

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

SUNEE SURTEE GOVT. SCHOOL - POLLING STATION - INCIDENT

(No. 1B/78) Mr R. Uteem (Second Member for Port Louis South & Port Louis Central) asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Affairs and External Communications whether, in regard to the incident which occurred on 5 May 2010 in front of the Sunee Surtee Government School polling station, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Police, information as to if -

- (a) any inquiry has been carried thereinto and, if so, the outcome thereof
- (b) any politician and the Lord Mayor were involved, and
- (c) any arrest has been effected.

Reply: In regard to parts (a) and (b) of the question, I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that on 5 May 2010, the Police Officer in charge of police duties at Surtee Soonee Government School Polling Station received complaints regarding the unauthorized presence of the Lord Mayor within the precincts of 200 metres of the school on two occasions at 10.30 hours and 15.30 hours, respectively. On both occasions, the Lord Mayor was requested by the Police to leave the place, which he did.

I am also informed that on the same day at about 16.00 hours, another incident occurred along Alma Street, Vallée Pitot, involving the Lord Mayor and one Mr Y.R. As a result, a group of about fifteen persons gathered. In order to prevent the situation from deteriorating, the Police intervened and the Lord Mayor was escorted outside the 200 metres precinct of the Polling Station.

I am further informed that on the same day, an enquiry has been initiated for the offence of "Undue Influence, that is Loitering in any street, or open place, within 200 metres of the precinct of a Polling Station" in breach of section 65(2)(d)(i) of the Representation of People Act against the Lord Mayor. Investigation is ongoing.

As regards part (c) of the question, I am informed that the law does not provide for arrests in such cases. Police normally acts with tact and discernment by requesting such persons to vacate the premises to ensure the smooth conduct of elections.

CALODYNE – FEROCIOUS DOGS - ATTACKS

(No. 1B/79) Mr A. Ameer Meea (First Member for Port Louis Maritime and Port Louis East) asked the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Affairs and External Communications whether, in regard to the attacks by ferocious dogs, which occurred at Calodyne, on or about Wednesday 19 May 2010, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Commissioner of Police, information as to if an inquiry has been carried out thereinto and, if so, indicate the outcome thereof.

Reply: I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that on 19 May 2010, two dogs - one Rottweiler and one German Shepherd - attacked and injured three children at Calodyne.

Police instituted an enquiry into the matter and the owner of the dogs, one Mr Y.C was arrested on 21 May 2010. He appeared before the Rivière du Rempart District Court on a provisional charge of “Wounds and Blows with Aggravating Circumstances” and was released on bail upon furnishing a surety of Rs 5,000 and entering into a recognizance of Rs 50,000. Investigation into the matter is still ongoing.

I am very concerned with the increasing number of attacks by dogs. I feel that there is an urgent need to review the existing legislation to address the issue of aggression by dogs. As a matter of fact, I have already given instructions to the Minister of Agro Industry and Food Security for the elaboration of a ‘Dog Control Bill’ to address, *inter alia*, the care and control of dogs, the registration of dogs, special provision in relation to dangerous dogs and menacing dogs and to make provision in relation to damage caused by dogs. Action in this connection has already been initiated.

CHILDREN - STUNTING

(No. B/109) Mr S. Obeegadoo (Third Member for Curepipe and Midlands) asked the Minister of Health and Quality of Life whether, in regard to children under the age of five, she will state the percentage thereof suffering from severe or moderate stunting.

Reply: I wish to inform the House that the percentage of severe or moderate stunting among children under 5 years can be obtained only through a specific survey. So far two surveys had been carried out in 1985 and 1995. These surveys revealed the following -

- (i) the prevalence of severe stunting among 0-5 years old children was 8.9% in 1985 compared to 2.5% in 1995; whereas
- (ii) the prevalence of moderate stunting in the same group of children was 12.6% in 1985 and 7.1% in 1995.

Stunting is caused by chronic malnutrition. After the 1985 survey, a Nutritional Surveillance System was set up by the Nutrition Unit of my Ministry to monitor the growth of children under 5 years.

