

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

SOUTH EASTERN HIGHWAY PROJECT

(No. B/79) Mr G. Gunness (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 South Eastern Highway Project, he will state –

- (a) where matters stand;
- (b) the number of times the Environmental Monitoring Committee has met, and
- (c) when the project is scheduled to be completed.

Reply – (Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Public Infrastructure, Land Transport & Shipping): The South Eastern Highway Project comprised initially of three components as follows –

Component 1	From Plaine Magnien to Ferney
Component 2	From Ferney to Kewal Nagar
Component 3	From Kewal Nagar to Bel Air

The construction of the road section within the Ferney Valley between Ferney and Kewal Nagar has been cancelled.

The works are progressing on the remaining components as follows –

- (i) From Plaine Magnien to Ferney
Works are ongoing and have progressed up to 50%
- (ii) From Kewal Nagar to Bel Air
works have progressed up to 40%

The Environmental Monitoring Committee which was set up on 25 August 2004, met eleven times, the last meeting having been held on 01 June 2005.

The main objectives of the committee were to examine the mitigative proposals made by the Road Development Authority, the National Parks and Conservation Services, the Forestry Services and the Mauritian Wild Life Foundation for the protection of fauna and flora.

The environmental monitoring of the project is ongoing and one officer from the Ministry of Environment and National Development Unit has been assigned specific duties for the monitoring of compliance and implementation of Environmental mitigation measures.

The project is expected to be completed in November 2006.

AIR MAURITIUS - ZEE TV AWARDS – AIR TICKETS

(No. B/87) Mr P. Jhugroo (Third 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 Air Mauritius, information as to whether the Company granted free air tickets in the context of the organisation of the Zee TV Awards and, if so, will he table a list of the beneficiaries.

Reply - (Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism, Leisure & External Communications): Air Mauritius has advised that no free ticket was issued to Zee Telefilms Ltd. in connection with the Zee Cine Awards 2006 held on 04 March 2006 at the Swami Vivekananda Convention Centre in Pailles.

However, a transportation service agreement was signed on 02 February 2006 between Air Mauritius and Zee Telefilms Ltd. providing for transportation by Air Mauritius in exchange of air time on Zee TV Channels worldwide. Air Mauritius has accordingly provided transport facilities for participants, crew members and the Zee TV delegation participating in the Zee Cine Awards 2006. in consideration thereof, Air Mauritius has been provided a credit note valid for a period of two years for TV commercials on Zee TV channels worldwide.

The event was broadcast anew in several countries and Zee TV has been using the footage with film starts taken on board of Air Mauritius.

The Zee Cine Awards 2006 held in Mauritius brought worldwide coverage for the Republic of Mauritius.

**RODRIGUES - BAIE DES LASCARS
– POLICE VEHICLE - ROAD ACCIDENT**

(No. B/89) Mr A. Nancy (First Member for Rodrigues) 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, on or about 25 February 2006, an accident involving a Police vehicle occurred at Baie des Lascars and, if yes, whether an inquiry was carried out to establish the cause of the accident and the outcome thereof.

Reply: I am advised by the Commissioner of Police that, on Saturday 25 February 2006 at about 08 12 hours, a Police constable, posted to Rodrigues CID, reported a case of road accident involving Police van GM 8582 which occurred at Baie des Lascars.

According to the Police constable, the accident occurred near the cemetery of Baie des Lascars. He reported that whilst he was negotiating a curve, the rear nearside wheel entered into a pool of muddy water and he lost control of the vehicle which turned over on its offside flank and ended its course into a gutter on the right side of the road. The vehicle was heavily damaged and there was no casualty.

The case is being inquired into by Rodrigues Police to establish the exact circumstances of the accident. I am further advised that the inquiry has not yet been completed.

**RODRIGUES – ANSE AUX ANGLAIS
– POLICE VEHICLE – ROAD ACCIDENT**

(No. B/90) Mr A. Nancy (First Member for Rodrigues) 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, on or about 23 March 2006, an accident involving a Police vehicle bearing the number 2694 JU 01 occurred at Anse aux Anglais and, if yes, -

- (a) the name of the driver of the said vehicle;
- (b) if the case was reported on the same day, and
- (c) if an inquiry was carried out to establish the cause of the accident and the outcome thereof.

Reply: I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that a road accident occurred at Anse aux Anglais on 23 March 2006 at about 20 30 hours involving Police van 2694 JU 01 driven by Police sergeant bearing number 7447 posted at Rodrigues ADSU, and van bearing registration number 78 RZP 00.

The case was reported at Port Mathurin Police station on the same day at 22 35 hours by the driver of vehicle 78 RZP 00. The Police officer only inserted an entry about the accident in the ADSU Diary Book at about 21 50 hours on the same day.

MONTAGNE LONGUE/CRÈVE COEUR – ROAD REPAIRS

(No. B/134) Mrs B. Virahsawmy (First Member for Port Louis North and Montagne Longue) asked the Minister of Environment and National Development Unit whether he is aware of the problems faced by the inhabitants of Crève Coeur along the road from *Pied La Fourche* to the bus terminus because of the curb and the narrowness of the road and, if so, what remedial measures are envisaged.

Reply: I am informed that the Montagne Longue, Crève Coeur road from *Pied La Fourche* to the bus terminus is a classified road falling under the jurisdiction of the Road Development Authority since January 2004.

Part of the road which is approximately 5.5 metres wide passes through a residential area and, therefore, cannot be widened because of unavailability of land. Additionally, there are two dangerous bends along the road.

I am advised that the Road Development Authority will conduct a survey to find out if the bends can be realigned to improve the narrowness and visibility.

SCHOOL PREMISES - STUDENTS - SAFETY & SECURITY

(No. B/135) Miss K. R. Deerpalsing (Third Member for Belle Rose and Quatre Bornes) asked the Minister of Education and Human Resources whether he will consider the advisability of requesting schools' staff to supervise the orderly exit of students from school premises in order to prevent accidents which may occur due to chaotic runs for buses parked outside school premises.

Reply: I wish to thank the hon. Member for the question and to say that the safety and security of students both within and outside school compounds are of central concern to us as a caring Government.

I am informed that it is the responsibility of the management of the schools to generally ensure discipline as well as the safety and security of the students. The Head of school assisted by the teaching and non-teaching staff should normally ensure that there is an orderly exit of students and they do not leave the school before the whole process is over.

