

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

REHABILITATION YOUTH CENTRE - INCIDENT

(No. B/1306) Mrs F. Labelle (Third Member for Vacoas and Floreal) asked the Minister of Social Security, National Solidarity and Senior Citizens Welfare & Reforms Institutions whether she is aware of the recent case of a child who was locked naked in a cell at the Rehabilitation Youth Centre and, if so, will she state if an inquiry has been carried out thereinto and the outcome thereof.

Reply: No such case has been reported to my Ministry for the simple reason that no such incident occurred at the RYC. This unfounded remark made by the hon. Member is most unfair towards the staff of the RYC who have been attending to the inmates to the best of their ability, and many times in very difficult circumstances.

MAB - STATE AND PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS - STUDY

(No. B/1307) Mrs F. Labelle (Third Member for Vacoas and Floreal) asked the Minister of Education and Human Resources whether, in regard to the study carried out by the Management Audit Bureau regarding the per capita expenditure in private and public secondary schools, he will state if its report has been submitted and, if so –

- (a) what are the main findings, and
- (b) will he consider the advisability of laying a copy thereof on the Table of the National Assembly.

Reply: The Management Audit Bureau (MAB) has, in September 2006, submitted a draft report on the “Computation of per capita expenditure in State and private secondary schools” to my Ministry for comments and views.

I wish to point out that although the request to MAB was made as far back as August 2003, it was only in January 2006 that I personally intervened to request the MAB to urgently start the exercise.

I also wish to say that this computation exercise is a very complex one as it involves two sectors, namely the State school sector and the private secondary school sector which have the same mandate and objectives but have different work practices and operate within different structures. For example, while in the State sector, only graduates are employed as Education Officer, in the private sector, there may be Teachers who are only SC holders.

Consequently, the MAB has established different modes of computing the per capita expenditure, each having its own assumptions and parameters.

A Technical Committee comprising Senior Officials of my Ministry and the Director of the Private Secondary Schools Authority (PSSA) has been set up to examine the draft report and to submit its views/recommendations on the way ahead in order to harmonize both sectors and reduce disparities, if any.

The Technical Committee is presently in the process of finalising its views/recommendations for eventual submission to the MAB.

Given the fact that report is still in its draft form, it is considered premature at this stage to comment on the findings thereof, nor is it appropriate to lift figures out of context and make sweeping generalisations. As soon as the MAB completes the exercise and submits its final report, I shall consider the advisability of laying a copy thereof on the Table of the National Assembly.

NATIONAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS – ADMISSION

(No. B/1308) Mrs F. Labelle (Third Member for Vacoas and Floreal) asked the Minister of Education and Human Resources whether he will state the number of parents who have applied for a seat in the National Secondary Schools for their wards who will be completing their primary education this year.

Reply: I believe that the hon. Member is referring to State Secondary Schools with admission on a national basis.

I am informed by the MES that the data is presently being entered in the computer system for admission purposes and that the information will be available in due course.

HOSPITAL PREMISES – PATIENTS - SECURITY

(No. B/1309) Mrs D. Perrier (Fourth Member for Savanne and Black River) asked the Minister of Health and Quality of Life whether he is aware that there is a lack of security within hospital premises and, if so, will he state the measures, if any, that have been or will be taken to reinforce the security of patients and visitors thereat.

(Withdrawn)

FOREIGNERS – HAWKING ACTIVITIES

(No. B/1310) Mrs F. Jeewa-Daureeawoo (Third Member for Stanley and Rose Hill) asked the Minister of Industry, Small & Medium Enterprises, Commerce and Co-operatives whether he is aware that some foreigners indulge in hawking activities around the island and, if so, will he state if they are the holders of trade licences, if any, and, if not, the measures that will be taken to address the issue.

Reply: I am informed by the Ministry of Local Government that Local Authorities do not issue trading licence to foreigners to trade as hawkers in the country. Therefore, foreigners undertaking such activities are doing so illegally. So far, my Ministry has not received any complaint in this regard. If the hon. Member is aware of any specific case, the matter can be referred to the relevant authorities for any appropriate action.

**BANK OF MAURITIUS - MONEY TRANSFERS FROM LOCAL
BANK TO FOREIGN COUNTRIES**

(No. B/1311) Mr P. Jhugroo (Third Member for Port Louis North and Montagne Longue) 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 whether, since the last budget speech, there has been major transfers of money from local banks to foreign countries.

(Vide reply to PQ. No. B/1284)

**AGRICULTURAL MARKETING BOARD – GENERAL MANAGER
– QUALIFICATIONS, SALARY, ETC.**

(No. B/1312) Mr P. Jhugroo (Third Member for Port Louis North and Montagne Longue) asked the Minister of Agro Industry and Fisheries whether in regard to the General Manager of the Agricultural Marketing Board, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain therefrom information as to whether the post has been filled and, if so, when, indicating –

- (a) if the post was advertised and, if not, why not;
- (b) the qualifications required for the post;
- (c) the qualifications of the appointed person, and
- (d) the salary and other benefits to which he is entitled.

Reply: The post has been filled on 20th April 2006 on a contractual basis for one year. Section 11(e)(i) of the Mauritius Agricultural Marketing Act provides that the Board of the Agricultural Marketing Board may, subject to the approval of the Minister, appoint a General Manager and fix the terms of his employment.

The post of General Manager was filled as per provisions of the Act. The post was not advertised. There is no legal requirement to do so.

The current General Manager holds a Post Graduate Diploma in Business Administration from the University of Surrey. He has some six years experience at middle and senior management level.

Information regarding the salary and other benefits to which the General Manager is entitled is being tabled.

