

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS**MBC – CAMERAMEN – PROMOTION EXERCISE**

(No. B/1408) Mrs S. Hanoomanjee (Second Member for Savanne and Black River) asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence and Home Affairs whether, in regard to the cameramen employed by the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Corporation, information as to if a promotion exercise in the grade thereof has recently been carried out and, if so, indicate –

- (a) if the new recruits satisfy the qualifications requirements as per the scheme of service, and
- (b) if any cameraman holding the required qualifications has not been promoted and, if so, the reasons therefor.

(Withdrawn)

MBC – SPORTS & CURRENT AFFAIRS SECTIONS

(No. B/1409) Mrs S. Hanoomanjee (Second Member for Savanne and Black River) asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence and Home Affairs whether he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation, information as to if the Sports Section and the Current Affairs Section have been detached from the News Department and, if so, the reasons therefor.

(Withdrawn)

SSR INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - EXTENSION

(No. B/1411) Mr Y. Varma (First Member for Mahebourg and Plaine Magnien) asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence and Home Affairs whether, in regard to the proposed extension of the Sir Seewoosagar Ramgoolam International Airport, he will, for the benefit of the House,

obtain from the Airports of Mauritius Ltd, information as to where matters stand.

The Prime Minister: Mr Speaker, Sir, for the past few years, the Passenger Terminal at SSR International Airport has been saturated and not able to cater satisfactorily for the increase in the flow of passengers. The Terminal was designed to accommodate some 750 passengers at peak hours. However, over the past few years, this figure has reached a peak hour passenger of 1200, entailing therefore bottlenecks at all the processing zones.

Against this background, the ability to provide a quality service to passengers is constantly being challenged. Therefore, there is an urgent need to address these weak links in the Passenger Terminal so as to cater for current traffic, the projected traffic growth and to ensure a satisfactory level of service over time. Accordingly, Mr Speaker, Sir, in line with the SSR International Airport Master Plan, the second phase for the development of the Passenger Terminal development project is being undertaken so as to provide for a passenger handling capacity of around 4 million people annually.

The project is being implemented by Airports of Mauritius Limited (AML) in partnership with Aéroport de Paris Management (ADPM). To that effect, an *Accord de Partenariat* was signed in June 2008 between AML and Aéroport de Paris (ADP). The agreement provides for ADPM to be the Strategic Partner of AML for this development project.

The project comprises the construction of a new Passenger Terminal with state-of-the-art technology and ancillary facilities such as new Aircraft Parking Stands, extension to the current car park and the rehabilitation of part of the current Passenger Terminal.

I am informed by AML that the project is presently at design stage and this is expected to be completed by February of next year.

Concurrently, AML has made an application to the Export and Import (EXIM) Bank of China for a concessionary loan of euros 195 m. for the financing of the project. A delegation is proceeding to China this week to undertake further discussions and to finalise the loan.

According to the work plan, the construction is due to start by July 2009 and is expected to be completed within a period of two years.

PREVENTION OF TERRORISM ACT - AMENDMENT

(No. B/1412) Mr N. Bodha (First Member for Vacoas and Floreal) asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence and Home Affairs whether, in regard to the Prevention of Terrorism Act, he will state if he proposes to bring any amendment thereto, in view of the recent terrorist attacks in India.

The Prime Minister: Mr Speaker, Sir, the recent terrorist attack in India is a heinous crime which has been unequivocally condemned by World Governments including Mauritius. The Government of Mauritius has always unrelentlessly supported all campaigns and initiatives, both at regional and international levels, against terrorism.

Mauritius, Mr Speaker, Sir, is a party to ten UN Conventions and Protocols relating to Terrorism, and is also signatory to the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.

Mauritius, Mr Speaker, Sir, is conscious of the threat that terrorism poses at the regional level, and of the need to maintain the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace. In this context, Member States of the Indian Ocean Commission signed a Convention relating to Regional Security (*Convention sur la Sécurité Régionale des Etats Membres de la Commission de l'Océan Indien*) on 17 March 2006. The OAU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism was ratified in 2003.

At the bilateral level, Mauritius and India signed in August 2005 a bilateral Cooperation Agreement aimed at fighting terrorism.

In the light of the events which occurred in Mumbai, we are studying very carefully the Prevention of Terrorism Act to see if we need to bring any amendments to it. However, we need to ensure that the penalties provided in the Act remain coherent with all our laws.

Mr Speaker Sir, additionally, we are introducing into the National Assembly the Prevention of Terrorism (International Obligations) Bill today. The Bill aims at allowing Mauritius to adhere to international counter-

terrorism instruments to which it is not yet a party. The ratification of those counter-terrorism conventions and protocols will enable Mauritius to develop and promote comprehensive, coordinated, and consistent response at the national, regional and international levels to counter-terrorism.

Mr Bodha: Thank you, Mr Speaker, Sir. May I ask the hon. Prime Minister whether we had recourse to foreign expertise in the drafting of the amendments?

The Prime Minister: Probably not, Mr Speaker, Sir, because we are ratifying so that we may be able to be part of the Convention.

TERRORISM - MEASURES

(No. B/1413) Mr N. Bodha (First Member for Vacoas and Floreal) asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence and Home Affairs whether, in regard to terrorism threats, he will state if Government proposes to take additional measures to avert any risk thereof.

The Prime Minister: Mr Speaker, Sir, with your permission, I shall reply to PQ B/1413 and B/1415 together as they relate to the same matter.

Mr Speaker, Sir, during the past decade, terrorism has emerged as one of the scourges of the 21st century. Terrorism is in fact one of the greatest global menace of our age, which violates basic precepts of democracy and civilised living. It constitutes a threat not only to peace and security, but also to economic development and social harmony of a country.

Terrorist attacks in New York, Bali, London, Amman, Madrid and more recently Mumbai, have demonstrated that no country is immune from the threat of terrorism. Mauritius is no exception given our strategic position in the Indian Ocean and the fact that we are a well-known tourist destination with open and direct air and maritime access to many countries. There is

therefore a need to constantly reinforce measures to reduce our vulnerability while at the same time, increase our ability to respond effectively during a period of heightened alert.

In this endeavour, particular emphasis is being laid on the increased alertness at the two most important points of entry of the island, namely the SSR International Airport and Port Louis Harbour.