However, each school has its own specificities and the matter has to be examined also from the point of view of the external factors affecting the exit of students, like traffic congestion particularly in urban areas, lack of sufficient parking for cars, buses and vans.

Although the existing arrangements are, by and large, satisfactory there is still room for improvement.

Arrangements do exist for the orderly exit of students from schools after school hours and Head of Schools are constantly reminded of these arrangements.

JULES KOENIG SQUARE, QUATRE BORNES - TRAFFIC CENTRE

(No. B/136) Miss K. R. Deerpalsing (Third Member for Belle Rose and Quatre Bornes) asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Public Infrastructure, Land Transport and Shipping whether he will state if, with the collaboration of the Municipality of Quatre Bornes, it is proposed to redesign the central bus station in Quatre Bornes.

Reply: On 18 January 2006, the Municipality Council of Quatre Bornes sought the clearance of my Ministry for the construction of a proper traffic centre with appropriate bus shelters and all necessary amenities at Jules Koenig Square, Quatre Bornes.

My Ministry informed the Council on 10 February 2006 that it had no objection to the construction of the proposed bus station subject to all design plans being cleared with the National Transport Authority, Traffic Management & Road Safety Unit and Road Development Authority, bearing in mind that a mass transit system may have to be accommodated in future.

My Ministry will provide whatever support to the Council for the implementation of the project.

SCHOOLS - SEXUAL EDUCATION, HIV/AIDS, ETC

(No. B/137) Dr. R. Mungur (Second Member for Flacq and Bon Accueil) asked the Minister of Education and Human Resources whether it is proposed to introduce a structured and comprehensive school based curriculum having a culturally sensitive, age-appropriate, accurate and a non-judgmental education about sexuality as well as HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.

Reply: I wish to thank the hon. Member for his question and to inform him that in Mauritius curriculum development is undertaken on a national basis and therefore the concept of a school based curriculum which allows each school to elaborate its own teaching and learning experiences does not yet exist.

That being said, there is certainly need to revisit the whole question of exposure of our young students to sex education as well as HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases which are, understandably, sensitive issues but have remained for too long so controversial that they have been conveniently ignored.

The existing primary and lower secondary curricula do provide for the limited coverage of some specific topics related to elementary sex education. For example at the primary level, pupils are exposed to the body system, growth and development, puberty and basic HIV/AIDS issues through the subject of Health and Physical Education as from standard V. At the secondary level, students are exposed, through Integrated Science, to changes occurring at puberty, family planning, birth control and sexually transmitted diseases.

In addition organisations like the Mauritius Family Planning Association and *Action Familiale* carry out periodically briefing sessions in the secondary schools for the benefit of both teacher and student while the Health and Anti Drug Unit of the Ministry organises talk, activities and other co-curricular activities in collaboration with the Ministry of Health & Quality of Life and Non-Governmental Organisations. A case in point is the recent talk held on 16 March 2006 by this Ministry in collaboration with the Ministry of Health & Quality of Life.

Admittedly this is not enough and the next step will be for my Ministry in the weeks to come to identify collaborators having experience in exposure of students to sex education and to develop a strategy and a structured approach to sex education in our schools.

PLAINE VERTE - MEDICLINIC

(No. B/138) Dr. A. Husnoo (Second Member for Port Louis Maritime and Port Louis East) asked the Minister of Housing and Lands whether he will state if a plot of land has been identified for the building of a mediclinic in Plaine Verte and, if so, where it is situated, indicating if it has been vested in the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life and if not, why not.

(Withdrawn)

MON TRESOR MON DESERT GOVERNMENT SCHOOL – CONDITIONS

(No. B/139) Mr Y. Varma (First Member for Mahebourg and Plaine Magnien) asked the hon. Minister of Education and Human Resources whether he is aware of the unhygienic conditions prevailing at the compound of the Mon Trésor Mon Désert Primary school in Constituency No. 12 and, if so, will he state what remedial measures have been or will be taken.

Reply: I wish to inform the House that a team from the Zone Directorate has effected a site visit at Mon Trésor Mon Désert Government School on Monday 27 March 2006.

I am informed that no unhygienic condition, as such, was noted to prevail at school -

- (i) toilets were clean and well kept;
- (ii) the school yard was clean and grass trimmed;
- (iii) tap water is available, the fibre glass water tanks had last been cleaned on 6 January 2006;
- (iv) adequate number of bins are available all around the school premises;
- (v) classrooms are well ventilated and lighted, and
- (vi) construction of a larger concrete bin with metal cover, in replacement of the existing concrete bin, is under consideration.

However, due to the recent heavy rainfalls, leaves and fruits from the badamier tree got scattered in the school yard. These were collected and heaped and have already been removed by the scavenging section of the District Council. The collection of garbage at school will henceforth be done by the District Council every Saturday morning.

The state of cleanliness of the school compound is being closely monitored by the Zone Directorate and the Head of School.

MAHEBOURG - CHIKUNGUNYA DISEASE - CASES RECORDED

(No. B/140) Mr Y. Varma (First Member for Mahebourg and Plaine Magnien) asked the Minister of Health and Quality of Life whether, in regard to the chikungunya disease in Mahebourg in Constituency No. 12, he will state -

- (a) the number of cases recorded to date;
- (b) the treatment provided;
- (c) the measures taken to prevent the spread of the disease to other villages of the constituency, and
- (d) where matters stand to date.

Reply: Concerning part (a) of the question, I am informed that as at 3 April 2006, 347 confirmed cases have been reported for the region of Mahebourg.

As regards part (b), there is no specific treatment against the chikungunya. I am informed that patients attending hospitals are prescribed analgesics and anti-inflammatory drugs to relieve their symptoms.

With regard to part (c), a series of measures have been taken to prevent the spread of the disease to other adjoining villages. These measures comprise inter alia

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- (i) Fogging activities which are meant to eliminate adult mosquitoes are usually carried out in the evening, around clusters where several cases have been reported. It is also being carried out in the vicinity of schools and hospitals.
- (ii) Larviciding activities are carried out by using the insecticide called "abate". The purpose is to kill mosquito larvae. Larviciding is being carried out in the village of Mahebourg on a fortnightly basis.
- (iii) Cleaning up operations with the help of the Grand Port/Savanne District Council, the Ministry of Local Government and the Ministry of Environment and NDU.
- (iv) Furthermore, the following mobilisation/sensitisation/ awareness activities have been carried out in constituency No. 12 -

- Distribution of flyers on chikungunya

- Awareness campaign through meetings held with *Forces Vives* and community leaders;
- Talks held with community leaders, women's association, students and senior citizens, and
- House to house counselling by community health care officers in the region of Mahebourg.

