon. Minister whether any of these materials, *CT Scan and MRI Fees*, relate to equipment at Dr. Jeetoo Hospital?

Mr Bundhoo: It is related to most of the hospitals and that is why I said it will be circulated with all the details sought.

Mr Obeegadoo: *Item 22040*, to follow up from the question from my learned colleague, hon. Dr. S. Boolell, *(i) renovation of hospital wards*, while acknowledging that this budget relates to expenditure of 2012, may I know whether the expenditure concerned Cancer Wards (Male and Female) at Candos Hospital and, if not, why not given the sorry state therein?

Mr Bundhoo: Mr Chairperson, it is clearly spelt there, that is, new services at Block C at Flacq Hospital, a new Accident and Emergency Department at SSRN Hospital.

(Interruptions)

Can I finish, please! This does not make any reference to the Cancer wards. Whether additional provision is required for the purchase of furniture due to? It is all due to that. It is not exactly for the renovation of other wards, but, in fact, we have done renovation for Chemotherapy at the Jawaharlal Nehru Hospital, Jeetoo Hospital and also at the SSRN Hospital. These were funds that were being allocated in the normal Budget within the hospital. Victoria also!

Mrs Hanoomanjee: Mr Chairperson, under item 22140007 *Renal Dialysis*, can I ask the hon. Minister how many cases of Renal Dialysis have been carried out in private clinics and with

the expansion in all the other hospitals, can the hon. Minister say whether cases will no longer be referred to private clinics now?

Mr Bundhoo: For 2011, Government hospitals: 706; Private clinics: 205 and number of patients in Government for 2012 is 758; Private clinics: 212. I am pleased to inform the House that recently we have also opened a new unit at Souillac Hospital with 16 dialysis machines and other related equipment and every effort is being made to reduce, not dependency, but the number of patients that we send to private clinics.

With regard to private clinics, I also have it here – in 2011: 205 and in 2012: 212.

Dr. S. Boolell: Can we have on the same issue, Mr Chairperson, the private clinic which gets the bulk of the sum allocated for renal dialysis?

Mr Bundhoo: For 2011, it was Rs26.6 m. and for 2012, it was Rs24.6 m. excluding consumables.

Dr. S. Boolell: Which clinics?

Mr Bundhoo: I have the details with me and I would provide it to the hon. Member. In fact, I have the number of machines. The clinics that are concerned are Horam, City Clinic, Medisave Clinic, National Dialysis Centre, Chisty Shifa Clinic, Grand Bay Medical Centre and Apollo Bramwell. I think I have the information about the figures with me, but I don't know where it is. I will give it to the hon. Member.

Mr Bhagwan: I will take the last item, *Trust Fund for Specialised Medical Care*, Rs16 m. I take the opportunity of this item even as a Member of the Opposition, Mr Chairperson, to commend the personnel of that Centre for the good job they are doing, not only for Mauritius, they have an international repute within the region. Can I ask the hon. Minister whether apart from the Rs16 m., he has been requested by the Trust Fund for more funds which are urgently required; not only for the equipment, but also to change the living environment of this Centre, which I can say is the pride of Mauritius?

Mr Bundhoo: I thank the hon. Member for his commendable words with regard to the Trust Fund for Specialised Medical Care.

(Interruptions)

The amount for Rs15 m., the information sought was for – I apologise if I wrongly pronounce the words – *Tenecteplase injection, Integrilin injection, Plavix tablet, Meropenem injection*. One is Rs1.1 m., Rs1.2 m., Rs6.5 m. and Rs1.3 m., totalling Rs15 m.

The second part of the question raised by the hon. Member – yes, we are aware that the Centre is becoming too small and that is why the Prime Minister has decided to set up additional space for this unit and he has already recommended a study with Professor Dylon from University College London who is at the moment in time having discussions with the Office of the Prime Minister for the extension of this unit.

Mr Ameer Meea: Mr Chairperson, in relation to *Provisions and Store*, additional provision is required to meet increase in prices and consumption of foodstuffs, vegetables, fruits, and other stores. We are asked to vote for an additional amount of Rs28 m. over and above Rs120 m. that has been appropriated. Therefore, can I ask the hon. Minister how does this whole mechanism of purchasing foodstuffs and vegetables work? Is it done on a day-to-day basis? Is it done through tender for a contract of one year and how was it decided to pay and allocate an amount of Rs28 m. and what are the names of the suppliers that are concerned with this increase in prices?

Mr Bundhoo: Mr Chairperson, the contract is allocated on a strictly tender exercise and, of course, after consideration, the Tender Committee allocates the contract to the best tenderer. Who is the best tenderer? I honestly don't have the name as it has not been provided to me, but this can be circulated.