Regarding security at the SSR International Airport, a National Civil Aviation Security Committee chaired by the Secretary for Home Affairs is responsible to ensure and coordinate the implementation of appropriate security measures at the airport. Already, a series of measures have been put in place and I name them, Mr Speaker, Sir -

- a very sophisticated X-ray machine has been installed at the Red and Green channel in the Arrival area;
- another X-ray scanner has been installed at the Plaisance Airport Transport Services;
- the Customs Department has been connected to the Passport and Immigration Office database to track down targeted passengers;
- a CCTV Surveillance System has been installed to provide an efficient and reliable management tool to monitor operations;
- strict access control from the Public Area to the Security Area is implemented through a three-tier sharing of responsibilities among the Director of Civil Aviation, the Airport Police and the Airports of Mauritius Ltd;
- 100% screening of originating and transit hold baggage is carried out, and
- Regular patrol along the perimeter fence is carried out by Police.

Additionally, Mr Speaker, Sir, to reinforce security, the following measures are currently being implemented -

- the introduction of an Alert Colour Code System in accordance with international practices;
- a new computerised Border Control System has been introduced to control travel documents. This system enables the detection of fake documents. A forensic document examination machine will be donated by the UK Government, to be installed at the airport to assist in the detection of fraudulent and fake documents;
- the introduction of an Advance Passenger Information (API) System which will enable the Border Control Agencies to obtain the particulars of the arriving passengers well in advance;
- all officers working at Border Control are being briefed on the importance of in-depth profiling and questioning of passengers of high risk countries. Such profiling and questioning exercises are carried out with the assistance of NSS, ADSU and Customs personnel, and
- no requests for filming and photography at the airport nor at the Port, will now be allowed.

As for security at the harbour, a National Maritime and Harbour Security Committee chaired by the Secretary for Home Affairs is responsible for the coordination and implementation of all security measures. So far, the following measures have been implemented -

- a high security fence has been erected along the perimeter of the harbour;
- very strict access control measures with an identification system have been introduced;

- a Central Pass Office has been set up at the entrance of the port since February 2008. It issues passes only to bona-fide persons who have business in the port area;
- the five entrance/exit gates are manned by the Police and Customs round-the-clock;
- a CCTV Camera system which covers the whole harbour area has been operational in June 2008. It is manned jointly by Police and the Mauritius Ports Authority;
- arriving containers are scanned by Customs by using an X-Ray machine;
- the lighting has been upgraded to the required standard to provide for more visibility;
- regular search is carried out by the National Coast Guard on vessels upon reasonable suspicion. Stop and search are also carried out in the lagoon, in the coastal areas by the offshore patrol vessels;
- a Security Unit has been set up by the Mauritius Ports Authority to assist the Police in controlling the movement of people and vehicles inside the port security limits, and
- the Mauritius Ports Authority has installed an Automated Identification System (AIS) which covers a range of 30 nautical miles.

Furthermore, the following additional security measures at the harbour are presently being implemented -

- the deployment of a 10-strong detachment of the SMF to be permanently posted at the Capitainerie Building in the port area to respond to any emergency;

- a team headed by the Deputy Commissioner of Police (North) is conducting a full security audit of the Port premises;
- the acquisition by the Customs Department of an X Ray scanner for the Ferry Terminal at Caudan;
- strict control to be exercised over the movements of yachts and catamarans. All of them will henceforth be required to call at the Port before proceeding to any other mooring place or to the outer islands;
- the Mauritius Ports Authority along with other agencies, including the Police, will carry out simulation exercises in order to test existing safety schemes and the efficiency of their responsiveness in case of real emergencies, and
- the National Coast Guard is reinforcing its patrols in the harbour area as well as along the coast to prevent illegal entry of vessels.

The Mauritius Police Force is also reviewing its strategy to minimise the risk of terrorist attacks in Mauritius and to enhance preparedness and responsiveness in case of such attacks. This strategy is based on reallocation of manpower to specialised units, creation of new units, training of manpower, acquisition and installation of state-of-the-art equipment and strengthening of mechanisms of intelligence and information sharing at regional and international levels.

Mr Speaker, Sir, a team headed by the Commanding Officer of the SMF has been constituted and tasked to devise an “Alert Code System” aimed at providing an effective means to disseminate information about terrorist threats.

In view of improving the rapidity of intervention in case of emergencies, I have requested the Commissioner of Police to deploy a team of the SMF to be based in Port Louis and to reinforce the SMF team based at the Government Centre.

The Commanding Officer of the SMF is also reviewing the manpower allocation and the arms and equipment of the “*Groupe d’Intervention de la Police Mauricienne*” (GPIM) which is an elite unit of the Mauritius Police Force. The objective is to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of this specialised unit in such areas as hostage taking and negotiations, kidnapping, hijacking and armed attacks.

Furthermore, taking into consideration the fact that there may be a need, in the future, to conduct an armed operation at sea or near the coast, the Commissioner of Police is looking into the setting up of a special cadre of Commandos within the National Coast Guard. These commandos will be trained to handle special operations such as boarding, countering underwater threats, protecting small islets, and hostage situations onboard ships. This cadre would also be provided with specialist equipment like marine bullet proof jackets, helmets, and specialised automatic weapons.

As regards training in the field of Counter Terrorism, officers of the Mauritius Police Force have the opportunity to participate regularly in programmes run by friendly countries such as India, France, USA, South Africa, Egypt, Russia and UK. From 2005 to date, 46 Police Officers have benefited from training courses related to Counter Terrorism in friendly countries.

Mr Speaker, Sir, Government is investing massively in the purchase of new equipment to properly equip the Mauritius Police Force. Following my official visit to India, a twin engine Advanced Light Helicopter is being purchased with the assistance of the Indian Government. This helicopter, which will be operational in Mauritius at the latest, I am told, in February 2009, will have the capacity of carrying some 12 fully equipped troops. It will also be able to reach St Brandon or Rodrigues and return after refuelling over there. It does not have to refuel while going.

By early 2009, the CCTV Surveillance System Project at Flic-en-Flac, consisting of a total of 83 cameras, will be operational. The same project consisting of 271 and 69 cameras will be implemented in Port Louis and Grand Bay respectively, hopefully by end of next year. These systems will provide real time and actionable information on any suspicious activity or person in the areas covered.

