

Debate No. 07 of 09.05.2006**WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS****PRISONS PREMISES - PROHIBITED ARTICLES**

(No. B/426) Mr S. Naidu (Third Member for Beau Bassin and Petite Rivière) asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence & Home Affairs, Minister of Civil Service & Administrative Reforms and Minister of Rodrigues & Outer Islands whether he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Prisons, information as to the measures that have been or will be taken to prevent the throwing of parcels over the prison walls for detainees.

Reply: I am informed by the Commissioner of Prisons that the following measures have been applied to deter members of the public from throwing prohibited articles into prisons premises, and also discourage the detainees from introducing prohibited articles into prisons.

Action taken -

- Regular patrols are being effected outside the walls especially after the recent acquisition of a new patrol vehicle.
- Regular searching is taking place.
- Although the CCTV system is there, it is not being used optimally. The Commissioner of Prisons has therefore been asked to increase vigilance with respect to the CCTV system.
- Internal fencing has been strengthened at Grand River North West Prison.
- Punishment facilities across the prison estate have been increased and detainees involved in trafficking are facing internal prison discipline and appropriate punishment.

- Additionally, the Police are assisting where they can by mounting their own patrols and responding quickly to any request from the Prison Service for assistance.

The following measures are also being implemented to help prevent the trafficking of prohibited articles -

- Additional Watchtowers are planned at Beau Bassin Prison, Grand River North West and Petit Verger Prison to improve surveillance.
- The future installation of cellphone jammers in the Central Prison will interrupt the means by which detainees organise the traffic of prohibited articles.
- The New Wing is being refurbished in order to prevent detainees from climbing the roof.
- In Grand River North West Prison, most prohibited articles are thrown from the public road at the Jahagee corner. A tall fencing of about 30 feet high is being constructed in this area and this work is likely to be completed within two weeks.
- The Prison service will shortly purchase additional patrol dogs which will increase the deterrent effect. There are also plans to purchase drug sniffer dogs to assist in the search for prohibited articles.

These measures, when fully completed, are expected to effectively deal with the problem.

MRS J. D. - ALLEGED RAPE

(No. B/430) Mrs A. Navarre-Marie (First Member for GRNW and 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 he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Police, information as to whether any case of alleged rape by an Adviser attached to the Ministry of Agro Industry and

Fisheries on one Mrs J. D. of Pailles has been reported at the Pailles Police Station and, if so, will he state where matters stand.

Reply: It has been reported to Police that on Monday 24 April 2006 at 1245 hours, an alleged case of rape has been reported by one Mrs J. D. at the Central Criminal Investigation Department (CCID).

A statement was recorded from the alleged accused one Mr M.L. on Tuesday 25 April at 1140 hours in the presence of his counsels, whereby he denied the allegation of rape. After inquiry, and based on the facts and circumstances of the case, he was released.

The inquiry is still under way and so far, four statements have been recorded from witnesses.

On completion of the inquiry, the dossier will be forwarded the Director of Public Prosecutions for advice.

**CARREAUX KALIPTUS, BATTERIE CASSEE AND CITE
BRIQUETTERIE - DRUG-RELATED CASES - JULY 2005 - 09.05.06**

(No. B/432) Mr G. Lesjongard (Second Member for Port Louis North and Montagne Longue) asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence & Home Affairs, Minister of Civil Service & Administrative Reforms and Minister of Rodrigues & Outer Islands whether he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Police, information as to the number of drug-related cases recorded in the region of Carreaux Kaliptus, Batterie Cassée and Cité Briquetterie since July 2005.

Reply: I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that twenty-four drug related cases have been recorded in the region of Carreaux Kaliptus, Batterie Cassée and Cité Briquetterie since July 2005.

With a view to sensitising the inhabitants of the region on the drug problem, a Community Policing project is being implemented with the participation of the local Forces Vives and NGOs. In addition, special patrol teams are deployed on a daily basis to deal with drugs peddlers.

SSR BRIDGE – ILOT, CAMP DIABLE

(No. B/457) Mr V. Mardemootoo (Second Member for Rivière des Anguilles & Souillac) asked the Minister of Environment & NDU whether he will state if he recently visited Ilot Camp Diable in connection with the renovation of the SSR bridge and, if so, where matters stand.

