

No. 26 of 2010



FIFTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

**FIRST SESSION
WEDNESDAY 08 DECEMBER 2010**

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Dr. the Hon. Navinchandra Ramgoolam, GCSK, FRCP

Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Affairs and External Communications

Dr. the Hon. Ahmed Rashid Beebejaun, GCSK, FRCP

Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Energy and Public Utilities

Hon. Charles Gaëtan Xavier-Luc Duval, GCSK

Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment

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Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Development

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Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security

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Minister of Health and Quality of Life

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Hon Shakeel Ahmed Yousuf Abdul Razack Mohamed

Minister of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment

Hon Yatindra Nath Varma

Attorney General

Hon John Michaël Tzoun Sao Yeung Sik Yuen

Minister of Business, Enterprise, Cooperatives and Consumer Protection

*Members**Members*

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MAURITIUS

Fifth National Assembly

FIRST SESSION

Debate No. 26 of 2010

Sitting of Wednesday 08 December 2010

The Assembly met in the Assembly House, Port Louis

at 11.30 a.m.

The National Anthem was played

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

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, Minister of Energy and Public Utilities (Dr. R. Beebejaun) rose and seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

PUBLIC BILL**THE APPROPRIATION (2011) BILL**

(NO. XVII OF 2010)

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

Consideration of the Appropriation (2011) Bill (No. XVII of 2010) was resumed.

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

Mrs Navarre-Marie: On page 279, under *Programme Code 381: Policy and Management*, in his last report, the Director of Audit levelled criticisms against the percentage of overtime in, at least, two overseas missions. He said overtime incurred at two missions have increased by 55% and 120% respectively. I would like to know the measures that have been taken to curb these overtime expenses.

Dr. A. Boolell: First of all, without trying to cast doubt, of course, over the comments made by the Director of Audit in his report, one has to be also practical and look at the shoes as one stands. From information obtained, there was justification. However, we have impressed upon those concerned that they have to take necessary measures to redress the situation and we will see to it that overtime is kept to a minimum, hence, of course, the relevance of having a programme-based budgeting. It has deliverables and we have to stick thick and thin to what is prescribed.

Mr Bhagwan: At page 279, under item *22010 Cost of Utilities*, there is a substantial increase from Rs350,000 to Rs2,350,000. Can the hon. Minister give some explanation on such a substantial increase?

Mr Baloomoody: On the same page, under item *22030 Rent*, again we have a substantial increase from Rs7 m. to Rs12 m. Can we have an explanation?

Dr. Boolell: As we know, the rent is being apportioned to the three programmes - One, policy management; two, foreign relations, and three, international trade. We have also acquired a new space in the building where we are because the object is to try to have everyone under one and the same roof. I can circulate a breakdown in respect of the rent.

On the issue of utilities, I am waiting for the staff to give me the breakdown.

Mr Obeegadoo: Sir, I rise on page 284 on item *Minister*. The Minister being the chief responsible officer for this Ministry, may I refer him to Programme Code 381 on page 271 which speaks of the implementation of the medium term strategic plan? This is, however, not referred to on page 274 in terms of indicators for his Ministry. Does he get the point?

Dr. A. Boolell: Yes.

Mr Obeegadoo: Can we be clarified since the prime purpose of this programme is to implement the medium term strategic plan and we are approving funds therefore. On the other hand, in terms of performance indicators, targets, there is nothing about implementation of this plan.

Dr. A. Boolell: In fact, my colleague should take stock of the fact that we have produced a strategic plan which we are going to release for discussion to the wider members of the public and all the strategic objectives, of course, are based on the strategic plan which I have highlighted.

Mr Baloomoody: On page 284 under item *Minister*, may we know in how many Embassies we have a special adviser?

The Chairperson: Which item?

Mr Baloomoody: Under item *Minister* at page 284, can we have a list of the advisers, their attributions and salaries?

Dr. A. Boolell: I have no problem in circulating the information asked for by the hon. Member. We have a trade adviser and an economic adviser at our Embassies in Australia and in Brussels. Mr Jeelall is in Australia and Mr Noël Lee Cheong Lem is in Brussels. In Geneva, we have Mr Narsinghen. Then, in Paris, we have Mr Obadia. Let me reiterate what we have said in the past. They are doing a very good job. They have clear mandate and, of course, we monitor closely their deliverables.

Mr Baloomoody: Can I ask whether these advisers are allowed to engage in political activities?

Dr. A. Boolell: Well, we stick to past practices which they have embarked upon.

Mrs Navarre-Marie: On page 284, under item *Minister* regarding trade advisers, will the hon. Minister confirm that the trade advisers from Brussels were here during the electoral campaign and state the expenses incurred in terms of air tickets and other expenses?

Dr. A. Boolell: No, Mr Chairperson, everyone has one's rights as long as these rights are not encroached upon the good work of the Ministry. We live in a free country where every citizen can exercise his right of freedom.

Mr Obeegadoo: Under the Minister's vote, again, I note that on page 274, one of the prime services to be provided is the safeguarding of our sovereignty. I refer to *O3: Safeguard the sovereignty of Mauritius over the Chagos Archipelago and Tromelin*. The Minister will actively defend the rights of Mauritius to exercise its sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago and he expects 100% results in 2011; 100% in 2012; 100% in 2013. I have no doubt that the Minister will achieve this.

The Chairperson: Can I stop the hon. Member? I would like to know under which item he is talking?

Mr Obeegadoo: I start with page 284, the vote for the Minister whose salary we will be happy to approve.

The Chairperson: Yes, the hon. Member has to.

Mr Obeegadoo: At page 274, under item *Standards and Indicators*, I want to ask the hon. Minister in respect of the funds to be voted here for the Minister for this coming financial year, what are the immediate steps that he is going to take on this issue?

The Chairperson: No, this is not allowed.

Mr Bhagwan: I have one question under item *Minister* and I take it at page 281 under Sub-Programme 38202: *Support by Mauritius Overseas Missions*. Can I know from the hon. Minister whether it is still the practice, especially in Paris for the Embassy to have the services of a private taxi operator which was linked to the Subutex affair?

(Interruptions)

I have not finished hon. Dr. Boolell; I still have a few questions for you to take note. It is a well-known fact that the private taxi operator in Paris, whom I won't mention the name, was engaged in the Subutex affair. Can the hon. Minister inform the House whether whenever Ministers or Members of Parliament travel, the Embassy provides the services of a taxi, and that the guy in question who was offering the taxi service in Paris, was linked with the Subutex affair? May we also know whether the company is still offering this service?

The Chairperson: Is the hon. Member under the item *Minister*?

Mr Bhagwan: Yes, this is a general question. I have taken it also under *Sub-Programme 38202: Support by Mauritius Overseas Missions*. Can the hon. Minister inform the House whether it is still the same practice?

Secondly, on page 281, *item 31112408 - Upgrading of Chanceries*...

The Chairperson: Can I just guide the hon. Member? *Programme 382* concerns Foreign Relations, Embassies.

Mr Bhagwan: *Mauritius overseas missions*. Are we on *Programme 381*?

The Chairperson: Yes, on *Programme 381*. If the hon. Member is talking about Embassies, he can do so under *Programme 382*.

Mr Bhagwan: So, we are still on *Programme 381*.

Mr Baloomoody: I refer the hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs to page 276, item 01: *Delivery of Protocol and Consular Services*, under P3: *To prepare an inventory of Mauritian Diaspora*. May we know where matters stand and when are we expecting to have a sort of a report or survey?

Dr. A. Boolell: In respect of the first query, the answer is no. I would impress upon my friend not to use his vicious tongue. In respect of the Inventory of the Mauritian Diaspora, in fact, the hon. Member may recall ...

Mr Bhagwan: The hon. Minister is my friend, but he cannot use the term ‘vicious tongue’. He has to withdraw these words.

Dr. A. Boolell: I withdraw. I am telling the hon. Member to tread cautiously.

Mr Bhagwan: We are friends, but the hon. Minister cannot use these words.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Order!

Dr. A. Boolell: I am impressing upon my friend to tread cautiously.

The Chairperson: The hon. Minister has been asked questions; he just answers the questions without comments.

Dr. A. Boolell: I am answering, Sir. In respect of the Inventory of the Mauritian Diaspora, you may recall that when the Prime Minister was in UK, he put a lot of emphasis upon Mauritian Diaspora to try to attract people to come and invest in Mauritius. So, of course, the Ministry will conceive a caption containing all the details relevant to person/family on this issue without being intrusive. So, there is an inventory which is being carried out. We are encouraging Mauritians to participate actively because, as I have said, the Diaspora can promote investment and speed the sharing with Mauritian nationals.

Mrs Labelle: With your permission, I would like to come back to page 274, under item 03: *Safeguard the sovereignty of Mauritius over the Chagos Archipelago and Tromelin* and the performance indicator, which is to exercise its sovereignty over Chagos Archipelago and Tromelin. The baseline is 100% for next year and I see that for the two following years, we still keep the baseline of 100%. I would like to have some clarification, because if we are reaching the 100% next year, what are we keeping for the two following years?

Dr. A. Boolell: This is a target set in all humility; that’s why it is 100%. We are stepping up our lobbying to ensure that we safeguard our interest and we have stated, in no uncertain

terms, that our integral territory is sacrosanct. So, on all fronts, we are waging an intensive war to ensure that we protect what is legitimately ours.

Mr Li Kwong Wing: I think this measurement is of little relevance because what we should measure is the percentage of success we have been able to achieve.

The Chairperson: The Minister has answered. The hon. Member cannot question the basic percentage.

Mr Baloomoody: On page 276, under item *O1: Work towards the recognition of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) as a vulnerable group for special treatment*, can we know where matters stand, and if at least copies of the report can be communicated to Members of Parliament?

Dr. A. Boolell: I would have no problem. As you know, there have been the Barbados Declaration and then the Mauritian Declaration; we worked out on parameters to highlight the vulnerability of our Small Island Developing States and what needs to be done to safeguard the interests of Small Island Developing States in a multilateral organisation and at the United Nations to put across the case of Small Island Developing States resources; but we will do that.

(Interruptions)

Yes, there are papers that have been prepared and we will release them.

Mr Lesjongard: With regard to the Inventory of the Mauritian Diaspora, can we have an indication from the hon. Minister as to which countries are concerned?

Dr. A. Boolell: As you know, we are concerned with countries where there is also a sizeable Mauritian community and countries with which we have cultural affinities, but I can submit the list of countries. The reason as to why we leverage our ancestral values is precisely because of our Diaspora.

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Sir, at page 274, under objective 3, *P:2 Implement co-management regime in respect of Tromelin*, I would like to know on the issue of Tromelin *cogestion*, where matters stand, the number of meetings held so far on each of the different issues and what is the progress made?

The Chairperson: During the course of his speech, I think the hon. Prime Minister described extensively what has taken place on Tromelin. I think the hon. lady was there when the Prime Minister spoke; he mentioned about Tromelin in his speech.

Mr Obeegadoo: On the same issue, if I may reformulate. Since on P1 we have a 100% each time and you have explained that our sovereignty must be undivided, the commitment is 100%, how is it that on Tromelin, your expected results are for 2011 only 50% and for 2012 only 75%? What is the difference?

Dr. A. Boolell: Let me make it quite clear that this is jurisprudence in the making and it is a historical *Accord*, thanks, of course, to the personal intervention of our Prime Minister. We have to move towards ratification now and we are waiting for the French to submit it to their Senate and to their National Assembly and, once it has gone through, a document will be laid on the Table of the Executive of the Government of the Republic of France. On our side also, we have to introduce appropriate legislation for ratification and then we will have the subsequent meetings.

Mr Obeegadoo: I would like to talk on page 284, on *Programme 381: Policy and Management*, where the item *Minister* remains 1, but officers go from 26 to 34. So, we have an enormous 50% increase in officer cadre, although I was surprised that on page 272, in terms of constraints and challenges, this is one of the rare Ministries where lack of staff, qualified professional staff, is not pointed to as a major constraint. So, what are these officers supposed to be doing in the Ministry and why such an increase?

Dr. A. Boolell: The Ministry is constantly looking at constraints, shortcomings and how best we can use existing staff to address some of those issues. We have different directorates which are delivering and doing what is expected of them to do, sometimes in difficult circumstances. In respect of recruitment, this is an exercise that has to be done for additional staff. This is a recruitment that has to be carried out by the PSC.

Mr Obeegadoo: May we know what is meant here by officers? Are they trained, high level diplomatic staff at the level of Second Secretary or are we referring to some other cadre? Is this in respect of new Chanceries mentioned in the Budget Speech for the coming year?

Dr. A. Boolell: No, I am not referring specifically to Second Secretaries or Minister Counsellor. From the notes given here, we have Executive, Confidential Secretary, Word Processing Operators, etc.

Mr Obeegadoo: I am referring to page 284, under Salary Code *081848 – Officer*. I see that the number of officers increases by almost 50% from 26 to 34. We are not against. We want to understand why and what is this about? Are they Second Secretaries' secretaries?

Dr. A. Boolell: No, certainly it has nothing to do with the Second Secretaries. I assume that. Unless I have the relevant information, I take it for granted it is additional staff in respect of restyling of former grade of Clerical Officer. That's what I have here. I don't know whether this will satisfy the question of the hon. Member, but it is an administrative matter and the hon. Member does not have to worry about it.

Mr Li Kwong Wing: What about the cost of utilities?

Dr. A. Boolell: I am waiting for the information. Once I have it, I will circulate it.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade – Programme Code 381: Policy and Management (Rs49,940,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade – Programme Code 382: Foreign Relations was called.

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, I refer to page 276, *Performance Indicator 01, P3 – Contribute to the promotion of peace, security and stability in the Indian Ocean*, where there are four targeted meetings for each of the years 2011, 2012 and 2013. May we know what the hon. Minister has in mind here?

Dr. A. Boolell: I cannot give the hon. Member precise figures, but there will be meetings and consultations which are going to take place. Of course, we work very closely with the Indian Ocean Commission and other regional organisations with the objective of promoting peace and security in the region. I don't have to highlight threats coming, for example, from piracy or the conflicts in some of our regions which need to be resolved, but there is a need to have a coherent approach. We need to work very closely with Member States of the different regional organisations.

Mr Obeegadoo: I am sorry, Mr Chairperson, with all due respect to the hon. Minister, we are voting the Budget for 2011; we are voting funds for 2011. We are told that on this very important matter, as the hon. Minister just said, there are four meetings that are foreseen. At least, the hon. Minister should have some ideas as to which meetings, of which organisation it is planned to hold in 2011 since we have been asked to approve the funding.

Dr. A. Boolell: But the funding has to be approved although I don't have the exact organisation which is going to host the meeting. From the information which I have here, the number relates to the meetings which are going to be held. If I have the exact information, I will circulate it without any problem. It's not that we don't have any idea. But as to the number of meetings which are organised by relevant organisations in the region, we will highlight to the hon. Member the four meetings which are going to be organised in the days to come.

Mr Baloomoody: Can I take the hon. Minister to page 280, item 26210149 - *Contribution to South Centre*? I find that contribution to South Centre has been stopped; may we know why?

Dr. A. Boolell: Yes, we have stopped because South Centre is, unfortunately, not relevant to our cause, if anything goes against, to some extent, the interests of Mauritius. The South Centre is an organisation which is supposedly there to defend the interest of south countries. Sometimes, their views can be very controversial and in the latest meeting which they had, their views, unfortunately, went contrary to our interest.

Mr Obeegadoo: At the very same page 280, item 26210047 – *Contribution to United Nations Peacekeeping Operations*, we are being asked to approve a sum more or less equivalent to that approved last year. May we know what exactly our contribution is, is it purely financial or are we going beyond that, and which precise peacekeeping operations are being referred to here?

Dr. A. Boolell: This is purely financial although, in the past, we did send some officers to form part of standby forces.

Mr Lesjongard: Mr Chairperson, with regard to page 276, *sub programme 38202: Support by Mauritius Overseas Missions, 01, P1 to create greater awareness of Mauritius as an*

attractive Development hub, outreach to audience, the number of events to be organised in 2011 is 5. Can we have an indication as to where those events are going to be organised?

Dr. A. Boolell: I don't have the exact information, but, of course, this needs to be worked out together with intergovernmental agencies like BOI and other relevant organisations. We have worked it out with the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, but that information can be relayed.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, I am on page 275 regarding *performance Indicator 01 and P2 - Finalise modalities for implementation of the Bilateral Circular Migration Agreement with France*. I was under the impression that we have already started sending Mauritians under this programme, and now we are talking about finalising this programme by the end of 2012. Can we have some clarifications on this issue?

Dr. A. Boolell: No, there was a *Comité de Suivi* meeting which was held in Paris. We have travelled a long way. The modalities are being worked out and from information obtained it seems that the first batch of Mauritians will be recruited. It is difficult for me to say. We will probably travel to France by the middle of next year. Of course, it depends upon those people coming from France who are going to conduct the recruitment exercise. It is also possible for those who have worked for three years in France, to come back and who were keen to set small and medium enterprises. They will have resources from the Government of France and there may be a matching grant from the Government of Mauritius also to help them to start up those SMEs.

Mr Bhagwan: Mr Chairperson, at page 280, item 26210053 – *Contribution to Group of G77- ECDC*, can I know from the hon. Minister whether his Ministry has been involved in the context of the preparatory meetings for the Cancun Summit which is being held these days on climate change issue and whether there has been any meeting of the Small Island Developing States, especially with regard to contributions?

Secondly, under item 22120 - *Fees*, there has been an increase from Rs250,000 to Rs400,000. Can we have an idea to whom these fees are paid and whether there are professionals who are being paid out of this fund?

Dr. A. Boolell: In respect of this Cancun meeting, a question was put to our colleague, the hon. Minister of Environment, and he did reply to the question. But the hon. Member can rest assured that the Ministry of Environment is participating and the senior officials are taking part in the meeting which is being held in Cancun.

When we were in New York, in the sideline meeting, we fully participated in meetings organised by the Small Island Developing States, by the AOSIS Group and our proposals and contributions were taken on board. There is a common stand put forward by the Small Island Developing States.

Regarding the fees, I am just waiting for the officers to give me a breakdown in respect of what it all entails.

Dr. Sorefan: At page 280, item 22030 - *Rent*, may we know from the hon. Minister why the rent has gone down?

Dr. A. Boolell: I have replied to this and I will circulate the reply. I will give you the exact information as to why the rent has gone down. In fact, we have apportioned the rent according to the space and the number of staff occupying it. This is why I stated earlier that it is allocated to three programmes now.

Mrs Labelle: I am on page 276, *Multilateral Economic Directorate - O1: Training in Diplomacy and Foreign Trade*. The number of participants trained by the institute is 175 for 2010. My question is whether this training is for civil servants only, or it's a programme open to anyone who is interested in trade and diplomacy?

Dr. A. Boolell: In respect of fees, it is for training of staff locally and overseas, including the Institute of Diplomacy. In fact, the Institute of Diplomacy is doing a very good job, so much so that the lectures that are being dispensed have become so popular that there are many people who are keen from Government and non-governmental bodies. We have opened it to everybody who is interested.

Mr Baloomoody: Sir, I would like to talk on page 276, *Sub-Programme 38202: Support by Mauritius Oversees Missions - O2: Delivery of consular services and assistance to Mauritians abroad*. May I know from the hon. Minister who is the Consul in Chennai and how

much assistance he has given to Mauritians in Chennai when, in fact, we know that this gentleman is of no use whatsoever there?

Dr. A. Boolell: We have to pay our respect to the late Consul in Chennai who did an excellent job. We are yet to appoint somebody and a name has been submitted. I can tell you that the assistance given to Mauritians in distress is a good one. There are concerted efforts and, of course, our High Commission in Delhi liaise with the Consul to see to it that proper assistance is given, notwithstanding, of course, that there are certain limits. We can do what is expected of us within set parameters.

Mr Baloomoody: Can I ask only one specific question? In how many cases, has this Consul given assistance during the last financial year?

Dr. A. Boolell: Let me make it quite clear! He had been Consul since a very long time. He and members of his family have always dispensed assistance. In fact, the gentleman passed away and we need to show respect. He has done a good job as far as we are concerned.

Mr Obeegadoo: On page 280, under item 26210049 - *Contribution to the Agence Intergouvernementale de la Francophonie*, we find that our contribution is decreasing by a considerable amount. Can I have some clarification? There has been a fusion of IEF and OEF. How are these funds going to be applied? Does it go to a general Fund of the IEF or any specific programme of the IEF? In the field of education, for instance, there has traditionally been strong collaboration.

Since I am on that, I also put a similar question concerning the next item 26210050 - *Contribution to Commonwealth Secretariat* where, here, instead, our contribution is on the increase. Again, is this a general financial contribution or are we supporting some specific programme? The hon. Prime Minister, yesterday, referred to several matters where the Commonwealth Secretariat has been asked to come in to assist.

Dr. A. Boolell: In respect of *Contribution to Commonwealth Secretariat*, if my memory serves me well, I recall that there was an appeal made by the Secretariat to increase the contribution from member States.

In respect of *Agence Intergouvernementale de la Francophonie*, from the information that I have, contribution is mandatory. Statutory contributions of member States are reviewed on

a regular basis. There is an *ad hoc* committee set by *l'organisation Internationale de la Francophonie* and the actual amount paid for 2010 is €45,273, which comes to the sum earmarked within the Budget.

Mr Obeegadoo: On the question of the Commonwealth Secretariat, can the Minister confirm whether the next meeting of Commonwealth Education Ministers will be held in Mauritius, and if so, when?

With regard to item 26210052 - *Contribution to UN Capital Master Plan*, would the Minister clarify and tell us what this is all about?

Dr. A. Boolell: The Commonwealth Ministerial Meeting will be held in Mauritius next year. The UN Capital Master Plan is a mega project to renovate UN Headquarters complex in New York, to bring it into compliance with building and fire safety codes and modern standards for security, energy efficiency, sustainability and accessibility. The total amount of contribution yearly is 37,767 dollars for five consecutive years. When you travel to New York one of these days, you will see the *maquette*.

Mr Obeegadoo: On page 281, *Sub-Programme 38202: Support by Mauritius Overseas Missions, item 22030 - Rent* stays the same right up to 2013. I want some clarification because what I heard from the Budget Speech is that there is opening of new chanceries in the emerging economic powers. Further down, on that same page, at item 31112, the amount for non-residential buildings is decreasing, and then there is another item, *upgrading of Chanceries*, which corresponds thereto, where the figures fluctuate. So, can we have some clarification about how this relates to the idea of opening new chanceries and whether buildings will be rented and from which sums? Because it is not at all clear in the funds being requested for 2011.

Dr. A. Boolell: As far as I know, under the circumstances, because of budgetary constraints, we are not going to entertain any request to open any new Embassy. However, what we will do is that we will probably upgrade the existing consulate which we have in Reunion Island for reasons which I stated last time. There has been a proposal from the Saudi Arabian Government that land would be leased to Mauritian Government if we do agree, at a later stage, to open an Embassy.

As for the non-residential buildings and upgrading of chanceries, this is what the sum has been earmarked for. I hope that it is in London and Delhi. Probably, we will also enlist the services of consultancy in respect of some work that has to be done. There is also the refurbishment of Chancery in Washington.

Mr Obeegadoo: Despite all the hikes about a new thrust in terms of economic diplomacy, which the Budget Speech refers to for 2011, there will be no opening of any new Chancery.

Dr. A. Boolell: Under the circumstances, yes, there will be no Chancery. We are going to recruit trade counsellors, to whom specific mandate is going to be given and, of course, together with other agencies, we are going to wage an intensive campaign to attract investment in Mauritius. They will be based in our Embassies. I can tell you: London, Paris, Pretoria, Washington, Beijing, New Delhi and then, at a later stage, we will see if the needful would be done in respect of our Embassy in Moscow.

Mr Li Kwong Wing: With regard to page 275, *enhancing visibility of Mauritius*, under *O1 – Strengthening and Consolidating Bilateral Relations*, we don't even have a list of all the bilateral agreements in force in Mauritius.

Secondly, on page 277, under item *O1, P1 – Facilitate Cross Border Initiatives Through the Regional Development Company*, has this company been set up and is it manned? How is it that there are only two initiatives?

Dr. A. Boolell: In respect of Bilateral Relations, I can say with certainty to our friend that there are agreements. In fact, there has been an inter-Ministerial Committee which has been set up; and, at the senior level, a Committee set up, precisely to prioritise all the agreements which we have signed with friendly countries. We can release the information without any problem because for far too long, dust has been allowed to settle on those MoU and bilateral agreements. We are going to be focused and target specific areas, where we can get the benefits to be accrued.

In respect of the Regional Development Company, this company has been set up; the Chairperson of this company is the Financial Secretary. We have enlisted the services of Mr Raj

Virahsawmy, with the objective of having a subsidiary of this company to address the issue of Food Security. We are working very closely with ...

(Interruptions)

No, it is not easy. The hon. Member has been to Mozambique with us in 1996 and, I am sure, hon. Li Kwong Wing will realise the difficulties we had, but we managed to conclude a deal. Largely due to the personal intervention of the hon. Prime Minister, the *Societé Marrumeo* was set up.

Food Security is an issue that has to be addressed. We are looking at other

(Interruptions)

Of course! It was a collective ...

The Chairperson: The hon. Minister must not listen to comments from sitting position.

Dr. A. Boolell: They have to be fair also. I am simply stating facts. Of course, there was the contribution of hon. Bérenger. We are going to host a meeting because even our friends from Seychelles have expressed their willingness to participate in this Regional Development Company and projects have been identified to address precisely the issue of food security.

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, I have another concern which is regional cooperation again - a big element in the speech. I refer to page 282, *Contributions to IOR-ARC Membership Contribution*, under item 26210056. This contribution jumps from Rs1.5 m. to Rs4.3 m. next year. I may be ignorant, Mr Chairperson, but I have not heard much about the activities of the IOR-ARC lately. I would like to know how this increase relates to the fact that, on page 273, the summary of financial resources provides for an increase on the regional integration, from Rs80.5 m. to Rs100.95 m. However, in terms of staffing position, under regional integration, we are stuck at 23 posts. Can the hon. Minister clarify the whole issue and, in particular, increase in funding and the role of IOR-ARC?

Dr. A. Boolell: In fact, we are not too happy also with the role of the IOR-ARC. We need to have a fresh look at its activities because, so far, the results have not been forthcoming. However, there are issues which need to be considered, what we call *bien commun public*; issues like environment, fisheries and security in the region; these are issues that need to be addressed.

I recall when Sashi Taroor was Minister of State of India, a concept paper was prepared. Even France through Reunion

(Interruptions)

No, it's not '*enn vié zafer ça*'. Even France, through Reunion, was keen to give a helping hand. However, having said so, they are having a fresh look. They are trying to restyle the Secretariat and we hope that it will be a member-driven approach to cooperation and will produce the expected results. At the last meeting, which was held in Yemen, there is a new charter which has been introduced and it addresses the issues relating to the system, formation of group, restyling of the posts of Executive Director and the Secretary General. I hope that once it has reenergised itself, issues, which are common and relevant to member State of IOR-ARC, will be taken on board.

Mr Obeegadoo: My point is: why are we being asked to approve a threefold increase in the funding going to IOR-ARC, from Rs1.5 m. to Rs4.3 m.?

Dr. A. Boolell: I grant you this, it is a quite substantial sum, but we need to give it the means also to operate effectively.

(Interruptions)

I have said so. There has been room for improvement and that's why there have been those changes. As I have stated, there is a new charter which has replaced the older one. I have been also told that, with the increase in the cost of living, rental also is one of the issues which has, unfortunately, created a situation which has become difficult and we had no choice but to increase our contribution.

Mr Obeegadoo: Are we to understand that each Member State of the IOR-ARC likewise, is being asked to increase threefold its contribution?

Dr. A. Boolell: I can't say for certain whether every Member State, but I have been told that the increase is not only a Mauritian concern; it is a concern of all the members. Having said so, because of the ongoing activities, there will be several meetings which are going to be held. I have been told that a new framework is being prepared in respect of regional trade.

Mr Obeegadoo: I have one last question on page 285, Programme Code 382 - *Ambassador and Permanent Representative*, under item 020093. I refer to our representation in

Paris. Now that we have closed our diplomatic representation at UNESCO, I am well-placed to say that we have a lot to gain from UNESCO in counterpart to our contribution. May I know how our bilateral mission in Paris is being strengthened to be able to take on board our responsibilities at UNESCO?

I understand Mauritius was to be a candidate for the International Bureau of Education Council. I would like to know whether there will be a special adviser, for instance, from the Ministry of Education posted to our bilateral mission and, if not, how we are going to beef up of our capacity vis-à-vis UNESCO.

Dr. A. Boolell: Under the present circumstances, although the workload has increased, we have had no complaint. They are coping very well, but, however, if the need is felt to enlist the services of somebody, especially in the field of education, we'll give the support to our Ambassador and the needful will be done.

Mr Obeegadoo: Sir, may I be allowed on this point to make an appeal concerning funding for next year? We are expecting a lot from UNESCO, even on the cultural front, let alone education. Can I make an appeal that this matter be looked into and we use the funds being allotted to ensure that our bilateral mission in Paris has the means to have a permanent presence at UNESCO even though we are not physically based there and many small countries, even South Africa, which is not a small country, has that approach, the bilateral mission having a strong presence that is visible, that is felt at UNESCO?

Dr. A. Boolell: As I have said, as of now, there has been no complaint although the workload has increased. Of course, the support is being given by the Minister Counselor, the Second Secretaries and the job is being done. Well, our friend can be dissatisfied, but there has been no complaint registered.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade – Programme Code 382: Foreign Relations (Rs696,460,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

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

Mr Obeegadoo: I have just one question on page 286. Again, this seems to be the crucial element in the new Budget for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a new thrust in terms of

economic diplomacy and yet I note that we have a very small increase in staffing position here. Does the Minister think that with what we are approving, we shall be in a position to rise to the challenge of prioritising economic diplomacy?