This resulted in the significant improvement in the percentage of severe and moderate stunting shown by the 1995 survey.

Chronic malnutrition, and therefore stunting, is no longer an issue in Mauritius.

MUNICIPALITY OF PORT LOUIS – MATERIALS - LOSS

(No. B/110) Mr J. C. Barbier (Second Member for GRNW and Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Local Government and Outer Islands whether he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Municipal Council of Port Louis, information, as to the number of reported cases, since 2005 to-date, of loss of material belonging to the Council in which its employees are involved, indicating whether an inquiry has been carried out thereinto and the outcome thereof?

Reply: I am informed by the Municipal Council of Port Louis that since 2005 to date five cases of thefts have occurred at various sites, resulting in loss of materials such as iron chains, bars, electric cables and batteries. Only two of these cases involve employees of the Municipality of Port Louis.

I am further informed that these cases were reported to the Police Department and enquiries are ongoing.

CENTRAL MARKET – THEFTS

(No. B/111) Mr J. C. Barbier (Second Member for GRNW and Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Local Government and Outer Islands whether, he will state if he is aware of the complaints of the stallholders of the Central Market of Port Louis made in connection with theft of their properties at night and, if so, will he, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Municipal Council of Port Louis, information as to the remedial measures that will be taken to address the issue.

Reply: I am informed by the Municipal Council of Port Louis that seven cases of thefts, five in the vegetables section and two in the meat section, at the Central Market had been reported and investigations are under way at the level of Police Department.

I am further informed that, with a view to enhance security in the market, the Municipal Council is proposing to place CCTV cameras in strategic points inside the Central Market and preliminary surveys have already been conducted in this respect.

LE BOUCHON – PROJECTS

(No. 1B/112) Mr J. C. Barbier (Second Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Fisheries and Rodrigues whether, in regard to the private projects at Le Bouchon, he will state if he is aware of the complaints of the fishermen of the region in relation thereto and, if so, will he state the remedial measures that will be taken to address the issue.

Reply: I am informed that the same Parliamentary Question No. B/1009 was put by hon. Barbier on 20 October 2009 and that a written reply had been circulated on the same day.

Now that the matter has been referred to Court by the Beach Authority, it would be *sub judice* for me to make any further statement.

PAILLES - WASTE WATER NETWORK

(No. 1B/113) Mr J. C. Barbier (Second Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Energy and Public Utilities whether, in regard to the Waste Water Network in the region of Pailles, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Waste Water Management Authority, information as to where matters stand.

Reply: The hon. Member may wish to refer to my reply to PQ B/1314 of 01 December 2009 wherein I informed the House that the detailed design of this project was under review and was expected to be completed by March 2010.

I am now advised by the Wastewater Management Authority that the Consultant has, in his preliminary findings, concluded that the initial detailed design will require substantial modifications to take into account new developments, such as the widening of the motorway and the construction of a new bridge along the Pailles Junction Road and the increase in the number of households from 1,600 to 2,600.

The proposals of the Consultant for the re-design of the project are being examined by the Wastewater Management Authority in consultation with the funding Agencies, namely BADEA and the OPEC Fund.

The project will also require additional funding which has to be mobilized before the implementation of the project.

CITÉ SADALLY, VACOAS – BUS SERVICE

(No. 1B/114) Mrs F. Labelle (Third Member for Vacoas and Floreal) asked the Minister of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping whether, in regard to public transport, he will state if he is aware of the problems encountered by the inhabitants of Cité Sadally, Vacoas and, if so, the measures Government proposes to take to address the issue, giving the details thereof.

Reply: I am informed by both the NTA and the NTC that no complaints have been received from the inhabitants of Cité Sadally, Vacoas regarding the problem encountered by them.

I am also informed that bus transport facilities are available at regular intervals along Sadally Road by NTC buses operating along route 134 (Bord Cascade – Curepipe).

Nonetheless, I have already requested the National Transport Authority to liaise with the National Transport Corporation to look into the possibility of providing a circular bus service.