FARMERS SERVICE CENTRE – RECRUITMENT – JULY 2005 TO DATE

(No. B/1313) Mr P. Jhugroo (Third Member for Port Louis North and Montagne Longue) asked the Minister of Agro Industry and Fisheries whether he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Farmers Service Centre, a list of the persons recruited thereat since July 2005 to date, together with their addresses.

Reply: I am tabling the information sought.

FOREIGN EXCHANGE RESERVES

(No. B/1314) Mrs A. Navarre-Marie (First Member for GRNW and Port Louis West) asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Development whether he will make a statement on the state of our foreign exchange reserves.

(Vide Reply to PQ No. B/1284)

SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS – STUDENTS – SUICIDE CASES – JANUARY 2006 – NOVEMBER 2006

(No. B/1315) Mrs A. Navarre-Marie (First Member for GRNW and Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Education and Human Resources whether he will state the number of students of the primary and secondary institutions who have committed suicide since January 2006 to date, indicating their respective age and class.

Reply: I am informed that seven students who were attending secondary schools have committed suicide during the period 01 January

2006 to 31 October 2006. These students were in the age group of 12 to 17. One was in Form I, two in Form IV, three in Form V and one in Lower VI. However, no suicide was committed within school premises

No such cases have been reported during the above period in respect of pupils attending primary schools.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES – RECRUITMENT – JULY 2005 TO DATE

(No. B/1316) Mr J. C. Barbier (Third Member for GRNW and Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Local Government whether he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the local authorities, a list of the persons recruited thereat since July 2005 to date, together with their respective grades and addresses in each case.

Reply: I would like to refer the hon. Member to the replies I made to PQ B/796, B/1029 and B/1138 where I informed the House that since appointments and promotions in the Local Government Service fall under the sole responsibility of the Local Government Service Commission which is an independent Body, it would not be proper to give the particulars of persons recruited by the local authorities.

FISHERS – BAD WEATHER ALLOWANCE

(No. B/1317) Mr J. C. Barbier (Third Member for GRNW and Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Agro Industry and Fisheries whether in regard to bad weather allowances payable to fishers of mainland Mauritius and Rodrigues, he will state the amount paid to them on a monthly basis for the period July 2004 to September 2006.

Reply: I wish to point out that as from June 2006, registered fishers are paid bad weather allowance only on days when the weather is declared bad in the zones in which they are registered to fish. Formerly bad weather allowance was paid in a uniform way throughout the island even though bad weather was prevalent in only parts of the island.

Bad Weather Allowance paid to Fishers in Mauritius on a Monthly Basis from July 2004 to September 2006

Period	Bad Weather Allowance (Rs)
Year 2004	
July	3,339,765.00
August	3,354,615.00
September	3,635,280.00
October	1,949,535.00
November	1,924,020.00
December	2,987,820.00
Total	17,191,035.00
Year 2005	
January	1,899,450.00
February	2,136,240.00
March	2,314,440.00
April	2,021,355.00
May	3,580,200.00
June	2,398,680.00
July	2,901,015.00
August	5,477,230.00
September	6,842,115.00
October	5,122,270.00
November	4,206,160.00
December	2,698,740.00
Total	41,597,895.00
Year 2006	
January	4,473,975.00
February	4,459,440.00
March	3,500,010.00
April	2,874,915.00

May	1,914,290.00
June	3,140,700.00
July	4,734,165.00
August	3,234,695.00
September	2,422,650.00
Total	30,754,840.00

Bad Weather Allowance paid to fishermen in Rodrigues on a monthly basis from July 2004 to September 2006.

Period	Bad Weather Allowance (Rs)
Year 2004	
July	4,263,090.00
August	4,955,580.00
September	4,999,185.00
October	4,736,070.00
November	3,020,490.00
December	4,770,900.00
Total	26,745,315.00
Year 2005	
January	4,287,330.00
February	5,758,965.00
March	2,993,760.00
April	2,376,540.00
May	2,647,620.00
June	3,949,290.00
July	4,762,800.00
August	4,819,075.00
September	5,099,940.00
October	5,394,290.00
November	5,724,890.00
December	3,531,185.00

Total	51,345,685.00
Year 2006	
January	5,844,805.00
February	6,114,235.00
March	3,869,345.00
April	3,771,885.00
May	4,051,880.00
June	1,451,595.00
July	2,234,055.00
August	2,276,335.00
September	2,127,260.00
Total	31,741,395.00

TRANSPORT SYSTEM - ALTERNATIVE MODE

(No. B/1318) Mr J. C. Barbier (Third Member GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Public Infrastructure, Land Transport & Shipping whether, in regard to the alternative mode of transport, he will state if a decision has now been taken and, if so, will he give details thereof.

Reply: In its Programme 2005-2010, the Government has firmly stated its commitment to give urgent attention to the proposals concerning the alternative mode of transport and adopt the appropriate policy in the light of the medium-term and long-term interests of the country.

The following proposals to address the transport problem have been considered –

- A Light Rail Transit system;
- A monorail system, and
- A guided bus way.

The World Bank has been requested to assist the Government in examining the proposals and submitting recommendations on the best option. In the same breath the African Development Bank financed the consultancy services of Dr. Jonathan Richmond, an independent transport expert who submitted an action plan

after consultations with all stakeholders in the transport sector including representatives from the private sector and the unions.

A joint meeting with the World Bank, the African Development Bank, the *Agence Française de Développement* and Dr. Richmond held in September 2006, unanimously recommended to Government a package of 18 measures, including the development of an open exclusive bus way in the Curepipe-Port Louis corridor along the ex-railway track.

