No. 8 of 2010

REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS

FIFTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

FIRST SESSION

TUESDAY 20 JULY 2010

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MAURITIUS

Fifth National Assembly

FIRST SESSION

Debate No. 8 of 2010

Sitting of Tuesday 20 July 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)

PAPERS LAID

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

A. Office of the President –

The 36th Annual Report of the Ombudsman for period January to December 2009 (In original).

B. Ministry of Finance and Economic Development –

(a) The Annual Report and Audited Statements of Accounts of the Employees Welfare Fund for 2008-2009 (In original).

(b) Securities (Acquisition of Shares of Dissenting Shareholders during Takeovers) Regulations 2010 (Government Notice No. 154 of 2010).

C. Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity, Senior Citizens Welfare and Reforms Institutions –

The Community Service Order (Amendment) Regulations 2010 (Government Notice No. 153 of 2010).

D. Ministry of Local Government and Outer Islands –

The Pamplemousses/Rivière du Rempart District Council (Fees for Outline Planning Permission and Building and Land Use Permit) Regulations 2010 (Government Notice No.152 of 2010).

E. Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms –

(a) The Civil Establishment (Amendment) Order 2010 (Government Notice No.147 of 2010).

(b) The Civil Establishment (Rodrigues Regional Assembly) (Amendment) Order 2010 (Government Notice (Rodrigues Regional Assembly) No. 3 of 2010).

F. Ministry of Business, Enterprise, Cooperatives and Consumer Protection –

(a) The Consumer Protection (Control of Price of Taxable and Non-Taxable Goods) (Amendment No. 9) Regulations 2010 (Government Notice No. 148 of 2010).

(b) The Rodrigues Consumer Protection (Control of Price of Taxable and Non-Taxable Goods) (Amendment No. 16) Regulations 2010 (Government Notice No. 149 of 2010).

(c) The Rodrigues Consumer Protection (Control of Price of Taxable and Non-Taxable Goods) (Amendment No. 17) Regulations 2010 (Government Notice No. 150 of 2010).

(d) The Rodrigues Consumer Protection (Control of Price of Taxable and Non-Taxable Goods) (Amendment No. 18) Regulations 2010 (Government Notice No. 151 of 2010).

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 vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment (Mr X. L. Duval) rose and seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

MUNICIPAL COUNCIL OF PORT LOUIS & BLACK RIVER DISTRICT COUNCIL CENTRES – ACCESS

The Minister of Local Government and Outer Islands (Mr H. Aimée): Mr Speaker, Sir, with your permission, I shall make a statement.

I wish to refer to the issue raised by the hon. First Member of GRNW and Port Louis West at the sitting of 29 June 2010 and pertaining to the complaints made by her constituents to the effect that access to the municipal centres and centres under the jurisdiction of the Municipal Council of Port Louis and Black River District Council were denied to them for political reasons.

As indicated earlier, following enquiries I conducted into the matter at the level of the Municipal Council of Port Louis and Black District Council, I have been informed that at no point in time any association, club or inhabitant has been refused access to the Municipal Council or centres of Black River Council on political grounds as alleged.

Nevertheless, I have instructed that a circular letter be issued to all Local Authorities that application for the use of centres should be considered indiscriminately.

FILM CLASSIFICATION BOARD - *"PARADIS AN DEY"* FILM

The Minister of Arts and Culture (Mr M. Choonee): Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to have your permission to make a statement to inform the House of the role of the Film Classification Board of my Ministry, especially with regard to the documentary film "Paradis An Dey".

The Film Classification Board has been established under the Films Act 2002 and has replaced the Board of Film Censors. The Films Act 2002 is in force as from 01 October, 2009.

The Films Act 2002 provides, *inter-alia*, for the classification of films meant for public exhibition including video films as follows –

U		Universal – Suitable for all audiences
(PG)		Parental Guidance is compulsory for children under the age of 12 [Some scenes may be unsuitable for children under the age of 12]
(15)		Suitable for persons of the age of 15 and above
(18)		Suitable for all adults
(18R)		Subject to specified conditions [Adult audiences only]
Rejected		Not allowed

Under the film classification framework, films are no longer censored. They are just classified and rejection is also one of the classifications. This is in case the film is not considered suitable for public exhibition.

The film "Paradis An Dey", which made the headlines in the media recently, has not been submitted to the Film Classification Board yet, as required by Section 12 of the Films Act. My

information is that the film was forwarded to the Film Classification Board by the Police on 07 July 2010, for its views, for the purpose of Police enquiry.

The report (not classification) of the Film Classification Board was submitted to the Police on 08 July, 2010. It mentions, *inter-alia*, that the film in question may not be suitable for general viewing, meaning that it may not be suitable for all audiences.

I am further informed by the Secretary of the Film Classification Board that Mr Jameel Peerally, who is the producer of the film, came to the office of the Board on Monday 19 July 2010, i.e yesterday, to enquire on the procedures to be followed for the classification of the film and he was provided with all the relevant information.

However, he has not yet made any application for the classification of the film in question. Once the application is received at the Film Classification Board, the procedures for the classification of the film will be initiated.

PUBLIC BILLS

First reading

On motion made and seconded the following Bills were read a first time –

(a) The Arabic-Speaking Union Bill (No. VII of 2010)

(b) The Bhojpuri-Speaking Union Bill (No. VIII of 2010)

(c) The Creole-Speaking Union Bill (No. IX of 2010)

(d) The Mandarin-Speaking Union Bill (No. X of 2010)

(e) The Sanskrit-Speaking Union Bill (No. XI of 2010)

Second Reading

THE SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION (2008-2009) (No. 2) BILL

(No. XII of 2010)

Order for Second Reading read.

The vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Finance & Economic Development (Mr P. Jugnauth): Mr Speaker, Sir, with your permission, I beg to move that the Supplementary Appropriation (2008-2009) (No. 2) Bill (No. XII of 2010) and the Supplementary Appropriation (2009) Bill (No. XIII of 2010) be read together a second time.

At the outset, I wish to state that the total amount actually spent during each of the two financial years is below the total sum appropriated. For 2008-2009 the amount spent was Rs57.9 billion whereas the total sum already appropriated amounted to Rs59.9 billion. For the six months ended 31 December 2009, the amount spent was Rs31.2 billion and the sum already appropriated amounted to Rs31.5 billion.

Despite the fact that the total sum spent is below the sum already appropriated, a Supplementary Appropriation Bill is required where in respect of a programme, the amount spent exceeds the sum appropriated.

Mr Speaker, Sir, allow me to explain. Prior to the introduction of Programme-Based Budgeting (PBB) with effect from 01 July 2008, the Appropriation Bill provided estimates separately for recurrent expenditure and for capital development.

In respect of recurrent expenditure, appropriations were being made by Vote i.e head of expenditure by Ministry/Department. Transfers of funds from one vote to another vote were not allowed as a general rule. However, reallocations or virements between items within a vote were allowed subject to certain limitations and conditions as laid down in the Financial Management Manual (FMM).

For capital development, a single provision was being made in the Appropriation Bill for the whole Government whereas in the Capital Budget Estimates, provisions were made in respect of projects for each Ministry/Department. Virements for capital development from one Ministry to another was therefore possible.

The provision for additional funds to a vote was being made through advances from the Contingencies Fund and covered by a Supplementary Appropriation Bill in accordance with the Constitution and the Finance and Audit Act. It is to be noted that the provision for Contingencies Fund was not being appropriated and was not included in the Appropriation Bill. The Fund was established for the purpose of enabling advances to be made to meet urgent and unforeseen expenditure as specified in the law.

With the introduction of PBB with effect from 01 July 2008, the Contingencies Fund and the Capital Fund have been abolished. The Contingencies Fund which was outside the Budget has been replaced by a Provision for Contingencies within the Budget for the same purpose i.e to meet urgent and unforeseen expenditure as specified in the law.

Appropriation of estimates of expenditure, whether current expenditure or expenditure for investment projects by the Assembly is now being made by programmes instead of by vote i.e head of expenditure. However, where expenditure in respect of a programme is likely to exceed the amount appropriated under that programme, whilst at the same time savings are going to accrue in respect of another programme, a virement is allowed from one programme to another programme within a Ministry or from a programme in a Ministry to a programme in another Ministry, subject, of course, to limitations and conditions that are laid down in the Financial Management Manual (FMM). This system of virement is a current feature in the management of public finance.

Section 105(3) of the Constitution clearly states that where any “head of expenditure”, now any programme in the context of PBB, requires funds in addition to what have already been appropriated, such additional funds would require further appropriation by the Assembly through a Supplementary Appropriation Bill.

The Schedules to the two Bills give the excess amount spent in respect of each programme whereas the Estimates of Supplementary Expenditure give a summary, by programmes, of sums appropriated, spent and for supplementary appropriation together with explanatory notes as well as the details of the programmes, sub-programmes and items of expenditure.

The Supplementary Appropriation (2008-2009) (No. 2) Bill provides for the appropriation of a total sum not exceeding six billion eight hundred and nineteen million four hundred and seventy-three thousand and four hundred and seventy-three rupees (Rs 6,819,473,473) to meet supplementary expenditure incurred under certain programmes for the financial year 2008-2009.

I will now briefly outline the main areas where additional expenditure by programmes were incurred during the financial year 2008-2009 -

- First, an additional amount of Rs668.5 m. was spent under the Police Department. Out of this amount, Rs540.5 m. was required for the implementation of the PRB report 2008, Rs51.1 m. for the CCTV surveillance system project and Rs45.8 m. for fuel and oil.

- Second, an additional amount of Rs197 m. was required for the Ministry of Rodrigues and Outer Islands. An amount of Rs175 m. was spent to enable the RRA to implement the PRB report 2008.

- Third, an additional amount of Rs934.3 m. was required for the Ministry of Agro Industry and Fisheries. Out of this amount Rs760 m. was spent in connection with the accompanying measures for the sugar industry, the VRS. An amount of Rs104 m. was meant for the implementation of the 2008 PRB report. An amount of Rs43.7 m. was required for the purchase of materials for the Livestock Feed Factory of Richelieu.

- Fourth, an amount of Rs752.7 m. was required under the Ministry of Housing and Lands. Out of this amount Rs750 m. was transferred to the Social Housing Development Fund.

- Fifth, an amount of Rs504.3 m. was required under the Ministry of Public Infrastructure, Land Transport & Shipping. Out of this amount, Rs413.1 m. was provided as grant to the RDA and Rs37.6 m. was spent for the implementation of the PRB report. Additionally, Rs34.6 m. was provided as loan to the Mauritius Shipping Corporation.

- Sixth, an amount of Rs1.5 billion was provided to the Ministry of Education and Human Resource mainly for the implementation of the PRB Report 2008. Only an amount Rs60 m. was, in fact, used for the construction and upgrading of primary schools.

- Seventh, an amount of Rs767.1 m. was required under the Ministry of Health & Quality of Life. This comprised mainly of Rs519.1 m. for the implementation of PRB Report 2008, and Rs225.1 m. for medical supplies and equipment.

- Eighth, an amount of Rs385.3 m. was required under the Ministry of Local Government. Out of this amount Rs330.3 m. was used for the implementation of the PRB Report 2008 including Local Authorities. An amount of Rs55 m. was provided for the Pamplemousses Rivière du Rempart District Council.

- Ninth, an amount of Rs106.7 m. was required under the Ministry of Tourism, Leisure and External Communications mainly for the promotion campaign of the MTPA.

- Tenth, an amount of Rs127.1 m. was required under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Trade & Cooperation. This includes Rs63.5 m. for the Acquisition of Chanceries in Washington and Rs16.8 m. for the implementation of the PRB Report 2008 and Rs16.4 m. as donation to Bihar.

- Eleventh, an amount of Rs157.7 m. was required under the Ministry of Environment and National Development Unit mainly for the Land Drainage Programme.

- Twelfth, an amount of Rs191.3 m. was required under the Ministry of Public Utilities. Out of this amount, Rs180 m. was provided as loan to CEB in connection with infrastructure development.

- Thirteenth, an amount of Rs 161.4 m. was required under the Ministry of Industry, Small & Medium Enterprises, Commerce & Cooperation. Out of this amount Rs150 m. was provided as grant to the Manufacturing Adjustment & SME Development Fund.

The Supplementary Appropriation (2009) Bill provides for the appropriation of a total sum not exceeding two billion eight hundred and forty three million one hundred and seventy-nine thousand and six hundred and fifty-four rupees (Rs2,843,179,654) to meet supplementary expenditure incurred under certain programmes for the period of six months ended 31 December 2009.

Mr Speaker, Sir, allow me briefly to outline the main areas where additional expenditure by programmes were incurred during the period of six months ended 31 December 2009 -

- First, an additional amount of Rs325.8 m. was spent under Programmes of the Police Department. Out of this amount Rs 213.7 m. was required for the purchase of one helicopter and four Automatic Identification System (AIS) for two Dornier Aircrafts, Rs73.7 m. for Radio Equipment and CCTV Street Surveillance System and Rs15 m. for the acquisition of 17 Military 4-WD Pick Up vans;

- Second, an additional amount of Rs622.2 m. was required for the Ministry of Renewable Energy and Public Utilities. Out of this amount, Rs421.7 m. was required to meet the advance payment for the Plaines Wilhems Sewerage Project and Rs200 m. for the Maurice Ile Durable Fund;

- Third, an additional amount of Rs375 m. was required by the Ministry of Tourism, Leisure and External Communications for contribution to Cargo Handling Corporation and Branding Mauritius.

- Fourth, an additional amount of Rs32.9 m. was spent by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Empowerment for (i) construction of new access Road to La Tour Koenig and (ii) BPML Freeport Services for its relocation activities;

- Fifth, an additional amount of Rs323.9 m. was required by the Ministry of Public Infrastructure, Land Transport and Shipping for contribution to the Road Development Authority/Land Transport Authority for Road Decongestion Programme;

- Sixth, an additional amount of Rs55.1 m. was required by the Ministry of Housing and Lands for the transfer of funds to NHDC in connection with the Social Housing Development Project;

- Seventh, an additional amount of Rs713.7 m. was required by the Ministry of Local Government, Rodrigues and Outer Islands. Out of this amount, Rs697.2 m. was required for transfer to the Local Infrastructure Fund, Rs10 m. for the contribution to UNDP for Marine Protected Area Project and for upgrading of Infrastructure and Rs6.5 m. to enable the Rodrigues Regional Assembly to implement the PRB Report of 2008;

- Eighth, an additional amount of Rs83.2 m. was required by the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Senior Citizens Welfare & Reform Institutions. Out of this amount, Rs17.5 m. was required for refurbishment of the Recreational Centre at Belle Mare, Rs36.2 m. to meet increase in Social Assistance to Beneficiaries, Rs20 m. for the payment of salaries and basic operations in favour of the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund (SILWF) and Rs9.5 m. for the implementation of the PRB Report of 2008;

- Ninth, an additional amount of Rs65.4 m. was required under the Ministry of Agro Industry, Food Production and Security. Out of this amount, Rs60 m. was required for upgrading of infrastructure and rehabilitation of sugar camps and Rs5.4 m. for the Grant to the Irrigation Authority;

- Tenth, an additional amount of Rs210.6 m. was required under the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life. Out of this amount, Rs167.3 m. was required for the purchase of medicines, drugs and vaccines, Rs24.9 m. for the pandemic outbreak and Rs17 m. for Grant to the Trust Fund for Specialised Medical Care, and

- Eleventh, an additional amount of Rs9.2 m. was required under the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology for the upgrading and installation of software.

Mr Speaker Sir, before I conclude, I wish to inform the House that I propose to bring two amendments as follows -

- Firstly, on page 33 of the Estimates of Supplementary Expenditure (2008-2009) (No. 2) of 2010, the amount under *Item 26210 – International Organisations* of Sub-Programme *38201 – Bilateral, Multilateral, International Relations and Cooperation* should read Rs2,833,688 instead of Rs10,393,687 and to *insert Item 21110 – Personal Emoluments* under Sub-Programme *38202 – Support by Mauritius Overseas Missions* with a provision of Rs7,559,999 and

- Secondly, I wish to bring an amendment to the Schedule to the Supplementary Appropriation (2008-2009) (No. 2) Bill. *Programme Code 653: Youth Services* should read *Programme Code 683*: *Youth Services* arising due to a typing error.

  Mr Speaker, Sir with your permission, these changes are being circulated.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I now commend the two Bills to the House.

Dr. A. Boolell rose and seconded.

(11.58 a.m.)

The Leader of the Opposition (Mr P. Bérenger): Mr Speaker, Sir, the coincidence has it that we are called upon today to approve two Supplementary Appropriation Bills of a total value of round figure Rs10 billion a few days only after the Director of Audit has produced his report on the same two periods of time, that is, the financial year 2008-2009 and the last six months of 2009.

The Director of Audit has made remarks that as we are requested to approve additional expenditure already effected of Rs10 billion, I believe that this is an occasion to take stock of what the Director of Audit has had to say once again in terms of mismanagement of public funds, wastage of public funds and so on. I believe, therefore, that it is my duty to call upon Government to review the situation as far as the report of the Director of Audit and the reports of the Public Accounts Committee are concerned. We cannot go on, year after year, with the same *train-train* whereas things are getting worse, as pointed out by the Director of Audit.

In that context, before I move to the items of expenditure to which the hon. Minister of Finance has referred, it is interesting to note that our neighbour, South Africa, member of SADC like us, has travelled a long way in improving control of expenditure in South Africa. They have their own Public Accounts Committee, which is much more powerful than ours. But, last year, they deemed fit to vote a Money Bills Amendment Procedure and Related Matters Act. A brand new legislation setting up new institutions, including a Standing Committee on Appropriation, to better control public expenditure, to better get value for money. In fact, they went very far, because this Standing Committee on Appropriation, not only goes further than the Public Accounts Committee, but it can even amend the Budget provisions. This piece of legislation was voted last year, and I repeat: it is called the Money Bills Amendment Procedure and Related Matters Act, and it sets up a Standing Committee on Appropriation that has started working. I suggest, at this point in time, when we are asked to approve additional expenditure of Rs10 billion, that we must start travelling down that road of much better control by the Public Accounts Committee and by the House in general of the way public funds are appropriated and managed, or mismanaged in many cases, as the Director of Audit has pointed out.

We are considering the two Bills together; one Bill proposing appropriate funds already spent, Rs7 billion for financial year 2008/2009, and then Rs3 billion for the last six months of 2009. My remarks, Mr Speaker, Sir, will be: why are we not provided with information today on

why there has been terrible underestimation of what was required and, in certain cases, new items of expenditure, new projects are brought in that were not in the Appropriation Bill itself? What the hon. Minister has done is to simply give us the facts; so much additional money was required. Why?

My point is that, in numerous cases, targets have been missed completely. We were asked to appropriate so much and, in certain cases, we are asked to appropriate additional funds more that the original appropriated. Why? We are entitled to explanations. I raised the main items of expenditure, the main projects where we are asked for additional funds, and I think it is the duty of the hon. Minister - he has not done at the Second reading stage, and he can do it at summing up stage - to inform the House not only what additional amount of money we are called upon to appropriate, but why, especially where targets have been missed completely.

I will first talk on the cases where targets have been missed completely, and second I will talk about new projects, new items, and the main cases where there has been gross underestimation of what funds were required. Now, we are asked additional funds already spent. For the Plaines Wilhems sewerage system, Mr Speaker, Sir, in the Appropriation Bill for the last six months of 2009, we approved Rs586 m. I am sure that the technicians and the financial advisers do their best to be on target, as far as possible, before coming with a figure. Of course, you can't be 100% on targets. But, in the case of the Plaines Wilhems sewerage project, Mr Speaker, Sir, we were asked, for the last six months of 2009, to appropriate - and we did appropriate - Rs586 m. We are now asked for an additional Rs421 m. How can that be? In six months, we were asked for Rs586 m., and we are now asked for an additional sum of Rs421 m. We are entitled to an explanation. How can you miss a target like that? What has gone wrong?

If I go to the Road Decongestion Programme, in financial year 2008/2009, we voted Rs14 m. We are now asked for an additional sum of Rs407 m. The original sum voted was Rs14 m., and the additional expenditure we are asked to approve is Rs407 m. We are entitled to an explanation. There might be a technical one, but I am sure you can't miss the target by that much. There must be an explanation. Under the same Road Decongestion Programme, for the last six months of 2009, we appropriated Rs950 m., and we are now asked for an additional sum of Rs324 m. How can we be off target that much? We are entitled, as I said, to an explanation.

With regard to the police helicopter - that will probably interest the hon. Prime Minister. He has not come back by helicopter but by plane, but still he will be interested I am sure - in the

Budget for the last six months of 2009, we voted Rs45 m. for a new helicopter. We are now asked to vote an additional sum of Rs214 m. Again, we are entitled to an explanation; from Rs45 m. appropriated to an additional Rs214 m. I could go on and on like that.