A new radio communication system connecting all the adjuncts of the Force will be installed by end 2009. This will enhance communication and coordination of policing activities and special operations in the country.

The acquisition and installation of a Coastal Radar Surveillance System with the assistance of the Indian Government is also being looked into. The system will consist of radar integrated with an Automatic Identification System, which will cover the mainland as well as Rodrigues, St Brandon and Agalega. With this new system, the NCG will be in a position to monitor the movements of vessels, and any suspected craft can be intercepted, interrogated and investigated. It will be a pioneer effort in the area and will further enhance the maritime security of the country.

The coastal surveillance capacity of the NCG will also be reinforced with a Defender Class fast patrol boat. We have asked the US Authorities whether they could give us a Defender Class fast patrol boat. Now, they are donating that vessel to us. The boat will be handed over to the Mauritius Police Force by the middle of next year and will be available for intensive patrol in our lagoon and interception missions in tandem with the coastal radar system.

Mr Speaker, Sir, following my official visit to India, we have also decided to acquire an Offshore Patrol Vessel with the assistance of the Indian Government. The project will take about 2 years. The new vessel will replace the Vigilant. It will provide long range patrol up to the farthest boundaries of our EEZ and more extensive periods of patrol. It will enable the surveillance of our waters and EEZ against sea pirates, illegal fishing and any nefarious activities.

Mr Speaker, Sir, terrorism being an international phenomenon, the elimination thereof can only be achieved through international cooperation. Mauritius is already party to a number of international and regional instruments relating to the prevention and combating of terrorism. In order to ensure that Government can meet all its obligations under the various Conventions, I am, in fact, introducing, today, the Prevention of Terrorism (International Obligations) Bill.

In addition, good relations existing with friendly countries such as France, India, UK and USA are being exploited and information related to terrorism are exchanged to improve security. Good working relations also

exist among law enforcement agencies of these countries for timely exchange of information without going through administrative hurdles.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I wish to reiterate my Government's commitment in the fight against terrorism. No country, as I said, is immune from such an attack and we shall leave no stone unturned in this battle. In order to ensure effective and efficient coordination of our actions to address this issue, a Counter Terrorism Unit has been set up. The main objective of this Unit is to enhance security of the country and its people by collecting, collating, analyzing and disseminating timely intelligence through the establishment of a National and International Information Sharing Network that is focused on combating terrorism.

I have also requested the National Security Adviser to come up with a National Security Strategy geared towards effective and efficient security sector governance. The process for the formulation of this strategy is underway.

Besides, we have embarked into a project for the replacement of our existing National Identity Card by a sophisticated smart Identity Card which will contain new features to combat identity fraud. In fact, I am chairing an Inter-Ministerial Committee on that issue by coincidence tomorrow with a view to providing general policy orientation on that project.

Mr Speaker, Sir, let me conclude by saying that the fight against terrorism requires the support of each and every citizen, without which the overall Government strategy will be incomplete.

Mr Bodha: Mr Speaker, Sir, I thank the hon. Prime Minister for his long and exhaustive answer and for taking the matter very seriously. May I ask him whether he is satisfied with the Intelligence Gathering Mechanism so that we can act swiftly to any action should the matter arise?

The Prime Minister: There are some lacunae as usual, Mr Speaker, Sir, that is why we are strengthening the gathering of information

Mr Bodha: The hon. Prime Minister also mentioned the coastline, the Port area and the airport area. Will he agree that we should identify possible targets and that maybe one of the loopholes in what happened in India was that the Indian authorities never thought that the Taj Mahal or the Oberoi hotels or some of the other targets could be possible targets? Would he agree with me on this matter?

The Prime Minister: I agree, Mr Speaker, Sir.

Mr Bodha: Mr Speaker, Sir, may I ask the hon. Prime Minister whether he will agree that the whole successful attacks have been the results of minute and sophisticated preparation and it takes time and the only way to be able to avoid this is to beat the terrorists. It is a race against time to foil the attempt and the exercise. Will the Prime Minister agree that we should see to it that the Counter terrorism Unit which has been put up should meet regularly and it should be able to connect with international agencies as soon as possible so that we don't have a surprise attack?

The Prime Minister: It meets regularly already, Mr Speaker, Sir.

Mr Jhugroo: Mr Speaker, Sir, can I ask the hon. Prime Minister whether he has the intention to review the criteria involved in the application of work permits for foreign workers?

The Prime Minister: We are looking at that as well, Mr Speaker, Sir.

Mr Bodha: Mr Speaker, Sir, may I ask another question? In fact, I have asked another question. It is about faked passports and the entry into Mauritius ...

Mr Speaker: The question is on the Order Paper. The hon. Member will have to put his question later on.

Mr Bodha: Yes, Mr Speaker, Sir.

Mr Lesjongard: Mr Speaker, Sir, some time back measures were taken to prevent people from being in the vicinity of the airport, that is, outside the perimeter and alongside the runway. Are these measures still on?

The Prime Minister: We can't actually prevent people from travelling, as there is a road just outside the perimeter. Some people want to stop and show the children the plane leaving. That is also a bit difficult; otherwise that prevents all movement along the road, but we are monitoring the situation.

PQ Nos. B/1414 to B/1420 – See “Written Answers to Questions”

DR I. I. B. – DEATH - POLICE INQUIRY

(No. B/1421) Mr G. Lesjongard (Second Member for Port Louis North and Montagne Longue) asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence and Home Affairs whether, in regard to late Dr I. I. B. who was killed on 20 November 2008, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Police, information as to where matters stand as to the police inquiry carried out thereinto, indicating if any Police Officer of the Central Investigation Department of Rose Hill has been transferred as from that date.

The Prime Minister: Mr Speaker, Sir, I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that the Rose-Hill Criminal Investigation Department and the Major Crime Investigation are jointly inquiring into the case. So far, thirty-two persons have been interrogated in the course of the enquiry which is still ongoing.

On 04 December 2008, two suspects have been arrested. A charge of “murder” has been lodged against them before the Rose-Hill District Court.

They have been remanded to Police cell up to 11 December 2008. On the same day, a third suspect has been arrested under the same charge and has been remanded to Police cell up to 12 December 2008.