Government is currently considering the package of measures proposed and has approved the setting up of a Land Transport Authority which will be a one-stop-shop for unified integrated policy-making on transport matters and also for implementation and enforcement. The other measures, including the mass transit system, will be examined by the Economic Committee of Cabinet.

Preliminary discussions on the setting up of the Land Transport Authority have already started.

SLABS (CASTING) – SPONSORED LOAN SCHEME

(No. B/1319) Mr J. C. Barbier (Third Member GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Housing & Lands whether, in regard to low income earners, he will state when the Government policy in respect of sponsored loans and the allocation of grants for the casting of slabs were introduced, indicating the amounts of money disbursed in each case on a yearly basis since then.

Reply: I am advised that, in respect of sponsored loans, Government introduced a scheme in 1986 to assist people from the lower income group in becoming owners of a house, and, overall, in improving their conditions of living. This sponsored loan scheme contained a grant element equivalent to 10% of the loan, since several other schemes have been introduced and are managed by the MHC Ltd.

In regard to allocation of grants for the casting of slabs, this scheme was introduced in 1997 by the Labour Government under the leadership and vision of Dr. the hon. Navinchandra Ramgoolam.

The information regarding the amounts disbursed is being placed in the Library.

However, I wish to point out that for the period up to June 2005, the average yearly disbursement was Rs99,542,082. Since this Government assumed office, for financial year 2005-2006, an amount of Rs225,156,935 was disbursed. For financial year 2006-2007, an amount of Rs32,601,360 has been disbursed as at date.

HAJJ PILGRIMAGE – ORGANISATION, VISAS, TICKETS, ETC

(No. B/1320) Mr S. Lauthan (Third Member for Port Louis Maritime & Port Louis East) asked the Minister of Arts & Culture whether, in regard to the next Hajj pilgrimage, he will state –

- (a) the number of official organisers who have been issued with a licence;
- (b) the price of the air tickets, and
- (c) if arrangements have been made for the accommodation of additional pilgrims, if any.

Reply: I am informed by the Islamic Cultural Centre that, to date, there is no official organiser. However, provisional licences have been issued to 34 organisers to enable them make appropriate arrangements for Hadjees.

Final licences will be issued by the end of November 2006 to organisers who meet the conditions set under the ICC Hadj Regulations, namely –

- (i) a deposit of a security bond of Rs250,000 at the ICC;
- (ii) a minimum of 50 Hadjees, and
- (iii) satisfactory completion of formalities pertaining to accommodation and transport in Saudi Arabia.

Regarding the price of the air tickets, I am informed by the ICC that it had sought quotations from airlines and only Air Mauritius and Rogers Aviation have responded. The ICC is examining the offers received.

As regards part (c) of the question, the reply is ‘Yes’.

In fact, we have received an additional quota of 800 pilgrims and here I wish to congratulate hon. Dr. Kasenally and his delegation which, during

the pre-Hadj mission, made an appeal to the Saudi authorities for granting an additional 800 visas for Mauritius, thus making a total of 2,000 visas.

The accommodation of pilgrims is the responsibility of the organisers, under the supervision and control of the ICC. Thus, they are making arrangements for the 800 additional pilgrims also.

NHDC & EX-CHA HOUSING ESTATES – CLEANING

(No. B/1321) Mr J. Cuttaree (Second Member for Stanley & Rose Hill) asked the Minister of Environment & National Development Unit whether, in order to avoid any new outbreak of the chikungunya disease, he will state if actions will be taken for the regular cleaning of the grounds of the NHDC and the CHA housing estates.

Reply: I am informed that the local authorities, which are responsible for the cleanliness of the open spaces, drains, roads and recreational grounds in the housing estates found in their respective area, have intensified their actions in the wake of the national effort to eradicate chikungunya.

As regards the NHDC housing estates, it is the responsibility of their respective syndic and/or the residents themselves to make arrangements for the cleaning of their grounds and common parts. In accordance with the conditions of the lease, the owners/lessees of the ex-CHA housing estates are required to maintain their premises in a satisfactory state of tidiness.

I am also informed that, in March 2006, the NHDC started a sensitisation campaign against chikungunya in the NHDC and ex-CHA housing estates. In this context, officers of the NHDC held several talks and distributed pamphlets regarding preventive actions against chikungunya. Letters had been sent to all existing syndics and they were asked to help in the preventive campaigns. Residents with houses having overgrown vegetations were requested to have their yards cleaned and letters were sent to residents who were absent during site visits.

Moreover, to further promote cleanliness, my Ministry has embarked on a clean-up campaign in critical areas around the island including ex-CHA and NHDC housing estates.

MOTOR VEHICLES – USE OF ETHANOL

(No. B/1322) Mr R. Bhagwan (First Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière) asked the Minister of Public Utilities whether, in regard to the tests being carried out on the use of ethanol in the petrol mix in motor vehicles, he will state where matters stand.

Reply (Ministry of Industry, Small & Medium Enterprises, Commerce & Co-operatives): I am informed that test on the use of ethanol in the petrol mix in motor vehicles which started in August 2006 over a three-month period have stopped on 31 October 2006. The data collected in the field reports are presently being analysed with the assistance of the specialist from Total in France. Total Mauritius Ltd is expecting a full report on the tests which will be submitted to the Chairperson of the Monitoring Committee by December 2006.

AIR MAURITIUS LTD – BEEGOO, MR KISHORE – DIRECTOR

(No. B/1324) Mr R. Bhagwan (First Member for Beau Bassin and Petite Rivière) asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism, Leisure & External Communications whether he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Air Mauritius Ltd, information as to whether Mr Kishore Beegoo, a member of the Board, has also an established business in air cargo.