As regards medicines, every year it's the same thing. Are there no planners, specialists, experts to better target expenditure on drugs, medicines? For the financial year 2008/2009, we appropriated, at the request of Government, Rs558 m. We are now asked for an additional Rs225 m; nearly half. For the last six months of 2009, we voted Rs244 m., and we are asked for an additional Rs167 m. I am not saying that I am against that expenditure; of course, not! But, year after year, we should get closer to the target. We can't, year after year, move further from the target, and we are asked for still bigger additional sums to be appropriated, Mr Speaker, Sir.

It is the same thing - that also will interest the hon. Prime Minister - for the CCTV project in general. In financial year 2008/2009, we appropriated Rs30 m. We are now asked to approve an additional Rs51 m; again, nearly double. For the last six months of 2009, we were asked for and approved Rs19 m., and now we are asked to approve an additional Rs74 m. As I said, I could go on and on.

With regard to the Chancery in Washington, we were asked to appropriate - and we did - Rs7 m. We are now asked to appropriate an additional Rs64 m. As regards loan to the CEB, in terms of underestimation, we were asked to approve a loan, in financial year 2008/2009, of Rs120 m. Now, we are asked to approve an additional sum of Rs180 m., that is, more than the loan that we were asked for in the normal Budget. I could go on and on. It can't go on like that especially after the Director of Audit's Report that has just come out. We can't, year after year, miss the targets by that much and, I believe, as I said, that the hon. Minister of Finance owes an explanation to Parliament.

My second comment is on new items. When the Budget of 2008/2009 was presented and then when the mini Budget six months after the second half of 2009, I am sure the whole machinery of Government, including the Planning Section, knew what projects should have been included in the Budget. Now we have a list of new projects. We were not asked to appropriate any funds in the 2008/2009 Budget or the six months of 2009; we were not asked at all for any fund and now we are asked to appropriate funds for new projects, for new items of expenditure. I take a few examples, namely the Local Infrastructure Fund. In the Budget for the last six months

of 2009, we were not asked for anything and now we are asked to approve Rs697 m. There must be technical explanations to that, but we want to know as this is a huge amount, Rs697 m.

Concerning the VRS, in financial year 2008/2009, we were not asked anything and now we are asked for Rs760 m. Again, I believe an explanation is due, Mr Speaker, Sir. It is the same thing with the Cargo Handling Corporation. In the budget for the last six months of 2009 we were not asked for any funds to go to the Cargo Handling Corporation. We are now asked to approve Rs372 m. for the last six months of 2009. It is the same thing with the CNT (National Transport Corporation). We were not asked for any money and we are now asked to approve Rs10 m. and it goes on and on like that with the shipping Corporation, the Rivière du Rempart District Council. It is as if, when the 2008/2009 Budget and the Budget for the last six months of 2009 were presented, Government had no idea that these items would crop up, would come along, that they were maturing.

As we are asked to approve an additional sum of Rs10 billion in both the Supplementary Bills, I hope we will get some explanations from Government. I will keep some questions that I'll be asking at Committee Stage on Electoral Advisers. I am keen to know what that is and the additional sums for the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation, the CEB hardship cases, the branding Mauritius "Mauritius *c'est un plaisir*". I will keep that for Committee Stage: the Sugar camps and the prisons. The coincidence has it that in the case of the prisons we know what the situation is and what has happened very recently and yet we were asked in the last six months of 2009 for Rs10 m. which we appropriated. Now we are asked for an additional sum of Rs6 billion. But I will come back on these cases.

My main point, Mr Speaker, Sir, is we are asked to approve an additional expenditure of Rs10 billion for one and a half years and this is taking place a few days after the Director of Audit has hit very hard on financial control, mismanagement of public funds for the same period of one and a half years, 2008/2009, and the last six months of 2009. I am sure we can agree all of us that there is need to change the way public funds are supervised, are spent. There is need to increase the powers of the Public Accounts Committee and there is need to travel down new roads like they had done in South Africa. I hope we will get an explanation, how is it that sums required were underestimated by that much and how is it that new items had to be created that were not in the original Budgets and that we are asked now to appropriate.

Thank you, Mr Speaker, Sir.

(12.16 p.m.)

Mr K. Li Kwong Wing (Second Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière): Mr Speaker, Sir, at the outset, may I take this opportunity, as this is my maiden speech, to congratulate you on your unanimous election at the Chair of this august Assembly and also to the Deputy Speaker. I hope that you will bear your wise counsel on me as a new comer to this House so that we are able to do our job effectively.

The two Bills before us today spell out the additional expenses that we are called to vote. There is a temptation for us, after the speech of the hon. Leader of the Opposition, to say that the extent of the mismanagement has been clearly spelt out by these figures which constitute almost 20% of the original appropriation. This is a huge sum and, in order to gain credibility, I think the whole system of budget preparation and budget estimates should be reviewed because we cannot, year in year out, keep having such wide variation between an original budget estimate and what turns out to be spent. The time has come to make the determined choice of revamping the whole budget process. I know, Mr Speaker, Sir, you gave me the advice that I should not stick to policy in the course of the speech but if we discuss this Bill, if you take the items that need to be voted, we might lose sight of the lack of planning and lack of foresight in policy formulation and budget estimates. However, we have a legacy of these figures put before us which is a result of imprudent financial planning, not to say fiscal irresponsibility and, therefore, we need to address these issues while dissecting the different items of expenditure. We have in the different programmes, different Supplementary Expenditures that have been put before us and I would like to single out just a couple of these items. Unfortunately, it is a purely quantitative exercise because the amount that has been earmarked has not been adequate, or because the target that has been set was not rightly set. So, we are coming up with new figures and we are just looking at quantitative data. But, I think, more importantly, the non-quantitative aspect is even more crucial to consider. Because, when we consider the performance of the different agencies that are called upon to implement these programmes, we need not to address ourselves to these quantitative measures but also to non-financial information, and to indicators of service levels of these expenditures; and this is where the shoe pinches. Because Government is carrying on

business as usual, there keep on going the mismanagement and fiscal profligacy and the Management Information System is not up to date to …

Mr Speaker: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. Member! I think he is going a bit too far. I said that the ESE debates should be confined to the items which have been included in the Estimates and why the money is being asked for, but we cannot open up on policy issues.

Mr Li Kwong Wing: Mr Speaker, Sir, I am not addressing policy issues. I was just saying that the Management Information System ….

Mr Speaker: For the guidance of the hon. Member, let me read what has been written in Erskine May –

> "Where a Supplementary Estimate is being considered, debate should be confined as to why the extra money is being sought."

That is the only debate we can have.

(Interruptions)

Mr Speaker: Yes, but the Minister will, hopefully, explain when he will reply.

Mr Li Kwong Wing: Thank you, Mr Speaker, Sir. The idea was to show that because of the inadequacy of the Management Information System, we are forced to resort to itemised scrutiny of the expenses.

Mr Speaker: The hon. Member will have full opportunity when the Budget will be presented to say what he has to say on policy.

Mr Li Kwong Wing: Thank you, Mr Speaker, Sir.

So, with regard, therefore, to different items of expenditure, I think the hon. Leader of the Opposition has covered many of these issues, but I would like just to pick up what may have been missed out. I am talking, firstly, of the …

(Interruptions)

Mr Speaker: The hon. Member is making his maiden speech; I think he has the right to be heard in silence.

Mr Li Kwong Wing: I am talking of the issue of the expenditure concerning the CCTV street surveillance. I see a lot of emphasis has been laid on security in the different departments. The question which I would like to put in terms of community safety and security is whether the provisions for these CCTV street surveillance systems have been clearly worked out. Because the Supplementary Budget is more than three or four times the original Appropriation that has

been made. So, the question is whether the CCTV Street Surveillance System is adequate and if the Appropriation has already trebled, what steps have been taken to ensure that we have a proper CCTV Street Surveillance System.

The other item which has called my attention is the one on the Land Drainage Programme which was Rs200 m. in the original Budget for the year 2008-2009, and, now, we have a Supplementary Appropriation of Rs142.7 m. which requires the vote. We would like to have some additional information on that Land Drainage Programme because if Members would recall, there has been a lot of damage caused by heavy rains in different areas. Would this increase in the expenditure be adequate for a proper Land Drainage System, especially in the suburban areas? I see also that there has been a new item of expenditure. The hon. Leader of the Opposition mentioned new items of expenditure. There is one which refers to the setting-up of a new Ministry for the sum of Rs11.7 m. which is the Ministry of Consumer Protection. So, we would like to know what has been the evaluation of the need of this new Ministry now that it has been integrated into another Ministry.

With regard to the MID Fund, there is an additional expenditure of Rs200 m. called for. We know that this MID Fund has been termed a *coquille vide* and, in fact, there has not been any amount budgeted in the year 2009. So, it would be good to know why this amount is being asked for and for what uses.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition also talked about the software that has been installed in different departments which have not been properly used. There is a vote asked for in the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology for Rs9.3 m. The Director of Audit, in his report, has castigated the Ministry and the Government, in general, for not carrying out proper studies to determine the software needs of the Government; and for buying equipment which is outdated. So, it would be useful to know what items of software have now been earmarked for expenditure under the Supplementary Appropriation 2009.

I would not like to go into other items of mismanagement because these are recurrent items and the time will come when different Members will ask questions because these expenditures occur year after year. I have in mind a lot of expenditures in the Ministry of Agriculture and in the Ministry of Health, but the one thing which comes to mind here, is the vote for the Ministry of Agriculture for the Tianli or Jin Fei Project and whether we can have more information as to whether any additional expenditure is being called for, for this project?

Well, Mr Speaker, Sir, as I said, we will have time to go into details into these items and as the policy aspect is not put into question and debate, I would like to end here.

Thank you, very much.

(12.30 p.m.)

Mr Jugnauth: Mr Speaker, Sir, let me thank the hon. Leader of the Opposition and the hon. Member who have intervened on the two Bills before the House. Of course, there have been some criticisms, but that is the democratic process and that is part of the game, and I take it like that.

Let me address a few remarks that have been made by the Opposition. First of all, let me sum up briefly and try to address some of the points that have been raised with regard to the Performance-Based Budgeting.

As I have mentioned earlier, with the introduction of the Programme-Based Budgeting, there is, in fact, an element of flexibility that helps different Ministries and Departments to better achieve their objectives and their outputs as per their targets that have been set with a combination of effective use of resources. By effective use of resources, I mean more flexibility in the re-allocation of funds from one programme to another and within programmes also, but within the established rules. We all know that the PBB has been recently introduced; we are, in fact, I won't say at an infant stage, but at the birth stage, because there are other countries like Singapore which has taken a long time to be able to master and to implement PBB in a correct and appropriate manner. So we need to gather experience with the implementation of PBB and these rules, of course, will have to be reviewed and updated. The exercise we are called upon to undertake today is very simple. When funds are earmarked under a programme and that exceeds the initial amount that is appropriated, that excess, excluding any savings, in fact, needs to be appropriated by Parliament ex-post through a Supplementary Appropriation Bill and an Estimate of Supplementary Expenditure as is provided by the law.

Mr Speaker, Sir, we are, of course, called upon to use our resources even more judiciously and these are not times for wasteful expenditure, but rather times for expenditure rationalisation and reprioritisation. Therefore, with the deepening of the PBB, we will, no doubt, improve our internal processes further with a view to focussing more on delivery of services

given the resources that we have. Since, the hon. Members of the Opposition have mentioned the report of the Director of Audit, I must say that this is not new. The report of the Director of Audit is, in fact, meant to help Government to improve its governance and accountability. I can tell the House that I have taken good note of the comments that have been made by the Director of Audit, not only for the July 2008 to December 2009 period, but for the period of 2007 and 2008 also. I will be frank to say that some of the shortcomings that are highlighted are, in fact, called for concern. Let me say that there is a specific concern with regard to the quality of project preparation and appraisal that have resulted in poorly designed and improperly cost projects slipping into the Capital Budget.

The reports that I have gone through highlight the weaknesses in project management and monitoring that have not, in fact, allowed proper identification of bottlenecks or re-adjustment of expenditure plan. And, of course, there is the need to have more systematic value engineering and quality control on the assessments of major capital projects. I may recall that when I was Minister of Finance during the period 2003-2005, I had set up in 2004, a Project Monitoring Unit to monitor capital projects from inception till completion. The Unit which comprises of Economists, Engineers and Architects made a first assessment of capital projects and guided, in fact, Ministries in limiting cost of new project proposals, restraining cost overrun and reducing wastages and delays and through the intervention of this Unit, the Ministry of Finance has been able to reduce, in fact, project cost on a number of projects. I can recall also that we organised a number of workshops to develop capacity and skills for monitoring of capital projects in the line Ministries. I am convinced, My Speaker, Sir, that such a unit will need to be set up again at the level of the Ministry of Finance because the capacity building work will need to continue and, through the training process, officers of the Ministries will be equipped with skills to have a better grasp of the complexities of project management which are often the cause of most cost overruns and delays. The PMU will spearhead all efforts at bettering project management and setting up institutional arrangements to improve recurrent and capital expenditures and reduce wastages. It will also provide guidelines as a tool for a better management at all stages of a project, including a proper evaluation of costs, funding options, risks and tendering procedures.

Allow me also to mention that in the Government Programme 2010/2015, it is highlighted at paragraph 86, and I quote –

"Government will continue to promote efficiency and effectiveness in public finance management by better planning and consolidating the implementation of Performance-Based Budgeting (PBB). Emphasis will be laid on better accountability and transparency."

It has also been announced that –

"Government will also introduce new legislation for Public Finance Management."

Let me again reassure the House that I will see to it that public funds are judiciously and efficiently utilised. I have already set the example, in fact, by setting up a number of controls at the level of the Ministry of Finance and we intend to look at the shortcomings that have been highlighted. Of course, I do not pretend that I will be able to address all the issues, but with the help of all colleagues in Government, we will see to it that we are committed to bring the positive changes in the interest of the country.

Let me respond to some specific remarks that have been made by hon. Members of the Opposition. First of all, the hon. Leader of the Opposition has mentioned the example of South Africa where new institutions have been set up to control expenditure, that there is, in fact, a Standing Committee on Appropriation. I take note. Of course, we are going to look into that, but let me remind the hon. Leader of the Opposition what he said when he was Minister of Finance. Let me quote from the Supplementary Appropriation of 1999-2000 (No.III of 2000), just a parallel - I don't want to enter into a demagogy. The hon. Leader of the Opposition at that time reacting to the then Opposition had said –

"Today the Acting Leader of Opposition has the cheek to stand up and asked us after only five months in Government about the Fiscal Responsibility Act. What a shame, Mr Speaker, Sir! They wasted five years. But we will come forward with the Fiscal Responsibility Bill. Give us some time!"

Just to remind the hon. Leader of the Opposition that this is not a new situation. Of course, when there are criticisms, we should not just come up with new ideas. We should look and draw lessons from other countries, but we should see to it also what is appropriate for Mauritius.

Secondly, I grant the new hon. Member for having, in his maiden speech, pointed out a number of programmes where he wanted clarifications. He is a new Member, I can understand that. But since we are going to move to the Committee of Supply, the hon. Leader of the

Opposition will have ample time to ask questions on specific programmes, on the reasons why there have been underestimates, appropriation or whatever. I don't see the purpose for me to answer now, when ample opportunities are given for the Members of the Opposition to question each Minister under each programme.

Thirdly, Mr Speaker, Sir, the targets have been missed and I have just answered the point concerning why more money have been spent, because we will be moving for the Committee of Supply. I think the examples should come from the Opposition. The former Member of Parliament, Mr Jayen Cuttaree, was chairing the PAC and, as I said, what example has been given. For five years, Mr Speaker, Sir, there has been only one report from the Chair of the PAC and I can recall that when hon. Duval was chairing the PAC, there have been, at least, four reports from him.

(Interruptions)

The Opposition is mentioning the report of the Director of Audit, each year there has been report of Director of Audit. Each year, there could have been, in fact, a report from the Chair of the PAC. But for five years there has been only one report dated 25 March 2008 and that is also because probably we were going to election!

A last remark, probably, hon. Li Kwong Wing was going into the system of budget preparation and estimates and whether this should be reviewed and so on. But, I think he has been himself Adviser to a former Minister of Finance, and I think this is not new that we have had budget preparations. We have had Director of Audit's reports, year in year out, for so many years and why is it that nothing was done and that there has been no change at that time?

Lastly, Mr Speaker, Sir, just to reply to what has been said. Concerning the report of the Director of Audit, I have just mentioned that we will take note. Of course, we are going to address the issues that have been mentioned. There are explanations that can be given in a number of cases and if there have been omissions, if we need to correct, we will do so. But, this is not new again, year in year out, under different Governments, there have been omissions on certain matters that have been pointed out by the Director of Audit. The crucial thing is that we should not pay lip service to it, but that we should address these matters that have been raised. This is all, Mr Speaker, Sir.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time and committed.

At 12.44 p.m the sitting was suspended.

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

THE SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION (2008-2009) (NO.2) BILL (NO. XII OF 2010)

The following Programme Codes were called and agreed to -

(a) 011: Office of the Vice-President –Vice-Presidency Affairs (Rs1,598,235)

(b) 031: National Assembly –Parliamentary Affairs (Rs14,591,911)

(c) 041: National Audit Office - External Audit (Rs15,039,278)

(d) 051: Public and Disciplined Forces Services Commission - Public and Disciplined Forces Service Affairs (Rs4,935,985)

(e) 061: Ombudsman's Office –Ombudsman's Services (Rs1,105,923)

(f) 071: Electoral Supervisory Commission and Electoral Boundaries Commission – Supervision of Electoral Activities and Review of Electoral Boundaries (Rs1,384,072)

(g) 081: Electoral Commissioner's Office – Electoral Services (Rs26,018,742)

(h) 101: Local Government Service Commission – Local Government Human Resources Affairs (Rs2,592,911)

(i) 121: Independent Broadcasting Authority – Supervision of Broadcasting (Rs1,261,000)

(j) 151: Ombudsperson for Children's Office - Protection and Promotion of Children's Rights and Interests (Rs356,234)

Public Bodies Appeal Tribunal

Programme Code 171: - Determination of Appeals by Public Bodies was called.

Mr Ganoo: Mr Chairperson, I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether he can provide information as to the number of Members sitting on this Tribunal. Who is the Chairperson? Has the Tribunal already sat and heard cases? If yes, how many are there so far?

Mr Baloomoody: Concerning the same item, can I ask the hon. Minister whether he has received a letter of protest from the SEF regarding the conduct of certain members of this institution?

The Prime Minister: In fact, Mr Chairperson, there are one Chairperson and two members. Perhaps the hon. Member wants to know the names as well. The Chairperson is Mr Mohamud Sadick Namdarkhan and the two other members are Mr Guy Wong So and Mrs Priscilla Balgobin-Bhoyrul.

The second thing, I think, was the number of cases: 134 cases have been filed and 68 cases have been dealt with. As for the letter of protest – yes, I did receive a letter of protest yesterday and I am looking into it naturally. The Chairperson is not in Mauritius at the moment. I don't want to say why, but he is not in Mauritius at the moment.

Programme Code 171: Determination of Appeals by Public Bodies (Rs1,414,085) was, on question put, agreed to.

Government Information Service

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

Mr Bérenger: Before I put my question, can I suggest to the hon. Prime Minister that it is adding insult to injury to have an item where we are asked to approve a loan to the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation under the title Government Information Service. We know that the MBC is a Government Information Service, but I think we should find a way of putting it elsewhere *pour sauver les apparences au moins.* My question is we voted a loan of Rs280 m. for the building and now we are asked for an additional Rs63 m., can I know why the overrun and the conditions of the loan?

The Prime Minister: As regards the Government Information Service, it sounds like former communist regimes…

(Interruptions)

I don't think we can do anything about this!

(Interruptions)

Mr Chairperson, I want to explain this. It is only a book adjustment. What happens is that we repay the loan on a yearly basis, therefore, it is on the yearly basis that we know what amount is spent and, therefore, we do the book adjustment because the loan has to be repaid.

That is the reason it is like this. In that project which is to the tune of Rs650 m. – around that figure – Rs400 m. is being provided by the Government of the People's Republic of China through an interest-free loan, I should add this. Therefore no cash transaction is actually involved; it is only a book adjustment which is made upon receipt of the credit advances from the Government of the People's Republic of China.

Therefore, once works are completed by the Beijing Construction Engineering Co. Ltd., they ask for the adjustments, and that is the reason. About Rs200 m. is provided by the Government of Mauritius itself.

Programme Code 211: Government Information and Provisions of International News (Rs65,708,109) was, on question put, agreed to.

The following Programme Codes were called and agreed to -

(a) 231: Pay Research Bureau - Public Sector Compensation and HRM Policy and Strategy (Rs2,057,258)

(b) 241: Civil Status Division - Civil Status Affairs (Rs6,166,188).

Police Force

Programme Code 261: Security Policy and Management was called.

Mr Bérenger: If I can go back to the CCTV under item *31122*? We had provided Rs30 m., and we are asked to nearly double that sum - additional Supplementary Appropriation Rs51 m. When we will reach the sixth month, it would be the same again. Can I know why the difference between what we were asked to approve and the additional sum that we are asked to approve?