I am further informed by the Commissioner of Police that no Officer of the Central Investigation Department of Rose-Hill has been transferred as from 20 November 2008.

POLICE VEHICLES – MAINTENANCE COSTS

(No. B/1422) Mr G. Lesjongard (Second Member for Port Louis North and Montagne Longue) asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence and Home Affairs whether, in regard to the Police vehicles, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Police, information as to the maintenance costs thereof for the month of October 2007 and the month of October 2008, indicating if any decrease in the maintenance costs has been noted, since the closure of the Police garage.

The Prime Minister: Mr Speaker, Sir, I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that the total cost of maintenance of Police vehicles amounted to Rs3,797,589.50 for the month of October 2007 and Rs4,581,991.79 for October 2008.

I am further informed that in line with the measures announced in the Budget Speech 2006-2007 for the optimization of efficiency in the Public Sector, the Police Mechanical Workshop closed down on 01 October 2008. As from this date, new procedures have been put in place, following approval of the Central Procurement Board, for contracting out of maintenance and servicing of Police vehicles by local agents.

It is, in fact, too early to make an assessment of the impact of the new policy which has been in place for only two months.

Mr Lesjongard: Mr Speaker, Sir, we see that there is a difference of Rs1 m. with regard to what was formerly done by officers of the Police garage and when it has been contracted out. Do we foresee an increase or decrease in the trend of contracting out maintenance of those vehicles?

The Prime Minister: First of all, we are in a transition period. There has been a backlog and this is what partly explains this increase. Secondly, Mr Speaker, Sir, very often, we have a tendency in Mauritius to think that if we go for the cheapest, it is the best; it is not. Very often, you will find that the cost is not as much. But there are sophisticated cars which were being serviced and repaired by people who did not have the sophisticated equipment. Of course, it costs more, but in the long run it turns out to be cheaper. But, we are going to monitor it.

Mr Lesjongard: One last question, Mr Speaker, Sir. May I ask the hon. Prime Minister whether the contracts are being given to different contractors and, secondly, who is responsible for doing the monitoring of quality control?

The Prime Minister: In fact, Mr Speaker, Sir, what we have said is that the local agents are going to repair the cars which we have. For example, it has to be ABC if it is ABC. If it has to be Leal & Co., it will be that; if it has to be Iframac, it will be that, and if it has to be Toyota, it will be that and so on. The list is very long, Mr Speaker, Sir, but this is what we are doing.

**FOREIGNERS – ARRIVAL -
- FAKE FOREIGN/MAURITIAN PASSPORTS**

(No. B/1425) Mr N. Bodha (First Member for Vacoas and Floreal) asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence and Home Affairs whether, in regard to the foreigners, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Police, information as to the number thereof who have entered Mauritius with fake foreign or Mauritian passports, since July 2005 to date, indicating if an inquiry has been carried out in each case and the outcome thereof

The Prime Minister: Mr Speaker, Sir, I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that the number of foreigners who arrived in Mauritius on the strength of fake foreign passports is as follows -

• July to December 2005	-	5
• 2006	-	16
• 2007	-	19
• 2008 as at to date	-	20

According to established procedures at the Passport and Immigration Office, whenever it is suspected that a foreigner is travelling on the strength of a fake passport, he is refused the permission to enter Mauritius and is sent back to the country from where he started his journey or to his country of origin in accordance with the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) Standards. Thereafter, the name of the foreigner is added to the list of prohibited immigrants.

Foreigners who have entered Mauritius with fake passports and who have been intercepted are repatriated to their respective country of origin or to the countries from where they started their journey after enquiry and confirmation of their identity and nationality.

Mr Speaker, Sir, 54 out of the 60 foreigners who arrived in Mauritius with fake passports were intercepted at the Counter on arrival and have been repatriated. The six remaining foreigners are presumed Iraqi nationals travelling with fake Danish passports.

On 24 November 2008, they were all arrested at the airport while they were doing departure formalities to proceed to Australia.

On 03 December 2008, they appeared before the Grand Port Court on a charge of "Making use of fake document". They are presently detained at the Beau Bassin Prisons up to 23 December 2008, date on which they will appear before the Bail and Remand Court. An enquiry to establish in what circumstances they entered Mauritius is still in progress.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the following additional measures are being taken to tighten security and border control system to prevent entry of foreigners with fake travel documents -

- in-depth profiling and questioning of passengers;
- collaboration between the Passport and Immigration Office and the National Security Service to monitor passengers, especially those from high risk countries;
- our Missions abroad have been informed to be more cautious before issuing visas to nationals of high risk countries, and
- training of Immigration Officers by foreign experts on forgery detection and immigration malpractices.

Furthermore, as from 01 December 2008, the new Border Control System is operational and this will enable a more effective control of travel documents.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I think I have mentioned it earlier, but let me say it again, that my Office has approached the British Government, to review the security of our travel documents. I did say that they are donating a Forensic Document Examination Machine for use at the airport to assist in the detection of fraudulent and forged documents.

I must say that after the request, three visits of experts from the UK Border Agency came to Mauritius. They have recommended measures to improve the National Identity Cards and to identify fraudulent documents. The UK Government has also offered training facilities to two Officers in UK and, as I said, is donating a Forensic Document Examination Machine.

Mr Bodha: Mr Speaker, Sir, the hon. Prime Minister said that the Iraqi nationals with fake Danish EU passports were caught their departure formalities. May I ask the hon. Prime Minister then that they had succeeded in entering the country with the fake passports?

The Prime Minister: Mr Speaker, Sir, they were Danish passports and not Iraqi passports. They managed to get in, but we caught them on the way out.

Mr Bodha: Mr Speaker, Sir, may I ask the hon. Prime Minister whether it is being envisaged that we have a new passport, following the fact that the second part of the question which I asked was 'fake Mauritian passports'? Is Government envisaging the possibility of having a new passport, a more sophisticated one?

The Prime Minister: In fact, my understanding, Mr Speaker, Sir, is that the previous Government itself made the contract for new passports with new security measures. It appears that these - but we will look at it - appear to be quite sophisticated.

Mr Bodha: May I ask the hon. Prime Minister whether Government will consider the possibility of having a new visa policy for entering Mauritius?