Regarding part (d) of the question, I wish to inform the House that the situation is under control. The number of cases being reported is on the decline. However, we should not be complacent. Instead we should remain alert at all times and sustain our actions.

REDUNDANCY FUND - SETTING UP

(No. B/141) Mr Y. Varma (First Member for Mahebourg and Plaine Magnien) asked the hon. Minister of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment whether he will state if he has received requests for the setting up of a Redundancy Fund and, if so, will he state where matters stand.

(Vide reply to PQ No. B/109)

TROU D'EAU DOUCE/GRAND RIVER SOUTH EAST – PUBLIC TRANSPORT

(No. B/142) Mr L. Bundhoo (Second Member for Montagne Blanche and GRSE) asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Public Infrastructure, Land Transport and Shipping whether he has been made aware of the difficulties being faced by the public and students in particular with regard to the public transport in the region of Trou D'Eau Douce and Grand River South East and, if so, will he state what remedial measures will be taken.

Reply: I am aware of difficulties being faced by the public and students in particular with regard to the public transport in the region of Trou D'Eau Douce and Grand River South East.

At the level of my Ministry I have held regular meetings with the National Transport Authority to assess the transport situation on bus routes all over the island. At one of the meetings, we examined specifically the transport situation prevailing in the Flacq district which includes the localities referred to by the hon. Member.

I must point out that the region of Trou D'Eau Douce is served by six buses which operate between the locality and Central Flacq. In addition, there are 50 (fifty) taxis which operate as taxi trains along the same corridor.

As regards Grand River South East (GRSE), there are three buses providing services between the village and Central Flacq. Moreover, there are also about sixty taxis which supplement the bus services by operating as taxi trains between GRSE and Central Flacq.

Following the provision of free transport for students and pensioners, there has been a marked shift of passengers from the taxi to the bus mode in the Trou D'Eau Douce region.

Accordingly, to cope with the new demand along the route Trou D'Eau Douce – Central Flacq, a revised time-table was introduced by the National Transport Authority on 03 January 2006.

However, according to surveys carried out by the National Transport Authority, the number of buses is still inadequate to respond to the travelling needs of the inhabitants during peak hours. The licensing of additional buses is not envisaged as it would create excess capacity during off-peak hours, which would make the route economically and financially non-viable. At the end of the day, the livelihood of both existing bus and taxi operators would be put at stake.

With regard to the region of Grand River South East, a survey carried out by the National Transport Authority from 21 to 23 November 2005 has revealed that the three buses were operating with poor loading. During meetings held with bus operators and the GRSE Village Council, the former had expressed their concern on the fact that most of the passengers were travelling in taxis. However, after discussions, the representatives of the Village Council undertook to launch a

campaign with a view to encouraging people to travel in buses. The National Transport Authority has worked out a revised time-table in consultation with all parties concerned and same will be effective as from 03 April 2006.

The National Transport Authority will closely monitor the situation in order to ensure that a satisfactory bus service is provided.

I wish to point out that the Flacq district has certain specificities with regard to commuting by its inhabitants, which need to be addressed in an integrated way. In fact, prior to the introduction of free travel, there was heavy reliance and preference for travelling in taxi trains. As such, transport by bus was barely being resorted to by the public and the students. Thus most of the bus routes became uneconomical to operate. There is also the fact that transport demand in the regions of Flacq is mainly high during peak hours, which makes whole day bus operations unprofitable. However, with the introduction of free travel, recourse to bus services increased dramatically, posing unfortunately, a problem of inadequate buses. On the other hand, taxi operators are complaining of a fall in their revenue.

The Task Force chaired by me is looking into a review of the free transport scheme, which will take into consideration the interests of one and all.

NEW GROVE – PREGNANT LADY - SEXUAL ASSAULT

(No. B/143) Mrs A. Navarre-Marie (First Member for GRNW and Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Women's Rights, Child Development, Family Welfare & Consumer Protection whether she will state the measures taken by her Ministry following the alleged sexual assault of a pregnant lady at New Grove in January last.

Reply: I am informed that following the alleged sexual assault of a pregnant lady on 28 January 2006 at New Grove, the victim called at the Family Welfare Unit of my Ministry on Friday 03 February 2006.

She was assured of the psychological and legal assistance available to victims of sexual assault at Family Support Bureau. She was also informed that arrangements could be made immediately for a psychologist to visit her for counseling purposes.

However, she declined on the grounds that she preferred to keep her address confidential for security reasons. She was, therefore, given an appointment for psychological counselling on the following Monday 06 February, but she declined again indicating that she was not free.

Arrangements were then made for a psychologist of the Ministry to meet the victim on Monday 13 February 2006 at the Family Support Bureau of Bell Village, but she never turned up.

However, I wish to inform the House that, I personally received the victim and her husband in my office to reassure them of all available support services of my Ministry.

Following this alleged case of assault, I have personally chaired two meetings on 20 and 24 February 2006, with representatives of the Prime Minister's Office, Police Department and the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life for the elaboration of a protocol of assistance to victims of sexual assault.

The purpose of the protocol is to ensure a co-ordinated approach of all authorities concerned so as to provide prompt and timely assistance to victims of sexual assault.

On 03 March 2006, Government gave its approval for the implementation of the protocol.

With the application of this protocol, victims may now call directly at the Sexual Assault Units which are being set up in hospitals by the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life.

This fast track measure is meant to prevent victims from undergoing further trauma in police stations and casualty departments of hospitals.

FOSTER CARE PROJECT - ACTIVITIES

(No. B/144) Mrs A. Navarre-Marie (First Member for GRNW and Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Women's Rights, Child Development, Family Welfare & Consumer Protection whether she will state if it is proposed to dismantle the Foster Care Project and, if so, the reasons thereof.

Reply: The answer is no. It is certainly not proposed to dismantle the Foster Care Project. I wonder from where the hon. Member got this information.

In fact, the project which started on a pilot basis in December 2002, has since become a permanent programme run by the Child Development Unit of the Ministry.

NHDC LTD – HARDSHIP CASES - APPLICATIONS

(No. B/145) Mrs M. Martin (Second Member for Curepipe and Midlands) asked the Minister of Housing and Lands whether he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the National Housing Development Corporation information as to the number of applications received for an NHDC house from people against whom an eviction order has been issued.