The Prime Minister: Mr Chairperson, the project for the installation of the CCTV Surveillance System and the digital radio communication system are being implemented under an interest free loan granted by the Government of the People's Republic of China. The Government of the People's Republic of China has entrusted the implementation of the projects to China International Telecommunications Construction Corporation on a turnkey basis. No provision was made in the Budget July-December 2009, as the contract agreement between them and the Mauritius Police Force was not yet signed. The signature was done, I think, in December 2009, hence the provision of the Supplementary Estimates. The projects are expected to be completed, I think, by August of this year.

Programme Code 261: Security Policy and Management (Rs90,718,682) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 262: Community Safety and Security was called.

Mr Ganoo: I just want to query the hon. Prime Minister on item 26204 – *Combating Drugs.* I can read that this additional provision is required for the implementation of the PRB Report of 2008. The question I want to put is: who will, therefore, be paid this sum that is being appropriated? Is it the ADSU people, Police officers or officers of other Government service agency?

The Prime Minister: Those who are concerned with combating drugs, including ADSU.

Mrs Labelle: Regarding item *22020 - Fuel and oil*, there is a request for Rs40 m., and there is also transport equipment. May I ask the hon. Prime Minister whether he has information regarding the number of new vehicles that have been acquired during this financial year and also the number of vehicles that have been scrapped?

The Prime Minister: With regard to item *22020 - Fuel and oil* the hon. Member mentioned, to me this is basically the increase in cost of consumption of fuel and also because of the additional fleet of vehicles. Normally, every year or every two or three years, they scrap some vehicles and then they buy new vehicles. There is an additional provision for transport equipment because there is a five-year plan for the acquisition of vehicles. It is an ongoing plan, but Government wanted to buy more at the time. There were questions, in fact, asked by the Members of the Opposition, but no funds were available for that amount. So, it was kept in abeyance until nearing the Budget, when more funds were available. There have been savings also, I must say, Mr Chairperson, on other items. Therefore, additional money has been made available. As for additional transport, I see here about 30 units motorcycles and 45 units again of motorcycles. There were also provisions for additional cars, which is ongoing.

Programme Code 262: Community Safety and Security (Rs577,838,688) was, on question put, agreed to.

The following Programme Codes were called and agreed to -

(a) 281 : Meteorological Services (Rs9,149,400)

(b) *291: Mauritius Prisons Service – Management of Prisons (Rs3,804,457).*

Programme Code 292: Maintenance and Rehabilitation of Detainees was called.

Mr Baloomoody: With regard to item *22010 (b) settlement of arrears on electricity bills for Richelieu Open Prisons and Prisons' Garden, Beau Bassin for period December 2004 to April 2008*, can I ask the hon. Prime Minister why is it that we have not paid the electricity bills from December 2004 to April 2008?

The Prime Minister: As I said, there has been an increase in electricity consumption. But, as for the settlement of arrears, the CEB did not correctly submit its claim. There were some errors in it, and it had to be relooked at.

Mr Li Kwong Wing: May I ask the hon. Prime Minister why the price of food items has increased by more than 50%?

The Prime Minister: They are probably eating more.

(Interruptions)

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, Programme Code *292* is *Maintenance of Rehabilitation of Detainees*. May I ask the hon. Prime Minister whether he has the amount that has been spent on rehabilitation?

The Prime Minister: I don't have the exact amount that has been spent on rehabilitation, but it is an ongoing programme. But if the hon. Member needs the actual amount that is spent on rehabilitation, I will give it to her later.

Programme Code 291: Maintenance and Rehabilitation of Detainees (Rs56,758,940) was, on question put, agreed to.

The following Programme Codes were called and agreed to -

(a) 301: Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms –Civil Service Policy and Management (Rs7,937,332)

(b) 304: Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms –Civil Service Administration and HRM (Rs16,253,822).

Ministry of Rodrigues and Outer Islands

Programme Code 311: Rodrigues and Outer Islands Development was called.

Mr Bérenger: Mr Chairperson, under item *26321 Grants - Capital - Additional provision required for Capital Grant to Rodrigues Regional Assembly in respect of infrastructural projects,* we had approved Rs310 m. I am given to understand that the Rodrigues

Regional Assembly had been asking for much more than the Rs22 m. that we are asked to add to the Rs310 m. Can I ask the hon. Prime Minister whether this has been settled?

The Prime Minister: This is being looked at. There were some difficulties in providing the amount that was being asked and they had a vigorous way of looking at it at the Ministry of Finance and I know this is being looked at.

*Programme Code 311: Rodrigues and Outer Islands Development - (Rs197,036,281) was, on question put, agreed to***.**

Ministry of Public Infrastructure, Land Transport and Shipping

Programme Code 321: Policy and Strategy Development for Public Infrastructure, Land Transport and Maritime Services (Rs10,309,050) was called and agreed to.

Programme Code 322: Construction and Maintenance of Government Buildings and other assets was called.

Mr Bérenger: Mr Chairperson, under item *26313 - Extra-Budgetary Units Additional provision required for release of grant to RDA/LTA in connection with the Road Decongestion Programme,* we had approved Rs15 m. and we are asked for a supplementary appropriation of more than Rs400 m. I suppose it is the Prime Minister who is going to answer. Can we know, therefore, what is behind that?

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, it was a period when Mauritius was faced with a series of floods, starting with the Lola. Therefore, money had to be spent in upgrading and construction of new drains. At the same time, there were rehabilitation of roads, construction of new roads and enlargement of roads. And the Road Decongestion Programme that we had started is going on at an accelerating speed and that explains why an additional sum of money was required for that Budget.

Programme Code 322: Construction and Maintenance of Government Buildings and other assets (Rs35,690,864) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 323: Construction and Maintenance of Roads and Bridges (Rs413,144,445) was called and agreed to.

Programme Code 324: Land Transport Services was called.

Mr Bérenger: Mr Chairperson, it refers to fresh loans to the National Transport Corporation. When we approved the 2008-2009 Budget, there was no loan provided to the

National Transport Corporation. Can we know the conditions of that loan and why the need has arisen in the meantime?

Mr Bachoo: It was an advance that we had made to the National Transport Corporation. In the meantime, we are trying to restructure the entire organisation because we know it is running at a loss. So, they were in dire need of additional support from us and that is why Government had granted that additional loan.

Programme Code 324: Land Transport Services (Rs10,501,679) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 325: Maritime Services was called.

Mr Bérenger: Mr Chairperson, we have just heard that it was not expected that a loan would be granted to the National Transport Corporation, but because it is making losses, there was an urgent need to extend financial support. In the case of the Mauritius Shipping Corporation, again, there was no loan provided for in the 2008-2009 Budget, and now we are asked to approve a loan of Rs35 m. Is it because the Mauritius Shipping Corporation is also making a loss?

Mr Bachoo: Mr Chairperson, the first vessel is already very old, above 20 years old. That is the reason why we needed money for dry docking. Secondly, we have to pay the loan which we have contracted from the Chinese Government. That explains why we had to borrow from Government in order to pay the loans.

Mr Bérenger: In terms of financial planning, how come when the Budget was presented, we did not know we have to pay China and made other payments? That is what we describe as bad planning. It can't crop up in the middle of the financial year.

Mr Bachoo: Unfortunately, but the major part goes for the dry docking. Because, as I had just mentioned, the ship has become very old and that explains it. It was very difficult for us to forecast how much money that would cost.

Mr Li Kwong Wing: Mr Chairperson, can we know from the hon. Minister what are the terms and conditions of these loans?

Mr Bachoo: Well, this is a very old loan which was contracted for the second vessel. I don't have the details with me.

Programme Code 325 - Maritime Services (Rs34,645,727) was, on question put, agreed to.

Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Tourism, Leisure and External Communications

The following Programme Codes were called and agreed to -

(a) 341: Policy and Management for Tourism and Leisure (Rs1,721,414)
(b) 343: Destination Promotion (Rs104,995,993).

Vice-Prime Minister's Office and Ministry of Finance and Economic Development

Programme Code 362: Public Financial Management (Rs10,849,312) was called and agreed to.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Cooperation

Programme Code 381: Foreign Policy and Management (Rs1,434,594) was called and agreed to.

Programme 382: Foreign Relations was called.

Mr Jugnauth: Sir, I move for the following amendments –

(a) The amount under item 26210 – International Organisations – Programme 382 – Foreign Relations – Sub-Programme 38201; (page 33)

To delete the amount of Rs10,393,687.

And,
To replace by the figure Rs 2,833,688.

(b) To insert a new item 21110 – Personal Emoluments under Programme 382 – Foreign Relations – Sub-Programme 38202 – Support by Mauritius Overseas Missions – with a provision of Rs7,559,999.

The amended version of Page 33 is being circulated. **(Appendix I)**

Amendment agreed to.

Mr Bérenger: Mr Chairperson**,** under item *22030 Rent,* we are asked to vote a sum of Rs4 m. to relocate the Ministry's Headquarters at Newton Tower. Is that done? My question will go to the Prime Minister and to the Minister concerned. Since independence, if I am not mistaken, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was here, in the old building, and for purposes of visits by Ambassadors and so on, is it correct for the Ministry to be moved in a storey up there like any

other office? We know that everywhere we have something special like the Commonwealth Office and the Quai d'Orsay. Can I know whether this can be reviewed?

(Interruptions)

All right, some other Ministries can go to Newton Tower, but does not the hon. Prime Minister think that – in fact, the office which I occupied, and he occupies, was developed - the *ancien* Tresury Building to be our Quai d'Orsay? And now, we have ended up in a building like any other Ministry. Can this be reconsidered? The money spent on Newton Tower can be put to good use, but the Ministry of Foreign Affairs should come back to where it has always been.

Dr. A. Boolell: Mr Chairperson, not that I am different from others, but you know the office was, unfortunately, in a very shamble state. The reason as to why we moved was to bring everybody under one single roof for the work to be done more diligently and we are full of bliss. So, we do not disagree in respect of what the Leader of the Opposition has stated. But, that will be entertained when the time comes.

(*Interruptions*)

The Chairperson: Can you keep quiet!

(*Interruptions*)

Mr Bérenger: On the same project, *item 31112 – Non Residential Buildings – Additional provision required for acquisition of Chancery in Washington* - I raised it earlier on - what kind of planning is that? We had voted supposedly Rs7 m. for the acquisition of the Chancery in Washington and we are asked for a massive additional expenditure of Rs74 m.

Dr. A. Boolell: The hon. Leader of the Opposition is at *item 31112*?

Mr Bérenger: Yes.

Dr. A. Boolell: I think that the Leader of the Opposition should realise that this was an opportunity knock for the Government to acquire property. We have been renting the place. With the financial crisis, it was a buyers' market; we grasped the opportunity and now we have acquired a new building which is enabling us to make savings. So, I think it was a cost-effective plan.

Programme Code 382: Foreign Relations (Rs122,774,649) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 383: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Cooperation –International Trade (Rs2,877,278) was called and agreed to.

Ministry of Environment and National Development Unit

The following Programme Codes were called and agreed to –

(a) 403: Uplifting and Embellishment of the Physical Environment (Rs14,420,612).
(b) 405: Land Drainage (Rs143,285,003).

Ministry of Education and Human Resources

The following Programme Codes were called and agreed to -

(a) 422 : Pre-Primary Education (Rs12,682,460)
(b) 423: Primary Education (Rs389,580,130)
(c) 424 : Secondary Education (Rs843,496,091)
(d) 425: Technical and Vocational Education (Rs74,692,431)
(e) 426: Tertiary Education (Rs160,623,448)
(f) 427: Special Education Programmes (Rs22,659,620)

Ministry of Public Utilities

Programme Code 442: Energy Services was called.

Mr Ganoo: Mr Chairperson, under item *25110 – Non-financial Public Corporations – Additional provision required for granting subsidy to CEB in respect of electricity supply for hardship cases,* can the hon. Minister enlighten the House on the Supplementary Appropriation, that is, how many hardship cases will be dealt or have already dealt with this money which we are being asked to vote for?

Since I am on my feet, can I also query the hon. Minister on the next item *32140 – Loans – Additional provision required for granting loan to CEB in connection with infrastructural development*? Does this infrastructural development include the Jin Fei project?

Mr Bérenger: On the same item of granting subsidy to the CEB in respect of electricity supply for hardship cases, because there can be abuse there, can I be enlightened how are the hardship cases identified? How objective is it? Is it a committee which is responsible for identifying this hardship case and not that one?

Dr. Kasenally: As far as item *25110* is concerned, this is payment made to the Central Electricity Board for 170 cases under the scheme for assisting the needy and poor people who need access to electricity supply. In 2007, we had 321 cases, in 2008, 154 and in 2009, we had 101 cases. This scheme was introduced in 2006 and it was meant to help the needy to have access to electricity and there was a sort of income determination, for example, people with an income of less than Rs5,000 were getting an assistance of Rs65,000; they got, at least, 4 spans of electricity to bring the electricity from the grid to their home. Those earning Rs5,000 and above, up to Rs10,000, were having Rs50,000 for 3 spans and those earning between Rs10,000 and Rs15,000 were having Rs35,000. This is for displacement of poles as well. This scheme was extended to also include those people who wanted to have the poles displaced. As from March 2010, there was a single assistance scheme with two components – one for extension of electricity and a second one for displacement of bare wires. More or less the same criteria were used and it was a uniform income criteria for the two assistance schemes. Assistance was also given to people for insulation of bare wires, such insulation is a requirement for displacement of the poles. The scheme took into account that many households were unable to construct or extend their houses and they were unable to meet the cost of displacement and they were unable to proceed with the improvement of their buildings.

On top of that, everybody can apply for the scheme and if they qualify for it, all the applications are processed at the level of the CEB, following a social inquiry income so that we make sure that only those who are the needy and the poor are getting it. This has had a tremendous effect in extending electricity to those who otherwise would not have been able to afford it.

Mr Bérenger: Can I ask the hon. Minister for one precision. So, there are no cases where a family cannot pay the electricity bill and, therefore, assistance is extended to that for payment of electricity bill and, if yes, how is it chosen?

Dr. Kasenally: As far as paying electricity bill is concerned, there is no such scheme. But, as far as possible, we try to give them extra delay instead of disconnecting, we encourage it. In fact, we started by accepting part of the payment for people who could not afford to pay the full bill and, in this way we have encouraged people to pay rather than going into a debt trap.

Mr Lesjongard: Under item *32140* regarding *loans*, the Minister was requested to clarify what were those infrastructural developments, but he has not clarified them.

Dr. Kasenally: In fact, as the hon. Member said, this is a loan to the CEB for the purpose of offsite infrastructural works for the Jin Fei project and …

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Please, address the Chair!

Dr. Kasenally: … a construction of a substation of 66 KV to 22 KV comprising transformer capacity 44 MV and also tap-off from Belle Vue, 66 KV line. Part of this loan will be eventually reimbursed once the project gets under way.

Programme Code 442: Energy Services (Rs190,539,991) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 445: Radiation Protection (Rs753,506) was called and agreed to.

Ministry of Local Government

Programme Code 461: Policy and Management for Local Government (Rs3,231,621) was called and agreed to.

Programme Code 462: Facilitation to Local Authorities was called.

Mr Uteem: Mr Chairperson, I would like to know from the hon. Minister, under item *32145*, what is the purpose of the loan to the District Council?

Mr Aimée: In view of the financial difficulties, the Pamplemousses/Rivière du Rempart District Council has been granted loans by the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development and a sum of Rs42 m. had been provided to enable the Council to clear bank loan and thus reduce the high debt service and an amount caters for the cash flow problems. The loan is payable at 5% interest rate in 20 years. For the loan of Rs42 m., it is in five years and the loan of Rs13 m., three years' moratorium on capital has been granted.

Mr Nagalingum: Concerning item *26321*, *Grant to Local Authorities*, can we have details as to the Municipal Councils and District Councils? May we know what are the projects?

Mr Aimée: Additional provisions have been allocated to Local Authorities to meet increase in the staff salaries, overtimes, allowances, travelling, passage benefits and pension resulting from the implementation of PRB report 2008.

Programme Code 462: Facilitation to Local Authorities (Rs382,106,214) was called and agreed to.

Ministry of Agro-Industry & Fisheries

Programme Code 482: Competitiveness of the Sugar Cane Sector was called.

Mr Bérenger: I am sure that everybody wants to know what lies behind item *28212 - Transfers to Households – Provision requires to meet payment in connection with accompanying measures for the sugar sector –VRS.* It is a huge sum of Rs760,720,607. May we know what is that for and to whom has that been paid?

Mr Virahsawmy: Mr Chairperson, with your permission, I shall reply to this question. This amount represents an equivalent of Euro18 m., which has been allocated to the Budget of this Ministry for financial year 2008/2009. This forms part of the agreement reached between Government and MSPA under the Sugar reform programme, where an amount of Rs94 m. will be disbursed by the European Union as accompanying measures. This amount will have to be transferred to the Sugar Reform Trust. The amount of Rs760 m. will be used to effect the financing of the capital part of commercial loans contracted by sugar factories and institutions, to meet payment in connection with accompanying measures. Such funds are used to meet payment for cash compensation to employees under VRS II and for payment of land compensation to employees under the Early Retirement Scheme.

Programme Code 482: Competitiveness of the Sugar Cane Sector (Rs760,720,607) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 483: Development of Non Sugar (Crop) Sector (Rs69,309,765) was called and agreed to.

Programme Code 484: Livestock Production and Development was called.

Mr Bérenger: I have two questions under item *25110 – Non-Financial Public Enterprise – Additional Provision requires for the grant of subsidy to Mauritius Meat Authority.* Here again, we had approved Rs2 m. and we are asked to approve an additional sum of Rs8 m. Can we have an explanation about that? Secondly, under item 25210 – *Non-Financial Private Enterprise – Additional provision required to assist Corporate pig breeders following outbreak of Swine flu,* we were asked for Rs12 m. The substantive Minister is not present, I wonder whether we can have information. Are there still pig breeders in residential areas? A lot of money has been spent to relocate the pig breeders to develop the sector and so on. My information is that in spite of that we still have pig breeders in densely populated areas. If that is the case is that sum related in any way to that residual problem?

Mr Virahsawmy: Concerning the first question, Mr Chairperson, the amount represents the increase in basic salary, end-of-year bonus and staff pension. The Mauritius Meat Authority cannot increase its slaughter fees, so the Ministry and Government have to meet these additional costs. With regard to pig breeders, my information is that all the pig breeders have been moved to the two regions.

Mr Bérenger: Would the Minister be interested for us to take the officer that has just given him that note to areas around Port Louis where we still found pig breeders, including pig breeders. *Il n'y a pas de plus grands aveugles que ceux qui ne veulent pas voir*. In the suburbs of Port Louis, we still have pig breeders, including big ones. Can I ask the hon. Minister and the substantive Minister to discuss with the officer concerned and to check before supplying answers that are very economical with the truth.

Mr Virahsawmy: We shall ask, Mr Chairperson but, as the Leader of Opposition said, the paper says no.

Mr Balamoody: Can I ask the hon. Minister under the same item, *Additional provision required to assist Corporate pig breeders following outbreak of swine flu,* what about individual pig breeders who need assistance following the outbreak of swine flu? Were they given any assistance?

Mr Virahsawmy: They have all received the assistance.

Mr Lesjongard: Mr Chairperson, under item *22900 – Other goods and services – Additional provision requires to meet expenditure for the award of new tenders approved by Central Procurement Board for the purchase of raw materials for the manufacture of feed by the Livestock Feed Factory, Richelieu,* we are asked supplementary appropriation of Rs43 m. Do we understand that provision was not made for this amount before the award of the tender?

Mr Virahsawmy: Mr Chairperson, we have to continue the supply through the livestock feed and this amount represents the subsidy which is required to continue the supply of the livestock feed factory. The factory was closed in September 2009 and after that there is a subsidy of Rs2 per kilo of feed which is given to all livestock breeders.

Programme Code 484: Livestock Production and Development (Rs72, 083, 658) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 485: Forestry Resources (Rs18,202,198) was called and agreed to.

Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Senior Citizens Welfare & Reform Institutions –

The following Programme Codes were called and agreed to -

(a) 501: Policy and Management for Social Affairs (Rs7, 864, 524)
(b) 504: Probation and Social Rehabilitation (Rs4, 542, 666)
(c) 505: Social Welfare (Rs21, 676, 938)

Ministry of Women's Right, Child Development, Family Welfare & Consumer Protection –

Programme Code 521: Policy and Management for Women's Empowerment and Family Welfare was called

Mr Bérenger: Mr Chairperson, Item No. 22020*, Fuel and Oil* – I pick a quarrel with the wording thereof. It says –

"Additional provision required due to price fluctuation in fuel and oil and increase in consumption as a result of a higher number of cases of domestic violence."

I am sure what is meant is the higher number of reported cases. I believe it is vital to make the difference between the reported cases and the actual fact. If the Minister has information that there is an increase in domestic violence, I am prepared to listen, but is it that or is it an increase in the reported cases?

Mrs Bappoo: Mr Chairperson, there has been indeed an increase in the consumption as the Ministry had to intervene into a higher number of cases of child abuse and domestic violence which have been reported to the Ministry. The number is on increase, but they have to intervene in many more cases.