The Prime Minister: We are looking at all that, Mr Speaker, Sir. We are looking very carefully at all those people who want to come to Mauritius.

Mr Lesjongard: Mr Speaker, Sir, can I ask the hon. Prime Minister where they resided when they were in the country?

The Prime Minister: In fact, I would rather not say it, Mr Speaker, Sir, because the enquiry is ongoing and we want to know who are the people who actually gave them board and lodging.

Ms Deerpalsing: Mr Speaker, Sir, may I ask the hon. Prime Minister whether it is currently the case that at the airport the passports are scanned? Do we have the possibility for scanning the passports or are we envisaging that possibility?

The Prime Minister: This is being done. That's what I said, from 01 December, there is a new Boarder of Control System that is applicable.

Mr Bodha: Mr Speaker, Sir, in some countries now, like the United Kingdom and the United States, there is a photograph being taken at entry point. May I know if are we considering this possibility in Mauritius?

The Prime Minister: Mr Speaker, Sir, we also don't want to have a system where we block people from coming in. I think we'll have enough information from what we are doing and we won't need to actually take a photograph. We should not forget that there is also the CCTV camera which is all the time filming as well.

Mr Speaker: Time is over! Questions addressed to hon. Ministers! The Table has been advised that PQ. Nos. B/1426, B/1427, B/1440, B/1441 and B/1444 have been withdrawn.

BEACH AUTHORITY – CLEANING - CONTRACTS

(No. B/1426) Mrs S. Hanoomanjee (Second Member for Savanne and Black River) asked the Minister of Local Government, Rodrigues and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the contracts awarded by the Beach Authority for cleaning purposes, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Authority, information as to –

- (a) the number thereof for the years 2006 and 2007, and
- (b) if a particular company has been awarded most of the contracts and, if so, indicate the amount paid to the company for financial years –
 - (i) 2005-2006;
 - (ii) 2006-2007, and
 - (iii) 2007-2008.

(Withdrawn)

**BAIE DU CAP-QUATRE BORNES ROUTE
- INDIVIDUAL BUSES - TIME SCHEDULE**

(No. B/1427) Mrs S. Hanoomanjee (Second Member for Savanne and Black River) asked the Minister of Public Infrastructure, Land Transport and Shipping whether, in regard to the individual buses serving the Baie du Cap-Quatre Bornes route, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the National Transport Authority, information as to the number thereof, indicating if each of them has to respect a time schedule.

(Withdrawn)

***CALODYNE- SUR- MER HOTEL – TAXI OWNERS -
REPRESENTATIONS***

(No. B/1429) Mr P. Jhugroo (Third Member for Port Louis North and Montagne Longue) asked the Minister of Public Infrastructure, Land Transport and Shipping whether, in regard to the *Calodyne-Sur-Mer* Hotel, he will state if he has received representations from the taxi owners operating thereat to the effect that they are being prohibited from getting access to the Hotel for the purpose of dropping and picking up passengers and, if so, will he, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the National Transport Authority, information as to –

(a) the reasons therefor, and

(b) the remedial measures that will be taken.

Mr Bachoo: Mr Speaker, Sir, following representations received at the National Transport Authority, that taxi operators at *Calodyne-Sur-Mer* Hotel, were being denied access to the premises of the hotel and, despite several meetings held with the management there has been no development in the situation.

The Director of the hotel has systematically refused to put at the disposal of the NTA a copy of Memorandum of Understanding, which the hotel is proposing to sign to the taxi owners regarding their mode of operation.

I am, moreover, informed that the NTA is convening an urgent meeting with all the stakeholders on Wednesday 17 December 2008 to discuss the problem faced by the taxi operators to have access to the premises of the hotel.

Despite my repeated attempts to contact the Director of the hotel by phone, there has been no communication from the other side.

Mr Jhugroo: Will the hon. Minister conform whether the manager of *Calodyne-Sur-Mer* Hotel is a foreign national?

Mr Bachoo: Yes, Sir.

Mr Jhugroo: Can the hon. Minister inform the House whether there have been similar cases of victimisation in other hotels and, if so, in which hotels?

Mr Bachoo: A few cases were reported. One case which I have in mind was that of Vera Club but, luckily, the situation is under control. As far as this one is concerned, the NTA will take them to task once the meeting is held on 17 December.

Mr Rucktooa: So many phone calls were made by the hon. Minister and still the management is refusing to answer him. Does he think that they are going to accept the meeting that he has fixed on 17 December?

Mr Bachoo : They have accepted it, Mr Speaker, Sir.

YOUNG FARMERS CLUBS – FACILITIES

(No. B/1433) Mr Y. Varma (First Member for Mahebourg and Plaine Magnien) asked the Minister of Agro Industry, Food Production and Security whether in regard to the Young Farmers Clubs, he will state the number thereof, indicating –

- (a) their names and locations, and
- (b) the facilities extended to them.

Mr Faugoo: Mr Speaker, Sir, according to records available at the National Federation of Young Farmers Clubs, 112 clubs are registered with the Federation. I am tabling the names and location of these clubs.

With regard to part (b) of the question, the Federation, by virtue of the National Federation of Young Farmers Clubs Act of 1966, has to provide the following facilities –

- (i) training of members in the agricultural field and overall crop cultivation techniques;
- (ii) encouraging food crop production and backyard gardening;
- (iii) training in small livestock farming;
- (iv) training in food processing and preservatives;
- (v) dispensing courses in leadership, communication and Club Management.

I would like to inform the House that the National Federation of Young Farmers Club has seen its activities declined over the years as the youth have gradually abandoned agriculture for more remunerative and secure employment in the other emerging sectors of the economy. Moreover, with the setting up of institutions like the Agricultural Research and Extension Unit (AREU) and the Small Planters Welfare Fund, most of the core activities of the federation, that is, the dispensing of training and advice on good agricultural practices to farmers as well as promoting the welfare of farmers and their families have been taken over by these institutions.

AREU is encouraging young people to engage in agricultural activities and has so far set up 6 Agro Entrepreneur Clubs for those aged 18 and above. Furthermore, since years, AREU has been promoting the young aged between 12 and 18 years, through Agricultural Youth Clubs across the island with a present membership of 840, to actively get involved in the agricultural practices. These clubs are also receiving assistance from FAO under the Telefood Programmes and the Canadian Self-Help Projects.