Reply: My information is that the Director being referred to in the question is engaged in freight forwarding activities.

I am also informed that in accordance with the Companies Act and the Memorandum and Articles of Association of Air Mauritius Ltd, the said Director has already disclosed his interests to the company.

The House would appreciate that for the proper functioning of a company, there should be a right balance of competencies at the level of the Board of Directors. In achieving this objective, situations may at times arise where non-executive Directors have other interests. This is common in the private sector in Mauritius and appropriate provision exists in the Companies Act to deal with such situation. I understand that Air Mauritius Ltd stands guided by the legal provisions.

GOVERNMENT PRIMARY SCHOOLS - STDS I TO V PUPILS - ASSESSMENT

(No. B/1325) Mrs F. Labelle (Third Member for Vacoas and Floreal) asked the Minister of Education & Human Resources whether he will state if his Ministry has given instructions to schools not to insert the A+ grade in the results of pupils of Standard I to V and, if so, will he give the reasons therefor.

Reply: The assessment for Standard I to Standard V in Government primary schools has always been based on a grading system which ranges from A to E and U. Assessment at these levels are internal to the school. My Ministry does not think that there is the need to change the internal assessment system, given that examinations at these levels are viewed as a formative exercise geared towards the improvement of pupils' performance. The scripts at lower primary level, i.e. from Standard I to III, are marked by the class teacher and may contain an element of subjectivity.

For Standard IV and V, the scripts are marked by a group of teachers from the school, itself, without any consultation with other panels from other schools. However, there is no external moderation or quality control on the marking of scripts with the result that the grading obtained is particular to the school and there is no consistency between one school and another.

Already in previous years (2000 to 2005), some schools used a grading similar to A⁺ and in view of the change in the mode of assessment at the CPE, some schools have started using the A⁺ grade for these internal assessments. To avoid confusion, instructions were given to all Government primary schools to stick to the usual assessment mode for this year for these classes.

Finally, I wish to point out that the A⁺ formula is meant to achieve the two fold objectives of

- (i) selecting students for admission on to schools on a national basis, and
- (ii) ensuring that the students are equipped with both the essential and desirable learning competencies.

CAMP THOREL – HUMPS – CONSTRUCTION

(No. B/1326) Mr S. Dayal (Second Member for Quartier Militaire and Moka) asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Public Infrastructure, Land Transport & Shipping whether he will consider the advisability of having humps placed in the village of Camp Thorel on the roads –

- (a) near the
 - (i) new school;
 - (ii) Loderchand House;
 - (iii) *Shivala*, and
- (b) along the cremation ground.

Reply: The provision of a hump near the school is being considered. In view of the specific characteristics of the road, the construction of humps may not necessarily be the most appropriate solution at other locations.

The Traffic Management and Road Safety Unit will carry out a detailed engineering survey to assess the need for appropriate road safety measures.

MAURITIUS PORT AUTHORITY – PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER – POST

(No. B/1327) Mr S. Dayal (Second Member for Quartier Militaire and Moka) asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism, Leisure & External Communications whether he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Mauritius Port Authority, information as to whether a post of Public Relations Officer exists on its establishment and, if so, the name and qualifications of the incumbent, indicating if the latter was previously involved in any Police case and, if so, the details thereof.

Reply: I am informed by the Mauritius Ports Authority as follows –

- (a) there is a post of Public Relations Officer on the establishment of the Authority;
- (b) the post is currently filled and the name of the incumbent is Mr Chandrakant Ramgolam;

- (c) Mr Ramgolam holds a Diploma in Occupational Health and Safety and a Certificate in Safety Management, awarded by the National College of Industrial Hygiene, Australia.

He has also followed a part-time course in public relations organised by CCL Management Consultants.

I am further informed that Mr Ramgolam then Cargo Supervisor was questioned by Police in relation to a minor offence sometime in October 1997. No criminal charge was however brought against him.

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES – JOB SEEKERS – PROFILING

(No. B/1328) Mr L. Bundhoo (Second Member for Montagne Blanche and GRSE) asked the Minister of Labour, Industrial Relations & Employment whether, in regard to the profiling of job seekers, he will state if a recent exercise has been carried out by the Employment Services and, if so, will he give the reasons therefor and the outcome thereof.

Reply: It is a fact that a recent exercise has been carried out as regards the profiling of job seekers. In that respect, my Ministry issued a questionnaire to seek additional information to allow for more precise matching of job seekers with existing vacancies.

This has been done after clearing all legal issues involved. In the course of the exercise, the consent has been sought from each job seeker for the information provided to be communicated to all relevant parties for the purpose of obtaining job offers and/or training. The questionnaire was sent by our Employment Information Centres to all the 27,870 unemployed job seekers registered with the Employment Service.

In view of the urgency to secure viable employment for those currently unemployed, my Ministry made requisite arrangements for the data collection exercise to be undertaken with the least possible delay.

The exercise was carried out over a period of three weeks from end August to mid-September 2006. The 27,870 unemployed persons were convened at the 13 Employment Information Centres around the country and

officers of these centres assisted the job seekers in the filling of the questionnaire.

21,966 unemployed persons among those convened reported in effect and the data they provided was added to the existing database with the assistance of officers from the Central Information Systems Division of the Ministry of Information Technology & Telecommunications. This exercise took around one month.

I wish to remind the House that the Employment Service of my Ministry has for objective the registration of job seekers, including laid-off workers, and their placement in gainful employment.