Programme Code 521: Policy and Management for Women's Empowerment and Family Welfare (Rs7, 718, 927) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 522: Women Empowerment and Gender Mainstreaming was called.

Mrs Labelle: Mr Chairperson, regarding Item No. 31112*, Additional provision required for the completion of the construction of Women Centres at Notre Dame and Triolet,* may I ask the hon. Minister whether these centres have been completed and the real cost of the centres and whether these centres are now in operation?

Mrs Bappoo: Mr Chairperson, I have been informed that these allocations have been made because there has been progress in the construction works. Due to the progress in the

construction work, it demanded more budgetary costs to the programme and as far as I understand these women centres have been completed.

Programme Code 522: Women Empowerment and Gender Mainstreaming (Rs8, 964, 392) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 524: Family Welfare and Protection from Domestic Violence (Rs594,303) was called and agreed to.

Ministry for Consumer Protection and Citizens' Charter

Programme Code 525: Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Consumers was called.

Mr Baloomoody: Mr Chairperson, I know it is a new Ministry which was created. On Item No. 22900, can we have some particulars about the other goods and services? What were the services provided?

Mr Yeung Sik Yuen: Mr Chairperson, concerning item No. 22900, I see it is for the payment of uniforms, hospitalities and ceremonies in respect of World Consumer Rights.

Programme Code 525: Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Consumers (Rs5, 976, 109) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 701: Policy and Management Consumer Protection and Citizens' Charter (Rs5, 789, 507) was called and agreed to.

Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment

The following Programme Codes were called and agreed to -

(a) *541: Policy and Management for Labour and Employment (Rs378, 208)*
(b) *542: Labour and Employment Relations Management (Rs8, 847, 256)*
(c) *543: Registration of Associations, Trade Unions and Superannuation Funds (Rs2, 135, 101)*
(d) *544: Employment Facilitation (Rs4, 469, 269)*

Attorney General's Office, Ministry of Justice & Human Rights

Programme Code 561: Policy and Management for Justice and Human Rights was called.

Mr Bérenger: Mr Chairperson, we have a new Attorney General, but we have the same Prime Minister. I suppose that both are aware of the judgement from the Supreme Court that says

that the Attorney General in our Constitution cannot be Minister for this or that including especially Minister for Human Rights. Therefore, can I request the Attorney General to bring the required amendment so that the appellation of the Ministry should reflect the Supreme Court judgment?

Mr Varma: Mr Chairperson, it concerns the PRB report of 2008. It was prior to the judgement of the Supreme Court and that is why it is like that.

Mr Baloomoody: Mr Chairperson, may I ask the Minister where is the Centre of the Human Rights now being given that it has been taken over by the Commissioner….

The Chairperson: No. We are talking about the Attorney General's Office.

Mr Baloomoody: Mr Chairperson, we are talking about the Human Rights…

(Interruptions)

Mr Baloomoody: I am asking the Attorney General where is the center. Do we have a centre for the Human Rights?

The Chairperson: I think so, we have.

– Programme Code 561: Policy and Management for Justice and Human Rights (Rs2,341,453) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Health and Quality of Life

Programme Code 582: Curative Services was called.

Mr Bérenger: Mr Chairperson, to go back to the Item No. 22140, *'Medical Supplies, Drugs and Equipment'*. We were asked to approve Rs558 m. for medical supplies, drugs and equipment and it seems, as I said earlier, that we were completely off target and we are now asked for an additional Rs225 m. Can I know from the hon. Minister concerned how we can miss a target like that and what improvements are being brought to the way we assess the requirements in terms of supplies, drugs and equipment?

Mrs Hanoomanjee: Mr Chairperson, there has been an increase in the number of dialysis sessions, in the number of cardiac patients and in the number of post-renal transplant patients. And, as you recall, there has been a surge, at that time, of new diseases, such as chikungunya, dengue fever, and there have been new drugs and vaccines which were procured. With regard to purchase of drugs, I would like to point out that due to the high number of drugs to be procured - that is, we have got around 750 different items for which annual bulk purchases have to be made – and in view of the complexity of procurement procedures, contracts and

delivery schedules including distribution, this exercise is carried out 12 months in advance. And very often, after awards have been made, the suppliers are unable to supply the drugs and, consequently, the Ministry has to resort to bridging quotations and local purchases, thus resulting in higher prices paid for the same drugs.

Mr Uteem: Mr Chairperson, on item No. *22900 – Other Goods and Services*, mention is made for additional provision required to meet increases in contract prices for foodstuffs of an amount of Rs22 m. May I know whether these contracts are awarded following tender exercise and what is the duration of these contracts?

Mrs Hanoomanjee: Obviously, all procurement procedures are followed, Mr Chairperson and usually, the contract is for one-year duration.

Programme Code 582: Ministry of Health and Quality of Life – Curative Services (Rs767,138,341) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Industry, Small & Medium Enterprises, Commerce & Cooperatives

Programme Code 601: Policy and Management for Industry, SMEs, Commerce and Cooperatives was called.

Mr Li Kwong Wing: Mr Chairperson, I would like to know, with respect to item no. *26323, Extra Budgetary Units (Capital Grants),* the use of the extra budgetary grant of Rs150 m. How many enterprises are involved and the name of beneficiaries, if possible?

Mr Soodhun: Mr Chairperson, this amount of Rs150 m. was earmarked under the Manufacturing Adjustment and SME Development Fund to finance projects in Rodrigues including the special holiday package and passengers' services charge.

Programme Code 601: Policy and Management for Industry, SMEs, Commerce and Cooperatives (Rs150,885,455) was, on question put, agreed to.

The following Programme Codes were called and agreed to -

(a) 602: Industrial Development (Rs2,861,295)

(b) 604:Promotion and Development of Cooperatives(Rs7,728,344)

Ministry of Arts and Culture

Programme Code 621: Policy and Management for Arts and Culture (Rs2,458,501) was called and agreed to.

Ministry of Housing and Lands

Programme Code 641: Policy and Management for Housing and Lands (Rs2,754,759) was called and agreed to.

Programme Code 642: Social Housing Development was called.

Mr Bérenger: Mr Chairperson, therefore, under *Item No. 26323 – Extra Budgetary Units (Capital Grant) - Additional provision required for the Social Housing Development Fund*, we had approved Rs500 m. and we are asked to approve Supplementary Appropriation of Rs750 m. Can we know to what use the sum of more than Rs1 billion is earmarked? What is the Social Housing Development Fund doing right now?

Dr. Kasenally: Mr Chairperson, an additional sum was made available to my Ministry by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Empowerment for onward transmission to the Social Housing Development Fund. This Fund has been used to cover expenses in respect of Social Housing Projects for the period ending 31 December 2010. These are for the construction of 550 Firinga Type Housing in 11 sites, provision of 242 service sites, Housing Project at Military Road, Port Louis, which is under gestation, rehabilitation works on NHDC Housing Estates, Sewerage Rehabilitation Works, Electrical Installation at la Tour Koenig and Camp Levieux. Provision has now been made in the Budget of my Ministry, Programme 642, for all expenses to be met in respect of Housing projects instead of the Housing Development Fund. Only a sum of Rs25 m. is now available in the Social Housing Development. The rest was reverted back to the Consolidated Fund.

Programme Code 642: Social Housing Development (Rs749,964,492) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Information Technology & Telecommunications

Programme Code 661: Policy and Management for ICT (Rs2,095,348) was called and agreed to.

Ministry of Youth & Sports

Programme Code 681: Policy and Management for Youth & Sports (Rs808,659) was called and agreed to.

Programme Code 682: Promotion and Development of Sports was called.

Mr Quirin: Mr Chairperson, concerning item No. *22900 – Other Goods and Services*, it is mentioned that additional provision is required to meet costs in connection with participation of athletes in sports events and international meetings. Can the Minister of Youth & Sports give a breakdown of the sum of Rs8,595,934?

Mr Ritoo: Mr Chairperson, the provision is for the athletes who participate in athletic competitions in Lesotho, boxing in India, judo in Indonesia and the CJSOI Games in Seychelles.

Mr Quirin: Can I know the sum earmarked for each event or meeting?

Mr Ritoo: I do not have the details for each competition, but the sum is for all these competitions that took place in Indonesia, Lesotho, India and Seychelles. I can give you the details later on.

The Chairperson: The Minister can circulate the information later on.

Ms Ribot: Mr Chairperson, could we have details from the hon. Minister concerning the increase in overtime performed?

Mr Ritoo: Mr Chairperson, the activities in sports require a lot of work after office hours and during weekends, leading to payment of overtime to drivers and some sports infrastructure like swimming pools and gymnasium have to be opened early in the morning at 5 o'clock, thus necessitating a lot of overtime and, of course, because of shortage of staff in certain grades like boiler operator, swimming pools attendant makes that the existing staff have to work for long hours.

Programme Code 682: Promotion and Development of Sports (Rs18,815,980) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 683: Youth Services (Rs7,603,753) was called and agreed to.

E.S.E (2008-2009) (No. 2 of 2010), as amended, was agreed to.

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

COMMITTEE STAGE

The Supplementary Appropriation (2008-2009) (No. 2) Bill (No. XII of 2010) was considered and agreed to.

On the Assembly resuming with the Chairman of Committees in the Chair, the Chairman of Committees reported accordingly.

THE SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION (2009) BILL

(NO. XIII OF 2010)

E.S.E (2009)

Electoral Supervisory Commission and Electoral Boundaries Commission

Programme Code 071: Supervision of Electoral Activities and Review of Electoral Boundaries was called.

Mr Bérenger: Under item *21110 – Personal Emoluments*, we are asked for an additional appropriation for advisers to the Electoral Supervisory Commission. Can I know how many advisers there are and what do they do?

The Prime Minister: In fact, there are two advisers, Mr Chairperson. The advisers have been recruited on a contract basis, because the electoral boundaries exercise was going on and they needed additional help for that. I can give the hon. Member the names of the advisers. The names are Mr Mooroogessen Veerasamy and Mr Hawaldar. I think both of them have worked there before.

Programme Code 071: Supervision of Electoral Activities and Review of Electoral Boundaries (Rs202,780) was, on question put, agreed to.

The following Programme Codes were called and agreed to -

(a) *101: Local Government Service Commission – Local Government Service Human Resource Affairs (Rs138,284)*
(b) *121: Independent Broadcasting Authority –Supervision of Broadcasting (Rs1,400,000)*

(c) 171: Public Bodies Appeal Tribunal –Determination of Appeals by Public Officers (Rs739,271)

Programme Code 261: Police Force –Security Policy and Management was called.

Mr Bérenger: Can I come back to the helicopter? We approved the sum of Rs42 m. for the acquisition of one helicopter, and we are now asked for an additional sum of Rs214 m. Is it still for one helicopter? What has happened?

The Prime Minister: In fact, Mr Chairperson, the total sum for that helicopter is Rs214 m., but it is a book entry. The purchase is being made from the Indian line of credit of USD100 m., which Mauritius got when I was on an official visit in India. This is being taken from that. The provision was made in the July-December 2009 Budget, as the helicopter was delivered during that period. But, at the time the Budget was framed, we were not aware when the helicopter would be delivered. In other words, it is a book entry.

Mr Li Kwong Wing: Concerning the provision for the radio communication equipment and CCTV Street Surveillance System, the Supplementary Appropriation is Rs73,693,124, which is much more than what was originally budgeted. Can we get more clarification from the hon. Prime Minister about the use of this system because we already voted one for Grand' Baie, Port Louis and Flic-en-Flac? Is there any reason for increasing the Supplementary Appropriation to that extent?

The Prime Minister: In fact, we are putting additional cameras and there must be maintenance; contracts have to be given. I must also say, Mr Chairperson, that there have been savings. So, additional money was available.

Programme Code 261: Security Policy and Management (Rs73,693,124) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 263: Emergency, Disaster Management and Surveillance (Rs252,126,717) was called and agreed to.

Mauritius Prisons Service

Programme Code 291: Management of Prisons (Rs139,808) was called and agreed to.

Programme Code 292: Maintenance and Rehabilitations of Detainees was called.

Mr Baloomoody: Item *31112 – Non Residential Buildings – Additional provision required to meet expenses in connection with infrastructural works at the Administrative Block at Beau Bassin Prison and for the upgrading of prisons,* may we know which prisons we are talking about and what works have been done in these prisons?

The Prime Minister: First of all, repairs were carried out on the roof of the ex-prison headquarters. The roofs were leaking, and they are now used to accommodate, in fact, detainees' records and files, using an electronic database. Additional water tanks have been put to improve water supply in the prisons of Beau Bassin, GRNW and Petit Verger prisons. The gate lodge at Beau Bassin prison had been converted into a triple gate system, and then there have been improvements to toilets and bathrooms. In fact, in all the prisons these have been done. There has also been installation of security grille doors and partitions in the prison blocks, as well as installation of segregation units inside the prisons itself. There has also been the setting up of waiting rooms for prisons' patients in all prisons, and installation of security fencing at Beau Bassin and the women prisons.

Programme Code 292: Maintenance and Rehabilitations of Detainees (Rs17,851,211) was, on question put, agreed to.

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

Programme Code 441: Utility Policy and Management was called.

Mr Bérenger: Under item *26323 – Extra Budgetary Unit – Provision required for the Maurice Ile Durable Fund,* we are asked to approve Rs200 m. Can we know under whose responsibility the *Maurice Ile Durable* Fund falls now and to what use is the sum of Rs200 m. going to be put to?

Mr Ganoo: Mr Chairperson, under the same item, if you would allow me. In the past, we had been asked to vote grants to this *Maurice Ile Durable* Fund. Can I ask the hon. Minister what use has been made of the sum which had been budgeted in the past for the *Maurice Ile Durable* Fund?

Dr. Kasenally: Mr Chairperson, I think I'll answer what is available here. For the past, I need notice, and perhaps the hon. Member can put it to the substantive Minister. *Maurice Ile Durable*, after all, means availability of clear water and all facilities. Therefore, in this

connection, the amount was transferred by the Minister of Finance to *Maurice Ile Durable* to meet the cost of urgent replacement of old, inefficient, derelict pipelines. These were done at Camp Fouquereaux, Alma, Camp Thorel, Salazie, Plaine des Papayes, Triolet and others. There are about seven areas and the total provision, in fact, for water supply was Rs583 m. with Rs383 m. as loan to CWA.

Programme Code 441: Utility Policy & Management (Rs200,295,728) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 444: Sanitation was called.

Mr Lesjongard: Mr Chairperson, with regard to item *31113 – Other Structures - Additional provision required to meet advance payment to contractor in connection with the Plaines Wilhems Sewerage project*, I find that there is a sum of Rs421,787,169. I would have understood if it would have been the final payment, because we all know, Mr Chairperson, that according to the Procurement Act, we have payment scheduled which is very explicit. When the contract is signed, it is clearly defined. Why, in this case, we have a Supplementary Appropriation for advance payment? Could the hon. Minister give us indication as to why we have to pay advance payment and was the payment made outside the terms and conditions of the contract?

Dr. Kasenally: Actually, the hon. Member is quite right to say it; he seems to know it well, but he seems not to understand it. This was advance payment for the construction of the Plaines Wilhems Lot 1A in November 2009. The problem is that no provision had been made in the Budget as the award of the contract had been delayed on numerous occasions because of repeated requests for clarification from the European Investment Bank (EIB) and also the challenge at the IRP. However, the EIB gave its 'no objection' in October 2009 and the contract was awarded in November 2009 with the approval of the CPB. The contract value was Rs2.8 billion. This is why this was an advance payment to the contractor in respect of this contract and it was all done legally.

Programme Code 444: Sanitation (Rs421,787,169) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 445: Radiation Protection (Rs179,985) was called and agreed to.

Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Tourism, Leisure and External Communications

Programme Code 343: Destination Promotion was called.

Mr Bérenger: Sir, under item *26313 - Extra Budgetary Units,* we had provided Rs200 m.; we are now asked to provide an additional sum of Rs3m. Surely, as the notes says, it cannot be for the launching ceremony only. Therefore, can we have a breakdown of the total sum of Rs203 m. as to how this was spent, how much on 'Mauritius c*'est un plaisir'* and how much on other such activities?

Dr. A. Boolell: Mr Chairperson, I can give a breakdown for the Rs200 m. and the budget earmarked in respect of the additional Rs3 m. There is no problem. I don't have to highlight that the exercise was carried out in all transparency, and, in fact, one of the best promotional campaign agency was recruited.

(Interruptions)

Of course, *c'est tout un plaisir.*

(Interruptions)

Even, when it comes to incredible India which has gained the momentum and now which is giving so much visibility to India, it takes time.

The Chairperson: The question is simple.

(Interruptions)

Dr. A. Boolell: I would advise the hon. Leader of the Opposition to take time.

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Order! Order!

(Interruptions)

Dr. A. Boolell: It can easily be circulated. We will do that.

Mr X. L. Duval: Sir, I want to give some information. The launching ceremony, I think, cost Rs4 m. The Rs200 m. is the additional budget for the Ministry of Tourism through the stimulus package. This has nothing to do with the branding exercise at all.

Programme Code 343: Destination Promotion (Rs3,152,614) was, on question put, agreed to.

Programme Code 345: Civil Aviation and Port Development was called.

Mr Bérenger: Sir, under item *28223 - Capital Transfers,* the sum was asked for contribution. It is not a grant; it is not a loan; it is a contribution. Can I know from the hon.

Minister what is meant by this? Instead of grant, instead of loan, it is a contribution and for what purpose?

The Prime Minister: I will answer the question, Mr Chairperson. I think it is for additional pension liabilities. In fact, in the port sector reform which was initiated as per the World Bank recommendations, the Cargo Handling Corporation has been implementing a social plan which includes payment of pensions to the ex-employees of the company and the widows as from June 1997. Now, the social plan initially covered some 400 employees of the Cargo Handling Corporation and it also included a lump sum and a monthly pension for life, which is adjusted with inflation to the pensioners.

Now, as part of the plan, the Cargo Handling Corporation Ltd disbursed a sum of Rs160 m. and has been paying pension to the tune of Rs30 m. per annum on average since 1997. Now, in December 2009, SICOM submitted an updated value as of 30 June 2009 for the outstanding pension liabilities under the social plan and the total liabilities amounted to that sum, and that is what it is. It represents the present value of the pension payable to the ex-employees and the widows under the social plan agreement.

Mr Uteem: Mr Chairperson, may I ask the hon. Prime Minister, in an answer to a question last week...

The Chairperson: The hon. Member is referring to which item?

Mr Uteem: This item. We have heard that the Cargo Handling Corporation Ltd is a private company and has three shareholders, the State, SIC and MPA. So, we would like to know whether this contribution is by way of an injunction in the capital, is it by way of loan; is it by Government or is it by the MPA.

The Prime Minister: Mr Chairperson, it is the contribution of Government to the Pension Fund. That is what it is.

Programme Code 345: Civil Aviation and Port Development (Rs371,886,664) was, on question put, agreed to.

Vice-Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Finance & Economic Empowerment

Programme Code 361: Policy and Strategy Development for Economic Growth and Social Progress was called.

Mr Li Kwong Wing: Sir, under item *28223 – Transfers to Non-Financial Public Corporations,* may I ask the hon. Minister of Finance if he can explain in detail the relocation activities involved?

Mr Jugnauth: I see that there is relocation of BPML Freeport services from zone 1 to zone 6 in the context of the Binani Cement Factory project. There has been a revised relocation cost, which is estimated at Rs182.8 m. and in December 2009 Government contributed Rs100 m. to BFSL to meet part of its relocation cost.

Programme Code 361: Policy and Strategy Development for Economic Growth and Social Progress (Rs32,934,868) was, on question put, agreed to.

The following Programme Codes were called and agreed to -

(a) *323: Ministry of Public Infrastructure, Land Transport and Shipping –Construction and Maintenance of Roads and Bridges (Rs323,876,603).*
(b) *642: Ministry of Housing and Lands - Social Housing Development (Rs55,106,991).*
(c) *462: Ministry of Local Government, Rodrigues and Outer Islands - Facilitation to Local Authorities (Rs697,190,401).*

Ministry of Local Government, Rodrigues and Outer Islands

– Programme Code 311: Rodrigues and Outer Islands Development was called.

Mr Bérenger: Under item no. 26321, we are asked for an additional Rs10 m. for payment of contribution to UNDP for the Marine Protected Area Project. Can we have some information on this Marine Protected Area Project and how UNDP is helping us in relation thereto?

Mr Von-Mally: Yes, Mr Chairperson. There were Rs3.5 m. for the upgrading of roads there and Rs6.5 m. to meet the contribution to UNDP for the Marine Protected Area Project. In fact, this is for procurement of buoys, for the demarcation of the Marine Protected Area; for conservation and preservation of the marine environment and for redeployment of fishers in this area.

Programme Code 311: Rodrigues and Outer Islands Development (Rs 16,496,555) was, on question put, agreed to.