Reply: I am informed that a site visit was effected by the substantive Minister of Environment & NDU at Ilot, Camp Diable, in August last year at the invitation of the inhabitants.

A request was made to the Minister to consider the possibility of enlarging the footbridge, commonly known as SSR bridge to facilitate vehicular traffic, given that the existing road leading to the village is too narrow and has sharp bends and poor visibility which render traffic difficult and dangerous.

The replacement of the footbridge by a new bridge meant for both traffic and pedestrians would require substantial investment and may not be cost effective, given the low density of vehicular traffic. However, consideration will be given to the improvement and enlargement of the existing access road in due course.

**PERMAL SOOBRAYEN PRIMARY GOVT, SCHOOL – TOILETS -
RENOVATION**

(No. B/458) Mr V. Mardemootoo (Second Member for Rivière des Anguilles & Souillac) asked the Minister of Education & Human Resources whether he is aware that the toilets of the Permal Soobrayen Primary Government School were due to be renovated during the Easter holidays and, if yes, will he state if the renovation works have been completed and, if not, the expected date of completion.

Reply: I have been informed that, following a decision by the PTA to have the toilets repaired –

- (i) painting works have started at the school during the recent Easter holidays. The works comprise a new coating of paint on the walls and ceilings of the toilet blocks. Around 45% of the works have been completed. They are planned to be completed by mid May 2006;
- (ii) the paints were provided by the hon. Second Member for Rivière des Anguilles & Souillac, Mr Mardemootoo.

I wish to add that –

- (a) minor renovation works were carried out in one of the two toilet blocks of the school during March/April 2005. Materials were supplied by this Ministry and labour provided by the PTA;
- (b) the sewerage network of the toilet blocks is functioning and water is available. The toilets are considered as being of a reasonable standard;
- (c) floor tiling works during the July/August 2006 school vacation.

ARCHIVES ADVISORY COUNCIL – MEMBERS, MEETINGS, ETC.

(No. B/460) Mr S. Mohamed (Third Member for Rivière des Anguilles and Souillac) asked the Minister of Arts and Culture whether, in regard to the Archives Advisory Council, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain therefrom information as to –

- (a) the names of its members;
- (b) details of the meetings held since July 2005, and
- (c) the recommendations, if any, made by the Council to the Minister.

Reply: As regards part (a), I am tabling a copy of the composition of the Archives Advisory Council.

As regards part (b), I have been informed that since July 2005, two meetings have been held and discussions were focused on matters relating to general administration of the National Archives and activities held by the latter.

As regards part (c), the Council has made recommendations pertaining to the following –

- (i) the relocation of the National Archives in a purpose built complex;
- (ii) training to be dispensed to the National Archives personnel at all levels; and
- (iii) the creation of a new grade of Archives Attendant to enhance the maintenance of records.

**CARGO HANDLING CORPORATION - FINANCIAL
ADVANCES/LOAN - MAURITIUS PORTS AUTHORITY**

(No. B/461) Mr S. Mohamed (Third Member for Rivière des Anguilles and Souillac) asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism, Leisure & External Communications whether, in regard to the Cargo Handling Corporation, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain

therefrom information as to whether it has benefited from any financial advances and or loan in any form whatsoever from the Mauritius Ports Authority during the last five years and, if so, why.

Reply: I am advised that the Board of the Mauritius Ports Authority has on 27 June 2003, approved the grant of a loan, amounting to Rs150 m. to enable the Cargo Handling Corporation Ltd. to proceed with the procurement of new equipment for cargo handling operations.

The loan carries a rate of interest of 6%, and is repayable over a period of 9 years including one year moratorium. The loan agreement was, however, signed in July 2005, and the full amount disbursed in August 2005. The Cargo Handling Corporation Ltd. has already paid a sum of Rs4,336,205 as interest due in January 2006. Capital repayment on this first loan of Rs150 m. will fall due in July 2006.

I am further informed that a second loan for the same amount was approved in May 2004. This loan is also repayable over a period of 9 years inclusive of a moratorium period of two years. It carries interest at the rate of 7.5% per annum. However, this second loan agreement has not yet been signed, and the amount has not yet been disbursed.