Dr. A. Boolell: Yes, we are rising to the challenge although challenges can be quite daunting, but I do grant the hon. Member that we have a small staff, very efficient, which does an excellent job and, if the need is felt, we can even recruit on contract. The matter has been taken up with the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development.

Mr Baloomoody: Sir, I would like to ask a question on Sub-programme 38302: *Protection and Registration of Industrial Property Rights*. May I refer the hon. Minister to page 286, item 18 75 82 *Controller, Industrial Property Office*? If I may refer the hon. Minister to page 273, it is to have an 'efficient and timely registration of Trademarks and Industrial Designs and grant of Patents'. As far as the target is concerned, there is no target set out about what is the objective, how efficient and timely it is and how long are we expected to have a trademark registered once somebody applies to have it here internationally.

Dr. A. Boolell: I know this was a problem in the past, but by way of regulations, we have addressed this issue and now, I have been told that it is quite timely and they are speeding up the process.

Mr Baloomoody: The other question is on the same issue. It is that we don't have a process for arbitration in this unit itself. So, what is the procedure, in case of dispute, in that unit?

Dr. A. Boolell: In respect of the specific question the hon. Member put earlier, it is within two months.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade – Programme Code 383: International Trade (Rs33,261,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

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

Mr Ameer Meea: Mr Chairperson, on page 291, under item *Construction of low-cost housing units*, it is mentioned that 50% will be completed in December 2010 and the rest in June next year. Can I ask the hon. Minister to give us the list of the 11 sites as mentioned at page 288?

In the Budget Speech, it was mentioned that 700 units are for families earning less than Rs5,000. Where, in the Estimates, can we find as announced for the sum earmarked?

Dr. Kasenally: Mr Chairperson, work is in progress on all sites namely Glen Park. I have already mentioned all this in my speech on the Budget, but I will repeat it. At Glen Park: 60; Plaine Magnien: 60; La Tour Koenig: 39; Grand Bel Air: 50; Britannia: 45; Roche Bois: 16; D'Epinay: 60; Camp Diable: 60; Cottage: 60 and Calebasse: 60. The project cost is Rs325 m. and the building cost itself Rs168.9 m. to be met by NHDC Ltd, infrastructure...

The Chairperson: The question was about the sites only, not about the cost.

Mr Lesjongard: Mr Chairperson, with regard to Code 641 at page 293, item *22030001 – Rental of Building*, can we have an indication from the hon. Minister as to where buildings are being rented by the Ministry?

Dr. Kasenally: At Moorgate House, we have got a disparate number of units as you probably well know; it is the same as when you were Minister. There is Victoria House, Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund office building which is decrepit actually; we are moving out of it and there is one building at Mère Barthelemy Street which is metalcast.

Mr Baloomoody: Can I refer the hon. Minister to page 288 under item *Major Achievements for 2010* where it is said that –

“Some 8,000 occupiers of ex-CHA houses have become owners of the plot of land on which their building stands.”

I would like to know whether there is a specific unit at the CHA to assist those people whose CHA houses are very old now, especially the slabs which are coming down.

Dr. Kasenally: There is a unit, actually it is a nearly winding-up unit at the CHA. One thing I must inform is that all these houses, virtually their occupiers are full-fledged proprietors, *propriétaires de plein droit*. What we are doing now is to sell this land for Rs2,000 and, I think, we have done quite a number of cases. We have received 13,291 applications and 8,000 title deeds have already been signed. There are some which we cannot sell because they are on...

Mr Baloomoody: I am not talking about the ownership or title deed; I am asking whether there is a unit at the CHA. Some even complained that it is a *cadeau empoisonné* which has been given to them. The roofs of all houses are coming down.

The Chairperson: Whether there is a unit to address it.

Dr. Kasenally: There is a unit called the HMU, the Housing Management Unit in my Ministry which is looking after them.

Mr Baloomoody: May we know what is the procedure to apply.

(Interruptions)

The hon. Minister of Social Integration is fully aware of the problem and is saying that this unit does not exist, and we have a Minister for Housing and Lands who is telling us that the unit exists. I know that there is nothing to assist these people.

The Chairperson: If the hon. Member already knew, then why is he asking; he must tell the Minister.

Mr Kasenally: I think he doesn't know. I am telling the hon. Member that there is a unit and we are looking into it, but we are not going to repair all the ex-CHA houses. As I have already mentioned, they are full-fledged proprietors and we help them.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: I am on my feet. Can't the hon. Member be patient, please? I will repeat programme by programme.

Dr. Kasenally: When there is *l'amiante*, we help them to...

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: No, I am not going to allow. The question is very simple. The question is: those who are the owners of the ex-CHA houses and they are in difficulty, the roof is collapsing, is there a unit in the Ministry for them to make complaints? That's all!

Dr. Kasenally: Yes, there is. We can help them according to the means we have to do it.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, regarding this item, I know that, at a certain point in time, a structure was to be put to help these persons. They can't apply, for example, to have the allowance for the casting of slabs because of the structure. They need advice. Can I know whether this still exists? At a particular point in time, we were putting this structure for them to have advice so that they can benefit - they don't ask *gratis* - from the casting?

The Chairperson: Those who are the owners of their house.

Mrs Labelle: Yes.

Dr. Kasenally: Yes, Mr Chairperson, there is, in the Housing Management Unit, in my Ministry an engineer who tenders technical advice freely.

Mr Lesjongard: Mr Chairperson, again, under the same item, that is, CHA Housing Units, can the hon. Minister enlighten the House with regard to those owners who have problems in getting their *dossier* finalised because of land transfer problem? Can the hon. Minister inform the House as to where matters stand?

Dr. Kasenally: In fact, my Ministry has gone out of the way to help them and we have even got the help of the *notaire* to draft. So far, we have drafted as many as possible and we have even gone out and looked for these people who are entitled and we have managed so far to get at least 12,000 people to apply. We have bent over backward to help these people to get it, but there are problems because some of them are dead and there is the problem of fights between relatives.

Mr Baloomoody: Mr Chairperson, I will have to come back to the CHA owners as well. We know from the hon. Minister that there is a unit and an engineer there. May we know what facilities are given to the people? Are they given a financial grant to repair the roofs? Are they given a certain allowance or are they given manpower or material to repair?

Dr. Kasenally: They are given technical advice and they can apply for casting of roof slabs if they are entitled.

Mr Ameer Meea: Mr Chairperson, on page 293, under item 22030001 *Rental of Building*, can I ask the hon. Minister whether his Ministry is moving to a new building?

Dr. Kasenally: Yes, Mr Chairperson.

Mr Obeegadoo: On Programme 641, at page 288 which describes the major services to be provided under this programme, really, it looks like a strategy –

- New Housing Strategy;
- Planning Legislation;
- Legislation for maintenance of National Digital Cadastre;

- Hydrographic surveys, which is all very important.

Then, considering page 291, the actual indicators to make this programme operational, I know that there is absolutely no indicator relating to these objectives. Can the hon. Minister explain why we do not - as for the other Ministries - have indicators telling us when the New Housing Strategy will be prepared? Concerning the Planning Legislation, the Ministry itself says there is need to consolidate. When will this legislative exercise be undertaken? Cadastre, we know is something that is ongoing. Why do the indicators not relate to the objectives of the programme?

Dr. Kasenally: In fact, Mr Chairperson, we have something here, actually as far as formulation of the Housing Policy Strategy is concerned, there has been a request for proposal for an international consultant in the preparation of housing policy and strategy; papers are being worked out in consultation with MOFED. The tenders are expected to be floated by January 2011 and Rs2 m. have been provided under item 22120008. This is something substantial and, therefore, the hon. Member cannot come and say there is nothing planned.

Mr Obeegadoo: The hon. Minister should not be offended. The work is going on and we are very happy. All I am saying is the essence of PBB budgeting, that our objectives must meet targets that we measure from year to year. My question is very simple: will the hon. Minister consider defining a target for the funds we are approving so that we know well in time whether this strategic plan will be produced over the next three years?

Dr. Kasenally: Mr Chairperson, I am here to help and give all the information. In fact, there is a Bill to be introduced in the Assembly to update and consolidate the framework, the present and future challenges, to modernise and promote continued economic goals. It is expected to bring the Bill in the National Assembly by April 2011 and thereafter ensure a phased proclamation scheduled during the transitional period.

Mr Ameer Meea: Mr Chairperson, my question also is in relation to the answer that the hon. Minister just gave in relation...

The Chairperson: So, the hon. Member is satisfied.

Mr Ameer Meea: ...to the rental of the building. Since, he responded positively that he is moving to a new office, can I ask the hon. Minister where will that office be? When will he be moving and what will be the cost of the rent of the office?

Dr. Kasenally: We will be moving in a phased manner. I think some of the members of my staff will be moving, especially the survey division, and I will be the last to move up to Ebène.

Mr Lesjongard: Mr Chairperson, with regard to *Programme 641: Policy and Management for Housing and Lands*, can the hon. Minister give us an indication as to where matters stand with regard to the Planning Legislation?

Dr. Kasenally: The Planning Legislation is in another programme. I would like to go programme by programme which is page by page and then I will be able to satisfy everybody, because it falls on *Programme 643: Land Management and Physical Planning*. We are now in *Programme 641*, if we could finish with it.

The Chairperson: We are under *Programme 641*.

Mr Lesjongard: I have referred to *Programme 641* on page 288 which deals with Planning Legislation.

Dr. Kasenally: Mr Chairperson, we have got a new Bill, which will consolidate all these under one piece of legislation. At the moment, we have the Town and Country Planning Act, the Local Government Planning Development Act, and all these will be consolidated into one Bill. It will complement the new Environment and Land Use Bill which is under preparation and will be brought for legislation. It will be next year, not five years.

The Chairperson: No comment! If hon. Members want to ask a question, they will get the answer. No comment!

Mr Baloomoody: On *Programme 641*, may I refer the hon. Minister to page 288 - *Legislation for the maintenance of a National Digital Cadastre*. May we know from the hon. Minister where matters stand now? We know we are going towards a generalisation of municipalities this year.

Dr. Kasenally: Mr Chairperson, I think, it all comes under the LAVIMS Project and, in fact, they were supposed to finish on 15 December, but there has been increase in new number of

units to be put in; we will have to update it. The Bill is already being finalised and will be brought fairly soon to the Assembly for debate.

Mr Ganoo: I am still on *Programme 641: Policy and Management for Housing and Lands*. I don't want to be difficult with the hon. Minister. We all know that Government has already announced that 10,000 housing units will be constructed in five years.

In the present Budget, an elaborated housing programme has been announced, catering for different categories of house-seekers. Now, the hon. Minister is announcing to us that a study is being conducted and foreign experts have been solicited in order to come up with a strategic paper. The question I am going to ask is: aren't we putting *la charrue* before the ox, because now we are going to wait for the strategic paper to come? Can I ask the Minister whether he knows how many house-seekers are there in Mauritius? Is there a list at the NHDC and, if so, on what basis has an elaborated housing programme been announced in the Budget and, if ever, there are no database, no *données* at the Ministry or at the NHDC. Is this not going to delay the housing programme waiting for an expert to come and say that?

The Chairperson: No, that is general policy.

Mr Ameer Meea: I shall come back to page 293 under the *rental of building*. Since the Minister announced that he is moving to Ébène, can I know which building is it in Ébène? What is the rent per square foot to be paid? Is it a fully furnished one or unfurnished one and lastly, whether any tender procedures were launched before moving there?

Dr. Kasenally: Mr Chairperson, there has been proper tendering done by the CPB. We are not going to pay rental at Victoria House or all the others, so we are accumulating all this to pay rent and the Ministry of Finance will top up.

As far as furniture is concerned, we are putting some old and some new furniture. The aim is to bring all the units under one roof so that we can have absolute control of what is happening. I don't deal with the proprietors; the rental is about Rs29 per square foot. It is one of these big buildings. I don't remember the name.

The Chairperson: The hon. Minister has answered the question. The name of the building!

Dr. Kasenally: I will give it later on.

Mr Ganoo: I am sorry, Mr Chairperson, I have to come back to the question of the ex-occupiers of the CHA houses. In the past, the Minister has very kindly answered to many questions on the issue of the 8,000 occupiers who have already become owners. In some areas, where the CHA houses are to be found, as the Minister had enlightened the House in the past, they have some difficulties because the houses are being built either on *Pas Géométriques* or on private land belonging to sugar estates or to other private owners. On this question of CHA houses situated on the *Pas Géométriques*, there was a legal complex. Has this been disposed of?

The Chairperson: This is a policy matter.

Mr Ganoo: The other 5,000 CHA owners have not been able to acquire their land because of this problem. How has this problem been solved?

Dr. Kasenally: Mr Chairperson, there are not only 5,000 CHA owners on *Pas Géométriques*, I think there are no more than about 1,000 and some of them have been converted into luxury village. What has happened is that they have sold their rights to some people who are paying Rs142. I have to look into it. People are making a killing out of it. However, I will give all the details subsequently because I have repeated it many times as far as the CHA owners are concerned. We are making an effort. There are some which cannot be sold as I have said because there are problems about heritage and some people, clearly, are not prepared to buy this house because they are old and they are saying that they are paying Rs10. It will cost them Rs4,000. They say they are not going to live for 40 years, so they don't want it.

Mr Lesjongard: I will get back to LAVIMS project at page 288. Since Government has decided to get rid of the NRPT and since we all know that the LAVIMS project was supposed to help in the implementation of the NRPT, can we know from the hon. Minister whether there has been now a modification with regard to the LAVIMS project and, if yes, whether there is going to be a reduction in cost with regard to that project?

Dr. Kasenally: Mr Chairperson, the LAVIMS project is a very modern one which will help to put Mauritius up-to-date. Even a lot of advanced countries do not have it. However, it has never been modified; it was never meant to implement the NRPT. In fact, each and every property in this country will have a pin number which is Property Identification Number and with a touch of a button, you can have all the details on this piece of land, that is, who has bought

it and who has sold it over the years. More deliverables have been given and the cost of the project is as per the terms of the contract.

Dr. Sorefan: At page 288, regarding hydrographic surveys of Mauritius, may I know from the hon. Minister whether this survey has been initiated and, if yes, when will it start?

Dr. Kasenally: This is a very major project, Mr Chairperson. It has started, in fact, about four years ago. We have had numerous visits by the Indian Navy and this has been made possible thanks to a Memorandum of Understanding piloted by the Prime Minister. He signed it when he went to India. So far, the whole of Agalega has been surveyed. We have the entrance to Port Louis harbour, Mahebourg old port, Agalega, St Brandon, and there are other sites that I don't have at hand, but I can give the information. The surveys are ongoing and they will touch our exclusive economic zone which is of about 2 million square kilometres.

Mr Baloomoody: At page 288, regarding the rehabilitation on NHDC housing estates, it is a major achievement for 2010. May we know whether we have completed this rehabilitation of NHDC housing estates and if so, what percentage we have achieved and what is the target?

Dr. Kasenally: Mr Chairperson, first of all, I have to give the name of the building. It is called Ebène Tower where we will be moving. I will supplement the other achievements which is a survey of Port Louis harbour, and as far as hydrography is concerned, survey of the fishing port at Bain des Dames, survey at Agalega, deep sea water sampling for the land ocean based project, survey of Port Mathurin harbour and approaches in Rodrigues, survey in St Brandon, survey on Black River Bay, Tamarin Bay, Grand Bay, Rivière de Galets, Grand Port and Flic en Flac. We have more surveys to carry out so as to complement the whole.

As far as the NHDC is concerned, I keep repeating it, Mr Chairperson that Government voted about over Rs250 m. for rehabilitating the NHDC. Although we are in no obligation to do that, there are certain areas which have been done. The roofs have been done. There are problems with contractors, but we have a programme for rehabilitation of the water and the sewer works. The most difficult one is at Camp Levieux, Rose Hill. These are sites which have been identified for water works on six housing estates - Camp Levieux, Malaysian I; Alpha; la Tour Koenig, Vallée des Prêtres, Plaine Verte and Malaysian II. The total cost for this rehabilitation will be Rs39 m. Over and above that, there is rehabilitation of sewerage

infrastructure on some 44 housing estates to the tune of Rs48 m. The NHDC is finalising tender documents for consultancies.

At 12.59 p.m., the sitting was suspended.

On resuming at 2.33 p.m. with the Deputy Speaker in the Chair.

The Chairperson: We are still on page 291, *Ministry of Housing and Lands – Programme Code 641: Policy and Management for Housing and Lands.*

Dr. Kasenally: Mr Chairperson, I would like to go in a very systematic and transparent way, that is, page by page, instead of going backward and forward every time. I am prepared to answer each and every question, but let us have some discipline.

The Chairperson: If there is no objection from any Member, we shall proceed page by page.

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, that would indeed be desirable. I believe the Chairperson tried that yesterday. The difficulty, both for the Ministers and for us, is that for one programme it is spread out in terms of objectives and then indicators, and then summary of financial outlay and summary of staffing, and then the details of the current expenditure and then the details of the staffing. So, it is indeed difficult. I can understand the Minister; it is also difficult for us. We can go page by page, but then there will be cross-reference inevitably.

The Chairperson: As far as possible we go page by page or else if there is reference we are going to come back.

Dr. Kasenally: Even if we have to go back, we will cross that bridge when we come to it.

The Chairperson: We have to vote one by one. We are on Programme Code 641.

Mr Obeegadoo: I would like to refer the Minister to page 209 which provides a summary of financial resources for Programme Code 641. I would like to kindly request the Minister to explain to us the variation in the Estimates for 2010 and the Estimates for 2011, with reference, one, to issues of staffing. This is detailed on page 298 which suggests there are only four additional posts.

Then, there is a breakdown of the recurrent expenditure on page 293, *Programme 641: Police and Management for Housing and Lands*. These concern the first two item numbers. Compensation of employees and personal emoluments show a significant rise of some Rs3 m. in each case. My difficulty was in reconciling the quantum of overall increase and the fact that there are only four additional posts. On the other hand, without wishing to complicate matters, on page 294, there is indeed the acquisition of non-financial assets on page 292.

The Chairperson: Hon. Obeegadoo, we take your question on compensation of employees first.

Mr Obeegadoo: I want you to make it comprehensive and I will come back on another question.

The Chairperson: Yes, the hon. Member can put his question.

Mr Obeegadoo: I was kindly asking for some clarification from the hon. Minister as to the change in the overall Estimates from 2010 to 2011 having regard to changes in staffing.

Dr. Kasenally: The sum is only about Rs3 m. This will take care of increments and there is only a minimum increase. In fact, I am informed by my staff that provision has been made to reflect the staffing position, including new jobs through a rationalisation process.

Ministry of Housing and Lands – Programme Code 641: Policy and Management for Housing and Lands (Rs52,870,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Housing and Lands – Programme Code 642: Social Housing Development was called.

The Chairperson: Pages 298 to 299; we have page 294 to 295 for details of expenditure.

Mr Ameer Meea: On page 291, under Programme Code 642, P1: *Construction of low-cost housing unit*, it is mentioned in the Budget that for 2011, some Rs400 m. are earmarked for some 700 housing units for families earning less than Rs5,000 per month. Can I ask the hon. Minister where we can find this sum in the Estimates?

Dr. Kasenally: I go by what is here, Mr Chairperson. It is 550 housing units. I can only answer what is on the programme and this is for construction of low-cost housing. There are 550

housing units of Firinga-type on 10 sites: Glen Park/La Tour Koenig, Roche Bois, Petite Rivière, Camp Diable, Plaine Magnien, Grand Bel Air, Britannia, Calebasse, Cottage and d'Epinay.

Mr Bhagwan: Mr Chairperson, at page 294, under item *25110004 – Subsidy to NHDC*, can I know from the hon. Minister whether the Board of the NHDC has appointed its members and if so, who are the members? I was made to understand that the posts of Director-General and Chief Executive Officer were vacant. Can I know whether these have been filled?

Secondly, at the same page, under item *22120008 Fees to Consultants*, the amount earmarked is Rs2 m. Can we have some details about this?

At page 295, item *28222012 – Casting of Roof Slab Grant Scheme*, there is a decrease for this financial year. Can we know the reason for the decrease and whether there is an estimated target? According to our information, there is a problem for the process. Can the hon. Minister enlighten us as to whether he has put some order? I know there were some problems with the previous Director-General. Now that we have a good and efficient Director-General, I would like to know whether this has been reviewed.

Dr. Kasenally: Can I take the points because there are about four and the hon. Member can continue after that?

Mr Bhagwan: It is the same programme.

Dr. Kasenally: It is the same programme but if the hon. Member doesn't mind, he can just get me one by one item? First of all, the Managing-Director has been appointed. He is Mr Osman Mohamed. The Board is the same, it is ongoing and perhaps we may change it, replace some names and things like that.

Mr Bhagwan: Who is the Chairperson?

Dr. Kasenally: The Chairperson is the same as before, Mr Dhunput. The hon. Member was speaking about the casting of roof slabs. Although it has been reduced, for example, this year, up to now, we have issued just over Rs100 m.; the procedure has been streamlined and, I think, we are moving forward. However, although Rs100 m. have been voted, there is provision for more as and when needed.

Mr Bhagwan: Mr Chairperson, I have one additional question on the item of roof slab. Can I know the target set for the time limit by the NHDC for somebody who complies with all

the requirements for his application to be approved? From what we are made to understand, we have to go to the CEB office. There is a chain.

Dr. Kasenally: It used to be about four to six months, but now it is about three months if everything is alright. But we have a problem because some people want to *triangué* here and there and we have to verify.

(Interruptions)

No, it's the people. The house is not on their name.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Therefore, the hon. Minister means it is about three months?

Dr. Kasenally: It is about three months.

The Chairperson: Alright! We move to the item on 'Fees to Consultants'.

Mr Nagalingum: On the same item, Mr Chairperson, I don't find any provision for water pumps.

The Chairperson: We are talking about casting of slabs, not about water supply. There is no item on water.

Dr. Kasenally: Mr Chairperson, in fact, I have replied extensively to a parliamentary question. I have said that this comes under the programme of improvement in reticulation, that is, improvement of infrastructure. There is provision made for it. I mentioned it earlier, Rs14 m. plus Rs2 m. at Camp Levieux.

The Chairperson: Yes, we are left with the third one, Fees to Consultants, Rs2 m., about the query of hon. Bhagwan.

Dr. Kasenally: The Rs2 m. is for Consultant for the National Planning Strategy, as I mentioned, in one of the programmes.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Order, please!

Mr Ganoo: In this Budget, the threshold for the casting of slabs has not been increased. Has any provision been made for that?

Dr. Kasenally: In fact, we have increased it to Rs65,000, but as far as the threshold is concerned, it is Rs8,500. It is still the same. It's up to 150 square metres. If they have for 200 square meters, they will pay only for 150 square metres. Perhaps this might be reconsidered in light of demands.

Mr Ameer Meea: For the casting of slabs, what is the amount given per individual? Is it a fixed amount or the amount varies?

Dr. Kasenally: It is given only one-off. The person must be owner of the house with the title deeds and everything. Everything is done very tightly so that there is no abuse.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: No grumbling, please!

Mr Ameer Meea: The hon. Minister did not get my point. What I wanted to know is the amount given per person.

The Chairperson: Let the hon. Minister answer, please!

Dr. Kasenally: It is given for one building, one person gets it and it is Rs65,000.

Mr Ameer Meea: If it is Rs65,000 per person, I can see that Rs72 m. have been disbursed and there are 1,592 eligible beneficiaries. If we divide that sum, it amounts to Rs45,000. Can the hon. Minister, please, clarify?

Dr. Kasenally: As I have said, we give Rs65,000. The figure we quoted is an estimate. But I can assure the House that you are given Rs65,000 and no less.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Hon. Ms Deepalsing, please! Any more questions! Hon. Mrs Labelle! Order, please!

(Interruptions)

Hon. Sayed-Hossen, please! Hon. Bhagwan, please! I can't hear the hon. Minister!

Dr. Kasenally: If somebody comes with a roof less than 40, it is given on a *pro rata* basis.

The Chairperson: I want to give a note of warning to everybody, please! I have to concentrate on each item; I don't want any grumbling, please! Hon. Mrs Labelle!

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, at page 291, *Performance Indicator P2 – Construction of housing units on lands acquired under the Government/MSPA Deal*, there was an estimate of 900 units as per the Budget of last year and this year there is nothing. Must I take it that this project is out? This is my first question. Do I stop here for another question?

The Chairperson: Yes, if the Minister can just respond.

Dr. Kasenally: The project is not out. We have constructed 550, we will construct more. The process is ongoing; there will be 700 more and every year we will add on until 10,000 and perhaps 40,000 in 10 years.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, I am still at page 291, *Performance Indicator P2*. Batch 1 – 1000 units and it is written – 60% of the project will be ready in December next year, 100% and so on. It is the same for batch II. I would like to know from the hon. Minister if it is possible for us to know whether sites have been identified for these two batches and whether it is the construction phase which will be 60% or 60% of the number of housing units which will be ready in December next year.

Dr. Kasenally: Mr Chairperson, the target for 2011 is done in batches. There is batch 1 which is 1000 units and we will do 60% of these in 2011 and in 2012 we will do the rest. Each batch will include a mix of housing for units in scheme I and 2, that is, we want to have *un projet interne*. We do not want to put only one type of family. Each batch will include a mix of housing units for Scheme 1 families, that is, below Rs5000 monthly. Scheme 2 families are those earning monthly income between Rs5000 to Rs10000. Sites are identified; it is about 107 *arpents* for these 700 units for families earning less than Rs5000, 300 units for families earning between Rs5000 and Rs10000. As far as the sites are concerned, they are found at Long Mountain, Pointe aux Piments, Beau Bois, Quatre Cocos, Camp Ithier, Sebastopol, Chebel and Gros Cailloux, and the estimated project cost is Rs529 m.

Mr Baloomoody: Mr Chairperson, I refer to *Programme 642: Social Housing Development*. Can I come back to the housing policy development formulation of housing policy and strategic paper? We know that a consultant will be appointed. May we know the

term of reference of this policy and whether we are going to have a database of the needs and requirements of the people who need houses?

Dr. Kasenally: I replied to that earlier, but I will repeat it. There is a request for proposal for an international consultant for the preparation of a housing policy strategy and this is being worked out with the Ministry of Finance. The tender is expected to be floated by January 2011 and Rs2 m. have been provided under vote item 22122.

The Chairperson: Does the hon. Minister have the terms of reference? That was the question.

Mr Baloomoody: The terms of reference and what will be the objective of this.

The Chairperson: This is being worked out, I understand.

Dr. Kasenally: Yes, the data is being collected and some are already available.

Mr Ganoo: I have two questions, Mr Chairperson. I will come back to page 291 on *Programme Code 642: Social Housing Development – P2: Construction of housing units on lands acquired under the Government/MSPA Deal*, on the same question of the land for the Government/MSPA deal. The hon. Minister has kindly given us a list of the sites where the houses will be built and this is by virtue of the Government/MSPA deal. Have these sites been selected by Government or have they been offered by the MSPA? Have they been chosen as a result of the demand in these areas, or is it just because they have been offered that the Government has agreed to build the houses on these sites?

The Chairperson: The hon. Member should make his point.

Mr Ganoo: What are the criteria?

Dr. Kasenally: This land exchange mechanism has been dealt with by a High-Powered Committee chaired by the Secretary to Cabinet. In fact, it is a mix of everything because we cannot build houses on mountains where there are no people. Sites have been identified and they should be near an area where we have infrastructure available because, water, electricity and sanitation infrastructures cost a lot.

Mr Ganoo: I would like to ask the hon. Minister another question on item *25120002 Subsidy to MHC (Housing Loans)*. The Estimates for 2010 are Rs16,000,000 and the sum of Rs8,000,000 has been earmarked for next year. Unfortunately, in the major achievements for 2010, no information is given as to how many people have benefitted from MHC housing loan facilities this year.

The Chairperson: I take it that the question is how many beneficiaries there are for this year.

Mr Ganoo: And how can the Minister explain that the sum provided for next year has been halved by 100%?

Dr. Kasenally: Concerning provision for subsidy on Government sponsored loans, the Minister of Finance has agreed to provide additional funding as and when required.

The Chairperson: How many beneficiaries for this year? Does the Minister have it?

Dr. Kasenally: I have said that there are 700 houses to be constructed.

Mr Lesjongard: Mr Chairperson, with regard to page 291, *P2: Construction of housing units on lands acquired under the Government/MSPA Deal*, we understand from the hon. Minister that a first batch of 1000 units will be constructed and the project will end in 2012. He has also mentioned places where those units will be constructed and he has given an indication of schemes available under this present Budget. Can we know from the hon. Minister whether the sites he has mentioned will cater for various schemes on one site or are we going to have a site with a dedicated scheme?

The Chairperson: I think that it has been answered.

Dr. Kasenally: I have already mentioned it.

The Chairperson: Yes, it has been answered.

Dr. Kasenally: If the hon. Member would care to listen ...

The Chairperson: Alright, the hon. Member made his point. Hon. Lesjongard, there is no need for you to recapitulate what had been stated. You should put your question straightforwardly.

Mr Lesjongard: It is indicated...

(*Interruptions*)

The Chairperson: No, it had been stated, please!

Dr. Kasenally: It is an integrated approach. As I said, we will have people of all classes.

The Chairperson: Please, hon. Lesjongard! What I mean is that there is no need for you to make a repetition of what has been stated. You come straightaway with your question. In that case, the question you put had been answered previously.

Mr Lesjongard: I will come straight with the question. The hon. Minister has mentioned Montagne Longue as a potential site. Can we know in the region of Montagne Longue what scheme will be implemented?

Dr. Kasenally: It is going to be a mix of integrated – I cannot go there and put pegs.

The Chairperson: It is going to be a mixed one.

Mr Ameer Meea: Under Programme 264, item 28222011: *Upfront Grant Scheme for First Time Buyers*, for 2010, it was Rs18 m. and for 2011 it is Rs8 m. Can we have some details on the nature of this item and secondly, why it has been reduced by Rs10 m.?