The following Programme Codes were called and agreed to -

(a) *501: Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Senior Citizens Welfare & Reform Institutions –Policy and Management for Social Affairs (Rs53,764).*
(b) *502: Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Senior Citizens Welfare & Reform Institutions –Social Protection (Rs12,829,664).*
(c) *503: Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Senior Citizens Welfare & Reform Institutions –National Pension Management (Rs32,926,934).*

Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Senior Citizens Welfare & Reform Institutions

Programme Code 505: Social Welfare was called.

Mr Uteem: Mr Chairperson, in relation to item No. 31111, may I have an explanation from the hon. Minister for the increase in cost of the refurbishment of the Recreation Centre at Belle Mare*?*

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun*:* The additional provision is required to meet payment of claims from contractors. This is the amount that was claimed from contractors. The total cost of the project was actually Rs117.1 m., but the amount voted for the different periods varied. For 2008 to 2009, it was around Rs40 m. voted and the expenditure was about Rs30.1 m. and between July and December 2009, the amount voted for was Rs49 m. and the actual expenditure was Rs46.1 m.

Programme Code 505: Social Welfare (Rs37,443,296) was, on question put, agreed to.

The following Programme Codes were called and agreed to -

Ministry of Education, Culture and Human Resources

(a) *423: Primary Education (Rs5,262,055).*
(b) *425: Technical and Vocational Education (Rs95,564).*

Ministry of Agro Industry, Food Production and Security

Programme Code 482: Competitiveness of the Sugar Cane Sector was called.

Mr Bérenger: I have a few questions, Mr Chairperson. Under item No. 31113, there is an additional fund of Rs60 m. for upgrading of infrastructure and rehabilitation of sugar camps. I

would like to be enlightened. Sugar camps do not belong to Government, so to what purpose are we asked for Rs60 m.?

Secondly, under item No. 26313, there is an additional provision of Rs5 m. to enable the Irrigation Authority to effect payment of salaries and end-of-year bonus to its employees. Can we know what led the Irrigation Authority to be incapable of paying the salaries and end-of-year bonus of its employees? Clearly this is not a normal situation. What happened? After that was paid, has there been any reorganisation? What is happening at the Irrigation Authority?

Mr Virahsawmy: Yes, Mr Chairperson. The phasing out of camp is a project initiated in the late 90s with the objective of eliminating all the 133 sugar camps because of the inhumane housing conditions the workers were living in. An additional amount of Rs60 m. is required to undertake activities under the phasing out of the sugar camps. 70 camps have been completed in 1998. There are 63 left, out of which 50 have been completed and there are 13 camps left to be completed.

Under the item for the Irrigation Authority, the Irrigation Authority is not authorised to increase its operational revenue as it wishes, so Government has to bring a subsidy so that the small planters are not affected.

Programme Code 482: Competitiveness of the Sugar Cane Sector (Rs65,465,965) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Health and Quality of Life

Programme Code 582: Curative Services was called.

Dr. S. Boolell: On the last Budget, I noted that the Supplementary Appropriation was almost…

Mr Speaker: Can the hon. Member name the item?

Dr. S. Boolell: With regard to item No. 22140, on the last Budget, I noted that the Supplementary Appropriation was almost 50% of what was the appropriated funds and in this one, we note that now the sum required under Supplementary Appropriation is almost reaching. It is soon going to reach what is the estimated appropriated. I wonder whether we could continue, each time, with having an increase in the supplementary appropriation. And also I would like to ask the hon. Minister of almost a breakdown about the vaccines that are mentioned under this Budget which was not mentioned under the one. Can I get some clarification about what vaccines were purchased?

Mrs Hanoomanjee: Mr Chairperson, if we have got an increase in the number of patients, an increase in the number of dialysis sessions, an increase in the number – as I have mentioned earlier – of post regional transplant patients, obviously there will be an increase in the Budget. If like now we've got A(H1N1) or dengue, obviously we need to buy additional medicines for all these illnesses..

Programme Code 582: Curative Services (Rs210,611,487) was, on question put, agreed to.

Ministry of Information and Communication Technology

*Programme Code 662***:** *Scaling Up the ICT Sector was called.*

Mr Ganoo: Mr Chairperson, can I ask the hon. Minister if he could enlighten the House on the supplementary appropriation of Rs9 m., the additional provision required for upgrading and installation of software and also give the House details on which software, in fact, has been bought? As we know, the report of the Director of Audit highlighted and made very strong criticisms against the Microsoft Enterprise Agreement and underlined the fact that this was a total mismanagement of public funds. I don't want to quote the Director of Audit, but may I just remind the hon. Minister what happened in this case. The Director said –

> "No study was carried out to determine the software needs of Government for Microsoft products and that it was not known how the figure of seven thousand users was arrived at."

This is just one sentence. There are so many criticisms on this project. Mr Chairperson, Sir. May I ask the hon. Minister whether he is satisfied in this case, whether a proper study has been made and which software are we talking of?

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: Mr Chairperson, Sir, additional provision was required for upgrading and installation of software at the Government Online Centre. Additional oracle products and licences, that is, internet application server and real application cluster had to be purchased for the Government Online Centre. As the GOC was already operating with servers of high capacity in clustered mode, there was a need to comply with the policy of oracle with respect to the use of real application cluster and Enterprise Edition of Oracle. In case, compliance with the oracle policy was not considered, some servers would have been shut down, thus, resulting in a decrease in performance for Ministries and Departments accessing system like Registry, Central Personal System and Market Information System on the GOC. The

expenditure could not have been forecast as the possibility of transferring some licences from the Government contract to the Government Online Centre was still under consideration and discussions were still ongoing with GOC and Oracle African Operations at the time of the framing of Estimates July to December 2009.

Mr Chairperson, Sir, insofar as the question of 7,000 licences are concerned, it is a fact that an agreement was concluded in June 2008 with Microsoft for the purchase of 7,000 licences and software tools for office automation to develop a unified collaborative platform in Government. According to the Agreement these tools are meant to be used during the period for 2008 to 2013. This project was prompted by the recommendation of the National Information and Communication Technology Strategic Plan which calls for the adoption of the state-of-the-art of technologies with a view to bringing the citizens to the entire Government service delivering. The deal concerns advanced software tools that are correctly and actively being implemented in Government. As matters stand, already 50% of the licences have been used and, since this is a long-term project, all the facilities and software available will be used by 2013 which is the expiry date of the agreement. Mr Chairperson, it is not at all proper to insinuate…

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: No, sorry! This is not…

(Interruptions)

Please, sit down! The hon. Minister has given the explanation which was required by the hon. Member. He can keep the speech for next time.

Mr Ganoo: Just to remind the hon. Minister, the Director of Audit himself says and I am quoting from the reply…

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: Listen, hon. Ganoo…

Mr Ganoo: I am just replying. The Ministry itself said that this project cannot be imputed to this Ministry as the Ministry did not support the signature of the agreement on the consideration that it was detrimental to Government.

The Chairperson: Hon. Ganoo, I am asking you, there is an item on this, is this item linked with the one you are referring to?

Mr Ganoo: My question is whether this item we are talking of would not suffer the same fate as the past one?

(Interruptions)

The Chairperson: I think the hon. Minister has answered. This project is not going to suffer the same fate. Next question!

Mr Uteem: Mr Chairperson, Sir, the hon. Minister mentioned that the software relates to Oracle products. Is the hon. Minister aware that there is a claim by the Government for licences of Oracles which the Government wanted to return? Couldn't the Government have offset the amount which is owed on the return to Oracles?

Mr Pillay Chedumbrum: No, Sir.

Programme 662: Scaling Up the ICT Sector (Rs9,292,152) was, on question put, agreed to.

E.S.E. (2009) of 2010 was considered and agreed to.

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

The Supplementary Appropriation Bill (2009) (No. XIII of 2010) was considered and agreed to.

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

Mr Speaker: I suspend for half an hour.

At 4.17 p.m., the sitting was suspended.

On resuming at 4.55 p.m. with Mr Deputy Speaker in the Chair

MOTION

GOVERNMENT PROGRAMME 2010-2015

Order read for resuming adjournment debate on the following motion of the hon. Fourth Member for Vacoas and Floreal (Ms S. Anquetil).

"This Assembly resolves that the Government Programme 2010-2015 presented to this Assembly on Tuesday 08 June 2010, copy of which has been circularised amongst Honourable Members, be and is hereby approved".

Question again proposed.

(4.55 p.m.)

Mr M. Seeruttun (Second Member for Vieux Grand Port & Rose Belle): M. le président, permettez-moi, tout d'abord, de vous adresser mes sincères félicitations à votre poste de Deputy Speaker. Je suis certain que vous allez faire un bon travail sous la férule du président. Et je voudrais, en même temps, vous demander de transmettre au président de la Chambre mes sincères félicitations pour sa reconduction comme président de cette Chambre. Et cette reconduction témoigne l'appréciation de son travail par tous les membres des deux cotés de la Chambre. Je souhaite à tous deux un excellent travail pour que la démocratie sorte encore plus renforcée.

M. le président, je voudrais aussi remercier le Premier ministre, le Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam, et le vice-Premier ministre et ministre des finances, l'honorable Pravind Jugnauth, de l'opportunité qu'ils m'ont donnée et de la confiance qu'ils ont placée en moi pour que je puisse être aujourd'hui dans cette auguste Assemblée, comme un représentant du peuple.

Je profite aussi l'occasion pour remercier mes deux colistiers, le ministre des affaires étrangères, l'honorable Dr. Boolell et le PPS, l'honorable Moutia, qui m'ont soutenu pendant toute la campagne où un esprit d'équipe avait régné tout au long et cela a permis de donner les résultats qu'on connaît.

J'ai aussi un mot spécial pour les électeurs de ma circonscription, Vieux Grand Port/Rose Belle, qui m'ont soutenu et qui m'ont fait confiance pour être leur porte-parole et je suis conscient de la responsabilité qui m'incombe.

La circonscription No. 11 est une circonscription très particulière avec un passé très riche en histoire. D'ailleurs, dans quelques semaines, on fête le bicentenaire de la bataille de Vieux

Grand Port et je suis sûr que cet évènement aura des retombées positives sur les habitants de la région.

M. le président, la circonscription Vieux Grand Port/Rose Belle fait frontière avec quatre autres circonscriptions. Elle comprend des villages côtiers tout comme des villages à vocation agricole. Elle a sa dose de difficultés, mais avec le projet de développements annoncés dans le sud, je suis certain que la circonscription connaitra une transformation économique et visuelle dans un proche avenir au profit des habitants. Et là, je mentionne l'agrandissement de l'aéroport international Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, la relance du projet du *Business Parks* de Rose Belle et l'étude à être entreprise pour la réouverture possible du port de Mahébourg.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is indeed a pleasure and a privilege to be a Member of this National Assembly as a duly elected representative of the people of the Republic of Mauritius. This Government has obtained a clear mandate at the last general election to continue to take this country forward.

The programme set for the next five years, as announced by the President of our Republic, shows the commitment and dedication of this Government to respond to the challenges facing this country, be it on the economic, the social or the environmental fronts. In fact, this five-year programme testifies our commitment to put into action our promises to modernise further our country, consolidate national unity and bring equality to one and all.

If we look at the way the last general election was conducted, it already paved the way for a modern Mauritius. There were no *affiches sauvages*, no abusive use of *base* and no plastics used to disfigure our environment. I must say, the campaign initiated by the then Minister of Tourism '*decoller pas coller'* has paid its dividend.

The massive participation of women during the last electoral campaign shows the interest that women show in politics. Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, *l'Alliance de l'Avenir* showed its commitment to empower women and presented 13 lady candidates at the last general elections. Again this was a clear signal that women are being given due consideration in politics. There was a time when there was no woman in Government and then, there used to be one to lead the Ministry of Women. In this Government, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, we have not one, but three lady Ministers and no need to mention the high importance of the three Ministries that they occupy.

Of course, the credit should go to the hon. Prime Minister who wants to lead by example. As I said earlier on, these are, but a few examples of the commitment already shown to move our country forward on the path of modernity, equal justice and national unity. The creation of the Ministry of Social Integration and the Ministry of Gender is yet another commitment of this Government.

M. le président, une société ne peut progresser quand il y a de la misère et la pauvreté. Beaucoup a été dit dans le passé pour trouver une solution durable au problème d'exclusion à Maurice. Malheureusement, les résultats n'ont pas été encourageants. Ce gouvernement a voulu prendre les taureaux par les cornes en consacrant un ministère uniquement pour l'intégration sociale et cela va encore une fois dans le sens de nos engagements électoraux, c'est-à-dire, donner encore plus de chance et d'opportunité à tout un chacun. On vient de terminer une campagne électorale, on a tous eu l'occasion de faire du porte-à-porte et on a pu constater de visu les conditions précaires dans lesquelles vivent certains de nos compatriotes et cela nous interpelle tous.

Vous serez d'accord, M. le président, que cette situation n'est pas limitée à une section de la population et ne concerne qu'une communauté particulière. L'éradication de la pauvreté à Maurice est l'affaire de nous tous, le gouvernement, la société civile, les entreprises et ce qu'il ne faut surtout pas faire, c'est de stigmatiser ceux qui sont touchés par la pauvreté. Allons attaquer ensemble la source du problème. La tâche ne sera certes pas facile mais quand il y a la volonté, la moitié du travail est accompli.

M. le président, notre pays, même s'il est petit de taille et loin de toutes les grandes puissances du monde, il a su faire sa place dans ce monde de plus en plus compétitif. Cela a été possible en grande partie grâce à notre capital humain et l'accès à l'éducation et à la formation qui ont été à la base de cette réussite. Malgré des ressources très limitées, l'île Maurice est un des rares pays où autant est fait par l'Etat dans le domaine éducatif. On connait l'éducation gratuite du pré-primaire jusqu'au niveau universitaire et cela nous a permis d'avoir une nation éduquée.

M. le président, grâce à la détermination de notre Premier ministre, le Docteur Navinchandra Ramgoolam, nous avons aussi aujourd'hui le transport gratuit pour les étudiants et les personnes âgées et handicapées. Cela permet à tous les enfants d'aller à l'école sans que les frais de transport ne soient un handicap. Je me réjouis que ce gouvernement compte aussi revoir

les allocations versées aux institutions qui font un travail formidable avec des enfants ayant un handicap. Dieu seul sait combien ces enfants…

(*Interruptions*)

The Deputy Speaker : Order please !

Mr Seeruttun : … en ont besoin pour pouvoir faire face à leur avenir. J'ai été personnellement mêlé avec l'école de L'APEIM. Cette décision de revoir les allocations doit les soulager car ils attendent cela depuis un certain temps.

La décision d'étendre le plan d'aide aux enfants de trois ans pour le pré-primaire est un autre exemple de la prise en charge de nos petits par le gouvernement.

Ce gouvernement va encore plus loin dans ce mandat. Un ministère dédié à l'éducation tertiaire et de la recherche. Cette initiative fera de notre pays un *knowledge hub* dans cette région du monde. M. le président, aux Etats-Unis, avec plus de 3000 universités, imaginez le nombre de nouveaux projets entrepris par des milliers universitaires chaque année. C'est cela qui fait que les Etats-Unis soit un pays toujours en avance sur les autres avec des idées nouvelles et des produits innovateurs. Je suis sûr que ce nouveau ministère consacrera des ressources pour encourager nos jeunes à se surpasser et être plus créatifs et que la recherche devienne seconde nature comme c'était le cas pour nos aînés dans le domaine agricole et, en particulier, dans l'industrie sucrière. Le MSIRI est un exemple concret et je suis convaincu que nos jeunes d'aujourd'hui peuvent faire autant.

Avec l'engagement de ce gouvernement d'avoir un diplômé universitaire dans chaque famille mauricienne, le pays ne peut que sortir gagnant surtout en ce temps où tout s'externalise. M. le président, avec l'avènement de nouvelles technologies de communication, ce serait vraiment dommage que nos jeunes ne puissent avoir accès à cette mine d'information qu'offre l'internet aujourd'hui. Dans un souci de donner encore plus de chance à chaque étudiant, ce gouvernement veut rendre l'accès à l'information possible en revoyant le tarif d'accès à l'internet.

Tout cela est bien, mais si on n'a pas l'outil nécessaire, toutes ces facilités ne servent à rien. La cerise sur le gâteau est que ce gouvernement veut offrir à chaque étudiant du *Lower VI* un *laptop*. Avec cet outil, M. le président, le Premier ministre veut que les jeunes de notre pays aient les mêmes moyens que les jeunes des grands pays surtout quand on sait que dans ce monde qu'est devenu un village global, la compétition est de plus en plus féroce.

Tout en mettant l'accent sur l'éducation, ce gouvernement, M. le président, veut favoriser le sport parmi nos jeunes pour un meilleur épanouissement. En décentralisant les infrastructures sportives dans différents coins de l'île, c'est donner accès aux jeunes la possibilité de promouvoir leurs talents dans le milieu sportif. On vient de vivre des moments intenses avec la coupe du monde en Afrique du Sud, où le sport roi a encore une fois montré sa capacité de réunir tout le monde, peu importe leurs origines.

La professionnalisation du football local et le soutien financier que le gouvernement veut accorder aux équipes de première et seconde divisions démontrent l'engagement du gouvernement de relancer le football à Maurice. Avec un ministre des sports qui comprend bien cette discipline, je suis convaincu qu'il va apporter tout son soutien pour que le football à Maurice connaisse un meilleur avenir. Je profite pour faire un appel au ministre des sports et au ministre de l'éducation, de considérer la possibilité d'ouvrir après les heures d'école les facilités sportives qui se trouvent dans les différents collèges de l'île, afin que ces infrastructures soient utilisées de manière optimale.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, the world has, in the past years, been shaken up by an unprecedented financial crisis. Now, with the economic crisis in the Euro zone, no country is being spared by this turmoil, and Mauritius is no exception, though I must add that we suffered to a lesser extent, mostly due to a better regulated local financial sector and prompt actions of the Government. Who would have thought that countries of Western Europe would be on the brink of bankruptcy, where the citizens have had to queue up for a bowl of soup? As the hon. Prime Minister rightly points out very often, no one owes us a living.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, everybody in this House will agree with me that we are operating in a global village, where the response time to changes has to be almost instantaneous. As a responsible and dynamic Government, again this 5-year programme testifies that the Government is ready to review certain past measures. As a caring Government that gives due consideration to the people's needs, we should commend the Government, and the hon. Prime Minister in particular, for revisiting some measures taken in the previous five years, be it the NRPT, taxation on interests earned on savings, or the formula for the payment of SC/HSC exams fees.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, as a nation with a strong culture for savings, it has helped our country to become what it is today. By taxing the interests derived on savings, this would have

died out that culture, with disastrous consequences, far outweighing the benefits that such a measure could have brought.

I am also glad that the project to make Mauritius a duty-free island is back on track. This will boost the tourism sector and make the economy more buoyant. Today, we have the potential to attract a million tourists per annum, who come here for our sun, sea and sand. By adding a fourth 'S', that is, shopping, to these existing attractions, this will bring more tourists to Mauritius and, obviously, making them spending more money during their stay. Just think, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, if we can make each tourist who visits our island to spend an extra €100 or more, what impact it will have on our economy.

The duty-free island concept has the potential to boost various activities, be it -

- the hotel sector, in terms of additional rooms;
- the restaurant business, to cater for more clients;
- the construction sector, to cater for new and modern shopping malls;
- the taxi businesses, to move tourists around the island, and
- fruits, vegetables growers and fishermen, to supply for more vegetables, fruits and fish for more consumers.

All these activities would create new jobs and continue to improve the living of our citizens. If, today, the hospitality industry employs directly or indirectly seven employees for each hotel room that we have in Mauritius, just think what will happen with the spilling effect of the duty-free island concept.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, our country used to depend on a mono-crop industry in the early 1970s. We have moved into an industrialised nation during the 1980s and 1990s, and now we are moving more and more towards a service industry, be it in the hospitality sector, financial sector or the ICT. This is, but a natural process. We have proved in the past that our citizens can adapt easily to new environment. I have no doubt that we can do it again this time. As any economist would agree, for a country to attract investors, be it local or foreign, some conditions have to be met to make the feel-good factor visible. These indicators are commonly known by the acronym PEST, that is, Political, Economical, Environmental, Social and Technological.

On the political side, the population has voted massively for a stable Government, with the right persons in the right place, to secure the future of the country. We have a proven track record on the economic side to take on new challenges, and I have no doubt that, this time again, we will forge our way to make Mauritius a success story, with bold economic measures and new pillars to be developed.

Our social fabric is envied by many countries and, with the new Ministry for Social Integration and the maintaining of our welfare State, there will be more social justice for one and all. Our health services will continue to be modernised; a geriatric hospital to provide better care for the elders and, as announced, a specialised hospital will be built to provide the necessary care for women related health problems, again, as a caring Government, to give due consideration to our seniors and women in this country.

Law and order will be reinforced with better training and tools to equip our Police Force. The recruitment of 5,000 Police constables in the next five years demonstrates this Government's dedication to enhance security of our citizens. A conducive, social climate can only be beneficial to all stakeholders in a developing environment.

