

## WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

ANJALAY COOPEN STADIUM – RALLY – ADVERTISING  
CAMPAIGN

(No. B/848) Mrs A. Navarre-Marie (First Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence & Home Affairs, Minister of Civil Service & Administrative Reforms and Minister of Rodrigues & Outer Islands whether, in regard to the rally held on Saturday 05 and Sunday 06 July 2008, at the Anjalay Coopen Stadium, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation, information as to the reasons why an advertising campaign started in relation thereto on radio/television was discontinued two days before the rally.

**Reply:** I am informed by the Director-General of the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation that the advertising campaign in relation to the rally held on 05 and 06 July 2008 at the Anjalay Coopen Stadium was never discontinued on the MBC Radio. The campaign ran from 06 June 2008 to 06 July 2008.

I am further informed by the Director-General that, following complaints received from different quarters, it was deemed appropriate not to pursue the television broadcasting campaign concerning that event on 04 and 05 July 2008 and this in compliance with the provisions of the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation Act.

**SSR INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT & PORT - MAURITIAN &  
FOREIGN NATIONALS – FIREARMS, OFFENSIVE WEAPONS –  
ARREST**

(No. B/849) Mrs F. Jeewa-Daureeawoo (Third Member for Stanley & Rose Hill) asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence & Home Affairs, Minister of Civil Service & Administrative Reforms and Minister of Rodrigues & Outer Islands whether, in regard to firearms and other offensive weapons, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Police, information as to the number of Mauritian and foreign nationals who have been arrested at the Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam International Airport and at the Port for being in possession thereof, since 2006 to date, indicating the additional measures that will be taken to reinforce the control thereof.

**Reply:** I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that, since 2006 to date, 17 persons, including 7 foreigners, have been arrested for illegal possession of firearms and offensive weapons at the SSR International Airport, and 10 persons, including 2 foreigners, have been arrested at the Port for the same offence.

I have time and again stated in this House that my Government remains fully committed to take all necessary steps to consolidate law and order in the country with a view to clamping down on violence, crimes and thefts. I wish to reassure the House that we will continue to focus our efforts to bring down the level of crimes and thefts in the country.

Everyone is conscious of the key role that firearms can play in transforming petty crimes into organised crimes and thus impacting negatively on our society. The Government has enacted the Firearms Act 2006 to give the legal framework to promote security, peace and order in the country. The new law has acted as a deterrent to effectively curb crime.

In this restless fight against crime, new measures are taken every time there is need to do so, and if so warranted by the situation. There is a National Civil Aviation Security Committee and a National Maritime and Harbour Security Committee under the Chair of the Secretary for Home Affairs to monitor constantly security situation in the Port and at the airport. The Committee sees to it that its recommendations are effectively implemented.

In the Port area, the following measures have been taken -

- a high security fence has been erected along the perimeter of the harbour;
- very strict access control measures with an identification system has been introduced. A Central Pass Office has been set up at the entrance of the port since February 2008. It issues passes 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;
- CCTV Cameras which covers the whole harbour area has become operational in June 2008. It is manned jointly by Police and the Mauritius Ports Authority;
- arriving containers are scanned by an X-ray machine by Customs;
- the lighting has been upgraded to the required standard to provide for more visibility;
- all the Units namely Police, NCG, CID, ADSU Customs and other Marine Agencies are working in close collaboration with one another; and
- National Coast Guard carries out search on vessels upon reasonable suspicion and also performs stop and search whilst performing lagoon, coastal and offshore patrol.

At the airport, the following measures have been taken -

- the arriving hold luggage of high risk flights are scanned by an X-ray machine before they are placed on the conveyor belt to be delivered to the passengers;
- 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;
- MRA Customs has been connected to the Passport and Immigration database to track down targeted passengers dealing with such traffic, and
- a CCTV Surveillance System has been installed to provide an efficient and reliable management tool to monitor operations.

In future, a Security Unit will be set up by the Mauritius Port Authority and which will be called upon to assist the Police in controlling the movement of people and vehicles inside the Port security limits. This Security Unit will be undertaking regular patrols to detect and deter unlawful acts with the assistance of Police.

Under the Indian Line of Credit, an Offshore Patrol Vessel will be acquired. The US Government has donated a fast patrol boat which will be delivered by April next year. These boats will enable the Coast Guard to carry out more effective search and patrol in and outside the port area.

The Customs Department has already initiated action to install a X-ray scanner at Rodrigues Airport, and one at the new ferry terminal at Caudan.

On the international level, there is interaction and exchange of information with Interpol whenever there are suspected firearms related cases. There is also an agreement with the Indian Ocean Commission Member States for a common point of contact, whereby sharing of information on illegal trafficking of firearms are carried out. Moreover, a new Agreement has recently been signed with France in respect of sharing of information and control of illegal trafficking of firearms.

I wish to reiterate to the House that I shall leave no stone unturned to tackle the problem of law and order and to make our citizens feel safe. This battle against crime can only be won with the collaboration of each and every one.

## **CONSULTANTS – LOCAL & OVERSEAS – ASSIGNMENT**

**(No. B/865) Mr R. Bhagwan (First Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière)** asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Finance & Economic Development whether, in regard to the local and overseas consultants, including the World Bank consultants, appointed by Government against payment of fees, since 2005 to date, he will give details of their respective assignments.

**Reply:** The information requested for is being compiled and will be tabled.

## ROCHE BOIS – UNOCCUPIED LAND – CLEANING

(No. A/10) Mr S. Lauthan (Third Member for Port Louis Maritime and Port Louis East) asked the Minister of Environment and National Development Unit whether he is aware that an unoccupied plot of land situated next to the *Apostolat de la Mer* building, in Roche Bois, represents an eyesore and, if so, will he state the measures that will be taken to have it cleaned.