CAMP DIABLE - NHDC HOUSING UNITS

(No. B/462) Mr S. Mohamed (Third Member for Rivière des Anguilles and Souillac) asked the Minister of Housing & Lands whether he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the National Housing Development Corporation Ltd., information as whether there is any project to build NHDC housing units in Camp Diable and, if so, where matters stand.

Reply: I am advised that land of an extent of 5A50 at Camp Diable has been acquired in April 2001 by the previous Government under the Sugar Industry Efficiency Act for the purpose of undertaking a project for the construction of 100 housing units. This land has, however, remained undeveloped so far.

For the information of hon. Members, I wish to indicate that a project for the construction of 91 housing units is in the pipeline at Rivière des Anguilles, for which tenders have already been launched. In addition, a site and Services Project at Souillac consisting of some 120 plots of serviced land, has already been initiated.

In due course, consideration will be given to implement a housing project at Camp Diable.

TRANSFUSION TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS

(No. B/469) Mrs A. Navarre-Marie (First Member for GRNW and Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Health and Quality of Life whether he will state if the necessary tests are carried out on blood samples of potential donors before they donate blood with a view to ensure that such blood is free from any virus.

Reply: I am informed that –

- (i) the practice is that all potential blood donors are screened before they donate blood. Such screening is done by obtaining a history of the blood donor through a designed questionnaire to exclude those who are at risk of harbouring infectious agents;
- (ii) every blood bag collected is screened by laboratory tests for transfusion transmitted infections, that is, syphilis, hepatitis B & C and HIV. All these tests are done according to WHO norms and international recommendations, and
- (iii) we have a very low prevalence of positive screening of transfusion transmitted infection among donated blood.

I am also informed that so far there has been no instance of transmission of infection through blood transfusion in Mauritius.

**NHDC –CASTING OF SLAB GRANT SCHEME
– APPLICATIONS - JANUARY 2006-09.05.2006**

(No. B/471) Mr S. Dayal (Second Member for Quartier Militaire and Moka) asked the Minister of Housing and Lands whether, in regard to the casting of slabs, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the National Housing Development Corporation Ltd., information as to the number of applications received and cleared since January 2006, region-wise.

Reply: I am advised that a total of 1061 applications for casting of roof slabs have been received since January 2006 out of which a total of 338 applications have been cleared as follows –

Region	Collected	Paid
Center/West	404	136
East	247	78
North	193	68
South	217	56
Total	1061	338

I am also advised that 1678 persons, including the 338 persons mentioned above have obtained their cash grant for casting of roof slabs since January 2006.

QUATRE BORNES STATE SECONDARY SCHOOL PROJECT

(No. B/472) Mr S. Dayal (Second Member for Quartier Militaire and Moka) asked the Minister of Education and Human Resources whether, in regard to the project for the construction of the Quatre Bornes State Secondary School, he will state where matters stand.

Reply: In September 2004, the previous Government decided to set up a new State Secondary School for girls in the region of Quatre Bornes. It then began to look for appropriate land in the Quatre Bornes area.

In January 2005, Form I students were registered for admission to Quatre Bornes SSS on the understanding that the school was under construction. I am tabling a copy of a letter addressed to parents dated 11 December 2004 to that effect by the Ministry. However, the reality is that there was no school under construction and, in my view, parents were misled.

In the meantime, procedures for the acquisition of a suitable plot of land at Avenue des Tulipes in Quatre Bornes continued at the Ministry of Housing & Lands. However, at the end of March 2006, that Ministry informed my Ministry that all the owners of the plot of land had challenged the acquisition of the land before the Supreme Court. It may now take years before the matter is resolved.

Under these circumstances, the Ministry is exploring the possibility of putting up the school on another site, subject to the availability of funds.

The Parent-Teacher Association was informed accordingly at a meeting I chaired on 24 April 2006.

I need to state and to emphasise to this House that this is one of the numerous teething problems left behind by my predecessor. A fact which seems to be conveniently ignored in some quarters.

We are working towards finding an appropriate solution to this problem and I would invite the PTA to work together with my Ministry in finding the solution.