BASIC INVALIDITY PENSION – DISALLOWED CASES

(No. 1B/115) Mrs F. Labelle (Third Member for Vacoas and Floreal) asked the Minister of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions whether, in regard to the Basic Invalidity Pension, she will state the number thereof which have been disallowed in -

- (a) 2007;
- (b) 2008, and
- (c) 2009

indicating whether they include persons suffering from permanent disability or chronic illnesses.

Reply: The number of applications for Basic Invalidity Pensions which have been disallowed for 2007, 2008 and 2009 is being tabled.

It is to be noted that there are two types of disallowed cases. The first type relates to new cases while the second one is in respect of cases whereby persons have been granted the Basic Invalidity Pension for a certain period but were not found eligible following medical reboarding after the said period.

In reply to the second part of the question, I wish to point out that, in accordance with the National Pensions Act, a person is eligible to Basic Invalidity Pension provided he or she has a disability which is not less than 60%. The figures tabled for 2007 to 2009 may include persons with a permanent disability or chronic illness that does not meet the 60% disablement eligibility criteria as per the National Pensions Act. It is to be noted that many such cases are further referred for social aid.

STANLEY AND ROSE HILL - NDU PROJECTS

(No. 1B/116) Mr D. Nagalingum (Second Member for Stanley and Rose Hill) asked the Minister of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping whether, in regard to Constituency No.19, Stanley and

Rose Hill, he will give a list of the NDU projects already approved therefor, indicating which projects have not yet been implemented or completed, if any, as at 30 April 2010 and, if so, the reasons therefor and indicate the expected timeframe for the completion thereof.

Reply: The list of ongoing and new projects for Constituency No. 19 will be placed in the Library of the House.

EBÈNE – BUS STAND

(No. 1B/117) Mr D. Nagalingum (Second Member for Stanley and Rose Hill) asked the Minister of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping whether he will state if it is proposed to put up a bus

stand at Ebène and, if so, indicate

(a) if land has already been earmarked for the project, and

(b) the date when works are expected to start and the duration thereof.

Reply: I am informed by the Traffic Management and Road Safety Unit that it is proposing to put up a bus stand at Ebène. In this connection, a site of 3.417 *hectares* has been earmarked for a proposed traffic centre at Ebène.

A preliminary design layout has already been done and work will start as soon as funds are made available.

PLAZA THEATRE – RENOVATION

(No. 1B/118) Mr D. Nagalingum (Second Member for Stanley & Rose Hill) asked the Minister of Local Government and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the renovation of the Plaza theatre at Rose Hill, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Municipal Council of Beau Bassin/Rose Hill, information as to –

(a) the scope of the works;

(b) works carried out as at to-date;

(c) the estimated cost thereof, and

(d) when the theatre and *salle des fêtes* will be operational.

Reply: The Plaza Theatre is part of our cultural heritage and we should definitely spare no efforts to renovate and preserve it. In view of the considerable amount required for the renovation of the theatre, the Municipality of Beau Bassin/Rose Hill has therefore considered it wise to proceed with the works in a phased manner. According to plan, the renovation works should be carried out in three phases as follows -

- Phase one consists of the design, supply and installation of new roof coverings and ancillary works at roof level estimated at Rs90 m. This very first phase is considered to be very important and urgent in order to prevent the building from falling apart and to protect it from further deterioration.
- Phase two consists of renovation of Administrative Block and Salle des Fêtes estimated at Rs67 m.
- Phase three consists of refurbishment of the Theatre estimated at Rs390 m.

I am informed that Phase I has been completed. However, phases II and III would require a total investment estimated at Rs457 m. which the Municipality cannot afford. Once the funding will be secured, the works will be undertaken and thereafter the theatre and *Salle des Fêtes* will become operational.

With regard to parts (a), (b) and (c) of the question, the detailed information is being compiled and will be placed in the Library of the National Assembly.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS – PRIVATE TUITION

(No. 1B/119) Mr S. Obeegadoo (Third Member for Curepipe & Midlands) asked the Minister of Education and Human Resources whether, in regard to private tuition in the primary sector, he will state the measures being taken and that will be taken to address the adverse impact thereof on the students.