Dr. Kasenally: Although it has been reduced, as I have said, provision is made for extra money to be disbursed by the Ministry of Finance. It will be given as and when we use it; the coffer will be full all the time.

(*Interruptions*)

Mr Baloomoody: Can I ask the hon. Minister what are the requisite conditions for one to benefit from this scheme?

Dr. Kasenally: The scheme has already been amply ventilated, it is for people earning less than Rs5000, people earning less than Rs8000 for Scheme II and for the others I have just mentioned.

Mr Ameer Meea: On the same item, can I ask the hon. Minister if he can give a list of the beneficiaries?

The Chairperson: The hon. Member means for this year?

Mr Ameer Meea: Yes.

Dr. Kasenally: It is a long list. I will lay it on the Table of the Assembly.

Mrs Labelle: I am on page 291, *O2: Provision and facilitation of affordable housing to low income*, that is, Objective O2, P1 – *Construction of Low Cost Housing Units*, which is, I presume, different from batch one. May I ask the hon. Minister whether these houses will be built on a particular site or is it the CIS houses? Mr Chairperson, with your permission, I link that to page 295, under item *28222004, Infrastructure for Social Housing*, I find item (a) 533 *Housing Units* and the infrastructure is Rs1 m., whereas for the other 550 houses, I find Rs90,000,000. So, there is a big difference. Can this be explained as to in which cases infrastructure for 500 *maisons coûtent R 1 million et dans d'autres cas c'est R 90 millions, donc si on peut avoir quelques détails?*

Dr. Kasenally: The 533 housing units are already underway and this may be retention money. In Rs1 m. you don't get infrastructure, they cost a lot.

Mr Baloomoody: On page 295, under item *28212017, Current Transfer to Household*, we find that there is a sum of Rs12 m. allocated for the refund of registration duty. May I know from the hon. Minister how many people are qualified for that and why is it that over the subsequent years, we have made no provision for that?

Dr. Kasenally: I do not have the figures offhand, but I will inquire and inform the hon. Member.

The Chairperson: We come back to hon. Mrs Labelle.

Mrs Labelle. Thank you very much, Mr Chairperson. I am back to the construction of low cost housing units. 50% of the project will be finalised in December 2010, this is what I read. May I know where the site is for the 450 housing units?

Dr. Kasenally: I have already replied to that question. There has been a delay by the construction company. In fact, I have personally been around all these sites and, as I have said, I am putting pressure on the contractor to do the work.

Mr Ameer Meea: On page 295, under *Rehabilitation of Infrastructure of NHDC Estates*, a sum of Rs87 m. is budgeted, can I ask the hon. Minister if he can give us some details as to which NHDC estates are going to be rehabilitated?

Dr. Kasenally: In fact, I have already replied to that question. This sum of Rs87 m. is meant for infrastructure works and there is also sewerage works. I gave all the lists when I answered this question at the beginning. If the hon. Member is interested, I can give him the details.

Mr Lesjongard: With regard to page 295, under Programme Code 642, item 2822004, 242 *Service Sites*, can we have an indication from the hon. Minister as to whether we have a waiting list for such sites and how many families are waiting for those service sites?

Dr. Kasenally: Sites and services are very popular. There is always a waiting list, but I don't have the list of people or the number of people awaiting this. It was advertised and people come as and when they are required. Invariably there must be a waiting list.

Mr Obeegadoo: A question has just been put on page 295, *Rehabilitation of Infrastructure of NHDC Estates*, I would like the hon. Minister to inform us whether the NHDC complex at Atlee in Curepipe is included within the amount voted for next year, and if not, why not?

Dr. Kasenally: No, Sir.

Mr Obeegadoo: If it was not included, may we know why not? What are the criteria which determine the choice of specific NHDC estates to be included in next year's budget?

Dr. Kasenally: Surveys were carried out last year when the hon. Minister of Finance voted a sum of Rs225 m. as a one-off. So, we had to prioritise; a priority list was drawn and this was put and decided; and maybe next time we can consider it. I must say that the people of all these housing estates are full-fledged proprietors, *propriétaires de plein droit*. We have no right, in fact, to go and repair them, but then as a caring Government we have been doing that.

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, as a matter of clarification, we all know that the NHDC owners are full-fledged owners. We also know the law of the land as regards Syndic which is what it is. Therefore these Syndics do not operate and this is the source of the problem. In the case of Atlee, I just want to know factually since the hon. Minister answered a parliamentary question some time back, suggesting that those that were not included for next year, would be dealt with thereafter, but only an amount of Rs6 m. is budgeted for 2012 and nothing for 2013.

Do we take it that there is a commitment of Government to ensure that such cases be looked into in the following year?

Dr. Kasenally: I did not take any commitment whatsoever; however, we will consider it. Cité Atlee is very cold. We cannot stay unconcerned when these poor people are dripping of cold. This Government will try to see how we can help, but all these cost a lot of money and we have to spend our money most optimally and effectively.

The Chairperson: I will allow a last question on this item. Yes, hon. Lesjongard!

Mr Lesjongard: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. On page 294, Programme Code 642, under item 22160, *Overseas Training*, can the hon. Minister give us an indication of how many officers have already benefitted from overseas training and how many do benefit on a yearly basis?

Dr. Kasenally: Through our friend, the hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs, we have the Malaysian Authorities who have agreed to provide training on a cost sharing basis. I don't know the exact number, but there are certain officers who are going. We are making sure that this is a continuous programme of professional development. For year 2011, the Malaysia Authorities have offered to train four officers from my Ministry.

Ministry of Housing and Lands – Programme Code 642: Social Housing Development (Rs868,601,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

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

Mr Baloomoody: On page 292, Programme Code 643, *New Outline Schemes for Municipal Council Areas operational*, may I know from the hon. Minister where matters stand with regard to this outline operation and does that take into account the new municipalities which Government intends to create in the near future?

Dr. Kasenally: The five urban outline schemes were adopted in the 80s. As far as we are concerned, as at to date, tendering procedures are being finalised for the contract to be awarded shortly. There have been delays as procurement exercise had to be started anew in view of shortcomings of submission. We wish to follow scrupulously all tender procedures for better transparency. Once awarded, the draft scheme will be put on public deposit to allow the public

at large to make comments and representations, which will be ready in 11 months. We are expected to have the operational outline schemes approved by the end of 2010.

Mr Baloomoody: My question is simple. I want to know whether these new outline schemes will include the new towns which Government intends to create.

The Chairperson: I won't allow this question, because there is no indication, as at now, that new towns are going to be proclaimed. There is no Bill, there is nothing, as far as I understand. Can the Minister confirm?

Dr. Kasenally: There is nothing; it is just speculation, hearsay. When we come to the bridge, we will cross it!

Mr Lesjongard: Mr Chairperson, on page 296, item 22130003 - *Studies for Reviews of Urban Outline Schemes*, can we have an indication from the hon. Minister about which urban regions are concerned?

Dr. Kasenally: First of all, I take very strong exception about this *bla-bla-bla*. I am trying to give information as soon as possible. There are five municipal council outlines.

(*Interruptions*)

The Chairperson: Order, please! Hon. Minister, please!

Mr Lesjongard: Mr Chairperson, I am doing my job, and I will continue doing my job. My question is very simple. Can we have the name of the regions concerned? That's what I am asking.

Dr. Kasenally: I have already replied to that question!

Mr Obeegadoo: May I invite the Minister's attention to page 296, item 22130002 - *Hydrographic Surveys by Indian Navy*, would the hon. Minister kindly and calmly tell us what this is about?

Dr. Kasenally: Mr Chairperson, I have already replied with regard to this hydrographic survey before lunch time. In fact, a list of sites has been surveyed. At least, six missions were ongoing with the hydrographic ship, and there are about six areas which have been surveyed.

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, I wanted to know whether this relates to the bathymetric surveys, which the Indian Authorities offered to help us with, in terms of assessing

the depth of our territorial waters. Is this the same thing that we are talking about here? What are these hydrographic surveys exactly?

Dr. Kasenally: Mr Chairperson, this is exactly what it is!

Mr Bhagwan: On page 296, under item *26313091 - Current Grant-Town and Country Planning Board*, can we know from the hon. Minister whether the Board is operational and the number of cases pending? According to my information, there is a backlog there concerning some *litiges*. Can the Minister give us some information as to whether things would be accelerated after the Budget?

Dr. Kasenally: Mr Chairperson, the Board is still fully functional, but there is going to be a reorganisation. The Chairman is the Permanent Secretary of my Ministry. As far as the backlog is concerned, sometimes it is beyond our control, because the lawyers themselves are not free and keep postponing. This is one of the major constraints.

Mr Ganoo: On the same issue *Town and Country Planning Board*, could the hon. Minister tell us whether, in the context of a new planning legislation which the hon. Minister himself has announced and which is in this document, there is any intention to do away with the Town and Country Planning Board and substitute it by another forum, like the Judge in Chambers? Because there have been many complaints in the past about the time that this Board takes to give their ruling on certain issues.

Mr Baloomoody: On the same issue, can I ask the hon. Minister to inform the House how many days it sits per week or how many hours it sits per month, and how many rulings it gives per month?

(*Interruptions*)

The Chairperson: Hon. Aimée, please keep cool!

Dr. Kasenally: Mr Chairperson, in fact, there was a backlog which could be cleared. The backlog can be cleared, because there is no postponement. In fact, there are only a few cases and the Board, on my insistence, had been meeting, at least, once a week, but sometimes twice! I am stating the information I have been given.

Mr Lesjongard: Mr Chairperson, on page 292, with regard to *Sub-Programme 64302 - Land Management, 01:Leasing of State lands P1: Drawing up of new industrial/commercial*

leases, for the year 2011 targets are set, that is, 189 leases to be drawn, but then no targets are found later on. Can we have an indication of how many leases are being drawn at the Ministry on a yearly basis?

Dr. Kasenally: The target for 2011 is 189. 189 lessees have already opted for 60 leases, industrial/commercial, including 12 leases. The remaining will be completed by December 2011.

Mr François: At page 292, under *Programme 643 - Land Management and Physical Planning*, I see that there is a new cadastral system, and there will also be a Bill for planning. I don't see anything about any new legislation. As we know, there is an outdated Land Surveyors Act as well as the State Land Act. In view of the visionary LAVIMS/Cadastral Project, how will the Minister conciliate these shortfalls?

The Chairperson: I take it that the hon. Member's question is whether the Land Surveyors Act and the State Land Act will be amended.

Dr. Kasenally: Mr Chairperson, the new legislation will come up with the LAVIMS project. There will be scanning and uploading of survey plans, as per the new cadastral system. As I mentioned earlier, each parcel of land will be issued with a parcel identification number pin. As per the new cadastral system, all land parcels will be assigned this pin number by the chief surveyor. This will be subject to the Land Surveyors (Amendment) Bill and Cadastre Bill, which will be introduced. I think I just got a final copy of the Bill on my table this morning.

The Chairperson: I will take three last questions; one from hon. Obeegadoo, one from hon. Lesjongard, and one from hon. Uteem.

Mr Obeegadoo: I want to go back to this point I was asking about the hydrographic surveys by the Indian Navy. I understood the Minister to say that this was the same thing as the bathymetric studies, which dates back when I was Minister of Fisheries, 15 years ago. So, may I know when this study will be completed, that is, for the whole of our exclusive economic zone?

Dr. Kasenally: In fact, I mentioned that. I just don't want to say that I have already said it; but I mentioned that our exclusive economic zone covers an area of 42 million square metres. We have been doing it all around Mauritius. I just mentioned the sites. We have Agalega; St

Brandon has been done. In fact, it is unique. We never had it before. Not many countries have got it.

The Chairperson: Which means that the hon. Minister can't, at this stage, tell when it's going to be done?

Mr Obeegadoo: This is Programme-Based Budgeting. We are supposed to translate these matters into indicators, spread over the three years. The question is simple: when?

Dr. Kasenally: We have to be realistic. To have the whole area of our exclusive economic zone will be difficult, but the process is ongoing. We are having a next visit in March or April; the Indian ship is coming. It is an ongoing process and we are doing it. Initially, we will do the whole of Mauritius and the outer islands.

Mr Uteem: On page 297, under item 31132 – *Land Administration, Valuation and Information Management Systems (LAVIMS) Project*, may I know from the hon. Minister when will this project become fully operational and whether any amount has been budgeted to train the staff locally to operate this system?

Dr. Kasenally: The project started in January 2009 and is due for completion in March 2011. Already, a number of our staffs have been trained and this process is ongoing.

Mr Lesjongard: Mr Chairperson, with regard to page 292, *Sub-Programme 64302: Land Management, P4: Issue of Parcel Identification Number (PIN)*, can we have an indication from the hon. Minister as to how many such parcel identification numbers have to be issued for the island of Mauritius and whether he has the required personnel to do the job?

Dr. Kasenally: In fact, the vast majority of it is about 300,000 which - I cannot be so sure - have already been identified and pinned. In the meantime, there have been 100,000 new transactions and this is being taken care of and we have got the necessary manpower which has been trained to do it.

Mr Ameer Meea: Mr Chairperson, again, on the LAVIMS project, on page 288, *Major Achievements for 2010 - Completion of the LAVIMS Project and the National Digital Cadastre will be available for public use as from December 2010*, it is clearly stated here. Now, let us go to page 297; if the project is supposed to be completed and fully operational in December 2010, how come that in Estimate 2011, we have an amount of Rs103,000, 000 in terms of scanning of

deeds/software development, project management, cadastral plans and fieldworks? Can the hon. Minister clarify, please?

Dr. Kasenally: Mr Chairperson, a first extension was granted up to December 2010 on account of an estimated 125,000 additional properties that were added to the scope of the work. Because these had to be put in and there were some problems during the course of users' acceptance component – LAVIMS - the Registrar-General raised concern about certain security loopholes in the system being delivered by the contractor. Consequently, functional specification of deeds components are being modified by the contractor to make it more reliable and thereby prevent any tampering of scanned deeds by unscrupulous users. The implementation of the new features requires additional time; that is why I said, the completion date has, therefore, been extended to March 2011. This explains the extra budgetary provision.

Mr Ameer Meea: Now that we understand there are some problems concerning the LAVIMS project, can I ask the hon. Minister if there is any cost overrun on the project?

Dr. Kasenally: I would not consider them to be cost overrun. These are imperatives which we have to add because we had 125,000 additional properties and up to 5,000 deeds which we had to scan and this is part and parcel of the project.

The Chairperson: Hon. Baloomoody and hon. François, do you have any questions on LAVIMS? We will finish with LAVIMS.

Mr Baloomoody: I will come back to the *Town and Country Planning Board*.

The Chairperson: Which item?

Mr Baloomoody: On page 296, item 26313091, *Current Grant - Town and Country Planning Board*. We are allocating nearly more than Rs8.5 m. to the Town and Country Planning Board which now we know sits only once a week and it is chaired by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry. May we have a list of the members sitting on that Board? What are their allocations, a detailed breakdown of that money, which is costing us around Rs700,000 per month, working four days a week, with lots of backlog?

The Chairperson: The breakdown of the expenses for the Town and Country Planning Board!

Dr. Kasenally: I can assure that each and every rupee which is being spent is being well-spent. They have worked all the way through to clear the backlog and if there is any backlog, there are legal imperatives. There have been 300 appeals not represented by Counsels which have been cleared by the TCPB. In the current year, there are four cases taken at each sitting and it takes time.

Mr Baloomoody: I want to have the list of members sitting on the Board and their allowance. I have not asked for the number of cases.

Dr. Kasenally: This is just why I want to say when we are spending Rs700,000, work is being done. That is why I put that number. This is the output.

Mr Ameer Meea: One question on Land Management. There is an item, *Acquisition of Land*.

The Chairperson: I am sorry; I asked hon. members if they have any questions on LAVIMS, nobody raised their hands. I will take hon. Uteem! I am very sorry!

Mr Uteem: On LAVIMS, Mr Chairperson, may I know from the hon. Minister what was the contract value when the contract was originally awarded and now what is the estimated total cost of the project?

(Interruptions)

Dr. Kasenally: I will circulate it if at all I can get it now. I have nothing to hide. I said, I am all for transparency. You know the way they are putting it, they are trying to impute motives.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Please, let the hon. Minister answer first, and then, if you want to make your point you can do so!

(Interruptions)

Please, hon. Ms Deepalsing! There is no need to support me. If I need you, I will ask help.

Dr. Kasenally: The amount paid to the contractor as at to date has been US\$18,087,000, 575 million, and the balance of contract payable in 2011 will be 75 million.

Mr Ameer Meea: A last question on Land Management. On page 297, item 31410801 - *Acquisition of Land* where there is an estimate of *Rs135,000,000*, can I ask the hon. Minister if he can give us some details as to which lands are going to be acquired and in what regions?

Dr. Kasenally: These are fees for compulsory land acquisition. My Ministry only acquired this land on request from various other Ministries, but mostly from the Ministry of Public Infrastructure for construction of roads which are all over. For example, I have got the Verdun...

The Chairperson: This is an estimate and we can't have any details. This is what I understand.

Mr Ameer Meea: On the same item, can I ask the hon. Minister if the acquisition of land is in relation to the Métro Léger Project?

Dr. Kasenally: So far, it is not under the Métro Léger Project; the Métro Léger Project is supposed to be on the railway track land.

The Chairperson: All right! No problem! Hon. François!

Mr François: Mr Chairperson, one last question; it is a bit technical. As we are moving towards a new modern cadastre which is very good, will the hon. Minister inform us whether Mauritius is moving towards a new geodetic datum or are we using the old one?

The Chairperson: It is a question of policy and I will not allow it.

Ministry of Housing and Lands – Programme Code 643: Land Management and Physical Planning (Rs398,523,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare – Programme Code 521: Policy and Management of Gender Equality, Child Development, Family Welfare and Social Welfare was called.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Hon. Lormus Bundhoo, resume your seat, please! You know why. There is no need for me to tell you more than that. Can we take the vote?

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, at page 302, Programme 521 *Major services to be provided for 2011-2013*, third item *Reporting of progress in achieving gender equality and in*

strengthening children's and women's rights, may I ask the hon. Minister whether there has been any particular survey which has been carried out to evaluate jobs in the civil sector which are reserved to men only? We have talked about Police Band officers, patrolmen at the Civil Aviation and qualifications for women to be appointed charge nurses. There are differences. I would like to know whether there has been any particular work which has been done on this issue.

Mrs Bappoo: I don't think it has been done yet, Sir.

Mr Bhagwan: Sir, at page 302, Programme Code 521 *Major Services to be provided for 2011-2013*, fourth item, *Promoting the welfare and empower local communities through information, sensitisation and training activities at Social Welfare Centres and Community Centres*, can we know from the hon. Minister the total number of social welfare centres and community centres which are operational? What is the annual budget which is being earmarked for the organisation of their activities which are being provided for the coming year and whether provision has been made also for additional staff and the renewal of their equipment? Secondly,...

The Chairperson: Let the hon. Minister answer this question first!

Mrs Bappoo: The question has four parts, 4 answers.

The Chairperson: That's what I am telling. Let the hon. Minister answer this question!

Mrs Bappoo: Concerning social welfare centres, Mr Chairperson, we have in all 53 social welfare centres. They have an annual budget round about Rs120,000 each year for their programme of activities.

As far as community centres are concerned, we have some 130 and the budget allocation is divided in such ways so that it covers activities during the 12 months of the year. There are various programmes of activities. You have welfare activities concerning women, elderly, children, etc. You have programmes pertaining to education, sports, games and a variety of activities. But concerning staffing, if there is any vacancy as far as someone going on retirement or there is any particular programme which needs additional staff, this is being considered. But we have sufficient staff operating all over these 200 centres implementing the various programmes that we have.

The Chairperson: Hon. Bhagwan, one last question from you, I understand.

Mr Bhagwan: I have not asked for the list of activities. It is good that the hon. Minister is informing us of the activities. What is the annual budget that one particular community centre, for example, Albion, receives for its activities?

Mrs Bappoo: For the time being, I have the figures for the social welfare centres. As soon as I get it from the SILWF Division, I will inform the House.

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Mr Chairperson, at page 311, item 22030 *Rent*, we are asked to vote a substantial increase in the rent, more than 100%. Can we have some explanation on that?

Mrs Bappoo: There is a consequent increase on it because there is a problem of staffing at the level of the Ministry where it is now. So, this increase meets additional accommodation which is being provided at the Newton Tower.

Mr Obeegadoo: We are on *Programme 521*, I would like to refer the hon. Minister to page 302 whereby the major services are described and on the issue of *Formulating policy proposals* which is one of the objectives of this programme, and turning to page 306 which describes how it is made operational, indicators and targets. The only element that I can find here is the *PBB Strategic Plan*. May I ask the hon. Minister whether this PBB Strategic Plan relates to Gender Action Plan? And if so, why are the targets set as at June in each of the years 2011, 2012 and 2013? That is not very clear to me.

Mrs Bappoo: As part of the strategic budgeting initiative, the key Ministries for engendering of the Programme-Based Budgeting has been identified. We also have the selected programmes of the PBB with another 5 Ministries. These 5 Ministries were: Civil Service, Finance, Education, Youth and Sports, Labour, Agro-Industry, Social Security and the Ministry of Gender.

Mr Baloomoody: May I take the hon. Minister to page 312, Programme 521, item 22120002 *Fees to Chairman and members of Boards and Committees*? Can I also take the hon. Minister back to page 302 where we talk about *Achievements*? Under item *Community Child Watch Committees*, we find that there has been a Child Watch Committee at Cité Richelieu. May I know from the hon. Minister who are the members of this Child Watch Committee, how they were selected and whether their political affiliation has anything to do for them to be selected to

be a member? May we know what fees these members do receive? Because there is a budget of Rs100,000 which has been budgeted for year 2011. Can I know how much does each member or the Chairperson receive?

Mrs Bappoo: Let me tell you first, Mr Chairperson, that there is no political gains in the Child Watch Committee. All the members are from the *Forces Vives* and the social workers from different risky areas that have been identified and it is the same for Cité Richelieu. All these members work on 100% voluntary basis. There is no fee which is paid to these people. Up to 31 December 2010, we are having 20 of these Child Watch Committees and none of those members are being paid. There is no identification with their membership to any political party. They are all *Forces Vives* and social workers of the region and the final list is finalised in consultation with the people of the region and it gets the approval of the Ministry.

Mr Baloomoody: I appreciate the answer of the Minister. I hope that in practice it will work as she has stated. May we know who are the members of the Board who will get that fee on this item?

Mrs Bappoo: This is another issue that has nothing to do with the Child Watch. This item is payment of fees to the Chairman and members. In fact, this is a new item coming from the Ministry of Finance to our Ministry and I suppose it is for other Ministries also. Payment of fees to the Chairman and members of Bid Evaluation Committee which has been newly created and the fees paid to these people come under this item. It has nothing to do with the social workers. I would like to say also that – there was the question for hon. Bhagwan concerning Community Centres. He is not here. There is no need to answer.

The Chairperson: The Members can just pass on the information.

Mrs Bappoo: I'll give the information. So, 130 community centres and they have an amount of Rs50,000 for their monthly activities and the whole year is fully active.

Mrs Labelle: I am on page 312 under item 22120007 *Fees for Training*. It is a very small amount, but it has been decreased by 50% for the next coming year. I would like to know of which training we are talking about and who gives this training and to whom? Maybe, with your permission, Mr Chairperson, since we are on the same page, under item 31121801 *Acquisition of*

Vehicles, there is an amount of Rs2 m. earmarked, I would like to know how many vehicles are we purchasing, what type of vehicles and for which purpose?

Mrs Bappoo: It is the training on any gender programme and these fees are for the services of resource persons that we have from international consultants who do come for this training.

Mrs Navarre-Marie: Mr Chairperson, I have just one remark regarding item *22120002 Fees to Chairman and members of Boards and Committee*. I can't understand the word 'Chairman' because everyone knows that the worldwide trend today is to use the word 'Chairperson'.

The Chairperson: The Minister has taken note, I am sure.

Mrs Labelle: If at all possible, I would like to receive a reply to my question regarding the acquisition of vehicles.

The Chairperson: Yes.

Mrs Labelle: The question was: how many vehicles we are supposed to purchase and for what purpose? It is under item *31121801 Acquisition of Vehicles*.

Mrs Bappoo: This is for the purchase of a 15-seater van to attend to the different cases at outstations where we have problems with the children and so on.

Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare – Programme Code 521: Policy and Management of Gender Equality, Child Development, Family Welfare and Social Welfare (67,025,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare - Programme Code 522: Women's Empowerment and Gender Mainstreaming was called.

Mr Uteem: Sir, under item *28211 Transfers to Non-Profit Institutions*, may I know from the hon. Minister what criteria is used to allocate funds to these associations.

Mrs Bappoo: This is only a sort of symbolic grant which is given to all associations, members of the National Women's Council. It started with a sum of Rs500 at a time, now, I think, it is Rs2000 per association. There are no criteria, but the association must be a registered association with the Registrar of Associations.

Mrs Labelle: Under the same item 28211028 *Other Current Transfers*. I see Chrysalide Rs1.2m. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether her Ministry sends people to this centre because we know about the work that is being done in this centre. Is there an increased trend for the service offered by Chrysalide?

Mrs Bappoo: Yes, we have regular follow-ups and visits to the centre because, in a way, we are involved in working in partnership with the centre on cases of women who are treated for substance abuse or alcohol. This is the way that we work and as and when it is required we assist them.

Mrs Labelle: I am a bit surprised that the amount has remained the same since years, not only 2010, but it was the same for 2009, and we are budgeting the same amount. We know there is an increase in trend and we are keeping the same amount. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether there are other sources. How can we keep the same amount for five years with an increase in trend for such services?

Mrs Bappoo: This amount, Mr Chairperson, is not the only one for the running of that NGO programme. They raise their own funds and they can also apply to the CSR programme or to whichever programme where funds are available. This is only a support to their funds and their programme, but it is not the hundred per cent expenses for their organisation.

Mr Baloomoody: Under item 22090 *Security*, may we know whether it is a private security firm and, if so, which firm? On the same page, under item 22120 *Fees*, I find that for the next financial year, we have a sum of Rs900,000 for fees. May we know the advice will be in which field and who will be the professional we intend to hire?

Mrs Bappoo: Concerning security, of course, it is security in all the women centres and there is a contract to RSL Security Services Limited.

Mr Baloomoody: As long as it is not SOS Guard Ltd.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Yes, the other item.

(Interruptions)

Order, please! Hon. Bundhoo! If I need help, I will call you. Yes, hon. Dr. Sorefan!

(*Interruptions*)

Hon. Bundhoo, I remind you, please resume your seat!

Dr. Sorefan: At page 313, under item 31112018 *Construction of Women's Centres*, I see no (a) and (b); I just see (c) in bracket. May we know why we do not have (a) and (b)? Is that a missing item?

Mrs Bappoo: I suppose it must be a typing error, Mr Chairperson.

Dr. Sorefan: It can be a typing error, because when you take Notre Dame, the total sum comes to Rs2 m., for this year it is Rs350,000. The total of it is Rs6.6 m. plus Rs350,000. There are missing women centres.

Mrs Bappoo: There is nothing missing. Everything has been completed. It is only a retention fee of Rs350,000 to Notre Dame Women Centre.

Mr Obeegadoo: On the very same issue, can I be enlightened by the Minister...

Mrs Bappoo: Which page?

Mr Obeegadoo: Same issue, *Construction of Women's Centres* on page 313. I know there is only one, therefore, to be built in 2011 or completed in 2011. My question is very simple: how cost-effective is it that we should invest in women's centres? How is a woman's centre different from a community centre, a social welfare centre or a municipal centre?

The Chairperson: Continue your question. I will rule if I have to, please!

(*Interruptions*)

Please, hon. Baloomoody!

Mr Obeegadoo: I think nobody should usurp your role, Sir.

The Chairperson: The hon. Member should put his question!

Mr Obeegadoo: As regards the monies we are being invited to vote next year, I would like to know the justification for having a women's centre, the concept of a women's centre.

Mrs Bappoo: Yes, the hon. Member is right. He has taken the answer from my mouth. The first women's centre, Mr Chairperson, was put up in 1982 by the MMM Government at that time. It was the philosophy of Government to be able to promote for women development and

women programme. There was no question of gender at that time. So, the women's centres were the first sort of meeting place where you can put up programme for women, but now, not because it is a gender equality Ministry, we should close the women's centres. We have to promote more programmes for their empowerment; we have a lot of *rattrapage à faire*. *Il ne faut pas oublier...*

(Interruptions)

Nous sommes dans une société très patriarcale; il y a encore beaucoup à faire pour les femmes. Donc, l'utilité d'avoir des centres de femmes, cela va continuer parce que c'est une question de prestige et de philosophie.

Mr Obeegadoo: My point was very simple. Again, I am very specific, this is not policy, this is spending for next year. 82 was 82, that is 30 years ago. My question is: would these monies for next year not be more appropriately spent on shelters, on places for immediate assistance?

The Chairperson: No. I won't allow this question.

Mr Uteem: Still on the same item 31112018 on the *Construction of Women's Centres* in Notre Dame, may I know from the hon. Minister when was the original contract for the construction of the centre awarded? For how much was it awarded? When is the construction going to be completed and what would be the final cost of this project?

Mrs Bappoo: Let me take the last part, Mr Chairperson, because the centre has already been completed, already inaugurated and it is in operation. I think I may have the details from the staff. There was a problem at the time of its evaluation on project construction which has delayed everything, but the centre is now fully operational. I am informed that the contractor was very, very slow in the construction works. MPI has had several times drawn his attention. Finally, he left the site and a district contractor was appointed by MPI to complete the work, now construction has been completed, the centre is already inaugurated and is in operation.

Mr Uteem: I just heard the hon. Minister talk about what happened with the previous contractor. May I know from the hon. Minister whether the contractor was sued for liquidated damages since he left the site?

Mrs Bappoo: I have to check it. I need a proper question.