On the technological side, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, we have the necessary infrastructure to be in the forefront. The airport is being expanded and modernised to response to higher air traffic. The possibility to re-open the Port of Mahebourg is being contemplated. A modern mass transit way of transport is also being considered to address the problem of road congestion despite the Rs25 billion investment in new roads infrastructure.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, a modern Mauritius is possible if we could strike the right balance between economic development and environmental considerations. The project '*Maurice Île Durable',* so dear to our Prime Minister, is a clear safeguard to ensure our future is not compromised for the sake of economic development. The former president of the US, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, stated, as far back as the early 1960s that, I quote -

"The supreme concern of our time is the vulnerability of our planet".

Our country has benefitted over the years from a clean air mainly due to the good effect of the thousands of hectares of sugar cane fields covering the island by absorbing excess carbon dioxide released in the atmosphere. We are now experiencing a decrease in the surface areas under sugar cane cultivation and we need to adopt new means to control the CO_2 emission in the air so as to maintain a clean air for our future generations.

Duty concessions were given for the purchase of hybrid vehicles and the attempt to move towards low CO_2 emission vehicle has been very timid. As a concerned Government, I suggest that directives be given to Ministries and parastatal bodies to opt for hybrid vehicles when they are in the process of renewing their fleet of vehicles. This would be a clear example of setting the pace for others to follow.

The production of ethanol should demand a rethinking and why not a hub for the region and for that matter the *port de Mahebourg* could be an ideal location for such a project. This project on its own could develop into a new economic pillar. All these measures, as prescribed in the Government Programme, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, are the puzzles that draw the road map for a modern Mauritius.

To sum up the Government Programme, I quote James Freeman Clerk -

"A politician thinks of the next election, a Statesman of the next generation".

This is indeed what our Prime Minister has turned out to be.

En guise de conclusion, M. le président, je dirais ceci, en démocratie on dit souvent qu'on a le gouvernement qu'on mérite ; avec ce plan quinquennal nous avons la chance de donner aux mauriciens le gouvernement qu'ils méritent. J'espère que les générations futures nous seront reconnaissantes en leur donnant un pays moderne, propre et où il fait bon vivre.

Merci, M. le président.

(5.24 p.m.)

Mr A. Ameer Meea (First Member for Port Louis Maritime & Port Louis East): Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, let me congratulate you and the Speaker on your unanimous re-election to chair this august Assembly and I am sure we can rely on your guidance and expertise for the smooth running of the affairs of this House. I seize this opportunity to congratulate the hon. Members of both sides of the House on their election.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I take immense pride to stand here today, as a Member of the National Assembly, duly elected by the people of Constituency No. 3 and I wish to express to them my sincere gratitude and pledge to represent them with conviction and loyalty. I want to reassure them that I will leave no stone unturned to live up to their expectation. May I also express my thanks and gratitude to my leader and political mentor, hon. Paul Raymond

Bérenger, leader of the *Mouvement Militant Mauricien* for the trust placed in me and to my parents, my relatives and friends who encouraged me to engage myself in the political arena.

I joined the MMM after deep thought and after consultations with some very learned persons. It is my sincere belief that the MMM, despite what opponents may say, remains the torch bearer of national unity. It has always fought for social justice, consolidated democracy, combated communalism and offered equal opportunity to any Mauritian who aspires to the post of Prime Minister. It is not surprising that it is the only big party not having been beaten by a resounding and eloquent 60-0, *pisso.* I am convinced that the new emerging generation will understand this historical truth and will adhere to our ideal to change the mentality which has crippled our society to advance on the path of real modernity. When people will realise that we constitute a better team, I am sure the MMM will be in the next Government. *Avec l'adhésion de plus en plus de jeunes à la cause que nous défendons et à l'idéal que nous incarnons, nous sommes certains d'occuper l'avant-scène de la politique. Quelle que soit la configuration du prochain gouvernement, le MMM en fera partie. C'est mon intime conviction.*

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, the word 'modernity' was profusely used during the last electoral campaign and, today, I will axe my speech on modernity. The word 'modernity' was visible all over the island: on banners, on posters and on pamphlets. It is a sparkling word which tantamount to generate hope in every one of us, especially among the youth. But we should know what this word implies. Is it just providing new buildings and better services to the public while casting a blind eye on the way people tend to behave? Should there be no attempt on our part to change the mindset of some of our compatriots with a view to making them more responsible and conscious to what is going on around them with regard to new trends in development, as announced in *'the Government Programme?* How far have we achieved in terms of nation-building? This should be our prime concern. I am not personally against the setting-up of one or two additional Ministries if it is in line with any well intended Government's policy in its pursuance of lofty ideals and to cater for the welfare of the nation, but still I would insist that a Ministry of National Unity, with the appropriate legislation, should have been created to consolidate national unity. The actual situation prevailing proves that these laws need to be reviewed and enforced.

In the absence of such a Ministry, a special independent authority led by persons of proven moral authority with a commending track record should be created to act against any

person *portant atteinte à notre tissu social*. No one should enjoy immunity. Be he the President of the Republic, the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition or any high profile religious leaders. This is one step towards modernity.

I learned that some 200 youngsters, mostly school goers, were caught in a place in Vacoas, where they should not have been. This tendency to behave in open defiance of the law should be our concern. How can we explain this deviancy, so rampant today? Should we not think of ways how to make our youth toe the line in order to save them from themselves? The rat race in education, the abdication of some parents as well as teachers as regards character formation of the youth and the over exposure of our society to foreign influence, with the combining effect, are they not responsible to a large extent to this prevailing situation?

During the last mandate, we have witnessed a mushrooming of casinos near residential regions, unheeded of its social effect. Actually, we have the *Loto* which is making people go crazy. Soon, there will be *millionaire* at the MBC/TV. Has there been a thorough study to assess the incidence of these forms of entertainment on the family? Some heads of families are lured by dreams and are spending large amounts of hard-earned money on gambling, at the expense of health and education of their children. As a young person easily assimilated to the young generation, I would strongly suggest to the Minister of Education and Human Resources to review our whole concept of education.

The teaching of political sciences, history, our Constitution and human rights should be made compulsory as from secondary level. *A moins que nous ayons intérêt à laisser nos jeunes se vautrer dans un obscurantisme avéré pour mieux les mener en bateau, il faut faire quelque chose de profond et de sérieux pour qu'enfin émerge une nouvelle génération consciencieuse avec un esprit ouvert. C'est un peu cela la modernité.*

We should stimulate trust, confidence, pride and dignity in every single citizen. This is truly what Mauritius has been yearning for since we acceded to independence in March 1968. To what extent we have achieved in creating these conditions conducive to nation building, it's up to all previous Governments to answer.

Speaking of trust, we know that the *Alliance sociale* won the election in 2005 around the theme: *'Dans 100 jours nous pou change zot la vie'*. We knew what followed. The trust in this Government had a severe blow. In the last election, the *Alliance de l'Avenir* spoke about 'unity, equality and modernity' and won the election. What will happen this time? Will this new trust

'*alle dan dilo*'? If we want the population to believe in this Assembly, we should stop taking people for a ride after each general election. When we promise to modernise, we should come forward with a comprehensive mission statement, how we intend to proceed, what will be the financial implications and what will be the time frame? Or should we wait for the next coming election to see le *premier coup de pioche*?

Mauritius is a small island. Unless you prove me wrong, there is no way we can extend our territory. With the need for spaces for development heavily felt, we should be extremely cautious. As a responsible body, we should see to it that each square centimetre of land be judiciously used. *On ne peut pas continuer à brader ce qui nous reste comme terrain de l'Etat pour plaire aux petits copains. Nous aurons un jour des comptes à render;* the Government, for its irresponsible decisions in this matter and the Opposition for not raising the issue. But count on us, we will raise the issue.

If we go round the country, we will hear the public blaming the Police Force for not being able to cope with the situation. The Police officers are, in fact, the scapegoat. According to a press article, this vital department is allergic to IT. Work is still being done with pen and ink in notebooks. Our wrongdoers are racing on horseback. Our cops are chasing them on donkey's back. How can they keep pace with crime? Modernity should also cover this area. May be our IT graduates should be recruited to help the Police department in the process of modernisation.

It is amazing how Mr Jameel Peerally and his friends have been treated by the authorities for the projection of '*Paradis en dey'*. They should have been congratulated for their attempt to stand up against drug tycoons who are destroying our brothers and sisters, causing havoc and despair in so many families. The Prime Minister who happens to be the Minister of Interior missed a golden chance to stand alongside with these true compatriots to encourage them in their '*jihad'* against drug abuse. I wish here to salute my friends Ally Lazer, Cadress Renghen, Dany Phillippe, Imran Dannoo, and others for their courage and audacity.

They should not feel discouraged if it seems that they are being harassed by some zealous officers. *Il se pourrait qu'ils sont en train de le faire à contre cœur car les directives viennent d'en haut.* The population is behind you and is thankful for the job you are doing against all odds.

Port Louis is a microcosm with all ethnics represented. While the city is invaded by skyscrapers shooting up, the surrounding suburbs constitute a belt with numerous pockets of

poverty. This double standard development which has been going on is causing suffocation and asphyxia in this vital region where we still have a centralised system. For the Government to venture in a campaign of modernity, it should come forward with a mega project of environmental uplifting by providing the inhabitants of the Capital opportunities to emancipate alongside with progress. Actually, the Capital is falling prey to social evils with theft and prostitution becoming current features.

I welcome the setting up of the Ministry of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment to address this issue. This Ministry has a great responsibility and should be careful about spending money entrusted to it. Using money to ease a situation on a short-term vision could end up by developing among the people *une mentalité d'assistés* and we finally see ourselves caught up in a vicious circle. This money should be invested in a well-thought programme to bridge the gap between categories of citizens while restoring human dignity. It should not become a tool to gain political mileage by a systematic targeting of beneficiaries or of regions *pour cultiver le clientélisme électoral*. Modernity means to act in the most responsible manner showing a clear will to transcend political consideration when it is question of fighting poverty.

Modernity also means that the institutions be manned by persons best qualified and very much committed to serve without fear or favouritism. This will instil confidence and social stability, thus helping the change of the mindset.

A modern society means to have a plural and daring press. I owe my political awareness largely to the written press. These journalists have been my teachers in understanding politics. Let me avail myself of this opportunity to pay tribute to such journalists as Ivan Martial, Gilbert Ahnee, Jean Claude de l'Estrac, among others, and columnists like Mahen Oodiah, Jean Claude Antoine and Josie Lebrasse.

(Interruptions)

We should see to it that the press is allowed to exist, to thrive, without being harassed**,** *épargnée des tracasseries et des mesquineries quotidiennes*. The press, in a modern society, has eminently a great role to play. *Elle est un partenaire incontournable dans notre quête d'une société émancipée, éclairée et avant-gardiste*. In the same register, I would strongly advocate for a reliable *bulletin service* at the MBC. People want to hear crude information and news, just like they are being served to the public in advanced countries. *Des informations manipulées,*

censurées, biaisées ne rendent service à personne et finissent par abêtir la population. In such condition, how can we achieve modernity?

But let me tell you, Mr Deputy Speaker, for my first experience of a political campaign, I am not happy. What had not been attempted to influence the voters? Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, *je ne compte pas vous faire un dessin*. I will not exaggerate to say that the democracy for which we all pledge to stand for, has been perverted through bribery and other expedients *pas très catholiques*. We should come forward with a new set of legislations to do away with such practices which tarnish our electoral culture. Just to illustrate how things stood in the last general election, I would tell, in fact, what was reported to me by a friend, on what my direct opponent said mockingly, '*quand mo ena cash, ki mo ena pou peur election*?' This phrase speaks eloquently about the mentality being encouraged. It has not been an easy campaign. I entered this campaign with limited resources and relied essentially on my determination, my honesty and my sincerity which, in fact, has been the overriding factors contributing to my election and topping up the list against tough opponents.

Modernity in the field of electoral campaign means that a reasonable period of time should be provided to political parties to present and market their respective manifesto to the voting public so that the latter may know in clear for what they are opting. This would allow debates and confrontation of ideas. The electorate would not fall prey to demagogy. This will be an important step in the good direction.

Now, I will say a few words on my Constituency. The MMM/MSM Government, which hon. Jhugroo formed part at that time, initiated and completed numerous projects during its mandate 2000/2005 in my Constituency. Just to mention a few of the projects that have been initiated and completed at that time when the MMM and the MSM were in Government, we saw the *Piscine de la Plaine Verte qui est unique dans l'Océan Indien parce que c'est couvert. Le Centre 1er Fevrier à Roche Bois, la foire Cité Martial, le terrain de football à la rue Tamarin, St Martin, le grand bazar a été refait sous notre mandat, l'école maternelle, une crèche et une salle de lecture à la rue Balisage, le stade Mamade Elahee, le centre de jeunesse de Saint François, la salle municipale de Saint François, le Food Court à la Plaine Verte, un terrain a été acquis à la Route Cocoterie pour un centre de jeunesse en 2005, un autre terrain a été acquis pour la construction d'une école de musique à cité Roche Bois, une station de police et un dispensaire à Cité Roche Bois, réfection du Canal Anglais. Enfin, la liste est longue.*

(Interruptions)

Un terrain a été acquis à la Route Militaire et le gouvernent avait fait enlever les pylônes électriques pour faire de la place à des projets d'envergure comme la construction des écoles, un projet de logement et des facilités sportives. Une somme de Rs60 m. a même été déboursée pour ce projet. Mais depuis que le MMM a quitté le gouvernent, cinq ans se sont écoulé et rien n'a été fait.

Et comment ne pas oublier le Hawkers Palace! Ce projet a été torpillé par fanatisme politique et, aujourd'hui, ce bâtiment qui aurait servi à abriter bon nombre de marchands ambulants est, en effet, un éléphant blanc. Cinq bonnes années se sont succédé et le problème des marchands ambulants reste entier. Quelle drame!

La liste est longue et tout ces projets que j'ai mentionnés dans la circonscription No. 3 ont été réalisés en 2000 à 2005 et tout cela a coûté plus d'un milliard de roupies.

Maintenant, venons à 2005 à 2010, qu'est-ce qu'on a vu ? Il y a eu la construction des jardins, la réfection des rues, aussi de nombreuses poses de première pierre ont eu lieu. Je prends un exemple, le t*i bazar* de Plaine Verte qui allait être refait.

Aujourd'hui, on a dû enlever la pierre, cela fait tellement longtemps qu'elle a été posée. Par contre, il y a eu l'achat du terrain et bâtiment de la BAT, le transformant en Centre Polytechnique, mais dans une réponse parlementaire, on a su que ce projet était un projet national et que seulement 20% des élèves venaient des arrondissements de Port Louis, c'est-à-dire Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4. Allez donc faire le calcul pour la circonscription No. 3 ?

Donc, il n'y a pas eu de projets d'envergure que les habitants de la circonscription no. 3 ont bénéficiés de 2005 à 2010. J'ose espérer que ce gouvernement va rectifier le tir et changer la donne en faisant autant que le gouvernement MMM/MSM a fait en 2000 à 2005, sinon mieux. De toute façon, j'y veillerai au grain!

J'aimerais revenir sur l'autre parti du slogan utilisé par l'Alliance de l'Avenir : égalité. Voilà un mot qui sous-entend beaucoup de choses ! Permettez-moi de dire que nous avons encore du chemin à faire pour que chaque citoyen puisse se dire : « Je ne crains rien et avec mes qualifications et mes aptitudes, je suis persuadé que mon pays va me faire justice. Je n'aurai pas à mendier, à quémander des faveurs ou à devenir un de ces cireurs de pompes pour avoir une place au soleil. » Il faut que chaque fils du sol puisse se dire un jour : « J'aurais aimé devenir le

Premier ministre de mon pays sans avoir à changer de nom ou d'identité. » Après avoir eu vent de tout ce qu'on a débité dans des réunions privées durant la campagne électorale, je suis sceptique. Il y a eu des choses, des événements, des incidents qui confirment mon scepticisme. Là, j'attends du Premier ministre du courage et de détermination pour apporter de vrais changements afin que le slogan 'unité, modernité et égalité' ne soit une leurre de plus. Allez dans la bonne direction et je serai le premier à vous féliciter !

In the few Parliamentary sessions that I had the privilege to participate, I must confess that I am a bit disillusioned. My expectations were high in the sense that I anticipated a better standing on the part of all of us, showing ethical conduct. It would be a sheer paradox if we call ourselves hon. Members and yet we cannot afford to maintain a certain degree of decorum. Where are the ethics so proudly exhibited by our predecessors?

Now, let me say a few words on the post of Prime Minister. It is not given to anybody be the Prime Minister of the country. It is eminently a question of destiny. I am sure that the Prime Minister is fully aware of the chance he has to write history and that he will spare no effort to leave his footprints in the sand of time for the coming generations to appreciate. In his quest of a modern society, I am convinced that he will show political will, with the acumen needed to bring forward amendments in the electoral system *dans un esprit d'ouverture et de* fair play *et dans d'autres domaines tel que le découpage des circonscriptions.*

I have reached the end of my speech and would like to conclude that I am of the new generation of politicians and amid all hon. Members present in this august Assembly, I am, in fact, the youngest. Let me tell you one thing, on hearing the National Anthem being played here every Tuesday, I am extremely proud and honoured to be a Mauritian. This is what we called patriotism. I am sure we are all *animés par ce même sentiment si cher à nous tous.* I have visited several countries in the world and let me reassure you that, for me, Mauritius is the best place to be *et pour rien au monde je quitterai mon pays, ma patrie.*

Merci, M. le président.

*(*5.51 p.m)

The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade (Dr. A. Boolell): Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, let me congratulate the two previous orators who have intervened on a Motion moved by the beautiful lady, hon. Ms. Anquetil. I wish our friends well.

Hon. Ameer Meea has reminded us that he is the youngest in the National Assembly. As we say: "*aux âmes bien nées, la valeur n'attend point le nombre des années*". But, at the same time, if I can dispense an advice from somebody who has been around since some time: "good intentions do not always have the good consequences." But, let me also remind my friend, hon. Uteem, that I started as the child of my father. But, over the years, I have become the father of the man and we learn as we go along. It is a learning process and today we are in a temple, and I say it with all humility, a temple where we can acquire knowledge, share information and, certainly, this is the place where decisions are taken. We can even challenge the Chair. Not that we intend to do so, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir! After all, you and the Speaker have been returned unopposed. Congratulations are in order.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, we have a clear mandate to honour our obligations *vis à vis* the electorate and we have to fulfill the rights of an electorate, Mr Deputy Speaker Sir. I will say it in all humility, if today the *l'Alliance de l'Avenir* has won a resounding victory; we have to acknowledge that the architect of this victory is our Prime Minister, leader of the L'*Alliance de l'Avenir*.

I came back two weeks ago from Paris and I have had a meeting with advisers of President Sarkozy. I was glad to hear them saying : « V*ous avez de la chance d'avoir un Premier ministre comme le vôtre. »* I did not echo these words, but I fully subscribe to what has been stated by our friends from Elysée, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. When the Speaker is in the Chair, the chair does not vacillate. In fact, the decorum of the House is upheld and the House becomes dignified. So, it rests upon all of us to act in a dignified manner. It is true that elections are behind us, but it is time for us to take stock of the harsh realities.

Congratulations can indeed be a tall order, but we need to walk tall. And since 2005, this Government has walked tall simply because it has the guts to take bold decisions. *On juge le maçon quand il est au pied du mur, M. le président.* This is the fact. Can anybody deny that had it not been for this Government, which had to face adversity upon adversity, crisis upon crisis, I

don't know of many Governments, many Prime Ministers, who would have been able to hold on to the boiling pot. Some chose to run away, because they could not face their responsibilities, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. We are here today and we are here to stay as Members of the Government because we have been able to respond to the needs of our people. But, at the same time - and I say it loud and clear, because I have always spoken without fear or prejudice - as has been stated by my good friend, no one owes us a living. The writing is on the wall: the days of free lunch are over and we constantly need to think out of the box, because the paradigm is shifting like a tectonic plate. These are the facts and these are events unfolding on the international scene as well as regional scene, which are going to have an impact upon the lives of our people. Who are we, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, but citizens of a small island, which has a high vulnerability index, who have no choice, but to look outwards. We are not dream merchants, we don't intend to sell dreams, but we intend to face the harsh realities. We intend to live up to our expectations, face daunting challenges and turn challenges into opportunities. And it is against a backdrop of challenges, of opportunities, of a fragile global economic recovery, that my friend moved the Motion, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, which lays out the Government Programmes 2010-2015, a very ambitious Programme indeed, but very realistic. Of course, under the stewardship of our Prime Minister, we shall deliver. It is a call of the nation, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir and we don't intend to make our people cry. In fact, they will laugh, and they will laugh all the way, because when we laugh, we will laugh with the world, Mr Deputy Speaker Sir. It is a daunting task, indeed, but, as I have said, we have obligations and our people have the rights, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. Of course - make no mistake - the task is going to be daunting, is going to be an uphill battle. Some economists have expressed fears of a world double-dip recession. Yes, we can! We are going to bequeath a legacy of guaranteeing future to our youth. We will endeavour to make poverty history in this country and we intend, as we have been doing since early days of independence, to widen the circle of opportunities. We are going to make it bigger, we are going to create opportunities and bring those on the periphery into the economic mainstream. Of course, we need to have policies in place. We need to have measures. We need to take decisions. We need to act promptly, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. As I have said, this is an opportunity-knocked Government and we are going to move people from unemployment to skilled jobs, gainful employment. Our approach is one of a hand up and not a hand out, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, as I have said, some of us, most likely on the other side of the bench, may say and that it is easier said than done. But we have a proven track record. We have a glorious past and we promised to bequeath a legacy of secured future to generation to come. I have stated, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, that the global economic recovery is fragile otherwise G20 or G8 leaders would not have met to focus on paying debt. Debt today has become an acute on chronic problem. It is worldwide, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. Unless addressed in a very forceful, very coherent manner, the risk of a conundrum is there and when I talk of conundrum, I mean descent into social chaos. It is a question of getting to act together, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. But, unfortunately, they have chosen to move the agenda to Seoul. Let's wait and see, but nevertheless, the beginning of a convergence is there. It is a question of acting, and acting promptly, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir.