In view of the decreasing role of the Federation and its limited capacity to meet demands of young farmers and emerging agribusiness operators, Government has agreed that its activities be merged in the Agro Entrepreneur Clubs of AREU. Necessary measures are being taken by my Ministry for the merger of the Federation with AREU. The latter being an important stakeholder of the Food Security Programme will be in a better position to provide all necessary support to the youth in contributing to increase our food self-sufficiency.

Mr Varma: Could the hon. Minister inform the House when will the merger take place?

Mr Faugoo: The Ministry is working on the *modus*, how we are going to go about it, Mr Speaker, Sir.

MARE D'ALBERT – COMMUNITY CENTRE

(No. B/1434) Mr Y. Varma (First Member for Mahebourg and Plaine Magnien) asked the Minister of Social Security, National Solidarity and Senior Citizens Welfare & Reform Institutions whether in regard to the proposed construction of a new building to house the community centre in Mare d'Albert, she will state where matters stand.

Mrs Bappoo: Mr Speaker, Sir, the request for the proposed construction of a new building to house the centre has already been transferred to the National Development Unit (NDU). I am being informed by the NDU that consultations are still on to identify an appropriate site.

SOUILLAC – UNION SUGAR ESTATE - VRS I & II

(No. B/1436) Mr V. Mardemootoo (Second Member for Rivière des Anguilles and Souillac) asked the Minister of Agro Industry, Food Production and Security whether in regard to the Voluntary Retirement Scheme 1 at Souillac, near Texamon, he will state where matters stand.

Mr Faugoo: Mr Speaker, Sir, I shall, with your permission, reply to PQs B/1436 together with B/1437 as both relate to Voluntary Retirement Scheme at Souillac.

As the hon. Member is aware, 265 employees of the Union Sugar Estate Co. Ltd. voluntarily terminated their employment under VRS I in December 2001 and were offered land on two sites at Lady Barkly, Souillac. Infrastructure works on the sites were completed in 2006, but the workers subsequently did not want to take the land because the soil was compacted in certain areas and they feared that they would have to incur additional costs for the construction of their houses. It is worth to note that the necessary tests were undertaken to ensure that the sites were suitable for construction.

After numerous meetings and consultations between all stakeholders, an agreement was reached in December 2006 for a new site to be offered to the workers along the Savanne Road and Lady Barkly Road and adjacent to site No. 2. I am advised that the company had applied for a morcellement permit in April 2008 and received a Letter of Intent from the Morcellement Board on 05 November 2008. The company is in the process of launching a tender for the development of the site for the provision of infrastructure and their services. The works are expected to begin in March 2009.

With regard to VRS II, 140 employees have opted for retirement and they have received their cash compensation in December 2007. These employees have agreed to take the land at Lady Barkly, Souillac, i.e. the land initially earmarked for VRS I employees which was refused by them. The drawing of lot exercise was completed on 07 May 2008. Union Sugar Estate has applied for a modified Morcellement Permit in March 2008 and once the permit is obtained, the title deed will be prepared.

Mr Mardemootoo: Mr Speaker, Sir, for the first lot, the draw was made about 14 months ago for VRS II; until now, they have not received their contracts. For the second lot, the VRS I, they were supposed to make the draw in August 2008, but till now nothing has been done and these people are still waiting when the draw will be made. Can the hon. Minister see to it that at least the Morcellement Board can push up for the clearance permit?

Mr Faugoo: Mr Speaker, Sir, the Morcellement Board does not fall under my Ministry, but, however, I am going to look into that.

SOUILLAC – UNION SUGAR ESTATE - VRS II

(No. B/1437) Mr V. Mardemootoo (Second Member for Rivière des Anguilles and Souillac) asked the Minister of Agro Industry, Food Production and Security whether in regard to the Voluntary Retirement Scheme 2 at Souillac, he will state where matters stand.

(Vide reply to PQ No. B/1436)

**MOKA/QUARTIER MILITAIRE – BY-ELECTION – POSTER
PANELS**

(No. B/1438) Mr N. Bodha (First Member for Vacoas and Floreal) asked the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism, Leisure and External Communications whether in regard to posters, he will state the facilities that have been provided island wise for the affixing thereof, indicating if specific measures have been taken in Constituency No. 8, Moka and Quartier Militaire, in connection with the forthcoming by-election.

The Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism, Leisure and External Communications (Mr X. L. Duval): Mr Speaker, Sir, I am informed that an adequate number of poster panels is being installed in various localities of the island.

The local authorities have arranged for the installation of some 285 poster panels in different areas around the island, out of these a total of 222 have already been installed. The installation of the remaining poster panels is in progress. Moreover and in addition, my Ministry has arranged for the installation of some 165 poster panels throughout the island. 150 of which are being sponsored totally by Standard Bank to the totalling tune of Rs1.5 m.

Mr Speaker, Sir, in view of the by-election in Constituency No. 8, Moka/Quartier Militaire, my Ministry has arranged for the installation of some 100 temporary poster panels in different localities of Moka/Quartier Militaire. These poster panels are over and above the 20 panels already installed by the Moka/Flacq District Council, my Ministry and the Standard Bank Ltd.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I wish to reassure the hon. Member that we shall arrange for the installation of additional poster panels, if and when the need arises.

SALE BY LEVY – ATTORNEYS AT LAW – COMMISSION

(No. B/1439) Mr S. Dayal (Second Member for Quartier Militaire and Moka) asked the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Empowerment whether in regard to the protection of the borrowers, he will state if he proposes to amend the law with a view to prohibiting the Attorneys at Law appearing in the Sale by Levy cases from claiming the ten per cent commission in cases where the amounts claimed do not exceed eight million rupees.

The Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Empowerment (Mr R. Sithanen): Mr Speaker, Sir, in my reply to PQ B/1285 on 25 November 2008, I stated that as from 07 March 2007 a credit agreement of a sum not exceeding Rs2 m. can no longer include an obligation on a borrower to pay to a law practitioner a fee of 10 per cent when he is served with a notice for the recovery of a debt.

Regarding the proposal made by the hon. Member, I have to reiterate the reply I made to a supplementary question on the same subject, namely that the implications will have to be looked into before any decision is taken and that such decisions are usually made at the time of Budget.

