

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

BRIDGES – UPGRADING

(No. B/188) Mr S. Lauthan (Third Member for Port Louis Maritime and Port Louis East) asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Public Infrastructure, Land Transport and Shipping whether, in regard to the low level bridges, he will state if consideration will be given to have them raised with a view to ensuring better safety and security of the users, in the light of the recent cases of drowning.

**Reply:** The Road Development Authority has reported that around twenty bridges around the island were flooded during the torrential rains of 26 March 2008. The overflow was, in most cases, due to obstructions caused by litter and garbage rather than the capacity of our bridges. The National Development Unit is addressing the problem.

The Road Development Authority has an ongoing programme for the upgrading of all bridges prone to flooding or showing signs of defects. A complete inventory exercise of bridges on classified roads was started in August 2007 for the preparation of a three-year programme for reconstruction and rehabilitation works but urgent works have already started at Astroa Bridge, Pont Lardier and Antoinette Bridge at Barlow.

The observations made during the recent floods and the need to raise the level of our bridges will be taken into consideration in the course of the preparation of the three-year programme.

NOUVELLE FRANCE ROUNDABOUT/SSR INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT -  
STREET LIGHTING

(No. B/191) Mr S. Lauthan (Third Member for Port Louis Maritime and Port Louis East) asked the Minister of Local Government whether, he is aware that the street lighting from the Nouvelle France roundabout to the Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam International Airport is till defective as at to date and, if so, will he, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Grand Port/Savanne District Council, information as to where matters stand as regards the repairs thereof.

**Reply:** I am informed by the Grand Port/Savanne District Council that the street lighting network along the motorway from Nouvelle France to SSR International Airport was inaugurated on 23 July 2003 and entrusted to the Council only on 26 May 2005.

The House may wish to note that the Council was reluctant to take over the network due to defects noted in the lighting poles and lamps. Sporadic breakdowns were noted in the lighting network. Surveys carried out by the Council had revealed that the problem was attributable to leakages of water from the top of the electric poles thus causing short circuits and the Council had addressed this problem. Until March this year, no short circuit was noted. However, this problem having re-occurred, the Council is of the view that the leakage is only one of the factor that may be causing such breakdown and there may be other causes. Hence, a joint survey is presently being carried out with the engineer of the CEB to detect the causes of the problem and resolve it once for all.

#### **MAURITIUS HIGH COMMISSION, LONDON - MR Z. R. – POSTING**

**(No. B/204) Mr G. Gunness (Third Member for Montagne Blanche and GRSE)** asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism, Leisure and External Communications whether he will state if Mr Z. R. has been posted at the Mauritius High Commission, London, and, if so, indicate –

- (a) in which capacity, and
- (b) the terms and conditions of his posting.

*(Withdrawn)*

#### **PALMAR LIVESTOCK STATION – LAND - REDISTRIBUTION**

**(No. B/205) Mr G. Gunness (Third Member for Montagne Blanche and GRSE)** asked the Minister of Agro Industry and Fisheries whether, in regard to the Palmar Livestock Station, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain information as to if it has ceased its operations and if the land it occupied has been redistributed to other investors and if so, indicate -

- (a) the name of the investors;
- (b) the acreage of land allocated to each of them, and
- (c) the project in each case.

*(Withdrawn)*

### **EDEN COLLEGE (BOYS), QUATRE BORNES – SCHOOL LIBRARY**

**(No. B/206) Mr G. Gunness (Third Member for Montagne Blanche and GRSE)** asked the Minister of Education and Human Resources whether in regard to the teachers working at the Eden College (Boys), Quatre Bornes, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Private Secondary School Authority, information as to if a written authorisation from the administration is required for them to have access to the school library and, if so, if this is normal practice.

*(Withdrawn)*

### **TROU D'EAU DOUCE PUBLIC BEACH – TUCK SHOPS, LIMEKILN, ETC.**

**(No. B/207) Mr G. Gunness (Third Member for Montagne Blanche and GRSE)** asked the Minister of Local Government whether in regard to the Trou d'Eau Douce public beach, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Beach Authority, information as to if –

- (a) the Tuck shops constructed thereat have been pulled down, and
- (b) the limekiln has been rented for any commercial purpose.

*(Withdrawn)*

### **PONT COLVILLE DEVEREL & GRNW BRIDGES – REPAIRS**

**(No. B/208) Mr S. Dayal (Second Member for Quartier Militaire and Moka)** asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Public Infrastructure, Land Transport and Shipping whether in regard to the Pont Colville Deverel Bridge and the Grand River North West Bridge, he will state when maintenance and/or renovation works were last carried out thereat.

**Reply:** I am informed by the Road Development Authority that minor repairs and rehabilitation works have been last effected to the Colville Deverel Bridge between May and October 2000.