The Chairperson: The hon. Minister does not have the information.

Mr Obeegadoo: I refer to page 307. This is the service to be provided which is sectoral gender policy and gender responsiveness and on the indicators we have the issue of *Programmes in the Programme-Based Budget of pilot Ministries engendered*. The Minister referred to this earlier. I would like to know whether, within the same idea of the gender perspective informing policy-making, provisions for next year include this whole idea of setting up a gender desk within each and every one of the Ministries.

Mrs Bappoo: Already implemented this idea! Already there are four Ministries which have completed their gender cells. We are on another set of five Ministries and by the end of 2015 we need to complete all the...

(Interruptions)

It is not so easy to set up the gender cells. The UNDP is providing consultancy, etc. and will have the gender cells put in place in each of the Ministries, but we are going phase-wise, we have completed four, we are working on five others and selecting the five next, and completing the whole lot by 2015.

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, may I have your support on this issue? On *02 P1: number of women sensitised/trained on social issues in line with International and Regional Commitments on women's empowerment and gender equality*. This is for training sessions. I would like to know whether these sessions include speaking to young women and girls in schools which is of critical importance. May I go one step further and ask since the Ministry is that of gender equality whether for next year these sessions will be broadened to include boys in schools who need very much to be exposed to gender issues so that we do not miss an opportunity of producing yet another generation of sexist young males?

The Chairperson: The hon. Member must put his question, please!

Mrs Bappoo: I do agree to this principle. This is what we are doing because we are having our Gender Sensitisation Programme on a national level where we are involving men in it. We have a special programme called 'Men as Partners'; we are targeting the younger generation, that is, the youth. We have the collaboration of my colleague, the Minister of Education to sensitise the students on the same subject.

Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare - Programme Code 522: Women's Empowerment and Gender Mainstreaming (Rs98,275,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare - Programme Code 523: Child Protection, Welfare and Development was called.

Dr. S. Boolell: I would like some clarification on the *Grant to the National Children Council* under the *item 26313053* Rs9 m. on page 313, all the more so that at page 303 the Ministry has an inability to set up a Child Protection Register for successful follow-up, because of lack of human resources and here Rs9 m. are being given to the Children's Council. Can we have some clarifications on those Rs9 m?

Mrs Bappoo: The grant stands as it is, but the question of staffing is something different. We are recruiting additional staff actually. The exercise is on at the level of the PSC. We will then be having some 13 additional staff attached to the Ministry. Then, we will reset our target and priorities about our different programmes, which have been suffering till now because of lack of staff.

Mr Obeegadoo: On the same issue, at page 305, *Programme Code 523: Child Protection, Welfare and Development*, we know what horrendous cases have there been recently. Number in post for this year is 48 and for the next year, funded position, it is only 49.

Mrs Bappoo: I have just said, Mr Chairperson, that, actually, we are recruiting 13 additional family welfare and protection officers who will be joining the team. Actually, the PSC is carrying out the interview exercise. We made an additional request to the Ministry of Finance, and we have been told that, as soon as we get the new recruits, then we will make a special request due to the urgency of the various units, especially the Child Protection Unit; we will make specific requests for additional staff.

Mr Obeegadoo: Am I made to understand, therefore, that the figures given to us here on page 316 are not correct, and that the Ministry of Finance has already agreed to an additional 12 positions, which information is not reflected in the summary of financial resources at page 304?

Mrs Bappoo: The 13 vacancies that I just mentioned have not been included in the figures stated in the Recurrent Budget. I know, because I put questions in the same way. But,

these 13 additional staff will be joining the team and any additional request to the service of our Ministry, especially for the Child Protection Unit, will be made to the Ministry of Finance.

Dr. S. Boolell: Mr Chairperson, at page 313, under item *22120012 Retainer fees to Counsel*, we are being asked to vote a sum of Rs2,250,000. I would like some clarification.

Mrs Bappoo: This includes payment of fees for the Chairperson and members of the Child Mentoring Committee, the District Child Protection Committees and also payment of fees to the child mentors under the Child Mentoring Programme; payment to resource persons for group therapy, for victims of abuse, for Parental Empowerment Programme, *École des Parents* and other such training programmes. The new item added to it is payment to attorneys for the preparation of all legal documents for cases of tardy declaration of birth.

Mr Uteem: Mr Chairperson, on the same page 313, item *27210011 Foster Care*, relates to the benefits in cash. I note that there is suddenly a big increase in 2013, from Rs1.4 m. to Rs14 m. Why is it that, only after three years, the grant will be increased?

Mrs Bappoo: I suppose it's because it has taken some time for the Ministry to put up the Foster Care Programme. But, today, there is a monthly allowance of Rs1500 per child to be paid to the foster parents who take custody of these children. Actually, we have only 40 children placed like that.

Mr Baloomoody: Mr Chairperson, still at page 313, with regard to item *22900912 Running Expenses of Shelter for Children*, we find that there is more than 100% increase. May we know whether we are going to have more shelters built and, if so, where?

Mrs Bappoo: I think I have already answered in one of the parliamentary questions that there is a big problem of placement of children in places of safety. I said in my Budget intervention also that we are coming with a new shelter at Cap Malheureux. Provisions have also been made to cover for the running cost of Cap Malheureux shelter.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, I will come back to item *27210011 Foster Care*. I would like to know how many children are benefiting from the Foster Care Programme for the time being. I have also a question regarding *École des Parents*. If I go to page 304, under Programme 523, we see 'to enhance parent-child interactions, particularly in deprived areas through the

École des Parents project.' May I ask the hon. Minister whether these deprived areas have been identified for next year?

Secondly, who are the persons in charge of this project, how many trainees are engaged in this programme, and what are the qualifications or the training they have received to be a trainer?

Mrs Bappoo: Actually, we have some 40 children in foster families, Mr Chairperson. We have already identified areas in regions at risk for *École des Parents*. At the level of our own Ministry, we have the Child Development Unit and we have trained staff who are putting up the training programme. We have a training manual to meet the training programme with the different modules, which we have already launched in La Valette, Lallmatie, Tranquebar and Granhum together with Riche Mare and the next one coming will be Morcellement St André. We have 15 couples who are following these parenting sessions per region, which are sessions of three hours held twice weekly per region.

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, I refer to page 313, item 31111006 *Construction of Drop-In Centre, GRNW*, which gives the breakdown of recurrent expenditure for Programme Code 523. We, on this side of the House, are very happy to see that the budgeted amount for next year increases by 50%. However, half of this chunk is for a drop-in centre at GRNW. It is supposed to be a drop-in centre and, yet, it is classified under residential building. I would like some clarification from the Minister about what exactly this drop-in centre is to be, and what is the geographical area it will service, and how.

Mrs Bappoo: In fact, it is the construction of a residential centre in GRNW to the tune of Rs23 m. The site has already been identified; there has been a big problem in the launching of bids, procurement and evaluation. The Evaluation Committee has submitted a report; there have been dissenting comments from members of the Evaluation Committee, and so we went back to procurement and MPI. I hope that in 2011 we'll complete the construction of this centre which is a residential drop-in centre in GRNW. The project has been budgeted since last year, but, with so many difficulties, it is still on the programme and I do hope that with the new evaluation exercise going on, the contract will be allocated to the one who will deserve it.

Mrs Navarre-Marie: I would like to know from the hon. Minister for whom is the centre meant, because the drop-in centre was meant for children who are victims of sexual exploitation. What is this residential centre meant for and for whom?

Mrs Bappoo: It is the same; there is no change. It will cater for the rehabilitation and the reinsertion of children victims of commercial and sexual exploitation.

Mr Baloomoody: On the same issue, may I ask the hon. Minister where that centre will be exactly.

Mrs Bappoo: At Grand River North West.

Mr Baloomoody: Where in Grand River North West?

Mrs Bappoo: For that, I will need the site plan.

The Chairperson: We will take two more questions, hon. Dr. Sorefan and then hon. Uteem.

Dr. Sorefan: I will go back to the *Retainer fees to Counsel*. I understand that we have a big problem of recruiting attorneys because of the financial situation. May we know what step has been taken in this Budget to improve the financial situation?

Mrs Bappoo: We just go by the PRB recommendations, Mr Chairperson. Yes, there is a problem, but I cannot change any of the PRB recommendations. We have gone again in the press, but, now, there has been a very good response of attorneys who have responded. The interview will be going on and they will be recruited. There is no problem.

The Chairperson: Last question from hon. Uteem!

Mr Uteem: In respect to page 313, item 28211 *Transfer to Non-Profit Institutions, Charitable Institutions*, may we have from the hon. Minister the name and a breakdown of the amount given to each charitable institution?

Mrs Bappoo: Yes, we have a list of these and I suppose that my staff will be giving it to me. But there is a payment of *per capita* grant to the twelve institutions and the *per capita* grant is allocated to the tune of Rs211.94, plus compensation rate, and as at to date we have 254 children in these institutions. These are *Terre de Paix*, *Foyer Père Laval*, *Foyer Monseigneur Leen*, SOS Children's village, *Bambous et Bassin*, CEDEM, *Crèche Immaculée de Marie*,

Gayasingh Ashram, Mauritius Muslim Orphanage, *Association hébergement pour les personnes inadaptées, c'est-à-dire, Foyer Namaste*, Kadesh and Arise.

Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare – Programme Code 523: Child Protection, Welfare and Development (Rs91,870,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare – Programme Code 524: Family Welfare and Protection from Domestic Violence was called.

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, I said earlier how delighted we were on this side of the House that the budget for child protection had increased. Here, we are very worried because now on family welfare and protection from domestic violence, which is a crucial and very live issue, the funds budgeted have drastically been reduced from Rs84.8 m. to Rs56.1 m.

Apparently, looking at page 314, item 22900 *Other Goods and Services*, this reduction concerns a special collaborative programme for support to women and children in distress, would the hon. Minister kindly explain why this programme is being toned down and what are the consequences thereof?

Mrs Bappoo: First, there has been the merger of two budgetary items, that is, the special collaborative programme and the programme to women and children in distress which was under the Prime Minister's Office. Yesterday, a question was put to the Prime Minister and he answered it. Yes, the programme has been enunciated at the very beginning by the Ministry of Finance to the tune of Rs70 m., it is now reduced to Rs40 m. because, as I said, it is being merged with the item of women and children in distress and according to the number of calls that have been made in the press and the number of projects which have been approved by the technical committees and the steering committees; and finally clearance by the Ministry of Finance. The amount of fees that have been disbursed, I think, is some Rs30 m. to Rs40 m. So, according to these, this year the amount has been projected.

Five projects have been approved to the tune of Rs4 m. disbursed to five NGOs. There have been other projects also, 18 projects to the tune of Rs17 m. and 7 projects to the tune of another Rs5 m. So, according to this trend, the Ministry of Finance has reviewed the amount and

has allocated for this year an amount of Rs40 m. It is ongoing and still more NGOs can make their request when the calls are being made both for Mauritius and Rodrigues.

Mr Obeegadoo: We, on this side of the House, do not agree. If I turn to page 309, the indicators for Family Welfare and Protection Unit, *PI: Percentage of reported cases of victims of domestic violence provided with timely and adequate assistance*, our targets are 100% consistently. So, how can we cut the Budget almost by half and purport to respond to the same 100% of request? May we make a suggestion that the budgetary allocation on this item, given as I say and repeat, the very dramatic and worrying situation concerning cases of domestic violence reported on daily basis, that the budgetary allocation here should be reviewed and reinstated as to what it was last year?

Mrs Bappoo: I think, Mr Chairperson, it will be difficult because this is a special item mainly aiming for the NGOs. They are to come with their projects. There have been Rs70 m., but we have so many calls and so many requests approved under the set criteria put up by the Ministry of Finance. In a way, the Budget for the programme is not so much of a reduced or decreased, it is only the issue concerning this item. I do not have any fear on that.

The Chairperson: This is maintained.

Mr Obeegadoo: A final point on the same issue, Sir, it is not maintained, it is cut, reduced by Rs30 m. Yesterday, when a question was put to the hon. Prime Minister concerning the freeze in staffing for the Ombudsperson for Children, the answer was the support would be extended by the Ministry. In this case which is domestic violence, if we look at the number of posts on page 305 for this very same programme again the number of posts frozen is 33. I am not blaming the Minister as I know that the more funds she has, the happier she would be. So, my question is how, in the next year 2011, will the Ministry be in a position to respond to the challenges of the day with a reduced budget?

Mrs Bappoo: The response to the challenges, Mr Chairperson, is not only according to the number of personnel that we have. I do agree to the question that the more staff we have, the happier we are. But we have also a variety of programmes to be able to tackle the issues of domestic violence, programmes, preventive campaigns, etc. to be able to come to what we call a zero-tolerance campaign.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, I am on page 304, under the same programme 524. I see that there is an innovation that the Ministry is trying to bring. I am talking about the rehabilitation of perpetrators of domestic violence and the Abuser Rehabilitation Policy. But, when I go to the allocation of the staffing, I cannot find anything which goes in line with this new policy. So, can we know rehabilitation of perpetrators of domestic violence by whom, how, and the amount that we are expecting to spend on this particular item?

Mrs Bappoo: This is a very new item which meets our National Plan of Action on the family and we have only launched it a few weeks back, that is, on the International Day of Non-violence. We have retained a consultant to work on that. He is going to program the campaign itself, programming, funding and the responsible staff and then we will have what the final plan of action in hand to decide on the way forward. This is a very new item which meets our national plan of action on the family. We have only launched it a few weeks back on the international day of non-violence and we have retained a consultant to work on that. He is now going to program the campaign itself, the programming, the funding and the number of posts and then we will have what we call the final plan of action in hand. We want to promote it because on one side, we have the victims and on the other side we have perpetrators; we have to rehabilitate them. We will have to do the work, but we will go through the services of this consultant first and then we'll get the final policy which will be well-defined and ready for implementation.

The Chairperson: Hon. Baloomoody, I'll finish with hon. Mrs Labelle on this issue and then I'll come to you.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, I have just learnt that there is a consultant for this issue, but I can't find the fee that is payable to this consultant. Can we have the figure for this?

Mrs Bappoo: I will give it as soon as I'll have the answer.

The Chairperson: Hon. Baloomoody!

Mr Baloomoody: Domestic violence is no doubt on the increase and there is one fact...

The Chairperson: Which item?

Mr Baloomoody: At page 314 under item 21 *Compensation of Employees*, we have item 21110 *Personal Emoluments*; these victims need legal assistance in order to enforce their rights.

Can we know whether we have permanent Legal Advisers in that unit and if not, why not? And whether legal assistance is given to those in need and if so, at what stage of the enquiry?

Mrs Bappoo: We do have assistance of the Legal Advisers at the level of the Ministry; they are being paid on session, if I am not mistaken. I stand corrected when I have the notes. Here it is, we have five resource persons who are paid on a sessional basis to give a helping hand to the cases of victims of violence.

Mr Baloomoody: Are they being paid only to put an appearance report or to assist the victims during the course of the enquiry. We know, in many cases, these people when they go to the Police station, they are maltreated and when they go to other units, they are told to go from here to there.

The Chairperson: The hon. Member has made his point.

Mr Baloomoody: My question is: On what stage?

Mrs Bappoo: I need to check it because I have already given the other details to the hon. Member, but I need to confirm whether it is just at the stage of providing legal counselling only or they ...

The Chairperson: I think it is more a question on policy. The hon. Minister has made her point and I presume that the Minister is going to look into it.

Mrs Bappoo: Mr Chairperson, it is already there because they give the counselling and they assist also the case.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, still on this Programme 524, since the activities are being increased under this programme, when I look at page 316, though there is a decrease in the number of Family Counselling Officers as well as Protection Officers, there is a slight increase in this Budget. Can the hon. Minister explain that to us?

Mrs Bappoo: Yes, I know there is a slight decrease, but we are trying to make our case. We are having I think one more psychologist coming and gradually we'll make our case to the Ministry of Finance.

The Chairperson: I take two last questions, one from hon. Obeegadoo and then I'll come back to you.

Mr Obeegadoo: At page 309, if I can go back to the point that I was making earlier. On Programme 524 Services to be provided and then Indicators under P1 and P2, implementation of recommended actions and then cases attended to, may I, again, appeal to the hon. Minister that these indicators be revised to include gender awareness sessions in schools? If we want to be effective in spending next year's money, I am talking about the amounts budgeted, we need to convince young boys and girls that domestic violence is not normal and is not an acceptable practice. We have got to deal with defences against domestic violence in the minds of our young people right now. So, can I appeal ...

The Chairperson: The hon. Member has made his point. I think it is not a question, but a suggestion which I am sure the hon. Minister is going to consider.

Mrs Bappoo: I am going to consider, yes, of course.

Mr Baloomoody: On page 314, under item 27210, *Social Assistance - Benefit in Cash*, may I know in what circumstances these benefits are given to victims of domestic violence?

Mrs Bappoo: It is the Families in Distress Scheme. It provides financial assistance to widows and widowers and also provides financial assistance to parents or guardians who have lost a child due to any fatal accident. There are different schemes, one of Rs3,000, one-off grant of Rs9,000 to widows who have lost their husband in dramatic circumstances: murder, electrocution, drowning, shipwreck, etc. Another one-off grant of Rs9,000 for widows who have lost their spouse in very dramatic conditions and this is the item which is assistance to Families in Distress Scheme.

Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare - Programme Code 524: Family Welfare and Protection from Domestic Violence (Rs56,150,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare - Programme Code 525: Social Welfare Community-Based Activities was called.

The Chairperson: There has been an amendment by the hon. vice-Prime Minister yesterday which was circulated and we are at Programme 526. It is a typing error as mentioned by the hon. Minister. This was circulated yesterday.

Mr Obeegadoo: I have a general concern, Mr Chairperson, when we vote this amount for next year. Social Welfare...

The Chairperson: Which item is the hon. Member referring to?

Mr Obeegadoo: Programme 526, I'll take the general item, the amount we are voting, which is Rs221,275,000 on page 314, the total amount being allotted. The Social Welfare Centres in the old days used to be at the Social Security when the hon. Minister was Minister of Social Security and now it comes to the Ministry of Gender Equality. My concern is, looking at the activities as reflected on page 310, vocational skills, capacity building, training in income-generating activities; for our money to be cost effective, there has to be very close coordination with the Ministry of Social Integration, with the Ministry of Education and Human Resources. So, I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether there is indeed a coordination mechanism to ensure that there is no overlapping that we spend the money efficiently and effectively. A supplementary question is: who is actually going to dispense this training? Am I to understand that it is the Ministry of Gender Equality that is going to dispense vocational training to people?

Mrs Bappoo: There is coordination between all Ministries and especially the centres are being utilised very often by other Ministries also for their programme. Actually, we have lots of requests from the Ministry of Health and other Ministries, even from the Ministry of Social Integration. There is a coordination of work from our programme, but as others also use it for the community, they have access to these community centres. And then we have a lot of coordination work and joint programme together with other institutions. For example, when we are speaking about vocational training or school drop outs in the areas where children are not going to school, even during weekend or after school hours, special programmes are being organised at these centres by resource persons being paid on sessional basis, just to cater and help these children in very poor and deprived areas. But we are reviewing also, with the Ministry of Social Integration, how these centres will be of utmost use to the welfare of the community at large?

The Chairperson: Hon. Mrs Labelle!

Mr Obeegadoo: I have a question, Mr Chairperson, if I may be allowed. My question was a very direct one: who provides the vocational training, resource persons picked up in an *ad*

hoc manner or they are requested to address to the MITD for qualified personnel to provide quality training for employability?

Mrs Bappoo: More often it is through the MITD because since the time they are there, they have had joint programmes with us for the training.

Mrs Labelle: I am on page 310 under programme 526. I am looking at the performance indicators. I think my colleague has catered for *P1*. We are told that there will be 36,000 people who will be touched by this training programme, that is, nearly 3000 per month. How, where and by whom? It is very difficult to grasp that. Also *P2 Number of people trained in income generating activities*, 20,500 for this year. We have a figure for last year. I don't know whether the hon. Minister has the revised figure because it was an estimate. Do we have the revised figure of how many people have benefitted from that and the number of participants in *Recreational and Supportive Programmes*? We have *Programmes on social cohesion, unity, peace and harmony*. Maybe we can have some details on these programmes and how 162,500 personnes vont être atteintes et surtout si 127,000 ont été atteintes pendant une année, si mon calcul est bon, cela nous fait à peu près 10,000 personnes par mois. I am surprised by this figure. Moreover, *P2 Number of participants in programmes on community awareness*, c'est 100,000 comparé à 70,000. Est-ce qu'on peut avoir des détails, quand, comment et par qui?

Mrs Bappoo: This would be a very lengthy answer, Mr Chairperson, because there are many programmes and they are all very much involved with the participation of the community, be they the youth, women or men. I will just take one example of the average attendance in a social welfare centre. You might be having 50 persons participating in a programme and you have 56 centres. If you see for 12 months of the year, you can easily reach 36,000. The social welfare centres and the community centres are big networks of popular programmes with the community and we do achieve these numbers.

Mrs Labelle: One last question on this issue, Mr Chairperson. I am sorry to insist. I have made a rapid calculation. This brings me to nearly 313,000 people under these programmes. I think it is more than half of our adult population of the country. I can say the all adult population of Mauritius is attending this programme except Members of this House, I presume.

The Chairperson: No, we won't argue on this issue. The hon. Member has made her point and the Minister answered. Is there any other question?

Mrs Labelle: On page 317 under item 526 *Office Care Attendant*, may I know whether these attendants do replace drivers also? I don't see any driver under this programme, but we have drivers working under this programme, I think, and if so, can we have an average of overtime paid to the persons who also assume the duty of drivers.

Mrs Bappoo: I don't have the answer right now. I need details from the staff. I'll circulate it.

The Chairperson: Last question on that item.

Mr Baloomoody: With regard to item 28211022 *Operation Costs - Social Welfare Centre* at page 314, if we look at the objective, we know that one of the aims is capacity building, training programme on social cohesion and in income generating activities. I take it that these centres are equipped with certain equipment. May I ask whether they are equipped with specialised equipment for training of these people and whether they are properly maintained and if so, by whom?

Mrs Bappoo: There are several equipments being used, but these centres have their grant, their recurrent budget, they manage the operational cost of their centre *par rapport aux équipements aussi*. There is no problem for them, they look after their maintenance, they take care of everything, but there are two different managements. The social welfare centres are mainly for the Social Welfare Division with the Commissioner and the community centres are for the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund Management which takes care of whatever equipment is indeed for the training programme.

Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare – Programme Code 525: Social Welfare Community-Based Activities (Rs221,275,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

At 4.36 p.m. the sitting was suspended.

On resuming at 5.17 p.m. with the Deputy Speaker in the Chair.

Ministry of Tourism and Leisure - Programme Code 341: Policy and Management for Tourism and Leisure was called.

Mr Baloomoody: Mr Chairperson, at page 326, item 21110005 *Extra Assistance*, a budget of nearly Rs4 m. has been allocated for this. May we know what extra assistance we are talking about and to whom this special allowance will be paid?

Mr Bodha: Mr Chairperson, from the information I have, it is extra assistance for payment of salaries of advisers to the Ministry.

Mr Baloomoody: May we know how many advisers there are at that specific unit? Can we have their names and the allowance given to each?

Mr Bodha: This will be circulated. I have personally requested from the hon. Prime Minister for three advisers.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Bhagwan!

Mr Bhagwan: I would like to talk on page 327, *Contribution to World Tourism Organisation* and *Contribution to Regional Tourism Organisations of Southern Africa (RETOSA)*. I will start with the RETOSA. Can the hon. Minister inform us for the Rs3,100,000 we contribute, whether there has been - we are nearly ending this year - any meeting apart from the contribution? What does that organisation, I would say, make us...

(*Interruptions*)

Je n'ai pas terminé ! Calme !

Mr Chairperson, I would appeal to you, if we want to do our work correctly - which everybody wants - can you please advise certain hon. Members...

The Chairperson: We will take care of all these.

(*Interruptions*)

Order, please! The hon. Member must put his question!

Mr Bhagwan: ... not to intervene, '*sinon mo pou vinn mauvais !*'

(*Interruptions*)

The Chairperson: No, please! There is no need! The hon. Member should put his question!

Mr Bhagwan: I will deal with you, don't worry. So, apart from RETOSA, what are the...

(Interruptions)

'Taler mo pou envoye toi La Tour Koenig!'

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Hon. Bhagwan, please! Address the Chair!

Mr Bhagwan: They cannot make comments!

The Chairperson: No, we are going to take care of these, don't you worry! I told the hon. Member that he is under my protection.

(Interruptions)

Mr Bhagwan: I know. I don't have any lessons to take from you!

(Interruptions)

Not you, with due respect.

I would like to know what has been the World Tourism Organisation's contribution to us apart from the contribution we pay to these organisations.

The Chairperson: If the hon. Minister will bear with me, is there any more questions on Programme 341?

Mr Bodha: Yes, Mr Chairperson.

The Chairperson: We will take all the questions if the hon. Minister does not mind and then he can just note it down. I will try to see if we can work that way. Yes, hon. Obeegadoo!

Mr Obeegadoo: My first question relates to the programme objective.

The Chairperson: On which page?

Mr Obeegadoo: Page 320, *Monitoring of the Tourism Industry and for assisting in formulation of appropriate policies and strategies in the tourism sector*, and on page 321 this is repeated, *Formulate policies related to tourism and leisure that can be fully costed and financed and ensure implementation thereof*. Now, looking at page 323, I ask myself how this translates

into operational objectives with a time frame, with time bound targets. Unfortunately, this is one of the Ministries where it is very general and there is no mention of the PBB Strategic Plan. So, I would like to ask the hon. Minister if this PBB Strategic Plan relates to the very *raison d'être* of the Ministry which is policies and strategies that are costed and implementable or else, would he consider – in the spirit of this PBB budgeting – that we should have an appropriate operational objective with indicators?

Mr Ramano: A la page 326, toujours sous l'item 341 *Compensation of Employees*, concernant le nombre d'employés tombant sous la *Tourism Authority*, je voudrais savoir quelle est la compensation qui a été payée et le nombre de travailleurs qui sont toujours sous contrat sur un *month to month basis*?

The Chairperson: Hon. Minister, whenever you feel that you can't bear more questions, you just let me know.

Mr Bodha: As regards RETOSA, we had two high officers who came to Mauritius and they requested Mauritius to be, once again, in the forefront of RETOSA because, as you are aware, at some point in time, Mauritius was the Chair of the Ministers of SADC and we did a lot.

As regards WTO, Mauritius being one of the top leading destinations of the world, I think we have always been a show case and we have had consultancies, trainees, technical assistance and publications as regards challenges and statistics. We are part of an international organisation because we are a world player.

Concerning the PBB objectives - the formidable question of hon. Obeegadoo - what I can say is that the tourism industry has very set objectives as regards marketing and number of tourists which can be verified every week.

As regards the promotion budget, it is being earmarked on a weekly basis. For the whole budget, for the whole year, all the destinations are already known. The objectives are very clear and we can monitor them every week, in fact, because we are having the passenger arrivals every week.

As regards the question of hon. Ramano - the *compensation*, in fact, he has put the question differently; he is asking what has happened to the cleaning unit. We had about 100 people who are on contract and about 55 have been...

The Chairperson: Cut short, please! I think there was a parliamentary question on that issue.

Mr Bodha: I am just saying that the Ministry for Social Integration has taken about 55 and the Ministry of Local Government about 25. We are left with 15 and the squad is doing all that can be done to polish the Mauritius tourism products.

Mr Ramano: Je voudrais savoir par rapport à la provision qui a été faite, ce qui a expliqué le retard en ce qui concerne le paiement des salaires pour ces employés pour le mois de septembre et aussi d'octobre.

The Chairperson: This has nothing to do with budget appropriations.

Mr Ramano: Si la provision a été faite, pourquoi le retard dans le paiement ?

The Chairperson: It is for next year.

Mr Baloomoody: I would like to know whether there is any member of the staff of that department who has not received his salary. If it is so, how many?

The Chairperson: Yes, I can allow this question.

Mr Bodha: The answer is no.

The Chairperson: Yes, any more questions?

Mr Obeegadoo: In relation to the vote for the Minister at page 329, the Minister has rightly spoken about the need to set up an Economic Intelligence Unit at his Ministry which, of course, we fully support. May we be told where provision is made either funding-wise or staff-wise for the setting up of such a unit?

Mr Bodha: In fact, the funding will come from the extra assistance.

Ministry of Tourism and Leisure – Programme Code 341: Policy and Management for Tourism and Leisure (Rs32,555,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Tourism and Leisure – Programme Code 342: Sustainable Tourism Industry was called.

Mr Bhagwan: I have two or three questions under this item. In sub-programme 34202, can I take up on this item of Tourism Authority at page 327? I start with *Construction of*

Touristic and Leisure Infrastructure (Tourism Signage Programme) item 31113016. A sum of Rs3 m. is being earmarked, can the Minister later on circulate a list of the places where this signage has been placed. I think it is a good project, but there must be uniformity. Can the Minister let us know whether a survey has been carried out for the coming programme? And, if I can make a plea, not to forget our islets and our mountains, these are all touristic places.

Secondly, under item *Upgrading of Touristic and Leisure Infrastructure*, can the Minister inform us whether concerning this *Upgrading of Touristic and Leisure Infrastructure*, places have been earmarked? What are the touristic and leisure infrastructures and where are they situated?

As regards the *Placement of Buoys*, it is a very good project. Can we know where have we reached? I can see a sum of Rs500,000 only being earmarked. Are we completing the project, which I don't think so? For 2012, a sum of Rs2,000,000 is being earmarked, so why the sum of Rs500,000? We want some explanations.