In the context of the Budget Speech 2006-2007, an Empowerment Programme has been set up to provide, *inter alia*, opportunities for the unemployed, for those recycled from their jobs, for women, for young people entering the labour force and for small and medium entrepreneurs.

A Steering Committee and a number of sub-committees, including a Training and Re-skilling Sub-Committee, have been set up to ensure speedy implementation of relevant projects.

There is therefore need to provide maximum relevant information regarding registered job seekers to potential employers of the private sector and also any other institutions where vacancies are available in view of facilitating direct interaction between job providers and job seekers for a more effective placement in gainful and productive employment.

I further wish to inform the House that my Ministry is presently implementing “The Labour Market Information System” which is a project for the Employment Service. It consists of the implementation of a web-enabled infrastructure whereby all Employment Information Centres (EICs) and external stakeholders as well as the public will have access to the system through a web browser using the Internet.

MONT IDA GOVERNMENT SCHOOL - INFRASTRUCTURAL WORKS

(No. B/1329) Mr C. Sayed-Hossen (Fourth Member for Montagne Blanche and GRSE) asked the Minister of Education & Human Resources

whether he is aware of the bad state of the infrastructure and of the playground of the Mont Ida Government School and, if so, will he state the remedial measures that will be taken, if any.

Reply: My Ministry has received a request from the school in March 2006 for several infrastructural works to be carried there. I would like to inform the House that before the end of every financial year the four Education Zones of my Ministry submit a list of maintenance projects to be implemented during the following financial year. In respect of S. Ramudhin Government School at Mont Ida, the Director of the Zone did submit a list which included a project for the replacement of naco frames. Thus a survey was carried out in August 2006 by officers of my Ministry and it was observed that the naco frames effectively required replacement and the building some painting.

Since the replacement of the nacoframes was viewed as urgent, tender documents have been prepared by mid September 2006. Tenders were floated and evaluated. However, since only one bid was received and it was on the high side, tenders will be floated anew by mid November 2006. Works are expected to start around mid December 2006 and are scheduled to be completed by end February 2007. External painting will be carried out after completion of the naco frame works.

The following infrastructural works will be carried out by the zone during this financial year –

Interior painting – works will begin by the 3rd week of November and will be completed by third week of December 2006 in collaboration with the PTA.

Tiling in three classrooms – works will start by mid of November and will be completed by mid December 2006 in collaboration with the PTA.

Demolition of concrete water tank – works will start by 13 November 2006 and will be completed by end November 2006.

Concerning the playground, I am informed that some derocking and leveling works are required. These will be considered by the Zone in the priority list for financial year 2007/2008.

ROSE BELLE CYBER VILLAGE

(No. B/1330) Dr. R. Hawoldar (Second Member for La Caverne & Phoenix) asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Finance & Economic Development whether, in regard to the launching of the Cyber Village of Rose Belle, he will –

- (a) state if meetings were held by the then Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, indicating when and the names of the persons who attended those meetings, and
- (b) for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Business Parks of Mauritius Ltd. information as to the costs incurred.

(Withdrawn)

CYBER TOWER PROJECT – LANDSCAPING CONTRACT

(No. B/1331) Dr. R. Hawoldar (Second Member for La Caverne & Phoenix) asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Finance & Economic Development whether, in regard to the Cyber Tower Project, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Business Parks of Mauritius Ltd. information as to the name of the company or individual –

- (a) to which/whom the contract of landscaping was awarded, and
- (b) responsible for the buying and planting of the palm/shade trees.

(Withdrawn)

ASSIZES/SPECIAL ASSIZES – CASES AWAITING TRIAL

(No. B/1332) Dr. A. Husnoo (Second Member for Port Louis Maritime & Port Louis East) asked the Attorney-General, Minister of Justice & Human Rights whether, in regard to the cases awaiting trial before the Assizes and the Special Assizes, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain information as to –

- (a) the number of cases thereof, and
- (b) the steps that have been taken to reduce the delay in trial.

(Withdrawn)

PARASTATAL BODIES – PROCUREMENT/AUDITING PROCEDURES

(No. B/1333) Dr. A. Husnoo (Second Member for Port Louis Maritime & Port Louis East) asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Finance & Economic Development whether, in regard to parastatal bodies, he will state if Government proposes to amend the law to review the procurement and auditing procedures.

(Withdrawn)

ROAD TRAFFIC OFFENCES –CASES

(No. B/1334) Mr R. Guttee (Third Member for Grand’Baie & Poudre d’Or) asked the Attorney-General, Minister of Justice and Human Rights whether, in regard to road traffic offences, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain information as to –

- (a) the number of cases pending before the District Courts, and
- (b) the steps taken since 2005 to date, for the speedy disposal of the cases.

Reply: I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that a total number of 24,841 road traffic offences lodged since 2005 are to date still pending before the District Courts.

D32/IF/W05/3

This figure represents mostly contraventions established under the Road Traffic Act.

As regards the steps taken to speedily disposed of Road Traffic Offences, I am informed that the District Court of Port Louis has introduced a special sitting known as “Evening Session” which deals only with contravention cases. Whenever notices in lieu of summons are sent to a

contravenee, a form is also annexed to enable the contravenee to plead guilty, if he so wishes. The contravenee is then informed of the fine imposed by the Court.

Some thoughts need to be given as to whether the large number of contraventions that are being established have the effect of protecting road users and making driving safer.

CITE DOOL, TERRE ROUGE/AS-SUFFA MADRASSA – PARKING FACILITIES

(No. B/1335) Mrs B. Juggoo (First Member for Port Louis North & Montagne Longue) asked the Minister of Housing & Lands whether, he has received a request from the Cité Dool Mosque, Terre Rouge, for the allocation of a plot of land adjacent to the Mosque for parking purposes and, if so, will he state where matters stand.