Dr. S. Boolell: Mr Chairperson, I would like to refer the hon. Minister to page 35, under item 22060 *Maintenance*, where an additional provision is required to meet the increase in the cost of maintenance agreements. I would like some clarification concerning these maintenance agreements. I would also ask the hon. Minister to clarify the House on whether there is an in-house maintenance and whether those who provide the apparatuses maintained the apparatuses and for how long? And how come do we reach a sum of almost Rs3 m. on a total Budget of Rs80 m.?

Mr Bundhoo: In fact, the hon. Member who had a very long career in the public service is very much aware that the Internal Maintenance Division, and also the External Division - external by the virtue of the machine that we have purchased - have given a lifespan, and within this lifespan, there is a maintenance contract. For example, there is for the Gamma Camera at *Jawaharlal Nehru Hospital*, IBL and it goes on like this. I will give you another example, for the Pascal Laser *Photocoagulator* at S. Bharati (Eye) Hospital, it is within the top in UK. I have the figure here with all the details and I am pleased to circulate it, Mr Speaker, Sir.

Mr Jhugroo: At page 35, under item 22140007 *Renal Dialysis*, can the hon. Minister inform the House what procedure was used to choose the private clinics?

Mr Bundhoo: I would imagine that this procedure has been used many years ago and – I do not know – it must have been some kind of tender exercise where there was transparency. As far as I remember - I speak under the correction of other Ministers here - I am not aware of any case where we have had on the list a new provider of dialysis services.

Mrs Hanoomanjee: At page 35, under item 26313095 *Current Grant - Trust Fund for Specialised Medical Care*, I see that this item mentions an increase in activities. Can I know for how long is the waiting list for Cardiac Surgery?

Mr Bundhoo: I am not so sure if I have the information about a waiting list with me. If this is of any comfort to the hon. lady, I can tell her two things. Firstly, quite recently we have been using the services of an additional Cardiologist – in fact, I do not know the term used. Other than Dr. Gunness, we have another one and this has reduced the list. Now, the number of surgeries carried out in 2012 so far is 521.

(*Interruptions*)

The Chairperson: Do not interrupt!

Mr Bundhoo: The number of angioplasty carried out in 2012 is 483 and the number of angiography carried out in 2012 is 1,692.

Mr Jhugroo: Can the hon. Minister inform the House whether any enquiry had been carried out to investigate why the CT Scan and other hospital equipment are broken down very often?

Mr Bundhoo: I can assure the hon. Member that, only a month ago, five Biomedical Engineers were employed by the Ministry to do exactly what he is telling me to do.

Mr Ameer Meea: At page 35, under item 22900005 *Provisions and stores* where the sum of Rs28,260,309 is earmarked, the hon. Minister just stated that this is done through tender exercise and through contract with suppliers.

My question is: if this is done through tender and, eventually through contract, which I suppose is on a yearly basis, how come prices are increased during the year? If it is the volume that has increased, it would have been a good reason, but this is clearly stated to meet increase in prices. So, may I know from the hon. Minister how come that after tendering exercise and contract being signed, prices are increased?

Mr Bundhoo: Mr Speaker, Sir, my good friend is an Accountant and he should know that there is no such thing as a fixed price for vegetables and food items and, therefore, the prices of food and vegetable items fluctuate and increase. It is all seasonal.

(*Interruptions*)

The Chairperson: Silence!

Ministry of Health and Quality of Life - Programme Code 582: Curative Services (Rs58,287,643) was, on question put, agreed to.

Centralised Operations of Government – Programme Code No. 951: Centrally Managed Initiatives of Government was called.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Obeegadoo!

Mr Obeegadoo: I want to know if the hon. Vice-Prime Minister could give us some clarification as to the last item, the *New Delhi Centre for Science and Technology*. Could the hon. Vice-Prime Minister please tell us what exactly this is and what is the nature of the services that it provides?

Mr Duval: It is a good question, Mr Chairperson. We have paid Rs291,000 for this. I will get the information for the hon. Member.

The Chairperson: Page 37!

Mr Uteem: At page 37, under item *26210105 Contribution to Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA)*, may I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister how many cases have been handled by the PCA so far?

Mr Duval: Mr Chairperson, I must say that this is centralised operation of Government. We pay for some central expenses, but this does not fall under my Ministry, so, I am not able to tell the hon. Member. I can give financial information, but I cannot give operation information.