My last question is the *Tourism Authority*, this big "bebette" where lots of problems have occurred. Can the Minister inform us whether he is agreeable being given that we are asked to vote Rs 35m. I will not go into the last year's budget to ask Government about the office of good governance falling under the Prime Minister's Office, that is, to conduct a survey or to make an in-depth inquiry of the running of that authority. *Il y a pas mal de choses qui se sont passées ces dernières années et je demanderai au ministre s'il peut demander à cette section de good governance of PMO de faire une enquête.*

Mr Bodha: Je vais faire circuler tout ce que l'honorable membre a demandé avec plaisir. L'honorable membre a toujours de bonnes propositions. Il a toujours fait une excellente corrélation entre le tourisme et l'environnement.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Order, please!

Mr Bodha: As regards the signage problem and the other projects, I am placing the information in the Library as well. As regards the *Buoys*, from what I understand, I think we have reduced the budget because most of the programmes have already been implemented. What is left is going to be implemented, that is, we had a bigger budget before.

As regards the Tourism Authority, I thank the hon. Member for his concern about good governance and, in fact, the contract of the cleaning unit was with the Tourism Authority and they were being paid from the Tourism Fund which is another fund. What we are going to do, in fact, is that contract of the cleaning unit will be with the Tourism Fund and the Tourism Authority will do what the law provides for, that is, the licensing, regulating and enforcement of the law and it will be done in good governance. What we are doing, in fact, is that we want to clear the backlog and then we will be able to process the applications as and when required in the shortest delay. A lot of people invest a lot and then they require the permit to be given as soon as possible. We have done an exercise.

Mr Lesjongard: With regard to *Programme 342, Sustainable Tourism Industry*, that is, activities or cultural events to be held at La Citadelle. Can we have an indication of what type of events we are talking about?

The Chairperson: Which programme are you referring to?

Mr Lesjongard: I would like to talk on page 323, *Programme 342, Sub-Programme 34201: Improvement & Diversification of Tourism Product, 03: Promotion of Cultural Tourism, P1: Number of cultural events at la Citadelle that fully cover costs*. Can we have an indication from the hon. Minister about what type of events will be organised there, and which institution will be responsible for the organisation of those events? I believe the Minister is aware that cultural activities in the past have been cancelled because of protests from inhabitants of the area with regard to noise pollution. Can the Minister inform the House whether these problems have been addressed?

Mr Bodha: Mauritius, Mr Chairperson, never had a cultural programme which was a showcase of its tourism industry. We are a five-star tourism industry, but we don't have a five-star cultural product to, in fact, encompass this industry. That becomes a must, so that when you come to Mauritius, it's a must-see. This is what we want to do at La Citadelle, that is, a world-class sound and light show, with the best artists of Mauritius. In fact, we have hired the services of a screen writer, and this show is going to be - the Prime Minister also wanted it - for the National Day ceremony on the first day. So, we are working on a sound and light show, which we are going to showcase every night, with a dinner, at La Citadelle, for about 300-400 tourists,

to get them out of their hotel and to have this five-star tourist cultural product. We are working on it, and it is due for March.

With regard to the interesting question that my hon. colleague has asked about the noise, each and every time we have had events at La Citadelle, the police stated that the events should not end beyond ten o'clock at night. So, I think that we will be able to be within that limit.

Mrs Labelle: I am on page 327 under Sub-Programme *34201 Improvement and Diversification of Tourism Product*, item *22130 Studies and Surveys*, there is a sum of R1 m. Can we know in which particular field are the surveys or studies carried out? With your permission, I would like to go back to this event at La Citadelle on page 323. I think there are two events that are being scheduled for next year. The figure of 2 is here. The hon. Minister has given us some details on one event. May we know about the second one that is being proposed?

Mr Uteem: Under item *22130 Studies and Surveys*, I just want to know whether any contract has been allocated in respect of these studies and surveys.

Mr Bodha: As regards research and survey, we need a thorough survey of the perception of the destination and how people feel after having been to Mauritius. We are going to carry this out. At the end of their stay, we want the tourists to tell us what was their perception of accommodation, leisure, nightlife, shopping, the welcome and service.

As regards the shows, the first one is going to be a show on what Mauritius is as a gift to the world; this extraordinary intercultural harmony that we can showcase to the world in dances, ballet and jazz; what we are as a formidable people. The second one is most probably going to be a classical Paul et Virginie show, because it belongs to Mauritius.

Mr Lesjongard: I go back to the same item. Can I ask the hon. Minister whether the organisation of those events will be contracted out or will it be organised by his Ministry? How will the selection of artists participating in those events be carried out?

The Chairperson: I'll allow the first part of the question. The second part will be more or less a question of policy.

Mr Bodha: We want to take the best artists of Mauritius and, in fact, the idea is to have a national troupe with the best artists of Mauritius.

As regards the logistics about sound equipment and lighting, this will be conducted under my Ministry and we will go by all the procedures and tenders required.

Mr Bhagwan: With regard to Sub-Programme 34202 *Regulation and Control of Tourism Related Activities*, there were two organisations which were set up - two monsters - namely Events Mauritius and Discover Mauritius. Nous le savons tous. C'est dans le domaine du public. Nous avons posé pas mal de questions. C'est l'argent public. C'est le budget que nous sommes appelés à voter. Le ministre avait pris des engagements de revoir - c'est-à-dire effacer ces deux organisations - ou venir *with new proposals*. At a time when we are being asked to vote the budget of his Ministry, can the hon. Minister inform the country and the population what has happened in the past with these two organisations *où il y avait pas mal d'Ali Baba?*

(*Interruptions*)

Je ne cite pas de nom.

(*Interruptions*)

Ali Baba is not unparliamentary. Crooks!

The Chairperson: We know the context; the word is being used in Mauritius. Please withdraw!

(*Interruptions*)

The hon. Member makes his point without giving the word.

Mr Bhagwan: I have not finished, Mr Chairperson. It is public money. I said 'crooks'.

The Chairperson: No, the hon. Member can make his point without...

Mr Bhagwan: But public money was being dilapidated. Everybody knows that vehicles were being used...

The Chairperson: The hon. Member must put his question, please.

Mr Bhagwan: Let me finish, Sir. This is public money.

The Chairperson: No, it is not debate time; I am sorry.

Mr Bhagwan: I am asking your indulgence because it is very serious. We are being asked to vote money, and I know what the views of the Minister are. Can the Minister inform

the population, the House, the country about his intention with regard to these two organisations, namely Events Mauritius and Discover Mauritius? Again, in the name of transparency, is the Minister agreeable to ask, within Government, the office of good governance, which is making good work these days, to have a thorough investigation on the running of these two organisations, where public money has been massively invested and misused?

Mr Bodha: Mr Chairperson, in fact, Events Mauritius and Discover Mauritius are two companies, and their funding has nothing to do with the budget, but...

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Order! Let the Minister answer, please!

Mr Bodha: I can provide the extra information, but it has nothing to do with the budget, funding has nothing to do with the budget. I would like to say one thing. As regards Events Mauritius, it is no longer an event. The organisation of events is being done under the Ministry, like *Le Festival International Creole*. Discover Mauritius is different because it has a number of legal contracts with a number of private companies, like leases. For example, there are some lessees at La Citadelle, some lessees at l'île Plate, and we are, in fact, seeing that Discover Mauritius stays as a company in relation to those contracts and not beyond that.

Mr Bhagwan: In the last Director of Audit's report - I can table a copy - the Director of Audit made very serious remarks concerning the sublease of a land which was leased through the Minister of Tourism/Government at l'île Plate. The Director of Audit severely condemned the subletting and requested the Ministry to initiate action. Even the Minister of Agriculture replied in a parliamentary question. What is the latest...

The Chairperson: I am a bit lost. I want to know under what item the hon. Member is raising that question.

Mr Bodha: You ruled it rightly. In fact, what I would like to say is that, my colleague and myself, we are working with the SLO as regards the legal implications of that lease.

Mr Obeegadoo: On page 322, under Programme Code 342 - *Sustainable Tourism Industry*, I note with interest that the budgetary provisions are to increase from Rs43.8 m. to Rs56.4 m. This appears to be attributable to item 34202 *Regulation and Control of Tourism Related Activities*.

I note from page 327 that, in fact, this is the Tourism Authority. So, may we have some explanations as to what would justify this significant increase in budgetary resources?

Mr Bodha: This industry today - I said it the other day - is 1 billion euros and it concerns about thousands of operators. If we need to keep the quality and if we need to see to it that people go by procedures and criteria, we have to enforce the regulations and supervise the functioning of the industry. The other day, I just said it, for example, for Ile aux Cerfs, the turnover is Rs500 m. So, we still have a number of activities which are not regulated, like kite surf, dolphin watching and wind surf. I have the breakdown here.

As regards the previous question, this is for the salaries of staff, the monitoring and enforcement and pleasure craft. Today, we are having a new density as regards the use of the sea, the use of the pleasure crafts and all the activities within the industry. So, it involves the licensing, the computerisation project, Rs6 m., utilities and others. But I think we have got about Rs10 m. more and it is associated with the computerisation of the system, that is, to see to it that everybody who is in that industry is registered and can operate according to rules and regulations.

Mr Obeegadoo: Can I ask for some clarification on this? We have Rs13 m. more. To be exact, it is Rs13 m. additional. The staff, according to the same page 322, does not increase. In fact, there is one post less. Are we to understand that we cannot have better implementation, that the staff is being reduced? Are we to understand that the Rs13 m. is being requested essentially for computerisation?

Mr Bodha: Computerisation, registration and enforcement.

Mr Obeegadoo: With lesser staff? At page 324, Sub-Programme 34202, *P:1 Number of bungalows, dealers and tourist establishment inspected*, I would like to know what is the total number for next year. For instance, we have been told that 1,100 such establishments will be inspected. May we know 1,100 out of a total of what?

Mr Bodha: I would need the figure, but just to give you an example....

The Chairperson: We can wait for the figures and take the question of hon. Dr. Sorefan so that there is no duplicity.

Mr Bodha: Mr Chairperson, if I may. On the Tourism Authority, we have additional posts; there are tourist wardens, IT officers, research and internal auditors. For the monitoring, we have a figure here. For example, for inspection we carried out 758; queries answered: 200. We want to be very user-friendly, because it is a very sensible industry. The Tourism Authority, in fact, is at the apex of the industry, regulating the whole industry and in a very user-friendly manner enforcing the rules and regulations for the industry to run smoothly and all the activities are done as they should be done.

Mr Obeegadoo: If I understand correctly what the Minister is telling us, the figures here concerning funded posts relate only to posts on the establishment of the Ministry, whereas the increased allocation to the Tourism Authority is partly explained by an increase in the number of posts, not on the establishment of the Ministry, but at the Tourism Authority. Is that right?

Mr Bodha: Yes.

Mr Obeegadoo: In that case, since for this ongoing year 2010, there has been a perceived abuse in the application of funds to paint dustbins, walls, lampposts and trees, all of the same colour, can we have an undertaking from the Minister that in voting additional funds, these funds will not be misappropriated for such purposes?

Mr Bodha: I already said so, Mr Chairperson. I said that, as regards to the cleaning unit, the contract was the Tourism Authority; the funding was from the Tourism Fund. What we have done now is that for this cleaning unit, the workers have a contract with the Tourism Fund; they will have nothing to do with the Tourism Authority which will be a regulator of the industry. For the 10 million, I would like also to say that, in fact, it is own generated funds, because the Tourism Authority, every year with all the licences contributes to the Consolidated Fund. I need to have the figures.

The Chairperson: I think the hon. Minister has replied to the question. We will take hon. Dr. Sorefan.

Dr. Sorefan: On page 327, under item 22130 *Studies and Surveys*, tourism is one of the pillars of our economy. I understand from the Minister that the feedback from tourists will be through questionnaire. May I know whether the questionnaire will be prepared by a professional under contract or in-house?

Mr Bodha: Of course, we will have a professional.

Dr. Sorefan: May we know if he will be on contract?

Mr Bodha: We will go by procedures.

Mrs Labelle: On page 327, under item *31113416 Upgrading of Touristic and Leisure Infrastructure*. With regard to *l'ancien Musée de la SMF* at Vacoas, where, I think, there was a project of renovation at a particular point in time, has this project been finalised? Was the amount for renovation works included in the amount earmarked for last year? How much was spent? What is the use which this Ministry is making of this infrastructure for the time being?

Mr Bodha: Mr Chairperson, with your permission, I'll wait for the answer.

Ministry of Tourism and Leisure – Programme Code: 342 Sustainable Tourism Industry (Rs56,452,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

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

Mr Obeegadoo: On page 320, under *Code 343 Destination Promotion*, my first question relates to the new airlines mentioned on page 319. Since destination promotion presupposes – I presume – a certain segment of high-income tourists, may we know some more about these airlines Edelweiss airlines and Transaero airlines? What sort of market we expect to be tapping there in respect to the destination Mauritius?

Mr Bodha: Mr Chairperson, the Tourism Authority, in fact, collects about Rs75 m. from licences every year.

As regards the ex-SMF museum, it was funded by the Tourism Fund and we are thinking, in fact, of how to use the facilities that we have.

As regards the survey, it will be conducted with the help of the Central Statistical Office.

Concerning the air access, I totally agree with the hon. Member. Once we have created the desire for somebody to come to Mauritius, we should provide air access. The hon. Prime Minister yesterday mentioned that. In fact, we are working on hubbing Mauritius with Asia and one of the proposals which the hon. Prime Minister, in fact, made was the 14 flights to

Singapore; we are also thinking of Kaone; we are thinking of India. In the meantime, in January, we are having Transaero from Moscow; we have the Edelweiss from Switzerland.

As regards air access, we'll continue with our policy of no charters; we will continue with the scheduled flights.

Mr Obeegadoo: The hon. Minister misunderstood me. I was talking about the nature of these airlines. The tourist segment we are aiming for is not mass tourism; it is high income tourists. So, we can't go through airlines like Ceraironair which carry lower income tourists. My question was: can the hon. Minister tell us something about Edelweiss airlines and Transaero airlines, what segment are we reaching out to?

Mr Bodha: The air access is targeted towards that segment of the industry.

Mr Bhagwan: As regards the Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority, we are also concerned about that organisation. We are being asked to vote Rs390 m. which is quite a lot of money. Can the hon. Minister inform the House, in view of the diversification in China, whether it is earmarked to have an office in China? I am asking the MTPA to let us know later on what are the sub offices which MTPA has in Europe and elsewhere.

Thirdly, during the past years, we, in Parliament, are asked to vote massive sums of money - and the MTPA is like a *fourtou* - and out of money voted for the MTPA, all sorts of activities which are not within the ambit of the MTPA are being organised and funds are even diverted. Can I ask the hon. Minister, in view of the new trend in the tourism sector, whether it is not time to have an overhaul of that MTPA which was created in 1995? I will also appeal to the hon. Minister if he can request the good governance section of the Prime Minister's Office to make an inquiry about the amount of funds used during the past five years at the MTPA *au nom de la transparence*?

Mr Bodha: I totally agree with the hon. Member as regards the use of MTPA funds. Funds should be used for the promotion of the destination and this is what we are doing. We are going to circulate – if the hon. Member is interested – how we are spending the money on each market. When it comes to China, I would like to say just two figures. 45 million Chinese are travelling every year and we have 6,000. The possibility is immense, but we need to have a

flight. We are not yet towards having an office in China because having an office in Shanghai or Beijing is going to cost us a lot. What we are going to do first is to increase the critical mass.

As regards Russia and India, we will have specific budgets. In fact, you will see Rs340 m. and Rs50 m. Rs340 m. is for the source markets, that is, the markets we already have and Rs50 m. is for the new markets. So, that's how we are going to spend the money. I would like to say that I have talked to the vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and I have said that it is my personal commitment that the money will be well used. Otherwise, he would have decreased the sum.

Mr Lesjongard: Mr Chairperson, at page 328, item 26313047 *Special Programme for Emerging Markets*, can we have an indication from the hon. Minister as to what type of special programme we are talking about and where will those programmes be held?

Mr Bodha: For example, the emerging market of India, we have been into weddings, golf, we have been in Russia as regards kite surfing, windsurfing, honeymooning, golf and we are also thinking of the shopping hub later. So, this is a focused marketing. And this is in the emerging markets of Russia, India and China.

Mr Ramano: M. le président, toujours sous l'item 34301 *Country Promotion*, est-ce que c'est possible que le ministre nous donne des détails en ce qui concerne les compagnies qui ont bénéficié d'*emergency tendering* au niveau de la MTPA, le nombre et aussi pour quel contrat ?

Mr Bodha: From my personal knowledge, I am not aware of emergency tendering, but I will just check. Otherwise, I would like to say that as regards the PR companies, there was a tender for the PR companies for each destination.

Mr François: Mr Chairperson, at page 328, under Programme 343: *Destination Promotion*, may I ask the hon. Minister how many markets for Rodrigues are taken on board by the MTPA and secondly, how many new emerging ones will be considered for more visibility of Rodrigues?

Mr Bodha: I thank the hon. Member for this question. In fact, Rodrigues is on board on the main fairs in Berlin, Italy, England, France and everywhere. We are going to Rodrigues next week to see to it that Rodrigues is part and parcel of the Mauritian product in the emerging markets for the next year.

Mr Baloomoody: Mr Chairperson, at page 328, under sub-programme 34301: *Country Promotion*, in fact, we are spending quite a lot of money for the new markets. Can I ask the hon. Minister whether a survey has been carried out with regard to our existing hotels and whether they are adapting to the needs of these people in a specific market when we know the needs of the Chinese are much different than the needs of the European, be it for Russian compared to Indian?

Mr Bodha: It is an interesting analysis. We have a European centered product. We want to go to the new emerging markets of India and China and the Indian product is not yet there. That's why we have gone into niche like weddings and golf. The Chinese product is not here. The Chinese, for example, like to have dinner at 6.00, Karaoke at 8.00 and casino at 9.00. So, we are working with some of the hotels that are prepared to focus on this market. That's how we are going to work with the airlines - once we have the flight - with some of the hotels we are willing to take this element of risks on the new emerging markets. But everybody is aware the rebalancing of the industry is the future of the industry.

Mr Obeegadoo: I will take the point there, rebalancing is consolidating our acquired markets and forging ahead with new markets. At page 320, this programme refers to a three-year tourism marketing strategy which is the objective of the hon. Minister. Again, when I look at the indicators which are presented to us at page 324, the Ministry does not seem to be PBB compliant. There are no indicators to tell us when the strategy will be produced, when it will be published, when it will be ventilated and when it will be implemented. Why don't we have this as an indicator?

Mr Bodha: We are already working on all these indicators with all the stakeholders of the industry. We monitor and charter the industry, but we need to have all the stakeholders on board.

Mr Li Kwong Wing: On page 328 regarding item 22900902 *Branding of Mauritius*, do I take it that the branding exercise has been completed and there is no fund provided for the coming year for branding? I have seen two brands being branded around. One is Divine Mauritius and the other is *Ile Vanille*. Does it mean that this is a zero cost branding as compared to a former branding which had cost so much money? How much money is finally spent on that?

Mr Bodha: I would like to explain this, ‘*C'est un Plaisir*’ is a country branding, not only for tourism, it is also for textile and offshore. There was a *reliquat d'à peu près R 5 millions que nous sommes en train de payer* and we are waiting for the last deliverables like the website as regards to that one.

Once this is done, all the stakeholders who were involved like Enterprise Mauritius, the Board of Investment, Tourism, all the industries will sit down together and carry on with that exercise.

The slogans which the hon. Member is referring to like *Divine Ile Maurice*, were campaigns targeted at destination. ‘*Divine Ile Maurice*’ était pour la France, ‘Simply Divine’ was for the UK, ‘Marriages are made in Heaven’ was for India. They are focused programmes, but the branding is an umbrella branding *et c'est cela le plaisir*.

Mr Obeegadoo: On the same issue of branding, all this information is interesting and I thank the Minister. What about *Ile Vanille*? We do not have any vanilla. Why on earth would we use *Ile Vanille*?

Mr Bodha: Let me explain! The rebalancing will go with a promotion of regional tourism. When we see the people coming from Russia, India and China, they will not come to Mauritius only. It is easier if we do a twining of destinations. For the Chinese, they have not seen a volcano, if we twin Mauritius with Reunion Island, it is a winner. We came with this concept of the regional tourism because we never say: “I am going to the Indian Ocean”. People say: “*Je vais aux Caraïbes, je vais en Polynésie, je vais aux Antilles. Mais on ne dit pas que je vais dans l'Océan Indien*”. The idea is to bring people to the region. We say that we are the hub of the region and from Mauritius we can go to Madagascar, the Seychelles, Rodrigues, Comoros and Reunion Island and we have encompassed this regional product under the Vanilla Island concept.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ramano!

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, I have a supplementary.

The Chairperson: I will ask both hon. Obeegadoo and Minister Bodha to be very brief, please. We are not at question time; we are here discussing a budget allocation.

(Interruptions)

Mr Obeegadoo: We are talking about millions of public funds. As the hon. lady is putting it to me, in what way can vanilla be described as a common denominator for our islands?

Mr Bodha: This is asking me a question of how we came to that concept. The stakeholders of the region sat down and came up with something that they think we share all of us.

Mr Bhagwan: On this branding issue, the Minister has just stated that there is a *reliquat* of Rs5 m. It was a UK firm which obtained the contract and according to reliable articles on the Internet and elsewhere, the fees paid by Mauritius did not appear at all in that company's account. Being given that we are going to pay this *reliquat*, pending they can retain that amount, can the Minister ask our High Commission to make an inquiry on that particular firm through the Company's Division in UK?

Mr Bodha: Who will do that?

Ministry of Tourism and Leisure – Programme Code 343: Destination Promotion (Rs390,000,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Tourism and Leisure – Programme Code 344: Promotion of Leisure was called.

Mr Bhagwan: A sum of Rs8 m. is being provided. What has been lacking in the past years is the leisure wing of that Ministry. It was nearly disappearing. Can the Minister at least give us an indication of the activities which he intends to organise for the coming year? Can he give the assurance to the House, that in no case his Ministry, which uses public money, will have recourse to official bouncers for any activity of the Ministry which has been the case last year. Can the Minister give the guarantee to the House that if there is any security problem, it should be the Police Department and not bouncers?

Mr Bodha: We do not need bouncers for leisure activities. What I can ensure the House is that we are going to have ten events next year from February to November with a budget of about Rs500,000 per activity. *Ce sera un peu comme des fêtes à thème ou pour faire visiter certaines régions comme Mahebourg, Chamarel, Anou alle la mer and Domaine les Pailles.* We will go by procedure; I can assure the hon. Member.

The Chairperson: We will take questions from hon. Quirin and hon. Lesjongard.

Mr Quirin: M. le président, je viens d'entendre le ministre du tourisme dire qu'il a prévu dix activités pour 2011.

The Chairperson: Which item, please?

Mr Quirin: *Programme 344: Promotion of Leisure.* Mais quand je consulte la page 325 je vois que le *target* pour 2011 est 20 activités. J'aimerais savoir *which is which*?

Mr Bodha: We are organising our own ten big events, one per month and we are going to participate in other events organised by other parties.

Mr Lesjongard: With regard to *Programme 344 Promotion of Leisure*, can I ask the hon. Minister if he could give us some information as to why the *Festival Kreol* which used to be organised over a period of ten days, now is being organised only over a period of three days?

The Chairperson: I believe it is a question of policy.

Mr Bodha: What happened is that because of a number of events, we are doing it in December and in this month we have events every weekend. What we did is that we kept all the activities and brought them together so that people can have *des temps forts étalés sur trois jours*.

Dr. S. Boolell: Under *Programme 344*, item 22030 *Rent*, we have a sum of Rs1,550,000 which for next year comes to Rs2,250,000. Could I have some clarification?

The Chairperson: If the Minister does not have it, we will take another question in the meantime.

Mr Ameer Meea: Can I ask the hon. Minister what are we renting for the promotion of leisure?

Mr Bodha: I think that it is rent for the department. I think that it is the office.

Mr Obeegadoo: On that same page, apart from *rent*, the main increase seems to be attributable to *Goods and Services*. Can this be clarified?

Mr Bodha: The services are the sound system, we have the podium and we have the marquee. In fact, I would like to say that the hon. Member will find out that for security we have only Rs125,000. So, it answers the question as regards to the *gros pois*.

The Chairperson: Yes, any more information?

Mr Baloomoody: Under the same item 22030005 *Rental of Facilities for Events*, do we take that these are the facilities for sound, equipment or what? We want to know what are the services. Under item 22900 *Other Goods and Services*, my friend, hon. Obeegadoo, has asked a question concerning the goods and services and the hon. Minister has replied, that it is for tent, marquees, etc., but this is a special ...

Mr Bodha: The whole sum is Rs2,775,000, if we divide it by 7, it is only Rs270,000. So, it is Rs270,000 of services for one event like the one we had in Domaine Les Pailles.

Mr Baloomoody: It can't be the same. Rs1.2 m. are budgeted for rental of facilities for events. It can't be goods and services.

Mr Bodha: It is for La Citadelle.

Ministry of Tourism and Leisure - Programme Code 344: Promotion of Leisure (Rs8,071,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Education and Human Resources - Programme Code 421: Policy and Management for Education and Human Resources was called.

Mr Obeegadoo: Under Programme Code 421, I will start by referring to page 332 *Major Achievements*. We are informed that National Curriculum Frameworks have been launched at all levels. I am not quite sure that I understand what the launching of the framework means in English. Could this be clarified?

Dr. Bunwaree: This means that there have been development and intervention at all levels, that is, pre-primary, primary and secondary.

Mr Obeegadoo: In that case, is there a document that explains what these curriculum changes consist of? I will not ask the hon. Minister to give us the details now verbally, but will he undertake to circulate at the earliest to all hon. Members of this House a document outlining the nature of these curriculum changes?

Dr. Bunwaree: In fact, when I was speaking on the Budget, I did table a document. I was saying that there are so many things that I will not be able to say everything and I tabled a document, and this information is in that document. Now, if there is more information needed, of course, I will do the necessary.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, I am on page 332, regarding the *Enhancement Programme* for pupils of standard IV. May I know from the hon. Minister whether there has been an evaluation which has been carried out after the first year or is the hon. Member contemplating to have an assessment and what is the time frame for this particular assessment?

Dr. Bunwaree: The first year ended, in fact, a few days ago and, therefore, the assessment will take place early next year. It has been accepted in the country and, I think, everybody, especially parents have been very praiseworthy of this programme.

Mr Obeegadoo. On the same page, further down, under item *Form III National Assessment Conducted on a Pilot Basis*, should we understand that the money we are being asked to vote is intended to provide for the generalisation of the Form III National Assessment in year 2011, and if so, does generalisation mean all schools will be obliged to submit to these examinations and in which subjects?

Dr. Bunwaree: Generalisation will come one year later. There has been a pilot project this year. Next year, the pilot project will be extended possibly to all schools, if not, to the majority of schools and the number of subjects will also be extended from four to six.

Mr François: On the same line, is there any secondary schools from Rodrigues being involved in this Form III National Assessment, and if yes, which one?

Dr. Bunwaree: Does the hon. Member want to know the names of the schools?

Mr François: Yes, Mr Chairperson.

Dr. Bunwaree: Rodrigues will be for next year.

Mrs Labelle: Still on page 332, the setting up of the *Académie du Kreol Morisien* for the introduction of Mauritian Creole and Bhojpuri as optional subjects in school, can we have a time frame? Because once we heard, it will be in January and so on. Is it on? May I know from the hon. Minister the time frame for the introduction of these two languages as optional and has the academic been given a time frame to finalise the works?

Mr Baloomoody: Can I ask the hon. Minister whether these committees are functioning very well? Are there conflicts between the members of the committee regarding that academic, Creole especially?

Dr. Bunwaree: Concernant le *time frame*, je dois dire que la décision a été prise pour les introduire le plus rapidement possible. L'Académie elle-même a reconnu qu'il y a un peu de travail à faire. Je pense que cela va aller très, très vite. Je suis en train de *monitor the work that is being done*. Je suis très satisfait et là on est en train d'organiser la formation des éducateurs

qui auront la responsabilité d'enseigner la langue aux enfants. A Maurice, tout ne va jamais très bien, mais je suis satisfait du travail qui est réalisé.

Mrs Labelle. I heard the hon. Minister saying “*qu'on organise la formation des éducateurs*”, does it mean that the programme for the training of the trainers is being prepared or are we talking about the recruitment of the trainers? What is it that *organisation des formateurs*?

Dr. Bunwaree: On est en train d'attendre le produit fini qui va être introduit dans les écoles comme langues. Je ne l'ai pas encore, je pense que je vais l'avoir très rapidement. En attendant, on est conscient qu'on aura besoin des professeurs pour enseigner cette langue. Donc, il faut recruter d'abord et c'est ce qu'on est en train de faire. L'organisation a déjà commencé.

Mr Obeegadoo: I have a question on the very same point. The hon. Minister refers to recruitment of teachers for the teaching of Creole as a subject. I fail to see in the corresponding vote for staffing ...

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: No comments, please! Answer the question, hon. Minister.

Mr Obeegadoo: I have been very respectful to the hon. Minister and it pains me that, at this stage, there should be such an offensive language.

So, my point, if I may be allowed to finish without any impolite interruptions, I will simply ask the hon. Minister for clarification on the primary education and staffing. Where it is that funds are being provided for such teachers and in what number?

Dr. Bunwaree: I was joking and I hope that the hon. Member, who is my friend, has understood me. He needs to have my eyes to be able to know what is happening. This is what I wanted to say and I mean it. Maintenant, ce que je veux dire c'est qu'il va falloir recruter, bien sûr. Mais pour recruter, il faut d'abord revoir autour de soi, combien de professeurs on aura besoin. Le travail est en train d'être fait. Il ne voit pas dans le budget où on va puiser l'argent pour payer ces professeurs. J'étais moi aussi un ancien ministre des finances, je peux vous dire qu'on a toujours les moyens de travailler. Comment on a fait avec l'*Enhancement Programme*? On a payé les professeurs pour faire l'*Enhancement Programme*. Ce n'était pas dans le budget. Allez chercher dans le budget de l'année dernière et, avec vos yeux, vous ne verrez jamais, mais pourtant c'était là.

The Chairperson: Il n'y avait pas d'item sur ce projet là.