Reply: Assuming that the hon. Member is, in fact, referring to the AS-Suffa Madrassa at Cité Dool, Terre Rouge, when mentioning Cité Dool Mosque” in her question, I am advised that an application for a plot of State land for parking purposes was received from that Society on 16 July 2001. The Society was informed on 24 June 22003 that the land applied for was not available.

I propose to have the request re-examined with a view to allowing the use of the land applied for as parking until such time as the land is required by Government, with the condition that no permanent structure is put up.

NOTRE DAME GOVT. SCHOOL – SCHOOL YARD - FENCING

(No. B/1336) Mrs B. Juggoo (First Member for Port Louis North & Montagne Longue) asked the Minister of Education and Human Resouces whether he will state if he has received representations from the Notre Dame Government School, Notre Dame, in regard to the fencing of the school yard and, if so, will he state the actions that will be taken.

Reply: You will recall that on 18 July 2006, I informed the House that my Ministry had indeed received letters from the Head Teacher in May 2005 in connection with the fencing of the school.

This project has been earmarked for implementation during this Financial Year and the Ministry of Housing and Lands was requested on 6 July 2006 to demarcate the land. This land demarcation is mandatory in order to avoid encroachment of land by the Ministry or by neighbours.

A reminder was again sent to the Ministry of Housing and Lands on 25 September 2006.

I am now informed that the land has been demarcated. A meeting will be held next week with the Ministry of Housing and Lands, the Traffic Management and Road Safety Unit (TMRSU), the District Council of Pamplemousses/Riviere du Rempart and the Ministry of Public Infrastructure, Land Transport & Shipping (MPI) for the necessary clearances. Works will be carried out by Ministry of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport and are expected to start by mid November 2006 and are tentatively scheduled to be completed by mid March 2007.

MOUNT S. E. – WORKERS – VRS

(No. B/1337) Mr R. Guttee (Third Member for Grand' Baie and Poudre d'Or) asked the Minister of Agro Industry and Fisheries whether, in regard to the payment of benefits under the Voluntary Retirement Scheme to workers of the Mount Sugar Estate area, he will state where matters stand.

Reply: I am advised by the Mauritius Sugar Authority that 293 employees of the Mount Sugar Estate area (that is, 237 from *Compagnie Agricole de Mount Ltd* and 56 from Mount Sugar Estate) Land opted for Voluntary Retirement Scheme and had received their cash compensation on 1st July 2002.

With regard to land compensation, the Morcellement Permits for the sites at Mont Gout and D'Épinay involving 165 former employees of Cie Agriculture de Mount Ltd have been issued on 22 May and 23 June 2006

respectively. The beneficiaries have already signed the title deeds and arrangements are being finalised by the Mauritius Sugar Authority for these deeds to be handed over by end of November 2006. The Morcellement Permit for the site at Petite Julie earmarked for 72 ex-employees of *Compagnie Agriculture de Mount Ltd* is being awaited by the company before the preparation of the title deeds.

With regard to the sites at Mont Gout and D'Épinay earmarked respectively for 12 and 44 former employees of Mount Sugar Estate, the Morcellement Permits were issued on 15 October 2006. The title deeds are under preparation at the notary and are expected to be ready for signature by end of November 2006.

**INDIAN OCEAN ISLAND GAMES
– EXPENSES – TENDERING EXERCISES**

(No. B/1338) Mr V. Mardemootoo (Second Member for Rivière des Anguilles and Souillac) asked the Minister of Youth and Sports whether, in regard to the last Indian Ocean Island Games, he will state if all the expenses incurred by Government in relation thereto were made, following tendering exercises approved by the Central Tender Board and, if so, will he give details thereof.

(Withdrawn)

**ST JEAN, QUATRE BORNES – DUAL CARRIAGE WAY –
ROAD SAFETY**

(No. B/1339) Mr S. Mohamed (Third Member for Rivière des Anguilles and Souillac) asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Public Infrastructure, Land Transport and Shipping whether, in regard to the dual carriage way at St Jean, Quatre Bornes, he will state the measures, if any, that will be taken to increase the safety of the road users.

(Withdrawn)

**CONSTITUENCY NO. 13 – GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS –
IMPROVEMENTS – JULY 2005 TO NOVEMBER 2006**

(No. B/1340) Mr S. Mohamed (Third Member for Rivière des Anguilles and Souillac) asked the Minister of Education and Human Resources whether, in regard to the Government schools in Constituency No. 13, he will state the improvements that have been brought thereto since July 2005 to date.

(Withdrawn)

CONSTITUENCY NO. 13 – BUS SHELTERS

(No. B/1341) Mr S. Mohamed (Third Member for Rivière des Anguilles and Souillac) asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Public Infrastructure, Land Transport and Shipping whether he is aware that the regions falling in Constituency No. 13 are prone to heavy rainfalls and, if so, will he consider the advisability of having bus shelters constructed therein.

(Withdrawn)

**AIRLINE TRAVEL – GREEN HOUSE GASES - USER FEE
ENVIRONMENTAL TAX**

(No. B/1342) Dr. R. Mungur (Second Member for Flacq and Bon Accueil) asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Development whether he will state if Government is proposing to introduce a user fee environmental tax on airline travel for the setting up of a fund to be used towards the stabilization of the emission of green house gases.