Reply: In my reply to PQ No. B/619 on 23 June 2009 on the same issue, I pointed out that private tuition is a phenomenon which is deep-rooted in our educational system and at the local level, it is widespread especially in the primary and secondary sub-sectors. Government is fully aware of the adverse impact of private tuition on students and has been looking into ways and means to address the problem.

The Education and Human Resources Strategy Plan 2008-2020 underscores the need for a review of our current policy of private tuition. Consultations held on the matter revealed that a holistic and integrated approach should be adopted to address private tutoring which has been in place for years. This approach aims at tackling the problem at its very root and not merely dealing with the symptoms. This explains our opting for a phased process.

A number of measures have thus been worked on, some of which are already in place and yielding positive results while others are to be implemented shortly.

As you are aware, at the primary level we now have three cycles of two years as compared to two cycles of three years previously. As from this year, we are embarking on a national remedial education strategy for Standard III pupils to improve the performance of these pupils who are moving on to the second primary cycle. This remedial strategy is a follow up of the Diagnostic Assessment exercise initiated and which has identified weaknesses at Standard III level. Remedial measures are thus being applied at an early stage to overcome learning deficits that would otherwise, cumulate over the years.

Further, we have introduced the Enhancement Programme at Std IV level. This after-school hours innovative programme using a differentiated pedagogy and backed by co- and extra-curricular activities has received widespread acceptance from the community of parents who have clearly understood the benefits of this innovative programme and encouraged their wards to actively participate therein. Already a majority of pupils are participating in the Programme which has necessitated an investment of some Rs30 m. from Government.

There are substantial benefits that are accruing from this programme. Indeed, so much so that parents would much rather have their children exposed to its richness than having to make them labour under the heavy burden of private tutoring. After all, this programme is beneficial for the gifted, the average and the slow learners.

Since Std IV pupils belong to the second cycle, we believe that the policy regarding private tuition applicable to the first three years of primary schooling, inside and outside the school environment, should logically and for reasons spelt out earlier be extended to this Standard also. This explains why we are already implementing the decision of not allowing private tuition at Standard IV on school premises and as already announced, we have proposed to extend the existing policy on private tuition for pupils of Standards I, II and III to Standard IV as well.

Furthermore, I wish, at this stage, to inform the House that following the announcement made for the introduction of the draft Amendment Bill for the above purpose into the National Assembly, I have received further comments on the issue of private tutoring from the main stakeholders of the sector which, *inter alia*, relates to parental right of choice to education and control of private tuition by way of regulation and these are being given due consideration before finalising shortly relevant amendments to be made to legislations.

I would also like to add that it is desirable that all partners and stakeholders have a concerted approach with a view to evolving a national consensus on the issue in the best interest of our students.

EBENE – NATIONAL TRANSPORT CORPORATION – BUILDING

(No. 1B/120) Dr. R. Sorefan (Fourth Member for La Caverne & Phoenix) asked the Minister of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping whether, in regard to the new building at Ebène to house the National Transport Corporation, he will state –

- (a) the costs thereof ;
- (b) whether the building has been handed over, and
- (c) if it is presently occupied and, if so, by whom.

Reply: I am informed by the NTC that the cost of the construction of its new building to house its headquarters at Ebène amounts to around Rs114,951,524.56.

With regard to parts (b) and (c), I wish to inform the House that the building is still under construction.

VANDERMEERSCH STREET – CONGESTION

(No. 1B/121) Mrs L. Ribot (Third Member for Stanley & Rose Hill) asked the Minister of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping whether, in regard to traffic congestion at Vandermeersch Street at peak hours, in the morning and in the afternoon, he will state the remedial measures taken to address the issue.

Reply: Vandermeersch Street is a classified Road and falls under the jurisdiction of the Municipal Council of Beau Bassin/Rose Hill. It is a main traffic carrier which links the roundabout of Beau Bassin to the roundabout at the exit of Rose Hill Bus Station.