Dr. Bunwaree: Pas du tout, mais cela ne veut pas dire que cela ne sera pas fait.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, I think, I heard the hon. Minister say that *le recrutement a commencé*. If I am wrong, I stand to be corrected. *Si le recrutement a commencé ...*

The Chairperson: Le processus a commencé, pas le recrutement!

Dr. Bunwaree: Le processus de recrutement, on est en train de voir combien de professeurs on aura besoin. Il va falloir voir avec les parents parce que c'est une langue optionnelle; le travail a commencé.

Mr Obeegadoo: Au-delà du nombre et à la différence des enseignants pour le *Enhancement Programme*, nous parlons ici de postes permanents à être créés au ministère. Devrons nous comprendre que ce sont des postes dont les termes de référence, *the Scheme of Service* sera le même que pour les enseignants du primaire, les *senior teachers*? Est-ce la même catégorie?

Dr. Bunwaree: Exactement, je l'ai déjà dit à haute voix avant même dans la Chambre qu'ils auront le même statut que les *oriental language teachers*.

Mr Obeegadoo: If I could go back to the *Form III National Assessment*, I seem to recall that the Minister agreed, in the course of the debates on the Budget, to an independent audit before we could use funds to further expand the programme. Would the Minister be in a position to tell us how he envisages that such an audit can be carried out earlier on in the year before we commit funds?

Dr. Bunwaree: Yes, there is no problem on that.

Mrs Labelle: I am still on page 332 and there is an achievement, the percentage of students entering Form I and graduating in Form V in secondary schools increased from 57.1 in 2008 to 57.8. Nearly half of our students left schools and since schooling is compulsory up to 16 years, may I ask the hon. Minister what happened to these students who are supposed to benefit from education up to 16 years old? Is there any follow up of these students? What happened to them?

Dr. Bunwaree: Je dois dire que c'était une faiblesse de l'éducation. Il y a un travail qui est en train d'être fait à ce sujet et cela s'applique aussi aux enfants qui ne réussissent pas aux examens de la CPE et qui n'arrivent pas à joindre le système pré-vocationnel; il y en a qui sont des *left-outs* là aussi. On est en train de revoir tout cela.

Mr Obeegadoo: Still on programme 421, at page 336, *O2: Review of policies, measures and procedures*, we have been informed that for year 2011, there are studies relating to six different areas that are to be undertaken and we have been asked for funds presumably to finance such studies. Would the hon. Minister inform the House who would undertake such studies and are we seeking technical support from abroad to ensure that we have an international comparative perspective in that respect?

Dr. Bunwaree: We will also take international support whenever necessary.

Mr Obeegadoo: My question was: who is to undertake such studies?

Dr. Bunwaree: The Ministry will decide, but we will also tap the services from abroad.

Mr Obeegadoo: I would like to insist because we are being asked to vote for funds and before we agree to vote, I just want to know whether it will be an in-house exercise by the Ministry itself or will it be tendered out to consultants locally or abroad? Could we have some indication as to how the public money, in this regard, will be applied?

Dr. Bunwaree: Through consultants, EU has been approached and I am also said that they will be funded by ABP.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, on page 341, item 22130 *Studies and Surveys*, I link that to the performance indicator on page 336 where there is a series of different studies in different fields like on IT project, quality assurance, enhancement programme, special education needs and so on and so forth. When I come to the *Studies and Surveys* in the Budget, I see for the study on *Education IT Projects*, it is Rs3 m. It is the total amount that has been put under *Studies and Surveys*. What about the other surveys which are being mentioned on page 336? How are we going to fund the other surveys?

Dr. Bunwaree: One of the most important surveys we are going to have is for an integrated approach insofar as the ICT projects of the Ministry are concerned. Here, we have advanced quite a lot in ICT at school, using ICT in secondary and primary schools. Now, we are

coming with *Sankore Project* which is another revolutionary one. We have been advised, in the course of our work, that there should be a study carried out and the Rs3 m. provided are for *Sankore Project*, school Administration Management System, e-education portal, acquisition of laptop and study on that. And if ever there is the necessity of finding other means, we have been given the guarantee by the Minister of Finance that as and when funds will be made available.

Mrs Labelle: There are five surveys being mentioned and we have the allocation for only one which takes all the money. Let's say if there was Rs1 m. left, because here all the money is being taken up, so, are we going to have these surveys?

The Chairperson: This is what I have understood, as and when needed!

Dr. Bunwaree: I have said that funds should be made available.

Mr Obeegadoo: On the same page, *Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers*, we welcome this item and I take it that the holding of the conference is now confirmed. May I ask the hon. Minister whether the theme of such a conference is on discussion, Mauritius as host country, of course, would have a major say concerning the theme and the practical organisation in terms of parallel activities. This is a golden opportunity for the country and I would like some more information.

Dr. Bunwaree: The theme is being worked out and a delegation is coming from Commonwealth in early January and all this will be sorted out.

Mrs Labelle: On page 341, item 22090 – *Security*, may I know from the hon. Minister whether there is only one firm or we have several firms for security, particularly bearing in mind all the problems we've got with the loss of computers in our schools and so on. May we know how many security firms; he can give us the names or submit a list?

Dr. Bunwaree: I think I am going to circulate the list.

Mr Obeegadoo: Page 341, item 26210 – *Current Grant to International Organisations*, I note that the budgeted amount for UNESCO is on a sizeable increase, nearly 50%. May we be informed why that is so and whether, on the one hand, Mauritius is proposing to assume any position of responsibility? It was rumoured that Mauritius would run for the Council, the Board of the International Bureau of Education.

Dr. Bunwaree: I can't reply offhand; the negotiations are going on. Of course, if this sum has been increased, it is because there has been a request for the proposal, but whatever responsibility Mauritius will take, I can't reply offhand, I can only say that we are actively involved in whatever UNESCO is doing and as soon as we get detailed information, we will let the House know.

Mr Obeegadoo: I hope that the Minister will provide us with some justification for the increase of this contribution to UNESCO. Earlier on, today, Mr Chairperson, we raised the issue of the fact that we no longer have a diplomatic representation at UNESCO. Can the hon. Minister tell us whether, within the Budget for 2011, he is taking steps to ensure that our Mission in Paris is empowered in terms of human resources to appropriately represent us at UNESCO, for instance, with a dedicated person from the Ministry being posted - even if it is not on permanent basis - as and when necessary at the bilateral Mission in Paris?

Dr. Bunwaree: We already have a special desk at the Ministry and a person is responsible for that. The Mission also has been approached already and, of course, it is going to be further strengthened.

Mr Ameer Meea: Mr Chairperson, on page 341, under item 22120 *Fees* Rs1.6 m., can I ask the hon. Minister to what it is in relation?

Dr. Bunwaree: It is fees to the Chairman and members of Boards and Committees of the National Equivalence Council.

Mr Obeegadoo: I am still on item 26210 *Current Grant to International Organisations*. While the hon. Minister is trying to get the information concerning the increase to UNESCO, let me say that UNESCO is only part of the total sum being voted. May I know which other international organisations we are contributing to? I am comparing figures from this year to next year. The overall sum decreases by more than a million so that apart from UNESCO, there is hardly Rs300,000 left. So, which other international organisations are we contributing to?

Dr. Bunwaree: For UNESCO, it is Rs1.2 m., but I am still waiting for information as regards the increase. CONFEMEN: Rs225,000; ADEA: Rs100,000. For UNESCO, there is an increase of Rs500,000 - some contribution to UNESCO; Rs15,000 for CONFEMEN, but I still do not know the reason why. They must have asked for that, I think.

Mr Obeegadoo: Let's hope that the hon. Minister be provided with the information eventually and let us know. On the same page, further down, next to the budgetary units, item 26313099 - *World Hindi Secretariat*, there has been some controversy in the press, as the hon. Minister must be aware, concerning nominations. May we know whether the World Hindi Secretariat is now fully staffed and who are the persons at the Head of the Secretariat? I seem to recall that the Secretary would be a Mauritian and the Deputy, an Indian National. Can I know how this sum of Rs3.5 m. is going to be applied? For what purposes will this money be used?

Dr. Bunwaree: The Director is an Indian National and the Deputy Director is a Mauritian. It keeps changing after three years. So, for the time being, the Deputy Director is from our side and the Director is of Indian nationality. As to whether it is fully staffed, it depends on the work they are doing. I have not had complaints that there is need for any more staff at this stage. I must say that I am very much interested in this organisation, and I am not very satisfied with the way they are working. We cannot work alone; we have to work hand in hand with the Indian Government, and whatever is being done has to be discussed on both sides. So, this takes some time. In fact, there is a ministerial meeting that was supposed to take place in Mauritius. We have been waiting for that for about more than six months now.

Mr Obeegadoo: My question was: what is the programme of activities of the World Hindi Secretariat for the coming year? I would wish to know, before we agree to a sum of Rs3.5 m. being allotted to the Secretariat, what exactly its work plan consist of, the more so, as this work plan is to be co-funded by the Government of India.

Dr. Bunwaree: Just before I reply to this, I am informed that additional staff will be recruited early next year. Maybe, this will give a further boost and it will satisfy me too, because I just said that I am not very much satisfied with this. The sum of Rs3.5 m. is, I am told, for running expenses.

Mr Obeegadoo: May I be allowed to insist? This House is being called upon to approve a budgetary allocation of Rs3.5 m. Surely, the hon. Minister will agree that we are entitled to have some more details about how this money will be used, and what the work plan of this organisation is?

Dr. Bunwaree: I will get the information from the Secretariat as soon as possible. I won't be able to give that today. In fact, as we know, they promote Hindi throughout the world.

Mr Obeegadoo: On Programme 421, page 349, which deals with *Policy and Management for Education and Human Resources, items 06 00 88 and 06 00 86 - Director*, I note that there are two additional posts of directors. May we be enlightened as to the situation for 2011? How many full-fledged directors will be at the Ministry of Education? Do we still have a director in charge of each of the four educational zones; the administrative zones?

Dr. Bunwaree: We do still have the directors in the zones and one at the Head Office.

Mr Obeegadoo: Only one director in all at the Head Office?

Dr. Bunwaree: No. We have directors, but the same number that usually existed. What I am going to do is to circulate the information. For the year 2010, there are 4 posts, and for the year 2011, 6 posts, two more.

Mr Obeegadoo: May we know what will be the attributions of those directors?

Dr. Bunwaree: Their scheme of service is well-defined by the PRB.

Mr Obeegadoo: We have two additional positions of director. May we know to what end?

Dr. Bunwaree: We are going according to the strategic plan for education and we are reviewing the zones and the delimitations of the zones, which we believe was done - I won't say wrongly - in the past and has to be reviewed, and where children are still travelling from the South to the North. So, we will need these people.

Mr Obeegadoo: I take it that these will be directors for the zones. There are three posts here that are not filled, namely *Director HR Development, Principal HR Analyst* and *Senior HR Analyst*. The hon. Minister referred to the strategic plan which, indeed, emphasises the importance to give a boost to HR Management within the Ministry of Education, which is the largest Ministry employee wise. So, may I know from the hon. Minister why is it that these posts are not being filled? Is it that the Ministry of Finance has not agreed to the filling of those posts or is it that there are problems in recruiting these officers?

Dr. Bunwaree: The difficulty is that we are always fighting to have these posts filled, but administrative constraints do always exist. With regard to the directors, I confirm that it is from 4 posts to 6 posts for the Head Office; four directors already exist in the zones.

Mr Obeegadoo: Further down on this page, item *04 65 75 Manager (ICT)* and item *04 59 71 Assistant Manager (ICT)*, again, the hon. Minister referred to the strategic plan, with the old proposal for the computerised database for all employees of the Ministry. This idea was mooted yet again to have a computerised database of all employees of the Ministry, teachers and so on, to facilitate HR management. I note, with concern, that the number of posts is not being increased. Would the hon. Minister give us some explanation?

Dr. Bunwaree: Unfortunately, we would have liked to do more than that.

(Interruptions)

Si c'était possible, on l'aurait fait.

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, I understand hon. Ms Deerpalsing might want to ask the question.

The Chairperson: No, please, thank you. I am chairing, don't you worry. If I need your help, I will let you know.

(Interruptions)

Hon. Ms Deerpalsing, please! You don't have the floor. The hon. Member should put his question.

(Interruptions)

Order, please! Order! Hon. Chief Whip, please! Let us concentrate on our work, please!

Mr Obeegadoo: Under Salary Code *06 51 62 Coordinator Health & Anti-Drug*, I am sure the Minister will agree that this is a unit that calls for revamping; it has a very critical role to play which it has not played for many years, going back a long way. Will the Minister agree to review urgently since he said additional resources could be made available to build up this unit? So, it can be effective in terms of its mission.

Dr. Bunwaree: I am very much aware of this and, in fact, I am a doctor myself, as you know. For the time being, *je complémente le travail*, but we are reviewing actively and dynamising this section of the Ministry which is taking care of health and drugs.

Ministry of Education and Human resources – Programme Code 421: Policy and Management for Education and Human Resources (Rs293,694,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Education and Human Resources – Programme Code 422: Pre-Primary Education was called.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, at page 333, under Programme 422 *Pre-Primary Education - All pre-primary schools offer minimum quality education as verified by the Ministry*, I link that to page 336. The outcome and performance indicator: *Number of compliant schools relative to existing guidelines*. May I ask the hon. Minister if a copy of the guidelines could be tabled, firstly? And secondly, is there any budgetary allocation for those schools which don't comply with the guidelines? What is being done? Do we have budgetary measures for these schools?

The Chairperson: Hon. Sayed-Hossen, please, there is no need for you to make the Minister understand.

Dr. Bunwaree: L'honorable membre doit être d'accord avec moi que c'est en train de s'améliorer quand même, mais il y a un travail de *monitoring* qui est en train de se faire. C'est là où on travaille avec le ministère de l'intégration sociale pour voir comment on peut aller beaucoup plus vite. I will make arrangements for the guidelines to be tabled.

Mr Obeegadoo: On the same issue at page 333, one of the constraints or challenges identified is the lack of in-house technical capacity relating to special educational needs and the Minister himself has stated it publicly. Of course, we fully agree that what is crucial is early detection of special educational needs. May I ask him whether he will consider, under this programme, developing a new indicator which will relate to the early screening of all children right from pre-primary to allow for early detection of special educational needs?

Dr. Bunwaree: Much is being done at the level of our schools for pre-primary insofar as screening is concerned and also for primary, I must say. The results will be more felt in years to

come, but the house can rely upon me being so much attached to this question that the work has already started. But we need more resources, we need to do more and we are working in close collaboration with the Ministry of Health and, in fact, screening is taking place in the schools at different levels. I would wish that every year it takes place regularly at a yearly interval and in all classes of pre-primary and primary.

Mr Obeegadoo: Still on page 336, one of the indicators at *01 PI* relates the number of children aged from 3 to 4 who are being schooled and if the statistics are right, of course, this is very encouraging. Being given that no country makes pre-primary education compulsory, this does not exist elsewhere, and what needs to be done is targeting the poorest for which pre-primary will make the greatest difference, may I know, on the basis of funds being allotted, what precise collaborative programme is envisaged or is operational between the Ministry of Social Integration and the Ministry of Education to reach out to the poorest of the poor and ensure, for instance, through direct income support, as has been successfully done in Brazil, that children are sent to pre-primary schools?

Dr. Bunwaree: Aucun gouvernement, M. le président, n'a fait autant que ce gouvernement dans le sens de ce combat, et l'honorable membre, lui-même, sait que quand il était ministre, il y avait à peu près 16% des enfants qui n'allait pas en pré-primaire. Nous approchons les 87% qui vont atteindre le pré-primaire en janvier de cette année. Il nous a félicités quand même pour cela et je lui en remercie. Mais je dois dire qu'il faut continuer à nous faire confiance et vous allez voir ce qui va se passer.

Mr Bhagwan: As regards *Programme Code 422: Pre-Primary Education*, I am taking this opportunity, on this item, to reiterate my appeal to the Minister. I know he is looking at this particular region; we have been talking about pre-primary education; it starts down and then goes up to Barkly Government School. I know there are things that are planned for the future. My appeal to the Minister for the coming financial year - now we are in December and January will come rapidly – is that this particular school, which is the most deprived region, be given personal attention of the Minister in terms of pre-primary for the poor, not only attending school, but equipment also, and then the primary at the level of CPE. We know the results of the past years.

Dr. Bunwaree: L'honorable membre a répondu lui-même. Il m'en a parlé plusieurs fois, mais on est en train de faire le nécessaire. Il le sait aussi, et je pense que l'année qui vient va être une année très encourageante pour l'école Barkly.

Mr Obeegadoo: On that very same issue, I am still on *O1, P1*, the hon. Minister said that no other Government has done so much. It is good to recall that it was the Labour/MMM coalition that introduced

The Chairperson: The hon. Member should put his question.

Mr Obeegadoo: My point is: if we want to go further ahead, will the hon. Minister tell us for next year, on the basis of funds being requested, can we ensure that all ZEP schools have adequate seats at pre-primary level as a priority to ensure that all children go to school, and secondly, that the existing subsidy with has not been revised for some time now be reviewed with the possibility of increase?

Dr. Bunwaree: En ce qui concerne les subsides, on a fait le point, mais jusqu'à maintenant c'est encore pareil. On va continuer quand même en ce qui concerne le subside de R 200 qu'on donne, mais en ce qui concerne l'admission des enfants aux ZEP schools - pas seulement aux ZEP schools, partout cela doit se faire et c'est là où le ministère de l'intégration sociale, avec un plan intégré, est en train de prendre - avec la création de nouvelles écoles pré-primaire dans les régions défavorisées - le taureau par les cornes avec l'aide du ministère de l'éducation.

Je dois aussi dire - comme je l'ai déjà annoncé à la Chambre quand je faisais mon discours - qu'on est en train de revoir le concept ZEP parce qu'on est dans une phase de stagnation d'une part et d'autre part, il y a un tiers des écoles parmi les écoles ZEP qui sont déjà qualifiées pour ne pas être du groupe ZEP. Donc, on voudrait qu'elles sortent de là mais sans perdre les avantages et les bénéfices qui existent et qui leur ont permis d'arriver jusque là. Donc, le travail est en train d'être réalisé et ce que dit l'honorable membre est déjà pris en considération.

Mr Obeegadoo: There, again, the hon. Minister knows he would have our full support if he wants to make ZEP more efficient.

Now, at page 341 Programme 422: *Pre-Primary Education*, there is a very significant increase in the sum budgeted on the goods and services from Rs87,000 to more than Rs2 m. Now, this cannot relate to buildings, we are talking of goods and services. Would the hon. Minister enlighten us?

Dr. Bunwaree: I'll get the information. In the meantime, we can take other questions.

Mr François: Just as a matter of interest, with regard to *Early Childhood, Care & Education*, is there any plan to introduce this as a course at the University or on the technical side to diploma or degree holders, for those involved in that subject?

Dr. Bunwaree: Yes, Mr Chairperson, it is being taken care of. As far as this question of rent, of facilities for events is concerned, it concerns my Ministry, of course.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Order, please!

Dr. Bunwaree: Renting of *salle verte*, chairs, etc. Il y a beaucoup de fonctions qu'on organise dans les écoles et avec l'*Enhancement Programme* cela fait beaucoup plus encore.

Mr Obeegadoo: This is more than what Minister Bodha just obtained for the Tourism Authority in term of events.

The Chairperson: Unfortunately, we don't have control over it.

Mr Obeegadoo: I just want some clarification. The Estimates for 2010 is Rs87,000 and this is now going up to Rs2 m. *C'est une augmentation de combien, 2,000%?* May we be told what are these events, which were not necessary for year 2010 and, all of a sudden, become necessary for year 2011?

Dr. Bunwaree: M. le président, il y a beaucoup de choses qui sont réalisées dans les écoles maintenant ; il y a une révolution partout. Donc, il ne faut pas être effrayé par les chiffres. Au cours de d'année, l'honorable membre pourra poser des questions sur ce qu'on est en train de faire et on donnera les réponses. Mais je dois dire qu'il va falloir faire un *survey* aussi.

Mr Obeegadoo: I am sure the Minister can do better. If I can draw his attention to that page, where he said: in 2010, Rs87,000; in 2011, it shoots up more than Rs 2m.; 2012, it goes back to Rs87,000; 2013, it stays at Rs87,000.

Dr. Bunwaree: A survey will be carried out in 2011.

Mr Obeegadoo: Goods and services relate to the funding of a survey, relating to what?

The Chairperson: If the hon. Member has the details, he can provide them.

Dr. Bunwaree: *On va faire cela dans plusieurs domaines de l'éducation. Il faut que l'honorable membre s'habitue un peu à cela.* I am told that there will be a study on the setting up of quality assurance functions.

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, with all due respect, the study on the setting up of quality assurance functions within the Early Childhood Care and Education Authority has always existed in terms of monitoring. May we know whether private pre-primary institutions meet the minimal standards set?

(Interruptions)

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Ms Deepalsing, please tone down!

Mr Obeegadoo: Could we have some enlightenment?

Dr. Bunwaree: I have said that the hon. Member may put questions in the course of the year to see how we are spending this money.

(Interruptions)

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Jhugroo, please!

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, at page 341, under item 22130 *Studies and Surveys*, we find that a sum of Rs2 m. has been earmarked for the next year. Is the hon. Minister telling us that these Rs2 m. are included in that?

Dr. Bunwaree: No, the sum of Rs2 m. is for the survey. As I said, we are going to spend much more in the course of the year. When we'll do the survey, we'll see what we are doing with it.

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, at page 342, I note that under item 26313 *Extra-Budgetary Units*, there is also a standing and your capital grant of Rs8 m. is going to the Early Childhood Care and Education Authority. May we know what does this cover?

The Chairperson: Is it not for item 421 which has been approved?

Mr Obeegadoo: No, it is 422.

Dr. Bunwaree: *Programme 422: Pre-Primary Education*, funds will be used for pre-primary units. It has been mentioned in the Budget. I also mentioned it in my speech. Well, if the hon. Member wants to know the places, I can give him.

Mr Obeegadoo: Yes, please.

Dr. Bunwaree: Zone 2: Mohunlall Mohith Govt School, l'Avenir, where there is retention money because it has already started; zone 4: Palma, contract has been awarded; zone 1: Mohabeer Foogooa, Montagne Longue, it is at preliminary stage. Purchase of equipment and furniture, audiovisual equipment, chairs and tables and there is also upgrading of certain schools, maintenance of PPUs in view of improving quality learning environment.

Mr Obeegadoo: Can I, again, appeal that priority be given to the poorest areas, to the ZEP schools, in particular? Mr Chairperson, I would like to raise one last point. At page 350, under Programme 422, we have no details of the number of posts. I take it that this relates to employees of the Early Childhood Care and Education Authority. Can I ask the hon. Minister whether within the Budget, which is going to be allotted to the Early Childhood Care and Education Authority, there is room for the sorting out of longstanding issues in terms of industrial relations which, as he is well aware, I am sure, causes a lot of frustration and demotivation amongst the teachers; that there needs to be standardisation of conditions of employment. Can he tell us whether within the funds being allotted, that is being envisaged so that teachers are properly motivated to do their job?

Dr. Bunwaree: In fact, the problem is quite complicated. I have taken much pain to look into the matter and I can give the assurance to the hon. Member that we are doing all we can to regularise wherever it has to be regularised and do whatever needs to be done.

Mr Obeegadoo: We were told about this quality assurance survey to be undertaken by the Early Childhood Care and Education Authority. Will the hon. Minister, for the next financial year, take care to ensure that there is a clear demarcation as between the role of the authority in providing education services and as a regulator?

Dr. Bunwaree: *Certainement!*

Ministry of Education, Culture and Human Resources - Programme Code 422: Pre-Primary Education (Rs149,605,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Education, Culture and Human Resources - Programme Code 423: Primary Education was called.

Mr Ameer Meea: At page 342, under *Programme Code 423*, item 22060 *Maintenance*, there has been a substantial decrease from Rs162 m. to Rs58 m. Can I ask the hon. Minister the reason why?

Dr. Bunwaree: Je n'ai pas les explications détaillées mais je peux dire qu'il y a beaucoup de travail de maintenance à faire dans les écoles. On va continuer à faire le bon travail.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Order!

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, I talked about that in my speech. With the implementation of Primary School Renewal Project, the Ministry is putting more emphasis on major rehabilitation works in primary schools where old buildings are being demolished and replaced by new classroom blocks, instead of focussing on many short-term small upgrading works in old primary schools which was a palliative measure. The Budget has, therefore, been shifted and reallocated to upgrading of Primary School Renewal Project in order to focus on long-term innovation works, as I mentioned.

Mr Obeegadoo: We are on *Programme 423: Primary Education* on page 333. The objectives of this programme are described as essentially ensuring that all children reach the desired learning outcomes at the end of primary. On page 337, the performance indicators for CPE pass rate suggest a 1% increase at best each year. At this rate, we would need to wait for another 30 years for the totality of our children to acquire what the MIE called the 'Essential Learning Competencies'. Will the hon. Minister tell us whether he will be willing to review these targets and adopt whatever measures on the basis of funds allotted to ensure that there is a fundamental review of the CPE examinations system?

Dr. Bunwaree: I am really surprised by what I have just heard from the hon. Member. In fact, I thought he had listened to what my colleague had mentioned when they were in power. It was going down by 1% every year and now it is going up by 1% every year. We are on the

right track, but still we'll go in the direction of the review of the CPE examination, because we want to do still better.

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, a supplementary question on this. I think it is very regrettable that we should go into that debate. Hon. Li Kwong Wing made the point very clearly about the statistics and the fact that there were no repeaters. Let us not have a debate. We are not talking of repeaters sitting or not sitting. My point is very simple. Let us forget about Mr Bunwaree and Mr Obeegadoo. We are not important. We are talking about the children of this country. My appeal to the Minister is whether the hon. gentleman will agree to revisit the suggested indicators under the PBB so that we can move much faster in terms of reviewing pass rate for CPE.

Dr. Bunwaree: It is not a question of putting whatever figure we want. We want to put figures that we are going to achieve. It is the second time that we are having Performance-Based Budgeting.

The Chairperson: Next question!

Mr Uteem: Mr Chairperson, on page 342, under item *22120025 Fees to Oriental Language Teachers*, I note that there is a reduction in the fees payable to Oriental Language Teachers and then on page 351 I also note, on the Staffing Positions, there is going to be a reduction in the number of teachers of the Oriental language.

The Chairperson: Which item?

Mr Uteem: It is item *062952 Teacher/Senior Teacher (Oriental Language)*, from 1160 down to 1136. So, there is reduction of 24, although there is going to be an increase in the Deputy Head Teacher of Oriental Language by six. Overall the number of oriental teachers is going down. May I know from the hon. Minister why is that the case?

Dr. Bunwaree: The number of oriental teachers is based on the requirements. If it is going down, it is because this is what we need. Some go on promotion and the others continue. The fees are meant for the evening schools.

Mr Uteem: There were two related questions. One was on the fees payable and the other one was on the establishment workforce for oriental teachers. Both on the establishment and on the fees payable, there seems to be a decrease in the number of oriental teachers.

Dr. Bunwaree: I do not think we can relate one to the other. Ceux qui travaillent les après-midis sont des personnes qui donnent des cours comme dans les Baïtkas, les Madrassahs et même pour le Mandarin. D'ailleurs, j'avais moi-même augmenté les *fees* quand j'étais ministre des finances. C'était passé de R 300 à R 1,500 et maintenant à R 2,000 si ce sont des gradués qui enseignent. Ces *fees* sont payés à ces personnes pour encourager la langue d'être enseignée. Mais je ne pense pas qu'on peut faire une relation directe entre ces deux.

Mr Obeegadoo: On this issue of oriental languages, will the hon. Minister tell us in terms of the Budget for next year whether we are addressing the issue of certain oriental language teachers who have been teaching for 15 or 20 years and because they lack basic qualifications, have not been taken on board on the permanent establishment? I know the hon. Prime Minister himself took a commitment on this issue. Are we dealing with this problem for next year?

Dr. Bunwaree: We are dealing with this. We are liaising with the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms.

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Mr Chairperson, on a point of order, paragraph 73 of the Standing Order...

The Chairperson: Yes. The hon. Minister means that it is a question of policy.

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Yes, it is a question of policy and then it is written clearly at paragraph 73 subsection 12 that discussion shall be confined to the details of expenditure contained in the vote and shall not refer to the general principle of Government policy and administration.

The Chairperson: I think that the hon. Minister should lay emphasis on the words 'general policy'. We are not meaning policy, but general policy. In any event, I tend to agree with her that we are concerned here with a budget allocation and if we have a policy which is linked to any allotment of fund, I will allow, but not on a policy proper.

Dr. Bunwaree: I mentioned that for supply teachers. I think this is what was mentioned. Concerning supply teachers, I said that we are liaising with the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms. The scheme of service is being finalised.

Mr Obeegadoo: I thank the hon. Minister for being so cooperative and providing the answers. On the same issue - before hon. Ameer Meea intervened - raised by hon. Uteem, that is, the shifting numbers of Teachers/Senior Teachers and Oriental Language Teachers as at page 351 in respect of budgetary allocation, as hon. Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun will appreciate, I would like to know whether this is projected for next year to go in the direction of the fusion of these two grades of Teachers/Senior Teachers and Oriental Language Teachers.

The Chairperson: This also is a question of policy.

Mr Ameer Meea: I shall come back to page 342, item 22060 *Maintenance*. The Minister just stated that the figure has decreased because the amount has been reallocated for upgrading of schools. Correct me if I am wrong! When I see the figure for upgrading of school...

The Chairperson: Which item?

Mr Ameer Meea: Maintenance is on page 342 and then the *Upgrading of Schools* to which the Minister relates is on page 343, item 31112402. In this case also there has been a reduction for more than Rs50 m. Can the Minister state why the maintenance figure has decreased in this case?

Dr. Bunwaree: I said that much work has already been done; we don't need that much also.