Reply: I am informed by the NHDC Ltd that as at 23 March 2006, 288 applications were received from households who had received a Court eviction order from their landlord.

I am further informed that as at March 2006, out of the 288 applications received, 88 have already been called for an interview by the NHDC Ltd and their files are being processed to ascertain their eligibility. The others will be called for interview shortly.

The House may wish to know that the NHDC Ltd usually reserves around 25% of houses in its newly constructed housing estates for allocation to hardship cases.

LAGOONS - JET SKIS - LICENCES

(No. B/146) Mrs M. Martin (Second Member for Curepipe and Midlands) asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism, Leisure and External Communications whether he will state if it is proposed to grant licences for the operation of jet skis in our lagoons.

Reply: The importation of water-scooters and jet skis was banned in 1989 for security reasons.

However, in line with the policy of my Ministry to diversify our tourist products as well as our tourist markets, Government on 16 December 2005, agreed to grant special permission, on a pilot basis, to a group of Russian VIPs to practise jet skiing in our lagoon, subject to very strict conditions -

- (a) the jet skis should be taken back upon departure of the visitors;
- (b) the promoters and visitors shall comply with any terms and conditions to be laid down by the National Coast Guard (NCG), Ministry of Fisheries (MOF) and/or Ministry of Environment (MOE) for security purposes, environment protection and fishing activities;
- (c) the extent of the zone where the jet-skiing activity will be practised should be communicated to the Ministry, and zoned accordingly with buoys and floats under the supervision of the NCG, MOE and/or MOF;
- (d) All the costs relating to installation of buoys and supervision of the jet skiing activities by the NCG being borne by the tour operator;
- (e) the promoter should pay a temporary tourism enterprise licence fee per jet-ski, and
- (f) the promoter shall take a comprehensive insurance policy in Mauritius to cover any liability for both the skiers and members of the public.

The idea behind this decision of Government is to test the feasibility of allowing the practice of jet skiing under certain controlled conditions. If this first exercise proves conclusive and successful to the satisfaction of the various stakeholders, my Ministry will look into ways and means of developing this

tourism product and tapping this niche market to attract more up-market tourists who are very high spenders.

If, and I say if, any licence is given in the future, Government will ensure that the jet skiing activity is carried out offshore, outside the lagoon, and under strict safety and environmental conditions.

NATIONAL HERITAGE FUND BOARD - MEETINGS

(No. B/147) Mrs M. Martin (Second Member for Curepipe and Midlands) asked the Minister of Arts and Culture whether following the nomination of the new president of the National Heritage Fund Board he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain information as to the number of times and the dates on which the Board has met and the outcome thereof.

Reply: Since the nomination of the new Chairperson on 22 February 2006, the National Heritage Fund Board has held two meetings on Friday 03 March and on Monday 27 March respectively.

I have been informed by the National Heritage Fund that decisions were taken at these two meetings on the following main issues -

- (i) activities to be organised by the National Heritage Fund to mark the International Day for monuments and Sites on 18 April 2006;
- (ii) restoration of the Watch Tower, Store House and Landing Jetty on Ile de la Passe;
- (iii) launching of a sensitisation campaign on the safeguard of our national heritage, and
- (iv) recruitment of a Consultant for co-ordination of research projects.

LIQUIFIED PETROLEUM GAS (LPG) - PRICE

(No. B/148) Mr S. Naidu (Third Member for Beau Bassin and Petite Rivière) asked the Minister of Industry, Small & Medium Enterprises, Commerce and Co-operatives whether, in regard to the difference in the selling prices of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) for domestic use and industrial use, he will state whether measures if any, have been taken to prevent the use of domestic LPG for industrial purposes.

Reply: Indeed because of price differential in favour of 12 kgs cylinders, industrial users of 40/50 kgs cylinders may shift to 12 kgs cylinders. The 40/50 kgs cylinders represent 5% of the market.

I have requested the suppliers to revise the price for the 40/50 kgs cylinders and I am informed that due to international prices going down, the price difference is not widening but is rather shrinking.

My Ministry is, on the other hand, studying the problem along with the suppliers with the view to preventing the use of domestic LPG for commercial purposes. If there is any misuse for industrial purposes, that too will be considered.

It has also been brought to my attention that canalisation is being practiced. I intend to make regulations to render canalisation illegal. I am making an appeal to those concerned to immediately stop the practice because of safety hazards.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY - ACTIVITIES

(No. B/149) Mr S. Naidu (Third Member for Beau Bassin and Petite Rivière) asked the Minister of Women's Rights, Child Development, Family Welfare & Consumer Protection whether, in regard to the activities organised in the context of the International Women's Day, she will state if a video clip entitled "Celebrating the Achievements of Women" was produced and, if so, will she give the list of producers and/or audio visual companies who were invited to submit quotations, indicating the name of the successful bidder and the contract value.

Reply: In the context of International Women's Day 2006, the Ministry initially proposed to enlist the services of Art Academy Ltd for cultural items to be performed at Octave Wiehé Auditorium, Réduit on 08 March 2006.

Art Academy Ltd submitted on 07 February 2006 a quotation of Rs197,000.

Unfortunately, no provision exists under the Ministry's budget to fund the running cost of the SOS Femmes. It is worth mentioning that the Association has on more than one occasion in the past approached Government to secure funding to meet its running costs. The previous one dates back to February 2005. That application was not entertained.

However, with a view to assisting SOS Femmes to find a sustainable long-term solution. I have approached my colleague, the Minister of Housing and Lands, who has kindly agreed to consider favourably the request for a plot of State land to be made available to the Association for the construction of a shelter. The Association is proposing to raise funds for the construction.

Furthermore, the Association is eligible for funding under the "Partnership Against Family Violence Committee" for projects and activities organised to combat family violence.

SOS Femmes has submitted a project proposal for a sensitization campaign, which is under consideration by the Ministry.

In addition, I wish to inform the House that I have personally effected a visit to the SOS Femmes Centre on 15 August 2005.

WTO/WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANISATION - BIO-PIRACY

(No. B/150) Mr J. Cuttaree (Second Member for Stanley and Rose Hill) asked the Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Co-operation whether he will state the position of Mauritius on the discussions taking place at the World Trade Organisation and the World Intellectual Property Organisation on the issue of bio-piracy in the African Region.

Reply: The position of Mauritius at both the WTO and WIPO on bio-piracy has always been in line with the position taken by the African Group.