Vandermeersch permits only a two-lane traffic movement opposing each other. There are two traffic lights along the road; with one located at its junction with Malartic Street and the second one at its junction with Reverand Lebrun Street. Currently, the heaviest local traffic from the side of Balfour Garden accedes onto Vandermeersch Street through Malartic Street. The Police mans the lights during the morning and afternoon peak hours.

The best solution would have been to provide an additional lane along Vandermeersch Street. However, this is not possible as it involves use of the land reserved for the Mass Transit System.

To remedy the situation, we had recourse to short term measures. In this regard, TMRSU has already re-timed the traffic lights and yellow lines have been marked where required. The Police are also providing a helping hand by its presence in controlling the traffic during peak hours.

**ROYAL ROAD & DR MAURICE CURÉ STREET, ROSE HILL - FOOTPATHS
AND DRAINS**

(No. 1B/122) Mrs L. Ribot (Third Member for Stanley & Rose Hill) asked the Minister of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping whether asked the Minister of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping whether, in regard to the footpaths and drains along the Royal Road and the Dr Maurice Curé Street, Rose Hill, he will state the measures taken by his Ministry for the upgrading and maintenance thereof.

Reply: I am informed that the footpaths and drains along the Royal Road at Rose Hill are in good condition and regularly maintained by the Road Development Authority (RDA).

As regards Dr Maurice Curé Street, I am informed that the street is a non-classified road and is under the jurisdiction of the Municipality of Beau Bassin/Rose Hill. A proper drainage over 700 metres is required on both sides of the street.

EMBASSIES – OFFICIALS - CONSULTATIONS

(No. 1B/123) Mrs A. Navarre-Marie (First Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade whether, in regard to official/s posted in our Embassies abroad, he will state -

- (a) if since March 2010 to-date, they have been called for consultations and, if so, indicate;
 - (i) the number thereof;
 - (ii) their ranks;

- (iii) the Embassies, and
 - (iv) expenses incurred in connection therewith, and
- (b) the nature of the consultations and the outcome thereof.

Reply: With regard to part (a) of the question, I am advised that only one official namely HE Mr A. Kundasamy, High Commissioner in London was called for consultations during the period March 2010 to date.

An amount of Mauritian Rupees 50,915 was incurred in relation to the payment of air ticket and allowances.

With regard to part (b) of the question -

- (i) High Commissioner H.E. Mr A. Kundasamy was called for consultations by the Government following the decision of the British Government to establish a marine protected area in the waters of the Chagos Archipelago, and
- (ii) action taken as a result of these consultations included the following -
 - (a) letters were addressed by the Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade to Hon. William Hague, then Shadow Foreign Minister of the Conservative Party, and Hon. Edward Davey, then Shadow Foreign Minister of the Liberal Democratic Party, to convey the concerns of Mauritius over the marine protected area and seek their support for the position of Mauritius on the matter, and
 - (b) the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group was requested to address the matter at its meeting scheduled for 16 April 2010 in London on the grounds that the creation of a marine protected area around the Chagos Archipelago constitutes a violation of the fundamental political values of the Commonwealth enshrined in the Harare Declaration. The Commonwealth

Ministerial Action Group decided to request comments and explanations from the UK on the matter.

MUNICIPALITY OF PORT LOUIS - CENTRES – USE

(No. 1B/124) Mrs A. Navarre-Marie (First Member for GRNW & Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Local Government and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the use of Municipal centres in Port Louis, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Municipal Council of Port Louis, information as to the criteria to be met by social organisations to benefit from the use thereof.

Reply: I am informed by the Municipality Council of Port Louis that, since decades, the criteria to be met by social organisations to benefit from the use of municipal centres are as follows -

- (i) The social organisations need to be registered with the Municipal Council of Port Louis;
- (ii) The centres are to be used for social and cultural purposes only;
- (iii) Availability of the centres, and
- (iv) Applications are processed on a first come first served basis.