Mr Dayal: Mr Speaker, Sir, can I ask the hon. Vice-Prime Minister whether he has obtained legal advice regarding this and if in case it is so, is he ready to lay copy on the Table of the Assembly?

Dr. Sithanen: Legal advice on what?

Mr Dayal: On the issue of amending the law.

Dr. Sithanen: That's what I have said, Mr Speaker, Sir, that we have to look at all the implications. Usually such announcements are made after we have discussed all the implications, including the legal advice from the SLO. Any if any announcement is made, it will be made during the next Budget.

Mr Dayal: I will insist with the hon. Minister if he can seek legal advice and come to the House with a statement.

Dr. Sithanen: Mr Speaker, Sir, I have said that we have to go through the process and once we reach the end of the process, a decision will be made.

MARE CHICOSE INHABITANTS – LAND REALLOCATION

(No. B/1440) Mr M. Dowarkasing (Third Member for Curepipe & Midlands) asked the Minister of Local Government, Rodrigues & Outer Islands whether, in regard to the project for the reallocation of land to the inhabitants of Mare Chicose, he will state where matters stand.

(Withdrawn)

JOACHIM, CAMP CAVAL & WOOTON - COMMUNITY CENTRES

(No. B/1441) Mr M. Dowarkasing (Third Member for Curepipe & Midlands) asked the Minister of Environment & National Development Unit whether, in regard to the community centres situated at Joachim, Camp Caval and Wooton, he will state where matters stand.

(Withdrawn)

**PAMPLEMOUSSES AND RIVIERE DU REMPART - MARKET
FAIRS – HAWKERS**

(No. B/1442) Mrs M. Martin (Second Member for Curepipe & Midlands) asked the Minister of Local Government, Rodrigues & Outer Islands whether, in regard to the market fairs at Pamplemousses and Rivière du Rempart, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the District Council of Pamplemousses and Rivière du Rempart, information as to the arrangements made for the allocation of stalls to the hawkers operating thereat.

Dr. David: Mr Speaker, Sir, I am informed by the Pamplemousses/Rivière du Rempart District Council that no hawker has been authorised to operate at the market fairs of Pamplemousses and Rivière du Rempart.

Mr Bodha: Mr Speaker, Sir, can the hon. Minister state whether we don't have some hawkers selling vegetables and some others called general merchandise hawkers who have been given authorisation, under condition, to operate on Saturdays and Sundays in Pamplemousses and Rivière du Rempart?

Dr. David: No, Mr Speaker, Sir.

Mrs Martin: Mr Speaker, Sir, can I ask the hon. Minister whether there was any agreement to find potential land, in order to accommodate hawkers in excess for the Pamplemousses and Rivière du Rempart fairs?

Dr. David: Mr Speaker, Sir, ...

Mr Bodha: Mr Speaker, Sir, may I ask the hon. Minister whether he is aware that we have hawkers operating at the Pamplemousses and Rivière du Rempart fairs on Saturdays and Sundays?

Dr. David: Mr Speaker, Sir, the hon. Member is referring to authorisation given to the hawkers to operate inside the market on Saturdays. I checked, and that's not the case.

HOTELS (NEW) – CONSTRUCTION

(No. B/1443) Mrs M. Martin (Second Member for Curepipe & Midlands) asked the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism, Leisure and External Communications whether, in regard to the new projects for hotel constructions, he will state the number thereof which have been approved as at to date, indicating where matters stand as to the implementation thereof, in each case.

The Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism, Leisure and External Communications (Mr X. L. Duval): Mr Speaker, Sir, in the reply which I made to Parliamentary Question B/765 at the sitting of the House on 01 July 2008, I had mentioned that 27 new hotel projects were either being constructed or were still at project stage.

I am informed that, out of these, two hotels have already been constructed and are operational. Four others are presently under construction, and the construction of six other hotels is expected to start by next year.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the detailed information regarding the status of the other hotel projects is being compiled and will be laid in the Library of the National Assembly in due course.

NATIONAL LIBRARY – NEW BUILDING

(No. B/1444) Mrs M. Martin (Second Member for Curepipe & Midlands) asked the Minister of Education, Culture & Human Resources whether, in regard to the project for the construction of a new building to house the National Library, he will state where matters stand.

(Withdrawn)

FOREIGN MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS – VISITS TO MAURITIUS

(No. B/1445) **Mrs M. Martin (Second Member for Curepipe & Midlands)** asked the Minister of Health & Quality of Life whether, in regard to the medical practitioners visiting Mauritius to operate the patients who are otherwise inoperable locally, he will state –

- (a) the number thereof, since January 2008 to date, indicating
 - (i) their different fields of expertise;
 - (ii) the number of Mauritian patients operated by each of them, and
- (b) the proposed number thereof who will be visiting Mauritius in 2009, indicating their respective fields of expertise.

Dr. Jeetah: Mr Speaker Sir, I am informed that 16 different foreign medical teams have visited us from January 2008 to date. In fact, these teams comprised 27 foreign medical practitioners, specialised in different fields such as cardiology, ophthalmology, paediatric urology, orthopaedics and plastic maxillo-facial surgery. From January 2008 to date, they have operated upon 294 Mauritian patients.

With your permission, Mr Speaker, Sir, I am tabling a copy of the different visits of the foreign medical teams from January 2008 to date, indicating the number of patients operated upon by each of them.

As regards part (b) of the question, I wish to inform the House that we are expecting the same teams to come to Mauritius in the course of next year.

Mrs Martin: Mr Speaker, Sir, may I ask the hon. Minister on which criteria are these foreign medical practitioners allowed to come to Mauritius?

Dr. Jeetah: In terms of whether we have the skills in Mauritius or not, and also depending on whether they are available to come to Mauritius, Mr Speaker, Sir.

Mrs Martin: Mr Speaker, Sir, may I ask the hon. Minister, on average, how many patients are actually treated by one medical team?

Dr. Jeetah: Mr Speaker, Sir, these are very specialised techniques. The total number is 294. On top of these very sophisticated operations, they also train the medical personnel of our hospitals, here in Mauritius.

Mrs Martin: Mr Speaker, Sir, may I ask the hon. Minister whether there is a waiting list of patients who are awaiting treatment and surgical operations in Mauritius, especially those people who don't have the means and who are not financed by Government to go abroad?