**Reply:** The said plot of land has already been cleaned by the Mauritius Ports Authority.

## ROCHE BOIS – MOTORWAY – FLYOVER & HANDRAILS

(No. A/11) 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 motorway in Roche Bois, he will state if consideration will be given for

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- (a) improving the structure of the flyover situated thereat by replacing the steps with ramps for the benefit of the disabled persons and the senior citizens, and
- (b) putting up handrails in the middle of the strip of land separating the motorway.

**Reply:** The footbridge on the Motorway at Roche Bois was constructed in the late seventies during the implementation of the Northern Entrance Road, now part of Motorway M2. The Road Development Authority (RDA) does not propose to remove the steps at this stage. It is to be noted that the proposal to have ramps was also made during the mandate of the previous Government, but was not pursued. However, the provision of separate ramps will be considered during the upgrading of Motorway M2 from Quay D to Terre Rouge in financial year 2009/10.

With regard to the provision of handrails, the Traffic Management and Road Safety Unit (TMRSU) awarded the contract to Trio Development Limited, District Contractor, for the supply and fixing of about 1 km of handrails in the central verge of Motorway M2 in Roche Bois between the Mer Rouge and Cocoterie roundabouts in February 2008.

The works which are expected to be completed in August 2008 are not progressing as one of the sections of iron required for the manufacture of handrails is not currently available on the market.

It is to be noted that in the past, handrails were provided in the area of Mer Rouge and most of them have been stolen. The level of theft is high in the region.

Furthermore, the speed limit of 60km/h is not fully respected by drivers whilst most pedestrians tend to cross the road at grade.

#### **CITE ROCHE BOIS - CORNER LIGNE T & LIGNE S – DRAIN SLABS**

**(No. A/12) Mr S. Lauthan (Third Member for Port Louis Maritime and Port Louis East)** asked the Minister of Local Government whether he is aware that there is no slab over the drain at Corner Ligne T & Ligne S, in Cité Roche Bois, thereby representing a real danger to motorcyclists and pedestrians and, if so, will he, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Municipal Council of Port Louis, information as to if needful will be done for the drain to be covered.

**Reply:** I am informed by the Municipality of Port Louis that the drain at corner Ligne T and Ligne S in Cité Roche Bois is already covered with slab.

## ROCHE BOIS – PETANQUE PITCH

(No. A/13) Mr S. Lauthan (Third Member for Port Louis Maritime and Port Louis East) asked the Minister of Environment and National Development Unit whether he is aware that an unoccupied plot of land, situated behind the former Saint Martin Football Club, in Roche Bois, is being used as a dumping ground, thus preventing youngsters from playing *petanque* thereat and, if so, will he state the remedial measures that will be taken to have it cleaned.

**Reply:** The said plot of land was cleaned by the Municipal Council of Port Louis on 22 May 2008. During a joint site visit effected on 10 July 2008, it was observed that the Petanque pitch was clear, clean and well fenced.

## ST PIERRE, L'AGRÉMENT – DRAIN WORKS

(No. A/14) Mr S. Dayal (Second Member for Quartier Militaire & Moka) asked the Minister of Environment & National Development Unit whether, in regard to the project for drain works to be carried out along Moonsamy Road, L'Agrément, St Pierre, he will state when works are likely to start.

**Reply:** Under the land drainage programme of the current financial year consideration will be given to implement drain schemes at both Moonsamy Road, l'Agrément as well as Shivala Road, l'Agrément being given that both roads are quite near to each other in the locality.

Formalities were underway for a drain consultancy tender for the implementation of drain schemes. It is expected that the Central Procurement Board (CPB) will shortly finalise the drain consultancy tender exercise. Soon after the award of the consultancy service contract, we will embark on the drain schemes forming part of our drain programme for this financial year.

## **MOKA, LA SERPE ROAD – ROAD TARRING**

(No. A/15) **Mr S. Dayal (Second Member for Quartier Militaire & Moka)** asked the Minister of Environment & National Development Unit whether, in regard to the project for the upgrading and tarring of the road at Moka, commonly known as La Serpe Road, he will state when works are likely to start.

**Reply:** Following representations from inhabitants of the locality, repair work made up of Double Bituminous Seal Type was carried out to La Serpe Road, Moka.

Frequent rain during the recent rainy period has led to the damage of the road.

The resurfacing of the road is estimated to cost approximately Rs300,000. Consultations are being held with District Council Moka/Flacq to give consideration for the improvement of the road.

## **VERDUN, ALMA/QUARTIER MILITAIRE – HOUSING UNITS**

(No. A/16) **Mr S. Dayal (Second Member for Quartier Militaire & Moka)** asked the Minister of Housing & Lands whether he will state if he will consider the advisability of acquiring land in the vicinity of Verdun, Alma or Quartier Militaire for the construction of low cost housing units.

**Reply:** Identifying suitable land for implementing housing projects throughout the island is an on-going process, based on demand and other criteria like existing infrastructure and other utilities

The issue of acquiring land arises only if there is no State land available for the construction of low cost houses in regions where there are demands.

To remind, 523 housing units have, over the last ten years, been constructed and delivered in the regions of Dagotièrre, St Pierre and Vuillemin.

In the wake up of the 2008–2009 Budget Speech, Government has decided to revamp, consolidate, and strengthen the social housing schemes. In this context, a Social Housing Development Fund has been set up to receive and manage the 1000 arpents of land to be made available following Government/Mauritius Sugar Planters Association Agreement. The advisability of acquiring additional land will be considered if and when the need arises.