So, what is the debate? The debate simply is the return to the path of fiscal consolidation. It is on the agenda. There are several issues: economic crisis, financial crisis, environmental issues, debt alleviation. These are issues that are on the political agenda, on the agenda of the international forum. But then there is a saying that there is no such thing as one size fits all, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. The debate that is raging today is whether we need to apply austerity measures, fiscal restraints or we need to give additional stimulus package, but the objective is to wean away slowly, but surely, to ease stimulus spending.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, the wealthiest countries have taken a firm commitment as to whether they are going to honour their commitment which is a matter that can be discussed endlessly. Following the US Congress Bill which was approved by the Congress House, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, to have clear oversight on spending, on a regulatory framework to ensure that banks are properly regulated, to ensure that the onus of responsibility is not shifted upon consumers, now there is clarity and certainty. It is in this vein that the wealthiest among the G20 have taken commitment to halve the deficit by 2013 and to ensure that their debt load declines three years later. Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, do I have to remind the House of what is happening in UK? In UK, the Chancellor of Exchequer has chosen to adopt austerity measures. At what consequences, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir? There are far-reaching consequences with the result that the budget in some sectors is going to be reduced by 20% to 30%. There is a race for

unemployment and the victims are going to be those at the lower rung of the ladder. We don't know whether there will be money which is going to be forked out to meet pensioners' rights. Of course, I have in mind a country like Greece, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. If they don't act promptly, if they don't take corrective measures, if they don't adopt sound macroeconomic policies, the risk that the public sector can become insolvent is there and, at times, some pessimists are talking of a financial meltdown.

The UK debt, according to 'The Independent', Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, tantamounts to a toxic legacy for the children and grandchildren. Of course, things look bad in Portugal, Ireland, Greece and Spain where cranes are lying on construction sites, but there are no builders, no takers. This is the situation, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, in Euro zone countries. This is a situation in many G20 countries. Of course, there is hope. There is a ray of hope, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, and whatever happens in Europe, in the States, they have a bearing upon our economy and I will come to that at a later stage.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, as I have stated, growth prospects look greenest in Europe and region profligate economies which struggle for longer as austerity takes in. The global fragile economy, as I have stated, is on the way of recovery while output growing at a rate of 5%, though it is swifter than most expected, according to the economists. Of course, there is hope. There is hope because China has become a beacon of hope as well as India, Indonesia, Singapore - Asian countries and we have no choice, but to shift eastwards. We have to go eastwards young men, young women! We have to look eastwards and this is why I say we need to shift our paradigm notwithstanding the fact that we need to consolidate existing markets. We need to look at emerging markets, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. The fact remains that in markets where there is predictability and reliability - I have in mind the EU market - we export 70% of our goods to EU. 70% of our tourists come from EU. Our receipt in Euro has gone down and this has a direct impact upon those working in the tourism sector, upon the small planters who are desperately trying to eke out a living in the sugar cane field, upon the taxi driver, the gentleman or the gentle lady who runs a tourist shop, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. They are desperate. This has a direct impact upon those who are hawkers trying to peddle their wares on the beach. They seek the tourists over there, but when it comes to purchasing, it has gone down. These are the hard facts,

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. But what are we doing as a responsible Government? Are we sitting back? Are we relaxing? Are we enjoying our armchair comfortability? No, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir! Like Swami Dayananda, our motto is to awake and stop not till the goal is reached. This has been the motto of this Government: stand and be on the move. If we have to get on our bike to have the measures implemented, we shall do so, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. We shall respond to the needs of our people. We need to look at the level of preparedness of our people, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. What is it that we need to do? I will come to these issues, as Minister of Foreign Affairs who has to rove in many different capitals, who has to be in the corridor, who has to lobby for the good cause of Mauritius, because the image of Mauritius outshines many other countries.

Mrs Hilary Clinton, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, US Secretary of State is no member of the *Alliance de l'Avenir*. As far as I know, she never joined the rank and file of the Labour Party, but you know very well the praise that she heaped upon Mauritius, and she didn't do so, because we are good looking, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. She did it because she strongly believes that the policies taken by the Prime Minister, by the then Government, were the right ones. Only yesterday, I read what were the findings of the report of the World Bank - full of praise for Mauritius - and there I tend to disagree with some of the findings of the Director of Audit for whom I have the highest esteem and respect, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, of course, we are worried, we have expressed concern. We would have wished that the Doha Development Round would have been concluded, because it has a direct impact upon our export and access to new markets. I will come to measures specifically taken at the level of Geneva to safeguard our interests. They say that if the Round were concluded, this would have been the best stimulus package that the world would have had. But, unfortunately, who are we, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir? Not even a lightweight in the ring. We have to allow China and US to work out their differences to address issues, both in the agricultural and non-agricultural market access.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I will talk, at a later stage, on our concern in respect of Madagascar - today, Madagascar is becoming a very fragile State - and how the situation can impact upon us in the region; Seychelles, which today, is in the eye of a cyclone called piracy,

and, of course, the issue of sovereignty. High on our agenda is the issue of sovereignty, and I will come to this at a later stage.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, let me remind the House that, had it not been for the stimulus package and had we not had to face adversity, crisis upon crisis, because of prudent macroeconomic policies which we have adopted, because the Monetary Policy Committee of the Bank of Mauritius meets every quarterly, because of our honesty of purpose, because of the credibility of our credit rate vis-à-vis the Bank of Mauritius and other financial institutions, today, we would have been on track to reduce budget deficit to less than 55% of our GDP, total debt as a percentage of our GDP would have been less than 55%. But we had a choice to make; we had to rescue jobs, to protect those at the lowest rung of the ladder, the most vulnerable; we had to create opportunities to enable them to take the rung of the ladder, to enable them to send their wards and daughters to schools, because we are a Government which is totally committed to wage war on poverty. This has been our philosophy deeply rooted in our traditions. And I remind those who are in the rank and file of *l'Alliance sociale*: don't break away from traditions which are deeply embedded in the philosophy of the Labour Party; don't break away from those traditions. These are values which we cherish, based on the rights of every individual in our country, and we strongly believe in nation-building.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, when I look at Members in this House - and let me take, not a cursory look, but a friendly look at our friends sitting on the Opposition bench - I will ask a very simple basic question: is there fair representation in respect of national unity? I ask a simple question, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. I am not saying that there is a price to be paid for divide and rule. The price of divide and rule is one of decline. So, I make an appeal: let us all consolidate our position; let us all poise ourselves to become strong proponents of national unity. It is in this spirit that I make an appeal to all of us. This country holds a lot of promises. It is in this vein that the Equal Opportunities Bill was introduced in this House, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. Don't come and say that it is yet to be proclaimed! Of course, it is going to be proclaimed! Of course, we are going to identify the person who is going to act as a Commissioner, who is going to see to it that justice prevails, that there is no perversion of justice.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, these are facts. Everything is rule-based. So, I make an appeal - and this is a solemn appeal - that we need to work towards nation-building.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, let me now come to another issue, which is relevant to social justice. Let me now turn to market access. As I have stated earlier, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, in Geneva, we have put up a common front and, as spokesperson of the ACP group, our Ambassador has done an excellent job not only to put Mauritius in the limelight, but to see to it that our rights are acquired. Though the period of transition may be only for ten years, we are going to safeguard our rights in respect of export, of our products, be it agricultural products or non-agricultural market access products. As I have stated, the period is going to be transitory only. It is not going to last forever, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. So, we have to make the most of this transitory phase, and we have to see to it that, during the transitory phase, we become more competitive, we consolidate our edge in sectors where we have comparative advantage, we seek new markets and, in line with what has been spelt out by the vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, we need to become a duty-free island. There was a very pertinent question put by hon. Li Kwong Wing. Of course, we have to live up to our expectations. This is a dream that we cherish. As our Irish friends say: It is a long way to Tipperary before we kiss the Blarney stone.' But we shall kiss the Blarney stone, and we have to do it the way we know best. Of course, we have to update the existing plan. But, for this to happen, we need to conclude as many Free Trade Area Agreements as possible; we need to conclude Free Trade Area Agreements with the EU. We have to make sure that in the full EPA, there is a Turkish clause, because we are concluding markets with Turkey. We are creating opportunities for our exporters; we are constantly capturing markets; we are opening our sectors, and the services sectors, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, hold a lot of promises. In the services sectors, there are no rent-seekers, but people who will use their grey cells. In the financial services sector, we see so many young people taking the rung of the ladder and running their own firms. In the legal sector, today, Mauritius is on its way to become a centre for international arbitration, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir.

This is why Mauritius is posed as a gateway to Africa and Europe, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. We are on the right track and we stand to be a winner all the way because of our comparative advantage. We don't have any resource curse in this country, but what we have is our human capital and we have to invest massively in it. This is what is being done at the level of pre-primary, primary, secondary and tertiary, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. We are preparing our people to respond to the needs of the region and of the international market, and we can do it because we constantly have to identify our needs. We have to reengineer and reinvent ourselves.

We have to be bold, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. This is why today there is a Ministry of Tertiary Education. We are looking beyond 2020. When we say that we are going to turn Mauritius into a tertiary education hub, a regional multicentre for excellence, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, we have the capacity, the possibility and everything is possible. *Tout est possible dans la limite du possible, M. le président.* And we are doing it, because we are committed to turn things round, to empower our people, to encourage them to take the rung of social and economic ladder. When we talk of democratisation, what better way than empowering our people? How can you empower your people if it is not through free education, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir? Free education is a passport for life, a passport that enables you to open new avenues and there is a bright future for our young people.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, when I talk of capturing new markets, of Economic Partnership Agreements, of the edge that we have over others, sometimes those countries which don't like us want to derail the process. Let me take the case of, unfortunately, some LDC countries which benefit from duty-free and quota-free. It is not in their interests to allow Mauritius to move. Of course, there is the fear that we may break away or that we would not be able to consolidate the unity, but our first and foremost duty is to consolidate the unity. But what do we ask, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir? We ask for geometrical variations that allow those who can cruise on the fast track to move forward. This is why we need to look, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, at other configurations and today we hold the presidency of the Indian Ocean Commission. We say loud and clear that there are two countries in the region which can be the powerhouse of the Indian Ocean Commission: they are Réunion and Mauritius. And, we are moving the process. We are looking at contentious issues, like rules of origin and see how best we can cumulate to add value to our products to capture markets, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir.

Very soon, with the help of the *Agence Française de développement*, there will be a maritime corridor, and in the months to come, we will move the process forward and widen the political and economic space and think in terms of Indian Ocean Commission Plus. But the fact remains, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, as the French would say, *existons d'abord*, do what needs to be done first and foremost. This is why I say loud and clear that the two *moteurs de la région sont l'île Maurice et l'île de la Réunion*. But then, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, Madagascar, fragile though it is, is a country that holds a lot of promises.

(Interruptions)

Potentials, yes! *Pays en devenir*! But the potentials, as my friends are saying, are there and we, as friends of the Malagasy Republic, have stood by our friends in Nairobi at the AGOA Conference. We defended the rights of the Malagasy people, we impressed upon our American friends not to impose sanctions because those who are going to feel the pain worse than anybody else would be the poor people. What they are doing, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, is that they are creating massive pockets of poverty. And we know what are the consequences, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. But I am glad that today, with the help of the international contact group and of the SADC mediator, there is a new process evolving, there is a feeling that *pour sortir Madagascar de la crise politique*, there is a need to have a Malagacho-Malgache solution. This is very much on the way. The National Commission will establish the national dialogue and will eventually look at four issues. First, New Constitution, then second, Referendum for a new Constitution, third, Amnesty and fourth, National Reconciliation. The Indian Ocean Commission has delegated a fine jurist to help them to prepare their Constitution and following Constitution, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, national election, and eventually presidential election. And, of course, we have told our friends that the financing of the national dialogue would come from the international contact group, from the financing and the technical assistance. But then, there is a need to organise elections and Mauritius is willing to dispense all the help to our Malagasy friends. One should not forget that when there was election in Liberia in 1997, there was no electoral roll, no electoral register, but then, because of the acumen of our people who worked in the Electoral Commission - I have in mind one particular person, Mr Dauwoo – they helped to prepare the electoral roll, set the electoral process moving and organised the election. And, today, there is not only nominal democracy, but there is a full-fledged democracy in Liberia, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. This is the weight that Mauritius carries on the regional and international scenes. But, as I have said, we don't want to punch above our weight in respect of our diplomacy, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. No! But, we are a beacon in the region. Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, let me make it quite clear to the House, I started by saying that the writing is on the wall, that the days of a free lunch are over and if we are not imaginative and creative, if we don't look at alternative markets, if we don't invest in human capital, if we don't harness and mobilise our human resources, if we don't subscribe fully to meritocracy…

(Interruptions)

But we have done it! They looked elsewhere when we introduced the Equal Opportunities Bill in this very House. We are not paying lip service to meritocracy, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. Look what we have done when we have set up a public Body to assess the merits of our civil servants who feel aggrieved! They never mentioned it, but we did it and we did it the best way, because we believe in widening the circle of opportunities for our people. This is the spirit. They know the language that they hold when they are confined to their *cul-de-sac*. We know, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, what they can be up to. Unfortunately, we don't intend or we never dare to condescend to their level.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, we have travelled a long way, as I have said. Before I come to the issue of piracy, as I have said, SADC has prepared a report on Malagasy situation which is going to be submitted to the AU Summit, to the Chairman of the Troika Summit and the Chairman of SADC. Of course, everything is being done within the spirit of what we call the Maputo Agreement. And then, of course, we will accelerate and will help them as facilitator to accelerate the pace of the reform, though, as we said, it may take a long time.

Let me now come to an issue which, unfortunately, is of grave concern to all of us. It is an issue which was raised at the ACP/EU Parliamentary Conference which was attended by our good friend, hon. Ms Deerpalsing - the issue of piracy.

The issue of piracy, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, has become an international problem. Of course, we are waiting for a report to be submitted by the Secretary-General of the UN in respect of transfer of prisoners and of prosecution. But let me tell you one thing, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir! It is not because we are miles away from Seychelles that we will not assume our responsibility. The statement made by the hon. Prime Minister in Nice at the France/Africa Summit and the meeting which he had with Baroness Ashton clearly demonstrate our commitment to wage war on piracy. We know the nexus that there is between piracy and terrorism. Those who have put bombs, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, in Kampala where the summit is going to be held, we know where they hail from. But, at the same time, we are saying loud and clear that the problem has to be resolved inland in Somalia and UN needs to be dispensed all the facilities and incentives. We know the excellent work carried out by the International Contact Group and the United Nations Office on drug and crime and it is within this perspective that we are talking with our EU friends to look into the possibility of having an agreement on transfer of prisoners and prosecution. But, of course, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, we agree in principle, there

are miles to go. There are so many sensitive issues that have to be and are being discussed and there is a committee being chaired by Mrs Fong Weng of the Prime Minister's Office where other Ministries are involved. There are so many issues.

I am having a meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Seychelles in the weeks to come. Seychelles has prepared a very in-depth action plan because they stand to lose more than 2.5 m. euros annually, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. This is impacting upon the economy, upon the eco-tourism and fisheries sector and we know the problem that they are facing with the number of inmates in their prisons. We are waiting for experts to come and help us to look at our institutional set-up, at our legislative framework. Amendments that have to be brought in the Merchant Shipping Act in respect of alleged pirates caught on the high seas who are not our nationals. At the same time, we are waiting for the report to be submitted by the Secretary-General of UN in respect of prisons to be constructed in Somaliland and Puntland. It is amazing. Yet, no one is for detachment of territories from countries. But when it comes to an issue like piracy which becomes the overriding factor, the territorial issue has not become secondary, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, but has been relegated for the time being. This is a very serious issue. Madagascar is fragile, Diego Suarez, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, is a horn and not far from that danger zone. This is why it is very important that there is political stability in the region and we have to work towards achieving this political stability.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I have talked of Madagascar and Seychelles; Comoros is about to recover its soul now with the assistance of AU for them to do the proper handing over and in respect of presidential elections to be organised. But, at the same time, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, as I have stated, Mauritius may be the oyster, but we need to look beyond the shores of Mauritius and, today, circular migration is a sector, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, that is being given all the support by this Government. *L'Assemblée Nationale de France* has ratified the relevant document and the *instrument de ratification* has been submitted by France. They have submitted a copy to our Ministry. Now, we have to send the notification and once that is sent on time, on the first day after two months, it comes into force. What are we doing? We are creating opportunities for 850 Mauritians - professionals, skilled and semi-skilled people - to have the opportunities to travel to France. Then, depending on what they are doing, there is the possibility that the work permit may be extended. When they decide to come back, there will be a matching grant to enable them to invest in enterprises and to become entrepreneurs. They will have this

whole set of accompanying measures. But we are looking beyond France. With Canada, today, we are running co-diploma, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, because the opportunities are knocking in Canada for our young people to move to Saskatchewan and to other provinces. Already, more than 300 young Mauritians have moved to Canada and they can also take their families.

I have another good news, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. We have obtained visa waiver - similar to the one which we have with Schengen countries, with Switzerland. But there is a premium to it, that is, when one travels to Switzerland, you have a visa waiver within 6 months over 3 months period. But let us say that you are a student and you have obtained a seat in one of the colleges or universities, there is no need for you to have a student visa. Or let us say that you are a good looking guy or girl and you want to settle down with a Swiss, nothing stops you to get married and you do not need to apply for any visa.

(*Interruptions*)

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, what are we doing? We are pegging visa waiver with circular migration. Never done before, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir! The world has become a global village. At the touch of the finger, the whole world becomes our oyster.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, this programme, prepared by a responsible Government, highlights our commitment, our zeal and determination to see it through and I promise, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, as a humble Member of the Government and of this National Assembly, as a Member of a great party called the Labour party, that we are going to deliver under the stewardship of our Prime Minister.

Thank you very much, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir.

(6.39 p.m.)

Mrs A. Perraud (Fourth Member for Port Louis North & Montagne Longue): Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, first of all, I would like to present my warmest congratulations to you for being chosen unanimously as Deputy Speaker of this august Assembly. I would also present my congratulations to Mr Speaker who is known for his wisdom, experience and fairness in his deliberations. My congratulations also go to all hon. Members of both sides of the House on their election, particularly to those like me who have been elected for the first time. I seize the opportunity to heartily thank the hon. vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment, leader of the *Parti Mauricien Sociale Démocrate* (PMSD) for the trust

he has invested in me by choosing me as candidate in Constituency No. 4. I wish to assure him that I will not fail the responsibility that has been placed upon me and I will always be sincere and loyal to the PMSD. I know that it was not an easy task for the hon. vice-Prime Minister Xavier Luc Duval because there were a lot of valuable candidates who had worked and been in the Party for much longer than me. I am very grateful to him for his courage, wisdom and leadership. I feel very honoured to belong to the PMSD.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like also to thank the hon. Prime Minister, Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam, leader of l'*Alliance de l'Avenir,* for his trust in me. For the short time I have known him, he has always shown that he is a leader with deep understanding and who is capable of listening. I see the magnanimity of a statesman. I will fail in my duty if I don't express my gratitude and thankfulness to the electorate in Constituency No. 4. The campaign for me has been very short, but so enriching. I met wonderful persons throughout the Constituency. This campaign gave me the opportunity to see Mauritius from the inside, to meet different people of different social, religious and cultural backgrounds. In the words of Marcel Gabon, I would say that I met *l'île Maurice profonde* in my public encounter with people of Crève Coeur, Les Marianes, Congomah, Montagne Longue, Terre Rouge, Riche Terre, Ste Croix, Cité La Cure, Chiktrakoot, Vallée des Prêtres et Carreau Lalo.