The new bridge in Grand River North West has not undergone any major works except for routine maintenance. The last intervention was made on 25 March 2008.

## **HORTENSIA ROAD & ROSE AVENUE, VERDUN - DRAIN WORKS**

(No. B/209) Mr S. Dayal (Second Member for Quartier Militaire and Moka) asked the Minister of Environment and National Development Unit whether in regard to the drain works to be carried out at the Hortensia Road and Rose Avenue at Verdun and near the Shivala, known as Ganesh Mandir, at l'Espérance, Quartier Militaire, he will state when they will start.

**Reply:** I have been informed by the Moka/Flacq District Council that –

- (i) there exists a cross drain across Hortensia Road at Verdun. However, the drain has been clogged and requires reconstruction. Furthermore, downstream there is need to carry out clearing and dredging in view of sedimentation and the overgrowth of weeds. The estimated cost for the clearing and dredging work will be of the order of Rs400,000.
- (ii) A new surface run off drain must be constructed along Rose Avenue at Verdun on a length of about 125 mts up to the existing drain along the main road. The estimated cost for the provision of the drain to link with the drain along the main road will be to the tune of Rs200,000.
- (iii) Near Shivala at L'Esperance, Quartier Militaire, there exists a cross drain, which has been damaged downstream and is heavily silted. The estimated cost of the re-opening and reconstruction of the cross drain over approximately 50 mts will be around Rs75,000.

The schemes will necessitate an overall amount of Rs675,000. I would like to inform the House that after discussion with the Moka/Flacq District Council, I am arranging to seek the authority of Ministry of Finance and Economic Development to meet the expense involved from the National Land Drainage vote of my Ministry and to liaise with the District Council of Moka/Flacq for the execution of the drain projects.

## **HEALTH INSTITUTIONS - INFANT FEEDING PRACTICES**

(No. B/210) Dr. M. Husnoo (Second Member for Port Louis Maritime & Port Louis East) asked the Minister of Health & Quality of Life whether, in regard to the infant milk Formula 1, he is aware that some importing and distributing companies are using aggressive marketing campaigns to encourage the use thereof in Government and private health institutions and, if so, if his Ministry will take remedial measures to ensure that these practices do not prejudice breastfeeding.

**Reply:** The reply to the question is in the negative. Access to marketing representatives of infant milk formula companies in health institutions is prohibited. Moreover, I am informed that this is also the case in private health institutions.

In fact, in relation to infant feeding practices, my Ministry advocates exclusive breastfeeding up to six months and continued breastfeeding up to two years. All healthy babies born to healthy mothers are exclusively breastfed in public health institutions up to their discharge. This is implemented by the Ministry in collaboration with MAPBIN, an NGO.

This policy emanates from the Innocenti Declaration, to which Mauritius has adhered to since 1990. The measures recommended in that Declaration are being implemented in Mauritius.

My Ministry is sparing no effort to promote breastfeeding. One concrete example is the availability of a breastfeeding counsellor from MAPBIN in the breastfeeding clinics set up in the five regional hospitals.

Regular training workshops are also organised by my Ministry for the personnel of both public and private health institutions for the promotion and management of breastfeeding.

Besides, there is a policy which prohibits advertisement on TV, radio and in the press.

Furthermore, my Ministry is currently working on a draft legislation to ensure safe and adequate nutrition for infants, including the promotion and establishment of breastfeeding as well as the regulation of marketing of breast milk substitutes. It is expected that the enactment of the proposed legislation will go a long way towards the promotion of breastfeeding.

### **FLOOD PRONE AREAS - LIST**

**(No. B/211) Dr. R. Mungur (Second Member for Flacq & Bon Accueil)** asked the Minister of Environment & National Development Unit whether, in regard to torrential rainfalls, he will state if he will consider having a flood map prepared with a view to determining the flood prone areas within the coastal regions to facilitate evacuation.

**Reply:** The study on the land drainage system of the island of Mauritius commissioned by the Ministry of Public Utilities and conducted between July 2001 and February 2003 identified 326 flood prone areas across the island including the coastal regions. The drawings of these 326 areas were also provided in maps according to the respective areas of jurisdiction of local authorities.

But the flood prone areas need regular updating since with development these areas evolve. According to procedures laid down by the Cyclone & Other Natural Disasters Committee placed under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister's Office, local authorities are expected to carry out an exercise to produce a recent list of areas prone to flooding in their respective regions of responsibility and to communicate such information to the NDU of my Ministry.

Note is being taken of the proposal of the hon. Member. I contemplate to take up the proposal with the Ministry of Local Government, local authorities, the Water Resources Unit of the Ministry of Public Utilities and the cartographic section of the Ministry of Housing & Lands.