The debate at the WTO on the issue of bio-piracy revolves around the following two issues -

- whether all life forms covered under Art 27.3 (b) of the TRIPS Agreement (i.e. plants, animals, micro organisms and so on) should be patented, and
- whether the TRIPS Agreement should be revisited to make it compatible with the Convention on Bio Diversity (CBD) regarding access to genetic resources and the associated traditional knowledge as well as the sharing of benefits arising from their use.

The position of Mauritius has been that the provisions of Art 27.3(b) of the WTO TRIPS Agreement should be revised to prevent the patenting of plants, animals and micro-organisms. Moreover, the Agreement should be revisited to make it compatible with the convention on bio-diversity regarding the access to genetic resources and the associated traditional knowledge as well as the sharing of benefits arising from their use.

The rationale of this position is to prevent the mis-appropriation of genetic resources and knowledge, commonly known as “bio-piracy”, for use in patented inventions in order to protect traditional knowledge and folklore. Mauritius is also supportive of the position that users of genetic resources in patent inventions should disclose the origin of these resources and that the benefits arising from their use should be shared with the countries from where these resources emanate. At the level of WIPO, Mauritius is closely following discussions on the protection of traditional knowledge and the work of the Inter-governmental Committee (ICC) on Intellectual Property and Genetic resources. We are working together with the Africa group to ensure that adequate measures are put in place to prevent bio-piracy through the mis-appropriation of genetic resources and that protection be provided to traditional knowledge.

PLAISANCE, ROSE HILL - MARKET FAIR - RENOVATION

(No. B/151) Mr J. Cuttaree (Second Member for Stanley and Rose Hill) asked the Minister of Environment and National Development Unit whether, in regard to the renovation of the market fair at Plaisance, Rose Hill, he will state the date on which the tender was awarded and the expected date of completion.

Reply: The tender for the construction of a market fair at Plaisance, Rose Hill was awarded on 05 September 2002. The scheduled completion date was 30 September 2003.

The contract was terminated on 15 November 2004 because the contract had failed to mobilise adequate resources to complete the project on the scheduled date, which was revised on several occasions.

On 07 December 2004, a contract for outstanding works with regard to site works such as drains, parking area and boundary walls was awarded to Gamma Civic. On 24 January 2005, Development Works Corporation was awarded a contract for outstanding work regarding the main building.

I am advised that Gamma Civic has completed all outstanding site works. DWC is expected to complete the building works by end of May 2006.

NATIONAL COLLEGES - ADMISSION – YEAR 2007

(No. B/152) Mrs F. Labelle (Third Member for Vacoas and Floreal) asked the Minister of Education and Human Resources whether, in regard to the admission to the National Colleges in 2007, he will state what are the parameters set by his Ministry for the selection exercise.

Reply: I wish to refer the hon. Member to the reply, which the substantive Minister made to the PNQ of the hon. Leader of the Opposition, at our sitting on Tuesday 21 March. Rather than talking of a selection exercise, it is preferable to talk of admission of students. In this respect, while admission of students to regional colleges will continue to be made on the basis of parental choice, grade aggregate and proximity of residence, as has been the case since 2002, admission to the National Colleges will be made on the basis of parental choice, grade aggregate and relative performance, as provided for in the Education Regulation 1957 as subsequently amended.

QEC, ROYAL COLLEGE, CUREPIPE, ROYAL COLLEGE, PORT LOUIS – ADMISSION - 2007

(No. B/153) Mrs F. Labelle (Third Member for Vacoas and Floreal) asked the Minister of Education and Human Resources whether he will give the number of students admitted to the Queen Elizabeth College, the Royal College

Curepipe and the Royal College Port Louis in January 2006, indicating the number of students who will be admitted at each of these colleges in January 2007, following the transformation of these schools into National Colleges.

Reply: The number of students admitted in Queen Elizabeth College, Royal College Curepipe and Royal College Port Louis in Lower VI in January 2006 is as follows -

QEC – 147
RCC – 144
RCPL – 171

As regards admission in Lower VI in 2007 in the same colleges the number of seats available will be as follows -

QEC – 150
RCC – 150
RCPL – 240

ANIMALS – SLAUGHTERING - PERMITS

(No. B/154) Mr S. Lauthan (Third Member for Port Louis Maritme and Port Louis East) asked the Minister of Agro Industry and Fisheries whether he will state if the practice of issuing slaughter permits by veterinarians prior to the slaughtering of animals at the slaughter house has been abandoned and, if so, the reasons thereof.

Reply: The practice of issuing slaughter permits has not been stopped. In accordance with the Meat (Abattoir) Regulations, permits are required for slaughter of female cattle and for sick or injured cattle that need to be slaughtered for humane reasons. However, all animals brought for slaughter at the Central Abattoir are subject to inspection by a veterinary officer of my Ministry prior to slaughter, that is, *ante mortem* examination and after slaughter to ensure fitness for human consumption.

The veterinary officer may not authorise the slaughter if the animal is sick or pregnant or there are doubts about the fitness of the meat for human consumption.

CONSTITUENCY NO. 3 – FIRE VICTIMS - GOVT. ASSISTANCE

(No. B/155) Mr S. Lauthan (Third Member for Port Louis Maritime and Port Louis East) asked the Minister of Housing and Lands whether he will state the measures taken for the allocation of plots of land to victims of fire in Constituency No. 3, indicating if these measures will be extended to victims of fire throughout the island.

(Withdrawn)

MOTORWAY (ST. LOUIS POWER STATION) - HANDRAILS

(No. B/156) Mr J. C. Barbier (Third Member for GRNW and Port Louis West) asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Public Infrastructure, Land Transport and Shipping whether he will state if the handrails on the motorway at the level of the St. Louis Power Station will be removed so as to give access to vehicles coming from Port Louis towards Camp Chapelon and, if so, when and, if not, why not.

Reply: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I made to PQ IB/71 on the same subject.

As I stated in my reply to PQ IB/71, having been made aware of this problem by the inhabitants of the region, my colleague, the Minister of Local Government and myself immediately carried out a site visit on Wednesday 03 August 2005. Thereafter, the Traffic Management and Road Safety Unit was requested to undertake a detailed survey with a view to re-designing the access in order to facilitate vehicles exits on the motorway as well as recommending other mitigating measures to enhance safety.

I indicated in the reply that the Traffic Management and Road Safety Unit would carry out a detailed survey and come up with measures to facilitate the

movement of vehicles going to Camp Chapelon from the Motorway at St. Louis. The report considered various options as follows -

- Option 1** Lowering the handrails along the central reservations to a height below the driver's eye level up to a distance of about 300 metres.
- Option 2** Provide a set of traffic lights at that junction.
- Option 3** The construction of a grade separator at that junction.