Mr Lesjongard: I refer to page 343, *programme 423 item 28211040 Other Current Transfers – PTA (Primary Schools)*. Can we have an indication from the hon. Minister as to why the amount has been decreased in the present estimates?

Dr. Bunwaree: Concerning grants to PTAs, *per capita* grant is based on the number of pupils enrolled in the school and it could be used for other expenses as well. The rate per pupil is R3.

(Interruptions)

The hon. Member wants to know why it has gone down. The basic grant is fixed and is intended for meeting the costs, as I said, for minor repairs. Other current transfers and provision is being made according to trend.

Mr Obeegadoo: I take item 28 *Other Expenses* on page 343. Will the Minister tell us whether for the next year, provision is being made so that the existing discrimination *per capita* spending on children in State schools and private schools be abolished?

The Chairperson: It's a question of policy. Next question, hon. Ameer Meea!

Mr Ameer Meea: Mr Chairperson, at page 343, under item 31112002 - *Construction and Extension of Schools*, there is Jean Lebrun Govt School (Ph II), I find an amount of Rs24 m. has been earmarked. Can I ask the hon. Minister where matters stand? For the amount budgeted in 2010, that is Rs20 m., how much was spent on it and where do matters stand?

Dr. Bunwaree: I need notice of this question. I will circulate the reply.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, with your permission, I will go to page 337, the Performance Indicator regarding the ZEP schools. There is 38.0% for pass rate and an increase of 38.5%. The hon. Minister mentioned that there are some schools which, following their results should be out of the ZEP. May I ask the hon. Minister whether there are other schools which will be included in the ZEP because of their performance during the past years?

Secondly, since we are talking of integration, the provision of learning and other support to pupils, may I know whether the other support to pupils will include the parents? The hon. Minister for Gender Equality talks about *École des Parents* and so on. Will this be a support to the ZEP school pupils?

Dr. Bunwaree: *Concernant l'École des Parents, on est en train de travailler ensemble avec le ministère de Gender Equality.* The answer is 'yes' and then whether it will go to ZEP schools ...

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Hon. Ameer Meea!

Mrs Labelle: The hon. Minister was answering to my question and he was going to give me the information of schools which were out and schools which will get in.

Dr. Bunwaree: This is what I am saying. I have just mentioned that we are reviewing because there has been some stagnation and, in fact, there are some ZEP concepts in almost all

the schools of the country. We are taking all this on board and come with a better formulation for improvement in that sector.

Mr Ameer Meea: Mr Chairperson, at page 343, under item *31112402 – Upgrading of schools, upgrading of toilets*, there is an amount of Rs12 m. which is budgeted. Can I ask the hon. Minister whether the Emmanuel Anquetil Govt. School is included in that? It is found in my constituency at Roche Bois and the toilets there are in a very bad state.

Dr. Bunwaree: Elle le sera parce que mon ami, l'honorable Mohamed, m'en a déjà parlé. Je vais rendre service à notre ami aussi.

The Chairperson: The hon. Minister is going to look into it.

(*Interruptions*)

\Hon. Mrs Labelle, order, please!

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, I am at page 343, item *31132401 - e-Government Projects & e-Education Portal*, Rs28 m. were earmarked for last year. May I know from the hon. Minister how much has been spent and whether this project has been completed?

Dr. Bunwaree: I don't think that it has been completed, but it is nearing completion. And I must tell hon. Ameer Meea that I have just got the information about the Emmanuel Anquetil. In fact, sums have been earmarked; drawings are being amended by the MPI, and cost estimates awaited.

Mr Lesjongard: Mr Chairperson, at page 343, under item *31112402 - Primary Schools Renewal Projects*, since a substantial amount has been spent in 2010, can we ask the hon. Minister to circulate a list of the primary schools concerned?

Dr. Bunwaree: Yes, I will.

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, as regards page 342, item *21 - compensation of Employees*, will the hon. Minister tell us what is the figure that is being earmarked for special allowance to teachers and head teachers participating in the Enhancement Programme and is that being increased for the next year?

Dr. Bunwaree: I think it is Rs3,000 for educator, Rs4,200 for inspectors, Rs3,900 for head masters and resource persons Rs200 *per diem*.

Mr Obeegadoo: So, these will be the figures for the coming year, 2011 as budgeted. What about ZEP? May we know what the allowance is and is it being increased according to the figures being budgeted?

Dr. Bunwaree: The allowance is the same. It has not changed but I must tell the hon. Member that it is not the allowance that attracts the teachers. We have to take that also into consideration and take that on board, when we decide what we are going to do with the ZEP schools. *Il paraît que même si on leur offre, les professeurs n'en veulent pas, parce qu'il y a d'autres problèmes. C'est ça la difficulté.*

As regards the allowances for ZEP schools, it is as follows: Head Masters: Rs3,300; Deputy Head Masters: Rs2,900; Teachers and Senior Teachers: Rs2,600; Mentors: Rs3,100; School Clerks: Rs910.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, at page 343, under item *28212004 - Other Current Transfers - Primary School Supplementary Feeding Project*, there is a decrease of Rs2 m. Maybe it is the trend. May I ask the hon. Minister whether it is only for ZEP schools and, presently, what the children are being provided from this amount of money?

Dr. Bunwaree: Autant que je me rappelle, il n'y a pas eu de changement dans cet état de choses, mais nous sommes en train d'utiliser le CSR. Si vous voyez une diminution, c'est qu'il y a beaucoup plus qui viennent à travers le système CSR.

Mr Baloomoody: Mr Chairperson, at page 343, item *28211040 – Other Current Transfers – PTA (Primary Schools)*, I find that there is a reduction. Is it per head or per capita? How is it distributed and if so, how much is given for one child attending primary school?

The Chairperson: I think the hon. Member was not here, this issue was canvassed.

Dr. Bunwaree: Insofar as the School Feeding project is concerned, I can say - if you allow me - in ZEP schools, pupils are supplied with a loaf, a portion of soft cheese and a fruit. But I am saying that with the CSR, we are improving quite a lot on that.

Mr Obeegadoo: I note that under item *26210073 - Contribution to International Network for Educational Transformation*, there is an allocation of Rs1.6 m. May we know what that is and what we get in return for that contribution?

Dr. Bunwaree: There is much which is obtained in return, but we need to work with them. There are many things we are doing in the international networking which is giving Mauritius an opportunity to showcase to the world. I can circulate the details for the hon. Member.

Mr Obeegadoo: Under the next vote, item 26313 - *Extra Budgetary Units*, this is the only mention of the MES with an increase of Rs4 m. For next year, being given that the work load of the MES is constantly increasing now with Form III National Examinations, may we know whether this increase is going for an increase in posts or some other elements?

Dr. Bunwaree: I need notice and I will circulate the information.

Mr Obeegadoo: On the issue of current transfers, this has been raised earlier by one of my colleagues.

The Chairperson: Which item, please?

Mr Obeegadoo: Under item no. 28, would the Minister agree to provide us, even by circulating a breakdown giving us *per capita* what the funding will be for next year as between students in aided schools, RCA schools and in State primary schools?

Dr. Bunwaree: Of course, we will allow you to get this information. For the MES, I am told that it is for the increase for operational expenses. The point has been raised by the hon. Member and we'll give the information to the House.

Mr Obeegadoo: At page 350, there is a post of *Assistant Director – Primary* which was not funded last year and which is now being funded. Will the hon. Minister confirm whether this is a position for the highest ranking cadre from the primary inspectorate? There used to be a reserved position of Assistant Director although the person does not have the same academic qualifications as those coming from the secondary sector.

Dr. Bunwaree: Yes, but we are still directed by schemes of service and by the PRB.

Mr Obeegadoo: My point is: why do we not have a post for 2010? And then the post is being funded for next year. Do I take it that this position was not filled as at present?

Dr. Bunwaree: We were certainly less lucky last year.

Mrs Labelle: With your permission, may I come back to the grant to MES? The hon. Minister has just mentioned that it is an increase in operational expenses. May I ask him whether there is any particular operation because next year the Budget will be decreased and the year after, it will decrease more? Maybe there is a particular operation which will be carried out for next year. May we know what this operation is?

Dr. Bunwaree: There are certainly so more operations that are being carried out there for next year. *Cela va cesser ou être absorbé dans le système.*

The Chairperson: It is a mere projection.

Dr. Bunwaree: Mais si vous avez besoin de détails, on les trouvera et on les circulera à la Chambre.

The Chairperson: Can we take the vote now, please?

Ministry of Education, Culture and Human Resources - Programme Code 423: Primary Education (Rs3,025,742,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Education, Culture and Human Resources - Programme Code 424: Secondary Education was called.

Mr Jhugroo: Mr Chairperson, on a point of clarification, the way we are proceeding since last night, can I know when we are going to finish with all these Ministries because, up to now, we have reached only nine to ten Ministries?

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Unfortunately, I cannot give any clarification on that issue because we are here to scrutinise the Budget of Government and every Member has got the latitude to put questions which are relevant and if...

(Interruptions)

Mr Jhugroo: Will I have an answer to my question?

The Chairperson: No, there is no need for the House to give any clarification on that issue! Let's continue!

(Interruptions)

Order, please!

Mr Obeegadoo: On page 337, under items *O1: Provision of Secondary Education in the public sector and supervision of the private sector* and *P3: Percentage of students entering Form I and graduating in Form V*, I take it that this relates to the so-called academic mainstream. May I ask...

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Hon. Ms Deepalsing, please!

Mr Obeegadoo: May I ask the hon. Minister why is it that we do not have an indicator for the pre-vocational stream inasmuch as we are budgeting funds also for the pre-vocational stream? The Minister himself earlier expressed concern that we were not managing to keep the students in the sector.

Dr. Bunwaree: We have to look into this and see in what way we are going to integrate it. There also I must say that the pre-vocational stream is being revisited at the level of the Ministry for the time being and then, of course, without the stakeholders.

Mr Obeegadoo: I move to page 344, in terms of *Compensation to Employees*, I would wish to have some guidance to the extent that the amount that is being budgeted for personal emoluments seems to rise slightly, but when considering the number of posts at page 352 for Educator, in fact, it decreases. This is worrying inasmuch as the numbers in secondary education are increasing. Can the hon. Minister provide us with some explanation as to what exactly is happening? Are we reducing the number of posts of teachers filled and what are the implications?

Dr. Bunwaree: No, it has slightly increased.

Mr Baloomoody: On page 344, under item *22090: Security*, I find that there has been a decrease in the sum allocated with regard to security. May I know how it is that it comes to a reduction in the cost?

Dr. Bunwaree: The services are contracted out, so it is a question of tendering.

Mr Uteem: I am still on page 344, item *22900: Other Goods and Services*, may I know what these school requisites and other goods and services stand for?

Dr. Bunwaree: Before I give this explanation, maybe I will give you the answer to the previous one. That is why there has been a decrease. In fact, the real explanation is for hon. Baloomoody. It is a question of tendering, of course, but we had to have recourse to a new contractor on 01 July 2010. Therefore, the price has gone down because of that.

Insofar as *Goods and Services* are concerned, I am told that we had recently disposed of all dangerous expired chemicals at the cost of Rs3.3 m. So, this is good news and in order to prevent recurrence of such situation, we are monitoring closely the supply and use of chemicals at the level of schools. Moreover, the use of chemicals at school level is being rationalised with a view to obtaining maximum efficiency gain.

Mr Baloomoody: Under item 22120: *Fees*, may we have some particulars about the fees and for what purpose it is?

Dr. Bunwaree: I do not have the information for this. What is the budget item?

The Chairperson: Rs2 m.

Dr. Bunwaree: Certainly to pay Board members.

Mr Baloomoody: Board members yes, but may we know which Board and who are the members?

Dr. Bunwaree: National Equivalence Council. I replied to that question just now.

Mrs Labelle: I am on page 346, under item 31122999: *Acquisition of Other Machinery and Equipment*, from Rs14 m. we are expecting to spend Rs26 m.; may we have some details on the machinery and equipment that we will purchase?

Dr. Bunwaree: The funds will be used for the purchase of equipment for special rooms, home economics, workshops, design and technology, administration office, laboratories for Physics, Chemistry, Biology, and sports equipment for gymnasium.

Mr Barbier: On page 344, under item 21111 *Other Staff Costs*, may I know what is it about? Can we have some details on that vote, which comprises other staff costs?

Dr. Bunwaree: I am giving the breakdown. It is payment for regular overtime to school caretakers in connection with extra cleaning during weekends and occasional overtime to staff of the maintenance unit. There is also the question of wages for payment of general workers

recruited on a casual basis. Thirdly, there is travelling and transport, which includes travelling allowance, mileage allowance and refund of the fares to eligible officers who are on the establishment of the Ministry, posted in the secondary sector.

Mr Lesjongard: Mr Chairperson, at page 345, under item *31112002 Construction and Extension of Schools*, since a substantial amount has been spent, can we have the list of schools which are being renovated or extended?

Dr. Bunwaree: I will circulate it.

Mr Obeegadoo: On page 344, under item *22060 Maintenance*, the hon. Minister will surely agree that this is one area where there are constant complaints about maintenance of public school buildings at secondary level. Why is it that the sum is to be halved from this year to the next? The sum is being decreased from Rs53.7 m. to Rs23.8 m., whereas everyday hon. Members of this House get complaints about the state of maintenance of secondary schools. If you look at the next item, *Cleaning Services*, it goes up for one year from Rs7.8 to Rs12.6, and then it comes down again to Rs8.6. Can the hon. Minister please help us and make some sense of these figures?

Dr. Bunwaree: I must tell the hon. Member that much is being done on maintenance of public schools. So, what is being said here does not reflect the reality. In fact, if you go along the schools, you will find it. The Ministry is putting more emphasis on major rehabilitation works in old secondary schools, for proper long-term planning of infrastructural works and the remaining secondary schools are mostly new. The maintenance is not that much. There is, therefore, less short-term, small upgrading works in all secondary schools. *On devrait être content car dans le pays tout entier, le niveau des infrastructures dans les écoles est nettement meilleur.*

Mr Uteem: On page 345, under item *31112002 (c) Construction and Extension of Schools* in respect of *Colline Monneron SSS, Phase IV*, may I know from the hon. Minister when is the expected delivery time and what is the difference between the original contract amount and the estimated final amount for the extension works?

Dr. Bunwaree: With regard to *Colline Monneron SSS, Phase IV*, there is the conversion of existing classrooms into computer rooms, tentative implementation plan, evaluation of bids

December 2010, award of contract January 2011, expected start date mid-January 2011, and the expected completion date October 2011.

Mrs Labelle: With your permission, Mr Chairperson, I am just looking at page 337, the performance indicator regarding *Organisation of Extra and Co-Curricular Activities for the Overall Development of the Learner*. May I ask the hon. Minister from which budgetary line this activity will be funded because we have the baseline of seven extra or co-curricular activities per student? Can we have some clarification on this target?

Dr. Bunwaree: Co-curricular activities are ongoing and we have increased them quite a lot, of course. I have no difficulties at all each time I want one extracurricular activity to be added. There are certainly items of the Budget where this will have to be taken. I don't think we will have one item. I will circulate it; I think it is better.

Mr Obeegadoo: On the same page 344, I note that, here again, as in the case of the primary sector, there is a contribution of Rs1.6 m. for INET. The hon. Minister was to provide us with some explanation, as to what International Network for Education Transformation (INET) is. So, in all, we are budgeting something like Rs3.3 m. for this organisation, much higher than what we contribute to UNESCO, ADEA and CONFEMEN put together. Does the hon. Minister have the information now?

Dr. Bunwaree: It is in the document that I have tabled.

Mr Barbier: Mr Chairperson, on page 344, under item 22060 *Maintenance*, I want to know if this Budget includes maintenance and the cleaning of the yard of Royal College of Port Louis. Actually, the yard is in a deplorable state; *l'herbe pe vine arbre là-bas, M. le ministre*.

Dr. Bunwaree: Le visage du collège de Port Louis est en train de se transformer.

Mr Obeegadoo: Under item 26210152 *Contribution to OECD*, I have already commended the hon. Minister for having opted for this PISA assessment. I note that we had already budgeted Rs1.6 m. for 2010 and we are budgeting Rs1.6 for 2011. So, may I know from the hon. Minister whether we have already transferred funds to OECD, when the PISA assessment will take place or has it taken place in 2010, and who will it apply to, to what sample?

Dr. Bunwaree: With regard to PISA, it has already started; it is ongoing. Mauritius participated for the first time. 73 countries participated; 4,713 students participated in the assessment and there will be a draft report by the end of January 2011. There will be a second draft report by the end of July, and a final country report in December 2011.

Mr Obeegadoo: On the issue of PSSA, under item 26313073, there is a slight increase in the budget being provided. There have been many complaints from the managers of private secondary schools that the MAB report has not been implemented in terms of grants to private schools. May we know whether the funds budgeted include the implementation of the revised grant formula of the MAB?

Dr. Bunwaree: Nous sommes dans le processus de revoir le *grant system of the PSSA*.

Mr Baloomoody: On page 345, under item 28211041 MSSSA, we are giving Rs875,000 every year. May I know who are the members of the Board; whether that Board functions, what activities there have been for the last financial year and what is being projected for the next financial year?

Dr. Bunwaree: There are many activities. The question must be put to my colleague, the Minister of Youth and Sports. But I can help in trying to find the reply to the question.

Mr Obeegadoo: At page 334, under item *Capital grants to the RTI and to the MGI*, especially MGI where it is Rs3 m. for next year, may we know for what purpose these funds would be applied?

Dr. Bunwaree: The grant for capital project?

The Chairperson: The details!

Dr. Bunwaree: I will circulate the details.

Mr Barbier: Mr Chairperson, I would like to talk on page 344, item 22900 *Other Goods and Services*. On that item, there is a decrease of Rs4 m. Can we have some explanation as to the decrease in this vote?

Dr. Bunwaree: I have already replied to that question.

The Chairperson: This has been dealt with. The hon. Member was not here, I understand.

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, on page 345, item 31 *Construction and Extension of Schools*, I have a few questions there. Firstly, concerning Piton SSS, this is a school which is the pride of a proper football pitch although the land was negotiated many years ago - Minister Bachoo will be aware - from the sugar estate there so that these schoolboys can have their football pitch. I would like to know whether the sums we are budgeting, which are quite important - Rs40 m. - will ensure that the football pitch at Piton will be available. I will put all the questions so as not to waste time. The second question relates to Floreal SSS.

Dr. Bunwaree: The answer is yes.

(*Interruptions*)

Mr Obeegadoo: I don't see why this is a laughing matter.

The Chairperson: Let us concentrate on our work, please!

Mr Obeegadoo: For Floreal SSS, here again, after five years, it would appear that the football pitch is available now. I see an additional sum of Rs10 m. is being budgeted. Is that for laboratory facilities? Because that was the main problem in that school, as far as I can recall.

The third one is MGSSS, Solferino. This, the Minister will know was a difficult case because it is crossed by Palma-Phoenix link road. There was an issue of a foot-bridge which would lead from the school to the playing fields. I would like to know whether the sum budgeted for next year will allow for that to be done.

The fourth one is Forest Side SSS. The playing fields for the girls SSS are now ready, however, for the boys there is a big plot of land that was earmarked many years ago, but which has not yet been converted into sports facilities. May I know whether the sum budgeted here, which is not that significant, Rs14 m., is intended for that purpose?

And finally, for Royal College, Curepipe, a number of years ago, we spent Rs50 m. on a general refurbishment of the Royal College. I note that last year, yet another sum of Rs60 m. and this year, 2011, Rs10 m. are being voted. Could we be provided with some details, please?

Dr. Bunwaree: I think the best thing is for me to give it to the hon. Member. I'll circulate the information so that for each of these colleges the hon. Member may know for what the amounts being voted here are being used. I will give the information for all the secondary schools of the country.

Mr Baloomoody: We can probably do the same with regard to IT. I refer the hon. Minister to page 346, *Acquisition of IT Equipment*. I understand this is a continuous project. May we know from the hon. Minister what percentage of secondary schools today are fully equipped with IT equipment and what is the target to reach 100% of it?

Dr. Bunwaree: I can safely say it is around 100% because all the secondary schools of the country have got a computer laboratory. In fact, they were having 15 PCs; now this has been increased to 20. Not for all! All have got at least 15, but in many other cases, it is 20. Sooner or later, it will be 20. Then, there will be the *Sankore Project* which is going to transform the classrooms; the blackboards will be replaced by screens and IT Equipment for the teachers to be able to use modern techniques to run their classes.

Mr Baloomoody: I thank the hon. Minister for the answer, but is there a special unit for the maintenance of the equipment? Because my information is that in a college found in our constituency, there are 20 equipments, but only four are functioning. Is there a problem of maintenance?

Dr. Bunwaree: There is a unit taking care of that, but not a specialised one. Maybe, this is a weakness; we will have to look into it. Once the *Sankore project* is implemented, it will be a whole revolution and we will need a very specialised unit for that.

Mr Obeegadoo: On the issue of infrastructure, the Minister said he would circulate the information. Could he please include Quatre Bornes SSS which is also a special case?

On page 352, under the issue of human resources, items *06 67 78 Rector and 06 58 73 Deputy Rectors respectively*, according to my recollection, there should now be something like 70 State Secondary Schools. With regard to the number that we will have next year, 63 Rectors and 63 Deputy Rectors, may we know how this is spread out, because we will not have a position of *Rector* in each State Secondary Schools? So, how does this work out, whereas, I believe the intention was to have one Rector and, where possible, a Deputy Rector in all the Schools? How does the figure of 63 here tally with the figure of about 70 or more State Secondary Schools in existence?

Dr. Bunwaree: The hon. Member knows how it works; he has been Minister in the past. We don't have funds for 100%, so, we do what we can.

Ministry of Education and Human Resources – Programme Code 424 - Secondary Education (Rs5,667,144,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

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

Mr Obeegadoo: At page 338, which gives the indicators and targets, Programme 425, *O1 P1* relates to the *Transition rate from Pre-Vocational Education (Year 3) to National Trade Certificate Foundation Course*. We were given to understand - if I can catch the Minister's attention - that the Minister intended to extend pre-vocational to four years. If that is the case, will it be implemented in year 2011 on the basis of funds provided? Will the funds provided allow for that and how does it tally with the target set here?

Dr. Bunwaree: We are not ready to start in January, but we may be starting in the course of the year.

Mr Lesjongard: At page 346, under item *22090 Security*, I see a very sharp increase with regard to the Estimates for 2011. Can the hon. Minister confirm whether this is due to a very recent tender exercise?

Dr. Bunwaree: I will look into the matter and inform the hon. Member.

Mr Baloomoody: Under item *21111 Other Staff Costs*, may we have some particulars of this *Other Staff Costs*?

The Chairperson: Other questions in the meantime?

Mr Obeegadoo: Sir, at page 338, under Programme 425: *Technical and Vocational Education, O1: Provision of Technical and Vocational Education and P2: Employment rate of vocational trainees within 6 months*, my question is: who actually surveys this objective, that is, who does the tracer study to find out six months after, where the vocational trainees - that is, presumably those having completed three years of pre-vocational - are employed? We do not even know. Is that what it refers to? Is it for those having completed three years of pre-vocational or is it for those who followed MITD courses?

Dr. Bunwaree: This is for MITD courses. Those who go for pre-vocational, they go to MITD first according to the standards they have reached. I believe, it should be MITD with the help of HRDC which does that.

As for the other staff costs, it is for overtime and wages.

Mr Obeegadoo: Still on page 338, the third indicator, P1: *Enrolment in higher polytechnic education*, may we know whether this higher polytechnic education refers to the two polytechnics, the *Institut Supérieur de Technologie* in Rose Hill and Swami Dayanand Institute of Management? Are those the only two we are referring to or are there other polytechnic institutions that are included here?

Dr. Bunwaree: As regards items O2: *Provision of top-up higher polytechnic education* and P1: *Enrolment in higher polytechnic education*, I believe it is attributed to the setting-up of the MITD, as you know, in November 2009. IST and SDIM which were under the aegis of the ex-TSMTF have been transferred to UTM. On top of that, there are other courses that are being run. It is starting at the University itself. HND courses also are being taken care of in the same line to allow these students to go for higher education.

Mr Obeegadoo: My question was very direct, in respect of this indicator here, which are the institutions concerned? I mean figures are given in terms of student numbers; to which institution do they relate?

Dr. Bunwaree: The information I have is higher polytechnic education. I believe it should be these two, but I am going to check.

Mr Uteem: Sir, at page 346, under item 26313027 *Current Grant - Mauritius Institute of Training and Development*, I notice that there is a sharp increase for the year 2011 and then, it goes down again, just for one year. May I know what is the reason for this sharp fall?

Dr. Bunwaree: There are difficulties of finances over the country, but it seems that part of the shortfall will be taken care of by HRDC in the way they work together.

Mr Obeegadoo: The hon. Minister would agree in response to this question that HRDC is, as far as I am aware, the regulator and MITD is the provider. So, how can a chunk of the MITD budget for next year go to the HRDC?

Dr. Bunwaree: This is an interesting point. I am not too much agreeable with it, but in the circumstances of finance, we had to agree to that.

Mrs Labelle: In fact, the same thing applies for capital grant, Mr Chairperson. Still on page 346, under item 26313027 *Current Grant - Mauritius Institute of Training and*

Development, for the capital grant too, there is this decrease. Is there any particular project that is being implemented and can we know which project it is, for capital grant for MITD?

Dr. Bunwaree: MITD has got quite a few schools that they are starting. In fact, some have already started last year, and, if I am not mistaken, there is the possibility of starting a school in the region of Triolet.

May I be allowed to give the information for another question? The two institutions are, in fact, Swami Dayanand School of Management and then the Institute of Technology, but there are schools to be built in the pipeline for the MITD.

Mr Barbier: Mr Chairperson, at page 347, under item *28211 Transfers to non-profit institutions*, we are asked to vote a sum of money, but we do not have the details as to which organisations we are voting for this huge sum of money. Can we have details of the institutions?

Dr. Bunwaree: It will be circulated.

Mr Li Kwong Wing: With regard to the business plan of MITD, can we know whether a contract has already been awarded to an external consultant to do it or is there any tender procedures being launched for that?

Dr. Bunwaree: As far as the MITD is concerned, first of all, there is the question of getting the green light from the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms for the setting up of the MITD and once, this will be done, it is a question of days, I may say, and then, the business plan will be taken care of.

Mr François: Sir, under item *26313027 Current Grant - Mauritius Institute of Training and Development*, does that grant contain funds for internships or exchange programme in Mauritius for Rodriguan students studying at Le Chou, MITD or will internships be considered under CSR as I proposed in my budget response?

Dr. Bunwaree: This is an idea which was brought forward by me after my visit to Rodrigues last year. I am all for these exchange programmes because these students in Rodrigues, they do not have exposure possibilities. This year, it has been done through my helping hand and through, let's say, some sort of CSR, but we want it to be regularised; maybe we will have to go in that direction.

Mr Obeegadoo: Before you call the vote, may I just remind the hon. Minister that there are still two questions which have not been answered. One referred to UNESCO and the other to INET.

The Chairperson: No, it has been circulated in the course of the speech of the hon. Minister on Budget.

Mr Obeegadoo: Since we are being asked to approve a large amount of money, maybe the hon. Minister could provide us, very briefly, with that answer.

Dr. Bunwaree: Well, for UNESCO, I think, it is because UNESCO has asked for that sum. That is the reason. UNESCO must have asked because we pay and this has to go, unless there are some other reasons.

Mr Obeegadoo: For the INET, it is Rs15.3 m.

Dr. Bunwaree: I am circulating for INET.

Ministry of Education and Human Resources – Programme Code 425: Technical and Vocational Education (Rs262,571,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Education and Human Resources – Programme Code 428: Special Education Needs of School Age Children was called.

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, I will start with page 338, again, the indicators and targets. I would ask for some clarification here. The indicator is *Enrolment of children with disabilities*. We know that children with slight disabilities are mainstreamed in some special primary schools that have facilities like Solferino, for instance. May I know whether when we are talking, here, of children with disabilities, are we talking of those with the more serious disabilities or is it a general term for all these children; special schools and those that will be mainstreamed, and what is the comparative figure? Does the Ministry have an estimated total number of children with disabilities that need to be schooled?

Dr. Bunwaree: This is a very difficult problem, I must say, Mr Chairperson. In fact, the hon. Member must bear with me because what is being done now with children having disabilities is also *sans précédent*. We have asked all parents who have got children with any type of disability - be they great, be they medium, be they small - to get them registered at the school in their locality when they reach the age of five. We started that this year and, in fact, we

have got quite a good number. Otherwise, these children would have been elsewhere. Then, to give all these details, we have to wait for a survey that is being carried out and that is continuing. I believe, by the end of March next year, we should be able to give the explanations that the hon. Member is asking.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, at page 347, under items *Other Expenses and 28211 Transfers to non-profit Institutions*, maybe we can have a list of these institutions. I would also like to know if APEIM is included under this item.

Dr. Bunwaree: I am going to circulate a list of the institutions. For APEIM, I will give the reply in a few minutes.

Mr Obeegadoo: Still on page 347, mention is made of *Study on Enhancing Quality for Education for Students with Special Educational Needs*. Could we be provided with some more information as to what is the precise focus of the study? Are we looking here at children of primary school age or is it more general, what is the objective of this study?

Dr. Bunwaree: Being given that I am a doctor and well-attached to these children, I think much has to be done for them. We are tapping the sources of resource persons from abroad because we are very weak, I must say, in this special needs education for children. If the hon. Member will put questions in the course of the year, by that time we will already have the programme frame because, in fact, nothing really solid exists for the time being.

Ministry of Education and Human Resources – Programme Code 428: Special Education Needs of School Age Children (Rs32,985,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Education and Human Resources – Programme Code 429: Human Resource Development was called.

Mr Obeegadoo: I refer first to page 334 which summarises the financial resources to be provided and I am very much confused here. The global financial envelope will be less in 2011 as compared to 2010 with a drastic reduction in terms of careers guidance. Why are we giving less funds for Careers Guidance?