RICHE TERRE – ROUNDABOUT – CONSTRUCTION

(No. 1B/125) Mr G. Lesjongard (Second Member for Port Louis North & Montagne Longue) asked the Minister of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping whether, in regard to the roundabout presently under construction on the highway at Riche Terre, he will state -

- (a) if a Traffic Impact Assessment was carried out in relation thereto;
- (b) the cost of the project, and
- (c) whether his Ministry has received any complaint concerning traffic congestion in the area.

Reply: The access road at Riche Terre is being built in the context of the agreement between Government of Mauritius and Tianli Economic and Construction Zone presently known as Jinfei.

The roundabout which is currently under construction at Riche Terre forms part of the access road to their development. The access road including the roundabout is a requirement in the Master Plan submitted by the developer who made its own assessment of traffic and road network need. Traffic Impact Assessment for Government projects is not required.

I am tabling extracts of the Tianli Master Plan showing the new access road.

The cost of the project which includes a dual carriageway of the length of 1.1 km, three roundabouts, street lighting, drains and other amenities is Rs100,646,620.

As an immediate measure to mitigate the traffic congestion problem, a third lane is being constructed from the new roundabout to the existing Terre Rouge roundabout. The purpose of a roundabout is to manage vehicular traffic from various entry points. However, it is noted that these roundabouts also affect fluidity of traffic. The accepted solution worldwide to this issue is

the replacement of roundabouts by grade separated junctions as is the case at Réduit which cost Rs176m in 1997. Ideally the 24 existing roundabouts from SSR Airport to Grand Bay can be thus replaced by grade separated junctions. A study has already been commissioned to prioritise the replacement of the roundabouts in view of the heavy investments involved. The traffic problem at Terre Rouge will also be addressed in this context.

POINTE AUX CAVES – PULVERISED COAL PLANT – CONSTRUCTION

(No. 1B/126) Mr G. Lesjongard (Second Member for Port Louis North & Montagne Longue) asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Energy and Public Utilities Whether, in regard to the proposed construction of a coal fired power plant at Pointe aux Caves, he will state

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(a) where matters stand and

(b) whether the Environment Impact Assessment has now been granted and, if not, why not.

Reply: I am informed by the CEB that after conclusions of negotiations with CT Power for the setting up of a 2 X 55 MW Pulverised Coal plant at Pointe Aux Caves on 23 December 2008, the following agreements have already been signed -

- Power Purchase Agreement (PPA);
- Interconnection Facility Design and Build Agreement (IFDBA);
- Shareholders Agreement (SA), and
- Coal Supply Agreement (CSA).

These agreements are subject to the Promoter obtaining an EIA Licence.

As regard to part (b) of the question, I am informed by the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development that the EIA application was received on 6 April 2007. In September 2008, the Ministry of Environment appointed Consultants Mott Mac Donald and Global Coastal

Strategies to undertake an independent evaluation and assessment of the EIA. The Consultants submitted their report in December 2008.

Based on the recommendations of the Consultants, on 04 September 2009, the promoter was requested to submit a Supplemental EIA report to address the shortcomings in the original EIA through additional studies namely -

- updating of the Traffic Impact Assessment report;
- stack height determination exercise;
- adequacy of the ash disposal and run-off;
- selection of a new outfall location based on systematic assessment of alternatives;
- a hydrodynamic modelling to assess impacts of proposed structures at sea, and
- thorough socio-economic assessment including cost –benefit analysis.

I am advised that on 16 June 2010, the promoter has submitted the Supplemental EIA report to the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development and that the report is being opened for public comments and circulated to the Authorities/ Ministries concerned for their views.

(No. 1B/127) Mr G. Lesjongard (Second Member for Port Louis North & Montagne Longue) asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Energy and Public Utilities whether, in regard to the production of electricity by the Independent Power Producers (IPPs) he will state

- (a) if the study carried out in relation thereto has been completed and
- (b) whether there is any dispute between Government and the IPPS on certain aspects of the Report.

Reply: In accordance with the agreement signed in April 2008 by Government and the Mauritius Sugar Producers Association (MSPA), an independent consultant Hunton & Williams was appointed in May 2009 jointly by Government and MSPA to review the energy sector as applicable to the Independent Power Producers.