## SPORTS ACT – GOVT. POLICY

(No. B/212) Dr. K. Babajee (Third Member for Savanne & Black River) asked the Minister of Youth & Sports whether, in regard to the Sports Act, he will state when it will be revisited to ensure that it meets the aspirations of the sporting community, in line with the Government Programme.

*(Withdrawn)*

## GREEN WASTE COMPOSTING PLANT

(No. B/213) Dr. K. Babajee (Third Member for Savanne & Black River) asked the Minister of Environment & National Development Unit whether, in regard to the green waste, he will state if green waste composting plants will be set up with a view to lessening the reliance on landfills.

**Reply:** Waste minimisation measures including composting and recycling form part of my Ministry's strategy for solid waste management.

In this context, following a compost market study, the proposal for the setting-up of a composting plant for green waste on a pilot basis was retained by my Ministry.

The recruitment of a Transaction Adviser to undertake a comprehensive feasibility study for the construction and management of composting plants and preparation of bid documents on a PPP basis was initiated in October 2005.

However, in the meantime, a private company, namely Solid Waste Recycling Ltd, expressed interest in the setting-up of a composting plant at no cost for the production and distribution of compost. A letter of intent was subsequently issued by the Board of Investment for this project.

The waste supply agreement between the promoter and my Ministry is being finalised.

This composting project and other minimisation measures are likely to lessen the reliance on the landfill, as it will save valuable void space at the landfill, increasing the lifespan of the Mare Chicose landfill by an additional period of one to two years.

## ILO – NATIONAL PAY COUNCIL – REPORT

(No. B/214) Mr A. Ganoo (First Member for Savanne and Black River) asked the Minister of Labour, Industrial Relations & Employment whether he has taken cognizance of the adverse report of the International Labour Organisation on the National Pay Council and, if so, will he consider the advisability of doing away with the Council and revert back to tripartite negotiations for the determination of the salary compensation payable to workers.

**Reply:** I have to inform the House that to date I have not received any official communication whatsoever from the International Labour Organisation (ILO) relating to the National Pay Council (NPC). However, I have taken cognizance of a report posted on the website of the ILO concerning the recommendation its Committee on Freedom of Association on a complaint made against the Government of Mauritius by the General Workers Federation.

It is to be noted from the report that at paragraph 927 the complainant (General Workers Federation) requested the Committee on Freedom of Association to recommend the following –

- (a) the dissolution of the NPC which has been instituted unilaterally in violation of ILO Convention No. 98;
- (b) exclusive use of the inflation rate criterion to determine the national wage adjustment, and
- (c) reinstatement of the previous National Tripartite Committee to determine wage adjustment based on inflation rate.

The Committee on Freedom of Association has not found that there has been any violation of ILO Convention 98 as was claimed by the GWF.

The Committee has, however, recommended that the Government of Mauritius takes a renewed initiative with the social partners, based on representativity, with a view to holding in-depth discussions on ways and means to improve the functioning, composition and objectives of the NPC which, as the Committee on Freedom of Association mentions itself at para. 957 of its report, has been established and functioning since last year

The hon. Member will, therefore, no doubt, agree with me that, in the light of the recommendation made, the question of doing away with the NPC and reverting to the National Tripartite Committee for the determination of salary compensation payable to workers does not arise.

Members on the NPC were appointed in May last year. It was already my intention before the remaining one month to renew the initiative as proposed by the Committee on Freedom of Association. I am sending to the representatives of workers, a communication in that respect today.

## **EPIDEMIC DISEASES – SANITARY & HEALTH MEASURES**

**(No. B/215) Mrs M. Martin (Second Member for Curepipe and Midlands)** asked the Minister of Health and Quality of Life whether, in regard to epidemic diseases such as malaria and chikungunya, he will state the sanitary and health measures his Ministry is taking to prevent the surge thereof, following the torrential rainfalls which occurred on Wednesday 26 March 2008.

*(Withdrawn)*

## **CUREPIPE & MIDLANDS – LAND DRAINAGE PROGRAMME**

**(No. B/216) Mrs M. Martin (Second Member for Curepipe and Midlands)** asked the Minister of Environment and National Development Unit whether, in regard to the projects under the Land Drainage Programme in Constituency No. 17, Curepipe and Midlands, he will –

- (a) state the number thereof,
  - (i) initiated since June 2006;
  - (ii) expected to be completed this year, and
- (b) give a list thereof, indicating the costs involved.

**Reply:** The information sought is being compiled and will be placed in the Library of the National Assembly as soon as it will be ready.