I am informed by the Traffic Management and Road Safety Unit that in view of the geometry of the road at that location, it would not be possible to bring about any low cost infrastructural improvement for the time being, which would facilitate vehicles to cross the motorway. The only option is to construct a grade separator access which obviously will be very costly.

In view of high risk of road accidents which prevail at St. Louis junction, it is not advisable from a road safety point of view to remove the guardrails.

POINTE AUX SABLES/TOMBEAU BAY – FISHERS - COMPENSATION

(No. B/157) Mr J. C. Barbier (Third Member for GRNW and Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Agro Industry and Fisheries whether he is aware of the persisting pollution in the region from Pointe aux Sables up to Tombeau Bay and, if so, will he state if it is proposed to grant additional compensation to fishers of the region.

Reply: A committee on pollution for the region of Pointe aux Sables to Baie du Tombeau was set up by the Government in August 2000. The committee was chaired by former Chief Justice Mr J. Forget with late Mr D. Goorah and Mr J. Bizlall as assessors. The aims of the committee were to look into amongst others, the origin and extent of industrial pollution in the lagoon of Port Louis from Pointe aux Sables to Baie du Tombeau and the compensation payable to those fishermen as a result of such pollution.

The committee submitted the first report entitled "Compensation payable to fishermen on account of industrial pollution in the lagoons of Port Louis" on 13

December 2000 to the then Ministry of Finance. In December 2000, 311 fishers who were registered as at May 2000 from Pointe aux Sables to Baie du Tombeau were compensated. They received a compensation of Rs9,000 per year in December 2000 for the period of 1991 to 2002 amounting to Rs33,588,000.

As per the recommendations of the Forget Report of 2000, a monitoring committee was also set up in December 2000 under the chairmanship of the Director of Environment to monitor the water quality from Pointe aux Sables to Baie du Tombeau. Regular monitoring is carried out by the Albion Fisheries Research Centre (AFRC), the National Environment Laboratory (NEL), the Wastewater Laboratory of the Wastewater Management Authority (WMA) and the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life. The technical committee meets on a bi-annual basis to review the situation and to take appropriate measures whenever necessary and to inform Government accordingly.

From the analyses carried out at almost all monitored sites, the water quality was within the Coastal Water Quality Guideline (CWQG) limits except, at two out of seven stations at Baie du Tombeau where phosphate levels were higher than the guideline limits. These stations are influenced by the freshwater input from Rivulet Terre Rouge. In general, high levels of phosphate are recorded at stations found near river mouths.

A general improvement in the water quality in the Port Louis region with the exception of Rivulet Terre Rouge at Baie du Tombeau has been observed.

I wish to inform the House that in a bid to reduce water pollution in that region, the Baie du Tombeau sewage outfall has been relocated off reef in January 2002. Moreover, with the coming into operation of the Montagne Jacquot Treatment Plant scheduled in September 2006, wastewater will no longer be discharged in the lagoon thereby bringing further improvement in the water quality.

In addition, I wish to point out that in October 2004 the former Government agreed that former Chief Justice Mr J. Forget would be requested to review the progress achieved in the implementation of the recommendations of the committee. However, in November 2004, the former Government agreed not to go ahead with the exercise in view of the negative attitude of the representative of the fishers of Port Louis.

In order to help the fishers of the region, they are being encouraged to fish outside the reefs around Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs), in order to have a better catch as compared to lagoon fishing. Most of the fishers of the region are being encouraged to go for off-lagoon fishing in order to earn a better living and at the same time reduce pressure in the lagoon. The average catch per fisherman day by a fisher operating in the off-lagoon is about 20 kg as compared to the average catch for lagoon fishery which is 4.2 kg per day. These fishers are trained at the Fisheries Training and Extension Centre (FiTEC) and as at to date 95 fishers of the Port Louis region have been trained in the FAD fishery. Fishers are being continuously trained to cater for the relocation from the artisanal fishery to fishing around FAD at the Fisheries Training and Extension Centre (FiTEC) and are provided with a daily stipend of Rs250 for the training period. The cost incurred for one training session (24 fishermen) in FADs Fishery Training Programme is about Rs228,824. In November 2005, more artisanal fishers of the region were called for training in the FAD fishery, but they proposed to join the training in winter months when they are not actively involved in fishing activities.

In addition, I must also point out that other incentives are provided by the Government to the fishing community -

- (i) A loan scheme of Rs200,000 is provided by the Development Bank of Mauritius (DBM) to give assistance at low interest rate of only 3% per annum to encourage fishermen to equip themselves better to carry out fishing around FADs;
- (ii) Registered fishers are also eligible for duty concession on either an outboard motor for 3 years or an inboard motor every 5 years. A spare outboard motor of lesser rating has now been included in the scheme.

In this context, it is not proposed to grant any additional compensation to fishers of the region.

CHIKUNGUNYA DISEASE - PREGNANT WOMEN - TEST

(No. B/158) Mrs F. Labelle (Third Member for Vacoas and Floreal) asked the Minister of Health and Quality of Life whether he will state the measures, if any, being taken to shorten the delay in obtaining the results of the test effected on pregnant women affected by the chikungunya disease.

Reply: Blood samples received from pregnant women affected with chikungunya, are treated on a fast track basis and are inoculated on the same day. Results are obtained within 2 to 6 days depending on the severity of the case. I am informed that when blood specimens are taken at the height of the fever, the results become apparent as from the second day.

Results obtained are communicated by telephone and despatched on the same day to all hospitals, private health institutions and private medical practitioners.

GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS - LARVICIDE SPREADING

(No. B/159) Mrs F. Labelle (Third Member for Vacoas and Floreal) asked the Minister of Health and Quality of Life whether he will state the dates on which larvicides were spread at the following Government schools - Réunion, Hugh Otter Barry, Révérend Espitalier Noël, SSS Floreal, Henrietta, Aryan Vedic, indicating the lifespan of the larvicides treatment.