I came across people who were generous, kind, who have a sense of hospitality and for whom values are very important. There were those who were selfish, reserved. There were people who work for nation-building, who are true Mauritians, who are capable of seeing and appreciating others for who they are, rather than what they represent in terms of cultural, religious and ethnic groups. I saw families in big houses, with cars and good jobs. I also saw big families living in one room, made of corrugated iron, with no electricity and water supply, having no job and no food. Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I found that there are people who are determined to come out of poverty and who should be encouraged, whereas there are those who are trapped in a vicious circle of poverty and who need help.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I shall serve my constituents with zeal and dedication and shall represent them to the best of my ability, irrespective of their social, religious or political background. Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, last but not least, I would like to express my sincere thanks and heartfelt gratitude to my husband Gino, for his love, kindness, time, patience, understanding, unflinching support and to my children who made a lot of sacrifices. My whole

heartfelt thanks go to my mother who has always stood by my side and for her encouragement and prayers. All that I am, I owe to her. She is *une femme exemplaire*. I would like to express my warmest thanks to my family, father, sisters and in-laws, especially my father-in-law, for their generosity, support and help in hard times. To all those who have trust in me, who believe in me and who have in one way or the other help me, I say 'thank you'.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I stand here today, addressing the House for my maiden speech with a great sense of humility and deep gratitude. I know that my story is part of a larger Mauritian story, that I owe a debt to all those who made my dream come true.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, before coming to the Government Programme 2010/2015, let me say this to both sides of the House: the election is over, it is time for us to overcome our differences and realise that it is best for us to see that we have many challenges ahead. So, let us be united for peace, nation building and, most of all, the alleviation of poverty in our mother country. Let us hope as well for *une opposition constructive*.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, hon. Members of this august Assembly: 'lend me your ears'. The Government Programme is full of hope. The underlying theme is, I quote -

"Building Our Future Together".

There is no doubt that the Government l'*Alliance bleu-blanc-rouge* aims at *unité, égalité et modernité pour créer l'avenir ensemble*. The Government under the leadership of Dr. Navin Ramgoolam, together with his partners, has a big vision for our country. The Government Programme shows that the Government is willing to tackle the obstacles to sustainable development and it means business. Poverty, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, is spreading its wings throughout the world, including Mauritius. A lot has been done by the Government *entre autres l'éducation gratuit, le transport gratuit, toutefois il y a encore de grands défis devant nous et le gouvernement en est conscient*.

Creating a separate Ministry to look specifically after social integration and economic empowerment is a revolutionary measure. It shows that Government is very much concerned with the problem of poverty in the country. In fact, it is unacceptable that in 2010, on one hand, there is big development and, on the other hand, there are so many pockets of poverty in Mauritius. Poverty must not be restricted to only one community, one group, one region or one Constituency. Poverty is the concern of each and everyone. Allow me to share with you this real life story. There is a group of families living on a State land, they are not squatters. They

have legal deeds. For many years, they have been living in a state of extreme poverty, deprived of electricity and water supply.

They spend money on candles; they don't watch television or listen to radio. They are cut off from what is happening in their own country and in the world. This situation is a serious handicap for the children at school. Almost all the children on this plot of land fail CPE every year. Such is the plight of typical families living in small houses which are often the prey of candle's flames and they lose the little they possess. We are aware also of the problems that this situation generates: stress, promiscuity, indiscipline, neighbouring strifes, violence.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, another case is those families who rent and cannot save enough money to have an NHDC apartment. They are not eligible to have *une maison* Trust Fund because their revenues are more than Rs5000, but yet they have many children and cannot *joindre les deux bouts*. I can go on like that for hours. I am sure each hon. Member of this House knows many people who are struggling everyday to survive. Once we visit a poor, we listen to a poor, we cannot forget him. We don't have the right to forget because history will not forgive us. We, as Members of this august Assembly, have the duty to serve our constituents to the best of our ability without fear or favour, with due respect to human dignity and their rights.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, we must congratulate this Government for its policy and measures taken to solve the problem of extreme poverty, where I quote -

> "The main areas of interest and intervention will be in social housing, training and education, capacity building and employment, infrastructural development and provision of public utilities, and health and recreation, the main objective being to bring about behavioural change in these citizens which would eventually empower them and promote responsible citizenship."

La construction de plus de 10,000 maisons additionnelles pour ceux qui sont au bas de l'échelle est une décision qui est à saluer. Je félicite le gouvernement d'avoir saisi la balle au bond pour combattre l'extrême pauvreté. Le discours programme démontre bien la volonté du gouvernement d'encadrer, d'accompagner les personnes qui sont au bas de l'échelle sociale. Il ne suffit pas de leur donner un poisson mais de leur donner une canne à pêche. I quote –

> "Furthermore, it will ensure that these citizens are fully integrated in the mainstream of our society. A strong and diversified platform will be put in place

to address poverty, fight exclusion, promote inclusive and sustainable growth and secure social progress."

Nous sommes confiants que l'honorable vice-Premier ministre, Xavier Luc Duval, saura mener à bon port les projets de ce nouveau ministère de l'intégration sociale et de l'économique *empowerment.* Les membres de cette auguste Assemblée et le pays tout entier reconnaissent le dévouement, le professionnalisme, l'esprit d'entreprise, le sérieux et l'efficience de l'honorable vice-Premier ministre Xavier Luc Duval. Mon vœu pour notre île Maurice est que tous les mauriciens se sentent mauriciens et fiers de l'être dans le respect de leur appartenance, affinité culturelle, sociale et ethnique. Qu'ils soient pauvres ou riches, qu'ils soient créoles, hindoues, tamoules, musulmans, blancs ou sino-mauriciens, qu'ils habitent la ville ou le village, mon vœu est aussi le vœu du gouvernement de faire de l'île Maurice un pays - *I quote* –

« *of equal opportunities based on the values of unity, equity and modernity* ».

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Government Programme clearly underlines, I quote –

"We need a constitutional regime that will strengthen our democracy, promote nation-building and further entrench the fundamental rights and freedom of all Mauritians".

M. le président, honorables membres, vous avez devant vous la plus jeune députée de cette auguste Chambre et je me fais le porte-voix des jeunes de cette assemblée. En tant que jeune, et pour avoir pendant longtemps travaillé avec les jeunes, les côtoyer, les écouter, les comprendre, je peux dire que les jeunes rêvent d'une meilleur île Maurice, qui offre une large place à la méritocratie, à la justice sociale, au patriotisme, une île Maurice qui accorde plus d'importance à l'art sous toutes ses formes, au sport et à la préservation de la nature.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, we can see that this Government acknowledges the importance of young people of this country. I quote –

"Young people constitute a dynamic force for social harmony, democracy and equality. They are an essential resource for sustainable development and are the very foundation upon which a nation is built."

And we, the youth, are very grateful to him for this. The other issue I would like to raise here is the concept of nation-building. In the Government Programme we find a vast semantic field of equity, I quote –

"Equity, unity, social justice, democracy, fundamental rights, freedom, equal opportunity, economic democratisation, citizens are fully integrated, fight exclusion, and promote inclusiveness growth, social harmony, equality".

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, this shows the determination of this Government in its endeavour to nation-building. Nation-building is a process and it has to be owned by every component of our nation. It is not only the task of Government. It is the responsibility of every Mauritian, of hon. Members of both sides of the House. The country needs us, hon. Members of this august Assembly, to participate in this nation-building.

Le discours programme démontre clairement que l'Alliance de l'Avenir sous le leadership du Dr. Navin Ramgoolam est un gouvernement qui construit, qui uni et qui rassemble. Le gouvernement l'a compris, tous nous sortirons gagnants s'il y a plus de justice sociale, plus de patriotisme, plus d'unité, plus d'égalité. Nous n'aurons pas à nous barricader chez nous en érigeant des hauts murs protégés par des chiens féroces ou de système de surveillance sophistiqué. Nous ne vivrons plus dans la peur, le doute, la méfiance et la jalousie et le gouvernement l'a bel et bien compris.

Another way to boost up this concept of nation-building is through the valorisation of every culture in Mauritius. I am so thankful to the Government for the paragraph 260 at page 27 of the Government Programme –

"Arts and Culture are catalysts for peace, stability and the consolidation of National Unity".

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is true that culture is the soul of people. It is also a major stepping stone for human empowerment. We must acknowledge that Government has done a lot for the valorisation of all cultures in Mauritius. It has its own track record during the preceding mandate. For this mandate, in the Government Programme, there was a lot of measures announced to promote culture. We welcome the decision of holding an annual *Festival Mauricien*. Let me also drive the attention of our Prime Minister and all Members of this Assembly *que comme enseignante au collège Père Laval à Ste Croix, je tiens à dire que la célébration du Festival International Créole, les années précédentes, est venue reconnaître et valoriser l'identité culturelle de la communauté Créole. De ce fait, toute la nation mauricienne en a bénéficié dans son ensemble et je tiens à remercier le Premier ministre, l'honorable Dr. Navin Ramgoolam, pour cela.*

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, self-concept and self-esteem are so important for an individual to succeed in society. As L.B. Ames wrote and I quote –

> *"Sometimes the difference between the child who succeeds and the one who fails is not a difference of intelligence or even in maturity. It sometimes is mostly a difference in self-confidence".*

Maslow has this to say about the importance of self-esteem and I quote –

> *"An individual must feel that he is achieving something worthwhile and is sometimes recognised for what he does or is and that he has some independence and reason for hope".*

M. le président, je voudrais dire que la nation mauricienne est comme une salade de fruits, pas une compote de fruits, ou mieux encore je dirais comme un bouquet de fleurs composé. Chaque fleur a sa place, a une couleur, a un parfum qui fait toute la beauté du bouquet.

Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world. Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, education is the other topic of my speech today. It is through education that the son of a fisherman can become a lawyer; that the daughter of a planter can become a doctor; that the son of a housewife can become an architect. Through education doors of opportunity remain open to all. Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to congratulate Government for its wise decision to encourage the use of mother tongue to facilitate teaching and learning and for the introduction of Mauritian Creole and Bhojpuri as optional subjects in schools.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to share a beautiful quotation of Nelson Mandela with you. I quote –

> *"If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language that goes to his heart".*

We must always remember that the future depends on what we do in the present. Our decisions today shape the destiny of thousands of children and the future of our country.

M. le président, il y a tellement de points que j'aurais aimé aborder ce soir car le Discours Programme foisonne d'idées, de mesures intéressantes, innovatrices, bonnes, relevant des défis, mais faute de temps et à cause de mes camarades, je ne le pourrais pas. Toutefois, j'aimerais rappeler ceci à la Chambre ; le gouvernement sous le leadership du Dr. Navin Ramgoolam, avec ses partenaires de l'Alliance de l'Avenir, a une grande vision pour la nation.

Le contenu du Discours Programme en est la preuve. Mais c'est à nous, chacun d'entre nous, que nous soyons membres de l'Opposition, députés, secrétaires parlementaires, ministres, whips de l'Assemblée et leaders *des partis, tous, il nous incombe la responsabilité de veiller à ce que les mesures préconisées dans le Discours Programme soient mises en application, que les intentions du gouvernement soient réalisées. Nous sommes les soldats qui allons défendre les mesures annoncées dans le Discours Programme dans notre circonscription respective.*

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I cannot conclude without saying a few words about my Constituency. I was so impressed by the kindness, the generosity, *le sens de l'accueil des habitants de la circonscription numéro 4. Le village de Crève-Coeur, au pied de la montagne de Pieter Both, niché entre les chaînes des montagnes, nous rappelant la légende de Paul et Virginie, mériterait plus d'attention. L'île Maurice, le secteur touristique bénéficierait si un* view point *était installé à Crève-Coeur pour que mauriciens et touristes puissent découvrir et admirer ce coin paradisiaque de notre île qui s'offre à perte de vue sur des paysages magnifiques de la nature. Je fais un appel aux autorités concernées pour que la gare de Crève-Coeur soit dotée d'abribus et de toilettes car les usagers du transport public et, en particulier, les femmes receveurs d'autobus en ont grand besoin. Les habitants de Crève-Coeur disent que leur village est réputé pour ses plantations de gingembre, d'ail, d'arouille, de fleurs, mais aussi pour les cressons qui poussent et s'épanouissent dans les nids de poules des routes. C'est la raison pour laquelle ils font une demande pressante pour que leurs routes soient asphaltées.*

La région de Ste Croix, Batterie Cassée, Cité Briquetterie, regorgent de sportifs de haut niveau. Pour le bien être de la région, le gouvernement gagnerait beaucoup à investir dans les infrastructures sportives et de loisirs. Nous connaissons tous les bienfaits du sport. La Cité La Cure est une des plus grandes cités ouvrières de Maurice. Malheureusement, trop souvent la presse fait écho que des mauvaises choses qui s'y passent. Mais cette cité vaut le détour. La Cité La Cure et ses alentours représentent la multiculturalité à Maurice. Vous pouvez retrouver les religions présentes dans notre île. Il y a une chapelle, une mosquée et un temple tamoul. La chorale de la Cité La Cure a remporté le deuxième prix à trois reprises au concours des chants de Noël. Le projet *Teen Hope* de la Cité La Cure marche à merveille, et les jeunes excellent dans le domaine artistique. Le sens de débrouillardise des habitants de cette cité est révélateur de leur volonté de sortir de la pauvreté. Ils font de la plantation et de l'élevage sur les terres marginales.

Beaucoup de jeunes de cette cité vont à l'université. Beaucoup d'habitants ont remplacé leur toiture en tôle par une dalle. D'autres ont, à force d'effort et de persévérance, agrandi leurs maisons. Tout cela montre qu'à la Cité La Cure il fait bon vivre. Toutefois, autour de la Cité La Cure se trouvent les *State lands*. J'invite tous les honorables membres d'effectuer une visite, plus spécialement le vice-premier ministre, l'honorable Xavier-Luc Duval. Vous verrez dans quelle extrême pauvreté vivent certains mauriciens. J'ai en mémoire ce *State land* où plus de vingt familles vivent sans eau courante et sans électricité depuis des années, où les enfants ne regardent pas la télé. Je ne peux effacer de ma mémoire cette petite fille handicapée mentalement et physiquement qui vit sur ce *State land* avec sa famille depuis cinq ans.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please!

Ms Perraud*: Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, this story, which is a real one, forms part of our mother country*. Quand je pense à cette famille, à toutes ces familles de l'île Maurice qui vivent dans l'extrême pauvreté, qui essaient de survivre, je félicite le gouvernement d'avoir eu le courage de prendre le taureau par les cornes pour combattre la pauvreté à Maurice. M. le président, Rome n'a pas été bâti en un jour. Le ministre de tutelle fera l'effort nécessaire pour sauver les plus démunis de notre société.

Before resuming my seat, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am sure that this Government, under the leadership of hon. Dr. Navin Ramgoolam, and with hon. Xavier-Luc Duval, hon. Pravind Jugnauth and hon. Dr. Rashid Beebeejaun, saura mener le pays à bon port et sera à la hauteur pour relever tous les défis qui se profilent à l'horizon. Longue vie à l'île Maurice!

Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. Mrs Perraud.

Mr Mohamed: Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I move for the adjournment of the debate.

Mr Von-Mally rose and seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

Debate adjourned accordingly.

ADJOURNMENT

The Minister of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping (Mr A. Bachoo): Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I move that this Assembly do now adjourn to Tuesday 27 July 2010 at 11.30 a.m.

Dr. Kasenally rose and seconded.

The Deputy Speaker: The House stands adjourned.

MATTERS RAISED

(7.14 p.m)

TAMARIN YOUTH CENTRE – MAINTENANCE AND FACILITIES

Mr A. Ganoo (First Member for Savanne & Black River): Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I shall be very brief. I have given notice to the hon. Minister of Youth and Sports to raise an issue concerning the state of the Tamarin Youth Centre, the lack of maintenance thereof, and the equipment and facilities thereat.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, Tamarin is an important and fast growing village on the west coast, and this youth centre as well as the facilities thereat were revamped and rehabilitated under the MSM/MM Government. In fact, the official ceremony took place in December 2004, in the presence of the then Minister of Environment, hon. Bhagwan, and the then Prime Minister. I am smiling, because I now remember that you were present also, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir.

This centre was a *bijou and fierté des habitants,* especially the youth of this region. But, unfortunately, afterwards, this centre and the surrounding facilities were neglected and fell into oblivion, and turned into a decrepit state.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, all the equipment and amenities were never replaced, so much so that they became unusable. Today, in fact, there are no games, no table tennis, no carom board. There are even hardly any chairs or tables in this centre. It was provided with a computer, and I checked this afternoon, but it fell into disuse, and is still out of order.

The point of raising this issue, Mr Deputy Speaker, is not to make any political capital out of this situation. I am just trying to draw the attention of the hon. Minister. I have been told that there are even some weightlifting equipment there but, since there is no trainer, up to now, nobody has been able to use them. But more importantly than the issue of simple amenities and equipment missing, there are no monitors, no trainers for the youth, and no activities are organised as such on a sustainable basis. Needless to say, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, that there are hardly any activities for the ladies and girls in the region. This centre, therefore, lacks not only equipment and amenities, but also *un certain encadrement,* and there is so much potential in the region, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir.

Adjacent to the Youth Centre lie a green space and a children's playground which, unfortunately, suffered the same fate and was left into abandon for years. Fortunately, recently, thanks to some district councillors, things got better. But I still think I should make an appeal to the hon. Minister, as far as the Youth Centre itself is concerned, to do the needful, and have his officers pay a visit to the centre to remedy this situation. I repeat what I just said, Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir. This is a sincere appeal to the hon. Minister. I am sure the youth can rely on him and he will respond positively to the expectations of the youth in the village. I humbly appeal to the hon. Minister to see to it that things are looked into as quickly as possible, and to lend a sympathetic ear to this appeal I am making.

Thank you.

The Minister of Youth and Sports (Mr S. Ritoo): Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Tamarin Youth Centre comprises of one office, one multipurpose hall, one kitchen, one volleyball cum basket court as well as a *pétanque* court. It is opened during weekdays, Saturdays, and sometimes on Sundays as well. However, outdoor evening activities such as basketball, volleyball and *pétanque* are held regularly after 7.30 p.m. On average, the centre has about 30 users daily for both indoor and outdoor activities.

Regarding staffing, although there is no Youth Officer based at the centre for the time being, yet we have a Senior Youth Officer attending the centre regularly for monitoring activities and meetings when required. Two General workers are posted permanently for cleaning and maintenance purposes. Moreover, one *animateur* is employed on a part-time basis for delivering basic computer training. The centre is also provided with security services.

The overall supervision of the Youth Centre is under the responsibility of the Principal Youth Officer of the district of Black River. I am informed that, overall, the Youth Centre is well maintained, and the facilities offered are being judiciously utilised by young people of the region. However, there are a few minor repairs, including window panes and volleyball net, which will be attended to shortly by our Maintenance Unit. Some problems were encountered with the use of the Net PC, due to misuse by certain undisciplined young people who have even been reported of consuming alcoholic drinks and smoking within the main hall of the centre. Thus access to the PCs has now been stopped and the equipment is now used only for computer training under close supervision three times a week, including Sundays.

Regarding lighting on the basketball pitch which is partly defective, the Energy Services Division has been requested to undertake a survey and necessary repairs will be carried out soon. Activities being organised by the Centre include, amongst others, basketball, aerobics, dancing, boxing, IT literacy and cookery. The youth of the region also benefit from activities organised at national level, such as *spéciales vacances* and dance competitions.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I wish to reassure the hon. Member that the Tamarin Youth Centre is adequately maintained and equipped with all necessary facilities. However, as per information gathered, there is a children's playground belonging to the District Council of Black River, adjacent to Tamarin Youth Centre, which is in a deplorable state due to acts of vandalism. The District Council has spent a lot of money to put it back in shape, but each time it is badly utilised, thus causing damage to the playground. I understand that the District Council intends to shortly undertake further repairs and maintenance work on the children's playground.

Thank you.

At 7.20 p.m the sitting was, on its rising, adjourned to Tuesday 27 July 2010, at 11.30 a.m.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Cooperation - *continued*

Item No.	DETAILS	Appropriated	Supplementary Appropriation
	38201 - Bilateral, Multilateral, International Relations and Cooperation - *continued*		
	Brought forward	--	**23,316,272**
26120	Grant to Foreign Governments *Provision required for donation to the Government of India to assist the reconstruction process of the state of Bihar affected by flood.*	--	**16,450,430**
26210	International Organisations *Additional provision required to meet increase in contribution to United Nations Organisation.*	48,219,885	**2,833,688**
31112	Non Residential Buildings *Additional provision required for acquisition of Chancery in Washington.*	7,500,000	**63,538,115**
31121	Transport Equipment *Additional provision required for the purchase of new representational cars for Missions in London, Beijing, Geneva and service cars for Missions in Mumbai and Cairo.*	1,200,000	**9,076,145**
	38202 - Support by Mauritius Overseas Missions		
21110	Personal Emoluments *Additional provision required for the implementation of the PRB Report 2008.*	128,339,230	**7,559,999**
	TOTAL	--	**122,774,649**
	38301 - International, Regional and Bilateral Negotiations and Implementation		
21110	Personal Emoluments *Additional provision required for the implementation of the PRB Report 2008.*	9,258,190	**2,583,961**
21111	Other Staff Costs *Additional provision required for the implementation of the PRB Report 2008.*	1,137,000	**293,317**
	TOTAL	--	**2,877,278**