Mr Obeegadoo: This one does concern finance. At page 37, under item *28216014 IMF Training Institute: IMF Trust Fund for Training in Africa*, the famous IMF Training Institute, may we have some indication how much in total it has cost the State of Mauritius or will cost the State of Mauritius?

Firstly, is this final or is there additional expenditure foreseen in the next Budget?

Secondly, whether this training institute has now come into operation and how many trainees are actually undergoing training?

Mr Duval: Absolutely, it has come into operation. It is working very well. It has had a number of courses that it has held during this year. It is a commitment over five years, but I must say here that we are committing money upfront, but we are also looking for other countries to meet these expenses. At the moment, I think, it is Australia and China that have committed Rs75 m. to the IMF Training Centre. In fact, it is a commitment, but it is also a commitment between IMF and ourselves to seek for financing from overseas.

Mr Obeegadoo: How much is it anticipated to cost the State of Mauritius?

Mr Duval: I do not have the total fund, but I can tell the hon. Member that, up to now, we have spent Rs165 m., but I know that we have received Rs75 m. after that from China and Australia.

Mr Uteem: Under the same item, how much under this amount relates to payment to the trainers and how much relates to the infrastructure and others?

Mr Duval: Very little to the infrastructure. In fact, the IMF pays some, but not a lot. Now, most of this amount is to bring in trainees who are high level officials from Africa. So, in fact, you can see that as a contribution, not to the IMF - there will be no point in that – but to training and good governance, Macro Economic Governance for the whole of Africa. I will provide the details of the courses, so far.

The Chairperson: On the last page! Page 38! Yes, hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Under item 32155013, I know that the hon. Vice-Prime Minister referred to it in his speech, but can we know, with respect to this building of MEDCOR, who conducted the valuation which reached the figure of Rs700 m.?

Mr Duval: What happened, in fact, there was a valuation, which we thought Air Mauritius would agree to, but, in the end, Air Mauritius wanted additional amounts which we were not agreeable to pay. So, the deal could not go through and, in fact, the money stayed with the SIC and the SIC has refunded the money in this year.

Mr Ameer Meea: Mr Chairperson, on the same item, on a point of clarification, if I understand well the SIC, which is a shareholder of Air Mauritius, has put money into Air Mauritius so that Air Mauritius buys MEDCOR.

The Chairperson: Hon. Member, you should ask questions.

Mr Ameer Meea: Yes, just on a point of clarification.

Mr Duval: I'll read it for you. Provision of Rs700 m. was for Equity increase, so, share capital increase. We put the money into SIC; so, SIC would buy the shares of Air Mauritius in MEDCOR so that the building would then belong to SIC.

Mr Jhugroo: Mr Chairperson, under item 32155003 *Airport of Mauritius Co. Ltd.*, can I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister why we should vote for an item when we are not allowed to put questions and get answers from this National Assembly?

The Chairperson: No, this question is not allowed. Hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: Under the same item *32155003 Airport of Mauritius Co. Ltd.*, may I know from the hon. Vice-Prime Minister, we are asked to vote for an increase in equity in AML, but there is also, we are told, another agency called ATOL, how do the two companies work alongside?

Mr Duval: Again, it is not my Ministry but ATOL is, as far as I remember, a subsidiary of AML, but ATOL also has other shareholders.

Mr Obeegadoo: Last item on page 38. Could the Minister again clarify? This is Rs15 m. as equity participation, so, could he please clarify the nature of this Civil Service College project and what does it mean the State acquiring equity participation in what is a Civil Service College? Could he kindly clarify?

Mr Duval: In fact, for operation efficiency, the Civil Service College will operate as an SOE – a State-owned Enterprise. There will be a company. We are putting in share capital and that is how the Civil Service College will operate. Now, it is supposed, at the beginning, to work in close collaboration with local universities, open universities for the award of certificates, diplomas and degrees.

Mr Obeegadoo: Can we have some indication as to who are the other shareholders?

Mr Duval: I would presume only Government, I am not sure.

Centralised Operations of Government - Programme Code 951: Centrally Managed Expenses of Government (Rs744,755,201) was, on question put, agreed to.

COMMITTEE STAGE

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

The Supplementary Appropriation (2012) Bill (No. XX of 2013) was considered and agreed to.

On the Assembly resuming, with Mr Speaker in the Chair, Mr Speaker reported accordingly.

ADJOURNMENT

The Deputy Prime Minister: Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this Assembly do now adjourn to Friday 08 November 2013 at 5.00 p.m.

The Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Development (Mr X. L. Duval) rose and seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

Mr Speaker: The House stands adjourned.

At 5.16 p.m. the Assembly was, on its rising, adjourned to Friday 08 November 2013 at 5.00 p.m.