Reply: I am informed that a proposal for introducing a user fee on airline travel was floated and discussed at the 35th Session of the Assembly of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) held in October 2004, in the context of international efforts to control emission of green house gases. No agreement was, however, reached among member-countries.

Government has currently no plan to introduce such a fee at this stage, especially as we have just recently introduced a solidarity tax of 1 to 2 euros on airline tickets for contributing to the International Drug Purchasing Facility (IDPF)-UNITAID for the provision of drugs in poor countries to combat the three pandemics namely, HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis.

I understand that discussions on that proposal will be pursued at the next session of the ICAO Assembly, which will be held next year. Government's position on the matter will be determined in light of the outcome of those discussions.

SUGAR – PRICE

(No. B/1343) Dr. R. Mungur (Second Member for Flacq and Bon Accueil) asked the Minister of Agro Industry and Fisheries whether, in regard to the fall in the price of sugar, he will state if Government is proposing to review the criteria laid down for the re-apportioning of the sugar proceeds in respect of the –

- (a) global cess fund;
- (b) sugar insurance premium, and
- (c) milling costs, and if so, when

Reply: As will be seen from the Multi Annual Adaptation Strategy Action Plan 2006-2015, the sugar industry will move from an essentially raw sugar producer situation to one where the sugar industry could produce all types of sugars i.e. raw, special, industrial, white, etc as well as electricity from bagasse and coal, ethanol from molasses and eventually ethanol directly from cane juice if circumstances so warrant. The profitability of sugar growers and millers will no longer be a function of the apportionment ratio of sugar alone. The objective is to derive the highest income from the proceeds of the whole cane plant.

As regards part (a), in order to reduce the global cess levied on sugar producers, a consultancy has been commissioned to review the service providing institutions funded by cess in the sugar sector and to advise on the most effective ways of providing such services bearing in mind the future trends in the price of sugar.

As regards part (b) of the question, I am informed by the SIFB that -

- (1) The premium payable to the Sugar Insurance Fund being a percentage of the value of the insurable sugar (Second Schedule of the Sugar Insurance Fund Act No. 4 of 1974 as subsequently amended) any fall in sugar price will entail corresponding fall in premium.
- (2) Moreover, following the approval of the recommendations made by a consulting actuary Hewitt L Y Ltd (formerly Bacon Woodrow Legris Ltd – appointed under section 48 of the Sugar Insurance Fund Act No. 4 of 1974 as subsequently amended) by the Board of the Sugar Insurance Fund and subsequent adoption by Government, recommendations contained in the Actuarial Review relax insurance terms which will subsequently be beneficial to sugar producers.
- (3) Changes are to be brought in the legislation for implementation of recommendations made in the Actuarial Review to take effect in principle for crop 2007.

As regards part (c) of the question, it is expected that the successful implementation of the Adaptation Strategy will reduce both sugar production and sugar milling costs. The sugar industry will become a sugarcane industry, where the factories in the four remaining sub clusters at FUEL, Savannah, Medine & Belle Vue will be able to respond in a flexible manner to the requirements of the market, and produce the mix of products (sugar, energy, ethanol) which fetch the highest combined market price.

The sooner that the above measures are implemented, the better for all of us. However, whenever there are many stakeholders involved, the best approach is to undertake the reforms through dialogues and this is what we intend to do.

DESBRO INTERNATIONAL LTD – IRON BARS - PRODUCTION

(No. B/1344) Mr A. Ganoo (First Member for Savanne and Black River) asked the Minister of Industry, Small & Medium Enterprises, Commerce and Co-operatives whether, in regard to the decision of Desbro International Ltd to stop the production of iron bars, he will state if Government is proposing to –

- (a) take measures to avoid any shortage of iron bars on the local market;
- (b) increase the price of iron bars, and
- (c) take measures to prevent importers from making windfall gains.

Reply: From information available, it is not foreseen that there will be any shortage of iron bars on the local market in the next two months. This is based on the enquiry made by the Consumer Protection Unit. Are actually available 4,500 MT of billets and 200 MT of rebars from Desbro. Murray & Roberts imported 4,000 MT of rebars, out of which 400 MT have been sold.

Furthermore, Samlo is producing 800/1000 MT of iron bars monthly. As regards (b), a request for price increase has been received from local manufacturers (namely Desbro and Consolidated Steel Ltd).

I may wish to inform the House that a ministerial committee has been set up to look into this issue. At this stage, I cannot pre-empt any decision to be taken.

QUARTIER MILITAIRE – DRAINAGE SYSTEM - UPGRADING

(No. B/1345) Mr S. Dayal (Second Member for Quartier Militaire and Moka) asked the Minister of Local Government whether he will state if he will consider the advisability of upgrading the drainage system in Quartier Militaire, particularly in the regions of the New Road, near the Moka/Flacq District Council, the one way, near the Police Station, the Quartier Militaire College and in the vicinity of the bus terminal and the market fair.

Reply: I wish to inform the House that consultations were held with the Ministry of Education & Human Resources, Ministry of Environment & National Development Unit, the Road Development Authority and the Moka/Flacq District Council, to consider the upgrading of the drainage system in Quartier Militaire, particularly in the regions of the New Road, near the Moka/Flacq District Council, the one way, near the Police Station, the Quartier Militaire College and in the vicinity of the bus terminal and the market fair.

With regard to the regions of Quartier Militaire State Secondary School and Quartier Militaire College, I am given to understand that a study has already been carried out by the Consultant of the National Development Unit and consultations are underway with the Ministry of Education and Human Resources in the matter.

However, I am informed that heavy infrastructural works in terms of construction of new drains in the region will have to be undertaken and which will imply substantial investment to the tune of about Rs40 m. I therefore propose to take up this matter with my colleagues, the Minister of Education & Human Resources and the Minister of Environment & National Development Unit.