Dr. Jeetah: Mr Speaker, Sir, there is, of course, a waiting list. I don't have all the information, but I can submit it at a later stage. In fact, what actually happens is that, when these very able doctors come to Mauritius, they not only train our medical staff, but they also do the operations, and that reduces the waiting list. This brings about a big saving to the country as well.

Mrs Martin: Mr Speaker, Sir, may I ask the hon. Minister what are the criteria that are used in order to select the patients who are supposed to be treated and those who are still on the waiting list for years and years?

Dr. Jeetah: Mr Speaker, Sir, that's a technical matter. I would like to leave it to the doctors who actually take the decisions.

Mr Jhugroo: Mr Speaker, Sir, may I ask the hon. Minister which cardiologist teams are actually coming to Mauritius to operate at the Cardiac Centre?

Dr. Jeetah: Mr Speaker, Sir, we have had, for example, Dr. Mustapha Sezen, Dr. Sinan Demirtas from Turkey, Dr. Giuseppe Cinirella, Dr. Kalangos from Switzerland, Dr. Salvatore Agati from Italy. There is a host of doctors.

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Mr Speaker, Sir, may I ask the hon. Minister whether private clinics also have recourse to these doctors?

Dr. Jeetah: I am not aware, Mr Speaker, Sir, but I can find out.

Mrs Martin: Mr Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister has already said that there is a waiting list and that the criteria are to be determined by the professionals. But, can Government give special consideration to those people who cannot be treated in Mauritius, who don't have the means, who are waiting sometimes for ten years in a row, and whose lives are in danger? Can the hon. Minister have a special look at that, and then put them on an emergency list?

Dr. Jeetah: Mr Speaker, Sir, I would have thought that they had looked at somebody who has been waiting for ten years. But, I will certainly look into it.

At 12.55 p.m the sitting was suspended.

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

BOIS CHERI ROAD - PETIT VERGER – PAVEMENTS – CONSTRUCTION

(No. B/1447) Mr S. Dayal (Second Member for Quartier Militaire and Moka) asked the Minister Public Infrastructure, Land Transport and Shipping whether, in regard to the construction of pavements along the Bois Chéri Road, from the residence of Mr F. W. towards Petit Verger, he will state where matters stand.

Mr Bachoo: Mr Speaker, Sir, 900m of footpath have already been provided.

The remaining 250m will be undertaken once land acquisition procedures are completed and CEB poles are displaced.

LE POUCE ROAD, PETIT VERGER – “PARCOURS DE SANTE”

(No. B/1448) Mr S. Dayal (Second Member for Quartier Militaire and Moka) asked the Minister of Environment and National Development Unit whether he will state if he will consider the advisability of setting up a “*Parcours de Santé*” at Le Pouce Road, Petit Verger, St Pierre.

Mr Bundhoo: Mr Speaker, Sir, due consideration will be given to the request. A feasibility study shall be carried out involving all stakeholders.

Mr Dayal: Can I know from the hon. Minister when the feasibility study will start?

Mr Bundhoo: I would imagine before the end of this year.

HIV & AIDS TEST – CASES

(No. B/1450) Mrs L. D. Dookun-Luchoomun (Third Member for La Caverne and Phoenix) asked the Minister of Health and Quality of Life whether, in regard to the HIV and AIDS test, he will state the number of adults and minors, respectively, who have undergone same during the years 2006, 2007 and 2008 indicating the number of cases tested positive, in each case.

Dr. Jeetah: Mr Speaker, Sir, with your permission, I am tabling a copy of the information asked for.

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: Because it is only three or four values that are required, could the hon. Minister give the values for at least 2008?

Dr. Jeetah: Mr Speaker, Sir, I did count, there are about 45 figures, but I will give the hon. Member the main figures. For the year 2006: 87,150 adults and 692 minors were tested for HIV, out of these 542 adults and 9 minors were found HIV positive. In 2007, 90,321 adults and 877 minors were tested for HIV, out of these 558 adults and 10 minors were found positive. For the period January to September 2008, 62,248 adults and 747 minors were tested for HIV, out of these 426 adults and 11 minors were found positive. I would like add, Mr Speaker, Sir, that HIV tests are also carried out in the private sector and from information obtained the number of tests carried out in that sector was 1,239 in 2006, out of which 6 were positive. There were 3,508 in 2007, out of which 15 were positive, and 4,134 from January to December 2008, out of which 24 were positive.

I would like to further inform the House that all positive cases detected in the private sector are referred to Government Central Health Laboratory at Victoria Hospital for confirmation, management and statistical records. As such, the positive cases I have mentioned in the statistics for public health services to include those detected in the private sector.

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: May I ask the hon. Minister whether any of these minors are still school going students?

Dr. Jeetah: Mr Speaker, Sir, I did not bring the details, but I can certainly find out. I can't give any more information than just figures.

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: May I ask the hon. Minister whether any HIV/awareness campaign is being carried out in secondary schools and perhaps even in primary schools to try to explain to students of the risks that they may face?

Dr. Jeetah: I guess, Mr Speaker, Sir, there is an *éventail de campagne* through the NGOs, Ministry, etc., to make people aware of HIV/AIDS. Furthermore, Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to add that we have, through our

mobile clinic, introduced counselling as well as testing for HIV, diabetes, etc, and the target is to reach 100,000 persons next year.

Mrs Dookun-Luchoomun: I have one last question, Mr Speaker, Sir. May I ask the hon. Minister whether the Ministry on its own is not carrying out any form of awareness campaign for students in colleges?

Dr. Jeetah: I will have to liaise with my colleague, the Minister of Education, and we will look into this aspect as well. As I said, Mr Speaker, Sir, with our mobile clinic, we have been to factories, schools, all around the country actually.

Mrs Martin: May I ask the hon. Minister whether he is considering to make HIV testing compulsory in case where people are getting married?

Dr. Jeetah: The law as such at the moment does not allow that, but we will have to look into it.

Mr Léopold: Can I know from the hon. Minister whether the figures that he has spelt out include also those cases from Rodrigues or is it only for the island of Mauritius?

Dr. Jeetah: That's a good question, Mr Speaker, Sir. I will have to check whether Rodrigues is included.

Mr Speaker: Time is over!