## **RODRIGUES – MS K. A. – EXAMINATION FEES**

**(No. B/217) Mr A. Nancy (First Member for Rodrigues)** asked the Minister of Social Security, National Solidarity and Senior Citizens Welfare & Reform Institutions whether, in regard to the subsidy on examination fees, she will state if same has been granted in respect of one Ms K. A. of Maréchal College, Rodrigues, and, if so, if she is entitled to same and if not, if an inquiry has been carried out thereinto and the outcome thereof.

**Reply:** Miss K. A. of Maréchal, whose mother is a beneficiary of social aid, has benefitted from payment of School Certificate Examination fees.

Given the fact that children of beneficiaries of social aid are eligible for full payment of examination fees, Miss K.A. was granted full payment of examination fees.



## CUREPIPE – MARKET - CONSTRUCTION

**(No. B/218) Mrs M. Martin (Second Member for Curepipe & Midlands)** asked the Minister of Local Government whether, in regard to the project for the construction of a new market at Curepipe, he will state where matters stand.

**Reply:** I am informed that the Municipality of Curepipe has on 16 June 2006 decided to construct a multi-storeyed building on the site occupied by the existing market at Chasteauneuf Street, which will *inter alia* house a new market under the Public Private Partnership. In this connection, the Municipal Council has already approached the PPP Unit of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development.

## CUREPIPE & MIDLANDS – LAND SURVEY EXERCISE

**(No. B/219) Mrs M. Martin (Second Member for Curepipe & Midlands)** asked the Minister of Housing & Lands whether, in regard to identifying available State land in the Constituency No. 17, Curepipe & Midlands, he will state if his Ministry is conducting a land survey exercise and, if so –

- (a) table a list of the regions where such surveys are being carried out, and
- (b) state if any land for agricultural purpose has been identified at Mon Bois, 16 Mile.

*(Withdrawn)*

## HOTEL PROJECTS – NORTHERN REGION

**(No. B/220) Mr N. Bodha (First Member for Vacoas & Floreal)** asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism, Leisure & External Communications whether, in regard to the projects for hotel constructions in the northern region since July 2005 to date, he will state –

- (a) the number thereof which have been approved, and
- (b) where matters stand as to the implementation thereof.

**Reply:** With regard to part (a) of the question, I am informed that according to our records, eight (8) hotel projects have been processed and approved by my Ministry since July 2005 to date.

With regard to part (b), I am arranging for the information in respect to the status of implementation of the projects to be tabled.

## **BUILDING MATERIALS - PRICE**

(No. B/221) **Mr N. Bodha (First Member for Vacoas & Floreal)** asked the Minister of Women's Rights, Child Development, Family Welfare & Consumer Protection whether he will state if there will be a reduction in the price of concrete blocks and other building materials in which cement is used, as a result of the fall in the price of cement.

**Reply:** Following the fall in the price of cement, some companies have already reduced the price of pre-mixed concrete by an average of Rs100 per metre cube. As for the price of concrete blocks and other building materials, the new prices are being compiled by the different companies and same will be published in the coming days.

As Minister responsible for Consumer Protection, it is my duty to ensure that the fall in the price of a raw material such as cement impacts positively on the retail prices of related building materials. Consequently, I already had a first meeting with some of the manufacturers and I am convening a second meeting on this Thursday with all the manufacturers of concrete blocks and other cement-based building materials to discuss on the proposed prices of these items.

### **DR IDRICE GOUMANY MUNICIPAL CENTRE – AIR CONDITIONING SYSTEM.**

(No. A/1) **Mr S. Lauthan (Third Member Port Louis Maritime and Port Louis East)** asked the Minister of Local Government whether he is aware that the air conditioning system of the Dr. Idrice Goumany Municipal Centre is out of use and, if so, will he for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Municipal Council of Port Louis, information as to the remedial measures that will be taken.

**Reply:** I am informed by the Municipality of Port Louis that the air conditioning system at the Dr. Idrice Goomany Municipal Centre is generally in good working condition.

I am also informed that two units are defective and need to be replaced. In this connection, tenders for the purchase of two new air conditioners are being launched and same will be installed before the end of this financial year.

### **MILITARY ROAD– HANDRAILS & HUMPS**

(No. A/2) **Mr S. Lauthan (Third Member for Port Louis Maritime and Port Louis East)** asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Public Infrastructure, Land Transport and Shipping whether he will state if consideration will be given for the setting up of a hump at Military Road, Cité Martial, Port Louis, in the vicinity of the community centre.

**Reply:** I have been informed by the Traffic Management and Road Safety Unit that the speed limit along Military road is 40 km per hour and that there are handrails and a hump at 150 m from the community centre. Footpaths have also been provided on the road opposite the community centre.

However, the Traffic Management and Road Safety Unit will carry out a survey to determine other road safety and traffic measures to improve safety of road users.