MOKA/QUARTIER MILITAIRE – STREET LIGHTING

(No. B/1346) Mr S. Dayal (Second Member for Quartier Militaire and Moka) asked the Minister of Local Government whether, in regard to the Constituency of Moka/Quartier Militaire, particularly in the regions of Mont Fleuri and Tafazul Lane at Circonstance, Saint Pierre, Ripailles/Nouvelle Découverte, Dagotièrre and l'Assurance, he will state if provision has been made for street lighting.

Reply: I am informed by the Moka/Flacq District Council that 190 high pressure sodium lamps of 70 watts were procured during the current financial year, and out of which 5 units have been distributed to each village council falling under its jurisdiction including Mon Fleuri at Tafazul Lane at l'Avenir, St Pierre, Ripailles and Dagotièrre/L'Assurance village councils. I

am also informed that these lanterns have already been fixed at locations which were determined by the respective village councils.

ALBION – GOVERNMENT SCHOOL

(No. A/5) Mr S. Naidu (Third Member for Beau Bassin and Petite Rivière) asked the Minister of Education and Human Resources whether, in regard to the project for the construction of a new Government school at Albion, he will state where matters stand.

Reply: I would like to refer the hon. Member to PQ B/63 which my predecessor replied to in October 2000. He stated that –

“After careful examination of the project proposal, it was found that the economic implications did not plead in favour of the implementation of such a project.

According to information received, the school population of Albion at that time was only 245 and these children attended either Pierre Desvaux de Marigny Government School at Canot or Petite Rivière Government School. The figure of 245 was considered too low to justify the operation of a school at Albion. More than 100 of these students resided within walking distance from each of the two above-mentioned schools.”

As at now, the school population has decreased to 179. These pupils of Albion are presently attending Pierre Desvaux de Marigny Government School at Canot and Petite Rivière Government Schools.

Furthermore, given the difficult economic situation and the low school population, my Ministry is not considering this project as a priority for this financial year.

Presently, my Ministry is carrying out a school mapping exercise. This exercise focuses on the demand for admission to standard 1 at primary level. The mapping exercise also takes into account such factors like new housing developments and population growth. In the light of the outcome of this school mapping exercise, a priority list of regions where new primary schools need to be constructed will be finalised.

COROMANDEL, MORCELLEMENT HERMITAGE – CHEMIN LA MORT - UPGRADING

(No. A/6) Mr S. Naidu (Third Member for Beau Bassin and Petite Rivière) asked the Minister of Environment and National Development Unit whether, in regard to the project for the upgrading of *Chemin La Mort* at Morcellement Hermitage, Coromandel, he will state where matters stand.

Reply: In April this year I informed the House that the design in connection with the slope stabilisation and the rehabilitation of the road in question was expected to be ready by end of April 2006.

In August 2006 the consultancy firm Gibb (Mauritius) Ltd expressed its inability to attend to the problem in view of geo-technical implications.

On 16 October 2006 the consultancy firm Gibb (Mauritius) Ltd has been pressed to come up with concrete proposals which would redress the situation at Morcellement Hermitage, Coromandel.

It must be pointed out that the firm Gibb (Mauritius) Ltd has recently brought out that it is taking a further view of the problem at Coromandel which would necessitate a detailed study and extensive geo-technical soil investigation.

MAINGARD – FOOTBALL GROUND - CONSTRUCTION

(No. A/7) Mr S. Naidu (Third Member for Beau Bassin and Petite Rivière) asked the Minister of Environment and National Development Unit whether, in regard to the project for the construction of a new football ground at Maingard, he will state where matters stand.

Reply: In September 2005 I informed the House that the project for the construction of a new football ground at Maingard would be considered in the 5-year plan.

The project has in fact been included in our 5-year NDU Development Programme which would be finalised soon. It is necessary to point out that the clearance of the Ministry of Finance will be required.

The budgetary provision for financial year 2006/2007 has been earmarked for ongoing projects and in view of the restricted budget it may not be possible to accommodate the football ground scheme. As measures are being taken for the scheme to form part of the NDU Development Programme, its realisation will depend on availability of funds.

ALBION – FOOTBALL GROUND

(No. A/8) Mr S. Naidu (Third Member for Beau Bassin and Petite Rivière) asked the Minister of Environment and National Development Unit whether, in regard to the football ground at Albion, he will state if Government is proposing to have it upgraded and provide for –

- (a) the renewal of the turf;
- (b) irrigation facilities;
- (c) a cloak room;
- (d) lighting facilities, and
- (e) the terraces and, if so, when and, if not, why not.

Reply: In June 2006 I informed the House that a contract for the upgrading of Albion football ground was awarded to DWC on 15 March 2005 and that following a site visit on 27 April 2005 it was decided that the cloakroom be relocated close to the main gate.

Due to the topography of the proposed location of the cloakroom, structural redesign in terms of foundations and retaining walls were warranted.

However, because of the difficulties encountered in resiting the cloakroom the contract was cancelled and no upgrading works were undertaken at Albion football ground.

With respect to part (d) of the question, a contract for the supply and installation of flood lighting at Albion football ground was awarded to Development Works Corporation (DWC) on 21 February 2005 for a sum of Rs2,014,992.50. On 26 April 2005 the DWC informed the National Development Unit that it cannot undertake the work due to serious liquidity problem and moreover procedures are underway for the closing down of the DWC.

Arrangements have therefore been made for the project at Albion football ground to be included in the 5-year NDU Development Programme.