

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS**HINDU TEMPLES – STATUES - VANDALISM**

(No. B/1148) Mr G. Guinness (Third Member for Montagne Blanche and GRSE) 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 statues in the Hindu temples, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Police, information as to the number thereof which have been demolished by acts of vandalism, since January 2008 to date, indicating if inquiries have been carried out thereinto and the outcome thereof.

Reply: I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that since January 2008 to date, two cases of acts of vandalism pertaining to the demolition of statues in Hindu Temples have been reported to the Police on 27 July 2008. An enquiry has been carried out, but the perpetrators have not yet been identified.

With a view to preventing such acts of vandalism, regular patrols are being carried out by the local Police, CID, ERS and ADSU at staggered time during the day and night near these places of worship. Besides under the Police-Public Partnership Programme, persons responsible for places of worship, watchman, and people living in the neighbourhood of such places of worship are being sensitised on the issue of crime prevention.

I wish also to point out that section 181(3) and (4) of the Criminal Code Act provides for the offence of 'damaging monument', whereby destroying, mutilating, damaging or throwing away religious statues is punishable by imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year and a fine not exceeding Rs2,000. If the offence is committed inside a place of worship, it is punishable by imprisonment and a fine not exceeding Rs3,000. Furthermore, all types of larceny committed at a place of worship are governed by sections 301 to 309 of the Criminal Code Act.

**ROCHE BOIS POLICE STATION - ASSAULTS, LARCENY AND
LARCENY WITH VIOLENCE – REPORTED CASES**

(No. B/1149) Mr S. Lauthan (Third Member for Port Louis Maritime and Port Louis East) 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 assaults, larceny and larceny with violence committed in the regions falling under the jurisdiction of the Roche Bois Police Station, over the past two years, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Police, information as to the number of reported cases thereof.

Reply: I am informed that the Commissioner of Police has devised a more effective policing strategy which places emphasis on involvement of NGOs, the *Forces Vives*, the local communities and citizens in the region. Accordingly, in line with the Police-Public Partnership Policing, the Crime Prevention Unit and the personnel of Roche Bois Police station have conducted sensitisation programmes on issues pertaining to personal security and property protection. The population of Roche Bois and the surrounding areas have also been encouraged, *inter alia*, to set up the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme. Since 2006, some 2,900 inhabitants - nearly 30% of the population, of the various localities in the Roche Bois jurisdiction have participated in these programmes.

Furthermore, the Police is also present on the ground through patrols which are normally carried by the Divisional Support Unit, ERS, Traffic Unit (North), Local CID, Alpha Squad, *Police du Tourisme*, *Police du Transport* and *Brigades des Mineurs*. In addition, the Metropolitan Division (North), which includes Roche Bois Police station area, is currently benefiting from patrols by one section of the Special Supporting Unit between 1300 hours and 1800 hours. During these patrols, frequent stop and search and road block exercises are carried out.

I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that the number of cases of assaults, larceny with violence and other larcenies reported in the jurisdiction of the Roche Bois Police station from year 2006 to 14 August 2008 is as follows –

- Year 2006 - 289
- Year 2007 - 289
- Year 2008
(as at 14 August) - 160

However, the concerted and collaborative efforts have proved to be effective, and crime statistics of the Roche Bois jurisdiction have shown visible signs of improvement since 2005.

FOREIGNERS - IMMOVEABLE PROPERTIES – ACQUISITION

(No. B/1136) Mr S. Soodhun (Fifth Member for La Caverne and Phoenix) asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence & Home Affairs, Minister of Civil Service & Administrative Reforms and Minister of Rodrigues & Outer Islands whether he will state the number of foreigners who have acquired immoveable property in Mauritius, since the proclamation of the Business Facilitation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2006.

Reply: (The Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Finance & Economic Development): As the House is aware, under the Non-Citizens (Property Restriction) Act, a non-citizen cannot hold or purchase or acquire an immovable property in Mauritius without having obtained the written approval from the Prime Minister's Office to acquire the property

However, in so far as the acquisition of an immovable property for business purposes is concerned, with the promulgation of the Business Facilitation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2006, an investor registered with the Board of Investment would only require the Board's authorisation for the intended purchase.

I am informed that since the coming into force of the Act on 1 October 2006, the Board of Investment has approved 64 applications. Out of these, 55 companies have already acquired an immovable property. This represents a total investment of Rs3.6 billion.