The Consultants started their work on 08 June 2009 and submitted their final report in October 2009.

The IPP's have expressed their disagreement to the Consultant on certain aspects of the report. This is a matter to be addressed by the IPP's and the Consultant.

TRANQUEBAR- ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

(No. 1B/128) Mr R. Uteem (Second Member for Port Louis South & Port Louis Central) asked the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Energy and Public Utilities whether he is aware that some 50 families in the region of Tranquebar known as Camp Manna are being deprived of electricity supply and, if so, will he, for the benefit of the house, obtain from the Central Electricity Board, information as to the remedial measures that will be taken.

Reply: According to information obtained from the Ministry of Housing and Lands, the fifty families at Camp Manna are presently occupying privately owned land. They have not produced any of the documents required by the CEB for electricity supply.

The CEB will provide electricity to the residents, if the owner of the land is identified and gives the necessary authorisations to these families to occupy the land.

MAURITIUS/INDIA- DOUBLE TAXATION TREATY

(No. 1B/129) Mr R. Uteem (Second Member for Port Louis South & Port Louis Central) asked the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Development whether, in regard to the Double Taxation Treaty between Mauritius and India, he will state if-

- (a) the said Treaty is being re-negotiated, and
- (b) if any joint committee between the Mauritian and Indian Authorities has been set up to reassure the Indian Authorities against any risk of misuse or abuse thereof and, if so, where matters stand.

Reply: The DTA between India and Mauritius came into effect in 1983. The development of non bank offshore business activities in 1992 in Mauritius coincided with the policy of economic liberalization in India where Foreign Financial Investors (FFI) were provided a number of incentives to participate in the Indian Capital market.

Over the past decade or so, the Government of India and the Government of Mauritius have been engaged in regular discussions on matters relating to the flow of investments between our two countries and the application of the DTA.

Several actions were taken by Mauritius to address the concerns of the Indian Authorities among which we note -

- (a) the Financial Services Commission (FSC) and the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) entered into a MoU for exchange of information;
- (b) companies investing in India from Mauritius may use the services of Indian auditors;
- (c) stringent conditions have been introduced by the FSC to ensure that Indian sourced funds are not reinvested in India through Mauritius;

- (d) the law has been amended to provide for wider exchange of information with Indian authorities;
- (e) the Mutual Assistance in Criminal and Related Matters Act has been enacted and provides for requests for judicial assistance notwithstanding the confidentiality provisions that apply to global business companies;
- (f) the law against money laundering was reinforced, and
- (g) the Mauritius Revenue Authority has been continuously providing relevant information as requested from time to time by the Indian authorities.

As a follow up to the ensuing dialogue between our two countries, a Joint Working Group (JWG) comprising of senior officials from both countries was set up in August 2006 to work on two important issues namely -

- putting in place adequate safeguards to prevent misuse of the India Mauritius DTA without prejudice to the economic interests of either country, and
- strengthening the mechanism for the “Exchange of Information” under the India Mauritius DTA.

The JWG met on six occasions both in Mauritius and India. Discussions with the Indian authorities will continue and the JWG will meet as and when required to sort out technical matters. To maintain effective coordination and liaison between both Indian and Mauritian tax authorities, the Government of India has just deputed an officer of the rank of Additional Commissioner of Income Tax to the High Commission of India in Port Louis.

The issues related to the DTA have been ongoing for quite a while and have been mentioned in the Indian press on many occasions. These issues were even raised in the Indian Parliament. We are conscious of the uncertainty that this may cause to investors. In this connection, the Prime Minister and myself intend to have high level talks with our counterparts and the Indian Authorities.

PORT LOUIS MARITIME AND PORT LOUIS EAST – TAXI STANDS

(No.1B/131) Mr A. Ameer Meea (First Member for Port Louis Maritime & Port Louis East) asked the Minister of Local Government and Outer Islands whether, in regard to the Taxi stands in the Constituency No.3, Port Louis Maritime and Port Louis East, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Municipal Council of Port Louis, a list thereof and their location, indicating if consideration will be given –

- (a) to placing of more visible Taxi stand signs;
- (b) for provision of water supply and street lighting thereat, and
- (c) to regular cleaning and maintenance of the shelters.