RIPAILLES, NOUVELLE DÉCOUVERTE - CREMATION GROUND

(No. B/473) Mr S. Dayal (Second Member for Quartier Militaire and Moka) asked the Minister of Environment and National Development Unit whether, in regard to the project for the construction/upgrading of the Ripailles crematorium, he will state where matters stand.

Reply: I am advised, with regard to the cremation ground project at Ripailles, Nouvelle Découverte, that the consultant of the NDU has visited

the site and has already submitted a concept of the project and the preliminary design as well as the cost estimates.

The cremation ground will comprise two pyres (one covered and one open), a boundary wall, shelters and other amenities.

The project has been included in the priority list of projects for Constituency No. 8 and will be implemented in due course.

BOIS CHERI, MOKA – MULTIPURPOSE COMPLEX - CONSTRUCTION

(No. B/474) Mr S. Dayal (Second Member for Quartier Militaire and Moka) asked the Minister of Local Government whether, in regard to the project for the construction of a multipurpose complex at Bois Chéri Road, Moka, he will state where matters stand.

Reply: I am informed by the Moka/Flacq District Council that the construction of a multipurpose complex at Bois Chéri Road, Moka is not in the priority list of projects to be implemented in the short term.

AQUACULTURE AND BARACHOIS – GOVERNMENT POLICY

(No. B/475) Mr G. Lesjongard (Second Member for Port Louis North and Montagne Longue) asked the Minister of Agro Industry and Fisheries whether he will state Government policy with regard to aquaculture and the future use of barachois over the island.

Reply: In setting up of the stage for robust growth in the National Assembly on 30 August 2005, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance & Economic Development highlighted aquaculture as a promising new sector.

Preparation of a comprehensive Master Plan for the development of this sector was proposed to provide government with a clear strategy for the way ahead.

My Ministry, along with the Ministry of Finance & Economic Development and the Board of Investment were entrusted with the responsibility of working out a Master Plan for the sector. After discussions, it was decided to enlist the services of competent aquaculture firms to carry out the study.

The terms of reference for the study cover marine aquaculture development possibilities relating to potential species, feed requirements, culture sites, environmental factors, technologies and marketing. A copy thereof is being tabled.

On 01 April 2006, the Board of Investment invited twelve selected companies to submit their proposals for carrying out the study with the closing date set on 01 June 2006. The bids will thereafter be evaluated based on clearly defined criteria, namely background and experience of firms including a list of past/present work in that particular field, general methodology and approach to be adopted for the realisation of the study.

As regards the future use of barachois, taking into consideration the different options available for the development thereof, it has been agreed that to make operations financially viable, an integrated approach including leisure, food outlets, tourism, fishing, recreational activities (pedalos, kayaking etc.) and aquaculture, where feasible, should be adopted.

On 31 March 2006, Government decided that a committee be set up under the Chairmanship of the Minister of Housing & Lands and comprising myself and my colleague the Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations & Employment, to consider the judicious allocation of the barachois so that the projects selected be promptly implemented.

I am advised by the Ministry of Housing and Lands that a report detailing the different applications/project proposals submitted by different parties is being prepared for submission to the Ministerial Committee.

ELECTRICITY – PURCHASE & SALE

(No. B/476) Mr G. Lesjongard (Second Member for Port Louis North and Montagne Longue) asked the Minister of Public Utilities

whether he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Central Electricity Board, information as to where matters stand in regard to –

- (a) the purchase of electricity by the Board from independent power producers, and
- (b) the sale of electricity by the Board to independent power producers.

Reply: As regards part (a) of the question, I am informed by the Central Electricity Board that the latter purchases electricity all the year round from independent power producers namely –

- (i) Compagnie Thermique de Belle Vue Limitée (CTBV);
- (ii) FUEL Steam and Power Generation Company Limited (FSPG);
- (iii) Consolidated Energy Limited (CEL), and
- (iv) Compagnie Thermique du Sud Limitée (CTDS).

CEB has also signed a PPA with Compagnie Thermique de Savannah Ltd (CTSav). The two units of CTSav will start operation in April 2007 and June 2007 respectively.

With regard to part (b) of the question, the independent power producers, purchase electricity from CEB for their internal use during maintenance period under the tariffs 421 and 422. In 2005, sale of electricity to the IPPs accounted for 4.2 GWh.