AQUACULTURE MASTER PLAN – FISH FARMING

(No. B/1178) Mr J. C. Barbier (Third Member for GRNW and Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Agro Industry and Fisheries whether, in regard to the aquaculture projects, he will state the number of sites identified island wise for fish farming, indicating –

- (a) the projects which will be set up and the timeframe for their implementation, and
- (b) the number of applications received and for which regions.

Reply: The number of sites identified island wise in the Aquaculture Master Plan for fish farming are as follows –

- (a) 6 sites have been identified for inland aquaculture using sea water;
- (b) 2 sites for inland aquaculture using freshwater;
- (c) 12 sites in the lagoon of Mahebourg, and
- (d) 6 sites for offshore aquaculture.

However, in the amendments to the Fisheries and Marine Resources Act only eight fish farming zones have been earmarked for development.

With regard to part (a) of the question no other project has been set up in addition to the existing ones operated by the Ferme Marine de Mahebourg Ltd in the lagoon and one inland at the ex-La Ferme Fish Farm Experimental Station.

As for part (b) I am informed by the Board of Investment (BOI) that three applications have been received for floating fish cage culture at sea so far. However the three projects will have to be resubmitted in line with the guidelines for fish farming being developed by the Board of Investment together with the Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Environment and National Development Unit, the Board of Investment, the Ministry of Housing and Lands and my Ministry taking into account the sustainability and protection of the environment.

PLAINE MAGNIEN – FOOTBALL GROUND - RENOVATION

(No. B/1179) Mr Y. Varma (First Member for Mahebourg and Plaine Magnien) asked the Minister of Local Government whether, in regard to the proposed renovation of the football ground in Plaine Magnien, he will state where matters stand.

Reply: I am informed by the Grand Port/Savanne District Council that the chain link fencing of the football ground in Plaine Magnien which was fixed twenty years ago was corroded and as it represented a threat to members of the public, it had been removed on 15 March 2007.

I am informed that in view of the high cost involved for the replacement of the fencing, the Council has decided to implement same in phases. Accordingly, it had decided to replace the fencing at the back of the goal posts in the first instance. In this connection, the Council had already approved the disbursement of funds to finance same.

I am also informed that the construction of a cloakroom at this playground had been included in the list of projects for implementation during this financial year under the Program-Based Budget of the National Development Unit.

**SECONDARY SCHOOLS – EDUCATORS –
PRB REPORT - WORKING HOURS**

(No. B1180) Mr G. Lesjongard (Second Member for Port Louis North and Montagne Longue) asked the Minister of Education and Human Resources whether, in regard to the additional teaching time of thirty minutes daily in the secondary schools as per the recommendation of the Pay Research Bureau Report, he will state if his Ministry has set up a mechanism for the implementation thereof.

(Vide reply to PQ. No. B/1172)

HSC - MUSIC – EXAMINATION SUBJECT

(No. B/1181) Mr G. Lesjongard (Second Member for Port Louis North and Montagne Longue) asked the Minister of Education and Human Resources whether, in regard to the introduction of music as an examination subject at the Cambridge Higher School Certificate as from November 2009, he will state –

- (a) the colleges offering music at Form V level, and
- (b) the requirements for taking the subject at the Cambridge Higher School Certificate.

Reply: At present, music (both western and oriental) is taught as a subject only in Forms I and II. In the context of Curriculum Reforms, as from 2009, consideration will be given to students of Form III being taught music as a subject and if the process gathers momentum, it will be gradually extended to other classes culminating up to its introduction in HSC in year 2013 or earlier as the case may be. In such an eventuality, collaborative arrangements with the *Conservatoire De Musique François Mitterrand* and the MES will have to be resorted to basically for practical based classes.

At this stage, music is not being offered at SC or HSC level. Candidates can, however, take Music privately at Advanced Subsidiary (AS) Level and as from 2009, it will also be possible for them to take Music at Advanced or Advanced Subsidiary Level.

The teaching of Music as a subject at Higher School Certificate level in 2009 is therefore not envisaged at this stage.

(*Note* : 2 Advanced Subsidiary Levels in the same subject are equivalent to one “A” Level).

UNIVERSITY OF MAURITIUS – CAFETERIA

(No. B/1182) Mr G. Lesjongard (Second Member for Port Louis North and Montagne Longue) asked the Minister of Education and Human Resources whether, in regard to the cafeteria of the University of Mauritius, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the University, information as to if any outstanding amount is due by the operator thereof and, if so, indicate the measures that have or will be taken to recover same.