Dr. Bunwaree: This is a question of policy. I will come with a statement in the House very soon because this is being revamped at the level of the Ministry.

As far as UNESCO is concerned, a request has been made for an increase in the member States contribution next year as I was saying.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, I am on page 338, *Sub-programme 42901 Careers Guidance*. The base line is 2300 students for this year and the same number for the three coming years for the *Provision of guidance and counselling to students*. Must we take it that we have got 2300 students who have received guidance and counselling and must I take it that this is being provided by – we have got only one Principal Careers Officer and we don't have any senior careers officer - four officers, that is, three Careers Officers and one senior officer? These four officers have provided counselling services to 2300 students this year and we are keeping the same amount for the three coming years.

Dr. Bunwaree: Pour l'instant, c'est ce qui apparaît dans le budget, mais comme je vous disais tout à l'heure, pour le *Careers Guidance* aussi on est en train de revoir le système. Cela est une chose. Maintenant il y a le secteur tertiaire où une partie du *Careers Guidance* est réalisée là-bas et puis il y a aussi le bureau de l'emploi.

(Interruptions)

On fait *Careers Guidance* là-bas. Moi-même j'avais instauré cela quand j'étais ministre du travail il y a quelques années de cela. Ces trois ministères sont en train de travailler ensemble pour voir quelle est la meilleure solution. J'aurais aimé que *Careers Guidance* existe dans tous les collèges du pays.

Mr Uteem: On page 347, *Sub-Programme 42902: Scholarships*, item 28212 *Transfers to Households*, may I know from the hon. Minister what is the percentage of laureates that come back to Mauritius and what are the measures being taken to enforce bonds against those laureates who do not come back to Mauritius after their studies?

Dr. Bunwaree: Unfortunately, I can't answer offhand; I need notice for this.

Mr Obeegadoo: At page 338, I am confused there. We are providing sums for the *Scholarship Unit* and its role here is described as *Provision of financial support to laureates* whereas my knowledge of this unit is that it was an open unit based at the Ministry where any student can walk in and ask for information about available scholarships, whereas here the statement is very limitative and seems to restrict its role to provision of financial support.

Dr. Bunwaree: We have an HRK Fund which takes care of all the rest. But, in fact, the unit is still functioning as it used to be.

Mr Uteem: On the same page under item 28212008 *Other current Transfers - Scholarships to Foreign Students*, may I know from the hon. Minister what is the criteria which is applied to give scholarships to foreign students?

Dr. Bunwaree: This is a question of policy. I will circulate the criteria for the hon. Member.

Mr Barbier: At page 347, item 22120 *Fees*, there is a provision of Rs250 m. May I know from the hon. Minister to whom these fees are being paid?

Dr. Bunwaree: Well, I answered the question for fees. In a few minutes, I will give the reply.

Mr Obeegadoo: At page 338, item 01: *Provision for training to Educators*, does this indicator include heads of schools, for instance, Rectors? My second question is: I am astounded by the fact that here the target for 2011 is less than half the numbers to be trained as compared to 2010, whereas training needs should be on the increase and this tallies with what is shown on page 348 in terms of the *Current Grants* to the MIE which stagnate to Rs177 m. which, in real terms, translate in a drop in actual budgetary resources available to the MIE which I take it is a very serious matter.

Mrs Labelle: Since I am on the same item *Training to Educators*, if I go to page 338, to the number of educators trained in pre-primary, primary and secondary education, I don't find anything regarding prevocation and special education needs. Must I take it that the programmes that MIE initiated regarding the training of prevocation and special education needs teachers are being put aside?

Dr. Bunwaree: Prevocation is also being taken care of by MIE. In reply to hon. Obeegadoo, the number of educators trained varies from year to year depending on new coach admitted and also specific training programmes related to new pedagogical projects.

Mr Obeegadoo: On page 348, under item *Grants to the MQA*, will the hon. Minister explain to us the situation inasmuch as there are no funds allotted to the HRDC, but there is a

sum of Rs19 m. plus capital grant of Rs1 m. for the MQA? Is it that one is replacing the other because, of course, there is potential overlapping as between these two institutions?

Dr. Bunwaree: I think it's for the second year that there is no fund for the HRDC. HRDC gets its funds from the private sector contribution and sponsorship, not a cent from the Government budget.

Mr Barbier: At page 354, under item *Senior Careers Officer*, I see that this post has not been filled yet and there is no provision for the coming years for this post to be filled. May I know from the hon. Minister whether this post is going to be filled or cancelled?

Dr. Bunwaree: There are budget constraints.

Ministry of Education and Human Resources – Programme Code 429: Human Resource Development (Rs372,731,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security – Programme Code 481: Policy and Strategy for Agro-Industry and Food Security was called.

Mr Obeegadoo: The statement as to the objectives, on page 358, is the formulation and implementation of general sector policies. On the indicators, there is nothing that corresponds to this except for the PBB Strategic Plan. May I have some clarification from the Minister as to what it means that for 2011, June is the target for the PBB Strategic Plan? Is it that plan that will set out the proposed general sector policies and that there will be one each year?

Mr Faugoo: My officers are not here, Mr Chairperson, I will circulate same later.

Mr Ganoo: Mr Chairperson, at page 361, Programme Code 481, can I ask the hon. Minister whether there is any provision in the Estimates for the measures that were announced in the ERCP, including the reduction of global cess?

Mr Faugoo: I'll have to look and then I'll circulate, Mr Chairperson.

Mr Ameer Meea: Mr Chairperson, on page 366, under item *22130 Studies and Surveys*, we can see that there has been a substantial increase from Rs400,000 to Rs10.5 m. Can I ask the hon. Minister which studies and surveys have been carried out and whether he can give a breakdown?

The Chairperson: Hon. Minister, do you have the information?

Mr Faugoo: No, I don't have it, Mr Chairperson, I will circulate same.

The Chairperson: We'll take another question in the meantime.

Mr Li Kwong Wing: At page 366 under item 31132401 *e-Government Projects (e-Agro-Industry)*, can we have some details on this item?

Mr Faugoo: I'll circulate it.

The Chairperson: Yes, hon. Ganoo, have you any query?

Mr Ganoo: Can I ask the hon. Minister if he is....

The Chairperson: Which item?

Mr Ganoo: Same item.

The Chairperson: E-Government?

Mr Ganoo: Not e-Government, Mr Chairperson, it is again on Programme 481: *Policy and Strategy for agro-industry and food security*. Can I ask the hon. Minister if he can enlighten us as to whether any provision for the Rs310 m. for FORIP as announced in the Budget has been provided for?

Mr Faugoo: It has been provided.

Mr Ganoo: Where, please?

Mr Faugoo: It is in programme 482.

Mr Ameer Meea: On page 366. Under item 22120 *Fees*, there is an amount of Rs7.7 m. Can I know the nature of the fees and to whom it was paid?

The Chairperson: Does the hon. Minister have the information now?

Mr Faugoo: For payment of fees to Chairman, Members of Board and Committees, the provision made for 2010 was insufficient and a *virement* was effected for what was required over and above.

The Chairperson: Do you have the information asked for?

Mr Faugoo: Which one?

The Chairperson: On page 366, there was a question on studies and surveys.

Mr Faugoo: I'll circulate.

The Chairperson: E-Government projects?

Mr Faugoo: I'll circulate.

The Chairperson: It is going to be circulated. And on cess?

Mr Faugoo: It's all there.

The Chairperson: On cess also it has been circulated. We take the vote.

Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security – Programme Code 481: Policy and Strategy for Agro-Industry and Food Security (Rs158,145,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security – Programme Code 482: Competitiveness of the Sugar Cane Sector was called.

Mr Ganoo: Under item *Competitiveness of the Sugar Cane Sector* at page 361 regarding the Sugar Insurance Fund, Mr Chairperson, can I ask the hon. Minister whether any provisions have been made or is it because the law is going to be amended as announced in the Budget?

Mr Faugoo: That's something to do with finance, Mr Chairperson.

The Chairperson: It is a question of policy.

Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security - Programme Code 482: Competitiveness of the Sugar Cane Sector (Rs1,020,604,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security – Programme Code 483: Development of Non Sugar (Crop) Sector was called.

The Chairperson: Is there any question?

Mr Obeegadoo: Yes, Sir. On page 363, O5: P1, this is the issue of pesticide residues on crops that we debated in this House not very long ago. Being given the serious concerns that have been voiced, may I invite the Minister to tell us whether his Ministry has budgeted for the means to carry out the required number of tests for determining pesticide residues and, if so, whether the target will be raised to address the serious challenge before us?

Mr Faugoo: The answer is yes.

Mr Li Kwong Wing: At page 368 *Programme Code 483*, item 22090 *Security*, the amount that has been provided has increased substantially to Rs9.5 m. Can we know what kind of security is it and for what purpose, and whether there is any contract that has been awarded to private security firms or is it the security staff within the Ministry?

Mr Faugoo: Mr Chairperson, it is for security services which have been awarded to Brinks Co. Ltd. for compound falling under the development of non sugar crop sector, including Barkly and Curepipe station.

Mr Ameer Meea: On page 368 under item 2212008 *Fees to Consultant (MARS)*, an amount of Rs4,600,000 has been budgeted. Can I ask the hon. Minister to whom it was paid and what was it related to?

The Chairperson: Hon. Obeegadoo, we take your question in the meantime.

Mr Obeegadoo: At page 369, under item 28 *Other Expenses*, I find that there is a drastic reduction apparently concerning transfers to private enterprises, in particular, capital transfers on the FSF. Will the hon. Minister kindly explain what actually is happening here?

Mr Faugoo: I will circulate the information.

Mr Ganoo: I am on page 362 *Programme Code 483: Development of Non-Sugar (Crop Sector)*. Can the hon. Minister enlighten us whether any provision, for the two hydroponic villages, has been made in the Budget and if so, whereas announced in the Budget?

Mr Faugoo: It has been made, but I cannot point out exactly where.

Mr Obeegadoo: I just put a question and I was told by the Minister that the information would be circulated. The practice for this full exercise is that the Ministry tries to provide it in relation...

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: If something which can just be stated is stated. This is a practice also...

(Interruptions)

Order, please! If it is a lengthy reply, it can be circulated.

Mr Obeegadoo: If it is lengthy, indeed...

The Chairperson: Has the Minister circulated it?

Mr Faugoo: Is it a point of order?

The Chairperson: It is being circulated?

Mr Faugoo: Sorry!

The Chairperson: The reply is being circulated?

Mr Faugoo: Yes.

The Chairperson: It is according to the Standing Order.

Mr Faugoo: This is what I said.

Mr Obeegadoo: On page 369 item 31 *Acquisition of Non-Financial*, I don't know what, presumably assets where the sums budgeted are being increased from Rs29 m. to Rs42 m. I will kindly invite the Minister to try and provide some information since we are being asked to vote this Budget. This is a kind, gracious request following the example set by the hon. Minister Bunwaree.

Mr Faugoo: I am going to circulate. The hon. Member can have a look because we are not voting tonight. It is going to be voted afterwards. The exercise is going on.

The Chairperson: If the hon. Minister has some information, he can convey it to the hon. Member.

Mr Faugoo: I am going to circulate, Mr Chairperson.

The Chairperson: The hon. Minister has it, I understand.

Mr Faugoo: I will circulate now, tonight. He can have a good look and then decide to vote or not to vote.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Order, please!

Mr Ganoo: Again, at page 362 *Programme Code 483*, Mr Chairperson, can the hon. Minister indicate to the House whether the sugar agricultural sector has announced in the Budget

that a National Agricultural Biotechnology Institute will be set up, whether any provision has been made, and if so, where?

Mr Faugoo: It has been made in the same programme.

Mr Li Kwong Wing: On page 369 under item 28215004 *Food Crop Insurance Scheme for the sum of Rs2 m.*, can we know which food crop it is about, for what kind of planters and who is the insurer for the scheme?

Mr Faugoo: It is open to all registered planters with the Small Planters Welfare Fund. It covers 26 different plants and it covers two cycles per year.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: All types of vegetables.

(Interruptions)

Order, please!

Mr Ganoo: Mr Chairperson, I come again to *Programme Code 483* at page 362, item 01: *New varieties of crops released to farmers/entrepreneurs*. My point about this issue is to ask the hon. Minister - I hope this time he will give us a fair answer of what we are expecting of him. As regards the Barkly Experiment Station, the hon. Minister should know, there have been quite some severe comments in the Director of Audit's report in terms of seed production. The Director noted that seed production had declined below the annual requirement which is set by AREU. In terms of the remarks which have been made by the Director of Audit regarding the seed cane, the seed testing laboratory, the cold storeroom which was out of use and the tonnes of seeds, infested with pests, which had to be disposed of at Mare Chicose, can I ask the hon. Minister whether the situation has been remedied?

Mr Faugoo: It is a very long question, it requires a long answer. I will circulate, Mr Chairperson.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Order, please!

(Interruptions)

We'll listen to hon. Mrs Labelle.

(Interruptions)

Hon. Obeegadoo, please! Hon. Mrs Labelle has the floor. Order! Hon. Assirvaden, please cool down!

Mrs Labelle: Maybe the hon. Member wants the floor. I can give way if he needs the floor. At page 369, Mr Chairperson, with your permission, I am on item *31112 Non-Residential Buildings*; from Rs6 m. we have now an amount of Rs15.6 m. Can we know the number of non-residential buildings which will be acquired next year for R15.6 m?

Mr Faugoo: It must be in the answer I circulated earlier on.

Mr Barbier: On page 369, under item *28211 Transfers to Non-Profit Institutions*, last year we voted the sum of Rs5.4 m., but there is no provision for the coming financial year. May I know whether it has been transferred? Will the hon. Minister circulate the list of those who have benefitted, for this current year, under this vote?

Mr Faugoo: Provision has been made, but it has been transferred to item *26313019 Current Grant – Food and Agricultural Research Council* for fiscal year 2011.

Mr François: Mr Chairperson, I have two questions. The first one, at page 363, concerns *Performance Indicator 06 - Control of plant, pests and diseases at entry points (airport, seaport)*. Is the hon. Minister satisfied with the way control is being carried out?

The Chairperson: No, it's a question of policy.

(Interruptions)

Order, please!

Mr François: I will reformulate.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Order, please! Hon. Mrs Labelle, you will have the opportunity to address the Chair.

(Interruptions)

Order, please!

Mr François: Mr Chairperson, I want to raise a point. There is a problem with the movement of animals and plants, especially between Rodrigues and Mauritius. Can I ask the hon. Minister whether he will increase procedures with regard to quarantine for control of pests and diseases between these two islands?

Mr Faugoo: If the hon. Member tells me to which vote and item this question is related, then I am ready to answer.

The Chairperson: Hon. François, you can raise an issue provided it is linked with an item or vote. I will allow you if you can link it to some specific items of the Budget.

Mr François: Mr Chairperson, it is at page 363, *Performance Indicator 06 - Control of plant pests and diseases at entry points (airport, seaport)*.

The Chairperson: No, this is an objective of the programme.

Mr Obeegadoo: Mr Chairperson, in respect of this point, there is a target for 2011 which the Budget is supposed to cover. Can it be in that connection?

Mr Faugoo: Under *output 6, Control of plant, pests and diseases at entry points (airport, seaport)*, it is a mandatory requirement to inspect all imported consignments and it is done at 100%. In fact, we have carried out 1,113 laboratory diagnosis for pests and diseases, along with 6,000 first diagnoses carried out during field visits and office course by the Extension Division. In fact, the target was 1,200, but we have reached more than what it was targeted.

Mr François: Mr Chairperson, my second question relates to page 369, item 28225006 (b) *Land preparation and fencing (Rodrigues)*, where an amount of Rs10 m. has been earmarked for Rodrigues. May I ask the hon. Minister who will monitor and implement the projects? Will it be the Ministry of Agro-Industry & Food Security or will it be a partnership between the Ministry and the Rodrigues Regional Assembly?

Mr Faugoo: It is Rodrigues Regional Assembly, but the Ministry of Agro-Industry & Food Security will supervise the project.

Mr Barbier: Mr Chairperson, at page 369, item 28225 - *Transfer to Private Enterprises*, the amount earmarked for the current year is Rs59 m., but it has decreased to Rs20 m. for the coming year. Maybe, the hon. Minister can give us the list of beneficiaries, or if he wants, he can circulate it.

Mr Faugoo: It is all in the sub items, Mr Chairperson.

Mr Ganoo: Mr Chairperson, I want to come back to page 362 *Performance Indicator 04 - Quantity of tissue culture planting materials supplied to growers*. Here again, Mr Chairperson, as far as plant tissue culture is concerned, this is carried out at the Barkly Tissue Culture Laboratory and we expect an answer from the hon. Minister. I am sure he will inform the House and react on what was commented upon by the Director of Audit to the effect that the average production of plant tissue culture represents only 2% of the optimum capacity of the laboratory, and several items of equipment were not in good condition. The cold storeroom, for example, was not operational; the refrigeration system of the cold store had exceeded its economic and technical lifetime. Of course, that had hampered the whole ambition of his Ministry. Since the Minister has now in the Budget the units of planting, the quantity of tissue culture, can he therefore tell us whether what has been provided for in the Budget will be materialised?

Mr Faugoo: I can give some information. In fact, the products in target for 2010 were 5,100 kgs of seeds. The agricultural services have produced so far 4,000 kgs of seeds for 30 crops.

As far as reduction in production of tissue culture plants over years is concerned, there are two main reasons why it has gone down. In fact, we are promoting private entrepreneurs to undertake this production activity. The expected demand of banana and anthurium tissue culture plantlets will decrease on the basis of market research.

Mr Li Kwong Wing: At page 369, item 26313086 - *Current Grant Tea Board*, I don't see any provision for this year. Does it mean the Tea Board has been wound up?

Mr Faugoo: Apparently, from what I understand, the Tea Board has a bank reserve and they have been asked to use from that Fund which they already have.

Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security – Programme Code 483: Development of Non Sugar (Crop) Sector (Rs567,780,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security – Programme Code 484: Livestock Production and Development was called.

Mr Ameer Meea: Mr Chairperson, at page 370, under item 22120 - *Fees*, an amount of Rs7,315,000 has been earmarked. Can I ask the hon. Minister what is the nature of the fees?

Mr Faugoo: It is for the payment of accreditation of food technology laboratory, fees for training, fees in connection with examination and interview and also provisions for refund of subscription fees to professional bodies. In fact, there is a decrease of Rs5 m., representing payment for laboratory test under the competent authority, the seafood hub, which has been transferred to the Ministry of Fisheries.

Mr Ganoo: Mr Chairperson, this issue of the food laboratory also gave rise to a lot of comments. I am sure the hon. Minister knows about this question of accreditation. Can I know from the hon. Minister what is the situation now? Has the laboratory been given the accreditation of ISO 17025?

Mr Faugoo: It is in the process.

Mr Barbier: Mr Chairperson, at page 359, *Programme 484: Livestock Production and Development*, may I know from the hon. Minister whether Government stopped its subsidy or the production of livestock feed some time back and, if so, since when and why? And how Government compensates the breeders on the livestock feed?

Mr Faugoo: I will circulate it.

The Chairperson: It is going to be circulated.

Mr Li Kwong Wing: On the same page 371, under item 28225 *Transfers to Private Enterprises*, there is a capital transfer under FSF for livestock of Rs34 m., can we know what type of livestock is that capital transfer concerned with and which is that private enterprise which is benefitting from this transfer?

Mr Faugoo: Mr Chairperson, there is provision made in connection with Food Security Fund and there is a whole list of schemes which have been launched. This fund is provided to finance those schemes. For example, there is the cattle breeder scheme, the pasture development scheme. Provision is also made for model dairy farms and goat multiplier farm and also loan for purchase of machinery and equipment.

Mr Obeegadoo: On the same programme, Mr Chairperson, if one looks at page 359, the total resources going to this programme is drastically reduced, part of it is because of the issues that the Minister just commented upon about animal feed and capital transfers for livestock; I also note on page 370 under item 21110 *Personal Emoluments* that there is a significant

reduction. Would the hon. Minister care to give us some indication as to what is happening here?

Mr Faugoo: The number of employees for 2010 reflects what was voted for this year and there is a reduction in the number of employees. This is why the amount has been decreased.

Mr Obeegadoo: I am sorry, but I have a question on the same issue.

The Chairperson: Yes, we will take it.

Mr Obeegadoo: May I just draw the attention of the hon. Minister to page 379, which indicates, under *Programme 484: Livestock Production and Development*, that the funded position has slightly increased from 503 to 505?

The Chairperson: What is the question?

Mr Obeegadoo: The question is that I would like to have an explanation for personal emoluments increasing. The Minister suggested that the number of posts was also decreasing. In fact, it would seem that funded position has increased by 2.

Mr Faugoo: No, I am talking about the overall number of employees. If we look at it individually, it might look different, but overall there is a decrease.

Mr Ameer Meea: On page 371, item 25210 *Non-Financial Private Enterprises*, there is an amount of Rs6 m. which is budgeted and it concerns subsidies and incentive for livestock. Can I ask the hon. Minister if he can circulate the list of private enterprises that will benefit from those subsidies?

Mr Faugoo: I have no problem.

The Chairperson: I understand the hon. Minister is circulating the list?

Mr Faugoo: Yes.

Mr Obeegadoo: On page 371, under item 26313110 *Current Grant – MSPCA*, it would appear that there was no sum budgeted for this current year but that we are budgeting Rs3.5 m. for next year. There have been all sorts of rumours about problems in the relationship between MSPCA and the Ministry. May we have some explanation as to what has been happening here, there are no funds for 2010 and Rs3.5 m. for 2011?

Mr Faugoo: The increase reflects increment payable to employees.

Mr Lesjongard: On page 371 under item 3113026 *Construction of Farm Buildings - FSF*, can we have an indication from the hon. Minister as to where those farms will be located and the number of model dairy farms and goat multiplier farms to be erected?

Mr Faugoo: I do not know yet where it is going to be located.

(*Interruptions*)

The Chairperson: Order!

Mr Ganoo: Under item 22120028 *Fees for Laboratory Test/Food Technology Laboratory*, we commented on that item a few minutes ago, but I would like to ask the hon. Minister to confirm whether these fees are paid by Government because of the private operators and can he confirm whether the Director of Audit did not recommend that the private operators themselves should bear the cost associated with the issue of the certificates of compliance instead of Government?

The Chairperson: Hon. Ganoo, we are concerned here with different items and I do not know which part of the Director of Audit's report you are referring to. Perhaps the Minister is aware.

Mr Ganoo: I will phrase my question differently. Can the hon. Minister confirm that the fees we are concerned with under item 22120028 *Fees for Laboratory Test/Food Technology Laboratory* are the fees, which the private operators should have paid and it was a recommendation that they should be made to bear the cost and not the State?

Mr Faugoo: This amount is being voted for accreditation of Food Technology Laboratory which is more or less Rs7 m. As I said earlier, there is also provision made for fees for training, fees in connection with examination and interview and refund for subscription fees to professional bodies.

The Chairperson: We will take a question from hon. François.

Mr François: On page 371, under item 26321001 *Capital Grant – Rodrigues Regional Assembly (Abattoir)*, there is a provision of Rs10 m. for next year. May I ask the hon. Minister

whether this amount is for the construction of the abattoir building equipments only or will it take on board the full project with road construction, earth work, masonry walls, etc.?

Mr Faugoo: This one is specific to the Abattoir.

Mrs Labelle: At page 370, under item 22900027 *Animal Feed*, I find that from Rs17 m. we are now at Rs10 m. May I ask the hon. Minister whether he will let us know to which animals we are referring to?

Mr Faugoo: Mr Chairperson, it is the grant which is given to small breeders. In fact, there was a huge amount of subsidies which were given and we had to do away with that in December. We are voting Rs10 m. for 2011 and there is an estimate for 2012 and 2013.

Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security - Programme Code 484: Livestock Production and Development (Rs334,517,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security - Programme Code 485: Forestry Resources was called.

Mr Ganoo: On page 372, under item 31131 *Cultivated Assets*, can the hon. Minister tell us what these provisions are for?

Mr Faugoo: This is the provision made for mechanical bulldozing, weeding of State lands after exploitation prior to reforestation.

Dr. S. Boolell: On page 372, Programme Code 485, under item 22090 *Security*, there is a sum of Rs3.5 m. to Rs4.5 m. approximately. Can the hon. Minister inform us to whom this sum is being paid for security services?

Mr Faugoo: It is for payment of security services to Brinks, for watching compounds and premises of the forestry services, namely at Head Office, Abercombe and Curepipe nursery.

Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security - Programme Code 485: Forestry Resources (Rs196,524,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security - Programme Code 486: Native Terrestrial Biodiversity and Conservation was called.

Mr Ameer Meea: On page 373, under item 22120 *Fees*, there has been an estimate of Rs15,000 in 2010 and now we see that there is an estimate of Rs7,269,000 in 2011. Can I ask the hon. Minister what is the nature of the fees and if some details could be provided?

Mr Faugoo: In fact, the amount which is being voted for reflects for fees for training, fees for consultants, the increase is due to PAN project; under the PAN project 10% land mass, that is, 15,000 hectares will be under a protected area status. UNDP will recruit consultants to help support the project.

Mr Ganoo: I come back to page 364 *Programme Code 486 Native Terrestrial Biodiversity and Conservation, O1: Management plans produced for islets and other protected areas for conservation, education and eco-tourism purposes, and P1: Number of Management Plans Produced; 8, 1, 1.* Can we ask the hon. Minister why it drops from 8 to 1, especially in view of the fact that we all know what happened to the lease of the Flat Island and also this was the subject matter of very harsh comments from the Director of Audit?

Ms Deepalsing: Mr Chairperson, on a point of clarification, if I may have your guidance. I don't know which Director of Audit's report the hon. Member is referring to each time. May I have your guidance? The hon. Member is the Chairperson of the Public Accounts Committee and as far as I understand when there are things that are live at the Public Accounts Committee, we are not supposed to be discussing this here. I don't know which report he is referring to? But I would like to have your guidance as to whether we can refer to the Director of Audit's report.

The Chairperson: No, if the report has been made public, it can be referred to.

(Interruptions)

Please, order!

(Interruptions)

Order! Hon. Mrs Labelle, please!

Mr Ganoo: This is the latest report from the Director of Audit and I can table it.

The Chairperson: It is a report which has been rendered public.

(Interruptions)

Hon. Ms Deepalsing, please! You wanted a clarification and you are being given. I take it that this is not an issue which is presently being subject of enquiry before the PAC. It is a report which has been rendered public and the hon. Member can refer to it.

Mr Ganoo: There have been parliamentary questions in this House concerning this issue. I was just asking the hon. Minister whether there were any plans for the future for the other islets.

Mr Faugoo: In fact, we have targeted for 2010 to come up with eight management plans for islets. We are achieving that target, Mr Chairperson. We have made, in fact, this year eight plans and what we are projecting to do is one each year and for the coming years.

As far as Flat Island is concerned, I think that my colleague, hon. Bodha has answered to a question earlier on, that we are consulting the State Law Office so as to enable us to take a decision.

Mr Ganoo: Does the management plan concern other islets?

Mr Faugoo: It is one management plan for seven islets. We are also working on a plan for the estuary bird at Rivulet Terre Rouge. I can circulate the list, Mr Chairperson.

Dr. S. Boolell: On page 372, last line, *Security*, we are called upon to vote another Rs4 m. and again to which security firms is that going to?

The Chairperson: Hon. Dr. Boolell, I missed you, could you please repeat.

Dr. S. Boolell: On page 372, last line under item 22090 *security* a sum of more than Rs4 m. is being called upon to be voted; can we know the name of the security firm?

Mr Faugoo: It is Brinks again.

Mr Obeegadoo: On a specific issue, on page 373 under item 22120 *Fees...*

(Interruptions)

I don't think that this question has been put.

Mr Faugoo: On which page?

Mr Obeegadoo: On page 373 second item from the top, I don't think it has been put, so can I ask ...

The Chairperson: I understand that this question has been raised.

Mr Faugoo: I have already replied to hon. Ameer Meea on this question.

Mr Obeegadoo: My apologies.

Mr Ganoo: Under the last item on page 373, *Rehabilitation of Nature Reserves & Parks – Removal of Invasive Alien Species*, I find that no provision has been made for this year. I can see that the provisions for 2011, 2012 and 2013 will be progressively increasing. Can the hon. Minister elaborate on these alien species, please?

Mr Faugoo: I will circulate the answer.

Mr Chairperson: Yes, a very last one, hon. Ameer Meea.

Mr Ameer Meea: Thank you, Mr Chairperson. On page 373 under item 31113016 *Construction of Visitors' Centre*, can I ask the hon. Minister where is that centre?

Mr Faugoo: It is in the region of Black River.

Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security - Programme Code 486: Native Terrestrial Biodiversity and Conservation (Rs51,685,000) was, on question put, agreed to.

Mr Bachoo: Sir, I beg to move that you do report progress and ask leave to sit again.

Question put and agreed to.

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

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Members, Mr Speaker will now resume his seat and will make an announcement.

At this stage Mr Speaker took the Chair.

ANNOUNCEMENT

P.B.B. ESTIMATES 2011 – COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY – TIME ALLOTMENT

Mr Speaker: Hon. Members, I have to inform the House that I have, under Standing Order 73 (4), had consultations with the Chief Government Whip and the Opposition Whip and I have decided to allot 15 minutes per Programme Code for each Ministry for the consideration of the P.B.B. Estimates 2011 at the Committee of Supply, and this will apply as from tomorrow morning. Thank you.

ADJOURNMENT

The Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Energy and Public Utilities (Dr. R. Beebejaun): Sir, I beg to move that this Assembly do now adjourn to Thursday 09 December 2010 at 10.00 a.m.

Mr Bachoo rose and seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

Mr Speaker: The House stands adjourned.

At 9.09 p.m. the sitting was, on its rising, adjourned to Thursday 09 December 2010 at 10.00 a.m.