Reply: Larviciding operations have been carried out at the following schools as follows -

Schools	Dates
Reunion Government School	23 February, 2006 7 March, 2006 29 March, 2006
Hugh Otter Barry Government School	26 February, 2006 25 March, 2006
Révérend Espitalier Noël Government School	26 February, 2006 25 March 2006
State Secondary School Floreal	11 March, 2006 28 March, 2006
Henrietta Government School	2 March, 2006 26 March, 2006

Aryan Vedic Hindu Aided School

5 March, 2006

30 March, 2006

The larvicide remains effective for ten to fourteen days under normal weather conditions. I am informed that it is a practice to carry out larviciding activities every ten days. However, in certain regions, it has not been possible to do so in view of persistent rainy weather since the beginning of the year. This has been the case of schools in the Central Plateau.

I wish to point out that larviciding operations only will not address the problem regarding mosquito nuisance. The most effective way to combat chikungunya is to eliminate potential mosquito breeding grounds.

In this context, Heads of Schools have been requested to ensure that their school premises are free from potential mosquito breeding grounds.

CENTRE DE FORMATION ARTISTIQUE – PAILLOTE – ACTIVITIES

(No. B/160) Mrs L.D. Dookun-Luchoomun (Third Member for La Caverne & Phoenix) asked the Minister of Arts & Culture whether he will state where matters stand regarding the “*Centre de Formation Artistique*” situated at Paillote.

Reply: The building housing the “*Centre de Formation Artistique*” was handed over to my Ministry on 27 January 2006.

However, some minor works, which remained to be completed, including electricity connection, were carried out during the month of February 2006.

During the month of March, my Ministry has made arrangements for the installation of equipment and furniture at the Centre. The process will be completed during this month.

My Ministry is finalising the training programme and activities to be carried out at the Centre.

It is proposed to start operating the Centre on the occasion of the International Dance Day on 29 April.

SOS FEMMES ASSOCIATION – GOVT. ASSISTANCE

(No. B/161) Mrs L.D. Dookun-Luchoomun (Third Member for La Caverne & Phoenix) asked the Minister of Women's Rights, Child Development, Family Welfare & Consumer Protection whether she will state if it is proposed to provide any form of support to the *SOS Femmes* organisation.

Reply: I wish to inform the House that I have always been very attentive to the needs of NGOs catering for women, children and families in distress. In this context, I made it a point to meet the President of SOS Femmes of 09 February 2006 as soon as I was informed that the Association was facing financial difficulties.

The President of the Association informed me of the problems faced by SOS Femmes and made a request for help from Government to obtain funding to support its activities towards the welfare and well-being of women and children victims of violence.

In addition, a Foster Care Advisory Committee, established under the Child Protection (Foster Care) Regulations 2002, has been entrusted with the responsibility to oversee the matching of children to foster parents.

On the contrary, my Ministry firmly intends putting up additional human resource in order to support this programme.

ADVISERS - EMOLUMENTS

(No. B/162) Mr P. Jhugroo (Third Member for Port Louis North & Montagne Longue) asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Finance & Economic Development whether he will give a list of Advisers attached to his Ministry and who also sit on different Boards, indicating the emoluments they draw.

Reply: The information sought is being placed in the Library.

**SENIOR CITIZENS & STUDENTS – FREE TRANSPORT -
REFUND TO BUS OPERATORS**

(No. B/163) Mr P. Jhugroo (Third Member for Port Louis North & Montagne Longue) asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Public Infrastructure, Land Transport & Shipping whether he will state if it is proposed to review the modalities for free transport of senior citizens and students and, if so, will he state what new measures will be introduced.

Reply: A Ministerial Task Force chaired by me is looking into the advisability of reviewing the present system of refund to bus operators of the cost of free transport in respect of senior citizens and students.

The Task Force, which has so far met on two occasions, is looking into the pros and cons of the various alternative options. Government will be invited to take a decision, once an effective and efficient option is agreed upon.

**UNIVERSITY OF MAURITIUS - TELUGU & MARATHI –
B.A. COURSES**

(No. B/164) Mrs D. Perrier (Fourth Member for Savanne and Black River) asked the Minister of Education and Human Resources whether he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the University of Mauritius information as to whether full-time B.A. courses in Telugu and Marathi are being offered for the academic year starting September 2006 and, if not, why not.

Reply: I am informed by the University of Mauritius as follows –

- (i) all full-time and part-time BA programmes in Oriental languages are mounted by the Mahatma Gandhi Institute according to the rules and regulations of the University of Mauritius (UoM), which awards the degrees;
- (ii) the UoM does not have any in-house academic resources to teach oriental languages. These are taught by MGI or by part-timers recommended by MGI, and

- (iii) MGI has the capacity to run BA courses in Telugu and Marathi, and is prepared to run these on a full time basis provided there is the required minimum number of eight to ten students.

The hon. Member may, however, wish to note that the system is being reviewed to make use of existing resources for running courses in the two languages irrespective of the number of students.

CPE EXAMINATIONS (2004 & 2005) – PUPILS – SUBJECTS

(No. B/165) Mrs D. Perrier (Fourth Member for Savanne and Black River) asked the Minister of Education and Human Resources whether, in regard to the CPE Examinations for each of the years 2004, 2005 and 2006, he will state the number of pupils taking –

- (a) five subjects, and
- (b) six subjects, indicating in each case the subjects offered.

Reply: A list of the number of pupils taking five subjects and six subjects in details at the CPE Examinations for the years 2004 and 2005 is being tabled.

As regards CPE Examinations 2006, figures are not presently available as entries have not yet been received at the Mauritius Examinations Syndicate.

STREET CHILDREN – JULY 2005 TO APRIL 2006

(No. B/166) Mrs D. Perrier (Fourth Member for Savanne and Black River) asked the Minister of Social Security, National Solidarity and Senior Citizens Welfare & Reform Institutions whether she will give the number of street children identified since July 2005 to date, indicating what action has been taken to address the issue.

Reply: The number of street children identified as at July 2005 was 337. However, from July 2005 to date an additional 120 children have been added to the list. We have to mention here, that out of the total 457 street children, 182 are

being closely followed up by the street educators, while the rest are being seen on and off by the street educators. No positive works can be carried out with the latter group, as they are not regularly present in the region where they have been identified.

The problems related to street children are numerous and complex and range from absenteeism at school, sexually abused children, substance abuse, lack of parental guidance etc.

During their period of employment, the street educators have strived continuously for the establishment of a trust relationship with those street children. From there on, they have worked out a rehabilitative programme for each one of them. Contacts have been established with most of the parents, with the consent of the children and the works carried out so far have proved significantly fruitful.