Reply: I am informed by the National Transport Authority that the list of taxi stands in the Constituency No 3, Port Louis Maritime and Port Louis East is as follows -

- (1) Plaine Verte Centre
- (2) Nicolay Road, Plaine Verte
- (3) Roche Bois
- (4) New Transportation Centre
- (5) Emmanuel Anquetil Street

Taxi stand signposts are available at the above taxi stands except for Roche Bois.

With regard to parts (b) and (c), I am informed by the Municipal Council of Port Louis that street lightings are provided in most taxi stands. Moreover, a joint meeting is envisaged with the National Transport Authority, Traffic Management and Road Safety Unit to discuss the provision of taxi stand signs, water supply and street lighting. The Council provides a regular cleaning service at all taxi stands.

**PRIEST PEAK HEALTH TRACT – *COMITE QUARTIER RUE LA PAIX* -
REPRESENTATIONS**

(No. 1B/132) Mr A. Ameer Meea (First Member for Port Louis Maritime & Port Louis East) asked the Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development whether he will state if he has received representations from the Comité Quartier Rue La Paix in regard to the bad state of the Priest Peak Health Tract at Cité Martial and, if so, will he state the remedial measures that will be taken.

Reply: The Priest Peak Health Track set up at a cost of Rs 8.2m. has been subject to repeated acts of vandalism since 2005. The Ministry carried out repair and upgrading works in July 2006 for the sum of Rs 497, 000. The site was however, subject to further acts of vandalism from December 2006 to January 2007. The site was closed in January 2007 and no further works were executed.

In April 2008 the Living Environment Unit carried out a survey to identify the required reinstatement works following acts of vandalism on site. Severe damages were observed such as

completely burnt kiosks, damaged wooden handrail and fencing and dumping of animal waste. The cost for undertaking repairs was estimated at around Rs3 m.

In November 2009 representations from Comité Quartier La Paix, were received by the Ministry in regard to the bad state of the Priest Peak Health Track at Cité Martial. On 14 May 2010 my colleague hon. Shakeel Mohamed, Minister of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment raised the issue of rehabilitating the health track with me and my Ministry is presently working on appropriate remedial measures to be taken.

VILLIERS RENE GOVERNMENT SCHOOL – RENOVATION WORKS

(No. 1B/133) Mr A. Ameer Meea (First Member for Port Louis Maritime & Port Louis East) asked the Minister of Education and Human Resources whether, in regard to the Villiers René Government School, he will state if during the renovation works presently being carried out thereat, the students thereof will be temporarily transferred and, if so, where.

Reply: It is not proposed to transfer pupils of Villiers René Government School during the present renovation works being carried out in the school.

SOCIAL HOUSING - PROJECTS

(No. 1B/134) Mrs F. Labelle (Third Member for Vacoas & Floreal) asked the Minister of Housing and Lands whether, in regard to social housing, he will state the number of

projects initiated and implemented on a yearly basis from 2006 to 2009, indicating the different sites concerned.

Reply: I am informed that the NHDC started the construction of 533 low cost housing units in October 2006 over 6 sites, namely at Rose Belle, Ville Noire, Rivière des Anguilles, Chebel, Bambous and Henrietta. These housing units have already been allocated to eligible beneficiaries.

Furthermore, the construction of 550 low cost housing units have already started last year over 11 sites namely at Glen Park, La Tour Koenig, Petite Rivière, Roche Bois, Camp Diable, Plaine Magnien, Grand Bel Air, Britannia, D'Épinay, Cottage and Calebasses. These housing units are expected to be ready by February 2011.

When we talk of housing programmes, we should not lose sight of the Casting of Roof Slab Scheme, which was introduced by this Government in 1997. This Scheme was introduced precisely to assist low income earners who persevere to construct a house of their own, on land owned either privately or through leasehold rights. From 2006 to 2009 some Rs741.1m. have been disbursed to 14941 beneficiaries.