Reply: I am informed by the University of Mauritius that there is no outstanding balance as at date in respect of payments from the Cafeteria operator. However, two to three months arrears were noted during the previous years. These arrears were subsequently offset against amount due by the UoM to the Cafeteria in respect of services provided by the latter for University functions.

The University of Mauritius is closely monitoring payments received from the Cafeteria Operator.

SEHDA - DRIVER

(No. B/1183) Mr G. Lesjongard (Second Member for Port Louis North and Montagne Longue): asked the Minister of Industry, Small & Medium Enterprises, Commerce and Co-operatives whether in regard to the Small Enterprise Handicraft Development Authority, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Authority, information as to if any driver posted thereat has been demoted, indicating the reasons therefor.

Reply: I have been informed that no driver posted at SEHDA has been demoted.

NORTHERN VIEW POINT – EMBELLISHMENT AND REFURBISHMENT WORKS

(No. B/1184) Mr S. Dayal (Second Member for Quartier Militaire and Moka) asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism, Leisure and External Communications whether in regard to the Northern View Point, also known as the Malinga-Crève Coeur View, he will state if his Ministry will consider –

- (a) embellishment and refurbishment works to be carried out at the foot of the Pieter Both Mountain, and
- (b) including the site on the list of tourist attractions.

Reply: As Members of the House are aware, in pursuit of our strategy to enhance the attractiveness of our country as an up-market and high-end tourist destination, the Tourism Fund has embarked on a programme of upliftment and embellishment of sites with high touristic potential. However, in view of the limited availability of funds, these projects are being carried out in phases.

In view of the high touristic potential of Malinga-Crève Coeur View, my Ministry would consider favourably participating financially in the implementation of any embellishment and refurbishment works at the foot of Pieter Both mountain, together with other authorities concerned, namely the Ministry of Public Infrastructure, Land Transport and Shipping, the Ministry of Local Government, the Ministry of Environment and National Development Unit and District Council North. On completion of the works, the site will obviously be included on the list of tourist attractions.

I am proposing to have consultations in this respect with my colleagues from the Ministries concerned.

SUNNI SURTEE MUSLIM CEMETERY AT RICHE TERRE – STREET LANTERNS & PAVEMENTS

(No. B/1185) Mr S. Lauthan (Third Member for Port Louis Maritime & Port Louis East) asked the Minister of Local Government whether, in regard to the road adjacent to the Sunni Surtee Muslim cemetery, leading to the motorway, Riche Terre, he will state if he is aware of the defective street lighting thereat and the presence of bushes obstructing the pavements along both sides of the road and, if so, will he, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Pamplemousses/Rivière du Rempart District Council, information as to the remedial measures that will be taken.

Reply: I am informed by the Pamplemousses/Rivière du Rempart District Council that all defective street lanterns in and around the Sunni Surtee Muslim Cemetery at Riche Terre have been repaired and all obstruction such as bushes/weeds on the pavements along both sides of the road have been removed. Moreover, patching works have been carried out along the road leading to the cemetery.

I am also informed that the abovementioned works were identified by a Committee, chaired by my colleague, the Minister of Public Utilities, on 17 July 2008, and included in the priority list of projects for implementation before the Mehraj and Shabe Baraat celebrations.

METHADONE SUBSTITUTION THERAPY – ADDICTS – SUPPLY DURING RAMADAN

(No. B/1186) Mr S. Lauthan (Third Member for Port Louis Maritime & Port Louis East) asked the Minister of Health & Quality of Life whether, in regard to the Methadone Substitution Therapy, he will state the measures, if any, that have been taken to enable the drug addicts of Muslim faith to procure their daily Methadone during the month of Ramadan.

Reply: Last year, arrangements were made for Methadone clients of Muslim faith to procure their daily dose of Methadone during the month of Ramadan immediately after breaking of fast.

This year, similar arrangements have already been made to enable the Methadone clients to obtain their daily dose at the various dispensing units.

BANK OF MAURITIUS – RESTRUCTURING EXERCISE

(No. B/1187) Mr S. Dayal (Second Member for Quartier Militaire & Moka) asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Development whether he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Bank of Mauritius, information as to if foreign consultants have prepared a programme for the restructuring of the Bank and, if so, if the members of its Board have been provided with copy of the report for approval and implementation.

Reply: I am informed that following discussions between the Governors of the Bank of Mauritius and Bank Negara, Malaysia, the Negara Bank deputed its officials in May 2007 for a period of one week, to assist the Bank of Mauritius in a restructuring exercise. I understand that no report has been submitted.