A number of concrete positive actions have been accomplished, however, I will mention here a few ones which can be placed on record. In the region of Mahebourg, six children got the opportunity to follow a Basic Course in Electrical Installation at the IVTB Mahebourg and they are now employed as helpers in Electrical Installation. This month, ten other children would start a Basic Course in Plumbing and Fittings at the IVTB Mahebourg. Courses are sponsored by both private and public organisations. In a number of cases, children have been encouraged to go back to school and the street educators have acted as mediators to facilitate their reintegration at school. Those who were involved in mendicity, were encouraged to join in group activities and were placed in structured groups. Most of them have reduced this practice while some have stopped completely.

There is no doubt that the Street Educators are engaged in a very important activity and that is the reason why, my Ministry will provide all the required financial support, through the NGO Trust Fund, to the NGO which has been recently set up by the Street Educators to carry on their task.

BEAU BASSIN - NEW MARKET - CONSTRUCTION

(No. B/167) Mr M. Allet (Second Member for Beau Bassin and Petite Rivière) asked the Minister of Local Government whether he will state if it is proposed to construct a new market at Beau Bassin on the premises of the existing one and, if so, will he say when and, if not, why not.

Reply: I am informed by the Municipality of Beau Bassin/Rose Hill that the construction of a new market at Beau Bassin on the premises of the existing one is under consideration.

**COROMANDEL, *MORCELLEMENT* HERMITAGE –
MAIN ACCESS ROAD**

(No. B/168) Mr M. Allet (Second Member for Beau Bassin and Petite Rivière) asked the Minister of Local Government whether he has been made aware of the problem faced by the inhabitants of *Morcellement* Hermitage, Coromandel as a result of the damage to the main access road also called Chemin La Mort and, if so, will he state what remedial measures will be taken.

Reply: I would like to refer the hon. Member to the reply to PQ IA/1 on this issue.

I am now informed that the consultant of the National Development Unit of the Ministry of Environment & National Development Unit, GIBBS (Mauritius) Ltd is still working on the design in connexion with the slope stabilization and the rehabilitation of the road in question.

I am further informed that the design is expected to be completed by end of April 2006 and the tender exercise will be launched as soon as the land acquisition and wayleave issues will be finalised.

CONSTITUENCY NO. 20 - LAND DRAINAGE PROGRAMME

(No. B/169) Mr M. Allet (Second Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière) asked the Minister of Environment & National Development Unit whether he will state if there is any drainage policy for Constituency No. 20 and, if so, will he state when works are likely to start, indicating the regions concerned.

Reply: The National Development Unit, in collaboration with the local authorities and the Road Development Authority, is implementing the national land drainage programme. Three hundred and twenty-six flood prone areas have been identified and the local authorities are responsible for the implementation of land

drainage projects on non-classified roads and the RDA for drain projects on motorways and classified roads.

There is therefore no specific drainage policy restricted to one particular constituency. However, the following drainage projects have been prioritized for implementation by the Black River District Council and the Municipal Council of Beau Bassin/Rose Hill –

- Allée Roussailles, Gros Cailloux
- Morcellement de Chazal, Albion
- Vishnu Temple Street, Beau Bassin
- Clément Charoux Street, Beau Bassin
- Hosenally Street, Mare Gravier

I am advised that the Municipal Council of Beau Bassin/Rose Hill awarded a contract in January 2005 for the sum of Rs15 m for the construction of drains at six sites in Constituency No. 20 including the three sites at Beau Bassin which I have just mentioned. Works are in progress. Regarding the projects at Gros Cailloux and Albion, these would be implemented in due course.

I would like to inform the hon. Member that new drain projects have recently been submitted by the Municipal Council of Beau Bassin/Rose Hill and Black River District Council for implementation under the National Land Drainage Programme. These include the construction of a drain network at Pavé d'Amour, Coromandel, absorption and precast drain at Richelieu Housing Estate, new drains in Canot Village and Gros Cailloux. These projects are currently being examined.

LAND DRAINAGE PROGRAMME

(No. B/170) Mr R. Bhagwan (First Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière) asked the Minister of Environment & National Development Unit whether, in regard to the land drainage programme, he will state -

- (a) the number of projects approved and under implementation as at 01 July 2005, indicating the total contract value;
- (b) the projects approved from 01 August 2005 to date, stating the number of contracts awarded constituency-wise, and

- (c) if any application has been made to the Ministry of Finance & Economic Development for additional funds, stating the amount and if same has been approved and, if yes, when and, if not, why not.

Reply: The reply is as follows -

- (a) Thirty-eight projects for a total contract value of Rs313,530,164.06 were approved as at 01 July 2005 for implementation under the national land development programme.
- (b) The 2005-2006 budget was passed on 18 April 2005 and the three projects for an amount of Rs47 m were approved just before the election. The hon. Member agrees that a ceiling of Rs200 m was set as far as drain projects were concerned and that added to the Rs47 m we had payments in respect of projects approved earlier which were spilling over the current financial year. However, in spite of such a tight situation, 13 projects have been approved and contracts awarded from 01 August 2005 to date.
- (c) An application for additional funds of Rs125 m has been made to the Ministry of Finance & Economic Development. A reply is being awaited.

HERVÉ DUVAL COMMUNITY CENTRE, BEAU BASSIN – ACTIVITIES

(No. A/2) Mr S. Naidu (Third Member for Beau Bassin & Petite Rivière) asked the Minister of Local Government whether, in regard to the Hervé Duval Community Centre, Beau Bassin, which was inaugurated in December 2005, he will state the reason why the centre is still not open to the public.

Reply: I am informed by the Municipality of Beau Bassin/Rose Hill that the "Centre Hervé Duval" at Vuillemin, Beau Bassin which was inaugurated on 20 December 2005, has become operational with effect from 19 February this year.

I am further informed that notwithstanding the fact that the hall was initially meant for holding meetings only, the Council has decided to provide some indoor games for the benefit of the youth of that region.

CITE BORSTAL - SEWERAGE NETWORK

(No. A/3) Mr J.C. Barbier (Third Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Public Utilities whether, in regard to works actually in progress at Cité Borstal on the sewerage network, he will state -

- (a) when the tender exercise was advertised;
- (b) the name of the successful tenderer;
- (c) when works started, and
- (d) the expected date of completion.

Reply: The tender for the rehabilitation/provision of sewerage infrastructure in Cité Borstal was launched on 30 May 2005. Following approval of the Central Tender Board, the contract was awarded to Messrs Sotravic Ltée on 21 November 2005. The contractor started works on 24 November 2005 and the expected completion date is 29 March 2007.